Newcastle University

SENATE

Title of paper: Leading Edge Curriculum Framework: 4. Capstone modules

Main purpose of the paper: For approval

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Purpose of the paper

In November 2025 Senate resolved to approve the Leading Edge Curriculum Framework. Section 4 Capstone modules was not ready for consideration at that time and is now presented for approval.

Relation to strategy and values

Education Strategy

Recommendations:

To approve Section 4 Capstone modules of the Leading Edge Curriculum Framework.

Consultation to date (including any previous committee consideration and its outcome):

Education Strategy Programme Board, University Education Committee

Leading Edge Curriculum Framework

4. Capstone modules

A **Capstone module** is part of the final stage of an undergraduate degree or a postgraduate taught programme. In Capstone modules students will demonstrate a deep understanding of their subject, critically evaluate arguments, make judgements and solve complex problems. Capstone modules offer self-direction permitting students to engage with areas of interest.

All programmes must incorporate:

4.1 A **Capstone module** in which students showcase knowledge and skills in their discipline(s).

All Capstone modules must:

4.2 Be a progression of **Encounters with the Leading Edge,** developed across the programme and be authentic to research, industry, practice and society, relevant to discipline, demonstrating relevant skills and attributes.

4.3 Include a **reflective element** in which students articulate the development of their thinking and/or reflect on the skills and attributes they have applied in the Capstone.

4.4 Meet the relevant **FHEQ requirements** (FHEQ 6 for UG, FHEQ 7 for PGT) and relevant **PSRBs**.

4.5 Lead to **an individual submission**. Group work may be included in Capstone modules either as an assessed component (e.g. group project work no more than 50% of the final mark), or as formative collaborative element leading to an individual output.

Programme teams will determine the format of delivery of Capstone programmes (e.g. predominantly supervised or taught). The nature of the work produced by students will vary across disciplines and depend on the nature of the Capstone module. Capstone outputs could either build towards a single project or be a portfolio of work demonstrating a wider range of skills.

The choice of outputs can also be defined by programme teams and where appropriate, co-created with students. Options include, but are not limited to: dissertation, oral presentation, poster, portfolio, case studies, report, business plans, policy document, creative media (podcast) and may also incorporate a collaborative element (see 4.5).

The format of the Capstone might be chosen to be consistent across a suite of aligned programmes to facilitate inter-disciplinary activities.

Programmes may offer more than one version of a Capstone module or variations in approaches within a single module as appropriate. Capstone options are in addition to the optional modules permitted at each stage in the QCPDF.

All students should:

4.6 Be given **choice** regarding both the topic and format of their Capstone project, except in cases where requirements are stipulated by PSRBs.

In line with the QCPDF, all Capstone modules must compromise 40 credits (UG) and 60 credits (PGT/integrated Masters) (unless restricted by PSRB requirements).

Programme teams can opt to:

- Have a Capstone module of 40 (UG) or 60 (PGT) credits in one semester; or
- Deliver the Capstone module (40 credits UG or 60 credits PGT) across the semesters in the Stage (i.e. across 2 semesters in UG or up to 3 semesters in PGT), respecting the 20-credit split (e.g. UG 20/20; PGT 40/20, 20/40, 20/20/20).

The division between semesters should follow a single model within a programme, (i.e. only one of the two options above) to ensure that all students will have the same choice of standard optional modules offered at the Stage irrespective of their chosen Capstone module.

Where a research proposal is required to be completed prior to the final stage, which contributes to the summative assessment for the Capstone module, the learning hours and assessment can be considered as a constituent part of the Capstone.

Integrated Masters programmes may consider offering a 40 credit Capstone at Stage 3 and a 60 credit Capstone at Stage 4 to provide exit routes at Stage 3. In this case the Stage 3 Capstone may follow a predominantly taught route within the parameters given above.