# Module Outline forms – a guide to the 5 key academic fields

## Video transcript

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| 00:00 | In this presentation we will describe the key academic fields of a Module Outline Form |
| 00:05 | - MOF for short – and offer advice on how to complete these successfully. |
| 00:12 | You might find it useful to look at one of your own MOFs for comparison as we go through |
| 00:16 | our recommendations. |
| 00:18 | It is important that MOFs are up-to-date, factually correct & clearly written as they |
| 00:26 | hold essential University information. For example, the MOFs data are used internally |
| 00:33 | for quality assurance and income allocation. They also feed externally into national websites |
| 00:40 | and inform prospective students about our programmes. |
| 00:46 | Along with documents such as programme regulations and specifications, MOFs also form part of |
| 00:51 | our learning and teaching contract with students, telling them what to expect and what we promise |
| 00:57 | to deliver. They may be scrutinised in complaints, appeals and even legal challenges. |
| 01:05 | All important reasons for getting them right. |
| 01:10 | In this presentation we will focus on one function of the MOF - as a document that captures |
| 01:15 | the educational intentions of the module leader. |
| 01:20 | To write an effective MOF you need to consider who will be taking this module, what programme |
| 01:25 | they are on, with which modules does the module align and when students will take the module |
| 01:31 | within the academic year and programme. |
| 01:34 | For every MOF you’ll need to know the credit size of the module and its academic level. |
| 01:41 | Keep these in mind as they will impact on the decisions you make. |
| 01:45 | Now let’s start by looking at the form….. There are 5 fields which cover the core elements |
| 01:51 | of academic content. These are the module aims, its learning outcomes, |
| 01:58 | the assessment, the teaching methods and activities, and the outline of the syllabus. |
| 02:05 | When developing or reviewing MOFs, we suggest you focus on the fields in the order they |
| 02:10 | are presented here as decisions in one will influence the others. |
| 02:16 | If you haven't come across these terms before - the module aim is an overarching statement |
| 02:22 | about your educational intentions; the learning outcomes - what the students will be able |
| 02:27 | to do; the assessment - what and how the learning outcomes will be assessed, the teaching methods |
| 02:35 | - the various educational strategies you’ll employ to support the students in achieving |
| 02:39 | the learning outcomes and; the syllabus – the module topic content. |
| 02:45 | We also need to consider the Graduate Skill Framework – the transferable skills gained |
| 02:51 | from this particular module – but more about that later. |
| 02:58 | To illustrate how these should align / be coherent with one another - let’s look at |
| 03:03 | a simplified fictional module on bread making. |
| 03:06 | We’ll set the Aim as ‘to introduce the art of bread making’, capturing your overarching |
| 03:12 | intent and one of the Learning Outcome as ‘to prepare a range of different types of |
| 03:18 | bread’, which states what the students will be able to do. |
| 03:23 | To meet this learning outcome, the assessment could be a practical examination requiring |
| 03:28 | students to ‘bake a range of breads’. To achieve the learning outcome and complete |
| 03:34 | the assessment the teaching activities would need to include practical experience in ‘a |
| 03:40 | kitchen’. The syllabus, the subjects students cover, |
| 03:45 | includes ‘weighing, measuring, kneading and proving’, all essential components for |
| 03:51 | introductory bread making. |
| 03:54 | We’ll now look at each field in more detail, and describe the principles to follow for |
| 03:59 | each one. We’ll start with the aims. |
| 04:02 | As we’ve seen in the bread analogy, the aims are foundation for all other decisions. |
| 04:08 | They give us the overarching educational purpose of the module. |
| 04:12 | The aims are what you as an educator wish to achieve. |
| 04:15 | They shouldn’t be expressed in terms of ‘To teach …’ or ‘To deliver …’, instead, |
| 04:21 | think about your aspirations for those taking the module |
| 04:23 | When completing your MOF,… this section should be brief and to the point. There might |
| 04:32 | be one or two aims per module, occasionally more, but no more information is needed in |
| 04:38 | this field. Now we’ve looked at aims, let’s move on |
| 04:43 | to learning outcomes. |
| 04:45 | Whilst the aim states the module leader’s intent - its purpose -, learning outcomes |
| 04:51 | break that intent down by making explicit statements about what students will or should |
| 04:56 | be able to do if they successfully complete the module. |
| 05:00 | Remember, students must achieve all the learning outcomes for the module. They should be written |
| 05:06 | using active verbs to ensure its clear what students can do by the end of the module. |
| 05:12 | They also need to be pitched at an appropriate level for the academic stage, and be a sensible |
| 05:18 | amount for the credit size. |
| 05:22 | We have now stated our expectations for completing the module, so we need to think about how |
| 05:27 | best to assess it to ensure the learning outcomes have been met. |
| 05:33 | The type of assessment used must evidence that learning outcomes have been achieved |
| 05:51 | and the students can actually do those things. The assessment is testing a representation |
| 05:58 | of the students’ abilities, not everything they have learned or can do. It is evidence |
| 06:04 | of the achievement of the learning outcomes, not all the topics covered. |
| 06:08 | On the MOF, assessments are split into formative and summative. Formative assessments allow |
| 06:09 | you and your students to judge progress and test development before summative assessments |
| 06:10 | test outcomes. |
| 06:11 | There are a number of different types of assessment and you should choose those that best fulfil |
| 06:14 | the intended purpose. |
| 06:17 | Ensure you include enough information so the reader understands what is expected and use |
| 06:22 | the comment box to give details. |
| 06:25 | When writing the rationale don’t just repeat what you have said before – use this section |
| 06:30 | to explain WHY this module is being assessed this way and how the assessments achieve the |
| 06:35 | learning outcomes. If there is more than one assessment, explain how they link with one |
| 06:40 | another. Give your rationale here not just the methods. |
| 06:48 | We now have our aims, learning outcomes and how those outcomes are assessed. |
| 06:54 | The next step is ensuring the ‘teaching activities’ support the achievement of the |
| 06:58 | aims, learning outcomes and assessments. |
| 07:03 | A useful way to think about this is - if the aim shows the direction of travel, the outcomes |
| 07:10 | the finishing point and the assessment is the actual finishing line you’ve set up, |
| 07:14 | then the ‘teaching activities’ equip the students with the necessary knowledge and |
| 07:18 | skills to successfully cross that line. |
| 07:22 | ‘Teaching Activities’ covers more than just what happens in a classroom. Think about |
| 07:28 | what will support student learning before, during and after teaching sessions. |
| 07:34 | When choosing teaching activities and writing the rationale in the MOF, look at the learning |
| 07:40 | outcomes and judge what activities are needed to build the necessary knowledge and skills. |
| 07:45 | Determine the time needing spent doing each activity, ensuring it all counts up to the |
| 07:49 | correct amount of time at the bottom of the table |
| 07:52 | So once completed you'll capture the ‘what will happen’ in the table, and the ‘why’ |
| 07:57 | in the rationale box. The last of the key fields is the syllabus. |
| 08:04 | The syllabus section is straightforward – this is a list of the topics, the content or subjects |
| 08:10 | you will cover in the module. There’s only one thing to remember here. |
| 08:15 | Don’t make yourself hostage to too much detail. Stick to general topic areas – this |
| 08:21 | should be an outline of the syllabus. The detail of what is taught when and by whom |
| 08:25 | should be in the module handbook, not in the MOF. |
| 08:29 | Once you've decided what needs to go in to the syllabus, make sure that the topics you’ve |
| 08:34 | included are sufficient to achieve your aims and learning outcomes and that assessments |
| 08:38 | and the teaching methods also still fit. |
| 08:42 | Lastly let’s look at the Graduate Skills Framework. At this point you will have all |
| 08:49 | the information you need to complete this section. |
| 08:52 | This is different from the previously described fields because you are not developing your |
| 08:56 | ideas here, just mapping your module against a general framework of knowledge and skills |
| 09:01 | for all graduates. For this section you need to record whether |
| 09:06 | the generic skills listed will be experienced by your students or assessed within the module. |
| 09:13 | There are likely to be ones that you’ll label as ‘not applicable’. |
| 09:18 | It is much easier to complete this section last of all as you’ll be clear about your |
| 09:22 | intent, what you will assess, what topics you will cover and how, by the end of the |
| 09:27 | process. There’s lots of other important information |
| 09:32 | that goes into a Module Outline Form. Help and advice about completing these sections |
| 09:39 | is available in your school or faculty. We hope you have found this helpful |
| 09:47 | This video was created in a collaboration between FMS and LTDS. |