UNIVERSITY OF
WEST LONDON
The *Career* University

Academic Quality and Standards Handbook

Section 2: Qualifications and Curriculum Framework

2024-25

1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Purpose and Aims

1.1.2 This section describes the structures and curriculum requirements of courses leading to qualifications of the University.

1.1.3 The list of approved University awards is in the [Academic Regulations](#).

1.1.4 This section applies to all courses within the University whether credit-bearing or not, with the exception of Research Courses.

1.1.5 All University qualifications and standalone modules must be aligned with the University Qualifications and Curriculum Framework (UWL-QCF) that is in force at the time that the course is approved. Some future changes to the UWL-QCF may affect all University courses and modules and should this be required the Academic Quality and Standards Office (AQSO) will manage the process to ensure that the amendments are made to the correct elements.

1.1.6 The aim of the Framework is to ensure that the University meets the obligations and expectations of its staff, students and regulators by:

(a) Promoting a shared and common understanding of University qualifications across the University, Academic Partnerships, and training providers (normally for Apprenticeship provision);

(b) To promote consistency in the use of qualifications and credit across University Schools and Colleges and Academic Partnerships;

(c) Providing a common reference point for setting and assessing academic standards when designing, approving, monitoring and reviewing courses of study and modules;

(d) To ensure that University qualifications are of an academic standard at least consistent with the standards referred to in the UK Framework for Higher Education Qualifications (FHEQ);

(e) To communicate to employers, schools, prospective students, Professional, Statutory and Regulatory Bodies (PSRBs) and other stakeholders the achievements represented by the qualifications of University; and

(f) To inform national and international comparability of academic standards.

2 QUALIFICATIONS OF THE UNIVERSITY

2.1 Definitions

2.1.1 In line with national statements on academic standards, the University uses the following terminology to describe its qualifications:

- **Award** means a degree, diploma, certificate or academic credit, conferred in formal recognition that a student has achieved the academic standards expressed by a level of the UK FHEQ. An example of an award is Bachelor of Arts with Honours, expressed as 'BA (Hons)'.

- **Course of Study** means an approved sequence of study (usually broken into modules) that provides a coherent learning experience and includes details of curriculum and assessment in a discipline or field of study. An example of a course of study is 'Media Communications'.

- **Qualification** means an award granted on successful completion of a course of study which expresses both a level and a discipline or field of study, so for the example above the qualification would be 'BA (Hons) Media Communications'.

- **Degree** means an award that represents the achievement of a full-cycle of study under the Qualifications Frameworks in the European Higher Education Area (QF-EHEA).

2.2 National Reference Points: terminology

2.2.1 The **Framework for Higher Education Qualifications (FHEQ)** describes the UK agreed threshold academic standards, i.e. the minimum acceptable level of achievement that a student has to demonstrate to be eligible for the award of academic credit or a qualification

2.2.2 **Characteristics Statements** describe the distinctive features of an award at a particular level within the Qualifications Framework. They focus on the particular purpose, general characteristics and generic outcomes of a given award.

2.2.3 **Subject Benchmark Statements** describe what knowledge and skills give a discipline its coherence and identity (academic characteristics) and define what can be expected of a graduate in terms of the abilities and skills needed to develop understanding or competence in the subject.

2.2.4 All the above are available at: www.qaa.ac.uk

2.3 Categories of awards

2.3.1 There are different categories of awards within the UWL-QCF.

2.3.2 The category of award provides information about the general approaches to admissions, learning, teaching, assessment and accreditation, and the emphasis of the outcomes within the course.

2.3.3   The descriptions below of categories of award are intended to be advisory rather than definitive in the choice of award, as practice may differ in specific disciplines. However, consideration of the choice of category of award must take place during the approval of a course or module.

2.3.4   Category 1: Research degrees

This category of awards prepares students for further academic study, particularly further research-based study or research-based employment.

- Entrants will usually be limited to students who have previous study in the same subject or discipline to a level which enables research-based study.

- Learning, teaching and assessment is usually offered through individualised learning environments and opportunities ('supervision').

- Assessment usually includes an individualised approach with significant oral / discursive examination.

Examples include: MPhil, or PhD.

2.3.5   Category 2: Specialised study degrees

This category of awards prepares students for their careers through subject-specific study.

- Entrants will usually have previous study at a preparatory level but may be from outside the subject or discipline area depending on the structure and content of the course.

- Learning, teaching and assessment is usually offered in group environments, and through timetabled 'contact hours' and independent or guided study ('taught').

- Assessment usually includes set tasks which are specific to a set of knowledge or skills developed in learning and teaching.

Examples include: BA (Hons), FdA, MA, MSc.

2.3.6   Category 3: Professional or practice degrees

This category of awards enables graduates to enter into a profession, or provides development opportunities related to particular professions or employment settings.

- Entrants will usually have previous study at a preparatory level and be required to undertake additional assessments or complete other requirements related to the discipline or subject prior to entry.

- Learning, teaching and assessment is usually developed in collaboration with a Professional, Statutory, or Regulatory Body, and employers; and includes significant practical elements such as placements or work experience which

facilitate structured or guided professional development to different levels of a professional career.

- Assessment usually includes significant professional work and is sometimes recognised as achievement of professional standards as well as achievement of academic standards.

Examples include: LLB (Hons), BEng (Hons), MBA.

2.3.7   Category 4: Micro-credentials

A micro-credential is:

- credit-bearing against a recognised level of the Qualifications Frameworks

- subject to standard quality assurance mechanisms

- not normally an award in its own right on the Qualifications Frameworks, although there are no upper or lower limits on the amount of credit that a micro-credential carries.

Micro-credentials typically represent a more flexible, shorter or narrower engagement with a subject, enabling learning, assessment and the award of credit to take place in a period that is less than a single academic cycle. They are commonly considered as a form of continuing professional development or an opportunity either to upskill or reskill.

Micro-credentials can be offered at all levels of the Qualifications Frameworks and can be additional, alternate or complementary to, or a component of, formal qualifications. The University normally offers micro-credentials as short courses. See the Academic Quality and Standards Handbook Section 3 (Course Approvals and Re-approvals) for further information.

2.4   Interim and Exit Awards

2.4.1   For all the main award types, the University normally confers an 'exit award' to students who have successfully completed a defined portion of the course but who are unable to complete the full award on which they enrolled.

Possible exit awards in ascending order of credit value and FHEQ levels 4 to 7

Overarching degree types	CertHE	DipHE	Foundation Degree	Ordinary Degree	Honours Degree	PGCert	PGDip	MPhil
Foundation Degree	x							
Honours Degree	x	x		x				
Postgraduate Diploma						x		
Masters Degree						x	x	
Integrated Masters	x	x		x	x	x		
Taught Doctorates								x
PhDs (default)								x

2.4.2   During the process of developing a new course, Schools and Colleges must confirm the exit awards to be made available.

2.4.3   In exceptional cases, Schools or Colleges may request that the standard exit awards relating to an overarching degree are not conferred to students e.g. in the case of professionally accredited courses where completion of the entire course is required to access relevant jobs. Such proposals must be made in the Business Case (Business Approval) Form (CA1).

2.4.4   Exit awards at the level of BA, BSc etc. and higher may be made available for direct application by students. In such cases the awards are referred to as 'enrollable awards'. Such proposals must be made in the Business Case (Business Approval) form (CA1).

2.4.5   Exit awards are not available for students entering a Bachelor with Honours degree directly at Level 6, including when entering a standalone Level 6 top-up degree.

2.4.6   The title of exit/enrollable awards normally will be identical to the overarching degree, unless to meet the requirements of a PSRB.

3 LEVEL DESCRIPTORS

3.1 Overview

3.1.1 The Level Descriptors describe the depth and complexity of each level of study and outline the academic skills, amount of prior knowledge and amount of learner autonomy required to pass a course or module at that level.

3.1.2 The descriptors are closely aligned to the FHEQ and, together with the more discipline-specific Quality Assurance Agency (QAA) Subject Benchmark Statements, should be used as a reference point in the development of qualifications, courses and modules, and for the determination of local marking criteria.

3.2 Descriptor for Level 3

3.2.1 Students successfully completing courses or modules at this level will have demonstrated:

    (a) A skills base of conceptual and factual knowledge with some appreciation of the field of study and of terminology used.

    (b) An ability to apply those skills independently in a range of complex activities or with guidance when working with greater complexity.

3.3 Descriptor for Level 4

3.3.1 Students successfully completing courses or modules at this level will have demonstrated:

    (a) Knowledge of the underlying concepts and principles associated with their field of study, and an ability to evaluate and interpret these within the context of that field.

    (b) An ability to present, evaluate and interpret qualitative and quantitative data in order to develop lines of argument and make sound judgements in accordance with the basic theories and concepts of their field of study.

3.4 Descriptor for Level 5

3.4.1 Students successfully completing courses or modules at this level will have demonstrated:

    (a) Knowledge and critical understanding of the well-established principles of their field of study, and of the way in which those principles have developed.

    (b) An ability to apply underlying concepts and principles outside the context in which they were first studied, including, where appropriate, the application of those principles in an employment context.

    (c) Knowledge of the main methods of enquiry in the field of study.

(d) An ability to evaluate critically the appropriateness of different approaches to solving problems in the field of study.

(e) An understanding of the limits of their knowledge, and how this influences analyses and interpretations which might be based on that knowledge.

3.5 Descriptor for Level 6

3.5.1 Students successfully completing courses or modules at this level will have demonstrated:

(a) A systematic understanding of key aspects of their field of study, including the acquisition of coherent and detailed knowledge, at least some of which is at, or informed by, the forefront of the field.

(b) An ability to deploy accurately established techniques of analysis and enquiry within the field of study.

(c) A conceptual understanding that enables the student to devise and sustain arguments, and/or to solve problems, using ideas and techniques, some of which are at the forefront of the field of study.

(d) A conceptual understanding that enables the student to describe and comment upon particular aspects of current research, or equivalent advanced scholarship, in the field of study.

(e) An appreciation of the uncertainty, ambiguity and limits of knowledge.

(f) An ability to manage their own learning.

(g) An ability to make use of scholarly reviews and primary sources (for example, refereed research articles and/or original materials appropriate to the field of study).

3.6 Descriptor for Level 7

3.6.1 Students successfully completing courses or modules at this level will have demonstrated:

(a) A systematic understanding of knowledge, and a critical awareness of current problems and/or new insights, much of which is at, or informed by, the forefront of their field.

(b) A comprehensive understanding of techniques applicable to their own research or advanced scholarship.

(c) Originality in the application of knowledge, together with a practical understanding of how established techniques of research and enquiry are used to create and interpret knowledge in the field.

(d) A conceptual understanding that enables the student to critically evaluate current research and advanced scholarship in the field.

(e)   A conceptual understanding that enables the student to evaluate methodologies and develop critiques of them and, where appropriate, to propose new hypotheses.

3.7   Descriptor for Level 8

3.7.1   Students successfully completing courses or modules at this level will have demonstrated:

(a)   An ability to create and interpret new knowledge, through original research or other advanced scholarship, of a quality to satisfy peer review, extend the forefront of the field, and merit publication.

(b)   A systematic acquisition and understanding of a substantial body of knowledge which is at the forefront of an academic discipline or area of professional practice.

(c)   An ability to conceptualise, design and implement a project for the generation of new knowledge, application or understanding at the forefront of the field, and to adjust the project design in the light of unforeseen problems.

(d)   A detailed understanding of applicable techniques for research and advanced academic enquiry.

4 UNIVERSITY CREDIT STRUCTURE

4.1.1 All taught courses should align with the credit framework.

4.1.2 The credit framework requires courses and their component modules to be described in terms of their level (i.e. difficulty) of study, and their credit volume (i.e. the notional time/learning hours needed for the associated teaching, independent study, reflection and assessment).

4.1.3 In line with the FHEQ, 1 credit equates to 10 hours of notional learning. For example, a 20 credit module equates to 200 hours. The notional learning hours may comprise contact hours, guided independent study hours, independent study hours and placement hours.

4.1.4 Contact hours are defined as time spent in contact with academic staff and academic support professional staff for the purposes of learning, teaching, and assessment (including feedback) and include enhancement activities which may take place throughout a module or within the University's designated Enhancement Week(s). Contact hours may be undertaken in person or online and may vary depending on the subject being studied and the design of particular courses. A breakdown of the different types of learning and teaching activities under these categories within the overall notional learning hours must be provided for each module. For Dissertation/Project modules contact hours will normally include hours allocated to individual supervision sessions and any cohort/group teaching sessions.

4.1.5 Courses should follow the academic calendar unless required by a PSRB or by other substantial factors. Any requirement to deviate from the academic calendar should be made clear at the point of approval or via the amendment process. An Academic Calendar Template (CA10) form should be completed to show the academic calendar for a course with a non-standard delivery pattern. This should include a breakdown of module delivery dates.

4.1.6 Regardless of whether a course has a September or February (or other) intake, the course should still follow the standard academic calendar or a CA10 should be completed if the course has a non-standard delivery pattern. If a course commences in February, this is Semester 2 (even though this is the cohort's first semester of study) as mapped on the academic calendar.

4.1.7 Course Specifications must include the exact duration of the course at the point of approval or amendment, and this should be in exact months. This is particularly important for international students, who are issued Confirmation of Acceptance for Studies (CAS) which includes the exact duration of the course.

4.1.8 A base of 20 credits per module or multiples thereof is normally required unless prevented by professional body requirements or there is a strong rationale for having modules with other credit values, e.g. 10 or 30 credit modules.

4.1.9 The delivery structure of the course should take account of the credit loading across the academic calendar. For courses with a Part Time delivery mode, particular attention should be paid to the balance of modules between semesters and across

an academic year. Where possible there should be an even distribution of modules to ensure consistency of workload. For example, for a Bachelor's Degree of 360 credits, the Part Time mode would normally consist of 60 credits per academic year over a six year period. This may vary if the Part Time delivery mode is proposed to be less than six years.

4.1.10   A module may designate another module as a pre-requisite; this means that a particular module must be taken prior to starting the other modules. The University does not normally approve the use of pre-requisite modules.

4.1.11   In addition to the credit volume of the course overall, each award specifies the minimum amount of credit that must be achieved at a particular level in order for a student to be eligible for the particular award (see table below).

Higher Education Awards	FHEQ level of award	Minimum total credits for award	Minimum credits at the level of the award	QF-EHEA cycles
PhD/DPhil	8	Not typically credit-rated	Not typically credit-rated	Third-cycle (end of cycle) qualifications
Professional doctorates (e.g. DProf, EdD, DBA, DClinPsy)	8	540	360	Third-cycle (End of cycle qualifications
Research master's degrees (e.g. MRes, MPhil)	7	Not typically credit-rated	Not typically credit-rated	Second-cycle (end of cycle qualifications)
Taught MPhil	7	360	240	End of second cycle qualifications
Extended master's degrees (e.g. MFA)	7	240	180	Second-cycle (end of cycle) qualifications
Taught master's degrees (e.g. MA, MSc	7	180	150	Second-cycle (end of cycle) qualifications
Integrated master's degrees (e.g. Meng, MChem, MPhys, MParm))	7	480	120	Second-cycle (end of cycle) qualifications
Postgraduate diplomas	7	120	90	N/A
Postgraduate certificates	7	60	40	N/A
Bachelor's degrees with honours (e.g. BA/BSc Hons)	6	360	90	First cycle (end of cycle) qualifications
Bachelor's degrees	6	300	60	First cycle (end of cycle) qualifications
Graduate diplomas	6	80	80	N/A
Graduate certificates	6	40	40	N/A
Foundation degrees (e.g. FdA, FdSc)	5	240	90	Short cycle (within or linked to the

Higher Education Awards	FHEQ level of award	Minimum total credits for award	Minimum credits at the level of the award	QF-EHEA cycles
				first cycle) qualifications
Diplomas of Higher Education (DipHE)	5	240	90	Short cycle (within or linked to the first cycle) qualifications
Certificates of Higher Education (CertHE)	4	120	90	N/A
Certificate of Achievement at L3	3	120	120	N/A

5 THRESHOLD QUALIFICATION REQUIREMENTS

The University Threshold Qualification Requirements (TQRs) describe the common structural components expected of each course of study leading to a particular University qualification.

A course should be approved in accordance with the UWL-TQRs, however they may diverge for example where a Professional, Statutory or Regulatory Body requires it.

5.1 Certificate of Achievement at Level 3

5.1.1 Certificates of Achievement at Level 3 should include:

(a) No examinations unless required by an accrediting PSRB.

(b) At least 40 credits of modules related to the development of academic skills in preparation for learning at Level 4.

(c) At least 40 credits of modules relevant to the named qualification to which the preparatory certificate is attached.

(d) A range of specified progression routes including at least one identified honours degree course.

5.2 Certificate of Higher Education (Level 4)

5.2.1 Certificates of Higher Education should include:

(a) No examinations unless required by an accrediting PSRB.

(b) A range of specified progression routes including at least one identified honours degree course.

5.3 Diploma of Higher Education (Level 5)

5.3.1 Diplomas of Higher Education should include:

(a) No examinations at level 4 unless required by an accrediting PSRB.

(b) Normally no examinations at Level 5 unless required by an accrediting PSRB; a rationale must be put forward where examinations are proposed at Level 5 and these are not required by a PSRB. Where used, examinations must be balanced against other assessment methods and normally constitute no more than 50% of a module mark (unless required by a PSRB or where a rationale is approved).

(c) A range of specified progression routes including entry to at least one identified honours degree course (which may be a Level 6 Top-up).

5.4 Foundation Degrees (Level 5)

5.4.1 Foundation Degrees should include:

(a) No examinations at Level 4 unless required by an accrediting PSRB.

(b) Normally no examinations at Level 5 unless required by an accrediting PSRB; a rationale must be put forward where examinations are proposed at Level 5 and these are not required by a PSRB. Where used, examinations must be balanced against other assessment methods and normally constitute no more than 50% of a module mark (unless required by a PSRB or where a rationale is approved).

(c) At least 40 credits at each level (4 and 5) of work-based or placement learning with extensive time in workplaces relevant to the qualification.

(d) Explicit reference and mapping, where available, to national occupational standards; sector skills foundation degree frameworks; professional body accreditation schemes; and apprenticeship standards, in addition to the FHEQ, Foundation Degree Characteristics Statement and Subject Benchmark Standards.

(e) A 20 credit module at Level 5 covering the main methods of enquiry and research relevant to the discipline or subject area.

(f) A range of specified progression routes including entry to at least one identified honours degree course (which may be a Level 6 Top-up).

5.5 Higher Technical Qualifications (HTQs)

5.5.1 Higher Technical Qualifications are level 4 or 5 qualifications which align to employer-led occupational standards. They are only recognised as HTQs if they are approved by the Institute for Apprenticeships and Technical Education (IfATE). These qualifications are expected to meet the requirements of the occupational standard and the respective requirements of the University qualification. For example, a Foundation Degree which is also recognised as a Higher Technical Qualification would be expected to align with 5.4 above, unless there are any specific requirements in the occupational standard which would prevent this.

5.6 Honours Degrees (Level 6)

5.6.1 Honours degrees should include:

(a) No examinations at Level 3 (where applicable) or Level 4 unless required by an accrediting PSRB.

(b) Normally no examinations at Levels 5 and 6 unless required by an accrediting PSRB or where a rationale for their inclusion is approved as part of an amendment, re-approval or approval process. Where used, examinations must be balanced against other assessment methods and normally constitute no more than 50% of a module mark (unless required by a PSRB or where a rationale is approved).

(c) A 20 credit module at Level 5 covering the main methods of enquiry and research relevant to the discipline or subject area.

(d) A 40 credit dissertation or professional project at Level 6 which will produce a written or artistic product equivalent to 9,000-10,000 words.

(e) Additionally, where the course includes a placement, this should be in accordance with the Quality Framework for Work Based learning (www.qaa.ac.uk/quality-code/advice-and-guidance), UKVI compliance (www.uwl.ac.uk/international/visas-and-immigration) and the Placement and Employment Team checklist. A student enrolled on an Honours Degree with a Professional or Industry Placement where the placement is part of the award (e.g. BSc Psychology (with placement)), will be reverted to the root award title (e.g. BSc Psychology) if they do not complete the placement.

5.7 Integrated Masters Degree (Level 7)

5.7.1 Integrated Masters degrees should include:

(a) No examinations at Level 3 (where applicable) or Level 4 unless required by an accrediting PSRB.

(b) Normally no examinations at Levels 5 and 6 unless required by an accrediting PSRB or where a rationale for their inclusion is approved as part of an amendment, re-approval or approval process. Where used, examinations must be balanced against other assessment methods and normally constitute no more than 50% of a module mark (unless required by a PSRB or where a rationale is approved).

(c) A 20 credit module which ensures students have a comprehensive understanding of techniques (skills and methods) applicable to their own research or advanced scholarship.

(d) A 60 credit research element at Level 7, either dissertation or professional project, which will produce a written or artistic product of the equivalence of 15,000 words.

(e) A Project module, normally 40 credits at Level 6 in preparation for Level 7.

(f) Additionally, where the course includes a placement or an internship, this should be in accordance with the Quality Framework for Work Based learning, UKVI compliance and the Placement and Employment Team checklist. A student enrolled on an Integrated Masters Degree with a Professional or Industry Placement where the placement is part of the award (e.g. MSci Psychology (with placement)), will be reverted to the root award title (e.g. MSc Psychology) if they do not complete the placement.

5.8 Masters Degree (Level 7)

5.6.1 Masters degrees should include:

(a) A 20 credit module which ensures students have a comprehensive understanding of techniques (skills and methods) applicable to their own research or advanced scholarship.

(b) A 60 credit research element, either dissertation or professional project, which will produce a written or artistic product of the equivalence of 15,000 words.

(c) Additionally, where the course includes a placement or an internship, this should be in accordance with the Quality Framework for Work Based learning, UKVI compliance and the Placement and Employment Team checklist. A student enrolled on an Honours Degree with a Professional or Industry Placement where the placement is part of the award (e.g. MSc Psychology (with placement)), will be reverted to the root award title (e.g. MSc Psychology) if they do not complete the placement.

(d) For an MRes, the research element is normally more than 60 credits to reflect the research intensive nature of the award. The word count or equivalent will be dependent on the number of credits allocated to the module. The remaining taught modules should prepare students to produce the research element.

5.9 Professional Doctorate (Level 8)

5.9.1 Professional Doctorates should include:

(a) Taught modules at Level 7 amounting to 200 credits (core modules totalling 80 credits and subject specific credits totally 120 credits) preparing students to undertake the research element of the course.

(b) The completion of an original piece of research under the guidance of a supervision team of two members of staff, leading to the production of a professional research project or thesis.

6   QUALIFICATION TITLES

6.1   Overview

6.1.1   Public understanding of the achievements represented by higher education qualifications requires transparent and consistent use of qualification titles.

6.1.2   The course team must make sure that the title of any qualification accurately reflects the level of achievements, appropriately represents the nature, volume and field(s) of study undertaken and is not misleading.

6.2   Level

6.2.1   In order to ensure that qualification titles accurately convey information about the level of the qualification:

(a)   The titles 'honours' (for example, Bachelor's degree with Honours), Masters (for example, Master of Arts) and Doctorate (for example, Doctor of Philosophy) are used only for qualifications that meet, in full, the expectations of the qualification descriptors at level 6, level 7 and level 8 on the FHEQ respectively.

(b)   Titles with the stem 'graduate' (for example, 'Graduate Diploma') are used for qualifications from courses of study that typically require graduate entry, or its equivalent, and have learning outcomes that match relevant parts of the descriptor for a qualification at level 6 on the FHEQ.

(c)   Titles with the stem 'postgraduate' (for example, 'Postgraduate Diploma') are restricted to qualifications where the learning outcomes of the programme of study match relevant parts of the descriptor for a qualification at level 7 on the FHEQ.

6.3   Title

6.3.1   In order to ensure that qualification titles accurately convey information about the focus of the qualification:

(a)   The title of Bachelor of Arts (BA) shall be generally used in art and design and the arts and humanities.

(b)   The title of Bachelor of Science (BSc) shall be generally used in technology, science or mathematics and their applications.

(c)   In areas where either title may be used, such as health, social or business studies, the title will be based on the curricular focus of the course and normally will reflect prevailing norms across the relevant higher education sector.

(d)   Some qualification titles may be restricted, for example, the title Bachelor of Laws (LLB) is reserved for courses of specialised study in law.

6.4 Name

6.4.1 The name for the course of study should accurately reflect the content and discipline studied on the course.

6.4.2 Qualification titles that reflect the subject focus of course of study in two disciplines (for example, a joint honours qualification) adopt nomenclatures based on:

 (a) 'A and B', where there is an equal balance between two components

 (b) 'A with B' for a major/minor combination where the minor subject accounts for at least a third of the programme.

 (c) Where there are more than three significant components, the title 'Combined Studies' is appropriate.

6.4.3 Use of the abbreviated titles PhD and DPhil is restricted to qualifications where assessment is solely by a final thesis or published work; or by artefact, composition or performance that is accompanied by a written commentary placing it in its academic context.

6.5 Pathways

6.5.1 Pathways are a particular type of variant. Within the confines of a course a named pathway can be created, whereby students complete a prescribed collection of modules. This would lead to the award of the standard award and title, with the pathway in parentheses or as a major/minor combination e.g. BSc (Hons) Biological Sciences (Animal Biology) or BSc (Hons) Psychology with Counselling. Multiple pathways must be contained within a single Course Specification.

6.5.2 A pathway with parentheses should use two-thirds or more of the same credit but be studied almost entirely within the specialism (including any placement activity). A major/minor combination should include at least two-thirds of common credit from the parent course on which it is based although students may be taught within the specialism or not. This requirement applies to the course as a whole, with no stipulation regarding individual stages. Where there is less than two-thirds commonality in compulsory credit, the proposal should be treated as a new and separate course in its own right.

6.5.3 Pathways can operate in one of two ways. Both will result in the standard award and title with the pathway in parentheses or as a designated minor.

 (a) <u>Adjourned Pathways</u> are those where students apply for and register on a generic course. Each participant's eligibility for a pathway is then confirmed by the final Assessment Board on the basis of the modules that have been completed.

 Under this structure, students benefit from the opportunity to experience the course and identify their preferred elements, before deciding the pathway specialism that will appear on their final certificate. The different pathways will not show up during searches of the Universities and Colleges Admissions Service (UCAS) and other course listings.

Details of the available pathways can be articulated, however, in the text of the printed prospectus and webpages, once they have been approved by Course Quality and Approval Sub-Committee (CQASC).

With this type of pathway students must retain the choice to graduate with the standard award and title only (i.e. without a pathway in parentheses).

(b) Direct Entry Pathways require students to apply for and register on a specific pathway from the onset. It is anticipated that participants will remain on the pathway for the duration of their studies. Under this approach each pathway has unique identifying codes (including UCAS codes in the case of undergraduate offerings). Consequently, the pathway will be identified when individuals conduct searches involving the specialism word/s.

To ensure that Direct Entry Pathways are included in printed prospectuses and/or UCAS listings they should be approved by CQASC.