



## **Flexible Combined Honours**

# **Student Handbook**

**2025 – 2026**

Streatham / St Luke's

Queen's Info point, University of Exeter, Stocker Road, Exeter, EX4 4QD

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WEBSITE: [www.exeter.ac.uk/fch](http://www.exeter.ac.uk/fch)

## **\*BASICS and HELP\***

- Start with this handbook – READ IT NOW! It is just 7 pages long.
- Read the detailed information on the FCH website– especially the lists of modules that you must/can take:  
<https://www.exeter.ac.uk/study/fch/studying/fchexeter/>
- Subject-specific advice and FCH information is provided by academics in each subject area: ‘subject coordinators’. There’s a list here:  
<https://www.exeter.ac.uk/study/fch/people/staff/>

The FCH administrative staff can best help you with programme administration at [fch@exeter.ac.uk](mailto:fch@exeter.ac.uk). The phone number for the Queen’s Info Point is 01392 723570.

For academic and study choice advice:

- Programme Director – Professor Marion Gibson  
[marion.h.gibson@exeter.ac.uk](mailto:marion.h.gibson@exeter.ac.uk)
- Deputy Director - Dr Damien Gaucher [d.gaucher@exeter.ac.uk](mailto:d.gaucher@exeter.ac.uk)

### **General info**

A wide range of enquiries can be made at the Student Information Desk (SID), via the student app MyExeter, phone or email. See  
<http://www.exeter.ac.uk/sid/>

MyExeter will show your timetable, ELE (for module resources and assessment submission points), campus facilities, grades, library and CareerZone information and more:  
<https://www.exeter.ac.uk/students/myexeter/>

The Students’ Guild provides many types of information. See:  
<https://www.exeterguild.org/>

If you need some immediate help you can come to the info points, Director and Deputy Directors, subject or Faculty staff or SID desks.

You can find wellbeing support, including self-help guides, here:  
<https://www.exeter.ac.uk/wellbeing/>

Education Welfare can be contacted at [welfare.fch@exeter.ac.uk](mailto:welfare.fch@exeter.ac.uk)

## **Welcome to your Studies with Flexible Combined Honours!**

**This Handbook contains the basic information you will need to start your studies and includes the simple rules that make FCH work for you. Please read the whole short booklet and get in touch if you have any questions or would like any more information**

### **What is Flexible Combined Honours?**

Flexible Combined Honours (FCH) is a degree programme that lets you combine subjects that would not otherwise be available in combination at Exeter. Most FCH students study two subjects, some three. The degree is overseen by the FCH Board of Studies and FCH Strategy Group: FCH is part of the Humanities, Arts and Social Sciences (HASS) Faculty but stretches across the university so that your subjects can be chosen from one or more of the other Faculties.

### **Your Degree Programme**

FCH delivers the following degree programmes:

- Flexible Combined Honours – 3 years
- Flexible Combined Honours with Study Abroad or Work Abroad or UK Work Experience – 4 years

All are awarded as BA or BSc degrees, as appropriate for the subject combination (more information below). All the programmes are available full- or part-time.

### **How Flexible Is It?**

FCH offers as much study flexibility as possible to you, within the University's rules: so you may be able to change the proportion of your subjects. Discuss it with the FCH Director: we'll need to check implications for your degree title and ensure the academic appropriateness of the programme of study. Note that you must take all compulsory modules in each of your subjects, so in some subjects the amount that you study will be more fixed than others:

<https://www.exeter.ac.uk/study/fch/studying/fchexeter/>

FCH students may also transfer from one FCH programme to another – e.g. to add a year's work placement - but you must talk to the FCH Director well in advance of any proposed change.

If places are available, you may also be able to change one of your subjects as your interests develop. Some changes will not be possible because of restrictions on entry grades, credits and numbers in certain subjects. Any proposed change in subject must be discussed and agreed with Admissions, FCH subject coordinators and the FCH Director. If you're studying two subjects you can explore adding a third, like a language.

For maximum flexibility, look at some of our "pathways": Mediterranean Studies, Middle Eastern Studies, Sustainability, Religion. These allow the taking of themed modules from multiple subjects.

## How Do I Choose My Modules?

Modules for your next year are chosen using an online system in the spring term of the current year. You will be notified in advance by the Queen's education support team, who will send you information about how to use the system for your subjects. **It is vital that you read this!**

You must take all the compulsory modules listed for your subject and read the rules about credits, levels and other requirements of study here:

<https://www.exeter.ac.uk/fch/studying/current-students/rules/> . You can also seek guidance from your Personal Tutor, FCH subject coordinators and the FCH Director and Deputy Directors. If you are considering changing the subjects you study for the following year, or their proportions, you must talk things through before selecting modules. You should note that places on all modules may be restricted due to space, timetable etc.

## Expectations and How to Deal with Problems

As a student, you agree to abide by the general rules of the University: please read these, they are important in setting out expectations, mutual responsibilities and minimum requirements for progress. They cover such areas as:

- Basic academic responsibilities:  
<https://www.exeter.ac.uk/students/administration/academic/>
- What to do if you are ill or must miss a class or an assessment:  
<https://www.exeter.ac.uk/students/infopoints/yourinfopointservices/attendance/>
- How to apply for mitigation (extension) if illness or circumstances affect your ability to complete assessments or exams  
<https://www.exeter.ac.uk/students/infopoints/yourinfopointservices/mitigation/>
- What to do if you want to interrupt your studies or withdraw from study:  
<http://www.exeter.ac.uk/students/administration/rulesandregulations/ug-pgt/interruptionandwithdrawal/>
- What is academic misconduct and how to avoid it:  
<https://www.exeter.ac.uk/students/facultycases/academicconductandpractice/>
- Appeals and complaints:  
<http://www.exeter.ac.uk/students/administration/complaintsandappeals/>
- If students do not fulfil their responsibilities to the University and wider community, disciplinary procedures may be considered. The Disciplinary Procedure of the University is available at:  
<http://www.exeter.ac.uk/students/administration/complaintsandappeals/discipline/>

## Procedures, Terminology, Rules

- **Programme** describes your overall studies.
- Each 120 credits of your programme make up a **stage**. Usually this is completed in one academic year. Often this is referred to as the year you are in, e.g. you are a first-year student.
- For each stage of your programme, you take a range of **modules**. A module is a series of classes or experiences, with assignments. Each module has a code, title and Module Descriptor, setting out details including teaching methods, assessment, etc. The first three letters of the module code refer to the subject, department or Faculty.

Most modules are taught by a combination of *lectures*, *seminars*, *workshops*, *practicals*, *labs* and *tutorials*. In *lectures*, the focus falls on presentation of information and analysis by a subject expert. *Seminars*, *workshops* and *tutorials* provide opportunities for discussion and interaction, often in smaller groups. There may also be *practical* or *lab* classes for sciences.

- Each module has a **credit** value - usually 15 or 30 credits. You **MUST** take 120 credits each year; no more, no less.
- The modules you take each have a **level**, which tells you the relative academic demand of the work. FCH students may take up to 180 level 4 credits within their degree by agreement with the Director. But unless a new subject is being undertaken in stage 2, or there is an academic reason approved by the FCH Director, it is expected that no level 4 (first year) modules will be taken in stage (year) 2. 120 level 6 (stage 3) credits are expected, although a degree may be awarded if a student has at least 90 credits at level 6.

There is further guidance on levels (including in language-learning) here: <https://www.exeter.ac.uk/fch/studying/current-students/rules/> A form must be completed by you and the FCH Director agreeing any lower-level study (available on the webpage listed above).

A detailed source of information about the policies and procedures of the University is the *Teaching Quality Assurance Manual* here: <http://as.exeter.ac.uk/support/admin/staff/qualityassuranceandmonitoring/tqa/manual/>

## Degree Classification, Honours, Degree Titles

The levels of degree classification in the UK are:

- First class
- Upper Second class (2:1)
- Lower Second class (2:2)
- Third class

All classes are 'honours' degrees. You do not need to write a Dissertation or do any additional study to get honours: they are automatically awarded. You pass a stage (year) if you achieve an overall average of 40% and pass a minimum of 90 credits. The overall average is calculated from all your modules, including any you may have failed.

You will receive your results via email following the FCH Assessment, Progression and Awarding Committee (APAC), often referred to as the Exam Board. You will be notified of any failure to progress and the requirement or opportunity to submit new assessments for any modules in the referral/deferral (see below) period after the FCH APAC. The referral/deferral period is late July to late August.

A guide to the terms used about academic progression can be found here, along with information about what happens if a module is failed, and how to retake assessments: <https://www.exeter.ac.uk/about/governance/tqa/apac/>

Details of how FCH degree titles are formulated are here – please read these before the process begins: <https://www.exeter.ac.uk/fch/about/degreetitle/>

As an FCH student, your degree title may be unique to you or to a small group of students; it will be determined by the proportion of credits studied in each of your subjects. During the spring term of your final year, the FCH Director will propose a degree title to you via email. If you are unhappy with the proposal you can talk through desired changes and if these are academically appropriate such changes can be made. Students cannot, however, insist on changes or on a specific title: it is determined by the modules you have taken. Once the title is agreed between you and the Director, the teaching departments are consulted. The departmentally approved titles are presented to the FCH Board of Studies for approval. The FCH Assessment, Progression and Awarding Committee (APAC), often referred to as the Exam Board, may alter degree titles where significant modules have been failed.

Graduation ceremonies are allotted according to the first-named subject of the FCH degree title.

## **Term Dates**

See: <https://www.exeter.ac.uk/undergraduate/questions/termdates/>

The dates given are for standard University terms: however, for some programmes of study the dates of required attendance may vary, e.g. fieldtrips.

## **Study Abroad**

The University offers a variety of study-abroad years (modules in their own right) usually available in the third year of a four-year degree. You should choose Study Abroad through UCAS at entry: places abroad are limited by partner institutions, so we cannot always allocate places abroad after you have begun your studies. The requirement for study abroad is a minimum overall first-year average of 60%. Information about study abroad is at <https://www.exeter.ac.uk/studyabroad/outbound/research/where/> The Research Handbook on this webpage is essential reading.

## **Work Experience**

Faculties provide work experience years (modules in their own right) that can form part of your degree. You can choose this at entry or later (transfers usually take place during the first year, to allow suitable preparation for the industrial experience).

Information about work experience in the UK and abroad is here:

<https://www.exeter.ac.uk/students/careers/jobsandworkplacements/workplacements/>

You'll also find the Careers Zone useful in finding jobs, placements and internships: <http://www.exeter.ac.uk/careers/> Consider working towards the Exeter Award, which covers and documents transferable skills

<https://www.exeter.ac.uk/students/careers/employability-schemes/exeteraward/>

## **Support for Study and with Welfare**

You'll find lots of advice about studying here, including bookable 1-1 support sessions and scheduled classes:

<https://www.exeter.ac.uk/students/studyzone/>

You can get expert help with issues of welfare and the impact of personal issues on your studies from our dedicated Education Welfare team:

[welfare.fch@exeter.ac.uk](mailto:welfare.fch@exeter.ac.uk) Contact them for appointments and advice. The welfare teams can provide one-off support but also a longer-term supportive structure of planning and review to help you through your studies.

## **Student Representation**

The FCH staff team is committed to listening to students' voices and working together to optimise our shared experience of university life and study.

Therefore, FCH has student reps, recruited by the student-led Guild, supported by Faculty engagement officers. These meet in a combined honours student group each year. More information about representation and how to apply to be a student rep can be found on the Guild website:

<https://www.exeterguild.org/academicrepresentation/>

## **Prizes and Commendations**

The FCH Assessment, Progression and Awarding Committee (APAC) awards a £50 prize to two final-year FCH students for academic excellence in BSc science subjects and in BA humanities subjects. Commendations are also awarded to students who achieve excellent results in a stage, complete a stage despite adverse personal circumstances or contribute significantly to the life of their subjects.

**If you have any questions or need any more information about any aspect of FCH, please do ask the administrators or Director.**

**Enjoy your studies!**