

UNIVERSITY OF BEDFORDSHIRE

ACADEMIC REGULATIONS 2012-13

Revised, approved and authorised by the Academic Board on 20 March 2013. These regulations take effect from 1st August 2012 for all student registrations in the 2012-13 academic year. All students are subject to the regulations in force at any time during the period of study of their studies. These regulations should be read in conjunction with relevant rules, other regulations, codes of conduct and policies, all of which are available from the University's website at www.beds.ac.uk.

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SECTION 1 PREAMBLE AND CONSTITUTION

(Minor corrections in 2012-13 to existing material in section 1)

Constitutional Powers to make awards

- 1.1 The University of Bedfordshire is incorporated as a Higher Education Corporation under the provision of the Education Reform Act 1988 as amended by subsequent legislation. The Higher Education Corporation's members are the University's Board of Governors.
- 1.2 The University of Bedfordshire has been granted degree-awarding powers by the Privy Council. The degree awarding powers have three principal aspects:
 - the power to establish academic awards (degrees, diplomas and certificates) and distinctions, and to determine the terms and conditions for granting and conferring such awards and distinctions;
 - the power to confer academic awards and distinctions on candidates who have pursued approved courses of study and who have passed such examinations or other assessments as required by the University;
 - the power to confer honorary awards on selected persons of distinction.
- 1.3 The University must ensure that the Degrees, Diplomas, Certificates and other academic awards and distinctions granted and conferred by it are comparable in standard with awards granted and conferred throughout the university sector in the United Kingdom; courses approved by the University must be of such an academic standard as to fulfil these requirements. Accordingly, the University subscribes to the UK's Quality Assurance Agency for Higher Education (QAA) and pays due regard to the QAA's Quality Code for Higher Education in the management of the academic quality and the standards of its awards.
- 1.4 In accordance with its Instrument of Government, the University is required to observe all relevant national legislation and regulations. The University's current vision, mission and values statements are set out at www.beds.ac.uk/. It is in this context that the University makes its judgements about the creation and conferment of its awards. The University's Academic Board sets in place Regulations to govern its award-making, standard setting and award conferment processes. These Regulations are subject to regular view by the Academic Board. Any changes will normally come into effect at the start of the subsequent academic year.
- 1.5 The Regulations are supported by detailed codes of practice, procedures and arrangements described in the Quality Handbook which is approved through Academic Board. Through taught course approval, course documents clarify full details of the learning and assessment structures of the course. Students are referred to the appropriate course handbook or other course materials for fuller guidance and detail on the learning and assessment structures of their course or programme of study. Through the Research Degrees Committee in consultation with the University Research Committee are clarified the full details of the learning and assessment arrangements for research students. Appendix 1 to the Regulations provides a glossary and definitions of terms used in the University's regulations and handbooks.
- 1.6 All queries relating to the Regulations should be directed to the Registrar, through the relevant Faculty Registry or the Research Office.

SECTION 2 AWARDS AND COURSES

Major revision for 2012-13

(This section contains previous material in section 3 2011-12 Regulations moved to new Awards & Courses section 2 and amalgamated with academic material taken from previous General Regulations 2011-12 and awards material drawn from past legacy regulations)

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 and 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 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 relevant assessment, 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		120				120
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, FdEng		120	120			240
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				60		60
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)	BEd		120	120	240		480
	BOst, (Hons)		120	120	180	60	480
Integrated Master's Degree	MEng MOst		120	120	120	120	480

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

Awards	Abbrev	Credit Levels					Total
		0/3	4	5	6	7	
Postgraduate Certificate	PGCert					60	60
Postgraduate Certificate of Education (Note: including professional work experience)	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:

Awards	Abbrev	Credit Rating	
		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 Doctor of Letters Doctor of Science	LLD DLitt 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 regulations govern its own academic awards. 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 Qualification Benchmark for Foundation Degrees, the curricula for foundation degrees must include elements of work-based learning, and employers must be involved in their design and monitoring.
- 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). The distribution of credits between the taught stage and 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 compensated. 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 Language of Instruction

- 2.9.1 English is the language of instruction and assessment on courses or programmes of study leading to the University's awards.
- 2.9.2 Exceptions may be approved by the Academic Board through the approval processes where:
- a) the subject of the course is another language; or
 - b) the intended learning outcomes of the professional practice element of a course can only be achieved through the medium of another language.
- 2.9.3 In the latter case, 2.9.2b, 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.

SECTION 3 ADMISSIONS and REGISTRATION

Major revision for 2012-13

(This section contains previous material in section 3 2011-12 Regulations moved to revised admission & registration section 3 and amalgamated with admissions and regulations material taken from previous General Regulations 2011-12)

3.1 Admission of Students to the University

- 3.1.1 Admission is the process through which someone, as an applicant, asks to become a student of the University of Bedfordshire. Each application from someone for admission as a student of the University is considered on its merit, based on the University's admissions policy and our mission and values. The admission of a student to study in the University is at the University's discretion, and is based on the reasonable expectation that the student is able
- to show the ability to study at HE level,
 - to complete the objectives of the course or programme of study and
 - to achieve the standard required for the award.
- 3.1.2 A prospective student or applicant must have already achieved certain educational levels and/or qualifications prior to their entry which align with the academic level of the course and the subject to be studied. These entry qualifications, including the expectations of competence in English are set by the Academic Board in line with admissions policy of the University. Before starting on a particular programme of study the applicants may also need to have specific qualifications that prepare them for that course which are set by the Academic Board through the course approval processes.
- 3.1.3 Applicants are admitted to study at the University and can become students of the University of Bedfordshire on condition that:
- they have the necessary entry qualifications and they have completed all the registration, orientation and induction procedures and,
 - they agree to comply with the regulations, rules, codes of conduct, policies and other procedures of the University as approved by the Academic Board and/or the Vice Chancellor and/or the Board of Governors from time to time and,
 - they have paid all the fees as set out in paragraph 3.3.4 below.
- 3.1.4 If someone is under 18 years old when they expect to register and become a student of the University, a formal consent is required from those responsible for the applicant. This must be through a consent form signed by the parent or legal guardian and by someone who is ordinarily resident in the UK to confirm their approval. The person resident in the UK takes responsibility for the student concerned until they are over 18. Where the parent or guardian is not ordinarily resident in the UK, the University requires satisfactory arrangements for supervision to be made prior to the registration of the prospective student.
- 3.1.5 Applicants are required to disclose all facts and information that might be relevant to their application for admission. The University reserves the right to: (i) withdraw any offer of admission to study at the University; or (ii) cancel any acceptance of such an offer where the offer has been made as a result of using false or misleading information, or by the non-disclosure of information that would have affected the decision about the application for admission.
- 3.1.6 The University similarly reserves the right to stop the registration or terminate the studies of a student who is subsequently found to have gained admission by

providing false or misleading information or non-disclosure of information in support of the application. Such students will have no right to a refund of their fees and any credits or awards they have achieved may be withdrawn.

- 3.1.7 The University establishes arrangements for students with disabilities to be supported and assessed as appropriate, and it makes reasonable adjustments as required to enable disabled students to follow the programme of study on which they register. Applicants with a disability are encouraged to declare their disability to the University during the admission process or as soon as possible thereafter.

3.2 Entry Qualifications

- 3.2.1 The University publishes detailed information on the qualifications required for admission to its courses, together with their equivalents www.beds.ac.uk/.
- 3.2.2 Holding the indicated entry qualifications does not guarantee an applicant a place because the numbers of students the University can admit at any particular time may be constrained - eg by externally imposed number limits or the limitations of University resources. The University establishes recruitment targets agreed through Academic Board for its different courses and learning provision and selection processes apply to decide to whom a place will be offered.
- 3.2.3 The minimum benchmark entry qualifications for undergraduate level courses are as follows:
- a) *Integrated Masters, Bachelor's degrees, Diplomas of Higher Education and Certificates of Higher Education:* having two A levels or equivalent;
 - b) *Foundation degrees and Higher National Diplomas:* having one A Level or equivalent;
 - c) *Professional Graduate Certificate of Education and Graduate Diploma:* having an Honours degree

Extended undergraduate degrees have specific entry requirements agreed through the course approval process.

The University may accept evidence of experience in appropriate employment as qualifying the applicant for entry.

- 3.2.4 The minimum benchmark entry qualifications for postgraduate level courses are as follows:
- a) having an Honours degree from a UK university, or equivalent; or
 - b) having exceptionally, evidence of previous advanced study, research or professional experience, which the University accepts as qualifying the applicant for entry.
- 3.2.5 Students, whose previous education has not been delivered through the medium of the English language, are required to demonstrate proficiency in English by the presentation of original certificates as follows for entry to a UG or PG course (excluding specific exceptions for which Academic Board approval has been given):
- a) IELTS overall score of 6.0 with 5.5 in each element

- b) TOEFL IBT with total score of 87 with a minimum of Listening 17, Reading 18, Speaking 20, Writing 17
- c) Pearson Test of English Academic (PTE Academic) – score between 52 and 54 with a minimum of 51 in each band
- d) Cambridge Certificate in Advanced English (CAE), minimum grade C
- e) Cambridge Certificate in Proficiency in English (CPE), minimum grade C
- f) or equivalent**

**The University accepts only the qualifications listed above, and in the event of non-standard qualifications (i.e. those not listed here) the University's Department of Languages and Communication is responsible for determining whether that qualification is equivalent to a standard qualification listed above.

3.2.6 Students may be exempt from the requirement to have a formal English language qualification if they have studied for a first degree in the medium of the English language in a majority English-speaking country, or they have passed one of the following:

- a) 2 GCE A Levels (in English) in discursive subjects validated in the UK – minimum grade D
- b) GCSE/IGCSE or O Level English language grade C or above validated in the UK
- c) Scottish Certificate of Education Standard Grade English, minimum grade C
- d) Scottish Certificate of Education Higher Grade English, minimum grade D
- e) Irish Leaving Certificate – Ordinary Level English, minimum grade C
- f) Irish Leaving Certificate – Higher Level English, minimum grade D
- g) West African Examinations Council School Certificate (WAEC SSCE): Minimum Grade C/6

3.2.7 A list of equivalent English Language qualifications is approved from time to time by the Academic Board. These are listed with other equivalents in detailed entry requirements published by the Registry www.beds.ac.uk/. All students unable to present such certification or equivalent are required to attend English classes before admission onto a course and to the University and reach an appropriate standard in relation to the award for which they register to study.

3.3 Registration as a student of the University

3.3.1 Registration is the process through which someone is confirmed as a student of the University of Bedfordshire. On admission to the University every student must complete registration, and the course or programme of study they want to follow including the "diet" of units they take - is confirmed at registration. Also as part of registration students must provide a declaration acknowledging their obligations to the University.

3.3.2 Students must undertake this process of registration and re-registration annually as and when required during their course or programme of study.

3.3.3 Registration includes a binding contractual commitment by a person, who has chosen to take a course or programme of study at the University to pay the tuition fees due. This commitment takes place when a student signs the registration form or otherwise indicates an intention to be bound by its terms in a way that is acceptable to the University following provision of personal and academic information on line

and/or in person and paying all they owe or a part of the tuition fees with an agreed payment.

- 3.3.4 No person is recognised as being registered as a student of the University and is not a student until:
- a) tuition fees have either been paid in full for the current academic year, or other arrangements have been made for that payment of fees, which are acceptable to the University; and
 - b) all other fees and sums due to the University incurred in the previous academic year or academic period have been discharged in full.

Course Registration

- 3.3.5 All units are offered subject to the constraints of the timetable, the availability of specialist staff, and to any restrictions on the number of students who may be taught on a particular unit. All units are listed in the relevant course handbook or other course material, but are not necessarily offered every year. Course structures are subject to annual review.
- 3.3.6 The establishment, delivery and continuation of a course or programme of study is subject to the availability of viable numbers of students and their continuing attendance. Where the circumstances are reasonable, the University reserves the right to discontinue courses, to divide, discontinue or combine units or classes and to vary the time or place of classes and to alter programmes of study as circumstances may require.
- 3.3.7 The University may exceptionally permit students to register for two courses or programmes of study concurrently. If one of the programmes of study is a research programme, the permission of the Research Degrees Committee is required.
- 3.3.8 There are no maximum time limits in place in the regulations for periods of registration for taught programmes but students are expected to maintain their academic progress, registration and attendance; or have any absence period approved as an agreed interruption to their study on a course. Students are expected to complete their courses within the normal period of time as approved at course approval and as set out in the course handbook eg in the case of professional body requirements.
- 3.3.9 Students are considered to have exited their course of study and registration with the University is concluded, once they have been conferred with an award by the appropriate University Board of Examiners, eg Undergraduate Scheme Board of Examiners.
- 3.3.10 A student may lose the right to continue on a course or programme of study, have their registration with the University cancelled and be made to leave the University:
- a) where the student's academic performance has been considered by a Board of Examiners and, having failed to make sufficient academic progress in their view, there is an academic decision that the student shall not be allowed to continue and remain registered as a student;
 - b) where the student has not completed registration by the published date for end of registration - the continuing student who fails to register normally then has their studies terminated on grounds of absence and assumed withdrawal;

- c) where the student is not in good financial standing, within the meaning of paragraph 4.1 of the General Student Regulations, with the University and has failed to make acceptable arrangements to pay what is owed;
- d) where the student is absent from their course or programme of studies without the agreement of the University and has demonstrably not engaged with their course or programme of studies the student shall not be allowed to continue and remain registered as a student;
- e) where the outcome of the investigation of an academic offence or of the presentation of false or misleading documentation or the non-disclosure of information, is a decision that the student shall not be allowed to continue and remain registered as a student;
- f) where the Vice Chancellor has accepted a recommendation that the student's registration must be terminated on disciplinary grounds under the terms of the Student Code of Conduct.

3.3.11 A student whose studies are terminated and who leaves the University as a consequence of a to f above must formally apply for admission if they wish to return to a course or programme of study with the University and previous circumstances are considered when deciding on that re-admission.

3.4 Attendance and Withdrawal

- 3.4.1 Every student registered with the University on a course or programme is expected to regularly attend classes and other supervised studies; undertake independent and other studies and complete assessment as required by the course definition as confirmed through the course approval process
- 3.4.2 Students are expected to attend all the formal learning opportunities of their course or programme of studies. The University monitors student attendance and it is used as a measure of engagement in studies. A student who does not attend timetabled classes for more than three consecutive days is required to inform the appropriate Faculty Registry Office or the Student Information Desk. A student who is absent between two and seven days through illness must submit a self-certification form; for absences through illness of longer than seven days a student must submit a medical certificate. Students must also observe the reporting requirements of their funding bodies or sponsors as appropriate.
- 3.4.3 A student who fails to attend, without good cause or due notice, the course on which he or she has registered, can be considered to have disengaged from the course or programme of studies. The University can decide to terminate that student's studies, which means cancelling his or her registration so the student is no longer allowed to be on the course or programme of studies with the University.
- 3.4.4 Any attendance policy that applies to a particular course, or one which specifies or requires regular attendance for prescribed parts of the curriculum, is published in the University course information.
- 3.4.5 In exceptional circumstances, students may interrupt their course and return to their study at a future date. The application for interruption must be made through

the appropriate Faculty Registry or the Research Office, considered by academics and other appropriate advice taken before a decision is made. If accepted, the Faculty Registry or the Research Office notifies the student, and as appropriate other internal staff, who inform external organisations including the UK Borders Agency and the Student Loans Company of the new date by which the student is expected to complete the course or programme of study.

- 3.4.6 Where a student has been unable to fulfil the specific regulations of his or her course or programme of study, but has fulfilled the University's academic regulations for progression, the University, on the advice of a Board of Examiners, may agree to withdraw the student from the course or programme of study for which he or she was originally registered, and transfer him or her to an alternative course.
- 3.4.7 A student who is intending to withdraw from their course or programme of study must inform the University using procedures published by the Registry.
- 3.4.8 Where a student withdraws, or if a student's study with the University is terminated and the registration cancelled, the Board of Examiners considers the student's performance and the credits achieved to date and through the relevant Scheme Board confers the highest award for which the student is eligible. A student receiving an award in this way may be subsequently considered for re-admission under the arrangements for recognition of prior learning.

3.5 Recognition of prior learning (RPL)

- 3.5.1 The University may recognise prior learning when such learning can be shown to have delivered the appropriate level and amount of study and to have achieved the intended learning outcomes of a specific unit or part of one of its own courses, thereby preparing the student suitably for subsequent parts of the course.
- 3.5.2 Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) may comprise accreditation of prior certificated learning (RPCL) and/or accreditation of prior experiential or otherwise un-assessed learning (RPEL). Procedures for considering RPL applications are determined by the Academic Board and issued by the Registry – see Recognition of Prior Learning Policy on www.beds.ac.uk/. Recognition of credit must be completed as part of the admissions process and prior to registration on a course or programme of study. A tariff of fees for the consideration of applications for RPEL is issued by the Registry and normally calculated case by case.
- 3.5.3 Credit for prior learning, whether certified or experiential, may count towards the requirements of a named or unnamed award up to the following maxima, unless varied by a course approval panel on behalf of the Academic Board:

See table below:

Award	Credits RPL	Level
Certificate of Higher Education	60	4
Foundation Degree	120	4
Diploma of Higher Education	120	4
Diploma in Professional Studies/Professional Practice	60	4
Unclassified Bachelor's degree	120	4
	60	5
Bachelor's degree with Honours	120	4
	120	5
Postgraduate Certificate	30	7
Postgraduate Diploma	60	7
Master's Degree	90	7

3.5.4 Honours classifications and other divisions of award are based solely on units studied and assessed at the University of Bedfordshire. Grades awarded by other awarding bodies as part of RPCL or periods of study abroad are not recognised by the University.

SECTION 4 REGULATIONS FOR RESEARCH DEGREES

Minor revision for 2012-13 – however confirmation that Research Students are also subject to sections 1,2,3, and 6

(Previous material in section 4 2011-12, changes following Academic Board approval and issues raised via QAA report including reference to Appeal arrangements)

4.1 General regulations for research degrees

4.1.1 Award framework

4.1.1.1 The following table summarises the University's research degree awards, the minimum and maximum periods of registration, and the length of the written thesis:

	Abbreviation	Minimum period of registration	Maximum period of registration	Length of thesis
Higher Degrees Doctor of Laws (LLD) Doctor of Letters (DLitt) Doctor of Science (DSc)	LLD DLitt DSc	N/A	N/A	N/A
Doctor of Philosophy (via transfer from Master of Philosophy, including the period of MPhil registration)	PhD	33 months full-time 45 months part-time	48 months full-time 72 months part-time	80,000
Doctor of Philosophy (direct registration)	PhD	24 months full-time 36 months part-time	48 months full-time 72 months part-time	80,000
Doctor of Philosophy (by published work)	PhD		18 months	10,000 words plus published work
Professional Doctorate		36 months part-time	60 months part-time	80,000
Master of Philosophy	MPhil	18 months full-time 30 months part-time	36 months full-time 48 months part-time	35,000
Master of Arts by Research	MA (Res)	10 months full-time 18 months part-time	15 months full-time 30 months part-time	20-30,000 words excluding appendices
Master of Science by Research	MSc (Res)	10 months full-time 18 months part-time	15 months full-time 30 months part-time	15-20,000 words excluding appendices

4.1.1.2 The research and/or development of professional practice undertaken by each research degree candidate in the University is regarded as an integral part of the research, scholarly and professional work of the relevant research institute of the University.

4.1.2 Admission

4.1.2.1 Applicants may apply to undertake research in any field of study in which the University is able to provide appropriate supervision, subject to the requirement that the proposed research is capable of demonstrating scholarship and of being presented for assessment by appropriate examiners.

4.1.2.2 For the degrees of Doctor of Philosophy, Master of Philosophy and for Professional Doctorates, the normal entry requirement is a first or upper second class honours degree of a university or other institution with degree-awarding powers in the United Kingdom, or equivalent. For the degrees of Master of Science and Master of Arts by Research, the normal entry requirements are as follows:

- a) the possession of an Honours degree from a UK university, or equivalent; or
- b) evidence of previous advanced study, research or professional experience, which the University accepts as qualifying the applicant for entry.

4.1.2.3 An applicant holding qualifications other than those above will be considered on his or her merits and in relation to the nature and scope of the research proposed. In considering an applicant in this category, the University shall look for evidence of the applicant's ability and background knowledge in relation to the proposed research. Professional experience, publications, written reports or other appropriate evidence of accomplishment shall be taken into consideration. Such an applicant must include in his/her application the names of suitable persons from whom the University may seek opinions about his/her academic attainment and fitness for research.

4.1.2.4 An applicant whose work forms part of a larger group project may register for a research degree. Each individually registered project must be distinguishable for the purposes of assessment and be appropriate for the award sought. The application must indicate clearly each individual contribution and its relationship to the group project.

4.1.2.5 Co-operation on a programme of research may be formalised with one or more collaborating establishments external to the University. Collaboration normally implies the applicant's use of facilities and other resources, including supervision, provided jointly by the University and the collaborating establishment. In such cases a formal letter from the collaborating establishment confirming the agreed arrangements should be submitted with the application, except where collaboration is an integral part of the project. The name of any collaborating establishment shall appear on the candidate's thesis.

4.1.2.6 Applicants proposing to work outside the UK must fulfil the following conditions:

- a) the applicant is UK-based or establishes close links with the University;
- b) the University has evidence that the facilities available for the research both in the University and abroad are satisfactory;
- c) the arrangements proposed for supervision enable frequent and substantial contact between the applicant and the supervisor(s) based in the UK, including face-to-face contact. The applicant should spend normally not less than an average of 6 weeks per year at the University.

4.1.3 Registration, approval, attendance and withdrawal

- 4.1.3.1 In considering an application, the University shall satisfy itself that:
- a) the applicant is suitably qualified;
 - b) the applicant is embarking on viable research, including any taught element or related studies;
 - c) the arrangements for supervision are adequate and are likely to be sustained;
 - d) the research environment and facilities are satisfactory;
 - e) the relevant Research Institute has given ethical approval to the proposed research.
- 4.1.3.2 For the degrees of Doctor of Philosophy and Master of Philosophy the Research Degrees Committee's confirmation of a student's research topic is normally expected within 4 months of admission. The student will be expected to conduct an initial literature review during this period.
- 4.1.3.3 A candidate shall submit his/her thesis before the expiry of the maximum period of registration. The Research Degrees Committee may approve the extension of a candidate's period of registration, or a change to the research topic, on consideration of the appropriate form. The same approval procedure is required for proposed changes to mode of study.
- 4.1.3.4 Where a candidate is permitted to change his/her mode of study, his/her minimum and maximum registration periods shall be calculated pro rata taking into account the time already spent on study in a different mode.
- 4.1.3.5 Where a student is prevented, by ill-health or other cause, from making progress with his/her research, registration may be suspended, but normally for no more than between 6 and 12 months.
- 4.1.3.6 The University may exceptionally permit a student to register for another course concurrently with the research degree, provided that either the research degree or the other course is by part-time mode of study and that, in the opinion of the Research Degrees Committee, the dual registration will not detract from the research and the same work is not being counted towards different awards.
- 4.1.3.7 Full-time students are expected to devote on average at least 40 hours per week to their research. Part-time students study on a pro-rata basis within the context set out in the award framework.

4.1.4 The character of the thesis

- 4.1.4.1 A student's thesis must embody the results of the research conducted under the guidance of the supervisors appointed by the University for the purpose.
- 4.1.4.2 The research may include creative work forming, as a point of origin or reference, a significant part of the intellectual enquiry. The written thesis may be supplemented by material other than in written form. The creative work must be clearly presented in relation to the argument of a written thesis and set in its relevant theoretical, historical, critical or design context. The final submission must be accompanied by some permanent record of the creative work, where practicable, bound with the thesis.
- 4.1.4.3 If the main focus of the research is the preparation of a scholarly edition of a text or texts, musical or choreographic work or other original artefacts, the completed submission shall include a copy of the edited text(s) or collection of artefact(s), appropriate textual and explanatory annotations and a substantial introduction and

critical commentary which sets the text(s) in the relevant historical, theoretical or critical context.

- 4.1.4.4 The thesis must be presented in, and the oral examination held through, the medium of the English language. The Research Degrees Committee shall satisfy itself that the candidate has sufficient command of the English language to complete satisfactorily his/her research. Permission to present a thesis in another language may be given if the subject matter of the thesis involves language and related studies, and should be sought at the time of application for registration.

4.1.5 Programme of related studies

- 4.1.5.1 A student shall normally be required to follow a programme of related studies, where necessary for the attainment of competence in research methods and of knowledge related to the subject of the thesis. It shall have the following objectives:
- a) to provide the student with the skills and knowledge necessary for the pursuit of the proposed research and professional practice development;
 - b) to provide a body of knowledge normally associated with a degree in the field of study;
 - c) to provide breadth of knowledge in related subjects.
- 4.1.5.2 Where the programme of related studies includes an approved programme of studies leading to another award and a student is registered for that programme and fulfils all its requirements, he or she may be recommended for that award by the relevant Board of Examiners in addition to the research degree award.

4.1.6 Annual monitoring

- 4.1.6.1 At least once a year the Research Degrees Committee shall establish whether the student is still actively engaged with his/her research and is maintaining regular and frequent contact with his/her supervisors, and shall consider reports from the student and the supervisors on the student's progress as part of the annual monitoring process. The University shall take appropriate action for failure to maintain satisfactory academic progress which may include termination of the student's registration.
- 4.1.6.2 Where a student has discontinued his/her research and/or no annual monitoring report has been prepared, the student's registration will be terminated.

4.1.7 Supervision

- 4.1.7.1 The Research Degrees Committee shall determine the supervision arrangements for individual students.
- 4.1.7.2 All research degree students shall have at least two, and not normally more than three, supervisors.
- 4.1.7.3 At least one supervisor shall have experience of supervising candidates to the successful completion of a research degree. In the case of a student registered for a doctorate, one of the supervisors must normally have successfully supervised to doctoral level.

- 4.1.7.4 One supervisor shall be designated as the director of studies (first supervisor), with responsibility to supervise the student on a regular and frequent basis.
- 4.1.7.5 In addition to the supervisors, an adviser or advisers may be proposed, to contribute specialised knowledge or act as a link with a collaborating establishment.
- 4.1.7.6 A research student, whether at the University or at another institution, shall be ineligible to act as Director of Studies for another research student, but may act as a second supervisor or adviser.
- 4.1.7.7 Any proposal for a change in supervision arrangements shall be made to the Research Degrees Committee.

4.1.8 Assessment

Stages

- 4.1.8.1 The assessment of MPhil and doctorate theses has two stages:
 - a) the submission to, and preliminary assessment of, the thesis by the Board of Examiners; and
 - b) the defence of the thesis by the candidate by oral examination.

Examiners

- 4.1.8.2 A candidate shall be examined by at least two and normally not more than three examiners, of whom at least one shall be an external examiner.
- 4.1.8.3 An internal examiner shall be defined as an examiner who is:
 - a) a member of staff of the University; or
 - b) a member of staff appointed by the University from a partner institution.
- 4.1.8.4 It is not permitted for a candidate's supervisor to act as an examiner.
- 4.1.8.5 Where the candidate and the internal examiner are both on the substantive staff of the same establishment, a second external examiner must be appointed.
- 4.1.8.6 An independent chair will be appointed to conduct all examinations. The role of the chair is to ensure that the examination process is conducted fairly and in accordance with the University's regulations and procedures. The chair attends the private meetings of the examiners, but is not an examiner and does not receive a copy of the thesis. For each examination the chair and the examiners are constituted as a Board of Examiners.
- 4.1.8.7 In any instance where the Research Degrees Committee is made aware of a failure to comply with the procedures of the examination process to the detriment of the candidate, it may declare the examination null and void and appoint new examiners.
- 4.1.8.8 Examiners must be experienced in research in the general area of the candidate's thesis and, where practicable, have specialist experience in the topic(s) to be examined.
- 4.1.8.9 The external examiner should normally have experience of examining research degree candidates and at least one examiner should also have substantial experience (i.e. normally three or more previous examinations). For examination for a doctoral award, at least one examiner must have substantial experience of examining at that level.

Assessment procedure

- 4.1.8.10 At the first stage, each examiner must consider whether the thesis satisfies the requirements for the degree. Each examiner must present an independent report on the thesis to the University. Providing the examiners agree, the second stage assessment an oral examination, will be commenced. Where there is a disagreement, the chair shall convene the Board of Examiners to resolve the matter.
- 4.1.8.11 Notwithstanding regulation 4.1.8.10, where for reasons of sickness, disability or comparable exceptional cause, the Research Degrees Committee is satisfied that the candidate would be under serious disadvantage if required to undergo an oral examination, it may approve an alternative form of assessment.
- 4.1.8.12 Following the second stage, the examiners shall agree on one of the following outcomes:
- a) that the candidate be awarded the degree for which he or she was registered;
 - b) that the candidate be awarded the degree subject to minor amendments and corrections being made to the thesis;
 - c) that the candidate be awarded the degree subject to substantive amendments and corrections being made to the thesis;
 - d) that the candidate be permitted to revise and re-submit for the degree and be re-examined on further one occasion;
 - e) that the candidate be not awarded the degree and be not permitted to be re-examined. In this case, the candidate's registration is deemed to have been terminated;
 - f) in the case of a PhD examination, that the candidate be awarded the degree of MPhil subject to the presentation of the thesis amended to the satisfaction of the examiners.
- 4.1.8.13 The examiners are required to present a joint report which, together with the first stage reports, provides evidence about the scope and quality of the work enabling the Research Degrees Committee to satisfy itself that the criteria for the award of the degree have been met.
- 4.1.8.14 Under regulation 4.1.8.12 b above, the examiners shall indicate to the candidate in writing what amendments and corrections are required. The time limit for making corrections should not normally exceed 3 months for minor corrections and 6 months for substantive corrections.
- 4.1.8.15 Where the examiners decide that the degree be not awarded and no re-examination permitted (regulation 4.1.8.12e), they must prepare an agreed statement of the deficiencies of the thesis and the reason for their decision, which will be forwarded to the candidate.

Re-examination

- 4.1.8.16 In the case of regulation 4.1.8.12d, the Board of Examiners shall provide the candidate with written guidance on the deficiencies of the first submission. The candidate must submit for re-examination within the period of one calendar year from the date of the second stage of the examination.
- 4.1.8.17 On resubmission each Examiner shall examine the thesis and submit an independent report on it to the University. The report shall contain recommendations on whether the thesis satisfies the requirements of the degree and whether a further oral examination is required. An oral examination must be held if such a report contains a recommendation that the requirements of the

degree may not have been met. If there is agreement the chair shall make arrangements to conclude the assessment process. Where there is disagreement the chair shall convene the Board of Examiners to resolve the matter.

- 4.1.8.18 The outcomes available to the Board of Examiners on conclusion of the re-examination are:
- a) that the candidate be awarded the degree for which he or she was registered;
 - b) that the candidate be awarded the degree subject to minor amendments and corrections to the thesis to the satisfaction of the examiners;
 - c) that the candidate be awarded the degree subject to substantive amendments and corrections being made to the thesis;
 - d) that the candidate be not awarded the degree and be not permitted to be re-examined;
 - e) in the case of a PhD examination, that the candidate be awarded the degree of MPhil subject to the presentation of the thesis amended to the satisfaction of the examiners.
- 4.1.8.19 Where the examiners reach a unanimous decision, the chair shall have the authority to approve the award on behalf of the University.

Examiners not in agreement

- 4.1.8.20 Where the examiners cannot reach agreement, the chair of the examination board shall submit the examiners' separate (preliminary and post viva) reports and recommendations to a meeting of the Research Degrees Committee who may:
- a) accept a majority recommendation (provided that the majority recommendation includes at least one external examiner); where there is more than one external examiner and their decisions are the same their recommendation will be accepted
 - b) accept the decision of the external examiner
 - c) appoint an additional external examiner recommended by the Research Degrees Committee and meeting all relevant criteria for appointment.

4.1.8.21 Where an additional external examiner is appointed, he/she shall prepare an independent preliminary report on the basis of the thesis and, if considered necessary, may conduct a further oral examination no more than 3 months after the initial oral examination. This additional examination will be considered part of that initial examination and will be chaired by the chair of that earlier examination.

The newly appointed examiner should not be informed of the recommendations of the other examiners. On receipt of the report from the additional examiner the Research Degrees Committee shall reconsider the outcome as per 4.1.8.20.

Appeals

- 4.1.8.22 The University will not consider appeals based solely on a student's disagreement with the academic judgement of the Board of Examiner nor of Research Degrees Committee acting as Board of Examiners.
- 4.1.8.23 The appeals procedure which applies to candidates for research degrees is set out at www.beds.ac.uk/ and uses the same criteria as for taught awards – see paragraph 5.10.

4.2 Regulations specific to the Doctor of Philosophy

4.2.1 Admission

- 4.2.1.1 Applicants are normally admitted to for the degree of Master of Philosophy with the possibility of transfer to PhD.
- 4.2.1.2 Exceptionally, direct registration for the degree of PhD may be permitted to applicants who have advanced standing at postgraduate research level at a UK university or other degree-awarding institution or have had appropriate research or professional experience at postgraduate level, which has resulted in published work, written reports or other appropriate evidence of academic achievement.

4.2.2 Transfer of registration from Master of Philosophy to Doctor of Philosophy

- 4.2.2.1 A student registered initially for MPhil who wishes to transfer to PhD must apply for transfer to the Research Degrees Committee when he or she has made sufficient progress on the work to provide evidence of development towards a PhD (this should be between twelve and sixteen months of full-time study from the commencement of formal supervision, or its part-time equivalent).
- 4.2.2.2 The student shall present a progress report on his/her research at an open seminar attended by at least one of his/her supervisors and a member of the Research Degrees Committee. The progress report should typically be of about 5,000 words (excluding bibliography) and should:
 - a) indicate the progress being made with the research and demonstrate the student's understanding of the subject matter;
 - b) describe the plan of future research, including details of the original contribution to knowledge which is likely to emerge,
 - c) identify any changes or developments to the research methodology which will require further ethical approval to be sought.
- 4.2.2.3 After the seminar, Research Degrees Committee shall determine whether the student has made sufficient progress and whether the proposed research provides a suitable basis from which the student is capable of completing a PhD thesis.
- 4.2.2.4 A student who does not succeed in gaining approval for transfer to PhD registration at the first attempt is allowed to submit one further time. If that is not successful he/she will remain registered for MPhil.
- 4.2.2.5 A student who is registered for the degree of PhD and who is unable to complete the approved research may, at any time prior to the submission of the thesis for examination, apply to the Research Degrees Committee for his/her registration to be changed to that of the degree of MPhil.

4.3 Regulations specific to Professional Doctorates

4.3.1 Awards

- 4.3.1.1 The University shall award professional doctorates to registered candidates who successfully complete approved programmes of supervised research and/or development of professional practice and who have successfully completed a taught course which should not exceed one third of the total work undertaken for the award.
- 4.3.1.2 The title of the degrees are approved by the Research Degrees Committee and reported to Academic Board and reflect the professional practice nature of the qualification and the programme of related studies.
- 4.3.1.3 A doctorate shall be awarded to a candidate who, having critically investigated and evaluated an approved topic resulting in an independent and original contribution to professional practice and demonstrated an understanding of research methods appropriate to the chosen field, has presented and defended a thesis, by oral examination, to the satisfaction of the examiners.

4.3.2 Admission

- 4.3.2.1 Applicants may apply for a course in any field of study in which the University has an approved professional doctorate award and is able to provide appropriate supervision, subject to the requirement that the proposed research is capable of leading to a scholarly outcome contributing to the advancement of professional practice and to its presentation for assessment by appropriate examiners.
- 4.3.2.2 An applicant will normally be in relevant employment, as the workplace will be used for the case study element in the proposal.
- 4.3.2.3 An applicant holding qualifications other than a first or upper second class Honours degree from a UK institution with degree-awarding powers, or equivalent, will be considered on his or her merits and in relation to the nature and scope of the programme of work proposed. Professional experience, publications, written reports or other appropriate evidence of accomplishment shall be taken into consideration. An applicant wishing to be considered under this regulation must provide the names of suitable persons from whom the University may seek an opinion about his/her academic attainment and fitness for research.

4.3.3 Assessment

- 4.3.3.1 Approval of the research topic is normally expected after completion of the taught stage and any other programme of related studies, and normally within the first half of the maximum period of study.
- 4.3.3.2 The assessment of the professional doctorate comprises two stages: the taught stage and the thesis stage. The taught stage must be passed before a candidate can submit his/her thesis for examination. The grades assigned to the taught stage do not contribute to the final assessment of the award, which is based on submission of the thesis and oral examination.

4.3.4 Supervision

- 4.3.4.1 Students shall have at least two, and not normally more than three, supervisors during their research.
- 4.3.4.2 One of the supervisors shall normally be an appropriately qualified or experienced individual in the area of practice of the professional doctorate.

4.4 Regulations specific to the Master of Philosophy

4.4.1 Transfer of registration from Master to Doctor of Philosophy

- 4.4.1.1 Exceptionally, a student registered for the degree of MPhil may apply to the Research Degrees Committee transfer his or her registration to PhD. In such circumstances a full progress report shall be submitted to the Research Degrees Committee along with the application for transfer, together with clear evidence to support the proposed transfer. Regulation 4.2.2 will then apply.

4.5 Regulations specific to the Master of Science or Master of Arts by Research

4.5.1 Award framework

- 4.5.1.1 180 M-level academic credits will be awarded to candidates successfully completing the MSc or MA by Research.
- 4.5.1.2 No staged or incremental academic credit will be awarded, but unsuccessful candidates will receive a transcript describing any M Level units undertaken, with associated credit, which may in some cases form an entitlement to a postgraduate certificate or diploma.

4.5.2 Admission

- 4.5.2.1 Part-time MA and MSc by Research programmes may be taken either at the University or as a work-based study for those working in industry. The period of registration for applicants with intensive work commitments is negotiable.
- 4.5.2.2 For applicants undertaking their research project in industry or in a work environment, whether part-time or full-time, the application must be accompanied by formal and written approval by the line manager and the industrial/workplace supervisor.
- 4.5.2.3 Part-time students undertaking their research in, or through, their place of work must attend the University for any relevant research methods programme and also for regular (at least monthly) meetings with their Director of Studies.

4.5.3 Registration and Approval

- 4.5.3.1 Approval of the research project is normally expected within 1 month of initial registration for full-time students and within 2 months for part-time students.
- 4.5.3.2 In some subject areas it may be appropriate for applicants for the MSc by Research to conduct a series of studies rather than a single study. Such a proposal, and the consequential intention to submit a portfolio of research projects for final examination, should be clearly delineated in the application for programme approval to the Research Degrees Committee.
- 4.5.3.3 Deferral will not normally be permitted.

4.5.4 Supervision

- 4.5.4.1 Each student will have a Director of Studies who must have experience of research at postgraduate level as evidenced either by possession of a research degree in a relevant area or through previous or present supervision of other research students. Each student will also have one other internal supervisor.

- 4.5.4.2 The Director of Studies is responsible for:
- a) agreeing with the student an appropriate and defined research programme;
 - b) ensuring the training of the student and supervision of the student in research methodology (including laboratory field work if appropriate);
 - c) ensuring that all Health and Safety and ethical matters relating to the project are adequately addressed;
 - d) meeting regularly with the student and ensuring that records of work are kept;
 - e) ensuring that all work is completed on time, and that the student submits work for assessment appropriately.
- 4.5.4.3 Students are required to undertake training in research methods. This may be achieved by taking an M level Research Methods unit or equivalent or taking a directed study course overseen by the director of studies. The following topics must be covered: Project Design, Ethics and Health and Safety, Skills in Academic Writing, literature searching and Data Retrieval/Handling.

4.5.5 Assessment

- 4.5.5.1 Assessment will consist of two stages: presentation of the thesis; and the oral examination. All must be completed to the satisfaction of the examiners.
- 4.5.5.2 The director of studies will give feedback on the work submitted for assessment in research methods. If the examiners require a student to be reassessed in any element of the research methods stage, the reassessment must take place before submission of the thesis at the designated date at the end of the maximum period of registration.
- 4.5.5.3 The oral examination will consist of a presentation (of thirty minutes' duration, in front of peers and examiners) and a closed room viva voce examination (of approximately one hour's duration) by the examiners.
- 4.5.5.4 Two examiners, one of whom must be external, will be appointed by the Research Degrees Committee for each candidate. The director of studies should attend the oral examination as an observer.
- 4.5.5.5 In appointing the examiners, the Research Degrees Committee will take into account the particular character of the MSc and MA by Research.
- 4.5.5.6 The examiners are required to submit reports on the thesis prior to the oral examination.
- 4.5.5.7 Following the oral examination, the examiners shall, where they are in agreement, prepare a joint report which is intended to provide evidence on the scope and quality of the work to enable the Research Degrees Committee to satisfy itself that the criteria for the award of the degree have been met.

4.6 Regulations specific to the Doctor of Philosophy by published work

4.6.1 Eligibility

- 4.6.1.1 The University will normally only consider applications from members of staff or former students of the University for the award of the degree of Doctor of Philosophy based on published work.

4.6.2 Admission

- 4.6.2.1 The applicant shall submit an application to the Research Degrees Committee in the form of a list of works on which the candidature is to be based. It must be accompanied by a statement giving details of where and when the research on which the works were based was undertaken, together with an outline discussion (of not less than 3,000 words) of the contribution of the published works to the advancement of the field of study.
- 4.6.2.2 The list and report must be submitted to the Research Degrees Committee having first been approved by the Director of the relevant Research Institute.

4.6.3 Supervision

- 4.6.3.1 PhD by Published Work students normally will have a director of studies.
- 4.6.3.2 During the period of registration, a member of staff of the University of Bedfordshire shall be appointed as Director of Studies to supervise the compilation of the final submission and to ensure that procedures relating to the appointment of examiners and examination arrangements are carried out. The Director of Studies shall also advise on the preparation of the thesis which, together with the published work, shall comprise the final submission.

4.6.4 Appointment of examiners

- 4.6.4.1 Prior to submission, the Research Degrees Committee shall appoint not fewer than two external examiners, together with an internal examiner. No examiner shall have been a co-author or collaborator on any of the works on which the candidate's application is based.

4.6.5 Examination

- 4.6.5.1 The candidate shall be examined by examiners appointed by the Research Degrees Committee, in accordance with the regulations for PhD awards.

4.6.6 Assessment

- 4.6.6.1 In examining the candidate, the examiners must determine whether:
- a) the works submitted demonstrate that the candidate has completed research at least comparable in scope and depth to that required to prepare a PhD thesis in the field concerned;
 - b) the thesis and supporting publications demonstrate that the candidate has personally made a systematic study (in a single or closely related fields); and
 - c) the candidate has shown originality by the exercise of independent critical power and has made a distinct contribution to knowledge.

4.6.7 Award of the degree

- 4.6.7.1 Where the examiners reach a unanimous decision, the chair shall have the authority to approve the award on behalf of the University. Where the examiners are unable to reach a unanimous decision, the matter should be referred to the Research Degrees Committee for resolution.

4.7 Higher Doctorates

4.7.1 Awards

4.7.1.1 The following Higher Doctorate awards may be awarded to suitable candidates:

Doctor of Laws (LLD)
Doctor of Letters (DLitt)
Doctor of Science (DSc)

4.7.2 General principles

4.7.2.1 The University will award Higher Doctorates to graduates and/or staff of the University of Bedfordshire and its predecessor institutions who, normally not less than six years after graduating with a Bachelor's, Masters or Doctor of Philosophy degree, are able to provide evidence of distinction in scholarship.

4.7.2.2 The University will call upon external assessors to report on the submission to a scrutiny panel established by the Research Degrees Committee. The Scrutiny panel will include external representation.

4.7.3 Criteria for the award

4.7.3.1 A Higher Doctorate is awarded only for published work of a high standard containing original contributions to the advancement of knowledge and learning which has given the candidate distinction in his/her field of study. It is determined solely on the evidence of the published work submitted and no other consideration can be taken into account. The published work must provide evidence of:

- a) a sustained and consistent contribution over a number of years
- b) a degree of cohesion to establish the candidate's distinction in his/her field of study
- c) the originality of the candidate's contribution to his/her field of study
- d) seminal publications which have led to extensions or developments by others
- e) an emphasis on applicable knowledge, and the value placed on the work by external organisations

4.7.4 Admission

4.7.4.1 A candidate for a Higher Doctorate must either:

- a) be a graduate of the University of at least six years' standing, or
- b) be of not less than four years' standing as an appointed member of academic staff of the University

4.7.4.2 There is no requirement for applicants to hold a PhD.

4.7.4.3 No submission for a Higher Doctorate will be accepted from a person who is a candidate for a comparable award of another institution.

4.7.4.4 Where a candidate is incorporating, in his/her submission, work for which a degree has previously been awarded, any such work must be clearly indicated.

4.7.4.5 Applications are normally made at the invitation of the Vice Chancellor or his/her nominee.

4.7.4.6 Before a formal application is made, the candidate is required to discuss his/her application with the Vice Chancellor's nominee. The nominee will advise the candidate whether there is a prima facie case for submission.

- 4.7.4.7 A candidate is required to provide two documents: a full list of the publications on which the application is based; and a brief statement (of not more than 1000 words) of how the publications identified have contributed to knowledge in the field of study concerned, indicating those publications which he or she considers particularly significant.
- 4.7.4.8 The candidate is asked to provide copies of any publications not in the public domain.
- 4.7.4.9 The following will not be considered for the purposes of the degree:
- a) reviews of a candidate's publications by other authors
 - b) references to works not submitted
 - c) conference papers not subsequently published in proceedings available publicly

4.7.5 Assessment

- 4.7.5.1 External Assessors will be appointed by the Research Degrees Committee. Two of the external assessors will be asked to report in writing on the candidate's submission; the third will be invited to participate as a member of the scrutiny panel established by the Research Degrees Committee.
- 4.7.5.2 The scrutiny panel will interview the candidate, and make its recommendation to the Research Degrees Committee. There will be no other form of examination.
- 4.7.5.3 The Research Degrees Committee will consider the scrutiny panel's recommendation, and the degree shall be awarded to the successful candidate, effective from the date on which the Research Degrees Committee approved the award.
- 4.7.5.4 One set of publications for which a Higher Doctorate has been conferred shall be deposited for reference in the University Library, where they shall be available for public reference. An additional set shall be retained as an archive set.

4.7.6 Appeals and re-submission

- 4.7.6.1 A candidate who has been unsuccessful in a submission for a Higher Doctorate of this University is permitted to apply subsequently on one occasion. Further submissions will be at the discretion of the Research Degrees Committee.
- 4.7.6.2 A candidate who fails to qualify for the award of a Higher Doctorate will be required on resubmission to comply with the regulations in force at that time.

SECTION 5 ASSESSMENT FOR TAUGHT STUDIES

Minor revision for 2012-13

(Previous material from Section 3 2011-12 – removal of Language of Instruction material to new Section 2, Registration material to new Section 3, Conferment material to new Section 6 and material from General Regulation on Assessment.

Changes with the section - clarification on rounding, changes from "field" to "portfolio", renumbering of paragraphs)

Further detailed review in academic year with major revision for implementation 2013-14

5.1 Assessment structures and processes

5.1.1 The purposes of assessment are:

- a) objectively to measure a student's achievements against the intended learning outcomes of the unit and course (summative);
- b) to assist student learning by providing appropriate feedback on performance (formative);
- c) to provide a reliable and consistent basis for boards of examiners to determine the progression of, and conferment of awards to, students.

5.1.2 Formative and summative assessment will be incorporated throughout each stage of courses. Initial diagnostic testing will also be incorporated as appropriate to support the learning process.

5.1.3 The unit specification will describe the elements of assessment contributing to summative assessment (e.g. whether assignment or examination or a combination of both). Where assessment is by a combination of assignments, or assignment and examination, the weightings of each element will be stated.

5.1.4 Standard sized units of 30 credits should have a minimum of two and a maximum of three elements of assessment. The aggregate assessment load for a 30 credit unit should not exceed 10,000 words or tasks requiring equivalent notional student effort.

5.1.5 Students will be assessed according to the assessment specified for each unit on which they are registered, irrespective of their course of study. A student successfully completes a unit by demonstrating achievement of specified intended learning outcomes.

5.1.6 All students offering themselves for any assessment must abide by the code of conduct governing the University assessment www.beds.ac.uk/

5.1.7 Alternative arrangements may be made for students with permanent or temporary disabilities; students must seek advice at an early stage from the disability advisor in accordance with the policies and procedures published at www.beds.ac.uk/

5.2 Boards of Examiners

5.2.1 Decisions about the assessment of students are made on behalf of the Academic Board by Boards of Examiners, consisting of the internal examiners for the course together with the external examiner(s) appointed by the University. Portfolio Boards of Examiners are chaired by senior members of staff from outside the departments responsible for the courses under consideration. Scheme Boards of Examiners are chaired by senior members of the academic staff not having a direct subject interest in their area of responsibility.

5.2.2 Boards of Examiners are established at two levels: Portfolio Boards of Examiners, which are empowered to take progression and to recommend conferment decisions; and two Scheme Boards of Examiners, one for

undergraduate taught courses and one for postgraduate taught courses. The Scheme Boards of Examiners monitor the consistency with which the University's Regulations are applied by Portfolio Boards of Examiners, take progression decisions about students for whom incomplete information was available at the time the Portfolio Boards of Examiners meetings were held, and take conferment decisions.

- 5.2.3 External examiners and Chairs of Boards of Examiners for taught courses are appointed by the Registrar on behalf of the Academic Board having been nominated through the Faculty Teaching Quality and Standards Committees and approved by the External Examiners Committee. Internal examiners for taught courses are nominated by portfolio teams and approved by the Faculty Teaching Quality and Standards Committee and Quality Directorate.
- 5.2.4 Each portfolio is required to establish a Student Attainment Review Board (STAR Board) that meets to the schedule and requirements prescribed in the Quality Handbook.

5.3 Marking and Grading

- 5.3.1 Student work will be graded using the University common scale and all units contributing to an award must carry credit and be marked with a grade point, (however scripts submitted for the Postgraduate Graduate Certificate of Education or the Professional Graduate Certificate of Education (PGCE), and the Certificate in Post compulsory Education, are exceptions which are graded on a pass-fail basis):

Description of Assessment Performance	Grade	Corresponding Grade Point
<i>Excellent</i>	A+	16
	A	15
	A-	14
<i>Very good</i>	B+	13
	B	12
	B-	11
<i>Good</i>	C+	10
	C	9
	C-	8
<i>Satisfactory</i>	D+	7
	D	6
	D-	5

<i>Work unsatisfactory, with some serious errors and/or omissions</i>	E	4
<i>Work of a very poor standard, with little relevant information and/or serious errors</i>	F	2
<i>Work containing little of merit</i>	F-	1
<i>No work submitted</i>	G	0

- 5.3.2 Where feasible, assessments should be submitted and graded anonymously.
- 5.3.3 The determination of the grade to be ascribed to a student's assessment involves the following stages: initial grading by the principal examiner; the second marking of a sample by a second internal examiner; the moderation of a sample by the external examiner; and a decision by the Board of Examiners.
- 5.3.4 A sample of all work first marked by staff in associate colleges must be moderated by University staff, who will determine the size of the sample. The work of students in accredited institutions is second marked by academic staff of the accredited institution.
- 5.3.5 Boards of Examiners may penalise students who do not meet the word limits for assignments by the ascription of a lower grade than their work would otherwise have merited.
- 5.3.6 When marking examiners must grade to one decimal place and round using the convention 0.50 and above to rounded up and 0.49 and below to be rounded down.

5.4 Requirements for passing a unit and for the award of credits

- 5.4.1 Students must satisfy the board of examiners that they have met the intended learning outcomes of each element of assessment in the unit by undertaking examinations or assignments. Students who gain a minimum grade of 4/E in all elements and gain an aggregate unit grade of 5/D-, will pass the unit concerned. However a board of examiners may confirm that a particular element of assessment in a unit is of a weighting and timing such that the minimum requirement is 2/F (not 4/E) for all students in that cohort who achieve a 5/d- overall aggregate grade.
- 5.4.2 Credits are awarded to students when they pass a unit.
- 5.4.3 Students who submit all elements of assessment but do not pass a unit, have a second opportunity within an academic study period to satisfy the Board of Examiners by undertaking a resit of an examination or a referral of an assignment on any failed element of assessment or on a full unit as prescribed by the Board of Examiners. The grade for the resit or referral is capped at a maximum of 5/D- for the element of assessment concerned.
- 5.4.4 Students who do not pass a unit on their second attempt may retake the unit during the next academic study period in which the unit is offered. Students who retake must be assessed in all the elements of assessment in a unit, earlier

performance on a unit cannot be credited. The full range of grades will be available to the Board of Examiners in assessing the retaken unit.

- 5.4.5 Students who do not pass the unit on their retake attempt have one final attempt for a resit of an examination or a referral of an assignment on any failed element of assessment. The grade for the resit or referral is capped at a maximum of 5/D- for that element.
- 5.4.6 Students who have a Non Submission at level 4 resulting in grade 0/G for one or more of the elements of assessment will be permitted an attempt at a referral of an assignment or resit of an examination. For Non Submission at level 5, students will only be permitted a referral or resit attempt where the Board of Examiners confirms satisfactory engagement with the unit. For Non submission at level 6, referral or resit is not normally permitted. On postgraduate awards students will be permitted an attempt at a referral or resit for Non submission in the taught elements only where there has been satisfactory engagement with the unit. The Board of Examiners may therefore require a retake for Non submission at Postgraduate Certificate, Postgraduate Diploma and Masters stages.
- 5.4.7 In exceptional circumstances approval may be sought by the Faculty Board from the Registrar for an in-course re-assessment (referral of an assignment or resit of an examination), prior to the formal decision of the Board of Examiners; for example for assessments occurring in the first term at level 4 or where professional practice may be affected.
- 5.4.8 Units which a student has passed cannot be reassessed. No student may resit, have referral or retake the whole or part of the assessments for any unit which he or she has passed in an attempt to improve the grade obtained. Students are not permitted to take additional units in an attempt to improve their class of award. The classification of a student's award is determined at the point where that student becomes eligible for the award, and no units may later be substituted with the intention of changing the award title or improving the class of award.
- 5.4.9 Boards of Examiners take account of approved mitigating circumstances presented by students through the University's student support arrangements or as otherwise specified in the course handbook when deciding whether to permit a resit of an examination, referral of an assignment, retake of a unit or allow the student to take the assessment without penalty.
- 5.4.10 There is no general provision for taught postgraduate students to be compensated for failure in a unit, unless exceptionally authorised by the Postgraduate Scheme Board of Examiners.
- 5.4.11 Where a taught postgraduate student fails to achieve a pass in the dissertation or equivalent unit, the Board of Examiners may at its discretion, based on a judgement of the student's overall performance and potential:
- a) permit the student to resubmit the work under its original title, by a date to be determined by the board; or
 - b) require the student to submit a new dissertation, by a date to be determined by the board; or
 - c) require the student to withdraw from the course.

- 5.4.12 Assessment or re-assessment of a dissertation unit may include a viva voce examination as part of the unit assessment. Dissertations should be submitted in accordance with the information set out in the University's guidance notes for the presentation of dissertations, available at www.beds.ac.uk.

5.5 Progression between stages

- 5.5.1 Irrespective of their mode of study, students progress through their courses by accumulating credit towards the various awards for which they are eligible. Students are required to demonstrate sufficient competence in their courses to justify progression to the next stage of study.
- 5.5.2 Students must have satisfactorily completed their studies at one academic stage before they are eligible to progress to the next academic stage. Students are not permitted to trail failed or incomplete units.
- 5.5.3 A student will be allowed to progress and register for the next stage if he or she:
- a) is making satisfactory academic progress, as set out in the specific course regulations;
 - b) has the prospect of gaining an award by continuing to follow his or her current course, or an alternative course;
 - c) is not under sanctions for being in debt to the University;
 - d) is not excluded from the University.
- 5.5.4 To progress between stages on an undergraduate course, a student must have:
- a) attempted all elements of the prescribed assessment, and passed units to the value of 90 academic credits with the grades specified in regulation 5.4.1, and
 - b) attempted all elements of assessment in the units accounting for the remaining 30 academic credits. A student is required to have attained an aggregate grade of 4/E, with a minimum of 2/F in any element of assessment, in the outstanding 30 credits in order to progress to the next stage.
 - c) A student progressing to the next stage under the terms of a and b above will not be permitted an opportunity for reassessment. The transcript will record the units taken, passed, and, the credits awarded for those passed.
- 5.5.5 A student must fulfil the requirements of one stage before being permitted to progress to the next stage. This will require a full-time student who has attained 45, 60 or 75 credits to study part-time until the deficiencies of the stage have been rectified.
- 5.5.6 A student who has not attained a minimum of 30 credits by the end of a stage i.e. after referral, will be regarded as not having made sufficient academic progress. The student will normally be required to leave the University by the relevant Board of Examiners on academic grounds.

5.6 Submission of assignments

- 5.6.1 Students must submit their assignments as specified in the assignment brief. When submitting work – other than on line through *Turnitin* - students will receive, and must keep, receipts recording the date and time they submitted their work.
- 5.6.2 Deadlines for the submission of assignments are published in assignment briefs. If students do not hand in their assignments by the published deadline, the assignment or element of assessment concerned, will be classed as a non submission. It will be automatically judged as a fail and students will receive a grade of 0/G on their record.

5.7 Final stage assessment

- 5.7.1 The final stage of an Honours undergraduate degree course will include a project or equivalent assignment(s) of independent work to the value of up to 60 credits (20,000 words).
- 5.7.2 A student will become eligible for conferment with an award when he or she has completed his or her course and in so doing has:
- a) acquired the requisite number of credits at the final stage of the course leading to the named award for which he or she is registered;
 - b) met any subject specific or PSRB requirements for the award, as agreed by the Academic Board through the course approval process.
- 5.7.3 At the point where an undergraduate student becomes eligible for consideration for an award, the Board of Examiners may compensate where 90 credits of the appropriate level are achieved at the final stage, and the balance of 30 credits has been attempted but failed. Compensation may be granted on the following conditions:
- a) the Board of Examiners is satisfied that the student has fulfilled the intended learning outcomes of the final stage;
 - b) the student has achieved an aggregate grade of 4/E in the failed credits.
- 5.7.4 When compensated, the student is not recorded as having passed the unit, and is therefore not given credit for that unit. In individual cases, the examination board may chose to award credit in the circumstance set out in 5.7.3 above, as determined at course approval.
- 5.7.5 Compensation is not permitted in the unclassified undergraduate degree or in any short course of the University (i.e. University Certificate, University Diploma, University Advanced Diploma or Certificate of General Credit).
- 5.7.6 Unless permitted in specific course regulations or for recognition of prior learning, credit that has contributed to one award may not be used again towards another award.
- 5.7.7 A Certificate of General Credit may be awarded, in conjunction with a transcript, where individual Units have been taken and passed separately.

5.8 Award Classifications

Undergraduate

- 5.8.1 The Bachelor's degree with Honours will normally be awarded in classes 1, 2i, 2ii and 3.
- 5.8.2 The Bachelor's degree (unclassified degree) will be awarded without any classes or divisions.
- 5.8.3 A candidate for any Undergraduate award who fails to satisfy the requirements for the intended award but satisfies those for a lower award will be eligible for the lower award.
- 5.8.4 When used as interim awards, the Certificate of Higher Education or the Diploma of Higher Education may be awarded as an unnamed award. Certificate of Higher Education or Diploma of Higher Education may be established as exit awards and also conferred as named awards where the requirements, including relevant assessment, are defined through the course approval process.
- 5.8.5 For each candidate for the Bachelor's degree with Honours, the class of Honours achieved will be determined by a weighted average of unit grades in the penultimate and final stages of the programme of study, as follows:
- grades from the units comprising 90 credits at the final stage, including *the* credits from the Honours project or equivalent plus the best credits *up to* 90 credits, are double weighted; and
 - grades from the units comprising the best 90 credits at the penultimate stage are single weighted; and
 - the result of this weighted average calculation is rounded up to one decimal place.
- 5.8.6 Where a student enters with advanced standing but he or she has not taken 90 credits in the penultimate stage, the calculated Honours classification will be based on the average of the grades attained in 90 credits at the final stage, including 30 credits from the Honours project or equivalent plus the best 60 credits from the remaining 90 credits.
- 5.8.7 Where a student has not entered with advanced standing but their calculated Honours classification would be higher if based on the final stage of the programme only, this methodology should be used.
- 5.8.8 The table below shows the weighted averages and the boundaries for classes of Honours:

Weighted average	Class
14.0 to 16.0	1st class honours

13.5 to 13.9	2i/1st borderline
11.0 to 13.4	2i
10.5 to 10.9	2i/2ii borderline
8.0 to 10.4	2ii
7.5 to 7.9	3rd/2ii borderline
5.0 to 7.4	3rd class honours

5.8.9 Where a student's weighted average falls below a class boundary by 0.5 or less, the Board of Examiners will consider whether the student should be placed in the upper or the lower class, using the evidence available. To gain the higher classification, students must have at least 50% of their final stage credits in the higher category.

5.8.10 The Diploma of Higher Education (DipHE), Foundation Degree (FD), Higher National Diploma (HND) and Higher National Certificate (HNC) may be awarded with Distinction to students who have attained grades of 14/A- or higher in a minimum of 60 credits at level 5 for DipHE/FD/HND and level 4 for HNC.

5.8.11 The Integrated Master's Degree may be awarded with Distinction to students who have achieved consistently high grades in levels 6 and 7 of the course as agreed through the course approval process.

Postgraduate

5.8.12 A student who has satisfied the requirements for the Masters degree may be awarded a Masters degree with Distinction if he or she has fulfilled the following criteria:

- a) attained a grade of 14/A- or above in 60 credits, including the dissertation stage; and
- b) attained a grade of 13/B+ or above in at least half the remaining credits.

5.8.13 A student who has satisfied the requirements for the Masters degree may be awarded a Masters degree with Commendation if he or she has fulfilled the following criteria:

- a) an average grade of 11.1 or greater and
- b) no more than 30 credits with a grade of less than 8/C- and
 - i. if there are 15 credits of less than 8/C- there must be 15 (or more) credits with a grade of more than 13/B+
 - or
 - ii. if there are 30 credits of less than 8/C- there must be 30 (or more) credits with a grade of more than 13/B+.

5.8.14 A student who has satisfied the requirements for the Postgraduate Diploma as an exit award may be awarded a Postgraduate Diploma with Distinction if he or she has attained a grade of 13/B+ or above in at least 60 academic credits.

5.8.15 A student who has satisfied the requirements for the Postgraduate Diploma as an exit award may be awarded a Postgraduate Diploma with Commendation if a majority of his or her credit is at 11/B- or higher.

- 5.8.16 A candidate for any postgraduate award who fails to satisfy the requirements for the intended award but satisfies those for a lower award will be eligible for the lower award.
- 5.8.17 When used as interim awards the Postgraduate Certificate or the Postgraduate Diploma may be awarded as an unnamed award. The Postgraduate Certificate or the Postgraduate Diploma may be established as exit awards for a course and also conferred as named awards where the requirements, including relevant assessment, are defined through the course approval process.

5.9 Academic offences

- 5.9.1 Students are assessed individually on the basis that the work they present is their own, unless the rubrics of the assessment specifically indicate otherwise.
- 5.9.2 Cheating, plagiarism, the fabrication of information and impersonation are academic offences, and where allegations of such offences are made they will be investigated. Where evidence of cheating or plagiarism in students' work, or other irregularities in the conduct of the assessment, come to light, the University shall determine the action to be taken in line with policy and procedures. The procedures to be followed, and the tariff of penalties to be imposed where the allegations are proved, are set out at www.beds.ac.uk/

5.10 Appeals against decisions of Boards of Examiners

- 5.10.1 The University will not consider appeals based solely on a student's disagreement with the academic judgement of a Board of Examiners.
- 5.10.2 Appeals against the decisions of Boards of Examiners may be made on the grounds that:
- a) a student's performance in an assessment was affected by ill-health or another factor which they were unable to disclose at the time, or which they had good reason not to disclose. Written evidence or certification must be provided to support such claims; or
 - b) an administrative error seriously influenced the outcome of the assessment concerned; or
 - c) relevant University regulations were not followed in relation to either the content of the assessment, the way it was conducted, or its results; or
 - d) the procedures followed by those responsible for the assessment were not in accordance with the principles of natural justice.
- 5.10.3 The appeals procedure is set out at www.beds.ac.uk.

SECTION 6 CONFERMENT

Major revision for 2012-13

(Previous material in section 3 2011-12 Regulations moved to new Conferment section 6 and amalgamated with academic material taken from previous General Regulations 2011-12 and conferment material from past legacy regulations)

6.1 Conferment of an Award

- 6.1.1 The Academic Board establishes authorised committees to make recommendations for the conferment of approved awards on students who having been registered as a student of the University have followed an approved course or programme of study and satisfied the relevant University Board of Examiners. These committees which act as University Boards of Examiners on behalf of Academic Board are:
- a) The Undergraduate Scheme Board of Examiners for taught courses up to and including level 6 and level 7 in the case of an Integrated Master's degree
 - b) The Postgraduate Scheme Board of Examiners for taught courses above level 6
 - c) The Research Degrees Committee for research programmes of study
 - d) The Nominations and Honours Committee for honorary awards
- 6.1.2 An award of University of Bedfordshire is deemed to be conferred on a student at the time of a University Board of Examiners' decision – eg the Undergraduate Scheme Board. This conferment is through authority delegated by the Vice-Chancellor as the chair of the Academic Board to the designated senior member of the Academic Board acting as chair of the Scheme Board of Examiners or as chair of the Research Degrees Committee. Such conferment includes action taken by the chair of the respective University Board of Examiners subsequently on its behalf.
- 6.1.3 An honorary academic degree of the University of Bedfordshire is conferred on an individual at the University Graduation Ceremony in person by the chair of the Academic Board or designated senior member of the Academic Board acting in that capacity. Conferment is not made *in absentia* but face to face with the individual so honoured and in exceptional circumstances, as approved by the Academic Board, the award will be made through a ceremony specifically arranged for this purpose.
- 6.1.4 The date of the award is the date on which the respective University Board of Examiners was satisfied that the student had reached the required standard or the date of the relevant Graduation Ceremony in the case of honorary awards.
- 6.1.5 Students are considered to have exited their course or programme of study and registration with the University is completed, once they have been conferred with an award by the appropriate University Board of Examiners.
- 6.1.6 Conferment of a University award is evidenced by the University through a) a formal degree award document which is provided to the student as certification that the academic award has been achieved, and b) a transcript or similar record document setting out in greater detail the course or programme of study followed, the units taken, the credits awarded and the grades received.

6.2 Conditions for receipt of an Academic Award

- 6.2.1 An award of the University of Bedfordshire will be conferred when the following conditions are satisfied:
- a) the individual was a registered student of the University of Bedfordshire at the time of his or her assessment for an award and was in good financial standing with the University;
 - b) the details of that individual's legal full name, date of birth, gender, course or programme of study followed and award to be conferred have been registered by the University;

- c) the award to be conferred is one approved by the Academic Board under its degree awarding and academic powers
- d) it has been confirmed that the individual as a student of the University has completed a course or programme of study approved by the Academic Board as leading to the award being recommended;
- d) the conferment of the award has been recommended by a Board of Examiners convened, constituted and acting under regulations approved by the Academic Board under its degree awarding and academic powers;
- e) the recommendation of the award has been signed by the chair of the Board of Examiners and by the chair of the Academic Board or his/her appointed representative, confirming that the assessments have been carried out in accordance with the University's requirements and that the recommendations have received the consent of the external examiners.

6.2.2 Once an academic outcome has been achieved, and an award conferred, that qualification is not withdrawn if a higher qualification is subsequently achieved.

6.2.3 In cases where students do not complete the course of study for which they are registered through lack of academic progress, withdrawal or premature termination of their studies and cancellation of their registration, a University Board of Examiners may propose conferment of a lower level qualification to recognise the level and extent of achievement provided the conditions indicated in 6.2.1 above are met.

Conferment of an Aegrotat Award

6.2.4 An award may be conferred as an aegrotat award where the following conditions are satisfied in addition to those in 6.2.1 above:

- a) the individual was a registered student of the University but had been unable to complete all the requirements for the award they sought, because they could not complete the course or programme of study due to illness or similar valid cause for which evidence is provided at the time of consideration by the Board of Examiners;
- b) the University Board of Examiners has sufficient evidence to judge that the student would have reached the required threshold standard for the qualification, and where feasible, secures additional evidence to make a judgement on a classification or division.

6.2.5 A candidate may chose to decline an aegrotat award and continue to complete the courses or programme of study, but cannot then claim the aegrotat award in the event of subsequent failure.

6.2.6 The term "aegrotat" will not be recorded on the certification, unless the Board of Examiners decides it has insufficient evidence to make a judgement on a classification or division.

Conferment of an award Posthumously

6.2.7 An award may be conferred posthumously and accepted on the deceased student's behalf by a parent, spouse or other appropriate individual. The following conditions must be satisfied in addition to those in 6.2.1 above

- a) the individual was a registered student of the University but had been unable to complete all the requirements for the award they sought, at the time of his or her death;
- b) the Board of Examiners has sufficient evidence to judge that the student would have reached the required threshold standard for the qualification, and where

feasible secures additional evidence to make a judgement on a classification or division.

At the discretion of the Vice Chancellor financial good standing conditions may be waived in the case of a posthumous award.

- 6.2.8 In the case of research degrees, there must be evidence that the student would be likely to have been successful had the oral examination taken place.

6.3 Rescinding an Award

- 6.3.1 In exceptional circumstances the Academic Board may rescind an award which has been conferred on a student.

6.3.2 Where an honorary award is to be rescinded the decision cannot be delegated but must be formally considered by the Academic Board decision-making standing committee with the agreement of a majority of members. Granting of an honorary award includes the decision to bring the award holder into the scholarly community of the University and behaviour, actions or the support of actions that run counter to the University's mission or damage its work will be considered in such cases.

- 6.3.3 Where an award is to be rescinded as a consequence of the investigation of an academic offence or an academic appeal, the decision to rescind may be taken on behalf of the Academic Board via chair's action.

6.4 Award documentation and certification

Certification documents of an award

- 6.4.1 The University issues documents as formal award certificates to provide formal legal evidence of the fact that an academic award has been made to an individual under the University's degree awarding and academic powers.
- 6.4.2 The name of the individual appearing on the award certification is the name held on the student's registration record at the time the award is conferred. The printed format for the name normally follows the UK convention but if the student's identity documents present the names in a different order from the norm in the UK, or evidence of an alternative international naming convention (as approved by the Registrar) is presented, names may appear in a different order.
- 6.4.3 Once issued there is normally no change permitted to the wording on an award certificate, unless a specific inaccuracy is proved eg a mis-spelling. However a replacement certificate may be issued in the case of gender reassignment on production of documentary evidence of the change.
- 6.4.4 The document provided as a certificate of an award conferred by the University shall record:
- a) the name of the University together with, if appropriate, the name of any other institution collaborating in the provision of the course or programme of study leading to the award;
 - b) the student's full and legal name as recorded on the University's registration record;
 - c) the name and designation as appropriate of the award;
 - d) the title of the award as agreed through the approval process for the course or programme of study by the Academic Board, for the purposes of the certification;

and in the case of research awards, the title of the thesis and the respective research institute;

e) the classification or division achieved by the student within the award where appropriate;

f) an approved endorsement or clarification, where appropriate eg that the course was in the sandwich mode; was through the medium of English; was by distance learning

- 6.4.5 The formal academic award document shall bear the signature of the chair of the Academic Board and the Registrar and have suitable security marking.

Statement of Credit – University Transcript

- 6.4.6 The University issues a statement of credit or transcript to a student who has successfully completed approved units of study or a stage of a University course leading to an approved award. The University expects to make such a transcript part of a Higher Education Achievement Record (HEAR) in a format approved by the Academic Board.

- 6.4.7 The transcript shall record:

a) the student's full and legal name as recorded on the University's registration record;

b) the units and elements of study successfully completed, with details of their length and level, grade achieved (where appropriate) and dates of registration and completion;

c) the details of any periods of supervised work experience or placement in the UK or abroad, with grades where appropriate and dates;

d) the details of exposure to transferable skills if appropriate.

- 6.4.8 The University Transcript and HEAR document shall be signed on behalf of the Academic Board by an authorised person approved by the Registrar.

6.5 Graduation Ceremonial

Graduation Ceremonies

- 6.5.1 University of Bedfordshire Graduation Ceremonies are events at which honorary degrees are conferred and at which those who have been conferred with an award by Boards of Examiners previously, receive the formal recognition and certification of their award and congratulation from the University community. Those attending a University of Bedfordshire Graduation Ceremony as participants are required to wear the appropriate academic dress for which they are eligible; comply with the General Regulations on professional behaviour and dress code and conform to Graduation Ceremonial Procedures.

Academic Dress

- 6.5.2 Ede and Ravenscroft Ltd are the gown makers appointed by the University of Bedfordshire. They aid with the specification of the academic dress and make the robes associated with the different awards. All graduates and award holders of University of Bedfordshire are required to ensure that they wear the correct gown, hat and hood when in full academic dress. It is an academic offence to wear the gown associated with an award for which an individual is not eligible. Gowns, hats or hoods for awards of the University of Bedfordshire may not be replicated without the express authorisation of Ede and Ravenscroft and the Registrar.