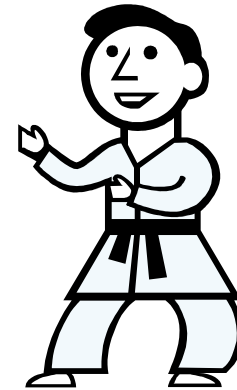


Masters Programmes and Projects

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Goals of This Talk

- To cover the educational aims and outcomes of Masters degrees:
 - at the University of Southampton
 - in the UK, and the EU
- To relate these aims to Masters projects
- To advise you on how to write Masters level reports and your MSc dissertation





Sources



- The University of Southampton Quality Handbook describes the Masters degrees we offer

http://www.soton.ac.uk/quality/approval/masters_degree.html

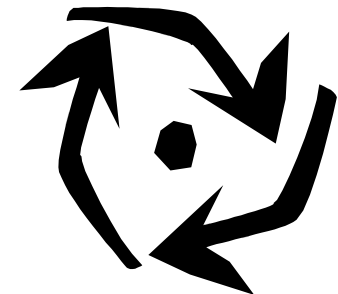
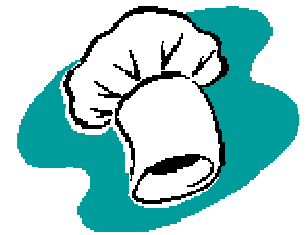
- Our standards are, we believe, compatible with those of the English, UK and European Qualifications Frameworks

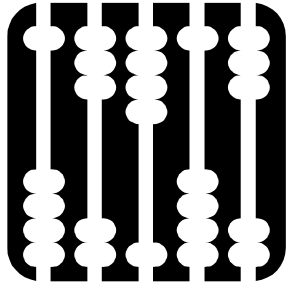
<http://www.qaa.ac.uk/academicinfrastructure/fheq/default.asp>

http://www.qca.org.uk/qca_19302.aspx

Bologna Process

- Nearly 50 countries have now signed the Bologna Treaty which aims to create a European Higher Education Area (EHEA)
 - common standards promote mobility, increase employability, and improve the quality of life
- The EHEA has three cycles of higher education:
 - in the UK these lead to Bachelor's, Master's and Doctor's degrees
 - the “Dublin descriptors” provide standard descriptions of the learning outcomes of each cycle
 - part of the EHEA qualifications framework





Masters Degree Outcomes

- These standards all define the abilities of Masters students in similar ways
- The UoS and NQF, for example, expect
 - systematic/comprehensive understanding
 - at the forefront of the discipline/profession
 - originality in the application of knowledge
 - the ability to learn independently and
 - continue developing knowledge/skills ...



... continued



- understanding/evaluation of research methodologies and techniques
- critique/evaluation of current research
- where appropriate, propose new hypotheses

- judgement/decision-making/responsibility
- deal systematically/creatively with complex and unpredictable situations/incomplete data
- self-direction/originality in solving problems
- communication to specialists/non-specialists

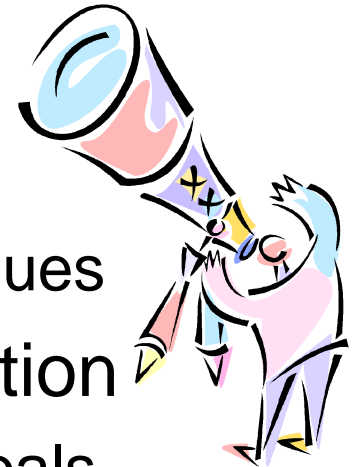
Masters Projects and Reports

- All your reports should, where possible:
 - show advanced knowledge/understanding
 - apply this knowledge with confidence to solve problems, preferably in a creative/original way
 - cite relevant research/standards/white papers
 - critically evaluate the literature/state of the art
 - reflect on your own achievements



Relative to Undergraduate Projects

- Masters project reports and dissertations should contain an extended survey of relevant literature
- Show innovation/creativity in the application of your knowledge to solve the problems that arise
- Emphasise your use of advanced/state of the art tools/technologies/techniques
 - avoid or summarise standard material/techniques
- Include critical, comparative & self-evaluation
 - relative to the literature/state of the art/your goals



Finally

- Note that MSc projects have a higher pass mark (50%) than undergraduate projects
- Make sure you achieve this
 - aim high
 - manage your time
 - listen carefully to your supervisor

