PROGRAMME SPECIFICATION

Course Record Information	
Name and Level of Final & Intermediate Awards	Foundation year for School of Life Sciences undergraduate programmes No intermediate awards, no award for completion
Awarding Body	University of Westminster
Location of Delivery	Cavendish Campus
Mode of Study	Full time
UW Course Code	Dependent on final award
JACS Code	Dependent on final award
UCAS Code	Dependent on final award
QAA Subject Benchmarking Group	Dependent on final award
Professional Body Accreditation	Dependent on final award
Date of initial course approval/last review	1997/2002/2007/2009
Date of Programme Specification	2012

Admissions Requirements
Applicant age <21: CC at A2 level (or equivalent) in non-Science subjects Applicant age >21: No formal entry requirements Applicants over the age of 21 years may be invited to attend an interview where basic literacy is tested and suitability for the course is assessed. IELTS entrance requirement of 5.5 (if applicable).

Aims of the Course
• To ensure that enrolled students acquire the level of scientific knowledge and study skills necessary to meet the entry requirements of their chosen undergraduate degree pathway • Pathway specific aims dependent on final award
Employment and Further Study Opportunities

Today's organisations need graduates with both good degrees and skills relevant to the workplace, i.e., employability skills. The University of Westminster is committed to developing employable graduates by ensuring that:

- Career development skills are embedded in all courses
- Opportunities for part-time work, placements and work-related learning activities are widely available to students
- Staff continue to widen and strengthen the University's links with employers in all sectors, involving them in curriculum design and encouraging their participation in other aspects of the University's career education and guidance provision
- Staff are provided with up-to-date data on labour market trends and employers' requirements which will inform the service delivered to students.

Successful completion of the Foundation year will allow entry into undergraduate programmes in the School of Life Sciences providing that the appropriate pathway-specific module has been studied and the student achieves sufficient credits to meet School of Life Sciences progression requirements to Level 4. Following successful completion of their undergraduate programme of choice students will have specific employment or further study opportunities related to the final award.

Learning Outcomes

Learning outcomes are statements of what successful students will have achieved as the result of learning. They are threshold statements of achievement and are linked to the knowledge, understanding, and skills that a student will have gained on successfully completing a course.

Knowledge and Understanding

At Level 3 students should be able to:

- demonstrate in their module assessments knowledge and understanding of the fundamental principles, concepts and terminology of biology, chemistry, maths, physics, and scientific investigations which underpin the subject areas of the life sciences;
- demonstrate in their module assessments some understanding of the theoretical backgrounds to a range of techniques commonly encountered in the life sciences

(Learning outcomes at **levels 4, 5 and 6** will be dependent on the degree pathway studied.)

Specific Skills

At Level 3 students should be able to:

- explain fundamental scientific concepts and principles relevant to life sciences;
- demonstrate competence in the use of SI units, basic data analysis and scientific report writing;
- demonstrate competence in standard laboratory techniques and the collection and manipulation of experimental data;
- evidence basic literacy and numeracy skills as applicable in the basic sciences.

(Learning outcomes at **levels 4, 5 and 6** will be dependent on the degree pathway studied.)

Key Transferable Skills

Learning Resources & Management of Information:

- **at Level 3** students are expected to be developing their ability (a) to access effectively information sources such as library resources, University-wide and School Intranet facilities and the Internet as appropriate; and (b) to identify and to select relevant information.

Communication Skills:

- **at Level 3** students are expected to be developing their ability to communicate, effectively using IT resources as appropriate, principles of biology, chemistry mathematics and physical science in a variety of written course work and examination formats, including practical reports and to formulate and give a short group oral presentation.

Intellectual Skills:

- **at Level 3** students are expected to be developing the ability to apply methods and subject knowledge accurately and carefully to a given problem as appropriate to the basic biological science, chemistry and mathematics.

Independent and Team Work:

- **at Level 3** students are expected to be developing the ability to (a) manage time effectively and prioritise tasks so as to meet deadlines and (b) work effectively with other members of a group in problem solving tasks and practical laboratory work.

Self Evaluation and Career Management

- at Level 3 students are expected to be developing the ability to evaluate their own strengths and weaknesses in the subjects studied and their practice; be aware of the undergraduate degrees available within the School of Life Sciences and of the broad career opportunities available from them.

(Learning outcomes at **levels 4, 5 and 6** will be dependent on the degree pathway studied.)

Teaching, Learning and Assessment Methods

Learning
Each module has its own combination of learning achieved via tutor-directed and self-directed activities that together with student-centred learning promote engagement with the subject material. Many modules make use of the online learning environment Blackboard to provide a learning resource, for example by holding presentations, documents and web links.

Teaching
At Level 3, the modules provide core knowledge and skills across the life sciences; most of the Level 3 programme is common across the School's Foundation year programme with the exception of two pathway-specific modules (FLSF306 and FLSF307) for which registration is dependent on the degree pathway and exit award for which the student has enrolled. In general, modules are delivered using combinations of lectures, tutorials, practical work, problem solving and computer-based exercises and student-centred learning.

Assessment
Modules are assessed using a variety of coursework and examination components. Some modules within the foundation programme are assessed entirely by course work whereas others will have an exam component which typically accounts for 50% of the module marks. Assessment methods for course work are varied and include essays, practical work, reports, group work and presentations. This variety enables students to develop skills that will prove useful in employment.

Course Structure
This section shows the core and option modules available as part of the course and their credit value. Full-time Undergraduate students study 120 credits (or 8 modules of 15 credits per year.

Credit Level 3

Code	Title	Status	Value

FSLF301	Processes in Biology	Core	30
FSLF302	Chemistry for Life Sciences	Core	30
FSLF303	Introductory Physiology & Anatomy	Core	15
FSLF304	Maths & Physical Sciences for Life Sciences	Core	15
FSLF305	Academic Skills for Life Sciences	Core	15
FSLF306	Perspectives in Healthcare	Option	15*
OR			
FSLF307	Bioscience in Action	Option	15*

*Option module is dependent on target award

Credit Level 4
Modules studied at levels 4, 5 and 6 will be dependent on the degree pathway studied.

Academic Regulations
The Foundation year, its associated degree programme and its intermediate awards operate in accordance with the University's Academic Regulations and the *Framework for Higher Education Qualifications in England, Wales and Northern Ireland* published by the Quality Assurance Agency for Higher Education (QAA) in 2008.

All students should make sure that they access a copy of the current edition of the general University handbook called ***Essential Westminster 2011/12*** 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*.

A *pass* in a module is achieved when the overall mark is greater than or equal to 40%; with at least 30% in the final assessment and any qualifying marks and/or sets achieved as detailed in the module handbook.

Condoned Credit at Level 3 and Level 4
A student may be awarded condoned credit at Levels 3 and 4 only, where he/she has achieved:

a) an overall module mark of greater than or equal to 30% but less than 40%;
b) an overall mark of 40% or greater but not reached the required qualifying mark(s) and/or qualifying set(s) as detailed in the module handbook; and
c) attempted all referred assessment as offered by the Assessment Board.

Where a student, following a referral opportunity, is awarded condoned credit, the recorded module mark will be capped at 39%. Condoned credit will count towards any credit limits for specified awards. Where a student is awarded condoned credit in a module but subsequently achieves an overall pass within a retake module, credit may contribute only once to an award.

Progression
To progress from Level 3 to Level 4 in fully time study a student must pass or have condoned a total of 120 credits. You must score an average mark of 40% across all 120 credits with no more than 45 credits being condoned. In addition a student must achieve a pass (40 %) in the two 30 credit core modules FSLF301 and FSLF302. To progress from Level 4 to Level 5 in full time study, a student must achieve an average of 40% across 120 credits; to progress from Level 5 to Level 6 full-time study, a student must pass at least 165 credits, including 75 credits at Level 5.

Award

To qualify for the award of BSc(Hons) in a named award, a student must:

a) obtained at least 480 credits including:
   - passed 75 credits at Level 4 or higher and achieved at least a condoned credit in each of the remaining modules worth 45 credits at Level 4; and
   - passed a minimum of 120 Credits at Level 5 or higher; and
   - passed a minimum of 120 credits at Level 6 or higher.

b) attempted modules with a maximum value of 330 credits at Levels 5 and 6;and

c) satisfied the requirements contained within any course specific regulations for the relevant course Scheme.

The class of the Honours degree awarded is decided by two criteria: the average of the best 105 credits passed at Level 6 being in the range of the class to be awarded, and the average of the next best 105 credits passed at Levels 5 and 6 provided the next best 105 credits passed are no more than one classification below this.

Support for Students

On arrival, an induction programme will introduce students to the staff responsible for the course, the campus on which they will be studying, the Library and IT facilities and to the School Registry. Students will be provided with the Course Handbook, which provides detailed information about the course. Students are allocated a personal tutor who can provide advice and guidance on academic matters.

During the first week of the Foundation year, students are allocated a personal tutor who can provide advice and guidance on academic matters. In the first year of a student's BSc (Hons) programme the Academic Tutorial Scheme will provide tutor group academic tutorial sessions where there will be the opportunity to discuss how your course is progressing, review returned course work, and consider areas we have identified as important for success. The scheme continues throughout your programme of study at the University with some tutor group meetings at longer intervals. The university offers students a great deal of support including study skills, academic support, financial, personal and career advice and the academic tutorial scheme will help you to access these if necessary.
Your academic English skills will be evaluated at the start of the course and if you require additional support will be provided at Level 3 and 4 via two English support modules (this will become your elective module at Level 4). Additional numeracy support is also available within the School.

Learning support includes the Library which, across its four sites, holds print collections of 356,000 printed books, 29,000 print and e-journals, over 45,000 electronic resources (databases, e-journals, e-books). Access to all resources is facilitated through Library Search, a new online service.

There are over 3,500 computers spread over the four University campuses available for students use. The University uses a Virtual Learning Environment called Blackboard where students can access course materials and communicate with staff and other students via message boards.

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

Reference Points for the course

Internally
The University of Westminster's Mission Statement, Quality Assurance Handbook and Modular Framework inform the programme's establishment of quality and good practice, together with Teaching & Learning Policy statements.

A key element in this programme is the provision of both a broad subject range of modules and challenging research Projects. Delivery of such a programme is linked to the research expertise of the academic staff of the School of Life Sciences.

Externally
The appropriate QAA Benchmark statements describe the skills and attributes that Honours graduates in a particular area should possess.
The South East England Consortium (SEEC) of 37 HE institutions has produced a set of Level descriptors, the use of which the University has adopted as good practice throughout its courses.

Quality Management and Enhancement

Course approval, monitoring and review
The course was initially approved by a University Validation Panel in 1997. The Panel included internal peers from the University and external subject specialists from academia, the Institute of Biomedical Science (the professional body for Biomedical Scientists), and industry to ensure the comparability of the course to those offered in other Universities and the relevance to employers. Periodic Course Review helps to ensure that the curriculum is up-to-date and that the skills gained on the course continue to be relevant to employers.

The course is monitored each year by the School 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 the outcomes from each Course Committee, evidence of student progression and achievement and the reports from External Examiners, to evaluate the effectiveness of the course. The Annual Monitoring Sub-Committee considers the School action plans resulting from this process and the outcomes are reported to the Academic Council, which has overall responsibility for the maintenance of quality and standards in the University.

Student involvement in Quality Assurance and Enhancement
Student feedback is important to the University and student views are taken seriously. Student feedback is gathered in a variety of ways. The most formal mechanism for feedback on the course is the Course Committee. Student representatives will be elected to sit on the Committee to represent the views of their peer group in various discussions. The University and the Students' Union work together to provide a full induction to the role of the Course Committee.
All students are invited to complete a Module Feedback 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. The University also has an annual Student Experience Survey which elicits feedback from students about their course and University experience.

Students meet with Review Panels when the periodic review of the course is conducted to provide oral feedback on their experience on the course. Student feedback from Course Committees is part of the Schools' quality assurance evidence base.

For more information about this course you may contact: Admissions Tutor for the School of Life Sciences; Jennifer Mackenzie; telephone 0207 911 5000 extension 65480. The School of Life Sciences web pages, accessible through www.westminster.ac.uk.
Please note – This programme specification provides a concise summary of the main features of the course and the learning outcomes that a student might reasonably be expected to achieve and demonstrate if s/he takes full advantage of the learning opportunities that are provided. This specification should be read in conjunction with the Guide to the Life Sciences Undergraduate Modular Scheme, your specific Course Handbook provided to students and Module Handbooks which provide more detailed information on the specific learning outcomes, content, teaching, learning and assessment methods for each module.