

The Development of a Masters Level, Unitised Distance Learning Framework, at Leeds Metropolitan University

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SUMMARY

Higher Education has gone through a period of rapid expansion resulting in many new first degree level courses in subject areas with no clear employment market. As a consequence we are producing many graduates who have no clearly defined career path.

Non-cognate degree holders are being appointed to jobs within the industry that would normally be obtained by people with cognate degrees; who have the report writing and analytical skills but lack the basic technical knowledge needed for entry into the relevant professional body and progression up the career ladder. Employers and professional bodies have indicated that there is a demand for post graduate conversion courses.

The School of the Built Environment has identified a market for 4 post graduate conversion courses that are to be delivered by distance learning. They are Civil Engineering Commercial Management, Quantity Surveying Commercial Management, Building Surveying and Facilities Management.

To be economically viable much of the development / delivery must be common. The University has decided they will be developed within a unitised framework.

The unitised framework breaks subject themes into smaller units, each with its own clearly defined content, objectives, references and owner. This allows each course to construct modules that are specific to its needs. Delivery is by a mixture of commercially published texts, University produced CD's / videos and web based material. Students can complete the courses without attending the University.

Units within Construction theme and nominal study hour

Unit 1	10 hrs
Unit 2	10 hrs
Unit 3	20 hrs
Unit 4	20 hrs
Unit 5	10 hrs
Unit 6	40 hrs
Unit 7	20 hrs
Unit 8	20 hrs
Unit 9	30 hrs

*Modules
(Constructed from units)*

Fundamentals of Civil Engineering

Made up of units 1, 2, 4, 7 and 9 = 90hrs
 Assessment = 70hrs
 Total hours = 160hrs

Construction Technology

Made up of units 1, 2, 3, 6 and 8 = 100hrs
 Assessment = 60hrs
 Total hours = 160hrs

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