T2.11a Programme handbooks – guidance FOR STAFF on content and format

**Please use guidance/template 2.11B for apprenticeship programme handbooks; and T2.11C for apprenticeship employer handbooks.**

Programme (together with module) handbooks may be regarded as part of the ‘contract’ between the student and the University (and, in the case of collaborative arrangements, the partner organisation); and it is therefore essential that they provide students with accurate and up to date information about their programme of study. This guidance sets out the core information which must be included in all programme handbooks, and which programme teams should supplement with programme and Department/Partner-specific details.

Handbooks should be directly addressed to the students on the programme: the style of writing should be informative and non-biased, in order to give students an accurate picture of the demands of the programme, and their entitlements. University policies and regulations do not all need to be reproduced in full, but, where there is an expectation that students will be able to access the published regulations online, they should be referenced (i.e. via hyperlinks) in handbooks. Any specific programme regulations should be included in handbooks.

The information in this guide applies equally to handbooks prepared by partners, although they will need to be contextualised to meet local needs. The Liaison Manager must regularly check all handbooks to ensure they also meet University requirements - where the programme is also delivered at Brookes, the content of the handbooks should be comparable.

For international partnerships, if programme handbooks are to be provided to students in a language other than English, approval is still required through the normal process, i.e. they should be produced in English and appropriate arrangements for translation made following approval.

**Please ensure the handbook meets accessibility requirements for any format in which it is provided to students. Guidance and tools on digital accessibility can be found at** [**https://www.brookes.ac.uk/accessibility/**](https://www.brookes.ac.uk/accessibility/)

Front cover

The cover of the handbook should be printed on the appropriate Brookes template to comply with the University’s new visual identity (for collaborative arrangements which do not use the University branded template, the University’s logo should be included on the front cover with that of the partner organisation), and should give the following information:

* Programme title and code
* Final and alternative exit awards
* Mode/s of study available
* Professional body accrediting the programme (if applicable)
* Department/School or name of partner organisation delivering provision, and the managing Faculty
* Name of Subject Coordinator/Programme Lead/Partner Programme Manager (as appropriate)
* Name of Liaison Manager (for collaborative provision)
* Academic year or cohort to which the handbook relates
* Covid-19 disclaimer, as agreed by Academic Covid in summer 2020 – this should read: *The University is committed to providing an academic experience equivalent to all programmes as validated and advertised, but, as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic, some adjustments have been made to our normal approaches to teaching, learning and assessment in order to respond to government advice and to protect the health and safety of staff and students. As a result of our responses, your programme may have been adjusted. To see the changes to your programme please follow the link which will take you to the outlined changes detailed in a word document held on the Moodle Page. Changes to the module from the validated module descriptor have been approved through a robust quality assurance process.*

Core contents

**Welcome**

* Introduction and general welcome to the programme, Faculty or partner, and University. Up to one page in length.
* Introduction to the teaching team: names, contact details, research interests, and teaching/support responsibilities with respect to the programme. A short paragraph for each member of the team, or a link to where this information can be found on the School/Department website.

**Curriculum**

* Rationale, aims and outcomes of the programme and how they are met through the way the curriculum is designed. A short statement of how the relevant Brookes Attributes are addressed and developed through the programme should be provided – also provide a map of how the modules address the programme learning outcomes. Up to one page for the aims and outcomes, and a page for the mapping diagram.
* Diagrammatic representation of the programme structure for all modes of study (e.g. full-time, part-time, sandwich, online learning, etc), clearly indicating for each level the modules to be delivered in each semester. On the diagram include the module codes and titles, module status, and module credit value. Indicate which modules must be studied in order to gain the target award, and the options available within the programme. Refer to regulations to ensure all award requirements are covered in the handbook.
* Module registration: instructions regarding module choices can be found on the University website at <https://www.brookes.ac.uk/students/your-studies/module-choices/> Add any detailed instructions that are specific to students on this programme.
* Module content: If full details of modules are not provided in module handbooks, provide brief summaries of the content of each module. Summaries should be a short paragraph based on the module aims as set out in the module description. List the modules level by level.

*Note*: module handbooks should be designed around the information contained in the approved module description. If the full details about the modules are not to be contained in separate module handbooks, then the full module descriptions should be included in the programme handbook.

* Professional body information, if applicable.

For programmes with professional accreditation, include the following information (approx. ½ page):

* Name of professional body;
* Nature of accreditation/recognition;
Requirements for gaining accreditation (e.g. specific modules must be studied, etc);
* Levels of membership for students/graduates, etc;
* Location of further information which may be available from the PSRB (i.e. link to their website).

**Learning, teaching and assessment**

* Learning, teaching and assessment strategy, including expectations about modes of learning within higher education (especially important for provision delivered overseas, where educational culture may be different), and progression (in terms of increasing intellectual demand) through the programme. A brief statement of how the teaching and learning strategy helps to develop the Brookes Attributes should also be provided.

Explain how the approach to assessment across the programme relates to the Assessment & Feedback Policy (approved by Academic Board on 22nd April 2020 – published in the academic policies contained within the Regulations)

Up to one page.
* Information about the use of Moodle (or other VLE used by partner) on the programme – and how to engage with it (refer to separate guide, if applicable). Use of University email. Up to one page.
* Work placement arrangements, if applicable.

If the programme has a work placement element, indicate its location within the programme and whether it attracts additional credit. If full details are not provided in a separate module handbook, provide information about the processes for identification, supervision and assessment of the placement in the programme handbook.
* Programme calendar – timetable and key dates e.g. for handing in assignments, getting feedback, examination committee meetings, etc.
* Assessment regulations – this section should refer to the relevant University regulations <https://www.brookes.ac.uk/regulations/> Specific requirements that apply to the programme should also be included here (and must have been granted formal approval through the relevant QA process). Provide information about how the University’s grading, award classification and GPA system applies to the programme.
* Assessment criteria, or indication of the location of assessment criteria in, for example, module handbooks.
* Processes for submitting work, and arrangements for getting feedback on marked work (including coursework and examinations). Also include information about any entitlements for formative assessment/feedback.
* Processes for extensions and penalties for late submission; link to the Exceptional Circumstances policy managed by SIRT at <https://www.brookes.ac.uk/students/your-studies/exceptional-circumstances/> Add details about any local support arrangements that are relevant to students on the programme; and for collaborative programmes, indicate the procedures that students should follow to submit a claim (partner organisations are required to adhere to the University policy, but should have their own procedures in place for considering applications).
* A brief outline of the procedures in place for marking and internal moderation (as per agreed Faculty policies), and for the ratification of marks by Examination Committees; and the role of the external examiner on the programme. Fairness in assessment is referenced in new Regulations.

Students should be informed that the reports of the external examiner are made available to them via Moodle. The name of the external examiner and institution/organisation at which they are employed is included in the report, and students should be advised that this information is provided for transparency and not for the purposes of direct communication with the external examiner.
* Where to find information about academic appeals and complaints processes. A short outline about what appeals and complaints are and how they are dealt, and refer to SIRT web pages at <https://www.brookes.ac.uk/students/sirt/academic-appeals/> and <https://www.brookes.ac.uk/students/sirt/student-complaints/>
* Academic integrity: good academic practice and the use of Turnitin (refer to the Turnitin policy – published in the academic policies contained within the Regulations); the role of the ACO. Useful link to guidance on academic integrity at <https://www.brookes.ac.uk/students/upgrade/study-skills/academic-integrity/> and to academic misconduct processes on SIRT web pages at <https://www.brookes.ac.uk/students/sirt/student-conduct/academic-misconduct/>
* End Point Assessment (apprenticeship provision only)- outline the arrangements for the EPA required to achieve the apprenticeship standard.

**Learning resources**

* Information about access to Library, IT, other specialist teaching accommodation and facilities, etc. Length of this section depends on local needs: refer students to relevant central webpages on Library and IT (or to student webpages at <https://www.brookes.ac.uk/students/> which has quick links to LR and ITS), with some contextual information about where to find resources appropriate to the programme, plus an outline of any dedicated local space, specialist resources or facilities for students on the programme and how to access them.

**Student support and guidance**

* Induction information, use of student information system, Department procedures for notification of sickness/absence, etc.
* Academic guidance –a short narrative to describe how a student on this specific programme should expect to experience the primary forms of academic or pastoral guidance (e.g. Lecturers, Module Leaders, Subject Coordinators, Academic Advisers, Student Support Coordinators, Programme Administrators). Contact information for key members of staff can be included, or links provided to the information if it is in other sections of the handbook.
* Information about the Brookes Union and link to the [Brookes Union website](http://www.brookesunion.org.uk/).
* Equality and diversity statement
* Health and safety information
* Data protection information
* Sources of additional information: e.g. Registry, Careers, Wellbeing (Disability Services, Counselling), academic skills support available from Upgrade, etc. See [www.brookes.ac.uk/students](http://www.brookes.ac.uk/students).
Signpost students to relevant information on the [ASA webpages](http://www.brookes.ac.uk/asa/).

Feedback on the quality of the learning experience

QA and student voice: particular reference to the operation of student feedback mechanisms within the Department/School, e.g. module evaluations, programme surveys, student representation, subject/programme committees (including where the minutes or outcomes are published), staff-student liaison committees, etc.

Programme Specification

Give a link to the relevant approved Programme Specification held on the APQO website <https://www.brookes.ac.uk/asa/apqo/programme-specifications/>