

UCLan Curriculum Framework (UCF)

Update Brief

January 2021



1 Purpose

This paper seeks to provide an update on the work to deliver UCLan's new Curriculum Framework. It will aim to update on the process of consultation and feedback with stakeholders, the resultant model of the 'Blockbuster Framework', and the timeline of events for implementation, including validation schedule.

2 Feedback, Consultation and Workshop Summary

A period of stakeholder feedback on the draft proposals began early in 2020 with introductions to the approach and discussions in various fora with representations from across the university including Student Experience and Engagement Committee, Academic Standards and Quality Assurance Committee, and the Academic Board. This fed into the work of a design group drawn from across the university to further progress the approach.

A summary of further feedback is included below:

- A full staff survey was initiated in June 2020 which garnered a healthy response from academic colleagues, Professional Services, and some initial feedback from UCU.
- Bespoke email accounts were set up and monitored to receive live and open feedback and requests for information on the UCF. This will remain in use throughout the next academic year and full first cycle of validation events;
- All staff responses have been mapped and recorded with any formal project response or action themes logged and forwarded to relevant parties;
- Comprehensive market research was conducted which provided feedback on the framework from local and national employers, students and alumni as part of the development of the Graduate Attributes;
- The Centre for Collaborative Learning (CCL) have facilitated a series of workshops to gather best practice and develop a collective bank of resources to sit underneath the UCF for use throughout the University. CCL will assist in the development of courses and in designing a flexible approach to assisting academics with the inclusion of the framework within their subjects.

3 Curriculum Framework

The Curriculum Framework provides a vehicle to guide course design and the inclusion of curriculum elements which are not course specific, and a more holistic approach to planning and delivering courses at the Preston, Westlakes and Burnley campuses. It will also acknowledge the need for flexibility in areas of the University where external accreditation or individual subject needs may not align with the framework. A helicopter view of the framework with revised definitions is included in appendix 1. The final version which has now been ratified by VCG will begin to inform a revised

course planning process for implementation during 2020/2021. Whilst the Curriculum Framework was initially designed to be an Undergraduate framework, feedback suggests there is support for it to be extended to PGT. All, or certainly most of the elements within the framework would lend themselves naturally to any student journey at the university, and the extent to which the framework maps onto PGT expectations will be explored during 2020/21 as schools start to engage with it for validation events.

4 Course Mapping Documentation

In order to assist in the validation process, the intention is for courses going through course approval or re-approval from September 2020, to adopt the UCF as part of threshold criteria for approval. Course teams will be asked to undertake a mapping exercise to demonstrate this. The mapping document final version can be seen at appendix 2. This mapping document will be trialled with those schools going through validation in semester 1 and will continue to be reviewed throughout 20/21 academic year. It should be noted that flexibility within the framework has been a key consideration throughout its design, and course feedback throughout 20/21 will be used to consistently review and develop the approach.

5 Implementation and Validation Timeline of Events

A timeline for validation is included in appendix 3. A summary of the timeline and additional key dates is included below:

- URP Chairs meetings formally introducing the Framework have taken place in September followed by new URP Chair training for all new Deputy Heads that have now been appointed following the Faculty restructures. Further training events will be delivered by Academic Quality into Semester 2, this year.
- School of Justice, and Schools of Business and Management have been the first schools to begin validation under the UCF in Semester 1 and into Semester 2.
- UCF workshops have been completed in order to support the development of courses by sharing and embedding best practice across the organisation. The Centre for Collaborative Learning will host and maintain the resources gathered by these workshops as well as conducting regular reviews of Framework content. These reviews will be informed by routine feedback from course teams who are utilising the Framework in the context of their own course proposals.

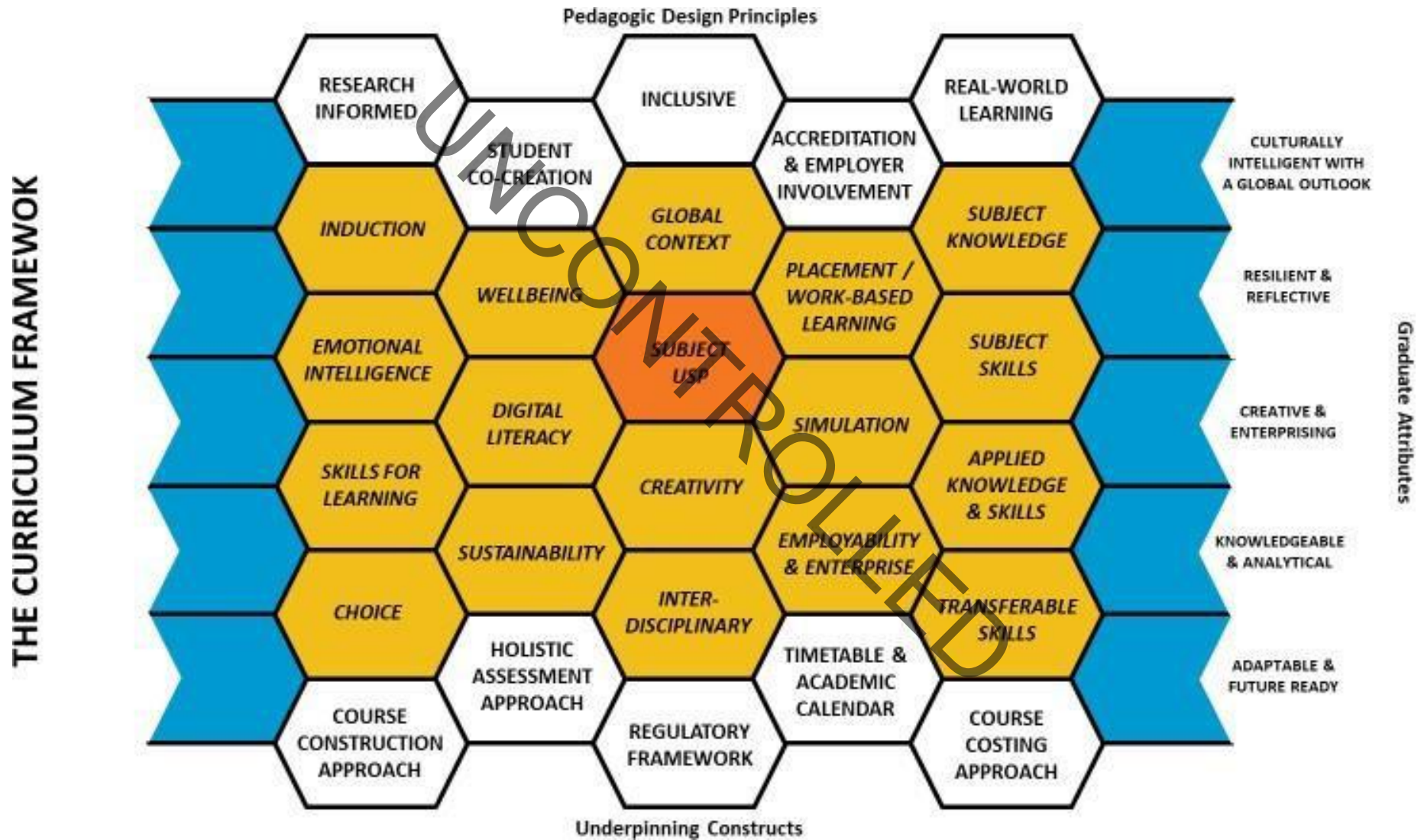
UCLan Curriculum Framework Design Group

Appendices:

1. UCF Final Draft
2. Course Mapping Document
3. Validation Timeline of Events

Appendix 1

UCF Final Version



Framework Definitions

1.1 The Underpinning Constructs - The Underpinning Constructs are a set of core building blocks that are fundamental to how courses are designed and built. They include the following elements:

- *Course Construction Approach* - Courses must be designed in line with the course construction approach guidance in order to be efficient. These are stated below:
 - *These principles should be followed when developing courses for approval. A rationale for deviating from these principles must be clearly articulated and approved, e.g. due to Professional Body requirements (see Appendix 19).*
 - *The course start date must be in line with our agreed academic calendar start dates.*
 - *Modules must be designed to conform to the following credit sizes per level of study:*

Level	Module Size Options
3	20, 40, 60
4	20, 40, 60, 120
5	20, 40, 60, 120
6	20, 40, 60, 120
7	20, 40, 60, 120

Examples of appropriate variations include international delivery requirements (10 credit modules), and some placement provision (0 credit-weighted modules).

- *Optional modules should normally be in line with the following:*

Level	Maximum number of Options
3	1 / 20 credits from a maximum choice of 2
4	0
5	1 / 20 credits from a maximum choice of 2
6	Up to 2 / 40 credits from a maximum choice of 4
7 (incl. integrated Masters)	2 / 40 credits from a maximum choice of 4

These maximums can rise through justification, e.g. options shared between courses that can demonstrate an increase in efficiency.

- *Options that are advertised to students must be delivered irrespective of student numbers so the design team must be confident that any options provided are efficient in terms of cost, and effective in terms of student experience.*

- Award titles must conform to the following minimum subject specific credit per level:

Level	Minimum course-specific credit
3	0
4	0 encouraged fully shared with other pathways
5	40
6	40
7	60
7 (integrated Masters)	40

- UG provision should normally include a sandwich year, and a Study Abroad option.
- There should normally be an even distribution of learning and summative assessment across the semesters (ideally 60 credits of learning and assessment per semester).
- *Holistic assessment approach* - Courses must have a holistic approach to assessment, ensuring an appropriate distribution of summative assessment using a subject-appropriate diet of assessment.
- *Regulatory framework* - Courses must be designed to be compliant with our regulations (with the understanding that in certain disciplines, amendments to the regulations are permitted in line with professional body requirements).
- *Timetabling and the Academic calendar* - Courses must be designed to be delivered in line with our timetabling expectations and be in line with the academic calendar.
- *Course costing approach* - Courses must be efficient and cost-effective. More information on this guidance and the 'Course Efficiency Calculator' can be found [here](#).

The following sections will go through draft definitions of the remaining elements of the UCF. Please note these definitions are illustrative and have formed the basis of the UCF workshops. The UCF workshops have enabled key resources and good practice to be gathered with a view to sharing across the institution by January 2021.

1.2 Pedagogic Design Principles - A set of over-arching pedagogic principles that must inform the design, on-going review and engagement of the curriculum. They will include the following:

- *Research-informed* - Courses must be designed to enable ongoing refreshment of curriculum to take advantage of the research community and engage students in the research process.
- *Accreditation and employer involvement* - Courses must be designed with input from employers to ensure relevance and pursue accreditation where available.
- *Inclusive* - Our curriculum offer must be fully inclusive and representative of our students and the wider world. De-colonisation of the curriculum is essential to ensure this can be achieved and will form the basis of significant work preparing courses for validation.

- *Student co-creation* - Students must be involved in co-creation of courses and curriculum.
- *Real-world learning* - Courses must deliver applied learning that is relevant to the world we live in.

1.3 The Graduate Attributes - a set of defined, practical and inclusive set of attributes that a student will have the opportunity to develop during their course of study at UCLan.

- *Culturally Intelligent with a Global Outlook* - Students will be able to gather knowledge, understanding and/or experience of local, regional and global perspectives. They will have the ability to be curious and open to new and diverse perspectives and will be able to make informed and ethical decisions by being able to reflect on and be aware of their own and other's biases and emotions. Ability to communicate and collaborate with people from diverse backgrounds with integrity and confidence.
- *Resilient & Reflective* - Students will understand how to be self-aware and understand the importance of recognising their own strengths and areas for development. They will be able to equip themselves with the professional tools that enable them to navigate the challenges that life and work bring.
- *Adaptable & Future Ready* - Students will be able to take personal responsibility for a proactive, purposeful and life-long approach to learning and to build relevant, new and complementary skills through a combination of action and reflection. They will understand the importance of being prepared for the steps that need to be taken to succeed in their chosen journeys.
- *Creative & Enterprising* - Students will develop a creative and enterprising mind-set to problem solving, and the ability to spot opportunities and act where needed. They will be able to adapt to change, prevailing cultures and working norms of an organisation.
- *Knowledgeable & Analytical* - Students will be confident and skilled in applying acquired knowledge to real-world contexts. They will understand the importance of being able to add value through the application of carefully analysed knowledge.

1.4 The Curriculum Characteristics - A set of learning opportunities that students will pass through within their courses that will underpin and enforce our defined set of Graduate Attributes. The characteristics are a holistic selection of specific and non-course specific elements. They will include the following:

- *Subject Knowledge, Subject Skills, Applied knowledge and skills and transferrable skills*. These are included here as they relate to how we describe subject-specific curriculum developed for our courses, and therefore have a key place in our overarching Curriculum Framework alongside other elements we wish to become consistently threaded through our course delivery.
- *Subject USP* - Each course will design and promote their own unique selling point in order to promote a sense of pride and belonging of their students within the

University as well as ensuring we have clear, value-adding additional selling points to attract students to our provision.

- *Induction* - Each new student, regardless of course or entry date will have access to an extended induction process included within their course and including introductory course content. Provision will address university expectations and support mechanisms.
- *Emotional Intelligence* - Courses will provide an opportunity to discuss with students how to understand and manage their own emotions, work in teams, communicate, turn failure into an opportunity to learn, reflect.
- *Skills for Learning* - Students need to be equipped with the skills required to learn effectively, including study skills, research methods, ethics, revision techniques, how to interpret assignment briefs, and work with feedback. This may include testing literacy and numeracy and providing resources to address any gaps for certain cohorts.
- *Choice* - Student choice is an important aspect of the journey through a course. Choice does not necessarily mean additional modules - but student choice in terms of projects, assessment, focus, group working, criteria. In addition, there may be an opportunity to develop cross-institutional choices for students to develop transferable skills.
- *Wellbeing* - Courses will demonstrate the inclusion of the University's framework for mental health and wellbeing including the effective use of wellbeing service's resource and effective signposting. It will also acknowledge the need for practical use of mental wellbeing initiatives within their chosen fields and grow resilience.
- *Digital Literacy* - Students need to develop the digital acumen to succeed in their careers. This includes developing ethically aware digital skills relevant to their subject, as well as the ability to find, harness and analyse information to inform decision-making.
- *Sustainability* - Inclusion of sustainability within courses will support the University's mission by striving to improve the environmental health and quality of life on our campus and within our wider community. Sustainability aims to discuss use of resources efficiently to benefit communities, the University and the workplace.
- *Global Context* - Courses will be required to touch upon the global context that our students will live and work within. This will include addressing items such as personal and cultural expression, tolerance and inclusivity, the global economic environment and the importance of ethical decision making in a globalized world.
- *Simulation* - Students will be provided with the opportunity to experience simulated real-world activities and processes in a safe environment. Simulations will aim to provide an experience as close to a working example as possible; and push course participants to try alternative strategies and approaches to better themselves and their peers.
- *Interdisciplinary* - Courses will provide an opportunity for students to experience and gain knowledge by working collaboratively with others in areas outside of their field of

study.

- Placement/Work based learning - Students will be provided with work-based learning or placements in order to provide them with an opportunity to increase their employability, gain an insight into potential careers and make contacts for the future.
- Creativity - Courses will promote self-efficacy and give students the opportunity to have agency over their learning. Students will be provided with opportunity to hone skills that are needed to produce ideas that are both original and valuable using imaginative approaches to make learning more interesting and exciting.
- Employability and Enterprise - Students will be provided with the opportunity to develop a set of skills, knowledge, understanding and personal attributes that enable them to be more likely to choose, secure and retain occupations in which they can be satisfied and successful.

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Appendix 2

Course Mapping Document (Draft)

Programme Underlying Principles

Please tick in the relevant boxes showing where individual elements are covered

Level	Module Code	Module Title
e.g. LEVEL 6		
e.g. LEVEL 5		
e.g. LEVEL 4		
		Emotional Intelligence
		Skills for Learning
		Choice
		Wellbeing
		Digital Literacy
		Sustainability
		Global Context
		Creativity
		Inter-Disciplinary
		Placement/Work-Or-Based
		Simulation
		Employability
		Subject Knowledge
		Subject Skills
		Applied Knowledge & Skills
		Transferable Skills

What is the **USP** of this provision?

How do you ensure that your course is, and will continue to be, **Research Informed**?

How has the need to ensure curriculum is **inclusive** informed the development of the course?

Describe how aspects of the course are timed and managed to allow for a gradual, **extended induction** into the university?

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Describe how **students have been involved** in the development of this course:

Describe any **accreditation** sought and state the **input from employers** into the curriculum:

Describe how your course delivers **real world learning** relevant to the world we live in:

Describe how the course has been designed to ensure a **holistic approach to assessment** – including timing of assessments, use of formative and summative, and different assessment formats?

Appendix 3

Implementation and Validation Timeline of Events

Faculty	School	2020/2021		2021/2022		2022/2023		2023/2024	
		Semester 1	Semester 2	Semester 1	Semester 2	Semester 1	Semester 2	Semester 1	Semester 2
Faculty of Business and Justice	Business/Management		RV	PR					
	Justice	RV	PR						
Faculty of Culture and Creative Industries	Arts and Media		RV	PR					
	Humanities, Language and Global Studies				RV			PR	
Faculty of Science and Technology	Natural Sciences			RV		PR			
	Engineering				RV				
	Psychology and Computer Science		RV					PR	
Faculty of Health and Care	Community, Health and Midwifery					RV			
	Nursing				RV				
Faculty of Allied Health and Wellbeing	Social Work, Care and Community	PR							
	Sport and Health Sciences			RV				PR	
Faculty of Clinical and Biomedical Sciences	Dentistry		RV	PR					
	Medicine		RV	PR					
	Pharmacy and Biomedical Sciences				RV	PR			

Key = **RV (Revalidation)**
PR (Periodic Review)