

Course Information Document: Foundation Year

For students starting in Academic Year 2020/21

1. Course Summary

Names of programme and award title(s)	Social Science Foundation Year
Award type	Foundation Year
Mode of study	Full-time
Framework of Higher Education Qualification (FHEQ) level of final award	Foundation Year
Normal length of the programme	1 year with progression onto a further three years at Keele
Maximum period of registration	The normal length as specified above plus 3 years
Location of study	Keele Campus
Accreditation (if applicable)	n/a
Regulator	Office for Students (OfS)
Tuition Fees	UK/EU students: Fee for 2020/21 is £9,250*

Our Social Science programme aims to fully prepare students for their undergraduate studies across all our Social Science based subjects including Sociology, Law, Criminology, Politics, IR, Education and Liberal Arts.

How this information might change: Please read the important information at <http://www.keele.ac.uk/student-agreement/>. This explains how and why we may need to make changes to the information provided in this document and to help you understand how we will communicate with you if this happens.

* These fees are regulated by Government. We reserve the right to increase fees in subsequent years of study in response to changes in government policy and/or changes to the law. If permitted by such change in policy or law, we may increase your fees by an inflationary amount or such other measure as required by government policy or the law. Please refer to the accompanying Student Terms & Conditions. Further information on fees can be found at <http://www.keele.ac.uk/studentfunding/tuitionfees/>

2. What is a Foundation Year programme?

Keele has a long-standing Foundation Year programme. The Foundation Year programmes in general are for students who meet Keele's minimum entry requirements, but not the specific requirements for entry directly onto the degree programme of their choice. They extend the duration of the degree by one year.

3. Overview of the Programme

The Social Science Foundation Year provides:

- a chance to sample social science subjects at university level before making a final choice of honours courses,
- intensive modules which provide the requisite background for specific honours courses for those without the necessary qualifications,
- access for non-traditionally qualified students to a wide range of social science courses,
- a broad grounding in academic principles, research and methods.

4. Aims of the programme

The broad aim of the programme is to provide preparation for subsequent study at Honours degree level in subjects provided in the Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences. A full list of Honours degree programmes provided by each School in the Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences can be found using the links below:

School of Law: <https://www.keele.ac.uk/law/studylaw/undergraduatedegrees/>

School of Social, Political and Global Studies: <https://www.keele.ac.uk/spgs/undergraduate/>

The broad aims of the programme are to enable you to:

- achieve a broad knowledge and understanding of a range of social science related subjects;
- acquire a range of cognitive, generic and transferable skills, including those practical and technical skills and techniques appropriate to the study of social science disciplines, and to deploy these skills appropriately;
- acquire suitable background knowledge and understanding at level three in your chosen specialist fields to allow progression to the level four degree courses in those subject areas.

5. What you will learn

The intended learning outcomes of the programme (what students should know, understand and be able to do at the end of the programme), can be described under the following headings:

- Subject knowledge and understanding
- Subject specific skills
- Key or transferable skills (including employability skills)

Subject knowledge and understanding

Successful students will be able to:

- understand broad social science related principles;
- study in a manner appropriate to social science degree students.

Subject specific skills

These are covered by the subject-specific modules, which are specific to individual programmes and not core to the Social Science Foundation Year.

General academic skills which are common to all routes are gained through the compulsory modules. Successful students will be able to:

- show awareness of the components and structure of an academic essay;
- access, use and reference appropriate resources;
- show awareness of plagiarism and improved ability to paraphrase and incorporate direct quotations;
- show ability to use rhetorical and linguistic styles, and structures and cohesive devices;
- show awareness of writer stance;
- interpret and address set essay questions;
- demonstrate ability to write in an academic style, with use of appropriate grammar, vocabulary, register, essay structure and cohesive devices;
- set, research, support and defend an academic thesis;
- think and write analytically and critically;
- synthesise and comment critically on a body of academic writing;
- prepare to participate meaningfully in a group seminar discussion;
- select appropriate materials for, and co-lead a seminar discussion;
- plan, research and deliver an effective academic oral presentation;
- work as a member of a team to plan and execute assignments;
- provide constructive and practical feedback to peers;
- consolidate writing and research skills;
- reflect on their own strengths and weaknesses, capitalise on their learning style, target areas for improvement and demonstrate progress towards personal SMART targets;
- communicate well in both verbal and written modes;
- carry out primary research with due consideration of acknowledgements and ethical protocols;
- carry out literature searches with due consideration of referencing.

Key or transferable skills (including employability skills)

Successful students will be able to:

- demonstrate effective written and oral communication and rhetorical skills;
- prepare and deliver presentations;
- work cooperatively and collaboratively in groups;
- communicate and negotiate effectively when working as part of a research and presentation team;
- reflect on their own skills and progress;
- participate in an investigative project;
- utilize effective independent study skills;
- manage time effectively.

Keele Graduate attributes

Engagement with this programme will enable you to develop your intellectual, personal and professional capabilities. At Keele, we call these our ten Graduate Attributes and they include independent thinking, synthesizing information, creative problem solving, communicating clearly, and appreciating the social, environmental and global implications of your studies and activities. Our educational programme and learning environment is designed to help you to become a well-rounded graduate who is capable of making a positive and valued contribution in a complex and rapidly changing world, whichever spheres of life you engage in after your studies are completed.

Further information about the Keele Graduate Attributes can be found here: <http://www.keele.ac.uk/journey/>

6. How is the programme taught?

Learning and teaching methods used on the programme vary according to the subject matter and level of the module. They include the following:

Lectures are normally 50 minutes long and consist of a member of staff talking to the whole class with the aid of PowerPoint presentations, whiteboards, and other visual aids. Many lectures involve only teaching by the lecturer, although there is usually opportunity to ask questions. However, some lectures are more interactive and may involve activities for the students to undertake.

Tutorials and **seminars** are small group sessions with a member of staff. Usually there is much more participation by students in these than in lectures. There is often opportunity for students to suggest the topics to be discussed, to ask questions and even to lead part of the session. Tutorials and seminars usually support the material delivered in the lectures; seminars often allow students and/or staff to introduce supplementary material.

Workshops are small group sessions based around an activity. These may be individual or group activities. A member of staff facilitates the session but the learning comes largely through the undertaking of the activity. Some workshops will complement the material delivered in the lectures rather than build on it directly.

During **placements** students have the opportunity to observe professional practice.

In **computer classes** students complete tasks using a wide variety of computer applications. Members of staff are available to provide guidance.

Independent study includes revision, wider reading around the subject, preparation and writing of assignments, preparatory reading, preparation for seminars and tutorials, and developing skills to complement the material delivered in class. Reading lists are provided to help students direct their reading.

Visits - here students will be able to visit areas of significance and understand their sociological, political and cultural importance.

Apart from these formal activities, students are also provided with regular opportunities to talk through particular areas of difficulty, and any special learning needs they may have, with their Personal Tutors or module lecturers on a one-to-one basis.

7. Teaching Staff

All Foundation Year Centre staff already have or are completing formal teaching qualifications and collectively have many years' experience of teaching on foundation year programmes. Many are engaged in scholarship relating to teaching and learning. In some cases teaching may be delivered by staff from other Schools in the University, or external experts in their field contracted to deliver specific teaching.

The University will attempt to minimise changes to our core teaching teams, however, delivery of the programme depends on having a sufficient number of staff with the relevant expertise to ensure that the programme is taught to the appropriate academic standard.

Staff turnover, for example where key members of staff leave, fall ill or go on research leave, may result in changes to the programme's content. The University will endeavour to ensure that any impact on students is limited if such changes occur.

8. What is the structure of the programme?

The academic year runs from September to June and is divided into two semesters. The number of weeks of teaching will vary from programme to programme, but you can generally expect to attend scheduled teaching sessions between the end of September and mid-

December, and from mid-January to the end of April. Each module is usually a self-contained unit of study and each is usually assessed separately with the award of credits on the basis of 1 credit = 10 hours of student effort. Students take a combination of modules to a total of 120 credits: compulsory modules and those related to their intended degree programme after their Foundation Year. Some routes may have option modules. Modules are worth 15 or 30 credits. Students study 60 credits in each Semester.

The teaching is based on Keele's standard two semesters. There is a vacation after the first semester's teaching at Christmas, followed by an examination period. The second semester begins immediately after the examination period and continues until June, with a vacation at Easter. The examination period for the second semester begins in May.

An outline of the structure of the programme is provided below.

For further information on the content of modules currently offered, please visit:

<https://www.keele.ac.uk/recordsandexams/modulecatalogue/>

Year	Compulsory	Optional		Electives	
		Min	Max	Min	Max
Foundation Year	105	15	15	0	0

Students will be able to select a Foundation option from Business, Law and Social Sciences.

Module Lists

Foundation Year

Compulsory modules	Module Code	Credits	Period
Foundations: Breaking the code - understanding academic writing	FYO-00247	15	Semester 1
Foundations of Social Sciences - 1	FYO-00263	15	Semester 1
Foundations of Social Science - 2	FYO-00265	15	Semester 1
Advancing Social Sciences	FYO-00269	30	Semester 2
University Research Portfolio	FYO-00271	30	Semester 2

Optional modules	Module Code	Credits	Period
Foundations of Business (option)	FYO-00253	15	Semester 1
Foundations of Social Sciences (Option)	FYO-00267	15	Semester 1
Foundations of Law (Option)	FYO-00273	15	Semester 1

The University Research Portfolio will enable students to specialise in their selected area of study.

9. Final and intermediate awards

Students successfully completing the programme with 120 credits will be eligible for the Certificate in Foundation Year Studies.

10. How is the Programme Assessed?

The wide variety of assessment methods used on this programme at Keele reflects the broad range of knowledge and skills that are developed as you progress through the degree programme. Teaching staff pay particular attention to specifying clear assessment criteria and providing timely, regular and constructive feedback that helps to clarify things you did not understand and helps you to improve your performance. The following list is representative of the variety of assessment methods used on your programme:

- **Unseen closed and open book examinations** in different formats test students' knowledge and understanding of the subject. Examinations may consist of essay, short answer and/or multiple choice questions.
- **Essays and reports** allow students to demonstrate their ability to articulate ideas clearly using argument and reasoning skills and with close reference to the contexts and critical concepts covered in the modules. Essays also develop and demonstrate

research and presentation skills (including appropriate scholarly referencing).

- **Class tests** taken either conventionally or online via the Keele Learning Environment (KLE) assess students' subject knowledge and their ability to apply it.
- **Research projects** test students' knowledge of different research methodologies and the limits and provisional nature of knowledge. They also enable students to demonstrate their ability to formulate research questions and to address them using appropriate methods.
- **Oral and poster presentations and reports** assess individual students' subject knowledge and understanding. They may also test their ability to work effectively as members of a team, to communicate what they know orally and visually, and to reflect on these processes as part of their own personal development.
- **Portfolios** may consist of a range of different pieces of work but routinely include a requirement that students provide some evidence of critical reflection on the development of their own learning.
- **Peer assessment** - in some cases students will be involved in peer evaluation of other students' work, particularly in group work. This helps students to take responsibility, improve their performance, and reflect on both their own work and that of others.
- **Course work assignments** consist of short written pieces completed in students' own time and provide the opportunity to test a range of deeper learning concepts; they are expected to make use of a variety of source material, as well as their lecture notes and text books etc., to complete these assignments.
- **Participation** - in some modules, marks are awarded for participation in group discussions.

Marks are awarded for summative assessments designed to assess your achievement of learning outcomes. You will also be assessed formatively to enable you to monitor your own progress and to assist staff in identifying and addressing any specific learning needs. Feedback, including guidance on how you can improve the quality of your work, is also provided on all summative assessments within three working weeks of submission, unless there are compelling circumstances that make this impossible, and more informally in the course of tutorial and seminar discussions.

11. Accreditation

This programme does not have accreditation from an external body.

12. University Regulations

The University Regulations form the framework for learning, teaching and assessment and other aspects of the student experience. Further information about the University Regulations can be found at: <http://www.keele.ac.uk/student-agreement/>

If this programme has any exemptions, variations or additions to the University Regulations these will be detailed in an Annex at the end of this document titled 'Programme-specific regulations'.

13. Other Learning Opportunities

Students are encouraged to participate in a wide range of activities offered by the University and the Students' Union, including societies, sports and volunteering. Involvement can be recognized in a number of ways including the Higher Education Achievement Record and Keele SU awards.

14. Additional Costs

We do not anticipate any further additional costs for this Foundation Year programme except in the case of students taking a science or mathematics module as an option. Students working in the chemistry and biology laboratories will be required to wear protective equipment; these can be purchased from the University. Students taking the module 'Exploiting the Earth' will be required to provide a £10 deposit with regard to the field trip, returnable on attendance. Most mathematics or science modules require the use of an approved calculator.

These costs have been forecast by the University as accurately as possible but may be subject to change as a result of factors outside of our control (for example, increase in costs for external services). Forecast costs are reviewed on an annual basis to ensure they remain representative. Where additional costs are in direct control of the University we will ensure increases do not exceed 5%.

As to be expected there will be additional costs for inter-library loans and potential overdue library fines, print and graduation. We do not anticipate any further costs for this undergraduate programme.

15. Annex - Programme-specific regulations

Programme Regulations: Social Science Foundation Year

Final Award and Award Titles	Social Science Foundation Year
Intermediate Award(s)	n/a
Last modified	May 2020
Programme Specification	https://www.keele.ac.uk/qa/programmespecifications

The University's Academic Regulations which can be found on the Keele University website (<https://www.keele.ac.uk/regulations/>)[1] apply to and regulate the programme, other than in instances where the specific programme regulations listed below over-ride them. These programme regulations list:

- *Exemptions* which are characterised by the omission of the relevant regulation.
- *Variations* which are characterised by the replacement of part of the regulation with alternative wording.
- *Additional Requirements* which set out what additional rules that apply to students in relation to this programme.

The following **exemptions, variations** and **additional requirements** to the University regulations have been checked by Academic Services and have been approved by the Faculty Education Committee.

A) EXEMPTIONS

The clause(s) listed below describe where an exemption from the University's Academic Regulations exists:

For the whole duration of their studies, students on this Programme are exempt from the following regulations:

No exemptions apply.

B) VARIATIONS

The clause(s) listed below describe where a variation from the University's Academic Regulations exists:

No variations apply

Additional Requirements

The programme requirements listed below are in addition to the University's Academic Regulations:

Additional requirement 1:

Regulations regarding Foundation Certificates

If, at the end of the academic year, a student's credit total is 120 then that student will become eligible for a Certificate in Foundation Year Studies. This is only actually awarded to students who subsequently withdraw from the University without successfully completing a further year of study.

Additional requirement 2:

Regulations regarding progression to Level 4

Satisfactory completion of the Foundation Year programme depends upon obtaining 120 credits. Progression to the next level of a particular degree programme at Keele depends on passing modules to the value of 120 credits and obtaining threshold marks in subject specific modules.

If, at the end of the Spring Semester, a student's credit total is below 120, the Foundation Year Examination Board may recommend to the University Senate one of the following courses of action - that the student:

- progress to the next year of the degree programme without further assessment,
- retake assessments in specific modules,
- submit additional written work or take additional modules,
- repeat the year of study, or

- withdraw from the University.

Satisfactory completion of the Foundation Year programme depends upon obtaining 120 credits. Students with fewer than 70 credits at the end of the year will normally be required to repeat the Foundation Year unless they have already repeated the year once, in which case they will be required to withdraw from the University. Students who have more than 70 but less than 120 credits will normally be offered reassessment in failed modules in order to satisfactorily complete the year.

Students who fail to reach a threshold mark at first attempt may be permitted to take reassessment (once only) across the full mark range. In cases where such a student fails a module at first attempt, reassessment will be offered across the full mark range only if the student attempted all assessments by the cut-off deadline for marking (i.e. up to one week late); the mark obtained will then be used for progression decisions but the agreed mark which appears on the transcript will be capped at 40%. For students who pass the module at first attempt, reassessment across the full mark range will be offered in all cases; the mark obtained will in that case be used for progression decisions and also retained on the student's transcript.

Students with at least 70 credits who cannot progress on the basis of autumn semester modules failed at second attempt may under certain circumstances be offered a third attempt during the summer reassessment period, but only to obtain a capped mark of 40%. Such students will not be able to progress to a subject with a requirement of a threshold mark above 40% in the module in question. If they subsequently still fail the Foundation Year and are offered a repeat year, then they will have only one further opportunity in any assessments already taken three times. No student will be allowed more than four valid attempts at any assessment.

Students with fewer than 120 credits who cannot progress on the basis of spring semester modules failed at second attempt will not be entitled to carry failed modules into the next year of study.

[1] References to University Regulations in this document apply to the content of the University's Regulatory Framework as set out on the University website here <https://www.keele.ac.uk/regulations/>.

Version History

This document

Date Approved: 14 May 2020

Previous documents

Version No	Year	Owner	Date Approved	Summary of and rationale for changes
1	2019/20	IAN CRAWFORD	14 May 2020	