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**Faculty of Humanities - Framework of Minimum Requirements for Scheduled Teaching and Learning Activities and Opportunities for Contact / Interaction with Academic Staff, for Distance Learning (DL) / Blended Learning (BL) Provision at Postgraduate Taught (PGT) Level**

**1. Background**

The introduction of the Faculty’s Framework is to ensure that students on PGT programmes have a minimum level of contact / interaction with members of academic staff, regardless of which programme they are registered on. The expectation is that Distance Learning (DL) and Blended Learning (BL) students should expect to get a similar amount of interaction with academic staff as campus based students but that this interaction will comprise of different types of contact than traditional lectures and seminars.

In accordance with the Quality Assurance Agency’s Framework for Higher Education Qualifications (FHEQ) Masters’ programmes are typically 180 credits which comprise of course units typically of multiples of 15 credits. One credit equates to 10 learning hours, so a 15-credit taught course unit will typically require 150 notional hours of student effort, which will be divided between scheduled teaching and learning activity, independent study and assessment.

The expectation is that PGT students should be more independent learners and as such the minimum contact / interaction with academic staff requirements can be achieved during both the delivery of course units and via other opportunities for interaction with academic staff available to students.

The Framework applies only to the taught element of PGT, DL and BL programmes. A separate Framework is available for campus based PGT programmes.

Dissertations (or equivalent) provide a highly personalised, independent learning experience for students with typically less contact time with an academic member of staff than a standard taught course unit. The dissertation element of the programme will not be subject to the requirements of this Framework although DL students should expect to get equivalent contact time as campus based students for their dissertation supervision.

Placement activity will also be excluded from the requirements of this Framework; this is governed by the University’s [Principles and procedures for student placements on taught programmes.](http://documents.manchester.ac.uk/display.aspx?DocID=10454)

**2. Minimum Requirements for Scheduled Teaching and Learning Activity and Opportunities for Contact / Interaction with Academic Staff**

These requirements are a directive from the Faculty set within a Framework which allows Schools flexibility, in terms of which teaching and learning activities and opportunities for contact / interaction with academic staff are included to meet the minimum requirements.

* **15 credit course unit (taught element of programme only) – minimum 20 hours contact/interaction**
* **30 credit course unit (taught element of the programme only) - minimum 40 hours contact/interaction**

NB: A pro-rata calculation should be made for course units with alternative credit weightings.

The minimum contact / interaction can be made up of both scheduled and non-scheduled (i.e. opportunities for contact / interaction) activity. The list below (not exhaustive) provides examples of the types of activities which could be counted towards the minimum requirements:

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| **Scheduled Contact (structured, timetabled, contribute to achievement of the Learning Outcomes)**  | **Non-Scheduled Opportunities for Contact** **(or Guided Independent Study Activities)** |
| lectures and online lectures and learning materials | research lectures / seminars and online equivalents |
| tutorials / seminars and online tutorials/seminars and discussions | presentations / film screenings etc. organised by the School, discipline or programme. |
| practical work, for example in a laboratory, in the field, workshop or studio  | defined and clearly communicated office hours / academic advising sessions including online equivalents |
| practice sessions and learning through case studies | on-line learning activities (e.g. blogs, discussions etc.) |

**3. Exemption**

Exemptions to the minimum requirements, specified in section 2, must be approved by the School’s Teaching and Learning Director / Postgraduate Taught Director.