

Programme Specification

1	Awarding body	University of London				
2	Teaching Institution	Birkbeck College				
3	Programme Title(s)	Cert HE Higher Education Introductory Studies				
4	Programme Code(s)	HEINT-H (modular enrolment)				
5	UCAS code	N/A				
6	Home Department	Psychosocial Studies				
7	Exit Award(s)	N/A				
8	Duration of Study (number of years)	1 or 2 years				
9	Mode of Study	FT		PT	X	DL
10	Level of Award (FHEQ)	4				
11	Other teaching depts or institution	N/A				
12	Professional, Statutory Regulatory Body(PSRB) details	N/A				
13	QAA Benchmark Group	N/A				

14	Programme Rationale & Aims
	<p>To provide an award-bearing programme designed to develop students' knowledge and approaches to learning in order for them to progress to further study in higher education in the following areas: social sciences; social work; business; nursing and health; arts and humanities.</p> <p>To enable students to gain an understanding of some contemporary concepts, debates and perspectives relevant to the study of specific subject areas within their chosen pathway of study.</p> <p>To integrate into curriculum, pedagogy and assessment the interdisciplinary exploration of social and cultural diversity and of equalities issues.</p> <p>To offer students an opportunity to study a range of different subjects in order that they can make an informed choice when deciding on a future course of study.</p> <p>To develop students' skills as active and reflexive learners in academic, work-related and broader lifelong learning contexts.</p> <p>To provide opportunities for students to plan their ongoing academic and career development and to provide students with advice and practical skills to support their applications for full or part time degree study.</p>

15	Entry Criteria
	<p>No specific formal qualifications are required, but fluent written and spoken English equivalent to Level 2 (i.e. GCSE grades A-C or equivalent) is expected.</p> <p>Students wishing to progress to some degrees may be required to have GCSE grades A-C in English, Maths and/or Science. Students should check the entry requirements for the degree to which they intend to apply.</p>

16	<p>Learning Outcomes</p> <p>Subject Specific:</p> <p>1) 1) Understanding of the Disciplines. Students will be able to: Describe and apply basic concepts, debates and perspectives relevant to the subjects that they study. Engage with a range of critical vocabularies needed to facilitate the study of specific subjects.</p> <p>2) Contextualising the disciplines and making interdisciplinary connections. Students will be able to: Understand and debate differing perspectives on equalities issues and questions of social and cultural diversities across the subject areas/disciplines.</p> <p>3) Understanding Methodologies Students will be able to: Describe the distinctive features of approaches to study in individual disciplines and consider the value of interdisciplinary perspectives.</p> <p>4) Understanding of how knowledge might be applied Students will be able to: Identify how subject specific and interdisciplinary knowledge can be applied to explore the characteristics of different cultures and societies. Discuss the contributions that subject specific and interdisciplinary knowledge can make to strategies for social change and development.</p> <p>Intellectual</p> <p>5) The ability to compare, contrast and organise approaches within and across the subject areas Students will be able to: Critically analyse, evaluate and compare primary and secondary sources in each of the subject areas Compare and contrast how equalities issues related to gender, 'race' and ethnicity, class, sexuality, disability and age are engaged within different subject areas. Evaluate the similarities and differences between approaches to study in the individual disciplines.</p> <p>6) Formulating Arguments Students will be able to: Tackle written assignments with confidence using a critical and analytical approach. Construct coherent and well-structured arguments in oral and written forms</p> <p>7) Undertaking Research Projects/Problem Solving Tasks</p>
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Students will be able to:
Identify research topics
Formulate simple research questions
Identify sub tasks within a problem solving task
Identify and access relevant information sources

8) The ability to evaluate research findings

Students will be able to:
Analyse and discuss examples of qualitative and quantitative data
Use basic statistical and numerical methods in relation to quantitative data.

Practical:

9) Ability to manage information

Students will be able to:
Employ time management strategies to enable them to balance the demands of study with other aspects of their lives
Recognise and employ the skills necessary to work in depth on specific topics, either independently or as part of a team
Recognise and employ the skills necessary to complete written assignments
Recognise and employ the skills necessary to undertake oral presentations
Effectively prepare for and undertake written tasks in examination conditions

10) Ability to employ research skills

Students will be able to:
Independently collect material from a variety of sources
Contribute research data to team activities
Analyse data and represent findings in oral and written forms

Personal and Social:

11) Ability to act as a self-directed, reflective learner

Students will be able to:
Critically reflect on their own learning experiences, including their work and life experiences and their relevance to the HE learning context
Recognise, practise and employ a range of strategies to plan their learning development, including the ability to evaluate the success of strategies and to effectively solve problems
Recognise and use a range of sources to further their own learning development
Understand the impact of factors such as class, 'race', and ethnicity, gender, sexuality, disability and age on their own and others' experience of learning

12) The ability to work in groups:

Students will be able to:
Recognise the benefits of working in groups

	<p>Recognise, practise and employ strategies for increasing the effectiveness of group functioning</p> <p>13) The ability to communicate effectively</p> <p>Students will be able to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Participate in small group discussion and debate by both listening and communicating their own ideas effectively Present their ideas to their peer group in the form of a short presentation Communicate their ideas effectively in written formats <p>14) Understanding of how the award has relevance to the student’s current and future career/course of study</p> <p>Students will be able to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Understand the demands made by higher education study Identify possible routes of progression from the award onto further study Construct a personal statement/personal development plan with reference to study and workplace opportunities Confidently work towards future goals Identify and apply a range of skills that are of value for academic study and career development
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17	<p>Learning, teaching and assessment methods</p> <p>The programme provides students with the opportunity to experience a wide range of teaching and learning styles as a preparation for further study.</p> <p>These include lecturer-led discussion, collaborative work on small group tasks, the gathering and interpretation of data, seminars, chaired debates, structured home study, use of an electronic learning environment, problem solving exercises, individual presentations to peers, constructive review of peers’ work and some one-to-one tutorial provision.</p> <p>Teaching is participative with group sizes between 10 and 20 and students are encouraged to develop their skills in independent learning in preparation for the demands of further HE study.</p> <p>Study skills and critically evaluative experiential learning are integrated into each module. Learning skills which are particularly focussed on throughout the programme include: time management, note-taking, reading skills, critical thinking, essay writing, writing for a variety of audiences and purposes, finding and using information and resources from libraries, internet and other sources, using bibliographies and referencing sources.</p> <p>The value of learning outside the classroom is reinforced by the inclusion of at least one visit into the formal curriculum for some modules. The exploration of learning experiences gained from these visits is integrated into teaching and learning on the modules.</p> <p>Assessment Methods:</p> <p>For each module students are usually required to complete 3 or 4 pieces of assessed work. The work submitted will amount to 4,000-6,000 words or equivalent. Coursework tasks include: critical analysis of specific sources; essays; reports; case studies; oral presentations</p>
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and reflective commentaries; written tasks aimed at specific audiences; learning reviews. In at least one module on each pathway one piece of assessed work is a timed assessment completed in class.

Assessment Strategy:

The variety and combination of assessment methods on Higher Education Introductory Studies is designed to provide students with experience in meeting the challenges of the kinds of assessment that they will encounter at level 4 study and to prepare them for the demands of further level 4/5 study.

Whilst all assignment tasks have been designed to map against a wide range of programme learning outcomes, the following assessment tasks specifically relate to the learning outcomes stated:

Critical analyses of specific sources are used to develop subject specific understanding; the intellectual skills of close textual analysis and comparative evaluation of argument as well as practical writing and communication skills. Usually set as the first assignment in a module, this assessment task is an important introduction to the skills of close reading and critical thinking.

Academic essay assignments provide an opportunity for students to develop their subject specific knowledge and their intellectual skills of formulating arguments, undertaking research and to apply the programme's thematic interest in equality and diversity issues to their exploration of a particular topic. They evidence the development of practical learning outcomes through the use of skills to manage information and provide the opportunity for the development of transferable personal and social skills of written communication that adheres to academic conventions.

The use of short timed assessments provides the opportunity for students to demonstrate their subject specific understanding; intellectual skills of critical analysis and evaluation and their management of information in exam conditions. This assessment also provides the opportunity for students who are returning to formal learning with the opportunity to develop their confidence and ability to achieve in a situation that has frequently been daunting them during previous educational experiences.

The inclusion of an oral presentation in most modules is aimed at developing students' confidence in contributing to and leading discussion based activity. Peer review is informally built into the assessment of this element which provides an assessment context in group participation which is extensively developed through the teaching and learning strategy on the programme is also a feature of the assessment strategy.

Whilst some assessment tasks are set to evaluate students' subject based understanding of tutor designated topics, other tasks provide the student with the opportunity to apply the skills and knowledge they are developing on the programme to an area of their own interest which is relevant to their pathway of study.

Assessment guidelines and key marking criteria are produced for each assignment set and students are also referred to the generic Common Awards Scheme marking and grading criteria.

The framing of specific assessments and the overall assessment strategy for particular modules and pathways has also been influenced by consultation with and research into the requirements of those higher education courses to which students will progress.

18	Programme Description
	Students begin the programme with an Approaches to Study module: either Approaches to Study, Approaches to Study with English Language Support (if they have English as a second language). Students the progress to subject modules, which also continue to give ongoing attention to learning development and study skills. The exploration of questions about equality, diversity and social justice is an interdisciplinary theme linking the programme's modules.

19	Programme Structure			
Modular Programme – students take compulsory module plus three options				
Level	Module Code	Module Title	Credits	Status*
4	SSAC076S4	Approaches to Study (HEIS) OR	30	Compulsory
4	FFHE015S4	Approaches to Study with English Language Support (Intensive)	30	Compulsory
<i>Plus 90 Credits of optional modules from the list below</i>				
Level	Module Code	Module Title	Credits	Status*
4	FFHE018S4	Business Studies	30	Option
4	FFHE019S4	Geography	30	Option
4	FFHE007S4	History	30	Option
4	FFHE006S4	Literature and Culture	30	Option
4	FFHE004S4	Maths and Statistics	30	Option
4	FFHE013S4	Politics	30	Option
4	FFHE003S4	Psychology	30	Option
4	FFHE002S4	Sociology	30	Option

Status*

CORE – Module must be taken and passed by student; COMPULSORY – Module must be taken, mark can be reviewed at sub-exam board; OPTIONAL – Student can choose to take this module

20	Additional Programme Information
	<p>Individual modules can be taken to provide an introduction to specific subject areas and to the learning skills required for effective study.</p> <p>The award can be completed in one year or two years to enable students to gain 120 credits and progress to a degree programme.</p> <p>Specific modules of the award, when completed to an adequate level, can count towards Year 1 of Birkbeck's BSc Social Sciences, BSc Business, BA Arts and Humanities, BA History, BSc Geography and BA Linguistics and Languages.</p>

21	Programme Director	Dr Kerry Harman
22	Start Date (<i>term/year</i>)	September 2008
23	Date approved by TQEC	Summer 2007
24	Date approved by Academic Board	November 2007
25	Date(s) updated/amended	8 October 2010