

Programme Specification

BSc (Hons) Applied Farm Management

1) Programme Information

Quercus code	<i>[completed by Registry post validation]</i>
Valid entry routes	BSc (Hons) Applied Farm Management BSc (Hons) Applied Farm Management with Placement Year BSc (Hons) Applied Farm Management with Foundation Year
Additional exit routes	HE Certificate HE Diploma BSc Applied Farm Management
Location(s) of Study	RAU; Cirencester
School	SAFE
Programme Manager	A Hinchcliffe
Awarding Body	The Royal Agricultural University
Teaching Institution	The Royal Agricultural University
Academic level on Framework for Higher Education Qualifications (FHEQ)	Level 4, 5, & 6
Admissions Body	The Royal Agricultural University
UCAS code(s)	34F6 (AFM)
Entry Criteria (include IELTS if relevant)	<u>UCAS Tariff – 104</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A Level – BCC • BTEC (Pearson) – Distinction, Merit, Merit • C&G - • Scottish Higher – BCCCC • GCSE – 5x C/4 including English and Maths • IELTS (Academic) – 6
Relevant QAA Subject Benchmark Statement(s) and other reference points, e.g. FD qualification benchmark	The programme and its essential key skills, knowledge and understanding are supported by the QAA Subject Benchmark Statement for Agriculture, Horticulture, Forestry, Food and Consumer Sciences 2020. https://www.qaa.ac.uk/docs/qaa/subject-benchmark-statements/subject-benchmark-statement-agriculture-horticulture-forestry-food-nutrition-and-consumer-sciences.pdf?sfvrsn=28f2c881_7 (2019)
Details of accreditation by a Professional, Statutory and Regulatory Body (PSRB)	
Mode of delivery	FT, and PT

Language of study	English
Programme Start Month(s)	September
Academic Board approval date	
Valid from	2021/2022

For Registry use only

Valid to	August 2022
Version	V3 January 2022 – Addition to elective module 3081

2) What are the aims and objectives of the programme?

The programme aims and intended learning outcomes are in line with the reference points of Part A, Setting and Maintaining Academic Standards of the UK Quality Code containing the Framework for Higher Education Qualifications of UK Degree-Awarding Bodies (October 2014).

The programme and its essential key skills, knowledge and understanding are supported by the QAA Subject Benchmark Statements for Agriculture, Horticulture, Forestry, Food, Nutrition and Consumer Sciences (July 2016), and Biosciences (November 2015).

This programme is aligned with The Skills Strategy for agriculture and horticulture: Towards a New Professionalism which was commissioned by the AgriSkills Forum and developed by Lantra, NFU and Landex in 2010.

The University intends that the following capability statements will provide an overarching framework for all its graduates, and inform specific programme aims and outcomes. Thus, the University expects that all graduates will:

- i) apply creative, critical and compassionate thinking processes to social and organisational issues.
- ii) develop communication abilities using people, ideas, texts, media and technology.
- iii) work with, manage and lead others in ways which value their diversity and equality, and which facilitates their contribution to the organisation and the wider community.
- iv) acquire and apply appropriate management, technical and practical skills and knowledge.
- v) display an ability to reflect on and learn from one's own experiences.
- vi) recognise and accept continuing learning as being central to one's capacity to realise potential.
- vii) develop, express and be able to defend personal values, beliefs and ethics.
- viii) hold a perspective which acknowledges local, national and international issues.
- ix) value a citizenship role which is connected to and responsible for the social, environmental, political and economic systems in which we live.

The BSc (Hons) in Applied Farm Management aims to:

- a) To provide students with an opportunity to develop the knowledge and understanding in applying effective farm management concepts to problem-based scenarios within a farm and agricultural environment.
- b) To enable students to develop a wide knowledge of farm management and business planning knowledge to further develop critical learning and transferable skills to prepare the learner for graduate employment or further study.
- c) Provide the opportunity for the individual study of a particular interest and for self-expression through the Honours research project and gain confidence and clarity in the expression of their own critical and analytical academic skills and professional opinions
- d) Enhance the learner's interpersonal qualities, skills and practice; the key skills required for both autonomous practice and team participation in working life.

Programme Features

- A focus on the professional agriculturalist which will provide students with the knowledge and skills they need in adapting to ever changing land utilisation, competition, challenges and issues such as food security, reconnecting the food chain, protecting and regenerating the environment, production sustainability;
- The programme draws on current academic theories and concepts across the portfolio of modules to deliver a student centric curriculum;
- A programme wide developmental approach to the implementation of the UN Sustainable Development Goals and UN Global Compact;
- Throughout the course there are regular opportunities to engage with a range of practising managers, organisations, employers and entrepreneurs and take part in work related experiences and internships;
- Programme of guest speakers which will enhance students' learning and links with the business community;
- Opportunity to study abroad without extending the length of the degree; and use of 'real life' (live) projects in assessments gives practical application of the theory.

3) What opportunities are graduates likely to have on completing the programme?

Employability of RAU agriculture graduates is excellent, and there are many diverse career opportunities in all sectors of the food chain. The applied nature of the programme, teaching methods and close links with industry provides you with the academic, technical, professional employment skills which are highly valued by employers.

The University, and its tutors have strong links with industry, with many tutors still very active within the sector as both consultants, and farmers alike.

This programme provides farmers and farm managers / consultants of the future with the diverse skills and intuitive understandings required to achieve these aims with a career in farm business management.

Following completion of the course, some of the routes you as a graduate, can potentially follow and or work towards are:

- a) Enterprise or unit assistant / manager operator in agricultural on production based enterprises either at home or elsewhere (e.g. Velcourt, Sentry
- b) Rural Estate manager
- c) Research consultant/advisor / land agency
- d) Government Officer – Defra, Natural England, Environment Agency

This programme will be particularly attractive to students who wish to pursue a specialist career (e.g. as an agronomist, nutritionist, breeding / health and disease advisor, enterprise or unit operator in agricultural on production based enterprises either at home or elsewhere (e.g. Co-operative Farms, Velcourt, Sentry Farming, G's Marketing, Intercrop). Alternatively, they may opt for a career in the support industries (e.g. BOCM Pauls, AB Agri, Trident, Genus, Cogent, Wynnstay, BASF, Agrii, Bayer, Syngenta, Merial, Pizer, Mole Valley Farmers) Studying agriculture also develops the skills needed for other graduate careers such as accountancy, teaching, journalism and the civil service.

Alternatively, students may qualify for progression e.g. MSc SAFS, Agritech, MSc Rural Estate Management), MRes, MPhil and PhD studies either at the RAU or elsewhere.

4) What should students expect to achieve in completing the programme?

Programme Intended Learning Outcomes

A. Knowledge and understanding

Knowledge and understanding will be acquired through lectures, seminars, visits, guided independent reading and specific group work. This is tested through a variety of assessment mechanisms such as practical workshops (e.g.1006, 1005, 2267, 3300), problem based learning using live case studies from our farms and network (e.g. 1054, 2020, 3205), scenario based tasks that test theories and solutions under differing circumstances, exams, and through looking at historic case studies to identify lessons learnt. Tutorials feature heavily as a teaching and learning approach, such as in 1005, 1052, 2315 [Ag commodity trading] 3205, and 3300. Assessments will be through examinations and coursework, including portfolio building for the industrial work placement, laboratory reports, presentations and completion of the dissertation research project and integrated farm management exercise.

- A1 Underlying scientific principles applied to agricultural production systems.
- A2 Management of sustainable agricultural production systems
- A3 Global production systems and their relevance to world food supply
- A4 Management of agricultural buildings and farm machinery
- A5 Rural policy and socio-economic factors affecting farmers and farm management scenarios
- A6 Land, woodland and environmental management
- A7 Farm management, financial and human resource management
- A8 Agricultural marketing
- A9 Current developments in world agriculture

B. Intellectual, Professional, Key skills

Intellectual skills are developed both through the delivery of dedicated contextualised modules and via the embedding of the skills in the topical modules. An Academic Skills module has been introduced into Level 4 to assist in the development of the core academic skills students require to succeed in higher education, and these are further developed at Level 5. They are practiced, assessed formatively and used within summative assessments. For example, critical analysis and evaluation skills feature as a key element of Level 6 assessment but they are developed through the use of staged assessments throughout Levels 4 and level 5. Argument construction, evidence use and reasoning skills are central to this.

- B1 Application of subject-specific theories, paradigms, concepts and principles within learning and assessment environments.
- B2 Critical evaluation of appropriate literature sources to inform study
- B3 Information synthesis from a number of sources in order to gain a coherent understanding
- B4 Identification of, and finding solutions to, problems
- B5 Development and validation of hypotheses
- B6 Demonstration of independence of mind and thought

C. Programme Specific Skills

Each module involves opportunities for interactive discussion on key subject topics and incorporate a degree of technology and digital platforms to assist in this. Students are explicitly trained in digital skills through 1400 and 2316 [personal & professional development skills] and are embedded and used in other modules (for example 1033, 1052, 2004, 2267, 2317 [Industry Placement] and 3205). Live farm management scenarios allow for the development of strong collaborative and communication skills, along with problem solving and analytical skills to be assessed through coursework, orals and written examinations and through modules 2020, 2041, 2225, 3210, 3205, 3094 and 3300. In addition to formative opportunities for group working, summative group assessment opportunities occur in the core modules 1053, 2316 [Personal and Professional Development skills], and 3205. Practical skills are assessed via examinations, coursework, practical competency 5 tests, placement opportunities (for example modules 1005, 1006, 1033, 1052, 2317 [Industry placement], 2020, 3210, 3205, 3094 and 3300).

- C1 Planning and completing an independent research project
- C2 Establishing relationships and communicating effectively within the agricultural industry
- C3 Drawing up management plans utilising information from a wide variety of sources
- C4 Applying initiative and taking on responsibility in a practical working situation
- C5 Critically evaluating verbal & written communications from a variety of sources to inform decision making

5) How is the Teaching and Learning delivered in this programme?

The programme will be taught using a mixture of lectures, seminars, tutorials and practical instruction at local farms. Our extensive industry contacts, external visits to livestock, crop enterprises and agribusinesses also provide valuable additional case studies.

Students also have access to the University's Farm491 facility, an innovative AgriTech business incubator providing facilities and support to AgriTech businesses and promoting technology and innovation within the sector.

Modules are assessed through a range of coursework, including real-life case studies, presentations and reports. The Research Project is an integral part of the course. Completed in your third year, it provides the opportunity to research in-depth a subject of specific interest.

The programme is normally of three years duration of full-time study (approximately 30 weeks per year). Study is undertaken at three levels on the FHEQ; Level four, five, and six (one for each year of study). However, it is possible to follow the programme on a part-time basis, over a longer time period, by gaining credits for the modules taken and achieved year-by-year. The time limits appropriate to part-time study are indicated in the University Academic Regulations available from the RAU website.

The option with a Foundation Year is normally four years of taught full-time study and the option with a Placement Year is normally three years of taught full-time study with one year based in industry.

The credit system is used to ensure a balanced workload across each programme, with each credit point representing a notional learning time of 10 hours of student work. Thus a 15-credit module will require a notional input of 150 hours of work, and a complete academic year of 120 credits will require 1200 hours of work, or approximately 40 hours per week. Although modules are sometimes grouped in specific cases into larger units (30 credits) according to the subject or the nature of the learning. The overall programme consists of a specific group of these full modules and double

modules, with the opportunity for students to pursue, also, an appropriate elective choice in year 3 (see Table in Appendix 1, for a list of modules and credits, with links to the appropriate Gateway page for each module).

Within this total time, students can expect to participate in timetabled activities; such as lectures, seminars, tutorials, and farm visits; for approximately one third of the total time – usually around 3 hours per week for a 15-credit module studied over 15-week semesters, some may be more due to lab session, and farm visits. Thus, the majority of module activities; such as reading around the subject, preparing for tutorials and seminars, preparing for, and completing, module assessments and revision for, and sitting, examinations; will take place outside of these scheduled activities, but are an essential part of a student's learning journey.

6) What is the Programme Assessment Strategy¹?

Assessments are designed to appraise individual capabilities fairly and consistently. We use clear, descriptive assessment guidelines (made available to students) to grade coursework and examinations and to aid classification. Lecturers communicate their expectations clearly to students and use explicit schema to facilitate consistency of marking within and between modules and to ensure good feedback on individual performance. All examinations and coursework assessments that contribute to degree classifications are subject to scrutiny by the External Examiners.

The assessments for this course come in a variety of forms:

1. Coursework
2. Examinations
3. Group Presentations
4. Dissertation (in final year)

From one level to the next assessments are increasingly designed to test analytical and other cognitive capabilities in relation to particular module aims and content. The programme assessment map is provided in **Appendix 2**. Coursework assignments such as individual essays, reports, case study analyses, individual and group-based reports and presentations and various technique- oriented assessments are used to test these skills.

The final year Dissertation Project is the capstone demonstration of these various skills, requiring students to conceive, justify, design in detail and execute a substantial piece of academic research. For the most able students, the Dissertation Project can generate work of a standard appropriate for submission to practitioner and academic journals in business and management.

At every Level we place high value on students being able to demonstrate effective communication in its various forms. This priority is reflected not only in how assignments are specified, but also in how they are marked - good command of written and spoken English is vital for work placements and for graduate employment. In order to encourage time management skills, students are set tasks to predetermined deadlines and are penalised for non-conformance.

Some modules have a teamwork requirement and in some there are group assignments, assessed via presentations and reports. All group assignments allow for an element of individual assessment, in order to recognise differences in individual performance where appropriate. Peer feedback can also play a significant part in team activities and is encouraged.

¹ Details of the implementation of the Assessment Strategy are found in Annual Programme Overview [Annex A].

Work placement learning is assessed through a graded report requiring a reflective, critical and conceptually grounded analysis of the placement context and experience.

Assessment methods and writing:

Assessment is via a balance of written or orally assessed course work and formal examination; Types of assignment include appraising work-based problem-solving exercises, considering production, operational and management systems on the University farm, whole farm planning case studies, laboratory-based analyses and literature-based reviews. Format of assignments vary from written reports, essays, technical notes, group or individual presentations, oral examinations, un-timed coursework assessments, and timed, unseen examinations. Other forms of assessment such as oral presentations, practical skills tests, timed coursework assessments, "seen examinations, case study and "open book" examinations may also be used.

It is vital that students learn and get to know how to do well in these various assessments in the programme. The University's criteria for assessment of projects, essays and examination contain helpful information about the kind of things that are looked for by examiners.

Coursework grading and feedback:

When work is submitted for assessment, tutors award the work a percentage mark based on the University marking criteria. The percentage marks correspond to the final degree classification as follows:

Percentage score	Class
70+	First class
60 – 69	Second Class Upper Division (2:1)
50 – 59	Second Class Lower Division (2:2)
40 – 49	Third class
35 – 39	Borderline fail
less than 35	Fail

In addition to assigning a percentage mark to the work, the tutor adds comments; usually about the strengths and weaknesses of the piece as well as advice about improving the work.

All assessment decisions are subject to internal moderation and external scrutiny by the programme's External Examiners. Students must ensure they retain all coursework in case the External Examiner(s) wishes to see it.

Regulations

All assessment decisions are governed by the University's Regulations; students who wish to see the full regulations may simply ask the Programme Manager, and they are also available on the [University website](#).

Diversity

This programme is inclusive with particular regard to teaching, learning and assessment, in accordance with Part 10: Inclusive Practice of the University's Teaching Quality Handbook and the

[Equality Act 2010](#). Students are encouraged to disclose any impairment to the Disability Officer so that the appropriate support can be provided. Students have the right to request that the nature of their impairment be treated as confidential.

7) What do students need to achieve in order to graduate?

Notwithstanding University Regulations and the authorities and powers exercised by examiners, students will normally need to demonstrate achievement in the elements of the programme, as laid out in Section 7. Programmes are structured through the accumulation of credit, where 1 credit represents 10 notional learning hours.

In brief, students will normally need to achieve the following in order to be awarded **the qualifications BSc (Hons) Applied Farm Management**

The accumulation of 360 credits (or more) to include a minimum of 120 at level 6 and a maximum of 120 at level 4, through the assessment of taught modules as detailed below:]

First Year

- 1005 –Livestock Science (15)
- 1006 –Crop Production Science (15)
- 1033 – Business Finance (15)
- 1400 – Developing Academic Skills (15)
- 1007 – Soil and Environmental Science (15)
- 1052 – Crop Production 1 (15)
- 1053 – Livestock Production 1 (15)
- 1054 – Introduction to Food Production (15)

Second Year

- 2314 – Farm Mechanisation (15)
- 2315 – Agricultural Commodity Trading and Marketing (15)
- 2316 – Professional Skills (15)
- 2020 – Farm Business Management (15)
- 2267 – Agricultural Research Methods (15)
- 2226 - Agricultural Policy and Legislation (15)
- 2317 – Industry Placement (15)

Plus, one elective choice from modules such as those listed below:

- 2004 – Livestock Production 2 (15)
- 2236 – Crop Production 2 (15)

If you are enrolled on the **BSc (Hons) Applied Farm Management with Professional Placement Year** then you will undertake your placement year between years 2 and 4 of your programme. You will complete Years 1 and 2 as detailed above, complete the placement year and then return for your final year of the programme. For further details about the Placement Year please see module:

- PPY – Optional Placement Year (0)

Third/Final Year

Programme specific modules

- 3300- Research Project (30)
- 3094 - Integrated Farm Project (15)
- 3205 – MIS for Farm Businesses (15)
- 3006 – Emerging Agricultural Issues (15)
- 3210 - Applied Agricultural Finance (15)

Plus, choice of two programme specific electives, one for each semester:

- 3008 Advanced Livestock Production
- 3020 Advanced Crop Production
- 3041 Corporate Finance
- 3090 Forestry and Woodland Management
- 3092 Countryside & Environmental Management
- 3207 Farming and Integrated Environmental Local Delivery
- 3209 Sustainable agricultural intensification
- 3238 Advances in Livestock Nutrition
- 3239 Crop Health and Protection
- 3240 Contemporary Media Studies
- 3316 Changing Consumer Behaviour
- 3317 International Marketing
- 3325 Rural Entrepreneurship
- 3227 Agricultural technology management
- 3081 Consumer Behaviour

If a student does not meet the required standards for the award, the examiners for the programme may decide to offer a lower award associated with the programme, providing that a lower exit award exists and the student meets the requirements of that lower award.

Pass Criteria

The University operates standard pass criteria which can be found in the [RAU Academic Regulations; \(paragraphs 137 – 153\).](#)

Programme Intended Learning Outcomes (ILO) Chart

Title of Award: BSc (Hons) Applied Farm Management

CODE	Identity	C	A1	A2	A3	A4	A5	A6	A7	A8	A9	B1	B2	B3	B4	B5	B6	C1	C2	C3	C4	C5	D1	D2	D3	D4	D5	D6	D7
1054	Intro to Food	15																											
1006	Intro to Crop Science	15																											
1033	Business Finance	15																											
1005	Livestock Science	15																											
1052	Cropping systems	15																											
1400	Developing Academic skills	15																											
1007	Soil and env science	15																											
1053	Livestock Systems	15																											
			A1	A2	A3	A4	A5	A6	A7	A8	A9	B1	B2	B3	B4	B5	B6	C1	C2	C3	C4	C5	D1	D2	D3	D4	D5	D6	D7
2004	Livestock Production 2 (elective)	15																											
2236	Crop Production 2 (elective)	15																											
2020	Farm Bus Management	15																											
2226	Agric policy and legislation	15																											
2267	Agricultural Research Methods																												
2314	Farm Mechanisation Management	15																											
2315	Ag commodity marketing & trade	15																											
2316	Personal and Professional Development skills	15																											
2317	Industry placement	15																											
PPY	Placement year (for those on the 'Placement Year Option')	15																											
			A1	A2	A3	A4	A5	A6	A7	A8	A9	B1	B2	B3	B4	B5	B6	C1	C2	C3	C4	C5	D1	D2	D3	D4	D5	D6	D7
3205	MIS	15																											
3300	Research Project-Dissertation	30																											
3094	Int. Farm Project	15																											
3210	Applied Agric Finance	15																											
3006	Emerg Agric Issues	15																											

8) Work-based Learning

In the second year of the programme, students are required to undertake a 15 week self-employment placement (or in an organisation) between April and September of that year (Module Code: 2317).

For students enrolled on the BSc (Hons) with Placement Year students are also required to undertake a 1200 hours, i.e. 35 weeks with a minimum 35 hrs per week, professional placement year. The Professional Placement Year (Module Code: PPY) is taken between Levels 5 and 6 of the academic programme.

It should also be noted that for those wishing to progress their career into agronomy and therefore undertake further industry training e.g., **BASIS Certificate in Crop Protection, FQA Training etc.** **You will need to gain as much experience as possible with an agronomist or spray operator.**

Approval process

It is the University's responsibility to ensure that learning opportunities during a placement are appropriate. However, it is at the same time obviously desirable that students secure a self placement (or in an organisation) which is suitable for their needs as well as amenable to them. For this reason, as well as for others, the **responsibility** for developing and securing a placement rests with the individual student. However, to ensure that the University's responsibilities are carried out, all placements are subject to **approval** by the University, **in advance** of the placement commencing.

This means that no placement can be considered to be in place and accepted until such time that appropriate checks have been made, and the placement has been approved for this purpose, by the placement coordinator. Students must submit relevant details of their desired placement on the appropriate form (including dates, name of organisation, outline job description, and so on) well in advance of the placement commencing, and at least by the date laid down, to ensure that checks can be carried out, and in case subsequent difficulties emerge.

Criteria for approval will include:

- The nature and function of the placement organisation, in relation to the student's learning programme (taking into account the student's pathway, for example).
- The placement organisation's ability to provide appropriate learning opportunities, (which must include the likely nature of the tasks and responsibilities that students may be expected to undertake during the work-based placement)
- Whether and how the University is able to support students on placements, and;
- The extent to which the placement organisation can fulfil its responsibilities under Health & Safety legislation.

It is in the interests of students, as well as the RAU, in this approval process, if students are able to gain an outline job description indicating the likely content of the job role during the placement, and submit this for approval.

The University must be in a position to assess whether placement providers know what their responsibilities are during the period of placement learning, both in terms of the provision of learning opportunities, and in relation to their role on the assessment of students, and thus have the organisation and prospective job role approved, before any placement commences.

The Placement Module and its role in Year 2

The compulsory work placement module is a very important element of the Year 2 programme. It has a large and important educational value, in terms of the ability to provide a bridge or link for the learning aims of many individual programme modules, between the formal 'academic' activities, in-university, and the specific practical work-based experience and organisational reality to which they often ultimately relate. It is especially important in the whole programme as it represents an opportunity for students to locate their final year dissertation topic (with the agreement of the employing organisation) in a real-world organisation, and thus focus the research study on an area where empirical data-gathering is feasible. Students are strongly encouraged to consider this aspect in advance, and discuss this with the link tutor (see below).

Failure to secure a work placement, or to submit a satisfactory report within the time scale laid down (normally before 30 September in each academic year), will normally result in a failure in the 15-credit module, and thus a failure in Year 2.

The placement opportunities are generally viewed very favourably by potential employers and provide you with the chance to experience real organisational life at first hand. It is not uncommon, in some situations, for students to find that a placement may also result in a job offer, for take-up after graduation. It is particularly important that students undergoing placements keep alive to the possibility of using their experience as the basis for a research project in Year 3, and thus basing a dissertation on a 'real-life' organisation.

The opportunity is open to wide ranging possibilities of type of organisation, and also country of placement. It is certainly important for students to remember the many types of organisation that may usefully provide opportunities; including those in the public and private sector, the for-profit and not-for-profit organisations, charities, co-operatives, and so on.

Prior to placement

Before placements commence, it is important that students familiarise themselves with the guidance available in the module handbook. In particular, they must be aware of your responsibilities and rights

Responsibilities include those:

- As representatives of the University as a Higher Education Institution (as the placement provider might well be asked to offer equivalent opportunities to other students in future years)
- Towards the placement provider; their customers or clients; and to their other employees. In effect students are acting as employed persons within the organisation, subject to the normal employer/ employee mutual obligations, to fulfil the contract of employment.
- For managing their learning & professional relationships
- For recording progress and achievements(very important in terms of the final reporting process, as documented in the module handbook and assessment brief)
- For alerting both the placement provider and the Royal Agricultural University to any problems experienced during the placement. In the latter case, the expectation is that students maintain an ongoing communication with the University, in most cases through the designated tutor.

Students should be aware of their rights;

- To a safe working environment, with all that this entails
- To be treated in accord with the law, for example in relation to discipline and grievance issues, redundancy, and equal opportunities.

Before placements commence, all students will be called to a pre-placement advice session, to begin the process of providing them with appropriate guidance and support in preparation for, during, and after their placements.

N.B – It is your responsibility to find and source your work placement; you will have support from your programme manager and careers

During placements

It is important that students keep in touch with University throughout their placement period, and for this purpose all students are allocated a tutor who will provide for liaison, and a point of contact during the placement. This tutor will normally visit the student on at least one occasion during the period of the placement, normally before the end of July. The purpose of the visit is to ensure that all is satisfactory from the viewpoint of both student and placement provider, to counsel all parties if difficulties emerge, and to remind students of the requirements of the reporting process required of students to fulfil the module criteria. In some rare instances no visit will be possible, in which case alternative arrangements will be made to fulfil this function of monitoring.

The student is encouraged to keep in touch with this tutor throughout the placement period, by email or telephone as appropriate, both before and after the visit. If all is going well a weekly email may well be sufficient. Thus it is crucial that all student email addresses, mobile telephone numbers, etc., that are relevant to the placement period, are recorded by University and maintained as up-to-date as possible. However, if problems occur during placements, as sometimes happens, please ensure you make contact as soon as possible, if necessary with the Programme Manager, or the Placement Coordinator, if the link tutor is not available at the time. Students must not wait for a visit if the problem is an urgent one.

9) How will the University assure the quality of the provision?

New programme proposals are reviewed by a Validation Panel, comprising at least the following membership: normally one subject matter expert external to the School or University, at least 3 academic staff not associated with the proposal. The Panel may include 1 member of professional staff. Panels are supported by an appropriately trained Secretary who acts as advisor to the Panel. Proposals are reviewed in line with the QAA's UK Quality Code, Advice and Guidance: Course Design and Development and in the case of partnership arrangements in accordance with QAA's Advice And Guidance: Partnerships. All programmes are ultimately approved by Academic Board for a period of up to 6 years.

Programme changes within a validation period are approved by the Academic Quality and Standards Committee (AQSC) on behalf of Academic Board. No more than 1/3 of a programme's core modules may be changed within the validation period before early programme revalidation is instigated.

The University has in place regular monitoring procedures for quality assurance including an Annual Programme Managers Report for each programme.

Each programme has at least one External Examiner who monitors all aspects of the assessment process. This is in line with the advice and guidance provided by the QAA regarding External

Expertise which emphasises that external examining is one of the principal means for maintaining UK threshold academic standards within autonomous higher education institutions.

Each programme has a formally constituted Programme Board, which includes the External Examiner(s), and which is responsible for ensuring that awards are made within the Regulations of the University and that students are made awards on the basis of meeting the specified Learning Outcomes of a programme at the appropriate standard.

Each programme has a Programme Committee which meets at least twice a year to discuss, inter alia, programme design and planning, the student experience (including feedback) and student progress.

Each School has a School Advisory Group (or similar) which meets at least once a year to engage with external stakeholders on curriculum design and currency of the School programme portfolio content.

Student feedback both qualitative and quantitative is collected for each module studied. In addition, the University holds Staff Student Liaison Committees and a Student Engagement Committee where students have the opportunity to discuss issues and give and receive feedback. Students are also invited to participate in the University's New Student Survey and Student Satisfaction Survey along with the annual National Student Survey. The results of all feedback are considered by the Programme Committee and additionally, in respect of the University and national surveys, issues of quality are considered by and acted on where appropriate by AQSC, Academic Board, School and University Executives.