UNIVERSITY OF LEADING THE WAY WESTMINSTER

PROGRAMME SPECIFICATION

Course record information

Name and level of final award:	Foundation Year for BSc (Hons) Biochemistry; BSc (Hons) Biological Sciences; BSc (Hons) Biomedical Sciences; BSc (Hons) Human Nutrition; BSc (Hons) Pharmacology and Physiology programmes. Final award dependent on student's chosen pathway
Name and level of intermediate awards:	Foundation Certificate Life Sciences
Awarding body/institution:	University of Westminster
Teaching Institution:	University of Westminster
Status of awarding body/institution:	Recognised Body
Location of delivery:	Cavendish Campus, 115 New Cavendish St
Language of delivery and assessment:	English
Mode, length of study and normal starting month:	One year full time study commencing in September, progressing to level 4 upon successful completion of the first year.
QAA subject benchmarking group(s):	Biosciences/ Biomedical Sciences
Professional statutory or regulatory body:	None
Date of course validation/review:	June 2017
Date of programme specification approval:	June 2017
Valid for cohorts :	Level 3 intake for 2019/2020
Course Leader	Amarachukwu Anyogu
UCAS code and URL:	http://www.westminster.ac.uk/courses/undergraduate

What are the minimum entry requirements for the course?

There are standard minimum entry requirements for all undergraduate courses. Students are advised to check the standard requirements for the most up-to-date information.

For most courses a decision will be made on the basis of your application form alone. However, for some courses the selection process may include an interview to demonstrate your strengths in addition to any formal entry requirements.

Aims of the course

The same Foundation Year programme provides an academic base for students intending to follow a range of different bioscience pathways, including Biochemistry, Biological Sciences, Biomedical Sciences and Pharmacology & Physiology. The course aims to create students who, through their knowledge, academic achievements and practical skills are able to benefit fully from study of the biological and medical sciences to degree-level. The programme has been designed to ensure that on successful completion, students acquire the level of scientific knowledge and skills necessary to meet the entry requirements of their chosen undergraduate degree pathway.

This Foundation course will produce level 3 students who;

1. are well informed on and have a secure comprehension of appropriate aspects of natural science,
2. are proactive and confident independent learners;
3. have the ability to integrate information from discrete but related scientific and professional disciplines;
4. possess practical and career-related skills;
5. have a clear view of future study and career opportunities open to them after graduation from the four year degree;
6. are assimilated into the discipline and practices of higher education.

What will you be expected to achieve?

Learning outcomes are statements on what successful students have achieved as the result of learning. These are threshold statements of achievement the learning outcomes broadly fall into four categories:

- The overall **knowledge and understanding** you will gain from your course (KU).
- **Professional and personal practice learning outcomes** (PPP) are specific skills that you will be expected to have gained on successful completion of the course
- **Key transferable skills** that you will be expected to have gained on successful completion of the course. (KTS)
- **Graduate attributes** are characteristics that you will have developed for the duration of and are embedded into your course (GA).

Learning Outcomes. Upon completion of level 3 you will be able to:

CLO 3.1 Identify and use with due regard for validity a variety of information sources (KTS);

CLO 3.2 Demonstrate good understanding of fundamental facts, major concepts and theories associated with biological systems (KU);

CLO 3.3 Demonstrate good understanding of fundamental facts, major concepts and theories associated with chemistry (KU);

CLO 3.4 Provide evidence of a knowledge of the scientific method and experimental process (KU);

CLO 3.5 Discuss the ethics of clinical practice and/or scientific research (PPP);

CLO 3.6 Demonstrate competence in appropriate interpersonal and team-working skills (KTS);

CLO 3.7 Apply numerical, problem-solving and practical skills (KTS)

CLO 3.8 Communicate clearly ideas, concepts and numerical information *via* appropriate means (KTS)

CLO 3.9 Reflect upon own career-related skills, knowledge and awareness (PPP)

How will you learn?

The learning and the teaching of the course relies on a mixture of face-to-face teaching and tutorial sessions using both didactic and student-centred styles. This strategy is appropriately supported with technology-enhanced learning where applicable to encourage mastery of the knowledge base. Much of the learning activities of the course rely on a blended approach which mixes classroom-based activities with on-line study material. Planned learning activities relate directly to the stated learning outcomes which have been defined to reflect both subject-related knowledge, intellectual and manual or practical skills along with an awareness of the professional and ethical contexts within which disciplines must operate. In addition to the formal programmed teaching & learning sessions, the Faculty operates a series of research seminars and 'academic conversations' given by invited expert speakers or staff from within the university. Attendance at such events allows all students within the Faculty the chance to learn about cutting-edge research and scientific developments.

Self-directed and tutor-directed private study forms a significant part of the learning experience. Laboratory-based practicals will begin to develop the necessary 'hands-on' skills required within the chosen discipline. Tutorials provide additional support and opportunities for students to develop or enhance appropriate skills and to gain confidence in their studies.

How will you be assessed?

In order for students to demonstrate that they have met the course learning outcomes the foundation course offers a variety of assessment which aim to allow students to evidence their skills and knowledge *via* written and oral means. Typically, the diet of assessments for a module consists of two or three summative exercises. The assessment menu will consist of individual work including open & closed examinations, essays and objective tests and data-based exercises. Some aspects of summative assessment focus on group-work skills. Suitably well chosen integrative assignments will help to ensure continuity of learning across disciplines. Two of the modules are assessed *via* coursework only, whereas others use a combination of both summative assessment (using either open or closed examinations) and coursework elements. Attempting assessments is not just a means to determine attainment but also a learning opportunity. Thus, formative (practice) assessments, including 'mock' examinations and exercises on examination preparation, self-assessment tests and monitoring by tutors of continuous activities will help students to undertake their own evaluation of their command of the material and so adapt their learning strategy according to need.

Employment and further study opportunities.

At the completion of four years of study, students will be able to demonstrate the following five Graduate Attributes:

- Critical and creative thinkers
- Literate and effective communicator
- Entrepreneurial
- Global in outlook and engaged in communities
- Social, ethically and environmentally aware

Successful Foundation students progress to BSc (Hons) Biochemistry; BSc (Hons) Biological Sciences; BSc (Hons) Biomedical Sciences; or BSc (Hons) Pharmacology and Physiology programmes within the University of Westminster and thus gain valuable degrees in their chosen areas of interest. Recent results show that students who do well on the

Foundation course invariably graduate with higher classification degrees in their chosen subject than those who enter at level 4. Inclusion within the curriculum of activities which support the development of 'Graduate Attributes' is an acknowledgment that future long-term career success is dependent upon a number of generic factors which support discipline specific knowledge in creating effective professional practitioners. University of Westminster courses capitalise on the benefits that London as a global city and as a major creative, intellectual and technology hub has to offer for the learning environment and experience of our students.

Table:
Alignment of Graduate Attributes to the Learning Outcomes at Foundation Level.

Graduate Attribute	Learning Outcome
Critical and creative thinkers	3.1; 3.2; 3.3; 3.4.
Literate and effective communicator	3.1; 3.2; 3.3; 3.7; 3.8
Entrepreneurial	3.6; 3.7
Social, ethically and environmentally aware	3.5; 3.9
Global in outlook and engaged in communities	3.2

Course structure.
This section shows the modules (all core) that you will take as part of the course and their credit value. Full-time Undergraduate students study 120 credits per year. Somewhat unusually, the Foundation does not offer students any option or elective modules. The subject menu is restricted to those aspects of basic science which will provide a solid platform for further study. Course structures can be subject to change each academic year following feedback from a variety of sources.

Credit Level 3				
Module code	**Module title**	**Status**	**UK credit**	**ECTS**
3ACHE003W	Introduction to Academic Practice	Core	20	10
3BIOL001W	Biology and Human Biology	Core	40	20
3ACHE004W	Critical Thinking for Academic and Professional Development	Core	20	10
3CHEM004W	Chemistry	Core	20	10
3BIOL003W	Bioscience in Action	Core	20	10
Award of Foundation Certificate available				
Credit Levels 4, 5 and 6				
	all modules at L4, 5 and 6 are dependent upon the student's chosen degree pathway and exit award			

Professional Body Accreditation or other external references.
Not applicable to the level 3 provision. The BSc (Hons) Biochemistry; BSc (Hons) Biological Sciences; BSc (Hons) Biomedical Sciences; BSc (Hons) Human Nutrition and BSc (Hons) Pharmacology and Physiology are accredited by the **Royal Society of Biology** for the purpose of meeting in part the academic and experience requirement for the Membership and Chartered Biologist (CBiol).The Biomedical Sciences degree is accredited by the Institute of Biomedical Science (IBMS). Honours graduates can expect to become registered with the Health and Care Professions Council (HCPC) as Biomedical Scientists, provided they fulfil the additional HCPC requirements of competencies through suitable employment and undertaking the IBMS certificate of competence. The Human Nutrition degree is accredited by the Association for Nutrition (AfN) and graduates from this course are eligible to join the Register as an Associate Nutritionist.

Academic regulations.
The Foundation Year for BSc (Hons) Biochemistry; BSc (Hons) Biological Sciences; BSc (Hons) Biomedical Sciences; BSc (Hons) Human Nutrition and BSc (Hons) Pharmacology and Physiology operate in accordance with the University's Academic Regulations and *the UK Quality Code for Higher Education Part A: Setting and maintaining academic standards* published by the Quality Assurance Agency for Higher Education (QAA) in 2013. All students should make sure that they access a copy of the current edition of the general University handbook called Essential Westminster*,* which is available at **westminster.ac.uk/essential-westminster**. The following regulations should be read in conjunction with the Modular Fr*amework for Undergraduate Courses* and relevant sections of the current *Handbook of Academic Regulations*, which is available at **westminster.ac.uk/academic-regulations**. Regulations are subject to change and approval by Academic Council.

COURSE SPECIFIC REGULATIONS:
Biology & Human Biology and Chemistry must all be passed (not condoned) for progression to level 4.

Course Management
Your course is managed through the School of Life Sciences within the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences. The Course Leader and the teaching team will meet you in the induction programme and can help you with enrolment, registration, and orientation to the university, its processes and the culture of higher education. The Course Leader is responsible for development and management of the course in conjunction with the Head of School and the School Director of Teaching, Learning and Quality.

Academic Support.
Upon arrival, an induction programme will introduce you to the staff responsible for the course, the campus on which you will be studying, the Library and IT facilities, additional support available and to your Registry Office. You will be provided with the Course Handbook, which provides detailed information about the course. Each course has a course leader or Director of Studies. All students enrolled on a full-time course and part time students registered for more than 60 credits a year have a personal tutor, who provides advice and guidance on academic matters. The University uses a Virtual Learning Environment called Blackboard where students access their course materials, and can communicate and collaborate with staff and other students. Students are assessed for their English language skills and if required can be offered a specific module, English for Academic Purposes, to enhance their success.

Learning Support

The Academic Learning Development Centre supports students in developing the skills required for higher education. As well as online resources in Blackboard, students have the opportunity to attend Study Skills workshops and one to one appointments.

Learning support includes four libraries, each holding a collection of resources related to the subjects taught at that site. Students can search the entire library collection online through the Library Search service to find and reserve printed books, and access electronic resources (databases, e-journals, e-books). Students can choose to study in the libraries, which have areas for silent and group study, desktop computers, laptops for loan, photocopying and printing services. They can also choose from several computer rooms at each campus where desktop computers are available with the general and specialist software that supports the courses taught at their School. Students can also securely connect their own laptops and mobile devices to the University wireless network.

Support Services
The University of Westminster Student Affairs department provide advice and guidance on accommodation, financial and legal matters, personal counselling, health and disability issues, careers, specialist advice for international students and the chaplaincy providing multi-faith guidance. The University of Westminster Students' Union also provides a range of facilities to support students during their time at the University.

How do we ensure the quality of our courses and continuous improvement?

The course was initially approved by a University Validation Panel in June 2017. The panel included internal peers from the University, academic(s) from another university and a representative from industry. This helps to ensure the comparability of the course to those offered in other universities and the relevance to employers.

The course is also monitored each year by the School and College to ensure it is running effectively and that issues which might affect the student experience have been appropriately addressed. Staff will consider evidence about the course, including Course Leader meetings with the student Course Representatives, outcomes from the Staff Student Exchange meetings in each Semester and evidence of student progression and achievement and the reports from external examiners, to evaluate the effectiveness of the course. Each School puts in to place an action plan. This may for example include making changes on the way the module is taught, assessed or even how the course is structured in order to improve the course, in such cases an approval process is in place.

A Course review takes place periodically to ensure that the curriculum is up-to-date and that the skills gained on the course continue to be relevant to employers. Students meet with review panels to provide feedback on their experiences. Student feedback from previous years e.g. from Staff-Student Exchange meetings is also part of the evidence used to assess how the course has been running.

How do we act on student feedback?

Student feedback is important to the University and student views are taken seriously. Student feedback is gathered in a variety of ways.

- Through the Student Representatives, students have the opportunity to express their voice in the running of their course. Student representatives are elected to expressly represent the views of their peer. The University and the Students' Union work together to provide a full induction to the role of the student representatives.
- Each School also has its own Staff Student Exchange Forum with student representatives; this enables wider discussions across the Faculty. Student representatives are also represented on key School, College and university committees.

☐ All students are invited to complete a questionnaire before the end of each module. The feedback from this will inform the module leader on the effectiveness of the module and highlight areas that could be enhanced.

☐ Final year Undergraduate students will be asked to complete the National Student Survey which helps to inform the national university league tables.