OXFORD
BROOKES
UNIVERSITY

Programme Specification

BA / BSc Student Designed Award

Valid from: September 2012

Faculty of Health and Life Sciences

SECTION 1: GENERAL INFORMATION

Awarding body:	Oxford Brookes University
Teaching institution and location:	Oxford Brookes University: Marston Road site
Final award:	BA (Hons) / BSc (Hons)
Programme title:	Student Designed Award
Interim exit awards and award titles:	Certificate of Higher Education – Student Designed Award Diploma of Higher Education – Student Designed Award BA / BSc – Student Designed Award
Brookes course code:	HC30
UCAS/UKPASS code:	
JACS code:	N/A
Mode of delivery:	Face to face / blended
Mode/s of study:	Full time or part time
Language of study:	English
Relevant QAA subject benchmark statement/s:	No subject benchmark statements available for generic degrees of this kind but cognisance has been taken of the FHEQ descriptors for Level 6
External accreditation/recognition: *(applicable to programmes with professional body approval)*	N/A
Faculty managing the programme:	Faculty of Health and Life Sciences
Date of production (or most recent revision) of specification:	July 2012

SECTION 2: OVERVIEW AND PROGRAMME AIMS

2.1 Rationale for/distinctiveness of the programme

This innovative open award allows students to build a bespoke honours degree pathway by means of credit accumulation. The award capitalises upon opportunities for work-based learning and for bringing professional expertise and academic knowledge into dialogue. The use of blended learning technologies, and the recognition of the workplace as a forum for learning and development, enable work-based students to capitalise upon learning opportunities and to situate their professional practice in a rich context of academic theory.

Students must meet the requirements for the level of their award as defined in the University's undergraduate regulations. Relevant credits may be gained entirely within the Oxford Brookes modular framework or may derive in part from APL recognition of credit gained elsewhere. Students are able to nominate the title of their award, subject to approval of the course team.

2.2 Aim/s of the programme

The overall aims of the Student Designed Award programme are to:

- provide a learner-centred approach through the facility for students to identify their own learning needs and design an individual programme to meet those needs;

- offer students for whom a suitable educational programme does not exist, the opportunity to plan, implement and review their own individual programme of learning;

- provide a flexible framework within which students may use learning from a range of sources in achieving their award;

- offer students the opportunity to claim credit for both certificated and experiential prior learning and to integrate this credit into the learning programme;

- provide opportunities for substantial use of work-based or vocational elements in meeting learning needs;

- develop independence and creativity through the opportunity for students to manage their own learning programmes.

SECTION 3: PROGRAMME LEARNING OUTCOMES

Knowledge, understanding and skills:

On successful completion of the programme students will be able to:

3.1 Academic literacy

Demonstrate a detailed knowledge of the major disciplines within the learning programme, and an awareness of the concepts and frameworks which may be applied to these:

- demonstrate logical reasoning in written work and discussion;
- reformat a range of ideas and information for a given purpose;
- identify the importance of critical enquiry and research to the workplace and identify the range of policy or social issues which have an effect on professional practice;
- demonstrate comprehensive knowledge of an area of specialisation and an awareness of the provisional nature of the state of knowledge;
- evaluate evidence, argument and assumptions, and contribute to the development and dissemination of evidence-based practice within professional contexts;

3.2 Research literacy

- analyse a range of information with minimum guidance and apply major theories of the discipline;
- locate, retrieve and appraise material from a range of disciplines and perspectives in forming and supporting an argument;
- critically review the evidence supporting conclusions or recommendations, including validity, reliability and significance, and can investigate contradictory information;
- demonstrate curiosity through the application of research to professional practice;
- analyse new data or situations with guidance, using a range of techniques appropriate to the subject;
- with minimum guidance, transform abstract data or concepts towards a given purpose and design novel solutions;
- demonstrate an understanding of research methodology and how this contributes to the development of knowledge for professional practice;

3.3 Critical self-awareness and personal literacy

- demonstrate awareness of the wider social and environmental implications of the areas of study;
- challenge received opinion and begin to develop own criteria and judgement;

- effectively utilise a wide range of communication skills, such as observation, presentation, preparation of written material;

- reflect constructively on own experience;
- evaluate own performance, identify own strengths and weaknesses and respond appropriately to any identified learning needs;

- plan, justify and manage an individual programme of learning to meet own identified learning needs.

- demonstrate confidence in the application of own judgement;

- evaluate the performance of others, in the classroom, the workplace or in the written form;

- demonstrate an ability to reflect in and on action;
- utilise a full range of resources in meeting own learning needs and responding effectively to feedback.
- demonstrate effective problem-solving and decision-making skills.
- plan and carry out a small research study or project, using primary or secondary data, and submit this work for assessment, in the form of a dissertation.
- use reflection, creativity and sound judgement in applying personal, professional and academic knowledge and skills to complex and unpredictable situations.

3.4   Digital and information literacy

- Effectively locate information from multiple sources using systematic manual and electronic searching techniques in order to develop coherent evidence based practice arguments.

- Engage effectively in a range of learning methods including the virtual environment and digital communication.

3.5   Global citizenship

- demonstrate sensitivity to the diversity in culture, lifestyle and viewpoints of others;
- recognise the potential for discrimination and sensitively explore issues of equity and diversity;

SECTION 4: PROGRAMME STRUCTURE AND CURRICULUM

4.1 Programme structure and requirements:
Due to the nature of this award, students are supported in planning an individual programme of study designed to support and reflect their professional role and requirements.
An individually planned programme must be submitted to the programme team and Education Cluster, where it is scrutinised for coherence and relevance in meeting the stated aims and its compliance with the University Undergraduate Programme regulations. Students who are working towards an outcome award of an Honours degree, will be required as part of their programme, to take and pass six level six (Honours) modules.

4.2 Professional requirements
Nothing specific, but students may include professional body-recognised short courses as part-fulfilment of credit for this award.

SECTION 5: PROGRAMME DELIVERY

5.1   Teaching, Learning and Assessment

There is a commitment to student-centred learning, with an emphasis on contracted learning activities and educational staff acting as facilitators. It is recognised that students are experienced professionals whose skills and knowledge have led them to design and undertake individual programmes of learning. Their programmes will build on existing knowledge and skills, and will provide opportunities for academic learning whilst further developing the professional practice of self and others.

In order to draw on students' experience and prior learning, and encourage innovation and development within the practice areas, a student-centred and facilitative approach is taken to teaching and learning. Student-centred learning is achieved through a partnership approach, built on mutual respect and negotiation. It is acknowledged that students are best placed to identify own learning needs, and that tutors may facilitate this process. Students are expected to be independent learners and to seek support from peers, facilitators and employers. This is particularly the case when undertaking work-based learning. Tutors and facilitators are available for guidance, to give feedback, and to allow students test out ideas and develop own plans and arguments.

Because students may select own learning outcomes, and negotiate the nature of assessments, it is believed that they will develop self-awareness and an ability to evaluate your own performance. They should gain insight into own learning needs and be able to respond effectively. Through this approach, it is anticipated that they will further develop self-confidence and self-reliance in learning activities and professional practice. The assessment methods will, to a large extent, be dependent upon the modules selected by an individual student for inclusion in a programme.

The programme handbook provides a commentary for students on how the Graduate Attributes are developed through the programme. In addition, students can expect to be introduced to the concept of Graduate Attributes during induction, and will have tutorial discussions with their academic advisor, particularly in their first year, which will focus on identifying module content and activities leading to their acquisition of Graduate Attributes, and their experience of them.

5.2   Assessment regulations

The programme complies with the University's undergraduate regulations, and with the Open Award Scheme. The structure of any academic programme is determined by the students, who will select the units or modules and construct their individual learning pathways to meet their own identified aims.

SECTION 6: ADMISSIONS

6.1 Entry criteria

Criteria	Essential	Desirable
Prior qualification	• Students are normally expected to hold a qualification that confers the right to State Registration in a health or social care profession • You will normally be expected to have six months post-registration experience in health and social care	

	• This is a 'top up' degree and it is required that students have demonstrated that they have reached an academic level commensurate with entry to level 5 or level 6 of the programme.	
English Language	Students whose home language is not English must demonstrate that their level of English is appropriate for study at undergraduate level. In addition to the academic entry qualification for the programme, as given above, applicants must have one of the following or an equivalent qualification acceptable to the University as set out in the list produced by the International Centre for English Language Studies (ICELS). (i) British Council IELTS: level 6.5 or above (ii) TOEFL score of 600 or above for the paper based test, (iii) Cambridge Certificate of Proficiency in English: Grade B or above (iv) O level English Language or GCSE English Language: Grade C or above (v) NEAB Test in English pass (vi) WELTS: Grade B B C or above (vii) University pre-sessional course: Level 2 or above	

6.2 CRB checks
Additional CRB checks are not normally required for entry to this programme.

SECTION 7: STUDENT SUPPORT AND GUIDANCE

Students will have recourse to a wide range of support personnel and support mechanisms during their time on the programme. These include an Academic Advisor who will oversee student progress and will assist in informing the selection of appropriate modules for the award; the student Support Co-ordinators who provide one to one support, advice, guidance and encouragement to help students progress through their chosen programme; the learning development and academic skills unit known as 'Upgrade'; the library facilities; disability Services; and Students' Union.

SECTION 8: GRADUATE EMPLOYABILITY

Many of the students will be in-service health and social care professionals who are seeking career advancement linked to academic progression. Others will be in the process of refocusing career and study opportunities and may be between jobs in the sector. Graduate status is increasingly required for many career grades within the public sector.

SECTION 9: LINKS WITH EMPLOYERS

The curricular and pedagogic regime of the programme includes considerable input from employers and practice partners – both in terms of curriculum co-production and in terms of programme contributions from visiting speakers from relevant industries/professions

SECTION 10: QUALITY MANAGEMENT

The programme is evaluated and quality-assured by the standard University processes of annual monitoring and review; periodic review; student committee representation and student fora; and external examiner scrutiny.