

IDENTICAL ACADEMIC STANDARDS; DIVERSITY OF LEARNING EXPERIENCES

Guiding Principle on Multi-Mode, Multi-Location Programmes

Heriot-Watt University is differentiated by the large scale of its provision offered in multiple locations and by multiple modes of delivery.

The University highly values, and is proud of, both the spectrum of choice it offers to prospective and current students, and the diversity of benefits and learning experiences available through different study options.

However, effective management of multi-mode, multi-location provision and the associated range of learning opportunities require a robust, institution-wide framework for the assurance of academic standards.

The University's approach to offering a spectrum of choice and different learner opportunities underpinned by the same academic standards is encapsulated in the following fundamental principle:

Identical Academic Standards; Diversity of Learning Experiences

Identical Academic Standards

Refers to both the required level of achievement for HWU awards and the HWU-wide assurance framework for ensuring that identical academic standards are maintained across multi-mode/location programmes.

HWU requirements: all versions of a programme must

- have **identical:** learning outcomes; award/programme title; mandatory courses; core knowledge, skills and competencies¹
- **adhere to the University's key policies for assuring the quality and standards** of its multi-mode/location provision:
 - Multi Code Part 2: Managing and Assuring Quality and Standards
 - Academic Management Structure across Multiple Campuses
 - Moderation of Assessment
 - Chief External Examiners
 - Examinations in Different Timezones

UK requirements: all versions of a programme must

- Meet the Expectations and Practices of the UK Quality Code
- Be properly located within the SCQF
- Be consistent with Subject Benchmark Statements

Diversity of Learning Experiences

- A **wide spectrum of choice of modes and locations of study** is available to HWU prospective and current students:
 - On campus (3 in the UK and 2 overseas)
 - With a global network of academic partners
 - Independent distance learning (IDL)
- For current students,
 - Transfers between campuses
 - Academic study placements at another HEI
 - Industry/business placement
- The University recognises that the student learning experience is not identical across all modes and locations, but must be **sufficient to achieve the same programme learning outcomes**
- **Each mode and location offers a different learning experience:** the five campuses each have their own particular features; studying by IDL is necessarily different to studying on campus or with an Approved Learning Partner; work placements offer yet another type of learning experience
- the University **values and is proud of these different learning experiences** and the options they provide to learners from a variety of backgrounds

References and Further Information

Contact: quality@hw.ac.uk See Learning and Teaching Policy Bank: <https://www.hw.ac.uk/services/academic-registry/quality/learning-teaching/policy-bank.htm> See *Programme Titles, Learning Outcomes and Courses: Policy* for further details, including permitted variants <https://www.hw.ac.uk/services/docs/multi-policy.pdf>; Briefing Paper <https://www.hw.ac.uk/services/docs/multi-briefing.pdf>

Learning and Teaching Briefing Papers

This briefing paper has been produced by Academic Quality and is one of a series related to Learning and Teaching. The briefing papers aim to provide a concise, informative overview of key policies, and include links to relevant procedures and templates.