

## UNIVERSITY OF BEDFORDSHIRE

### ACADEMIC REGULATIONS 2016/17

#### SECTION 2 AWARDS AND COURSES

##### 2.1 Academic Awards of the University

- 2.1.1 The University establishes academic awards under its degree awarding powers. The arrangements for the establishment of awards and their approval are detailed in the University's Quality Handbook. The awards approved for conferment by the University of Bedfordshire are stated in the Regulations below together with the conferment arrangements.
- 2.1.2 There are curriculum development and academic approval mechanisms to create the courses and programmes of study which lead to those awards. These processes must be approved through the Academic Board as detailed in the Quality Handbook. This material together with other policy and procedures in the Quality Handbook, are the process through which there is confirmation that the University's award standards are met and assurance that the quality of its courses, including the teaching and learning delivered are assured.

##### 2.2 The National Qualifications Framework and University qualification levels

- 2.2.1 For each Academic Award it establishes, the University states a benchmarked definition with reference to the University's qualification framework which is aligned to recognise the QAA Framework for Higher Education Qualifications in England, Wales and Northern Ireland (FHEQ) and uses the credit guidelines prepared through the Quality Assurance Agency QAA - *Higher education credit framework for England: guidance on academic credit arrangements in higher education in England (2008)* see <http://www.qaa.ac.uk/Publications/InformationAndGuidance/> and detailed guidance from the SEEC Southern England Consortium.

###### ***University qualifications and credit framework***

- 2.2.2 The University offers programmes of study leading to credits and award qualifications at the following higher education levels:

Level 0-3 Further Education – Pre Degree  
Level 4 – Higher Education Certificate  
Level 5 – Higher Education Diploma  
Level 6 – Higher Education Honours Degree  
Level 7 – Higher Education Masters  
Level 8 – Higher Education Doctorate

The detailed description of the expectations at levels 4 to 7 is provided within Appendix 2 of the Quality Handbook.

- 2.2.3 The University uses a credit scheme for all of the award qualifications within the academic framework for the Undergraduate Scheme and the Postgraduate Scheme and uses credits in a system of recognition of prior learning and to support student mobility and progression.

- 2.2.4 Regulations on entry with advanced standing, recognition of prior learning and on limitations to the re-use of credit are described in section 3 Admission and Registration, Section 5 Assessment, below and in the Quality Handbook.

### **2.3 Approved Awards of the University**

- 2.3.1 The following academic recognitions are the approved awards of the University of Bedfordshire. In each case the standard of the award is that expected of a student who, having met the relevant admissions requirements, has successfully completed a programme of study to a defined threshold of knowledge and competence, and for a defined range of credits in the University's qualifications and credit framework, as aligned to the National and Regional structures which the University has adopted.
- 2.3.2 Awards are defined with a formal award description and an abbreviated form also specified – eg Higher National Diploma - HND.  
The coverage of an award can be further described and used in designated forms to specify scope and focus of the award - eg Master of Arts – the award being a Masters degree and the designation being “of Arts”.
- 2.3.3 Awards are approved in named and/or unnamed forms, where a title can be added which provides further description of subject area covered and which is approved as part of course approval process. This confirms that the award to be conferred on the student adequately and correctly summarises the successful completion of a particular course of studies. For example Higher National Diploma in Sports Studies; Bachelor of Arts in Graphic Design;
- 2.3.4 Awards may carry classifications or divisions – to give recognition to different standards of student achievement. Permitted classifications are first – 1, upper second - 2.1, lower second - 2.2, third - 3. Permitted divisions are distinction, merit and commendation. Some awards are designated “pass or fail” and carry no further differentiation.
- 2.3.5 Those achieving Undergraduate or Postgraduate awards may use abbreviated forms after their name eg in a professional context *Ms A. N. Other BA(Hons), PGCE, MA*
- 2.3.6 Statements defining each of the University's awards are listed in Appendix 3 and a summary given in the table below. Courses of study may be approved leading to any of the University's approved awards and courses may be designated with more than one award outcome as an intermediate award within an approved course. Awards may be discontinued for the purpose of future courses but will be retained on the University's records, where students have been conferred with such awards.
- 2.3.7 Awards such as Certificate of Higher Education, Diploma of Higher Education, Postgraduate Certificate, Postgraduate Diploma, may be considered as intermediate or exit awards. Where an award is to be used in a named form the requirements, including assessment of learning outcomes, are approved through the course approval process.

#### **Summary table of University awards**

- 2.3.8 The following tables show summary information on University awards and

information on discontinued awards are shown in *Appendix 3 Awards of the University of Bedfordshire*. Credit-rated short courses may lead to awards as follows:

Awards	Abbrev	Credit Levels				Total
		4	5	6	7	
University Certificate	*	60				60
University Diploma	*		60			60
University Certificate of Continuing Professional Development	*		45			45
University Advanced Diploma	*			60		60
University Advanced Professional Certificate	*				30	30

\* Note: an abbreviated form is not approved for these awards

2.3.9 Undergraduate awards - courses may lead to awards as follows:

Awards	Abbrev	Credit Levels					Total
		0/3	4	5	6	7	
Higher National Certificate	HNC		150				150
Certificate in Post- Compulsory Education	CertPCE		60	60			120
Certificate of Higher Education	CertHE		120				120
Higher National Diploma	HND		120	120			240
Diploma in Professional Studies/Practice	DPS DPP		120	120			240
Diploma of Higher Education	DipHE		120	120			240
Foundation Degree	FdA, FdSc,		120	120			240

	FdEng						
Advanced Diploma in Higher Education	AdvDipHE		120	210			330
Professional Graduate Certificate in Education - Post-Compulsory Education	PgCE-PCE				120		120
Professional Graduate Certificate of Education	PgCE				120		120
Professional Graduate Certificate	ProfGrad Cert				60		60
Graduate Certificate	Grad Cert				60		60
Graduate Diploma	GradDip				120		120
Bachelor's Degree (Note: Unclassified)	BA, BSc, BEng		120	120	60		300
Bachelor's Degree with Honours (Note: via extended course)	BA, BSc, BEng	120	120	120	120		480
Bachelor's Degree with Honours	BA, BSc, BEng, LLB (Hons)		120	120	120		360
Bachelor's Degree with Honours (Note: including professional work experience)	BEEd		120	120	240		480
	BOst, (Hons)		120	120	180	60	480
Integrated Master's Degree	MComp MEng MSt		120	120	120	120	480

2.3.10 Postgraduate awards - courses may lead to awards as follows:

		Credit Levels					
Awards	Abbrev	0/3	4	5	6	7	Total

Postgraduate Certificate	PgCert					60	60
Postgraduate Certificate of Education <i>(Note: including professional work experience)</i>	PGCE					60	60
Postgraduate Diploma	PgDip					120	120
Master's Degree	MA,MBA MBM,MSc LLM					180	180
Master of Professional Practice	MProf					180	180

2.3.11 Postgraduate research may lead to awards as follows:

		Credit Rating	
Awards	Abbrev	7	8
Master of Science by research Master of Arts by research	MSc (Res) MA (Res)	*	
Master of Philosophy	MPhil	*	
Professional Doctorates: Doctor of Business Administration Doctor of Education Doctor of Health Related Studies Doctor of Leadership in Children's and Young People's Services Doctor of Osteopathy Doctor of Systemic Practice Doctor of Journalism, Media, Cinema, Television	DBA EdD DProf		*
Doctor of Philosophy	PhD		*
Doctor of Philosophy by publication	PhD		*

Higher Doctorates:			*
Doctor of Laws	LLD		
Doctor of Letters	DLitt		
Doctor of Science	DSc		

## 2.4 Approval of Academic Awards and Qualifications

2.4.1 The Academic Board holds the authority to approve and establish a new qualification and academic award of the University of Bedfordshire. In considering proposals Academic Board consults widely and reviews the internal and external context including the national framework (FHEQ) noting especially the following:

- the potential position of the new award within the national qualifications framework;
- the characteristics and level that would both distinguish the new award from existing University awards and relate it to them; and to the qualifications of other higher education or awarding bodies;
- the potential for new courses and programmes of study under such a new award
- the relationship to existing awards and suitability of existing awards for new courses and programme(s) of study;
- the potential for programme(s) of study capable of leading to this award and likely scale of demand
- the new award's potential for recognition by the academic community, other institutions and professions, applicants, students and employers.

2.4.2 The procedures for submitting a new award, are similar to those required for a new course leading to an existing award, and are contained in the Quality Handbook.

## 2.5 Dual and Joint awards

The University's regulations govern its own academic awards. Courses that lead to dual or multiple awards involve the granting of separate qualifications by each of the awarding bodies involved, based on the same student work. Regardless of the collaborative nature of the programme, responsibility for each award, and its academic standard, remains with the body awarding it.

Joint awards, where a single qualification is granted for successful completion of one course offered collaboratively by two or more awarding bodies, require the University to satisfy itself that it has the legal and regulatory capacity to grant academic awards jointly with the other organisation(s) in question, especially where this involves pooling or combining awarding powers granted within different legal jurisdictions.

A course or programme of study may incorporate credit or awards gained from another awarding body under arrangements for the recognition of prior learning. Credit gained through a course or programme offered through the University of Bedfordshire may be used to gain recognition from a formally designated professional body.

## 2.6 Honorary Degree Awards

2.6.1 Honorary degree awards which may be conferred by the University to selected

persons of distinction are listed below.

Master of Arts (HonMA)  
Master of Business Administration (Hon MBA)  
Master of Education (HonMEd)  
Master of Engineering (HonMEng)  
Master of Laws (HonLLM)  
Master of Letters (HonMLitt)  
Master of Science (HonMSc)

Doctor of Arts (HonA)  
Doctor of Business Administration (HonDBA)  
Doctor of Education (HonDEd)  
Doctor of Engineering (HonDEng)  
Doctor of Laws (HonLLD)  
Doctor of Letters (HonDLitt)  
Doctor of Science (HonDSc)

- 2.6.2 Honorary degrees may be awarded to individuals who have made a significant contribution to the work of the University or have earned distinction, at a regional, national or international level, in a particular field, especially the development or application of an appropriate subject discipline including work more generally aligned to the University's mission. Those receiving an honorary Doctorate are normally expected to have made a contribution to nationally significant developments in a sphere of work or subject discipline. Within this framework the Academic Board defines the detail of the criteria to be used when deciding on the conferment of honorary awards to those who will contribute to the good name and reputation of the University.
- 2.6.3 Honorary degrees are not awarded to current governors, current staff or registered students of the University.
- 2.6.4 The Academic Board is responsible for determining the procedures for the awarding of honorary academic degrees normally through a standing Committee appointed for this purpose. These nominations must include the title of the proposed honorary degree to be awarded, brief biographical details and a statement justifying the nomination in terms of the University's criteria. The decision whether to confer an award and its exact title is taken by this standing Committee.
- 2.6.5 Circumstances may arise when the basis on which the honorary degree was awarded is called into question. Any decision to rescind an honorary award must be made after due investigation and the consideration of the outcome by the Academic Board standing Committee – this is a matter which cannot be delegated via Chair's Action.

## **2.7 University Recognition** **- including titles, memberships and other University recognition**

- 2.7.1 Other University titles and recognition are given on behalf of the University on the authority of the Board of Governors with the approval of the Academic Board.

### ***Honorary University Fellowship***

- 2.7.2 The University may confer Honorary University Fellowships on individuals who have



made a particular contribution to the work or development of the University. Nominations will be considered by the Nominations and Honours Committee of the Board of Governors and decisions on whether to confer an honorary fellowship will be taken by this Committee.

- 2.7.3 Honorary University Fellowships are not conferred on current governors, current staff or registered students of the University.

***Academic titles – Professor, Reader, Fellow***

- 2.7.4 Through its Academic Board, the University may, on advice from designated appointing panels, confer the title of “Professor” or “Reader” or “Research Fellow/Senior Research Fellow” on those staff who meet the criteria confirmed by the Academic Board. The Academic Board may also confer similar titles to individuals who meet the criteria confirmed by Academic Board and identified as “Visiting Professor” or “Visiting Reader” or “Visiting Research Fellow/Visiting Senior Research Fellow”.

***Academic titles – Professor Emeritus***

- 2.7.5 Through its Academic Board, the University may confer an Emeritus title on the retirement of persons who previously carried such academic titles of the University of Bedfordshire.

***Other special recognition and titles***

- 2.7.6 The University may at its discretion grant such other honorary recognition to individuals as it thinks fit after consideration by the Academic Board and/or on recommendation from the Board of Governors.

**2.8 Courses and Programmes of Study leading to Awards**

- 2.8.1 Courses and programmes of study leading to awards of the University are developed through Faculty and University academic structures; considered in light of external academic and professional advice and approved under delegated authority of the Academic Board through its committees. Arrangements for approval of courses and programmes of study are defined in the Quality Handbook and Research Degree Handbook confirmed through Academic Board and its committees.
- 2.8.2 Definitive information about courses is published in the unit information specifications as defined in the Unit Information Form (UIF) and the course information specifications on the Course Information Form (CIF). They, or extracts from them, serve as the basis for the information about courses provided for students in the course information or handbook.
- 2.8.3 The named award to which a course leads reflects the level, nature and subject focus of the course, is determined at course approval, and is included on the award certificate.
- 2.8.4 In constructing courses normally the undergraduate academic year for full-time students comprises 120 credits and the postgraduate academic year for full-time students comprises 180 credits.
- 2.8.5 The curricula of courses may include practice-based learning, entailing theory-based learning and assessment interspersed with learning and assessment in practice-based settings. In conformity with the QAA’s Foundation Degrees Characteristics, the curricula for foundation degrees must include elements of work-based learning and partnership

with employers.

- 2.8.6 A Masters course comprises 180 level 7 credits, which must include a dissertation or equivalent assignment of independent work of value up to 60 credits (20,000 words). Where the dissertation or equivalent unit is less than 60 credits, the remaining units comprising the dissertation stage shall be agreed at course approval and published in the course information or handbook.
- 2.8.7 At course approval, and as a requirement of Professional and Statutory Bodies (PSRBs), the Academic Board may agree that it is a prerequisite for progression that students pass certain specified units, or a certain number of credits at a particular stage or that failure in certain units cannot be condoned. The Academic Board may also exceptionally agree, through the course approval process, course regulations that vary those expressed in the University's Regulations, in order to meet the requirements of a PSRB.
- 2.8.8 At course approval, and as a requirement of PSRBs, the Academic Board may agree a specific attendance policy that applies to a particular course, or one which specifies regular attendance for prescribed parts of the curriculum. Such information is recorded in the course or unit information specifications.

## 2.9 Learning Outcomes for Unnamed Exit Awards from Taught Courses

The University of Bedfordshire makes the following unnamed exit awards from taught courses.

Target award	Possible exit awards	Credit requirements Level			
		4	5	6	7
Foundation degree	Certificate of Higher Education	120			
Bachelor's degree with honours	Certificate of Higher Education	120			
	Diploma of Higher Education	120	120		
	Bachelor's Degree	120	120	60	
Advanced Diploma in Higher Education	Certificate of Higher Education	120			
	Diploma of Higher Education	120	120		
Integrated Master's Degree	Certificate of Higher Education	120			
	Diploma of Higher Education	120	120		
	Bachelor's Degree	120	120	60	
	Bachelor's degree with honours	120	120	120	
Postgraduate Diploma	Postgraduate Certificate				60
Master's degree	Postgraduate Certificate				60
	Postgraduate Diploma				120

No exit awards are allowed from other target awards, but a student may be awarded University credit.

### 2.9.1 Learning outcomes for unnamed CertHE and DipHE

An unnamed CertHE/DipHE is awarded when a student has achieved the requisite number of credits at levels 4 and 5 and no named exit awarded was established when the target bachelor's degree was approved. They are credit at a different level to the target award, and therefore the course learning outcomes, which are set at level 6, are not an appropriate point of reference in determining the learning outcomes the student has achieved.

The following generic learning outcomes have been developed using the FHEQ qualification descriptors, the equivalent descriptors from the Framework for Qualifications of Higher Education Institutions in Scotland and the SEEC level descriptors.

**Certificates of Higher Education are awarded to students at the University of Bedfordshire who are able to:**

- Demonstrate knowledge of the main theories, concepts and principles of their subject area, using appropriate terminology
- Use defined techniques and criteria to interpret and evaluate the reliability and value of information and data in line with expectations of the subject area
- Collect information from a variety of sources, and organise and communicate their findings coherently and accurately
- Apply routine techniques and methods appropriate to the subject area to formulate and evaluate solutions to well-defined problems
- Take responsibility for reflecting on their capabilities within defined parameters, in order to undertake further learning in a structured environment
- Work autonomously and with others to apply the knowledge and skills gained from their learning in contexts which may vary in scope but are well defined

**Diplomas of Higher Education are awarded to students at the University of Bedfordshire who are able to:**

- Demonstrate detailed knowledge and understanding of the scope of their subject area and its established theories, concepts and principles, including awareness of competing perspectives and the limitations of, and current challenges to, knowledge in the subject
- Apply those theories, concepts and principles to new contexts, recognising how the limitations in their knowledge influence their approach
- Critically analyse information and examine data for patterns, evaluating the significance and limitations of their findings
- Use the main methods of enquiry in the subject to collect information, comparing alternative techniques to select the appropriate method, and communicating the findings in a variety of forms appropriate to the audience and the subject area
- Synthesise their knowledge to define problems, generate ideas, formulate arguments and identify and critically evaluate solutions in unfamiliar contexts
- Analyse their own performance and capabilities to determine their individual learning needs and how to develop their skills, using feedback from others and taking the wider needs of the context into account
- Take responsibility and initiative in applying knowledge and a range of skills to working with limited supervision within defined guidelines in contexts of varying complexity and predictability, interacting with others as necessary

**2.9.2 Learning outcomes for unclassified bachelor's degree and unnamed PgCert and PgDip**

These exit awards are at the same level as the target award (bachelor's degree with honours and master's degree respectively) but of a lesser volume.

The following generic learning outcomes have been developed using the FHEQ qualification descriptors.

Bachelor's degrees without honours (unclassified) are awarded to students (having achieved 120 credits at level 4 and 120 credits at level 5) who have passed at least 60 credits but less than 120 credits of the final stage of the bachelor's degree with honours.

**Bachelor's degrees without honours are awarded to students at the University of Bedfordshire who have demonstrated aspects of:**

- a systematic understanding of key aspects of their field of study, including acquisition of coherent and detailed knowledge, at least some of which is at, or informed by, the forefront of defined aspects of a discipline
- an ability to deploy accurately established techniques of analysis and enquiry within a discipline
- conceptual understanding that enables the student:
  - to devise and sustain arguments, and/or to solve problems, using ideas and techniques, some of which are at the forefront of a discipline
  - to describe and comment upon particular aspects of current research, or equivalent advanced scholarship, in the discipline
- an appreciation of the uncertainty, ambiguity and limits of knowledge
- the ability to manage their own learning, and to make use of scholarly reviews and primary sources (for example, refereed research articles and/or original materials appropriate to the discipline).

Typically, holders of the qualification will be able to:

- apply the methods and techniques that they have learned to review, consolidate, extend and apply their knowledge and understanding, and to initiate and carry out projects
- critically evaluate arguments, assumptions, abstract concepts and data (that may be incomplete), to make judgements, and to frame appropriate questions to achieve a solution - or identify a range of solutions - to a problem
- communicate information, ideas, problems and solutions to both specialist and non-specialist audiences.

And holders will have:

- the qualities and transferable skills necessary for employment requiring:
  - the exercise of initiative and personal responsibility decision-making in complex and unpredictable contexts
  - the learning ability needed to undertake appropriate further training of a professional or equivalent nature.

The PgCert is awarded for the achievement of 60 credits at level 7 and the PgDip for 120 credits at level 7. The University's regulations on progression mean that these credits can only be achieved in the 'taught' component of the master's course; students are not able to be awarded credit for the dissertation stage if they have not successfully passed the taught stage.

The PgCert is awarded to students who have successfully completed at least 60 but less than 120 credits at level 7. They are awarded to students who have demonstrated aspects of the descriptor for a master's degree but who have not successfully completed the dissertation stage or demonstrated the increased intensity, complexity and density of study associated with remaining 120 credits of the full master's degree.

**The PgCert is awarded to students at the University of Bedfordshire who have demonstrated aspects of:**

- a critical awareness of current problems and/or new insights, much of which is at, or informed by, the forefront of their academic discipline, field of study or area of professional practice
- understanding of techniques applicable to advanced scholarship
- an understanding of how established techniques of research and enquiry are used to create and interpret knowledge in the discipline
- conceptual understanding that enables the student:
  - to evaluate critically current research and advanced scholarship in the discipline
  - to evaluate methodologies and develop critiques of them.

Typically, holders of the qualification will be able to:

- deal with complex issues, make sound judgements in the absence of complete data, and communicate their conclusions clearly to specialist or non-specialist audiences
- demonstrate self-direction in tackling and solving problems, and act autonomously in planning and implementing tasks at a professional or equivalent level
- continue to advance their knowledge and understanding, and to develop new skills to a high level.

And holders will have:

- the qualities and transferable skills necessary for employment requiring:
  - the exercise of initiative and personal responsibility
  - decision-making in complex and unpredictable situations
  - the independent learning ability required for continuing professional development.

The PgDip is awarded to students who have successfully completed the taught stage of a master's degree, achieving 120 credits at level 7. They are awarded to students who have demonstrated aspects of the descriptor for a master's degree but who have not completed the dissertation stage of the full master's degree and the associated intensity, complexity and density of study

**The PgDip is awarded to students at the University of Bedfordshire who have demonstrated:**

- a systematic understanding of knowledge, and a critical awareness of current problems and/or new insights, much of which is at, or informed by, the forefront of their academic discipline, field of study or area of professional practice
- a comprehensive understanding of techniques applicable to advanced scholarship
- an understanding of how established techniques of research and enquiry are used to create and interpret knowledge in the discipline
- conceptual understanding that enables the student:
  - to evaluate critically current research and advanced scholarship in the discipline
  - to evaluate methodologies and develop critiques of them.

Typically, holders of the qualification will be able to:

- systematically deal with complex issues, make sound judgements in the absence of complete data, and communicate their conclusions clearly to specialist *and* non-specialist audiences
- demonstrate self-direction in tackling and solving problems, and act autonomously in planning and implementing tasks at a professional or equivalent level
- continue to advance their knowledge and understanding, and to develop new skills to a high level.

And holders will have:

- the qualities and transferable skills necessary for employment requiring:

- the exercise of initiative and personal responsibility
- decision-making in complex and unpredictable situations
- the independent learning ability required for continuing professional development.

## **2.10 Language of Instruction**

2.10.1 English is normally the language of instruction and assessment on courses or programmes of study leading to the University's awards.

2.10.2 Exceptions are approved by TQSC through the approval processes where:

2.10.2a the subject of the course is another language;  
2.10.2b the intended learning outcomes of the professional practice element of a course can only be achieved through the medium of another language.

2.10.3 In the latter case, 2.10.2b, the non-English language component must comprise 25% or less of the course, the project or dissertation must be submitted in English, and arrangements must be made for assessments to be moderated in English.