# GFP PROGRAM SPECIFICATION

**A'SHARQIYAH UNIVERSITY**
جامعة الشرقية

## General Foundation Program

| | |
|---|---|
| **Awarding Institution** | A'Sharqiyah University |
| **College / Centre** | CLFS – Center for Languages and Foundation Studies |
| **Program Title** | GFP – General Foundation Program |
| **Final Award** | GFP Completion |
| **Credit hours** | 0 – See Appendix A for ROSQA Equivalence |
| **Mode of Study** | Full time |
| **Language of Study** | English and Arabic |
| **Benchmarks** | Local<br><br>• Oman Academic Standards for General Foundation Programs<br>• Math – Math Department in College of Applied Science<br>• ROSQA<br><br>International<br>• English – APTIS Testing – British Council<br>• CEFR/IELTS level norms<br>• IT (Computing) – KUDOS – SPARK/IC3 |
| **Entry requirements** | • To enter ASU's GFP, Omani students must have successfully completed the Certificate of General Diploma or equivalent in all courses.<br>• Non-Omani students are admitted if their General Secondary Certificate is equivalent to the Omani Certificate of General Diploma, and after receiving approval from the Ministry of Education.<br>• Any non-ASU or newly joining student with TOEFL 500 or IELTS 5 is exempted from English in GFP. Similarly, an IC3 certificate or ICDL will exempt students from IT in GFP<br>• Professional students in the public or private sector who have TOEFL, IELTS or other relevant training certificates are interviewed by the CLFS Director who assesses their English<br>• To be exempt from any GFP course/s, an equivalency system is used based on prior learning analysis (ROSQA)<br>• Entry level within the GFP English, Math, and IT courses is dependent on the student's initial placement test (described in programme outline below) results in all areas. |
| **Minimum period of registration** | FULL-TIME:1 Semester |
| **Maximum period of registration** | FULL-TIME: 3 years |
| **Date specification produced** | September 2016 |
| **Date specification last reviewed** | (15/09/2020) |

### 1. About the Center of Languages and Foundation Studies

The Center for Language and Foundation Studies (CLFS) at A'Sharqiyah University teaches all components of the GFP to students who require GFP as part of their higher education pathway to college. CLFS also provides specialized English language courses to those studying in the various colleges at ASU. The GFP at ASU is designed to ensure students achieve specific learning outcomes that meet Oman Academic Accreditation Authority (OAAA) standards. All activity GFP students engage in are in line with ASU's vision, mission and values.

### 2. Program Outline

The General Foundation Program (GFP) at A'Sharqiyah University consists of four components: English, Mathematics, Information Technology (IT) and Study Skills. Study Skills is embedded within the English Math and IT courses. All newly-registered students of the GFP take a placement test during the orientation week of the first and second semesters. Based on placement test results, students are assigned one of the three levels of English: Level 1, Level 2 or Level 3 (Level 3 being the exit level for English). As determined by their initial level, students have to follow the prescribed study path that will lead to a score of at least 60%, which represents the exit requirement for each stage/course of the Foundation Program, including the exit levels for English, Math and IT. A similar exit requirement of 60% applies to both IT and Mathematics. There are two levels for IT. There are three components in Mathematics: Basic Mathematics, which is a pre-requisite, for either Pure Mathematics or Applied Mathematics, depending on the academic specializations of the students' selected college.
Students must study 20 hours English Per week, +(if level 2 and above) 3 Hours IT and/or 4 Hours Math per week)

### 3. Program Aim/s

**English**:
- To extend the English language skills of the student to enable active participation in their postsecondary or higher education studies.

**Math**
- To ensure that students are equipped with the mathematical understanding and skills necessary to meet the cognitive and practical requirements of postsecondary or higher education studies in a variety of disciplines.

**Computing & IT (referred to as IT in this document)**
- To ensure that students are equipped with the computing and IT understanding and skills necessary to source, process and communicate information related to their postsecondary or higher education studies in a variety of

disciplines **General Study Skills**
- To equip students with fundamental study and academic skills needed for postsecondary or higher education studies.

## 4. PROGRAMME LEARNING OUTCOMES (Definitive)

| | English (Exit Level) Learning Outcomes[1] Upon successful completion of the program, a GFP student will be able to: | Curriculum Areas | |
|---|---|---|---|
| (pls note the font changes indicate English how are as of the General Study Skills are *implicit* within the English PLOs. They are also *explicit* in each GFP course Portfolio.) | a) ..*actively participate in a discussion* on a topic relevant to their studies by asking questions, agreeing/disagreeing, asking for clarification, sharing information, *expressing and asking for opinions*. | | |
| | b) ..*paraphrase information* (orally or in writing) from a written or spoken text. | Speaking | |
| | c) ..*prepare and deliver a talk* of at least 5 minutes. *Use library resources in preparing the talk, speak clearly and confidently, make eye contact and use body language to support the delivery of ideas*. | | |
| | d) …write texts of a minimum of 250 words, showing control of layout, organization, punctuation, spelling, sentence structure, grammar and vocabulary. | | The 4 English Skills – All Skills Classes |
| | e) ..produce a written report of a minimum of 500 words showing evidence of *research*, notetaking, *review and revision of work, paraphrasing, summarizing, use of quotations and use of references*. | Writing | |
| | f) ..*take notes* and respond to questions about the *topic, main ideas, details* and opinions or arguments from an extended listening text(e.g. lecture, news broadcast) | | |
| | g) ..follow spoken instructions in order to carry out a task with a number of stages. | | |
| | h) ..listen to a conversation between two or more speakers and be able to answer questions in relation to context, relationship between speakers, register (e.g. formal or informal). | Listening | |
| | i) ..read a one to two page text and identify the main idea(s) and *extract specific information* in a given period of time. | | |
| | j) ..read an extensive text broadly relevant to the student's area of study (minimum three pages) and respond to questions that require *analytical skills,* e.g. prediction, deduction, inference. | Reading | |
| | k) ..utilise a wide range and complexity of English grammar rules in order to aid understanding and communication in higher education | Grammar | |
| | l) ..utilise a wide range and complexity vocabulary in order to aid understanding and communication | Lexis | The 4 English Language Systems – All Core Classes |
| | m) ..utilise a range of pronunciation features with adequate control and be understood throughout a talk. | Phonology | |
| | n) ..present information, either spoken or written in a coherent and organised manner so there is clear overall communicative progression | Discourse | |
| *General* | *..how to keep a course Portfolio (English)* | | |
| *Study Skills* | | *All English Students* | |

[1]LOs here are exit level outcome areas – They are further described and broken down in each level.

| Math (pls note, LO areas for General Study Skills are embedded in Math Portfolio so pls see the LO areas below) | **Math, IT and General Study Skills (Exit Level) Learning Outcome Areas[2]**<br>**Upon successful completion of the program, a GFP student will be able to:**<br>**(Basic Math Learning Outcomes) – All students[3]**<br>o) …describe real numbers, subsets and their properties<br>p) …apply exponents, polynomials and rational expressions<br>q) ..solve linear equations, quadratic equations and inequalities<br>r) …understand and apply Cartesian coordinates and algebraic geometry<br>s)…recognize the trigonometric functions and use trigonometric identities.<br>**Pure Math Learning Outcomes**<br>ti) …construct and express functions and function graphs<br>tii) …simplify and apply exponential and logarithmic functions<br>ui) …solve and simplify trigonometric and graph circular functions<br>uii) …verify and prove trigonometric identities<br>v) … define and formulate statistics and probability concepts. | **Engineering and Applied Science Students** |
| | **(Basic Math Learning Outcomes) – All students**<br>o) …describe real numbers, subsets and their properties<br>p) …apply exponents, polynomials and rational expressions<br>q) …solve linear equations, quadratic equations and inequalities<br>r) …understand and apply Cartesian coordinates and algebraic geometry<br>s)…recognize the trigonometric functions and use trigonometric identities.<br>**Applied Math Learning Outcomes**<br>ti) …construct and express functions and functions  graphs<br>tii)..interpret linear and quadratic functions with graphically and algebraically<br>tiii) …simplify, convert and apply exponential and logarithmic functions<br>u) …solve systems of linear equations and inequalities<br>v) …organize and present statistics and probability data | **Business Students** |
| _General Study Skills_ | ..how to keep a course Portfolio (Math) | All Math Students |
| **IT** | w) …understand computer fundamentals and information networks and apply this knowledge in real life<br>x) …understand and be familiar with the basic principles of operation of a personal computer system and with basic principles of file management using a computer<br>yi) …utilize the essential skills that they need to create good quality documentation including Excel, Word and PowerPoint during their studies<br>yii) …equip students with the essential skills that they need to create professional presentations during their studies<br>z) …introduce students to the fundamentals of computer networks and communication systems which assist in providing the students with the tools for searching and accessing information remotely and using electronic mails for communicating with other people | **All students** |

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[2]Pls note – there are more detailed Course Learning Outcomes, Delivery Plans, Assessment Specifications and Assessment Maps for each course which are derived from the PLOs - See the Course File and the Teacher Course Folder

[3] Math is linear and modular ∴ all LO areas are described as exit standards are dependent on College major

| General Study Skills | ..how to keep a course Portfolio (IT) | All IT Students |
|---|---|---|
| General *StudySkills* | 1) understand and know how to manage their time and accept responsibility<br>2) understand and know how to deploy basic research skills<br>3) understand and know how to take academic notes<br>4) understand and know how to give effective presentations | **Explicit in all Portfolio areas and implicit in all course areas for all GFP students** |

## 5. PROGRAM STRUCTURE

***Students must pass the required courses for the program by completing Required and Elective courses listed in sections 5.1 to 5.5 below:***

| 5.1 | **GFP Requirements:** | |
|---|---|---|

| Course Code | Course Title | Pre-Requisites (P) |
|---|---|---|
| FPPI002 | Level 1 | (GFP Entry Standards/ GFP Placement Test |
| FPIN003 | Level 2 | FPIN002(Level 1) or equivalent |
| FPAD004 | Level 3 | FPAD003 (Level 2) or equivalent |
| FPIT001/ FPIT001A | IT 1 | GFP Entry Standards/ GFP Placement Test |
| FPIT002/ FPIT002A | IT 2 | FPIT001 (IT1) or equivalent |
| FPBM001/ FPBM001A | Basic Math | GFP Entry Standards/ GFP Placement Test |

| 5.2 | **College Requirements:** | |
|---|---|---|

| Course Code | Course Title | Pre-Requisites (P) |
|---|---|---|
| FPPM002/ FPPM002A | GFP Pure Math | FPBM001(P)/ FPBM001A(P) |
| FPAM003/ FPAM003A | GFP Applied Math | FPBM001(P)/ FPBM001A(P) |

## 6. PROGRAM REFERENCE POINTS

This Program has been designed with reference to:

- The program is designed in line with OAAA guidance that ROSQA is used to aid programme design, without credit points awarded. See Appendix A.
- English courses are also referenced against the Common European Framework (CEFR) and IELTS bands. Please see the Foundation Mapping document for more details.
- English, Math, and IT courses reference their learning outcomes against the learning outcomes in the OAAA GFP Standards. Please see the OAAA GFP Standards for more details.
- IT courses are mapped against the standards above, and in addition, have been mapped against IC3 course delivery.
- Qualifications for teaching in the program are referenced against the OAAA GFP Standards and updated MoHE stipulations for hiring staff according to the Oman NQF. Please see those documents separately.

## 7. TEACHING AND LEARNING METHODS (indicative)

CLFS deploys a student-centered approach in all of its classrooms. This is achieved through the communicative approach in teaching. Staff use the 5-star teaching method (students sit in 5 groups of 5) in all classrooms where this is possible (exception is IT because computers are set in rows). There are a variety of teaching methods within the communicative approach, for example, TTT (Test-Teach-Test), Text-Based, TBL (Task-Based Learning), etc., and teachers are encouraged to decide the best approach/method on principled eclecticism.

## 8. ASSESSMENT METHODS (Indicative)

There are a variety of formative and summative assessments used in Foundation:
- standardized tests
- exams (institution-made through Exam Committees)
- observations (in-class participation)
- portfolios
- assignments (group or individual)
- oral presentations, and/or
- evaluated performances
- self-evaluation of in-course progress
- evaluation of post-course success

## 9. CAREER and STUDY OPPORTUNITIES

The GFP offers alumni the opportunity to support students in GFP through collaboration with the Student Support Center. These positions are paid and the students are given training on how to deliver tutoring.

## 10. STUDENT SUPPORT

Students attend an orientation program at the start of their studies. They are supported by their teachers and a Course Coordinator is also available to advise on course or program-related queries.

Academic advising is an essential element in the educational process. GFP Students have academic advisors, which are not their course teachers, who help them in their academic progress. The academic advisor assists students in obtaining a well-balanced education and in interpreting university policies and procedures. It is ultimately the students' individual responsibility for achieving the learning outcomes, meeting course requirements, and making sufficient academic progress to exit the program.

Students have access to the University's library with a range of reading materials, online resources and study support. In addition, as above, the Student Support Center is available for students to access.

The University's Student Affairs Office supports students in adjusting to university life and advises on issues such as finance, regulations, legal matters, accommodation, transportation, disabilities and career guidance. Opportunities are also provided for students to participate in various extra-curricular activities.

The Student Advisory Council is also an important source of support and guidance, along with the class representatives and the CLFS Student Committee.

The University has a Student Fund which considers applications on a case by case basis.

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## 11. PROGRAM STRUCTURE DIAGRAM (Indicative)

### Semesters

| Fall | Spring | Summer |
|---|---|---|
| FPPI002<br>Pre-Intermediate English<br>0 Credits | FPIN003<br>Intermediate English<br>0 Credits | FPIAD004<br>Advanced English<br>0 Credits |
| | FPBM001/FPBM001A<br>Basic Math<br>0 Credits | FPAP003/FPAP003A<br>Applied Math<br>0 Credits OR<br>FPPM002/FPPM002A<br>Pure Math<br>0 Credits |
| | FPIT001/FPIT001A<br>IT1<br>0 Credits | FPIT002/FPIT002A<br>IT2<br>0 Credits |

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## 12. MAPPING of ASSESSMENT of LEARNING OUTCOMES GFP[4]

**KEY:** | F | = Formative assessment | S | = Summative assessment | FS | = Formative AND Summative assessment

| Upon completion of the program, students will be able to: REQUIRED COURSES: | FPPI00 2 | FPINI00 3 | FPAD00 4 | FPIT00 1 | FPIT00 2 | FPBM00 1 | FPPM00 2 | FPAM00 3 | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING** | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| a) ...*actively participate in a discussion* on a topic relevant to their studies by asking questions, agreeing/disagreeing, asking for clarification, sharing information, *expressing and asking for opinions*. | FS | FS | FS | | | | | | | | | |
| b) ...*paraphrase information* (orally or in writing) from a written or spoken text. | FS | FS | FS | | | | | | | | | |
| c) ..*prepare and deliver a talk* of at least 5 minutes*. Use library resources in .preparing the talk, speak clearly and confidently, make eye contact and use body language to support the delivery of ideas*. | | FS | FS | | | | | | | | | |
| d) …write texts of a minimum of 250 words, showing control of layout, organization, punctuation, spelling, sentence structure, grammar and vocabulary. | | | FS | | | | | | | | | |
| e) ...produce a written report of a minimum of 500 words showing evidence of *research*, notetaking, *review and revision of work, paraphrasing, summarizing, use of quotations and use of references*. | | | FS | | | | | | | | | |
| f) ...*take notes* and respond to questions about the *topic, main ideas, details* and opinions or arguments from an extended listening text(e.g. lecture, news broadcast) | FS | FS | FS | FS | FS | FS | FS | FS | | | | |
| g) ...follow spoken instructions in order to carry out a task with a number of stages. | FS | FS | FS | FS | FS | FS | FS | FS | | | | |
| h) ...listen to a conversation between two or more speakers and be able to answer questions in relation to context, relationship between speakers, register (e.g. formal or informal). | FS | FS | FS | | | | | | | | | |

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[4]Pls note – there are detailed Course Learning Outcomes, Delivery Plans, Assessment Specifications and Assessment Maps for each course which are derived from the PLOs - See the Course File and the Teacher Course Folder

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| Upon completion of the program, students will be able to: **REQUIRED COURSES:** | FPPI002 | FPINI003 | FPAD004 | FPIT001 | FPIT002 | FPBM001 | FPPM002 | FPAM003 | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **i)** ...read a one to two page text and identify the main idea(s) and *extract specific information* in a given period of time. | | FS | FS | | | | | | | | | |
| j) ...read an extensive text broadly relevant to the student's area of study (minimum three pages) and respond to questions that require *analytical skills,* e.g. prediction, deduction, inference. | | | FS | | | | | | | | | |
| k) ...utilise a wide range and complexity of English grammar rules in order to aid understanding and communication in higher education | FS | FS | FS | | | | | | | | | |
| l) ...utilise a wide range and complexity vocabulary in order to aid understanding and communication | FS | FS | FS | | | | | | | | | |
| m) ...utilise a range of pronunciation features with adequate control and be understood throughout a talk. | FS | FS | FS | | | | | | | | | |
| n) ...present information, either spoken or written in a coherent and organised manner so there is clear overall communicative progression. | FS | FS | FS | | | | | | | | | |
| o) ...describe real numbers, subsets and their properties | | | | | | FS | | | | | | |
| p) …apply exponents, polynomials and rational expressions | | | | | | FS | | | | | | |
| q) ... solve linear equations, quadratic equations and inequalities | | | | | | FS | | | | | | |
| r) …understand and apply Cartesian coordinates and algebraic geometry | | | | | | FS | | | | | | |
| s)…recognize the trigonometric functions and use trigonometric identities. | | | | | | FS | | | | | | |
| ti) …construct and express functions and function graphs | | | | | | | FS | | | | | |
| tii) …simplify and apply exponential and logarithmic functions | | | | | | | FS | | | | | |
| ui) …solve and simplify trigonometric and graph circular functions | | | | | | | FS | | | | | |

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| Upon completion of the program, students will be able to: | REQUIRED COURSES: | FPPI002 | FPINI003 | FPAD004 | FPIT001 | FPIT002 | FPBM001 | FPPM002 | FPAM003 | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| uii)…verify and prove trigonometric identities | | | | | | | | FS | | | | | |
| v) …define and formulate statistics and probability concepts. | | | | | | | | FS | | | | | |
| ti) …construct and express functions and functions graphs | | | | | | | | | FS | | | | |
| tii) … interpret linear and quadratic functions with graphically and algebraically | | | | | | | | | FS | | | | |
| tiii) …simplify, convert and apply exponential and logarithmic functions | | | | | | | | | FS | | | | |
| u) …solve systems of linear equations and inequalities | | | | | | | | | FS | | | | |
| v) …organize and present statistics and probability data | | | | | | | | | FS | | | | |
| w) …understand computer fundamentals and information networks and apply this knowledge in real life | | | F | F | | | | | | | | | |
| x) …understand and be familiar with the basic principles of operation of a personal computer system and with basic principles of file management using a computer | | | | | FS | | | | | | | | |
| yi) …utilize the essential skills that they need to create good quality documentation including Excel, Word and PowerPoint during their studies | | | | FS | FS | FS | | | | | | | |
| yii) …equip students with the essential skills that they need to create professional presentations during their studies | | | | | | FS | | | | | | | |
| z) …introduce students to the fundamentals of computer networks and communication systems which assist in providing the students with the tools for searching and accessing information remotely and using electronic mails for communicating with other people | | | | | | FS | | | | | | | |
| 1) understand and know how to manage their time and accept responsibility | | F | F | F | F | F | F | F | F | | | | |
| 2) understand and know how to deploy basic research skills | | F | F | FS | | | | FS | FS | | | | |
| 3) understand and know how to take academic notes | | F | F | F | F | F | F | F | F | | | | |
| 4) understand and know how to give effective presentations | | F | FS | FS | | FS | | | | | | | |

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**Appendix A**

**ROSQA states as a guide that 1 credit point = 10 hours of study**
**ROSQA advises 120 credit points are studied in 1 year.**

∴    **ROSQA implies that 1200 hours of work is covered in 1 year.**

**Assuming a student starts at the lowest level of entry they will be able to complete the programme in 3 semesters.**

| Activity | Hours | Equivalent Credit Points |
|---|---|---|
| English | 900 | 90 |
| IT | 90 | 9 |
| Math | 120 | 12 |
| Office hours (if students avail 5% of hours, this is equal to 6 hours/year) | 120 | .6 |
| Final examinations | 14 | 1.4 |
| Support course activity (English literacy) | 20 | 2 |
| Directed student self-study | 50 (homework) | 5 |
| Total | | 120 |