

Academic Framework

Workstream C: Transition, Progression and Attainment



The new Academic Framework – Workstream C is termed Transition, Progression and Attainment and its objective is to ensure a smooth transition into, and progression through, university life for students, through the design of a well-balanced programme structure over three or four years of full-time undergraduate learning based on patterns of student choice.

The implementation of the new Academic Framework structure, rules and regulations will be phased. New progression rules and the new programme structure will be implemented for Level 4 / Year 1 students entering in September 2020. (Admission with credit students will join cohorts on the old Academic Framework, until 2021 for Year 2 and 2022 for Year 3.)

Please note that there will be no transition between frameworks, the current framework will be phased out and continuing students will carry on and finish their studies under the rules and regulations of the same framework they began their studies with.

The Academic Framework rules will apply to the undergraduate qualifications at Level 4, 5 and 6, including Integrated Masters. Please note that for ACP courses, the Academic Framework rules should only apply to those Undergraduate BA / BSc (Honours) programmes that are fully taught at the colleges. Top-up courses and Foundation degrees will remain in their current form.

International Collaborative Provision has historically acted as a “mirrored provision”, emulating closely (with one year difference) the development and structure of Faculties’ in-house programmes. The implementation of structural changes, progression and degree classification rules relating to the Academic Framework in these programmes will take into account the mirrored provision factor, allowing the scheme to continue. Therefore, all relevant changes to the international collaborative provision programmes will be implemented a year after our in-house programmes, starting with Level 4 in September 2021.

	ACP			OBU			
Policies	Foundation Degrees	BA/BSc (Hons) entirely taught at the colleges	Top-ups	Foundation Years	UG Courses	Integrated Masters	PG courses
Academic Framework							
Structure		☑			☑	☑	
Progression		☑			☑	☑	
Degree Classification		☑			☑	☑	

The key elements of the new framework are:

UNDERLYING PRINCIPLES

- Progression should be based upon a linear model of progress through discrete levels of study and the removal of reference to Stage I and II.
- There is a minimum limit of compulsory modules per study level.
- There is a maximum limit of optional modules that programmes will not be able to exceed.
- Progression rules have been simplified with the removal of pre- or co-requisite modules. Pre/co-requisites have been superseded by a well-defined core of compulsory modules.
- All programmes will have a compulsory Semester 1 for students entering Level 4.
- The minimum number of Level 6 credits that a student must pass to graduate is 120.
- Work-Based Learning and Independent Study modules sit outside the maximum number of optional modules permitted at each level of study, providing they do not require a specific room or other logistical arrangements, and with the proviso that they are not used as a standard option that simply increases the number of options for all students. The maximum number of credits allowed for these modules is 30 in total per level, distributed in two single modules.
- Modern Languages and Academic English modules also sit outside the maximum number of optional modules permitted at each level of study.

STRUCTURE

SINGLE HONOURS

LEVEL 4

Programmes of study at level 4 should carry 120 credits distributed as follows:

- **Compulsory:** Minimum of 90 credits at level 4
- **Optional:** Maximum of 30 credits (from a choice of maximum 60)

All Programmes will have a compulsory Semester 1 for students entering Level 4.

LEVEL 5

Programmes of study at level 5 should carry 120 credits distributed as follows:

- **Compulsory:** Minimum of 60 credits at level 5
- **Optional:** Maximum of 60 credits (from a choice of maximum 120)

30 credit level 5 modules which span an entire academic year should be avoided if a subject wishes to encourage students to go on exchange.

LEVEL 6

Programmes of study at level 6 should carry 120 credits distributed as follows:

- **Compulsory:** Minimum of 30 credits at level 6
- **Optional:** Maximum of 90 credits (from a choice of maximum 150)

Students must pass a minimum number of 120 Level 6 credits to graduate.

PROGRESSION

Progression is based upon a linear model of progress through discrete levels of study.

There are two main routes of progression. The first route is for students obtaining an honours degree and a second route that allows alternative progression paths for students opting to exit with an interim award. In this second stream, students would be able to progress to the next level of study with fewer than the required credits for an honours degree. However, they would also be required to follow a specific exit award pathway at this point, and would not be able to move back into an Honours pathway again once they had chosen the alternative pathway.

Please note that the practice of trailing modules is not permitted as part of the students' progression through discrete levels of study in the new Academic Framework.

COMPENSATION

Compensation is defined within regulations as: "the practice of awarding credit for a limited number of modules that have not been passed, on the basis of good overall academic performance in a single academic year at a specific level. 'Good overall academic performance' means that the student has scored 30% or above in the module/s which are eligible for compensation, and has passed all the required modules at that level (at least 6 modules at Level 4 and 7 modules at Level 5)." The main elements of the compensation to be noted are:

- Credit is allowed to be awarded where a pass mark has been marginally missed (student has scored above 30%), providing the minimum number of required modules for that level have been passed satisfactorily.
- There will be no award of credit for missing a pass by a large margin, not attempting a module or where other modules across the year have been failed.
- Compensation should be confirmed by the exam committee and would be subjected to academic judgement and relevant PSRB requirements.
- A compensated pass mark would be recorded on a transcript, and the achieved mark would be used for the purposes of calculating the final degree classification and GPA. If applicable, compensation is applied after resits and before a module is retaken.
- A compensated pass is only awarded at the completion of the level of study at which it is to be applied. For part-time students, a compensated mark would normally only be awarded at the completion of the level of study at which it is to be applied (ie if it takes 2 years to complete Level 4, compensation will only be applied at the end of the second year).
- Compensation may apply to compulsory modules, unless this would breach PSRB accreditation requirements. This is likely to be the case where a module is the only route through which a particular programme learning outcome can be delivered.
- If a student has not met the conditions under which compensation may be applied, they will need to retake all of the modules they have failed, if they wish to progress further.

PROGRESSION REQUIREMENTS

The table below outlines the progression requirements defined by the new Academic Framework for Integrated Masters and undergraduate awards at Level 4, 5 and 6. The table includes undergraduate interim exit qualification progression requirements.

LEVEL	Integrated Masters	Honours Programme	Ordinary Degree	UG Diploma	Certificate HE
LEVEL 4	Minimum 120 credits Maximum of 30 credits via compensation marks	Minimum 120 credits Maximum of 30 credits via compensation marks	Minimum 120 credits Maximum of 30 credits via compensation marks	Minimum 120 credits Maximum of 30 credits via compensation marks	Minimum 120 credits Maximum of 30 credits via compensation marks
LEVEL 5	Minimum 120 credits Maximum of 15 credits via compensation marks	Minimum 120 credits Maximum of 15 credits via compensation marks	Minimum 90 credits Maximum of 15 credits via compensation marks	Minimum 90 credits Maximum of 15 credits via compensation marks	
LEVEL 6	Minimum 120 credits No Compensation	Minimum 120 credits No Compensation			
LEVEL 7	Minimum 120 credits No Compensation				
Overall requirements	Minimum 480 credits achieved All compulsory modules must be passed, at each level before progressing to the next PSRB requirements will apply in addition to, and when necessary supersede, the above	Minimum 360 credits achieved All compulsory modules must be passed, at each level before progressing to the next PSRB requirements will apply in addition to, and when necessary supersede, the above	Minimum 300 credits achieved All compulsory modules must be passed, at each level before progressing to the next PSRB requirements will apply in addition to, and when necessary supersede, the above	Minimum 240 credits achieved All compulsory modules must be passed, at each level before progressing to the next PSRB requirements will apply in addition to, and when necessary supersede, the above	Minimum 120 credits achieved All compulsory modules must be passed, at each level before progressing to the next PSRB requirements will apply in addition to, and when necessary supersede, the above

LIMITATION ON CREDITS TAKEN

There are limits to the number of modules which may be attempted in the course of completing an Honours degree or any intermediate awards, as described in the table below. A student who, through multiple failed modules, exceeds these limits, or reaches a point where they cannot progress without exceeding these limits, will be required to withdraw. The table below takes account of any accredited prior learning.

LEVEL	Limit on attempted credits
LEVEL 4	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Students may attempt a maximum of eleven (11) module credits* (including retakes of modules and after exhausting all the other available options, eg Exceptional Circumstances) in achieving the 8 module credits (120 Level 4 credits) required for progression to Level 5.Students who fail more than two (2) module credits at Level 4 will be required to withdraw from the course, unless one or more compensatory pass marks can be applied
LEVEL 5	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Students may attempt a maximum of eleven (11) module credits* in achieving the 8 module credits (120 Level 5 credits) required for progression to Level 6 (including retakes of modules and after exhausting all the other available options, eg Exceptional Circumstances).Students who fail more than three (3) module credits at Level 5 will be required to withdraw from the course, unless one or more compensatory pass marks can be applied
LEVEL 6	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Students may attempt a maximum of eleven (11) module credits* in achieving the 8 module credits (120 Level 6 credits) required for completion of an Honours degree or progression to Level 7 of an integrated master's degree (including retakes of modules and after exhausting all the other available options, eg Exceptional Circumstances).Students who fail more than three (3) module credits at Level 6 will be required to withdraw from the course

* Please note that multiple takes of the same module will count towards the maximum of module credits.

TIME LIMITATION

Please note that this time limitation per level will be superseded by the 8 year time limitation per programme of study and/or any PSRB requirements that might apply on this matter.

For studies at an undergraduate level, a student must meet the assessment and progression requirements for each level of study within a maximum of **three (3)** years for full-time students and a maximum period of **four (4)** years for part-time students, provided the student has studied part-time for the level for at least two years. This includes any periods of temporary withdrawal, and any allowances which are made for Exceptional Circumstances. Students who fail to meet assessment requirements within these time limits will be required to withdraw from their course.

For students at undergraduate level, the Examination Committee will require a student to withdraw who does not pass at least **three (3)** module credits in any two successive semesters of study. Compensatory pass marks cannot be awarded to enable a student to meet this progression requirement, unless the student has otherwise met all progression requirements for that level of study.

DEGREE CLASSIFICATION CALCULATION

The new undergraduate programme structure defined by the Academic Framework required the implementation of a new method to calculate the degree classification. Therefore, a specific weight has been given to each level of study in order to calculate the final classification.

The average mark for each level of study is the average of the final marks for all modules passed at that level (including compensated passes), weighted by the credit value of each module. Average marks are truncated, therefore an average of 59.6 will be recorded as 59% and will not be rounded up to 60%.

BACHELOR'S DEGREE

For Bachelor's degrees, the overall average mark is calculated using the level 5 and level 6 average marks, weighted as follows:

Level of study	Weight
Level 4	0%
Level 5	25%
Level 6	75%
Parameters	All modules are included No additional exit velocity

For students entering a Bachelor's degree programme at level 6 – including students entering with credit, or graduates from Foundation degrees – the overall average mark for classification purposes will be the level 6 average mark, which will be given 100% weighting.

INTEGRATED MASTERS

For Integrated Master's degrees, the 'overall average' mark is calculated as follows:

Average mark	Weighting
Level 4 – 0%	50%
Level 5 – 25%	
Level 6 – 75%	
(calculation as for Bachelor's degree)	
Level 7	50%

For students entering a Bachelor's degree programme at level 6 – including students entering with credit, or graduates from Foundation degrees – the overall average mark for classification purposes will be the level 6 average mark, which will be given 100% weighting.

This information will be also available in the Academic Framework webpage, if you have any questions please contact your Faculty ADSE or the Registry Team.

