

Chapter 1 – Programmes and Awards

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Chapter 1

Programmes and Awards

Introduction to the Regulatory Framework

- 1.1 The Regulatory Framework is intended to allow the flexibility necessary to enable the University to respond to the changing demands of industry, commerce, the professions and society in general, and to the needs of students, whilst ensuring that appropriate criteria, requirements and procedures for the setting and maintenance of quality and academic standards are established and maintained.
- 1.2 The main elements of the Regulatory Framework are:
- The Powers of the University which give authority for the award of degrees and other academic awards; and;
 - The Regulations which set out the University's overall requirements for programmes of study leading to its academic awards and other distinctions.
- 1.3 The University's Regulatory Framework covers all aspects of the provision of programmes of study, including the admission, progression and assessment of students. These regulations apply to all students on programmes of study leading to the University's academic credit and awards. They set out the requirements and expectations for the University's programmes and awards. They should be read together with a number of supplementary documents, which outline students' rights and responsibilities:
- <https://www.uws.ac.uk/current-students/supporting-your-studies/your-rights-responsibilities/>
- 1.4 Where these regulations make reference to policy or procedure in other documents, these shall be adhered to as if they were part of the Regulatory Framework. These include the **Quality Handbook**, **University Committees**, the **Assessment Handbook** and the **Recognition of Prior Learning Handbook**. Where there is a conflict between the programme regulations noted in a Student Handbook or other published material such as programme specifications and modules descriptors, and those defined in the Regulatory Framework, the University Regulations should take precedence.

Impact Assessment

- 1.5 The Regulatory Framework has been found to pose a **low risk** of negative impact on the groups protected under equality legislation. The most recent Equality Impact Assessment was undertaken in 2018.

Implementation of Regulations

- 1.6 The University undertakes an annual review of the Regulatory Framework and approves any proposed changes at Senate. Careful consideration is given to the impact on students of changes to regulations. The drivers for changes are to improve clarity, new relevant legislation and where changes are made to University policies and structures.
- 1.7 Students will be bound by the regulations currently approved by Senate for implementation during the academic year in which the student is enrolled. The University publishes its Regulations with a summary of all changes each August. By enrolling on an annual basis, students confirm their acceptance of them. Programme handbooks are provided annually and will draw attention to any specific programme regulations.

Use of “Normally” in the Regulatory Framework

- 1.8 Where the word “normally” has been used, it is expected that the Regulation to which it pertains is followed unless a full and convincing case has been made, accepted by the relevant parent committee and discussed with the University Secretary.

Eligibility to Study in the UK

- 1.9 The University reserves the right to decline, defer or withdraw enrolment where a candidate has not met the conditions of offer or where they cannot provide evidence that they have the appropriate immigration status to enable them to enrol as a student. Similarly, students may be withdrawn by the University where they are determined to be ineligible under Home Office regulations to remain in the UK.

Powers

- 1.10 The power to award certificates, diplomas, degrees and other academic distinctions is vested in the University by the Privy Council under the provisions of the University of the West of Scotland Order of Council 2015, Article 8, Schedule 1B (2)¹.
- 1.11 The Powers are vested in the University’s Court by the authority of the Statutory Instrument approved by the Scottish Parliament. Any changes to the Powers shall be subject to the approval of the Scottish Ministers and/or the Privy Council of the United Kingdom, as required by Statute

Academic Powers

- 1.12 The Powers described below relate specifically to the provision of programmes of study and do not include all the Powers which may relate to the University’s academic work.

¹ To be replaced with new Order of Council 2019, article 5, Schedule 1 from 1st October 2019

1.13 The University's Court has the power:

- To admit students, and to prescribe the conditions for their admission, to all programmes and programme elements whether or not leading to the award of a degree or other academic distinction;
- To grant all such degrees, diplomas, certificates and such other academic awards or distinctions as may be granted under the provisions of the University of the West of Scotland Order of Council 2015, Article 8, Schedule 1B (2);
- Subject to consultation with the Senate, to award honorary degrees and such other honorary academic distinctions as it deems appropriate to such persons as fulfil the conditions which it may prescribe for the receipt of such awards;
- Subject to consultation with the Senate, in exceptional circumstances to revoke a degree, diploma, or academic distinction, honorary award, honorary academic distinction or any other award previously conferred by the institution;
- To frame such codes of discipline and regulations as are necessary or desirable for maintaining good order in the institution;
- To frame such regulations as are necessary or desirable to maintain the academic freedom of staff and students in the institution;
- To form relationships, associations or affiliations with other educational institutions, and such other bodies both public and private as may be for the benefit of the University or necessary or desirable to carry out the objects of the institution.

1.14 The Powers enable the University:

- To determine the requirements for the enrolment and admission of persons to the University or to any particular programme, module or programme component or programme of supervised research in the University or delivered in any affiliated or associated institution, and to establish Regulations relating thereto;
- To grant and confer degrees, diplomas, certificates and other academic awards and distinctions on persons who have pursued programmes or programmes of supervised research approved by the University and have passed such examinations and other assessments as the University stipulates;
- To provide lectures, tutorials and other forms of instruction in such branches of learning and scholarship as the Court, on the recommendation of the Senate, shall approve and to make provision for research, scholarship and the advancement and dissemination of knowledge in such manner as the University deems appropriate;

- To provide such lectures and other forms of instruction to any persons as the Court on the recommendation of the Senate shall approve and to grant degrees, diplomas, certificates and other academic distinctions to such persons;
- On the recommendation of the Senate, to validate, approve, monitor and review programmes, modules, programme components, programmes of study and programmes of supervised research, whether or not they lead to the conferment of the University's degrees, diplomas, certificates or other academic distinctions; and to stipulate any conditions pertaining thereto;
- On the recommendation of the Senate, to accept in partial fulfilment of the study and assessment requirements for awards of the University such periods of learning and such assessments as the University recognises and have been successfully completed by persons otherwise than on programmes validated, approved and reviewed in accordance with the above.

Conferment of Awards

- 1.15 Academic awards shall be granted by the School Board of Examiners², with the authority of Senate when a student has satisfied the requirements for an award. An award is conferred when the student is capped at Graduation or graduates in absentia. (See 1.33-1.36 for intermediate awards)
- 1.16 The University's Research and Doctoral Degrees shall be granted with the authority of Senate by the Doctoral College Board following confirmation from a Doctoral College Review Board that a candidate has satisfied the requirements for an award. An award is conferred when the student is capped at Graduation or graduates in absentia. (See Chapter 4).
- 1.17 The University's Higher Doctorates shall be granted with the authority of Senate by the Research & Enterprise Advisory Committee following confirmation that a candidate has met the requirements for an award. An award is conferred when the student is capped at Graduation or graduates in absentia. (See Chapter 4)

Scottish Credit and Qualifications Framework

- 1.18 The University of the West of Scotland takes cognisance of the **Scottish Credit and Qualifications Framework** (SCQF) in these regulations. University awards will be designed and structured with regard to the expectations of the SCQF and the characteristic generic outcomes.

Approval of Programmes which Lead to Academic Awards

- 1.19 The University Senate through the Education Advisory Committee has established approval processes for the approval, monitoring and review of the University's awards. These are located in the **Quality Handbook**.

² Degree Assessment Board (DAB) for TNE and collaborative provision – see Quality Handbook for details

Awards of the University

- 1.20 All awards of the University are offered subject to approval and review in accordance with the procedures outlined in the University's **Quality Handbook**.
- 1.21 The University offers the following programmes and awards. The awards are rated for general credit against the Scottish Credit and Qualifications Framework (SCQF).

International Foundation Programme

120 credits at SCQF level 6

Certificate of Higher Education (CertHE)

120 credit points at SCQF level 7 or above

Diploma of Higher Education DipHE

240 credit points of which a minimum of 90 are at SCQF level 8 or above

Scottish Bachelor's Degree

360 credit points of which a minimum of 90 are at SCQF level 9 or above

Scottish Bachelor's Degree with Honours

480 credit points of which a minimum of 90 are at SCQF level 10 or above

Graduate Certificate (Grad Cert)

60 credit points at SCQF level 9 or above

Graduate Diploma (Grad Dip)

120 credit points at SCQF level 9 or above

Professional Graduate Diploma (PGDE)

120 credit points at SCQF level 10 or above

Postgraduate Certificate (PgC)

60 credit points of which a minimum of 40 are at SCQF 11 and none less than SCQF level 10

Postgraduate Diploma (PgD)

120 credit points of which a minimum of 90 are at SCQF 11 and none less than SCQF level 10

Masters

At least 180 credit points of which a minimum of 150 at SCQF 11 and none less than SCQF level 10

Integrated Masters

600 credit points of which a minimum of 120 are at SCQF level 11

Professional Doctorate

At least 540 credit points of which a minimum of 420 credit points at SCQF level 12 with a maximum of 120 credit points at SCQF level 11 and no credit lower than SCQF level 11.

Programme Specification

- 1.22 All programmes leading to an award of the University must have a Programme Specification, set out on the approved University template.
- 1.23 The Programme Specification is a concise description of a programme, including details of the programme structure, the entry requirements, learning outcomes, curriculum structure, learning and teaching approaches, progression and award requirements including PSRB requirements where applicable, intermediate, exit and combined studies awards available. (see Regs. 1.48-1.52) More information on the design of a programme can be found in the University's **Quality Handbook**.

Award Titles

- 1.24 The title of the award defines a coherent programme in which the modules reflect the subject content. The title should be expressed simply and in as few words as possible.
- 1.25 Where two or more subjects are reflected in the title there should be an appropriate balance of credit from each subject area. For instance, equal balance for a joint title and two thirds to one third for major/minor titles.
- 1.26 The validation or review panel will confirm the appropriateness of the title.

Honours Degrees

- 1.27 An approved Honours award should include a dissertation element (or equivalent evidence of substantial independent work) which should be equivalent to at least 30 credit points at SCQF level 10. For guidelines on Honours and Masters Dissertations see the **UWS Assessment Handbook**.
- 1.28 Each copy of the Honours dissertation should remain the property of the University, but the copyright of the thesis should be vested in the candidate.

Masters Degrees

- 1.29 An approved taught Masters programme must include a substantial dissertation (or equivalent evidence of sustained independent work) which should normally calibrate to at least 60 SCQF level 11 credit points. Further guidance on what constitutes 'sustained independent work' can be found in the **UWS Assessment Handbook**.
- 1.30 Each copy of the Masters Dissertation or project should remain the property of the University, but the copyright should be vested in the candidate.

Integrated Masters

- 1.31 An integrated Masters is an undergraduate degree followed by an additional year of study at Masters level, with a minimum of 120 credits at SCQF level 11.
- 1.32 The award is granted at the end of study as a full Masters – intermediate awards will be outlined in the programme specification.

Intermediate Awards

- 1.33 A non- continuing student who has accumulated the necessary number of credits and satisfied any other specific requirements may be granted an award intermediate to the final award for which they are registered, so long as this is within 5 years since last registered on the programme.
- 1.34 Programme specifications should clearly specify the learning outcomes required for each qualification. A student can receive only one award from any programme.
- 1.35 Normally no intermediate award will be granted to a student who has met the requirement for a final award, or to a student who immediately proceeds to the next level of the award.
- 1.36 The University may grant an intermediate award to a student who has met the requirements for that award but is no longer registered on the programme of study leading to a higher level qualification. See also Regulation 1.61 for Combined Studies exit award.

Sandwich Awards

- 1.37 A Degree or Honours Degree programme of study '**with sandwich**' should include not less than thirty-six weeks of supervised work experience in addition to the period required for the requirements for full-time study leading to the award.
- 1.38 The period of learning that constitutes the work placement or work experience should form a compulsory element in the programme of study. Its learning outcomes should be specified and related to the objectives of the whole programme. The performance of each student should be appropriately assessed. Satisfactory completion of, and performance in, the period of supervised work experience should be a requirement for the University's '**with sandwich**' award.
- 1.39 Distinct learning outcomes are required for an award '**with sandwich**' which distinguishes it from the full-time award. See paragraphs 1.68 onwards for regulations for work-based and placement learning.

Professional Accreditation of University Awards

- 1.40 University Regulations should apply to all programmes of study unless an explicit condition of professional accreditation requires a deviation.

- 1.41 In the case of any seeming conflict between the University Regulatory Framework and those of any external institution or body which accredits the programme, the School Board may seek approval from the Education Advisory Committee for the regulations of that institution or body to take precedence.

Joint Award

- 1.42 A joint award (collaborative arrangement) involves the granting of a single award by UWS with one or more collaborating awarding bodies for the successful completion of one programme of study. UWS is responsible for the standard of the award as one of the conferring institutions.

Dual Award

- 1.43 A dual award (collaborative arrangement) involves the granting of separate awards by both UWS and a collaborative partner, for a single programme of study.
- 1.44 The two awards will be based on the same assessed student work and can only be granted when the objectives of the programme have been achieved at the same point in time. Responsibility for each award and its academic standard will remain with the body awarding it.

Validated Award

- 1.45 A validated award (collaborative arrangement) involves the granting of an award by UWS to be delivered by non-degree awarding bodies. This can be undertaken in areas where the University is confident the partner has the resources and expertise to run its own UWS-validated award, and where the programme is not in direct competition with any award offered by the University on one of its own campuses.
- 1.46 The responsibility for the standard of the UWS award will remain with the University. A Joint Programme Panel (JPP), with representation from both UWS and the partner institution, will be established to manage the collaborative arrangements and to provide a focus for operational issues to be discussed. The Degree Assessment Board (DAB) is responsible for managing assessment processing. (The remit of the DAB is included in **Collaborative section of the Quality Handbook**).
- 1.47 Any validated award proposals will be subject to due diligence, initial scrutiny and approval in line with the requirements outlined in the **Collaborative section of the Quality Handbook**.

Programmes of Study

- 1.48 The Programme Specification specifies the core modules and learning outcomes required at each level and for each qualification, including intermediate awards and should specify the period within which a student

- should normally complete the programme and the associated assessments (including any resits).
- 1.49 Where a programme is offered on more than one campus or through blended learning, the core modules as defined in the programme specification must be the same at the different locations.
- 1.50 Where the outcomes of the programme are such that attendance is compulsory for specific elements, the Programme Specification must give details of the attendance requirements to be met by students.
- 1.51 Any specific requirements including elements that must be passed or have a higher threshold pass than University Regulations in order to qualify for professional accreditation must be identified in the programme specification.
- 1.52 Any modifications to a programme specification must be approved by the relevant School Board or the body assigned by the School Board to approve programme modifications.

Modules

- 1.53 A module is a formally structured learning experience with a coherent content and an explicit set of learning outcomes and assessment criteria. The credit value, content, learning outcomes and assessment details will be documented in an approved Module Descriptor.
- 1.54 The number of credits assigned to a module is based on the estimated student learning hours, i.e. the number of hours which it is expected that a learner will spend, on average, to achieve the specified learning outcomes at that level. Students are expected to undertake 10 hours of study for each SCQF point ascribed to a module.
- 1.55 The credit rating shall be confirmed at validation or approval. Students are awarded academic credit in respect of their achievement as demonstrated through meeting the learning outcomes for a module.

Study Abroad

- 1.56 Students taking a period of study abroad, or at another UK institution, as part of an exchange programme will require to have the modules they are taking at the other institution, approved and signed off by the Programme Leader, as meeting the required level and outcomes for the University's award.
- 1.57 In addition, there needs to be a translation of the partner institution's grading system as part of the exchange agreement to enable candidates to have the exchange credit count towards any award with distinction or Honours classification. This should be completed by the Programme Leader prior to the student attending the partner institution. The procedures for **Approval of Study Abroad** should be followed to enable the credit to contribute towards the award of the University.

Change of Module or Programme of Study

- 1.58 A student may seek approval for a change to their selection of modules. Any new module selection must be consistent with the programme specification for their programme of study and be approved by the relevant Programme Leader.
- 1.59 A student may seek approval for a change to their programme of study. Any such change is subject to the approval of their existing Programme Leader and the Programme Leader for the programme they wish to transfer to.

Lack of Academic Progress on a Programme

- 1.60 A student will be required to reapply for a programme of study if the School Board of Examiners has not assigned credit to the student for a period of two calendar years. The student will be treated as a new applicant and will go through the University's **Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL)** process to check on the currency of their learning. They will then be offered the most appropriate level of entry based on that learning or may be required to transfer to a different award if the title no longer exists in the University portfolio of awards.

Combined Studies Award

- 1.61 A School Board of Examiners is empowered to make an exit award of CertHE/DipHE or BA/BSc in Combined Studies where the student has met the credit requirements for an award in line with SCQF credit minima (see Regulation 1.21), but cannot continue on the named award.

Authorised Interruption of Study

- 1.62 A student registered for an award may be allowed a period of **Authorised Interruption of Study**, approved by the relevant Dean of School and may be re-admitted thereafter to complete the requirements for a degree. See also procedures for **Students with Parental Responsibilities**
- 1.63 A period of Authorised Interruption of Study will not normally exceed one academic session, and the total period of Authorised Interruption of Study, which may be granted throughout the programme of study, will not normally exceed two academic sessions.

Academic Engagement and Attendance

- 1.64 Students will take cognisance of the University's requirements for **Academic Engagement and Attendance**.
- 1.65 The programme specification may stipulate additional or specific attendance requirements, particularly where these are relevant to programmes with professional body accreditation.

- 1.66 Where a student has failed to engage in a programme, the Dean of School or nominee may convene a School Panel to consider withdrawal of the student on the grounds of non-attendance.
- 1.67 A student may appeal against the decision of withdrawal on the basis of failing to meet engagement requirements. (Refer to **Chapter 6**)

Work-Based and Placement Learning

- 1.68 The University recognises a range of learning which may be derived from a work environment or work related activities that may be credit rated. Modules may be approved that are entirely work-based learning or placement learning or practice based. The requirements for 'Sandwich' awards are outlined in paragraphs 1.37-1.39.
- 1.69 Further details and definitions are contained within **Work Based and Placement Learning Handbook**.
- 1.70 All Work-based and Placement Learning (sometimes known as practice learning) should be credit rated, whether as part of credit counting towards a University award or as placement credit in addition to the credit for the award. As noted above there are specific requirements for awards 'with sandwich'.
- 1.71 The University is responsible for the academic standards of its awards and the quality of the provision leading to them. The University will therefore put in place policies and procedures to ensure its responsibilities and those of providers of Work Based and Placement Learning opportunities are clearly identified and met.
- 1.72 Where Work Based/Placement Learning is part of a programme of study its learning outcomes will be clearly identified, contribute to the overall aims of the programme and will be assessed appropriately.
- 1.73 Where a Work Based/Placement Learning route and University route are available within the same programme, the programme learning outcomes for each route should be the same.
- 1.74 Up to 120 points at any SCQF level may be available via Work Based or Placement Learning. If Work Based or Placement Learning is in place for the full honours year, the normal University regulation for Honours dissertations should apply (See Regulation 3.20-3.24).
- 1.75 The design of the assessment of Work Based or Placement Learning for the award of academic credit remains the responsibility of University staff and may not be devolved to partner employers. The employer may be involved in assessment of Work Based or Placement Learning where appropriate and this should be specified in the module descriptor and learning agreement. However, the award of a grade will be the responsibility of the academic member of staff of the University.

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- 1.76 Credit can only be awarded when a tripartite learning agreement has been agreed with the employer, University and student prior to the commencement of the WBL/PL experience that defines the intended learning outcomes, methods of assessment and arrangements for reassessment.
- 1.77 The impact of failure or non-completion of any WBL/PL on student progression within the overall programme, and the provision of reassessment opportunities must be made clear in the assessment strategy and student handbook and approved at the approval event.
- 1.78 Where, for professional body or other reasons accepted by the Education Advisory Committee, it is determined that credit for WBL/PL cannot be integrated into the credit required for the award, general placement credit will be awarded and recorded on the student's transcript.
- 1.79 Where there is no professional body reason preventing it, there should be use of the full spectrum of assessment marks for the assessment of Work-based Learning (i.e. not pass/fail).