

8. REGULATIONS FOR ACADEMIC AWARDS

This section of the Student Regulations Framework applies to all taught programmes of Plymouth Marjon University, whether undergraduate or postgraduate and to all apprentices enrolled on the University's apprenticeship programmes, who are also classified as 'students' and referred to accordingly throughout this Procedure.

8.1 Authority to Confer Awards

1. Senate is responsible for conferment of academic awards on behalf of Plymouth Marjon University. Except for honorary degrees, an academic award is conferred only when Senate has confirmed the recommendation of the appropriate Progression and Award Board for the granting of that award. This is achieved when the Academic Registrar, who is Secretary to Senate, signs the Progression and Award Board's recommendation for the award.
2. In the event that clarification of these Regulations is required to secure the conferment of an award within a specified time, the Vice-Chancellor, who is Chair of Senate, may interpret the Regulations on its behalf. Any such interpretation shall be reported to the next meeting of Senate.
3. The University will maintain a permanent record of all the academic awards it confers.
4. These regulations apply to all academic awards of the University wherever or however the teaching, learning and assessment takes place.
5. Credit is not in itself an academic award of the University and is not the subject of these regulations. Section 3 of this [Framework](#) includes the authority for the assignment of credit by Module Assessment Boards.

6. These regulations align with the Frameworks for Higher Education Qualifications of UK Degree-Awarding Bodies, February 2024, and the Higher Education Credit Framework for England: Advice on Academic Credit Arrangements, May 2021.
7. Throughout these regulations, reference to a post holder shall include the post holder in person or any other person which the University authorises to act in that capacity.

8.2 Named Awards

Each student of the University works towards a named award, normally of the University but which may be registered for an award of another awarding body. The award is bound by the University's regulations and the relevant Programme Specification.

8.3 List of Awards

Level 4 awards

1. The University may confer the following Level 4 awards:
 - University Certificate
 - Certificate in Professional Studies
 - Certificate of Higher Education (Cert HE)
2. The award of Certificate in Professional Studies is linked only to programmes of study in the context of specific professional experience and designed to establish or build upon professional qualifications or registration.

Level 5 Awards

3. The University may confer the following Level 5 awards:
 - University Diploma
 - Diploma in Professional Studies
 - Diploma of Higher Education (DipHE)
 - Foundation Degree
4. The award of Diploma in Professional Studies is linked only to programmes of study in the context of specific professional experience and designed to establish or build upon professional qualifications or registration.
5. The Foundation Degree may be awarded as:
 - Foundation Degree Arts (FdA)
 - Foundation Degree Science (FdSc)
6. The award of Foundation Degree Science (FdSc) is linked only to programmes in which studies are substantially based on science or mathematics and their applications.

Level 6 Awards

7. The University may confer the following Level 6 awards:
 - Bachelor's Degree
 - Bachelor's Degree with Honours
 - Graduate Certificate
 - Graduate Diploma
 - Professional Graduate Certificate in Education (PGCE)
 - Professional Graduate Certificate in Education (PGCE) (International)

8. The Bachelor's Degree and the Bachelor's Degree with Honours may be awarded as:
- Bachelor of Arts (BA)
 - Bachelor of Education (BEd)
 - Bachelor of Education (International) (BEd International)
 - Bachelor of Science (BSc)
9. The award of Bachelor of Science (BSc) is linked only to programmes in which studies are substantially based on science or mathematics and their applications.
10. The award of Bachelor of Education (BEd) is linked only to programmes of initial teacher training including a substantial element of teaching practice. Moreover, it is awarded only to students who have satisfied the Government's current requirements for the award of Qualified Teacher Status (QTS). This requirement must be recorded in the Programme Specification.
11. The award of Bachelor of Education (International) (BEd International) is linked only to programmes of initial teacher training including a substantial element of teaching practice and where the award is taught wholly or in part overseas. This award does not carry UK Qualified Teacher Status (QTS) and does not entitle the holder to teach in maintained schools or non-maintained special schools in the UK.
12. The award of Professional Graduate Certificate in Education is linked only to programmes of initial teacher training including a substantial element of teaching practice. The award of Professional Graduate Certificate in Education (PGCE) (International) is linked only to programmes of initial teacher training including a substantial element of teaching practice and where the award is taught wholly or in part overseas. This award does not carry UK Qualified Teacher Status (QTS) and does not entitle the holder to teach in maintained schools or non-maintained special schools in the UK.

Level 7 Awards

13. The University may confer the following level 7 awards:
 - Postgraduate Certificate in Education (PGCE)
 - Postgraduate Certificate in Education (International) (PGCE International)
 - Postgraduate Certificate (PGCert)
 - Postgraduate Diploma (PGDip)
 - Master's Degree
 - Master's Degree (Integrated)
14. The award of Postgraduate Certificate in Education is linked only to programmes of initial teacher training including a substantial element of teaching practice. The award of Postgraduate Certificate in Education (International) (PGCE International) is linked only to programmes of initial teacher training including a substantial element of teaching practice and where the award is taught wholly or in part overseas. This award does not carry UK Qualified Teacher Status (QTS) and does not entitle the holder to teach in maintained schools or non-maintained special schools in the UK.
15. The Master's Degree (inclusive of Integrated) may be awarded as:
 - Master of Arts (MA)
 - Master of Education (MEd)
 - Master of Science (MSc)
 - Master of Business Administration (MBA)
 - Master of Osteopathy (MOst)
 - Master of Physiotherapy (MPhysio)
 - Master of Psychotherapy and Counselling (MPsy)

- Master of Public Administration (MPA)
 - Master of Public Health (MPH)
 - Master of Research (MRes)
16. The award of Master of Education (MEd) is linked only to programmes of continuing educational professional development.
 17. The award of Master of Science (MSc) is linked only to programmes in which studies are substantially based on science or mathematics and their applications.
 18. The award of Master of Business Administration (MBA) shall be used for programmes that focus on the general principles and functions of management and the development of management skills. Students entering MBA programmes must have appropriate experience of managerial practice and should normally have at least two years of appropriate postgraduate work experience on admission.
 19. The title Master of Public Administration (MPA) shall be used for programmes that focus on the general principles and functions of management and/or policy and administration in the public sector. Students entering MPA programmes must have appropriate experience of managerial practice and/or policy in the public sector and should normally have at least two years of appropriate postgraduate work experience on admission.
 20. The title Master of Public Health (MPH) shall be used for programmes which take an interdisciplinary approach to areas related to public health. Students will be taught how to monitor, diagnose, and regulate the health concerns of communities through public policies.
 21. The Master of Research (MRes) is a taught postgraduate degree. The award of MRes shall be used to provide a structured research training programme which can act as a foundation for doctoral study or for a research career outside academia.

22. The award of MOfst (Integrated Master's Degree) is a 4-year full time or 6-year part time pre-registration undergraduate and postgraduate degree, which is designed to develop a critical evaluation of the theory and practice of osteopathy. Recognised Qualification (RQ) status will be sought from the General Osteopathic Council (GOsC).
23. The award of MPhysio (Master of Physiotherapy) is linked only to programmes which prepare students to meet the standards of proficiency for physiotherapists set by the Health and Care Professions Council (HCPC).

Honorary Awards

24. The University may confer any of its degree awards as an honorary degree. In addition, the following degrees may be conferred *honoris causa* in accordance with University Guidelines for the Award of Honorary Degrees:
 - Master of Letters (MLitt)
 - Master of Music (MMus)

8.4 Standards of Awards

1. The University defines the standards of its awards in terms of the amount and the level of study undertaken, which builds upon the knowledge and skills expected of each student on commencement of their programme.
2. Except for the conferment of honorary awards, on completion of their studies, students are required to demonstrate outcomes in line with the qualification descriptors and the amount and level of study indicated in the Frameworks for Higher Education Qualifications of UK Degree-Awarding Bodies, February 2024, and the Higher Education Credit Framework for England: Advice on Academic Credit Arrangements, May 2021.

3. The University's Senate ensures that programmes of study are designed so that students can demonstrate outcomes at the level appropriate for the awards to which they lead.

8.5 Entrance Requirements for Academic Awards

1. The General Entrance Requirement for a taught programme of study in the University is that an applicant has provided evidence of knowledge and skills to support the academic judgement that the applicant will succeed in their studies. The evidence required is likely to include the qualifications described herein or their equivalent.
2. The Programme Specification relating to a programme of study leading to an award of the University must state any additional entrance requirements for a specific programme.
3. Entry tariffs for each programme will be published on the University website.
4. The University will publish guidance for staff, students and applicants in its Admissions Policy and Procedures.

8.6 Admission with Credit and Transfer between Programmes

1. In accordance with the University's Admissions Policy and Procedures, evidence of prior certificated learning and/or prior experiential learning appropriate to the named award will allow a student to apply for admission to a programme of study with specific credit. The decision to allow admission with credit will exempt the student from specified whole modules, the outcomes of which the student has already demonstrated. Students admitted by direct entry to any stage of a programme other than the beginning of its first stage are regarded as being admitted with credit, as endorsed by the University's Admissions team. Prior certificated learning can only be counted once. Once used for admission to an award of the University or of an alternative provider

the same credit cannot be used for an additional award. Double counting of credit is not permissible.

2. The University will make an academic judgement as to whether the learning is appropriate to the named award and which particular modules may be exempted. In doing so, the University will be bound by the General Entrance Requirement described in Section 8.5.1 of this Framework, by the limits imposed in this regulation and by the aims and outcomes of the programme as they are defined in the Programme Specification. The Admissions team will state any exempted modules in the formal offer letter to the applicant and inform the Registry and Programme Support Office so the Student Record can be maintained. Documents and evidence relating to admission with credit will be retained in the student's file throughout their registration.
3. The total of specific certificated credit allowed to exempt the student from specified whole modules (as per Section 8.6.1 of this Framework) may not exceed the following limits:

Level 4

- University Certificate and Certificate of Professional Studies – zero.
- Certificate of Higher Education (Cert HE) – 60 credits.

Level 5

- University Diploma and Diploma of Professional Studies – zero.
- Diploma of Higher Education (DipHE) – 120 credits of which not more than 60 are at level 5.
- Graduate Certificate – zero.
- Graduate Diploma – 60 credits.
- Foundation Degree – 180 credits of which not more than 60 are at level 5.

Level 6

- Bachelor's Degree – 240 credits of which none may be higher than Level 5.
- Bachelor's Degree with Honours – 240 credits, of which no more than 60 may be at Level 6. Exceptionally, candidates with a certificated level 6 professional qualification may be admitted with a maximum of 300 credits, of which no more than 60 are at level 6.
- Professional Graduate Certificate in Education (PGCE) – zero.

NB - in the case of top-up degrees, a similar requirement exists but this does not constitute 'advanced entry' *per se*. This is because Levels 4 and 5 are not offered on these specific programmes.

Level 7

- Postgraduate Certificate (PGCert) – 30 credits.
- Postgraduate Certificate in Education (PGCE) – zero.
- Postgraduate Diploma (PGDip) – 60 credits.
- Master's Degree – 90 credits.

4. Notwithstanding the overall limits on RPL within this Framework, not more than 50% of the total credit requirement for an academic award of the University will be awarded on the basis of prior experiential learning alone. Where a proposal is made to increase this amount for all entrants to a programme, agreement from the University's Senate will be required. This must be sought at the point of programme approval and will not be applied retrospectively. This exemption will not be granted to individual applicants seeking entry to a programme. This maximum limit of 50% does not apply to applicants to pre-registration nursing programmes (including nursing apprenticeships) who are currently a NMC registered nurse without restrictions on their practice.

5. The approved Programme Specification for a named award may, exceptionally, specify higher or lower limits for admission with credit, for example at the request of an accrediting Professional, Statutory or Regulatory Body (PSRB), or may include in its Specific Entrance Requirements particular qualifications for which admission with credit will be permitted.
6. Applications for the transfer of credit between University programmes will be considered on the basis of the equivalence of the curriculum studied. The general principles in Section 8.6.2 of this Framework will apply, but subject to the student achieving the aims and outcomes of the programme, there will be no limit on the number or level of credits that may be transferred. The Programme Leader or Programme Area Leader will communicate their request with Registry who can authorise the update to the Student Record. Documents and evidence relating to the transfer of credit will be retained electronically by Registry throughout the student's registration.
7. Transfers of credit will normally be possible only at the defined stages of a programme or at a point when modules start or end.
8. The University will publish guidance for staff, students and applicants in its Admissions Policy and Procedures.

8.7 Credit Requirements for Academic Awards

1. This regulation defines the minimum credit requirements for the recommendation of an award of the University to a student admitted in accordance with Section 8.5 of this Framework. However, the accumulation of credit at appropriate levels is a necessary but insufficient requirement for the conferment of University awards.
2. The Programme Specification will state the modules that must or may be studied. It will also state any additional outcomes that are not assessed for the award of credit, but which a student must demonstrate before they can be considered for progression to the next stage and/or the award.

3. The Higher Education Credit Framework for England: Advice on Academic Credit Arrangements, May 2021 describes the use of credit in UK higher education institutions and the definitions in these regulations have been set in line with that Framework.
4. The minimum credit requirements for awards of the University are as follows:

Level 4 Awards

- University Certificate – 60 credits at Level 4 or higher.
- Certificate of Professional Studies – 60 credits at Level 4 or higher.
- Certificate of Higher Education (CertHE) – 120 credits at Level 4 or higher.

Level 5 Awards

- University Diploma – 60 credits at Level 5 or higher.
- Diploma of Professional Studies – 60 credits at Level 5 or higher.
- Diploma of Higher Education (DipHE) – 240 credits at Levels 4 and 5 or higher, of which not more than 120 are at Level 4.
- Foundation Degree – 240 credits at Levels 4 and 5 or higher, of which not more than 120 are at Level 4.

Level 6 Awards

- Professional Graduate Certificate in Education (PGCE) – 60 credits at Level 6 or higher.
- Graduate Certificate – 60 credits at Level 6 or higher.
- Graduate Diploma, Bachelor's Degree with Honours (top-up) – 120 credits at Level 6 or higher.

- Bachelor's Degree – 300 credits at Levels 4 and 5 and 6 or higher, of which not more than 120 are at Level 4 and at least 60 are at Level 6 or higher.
- Bachelor's Degree with Honours – 360 credits at Levels 4 and 5 and 6 or higher, of which not more than 120 are at Level 4 and at least 120 are at Level 6 or higher.

Level 7 Awards

- Postgraduate Certificate in Education (PGCE) – 60 credits at Level 7.
- Postgraduate Certificate (PGCert) – 60 credits at Level 7.
- Postgraduate Diploma (PGDip) – 120 credits at Level 7.
- Master's Degree (Integrated) – 480 credits at Levels 4 or 5 or 6 or 7, including 120 credits at Level 7.
- Master's Degree – 180 credits at Level 7.

8.8 Maximum Period of Registration

1. The default maximum period for registration for programmes of more than one year's duration is three years longer than the planned duration of the programme of study. However, for programmes of one year's duration, the maximum registration is three years for full-time students and five years for part-time students. Absolute maximum registration periods are as follows:-
 - Foundation Degree – 8 years
 - Bachelor's Degree (including with Honours) – 10 years
 - Master's Degree – 5 years
 - Master's Degree (Integrated) – 11 years

2. A student's registration for an award of the University will cease if two academic years elapse without the award of credit towards that award and the Progression and Award Board will recommend any interim award for which the student may be qualified. For this purpose, an academic year will include any resit period and may be extended to allow for differences in the timing of Module Assessment Boards and Progression and Award Boards between years. Subject to Section 1 of this [Framework](#), such a student may apply for admission with credit to that programme or another programme of the University.
3. A student who voluntarily exits the programme with an Ordinary Degree, without attempting the Honours project, may normally be permitted to return and complete the Honours project within a five-year period. This is subject to the approval of the Programme/Programme Area Leader and the Academic Registrar. However, this provision does not apply to students who exit with an Ordinary Degree due to non-completion resulting from failed modules. Any Honours 'top-up' must be completed within the standard maximum period of registration, as outlined above.

8.9 Classification of Awards

1. The University will confer the Bachelor's Degree with Honours with one of the following classifications of honours:
 - First Class
 - Upper Second Class
 - Lower Second Class
 - Third Class
2. The University may confer all other Certificates, Diplomas and Degrees, except those conferred in **Honoris Causa** or **Aegrotat**, with the addition of one of the following classifications where applicable:

- with Merit
 - with Distinction
3. The Progression and Award Board will use the method of classifying awards described in Section 7 of this [Framework](#) at the time it meets.

8.10 Conferment and Certification of Awards

1. A recommendation for conferment of an award of the University shall be confirmed when all the following conditions have been satisfied.
- The student was a registered student on a programme of the University at the time of their assessment for an award.
 - The student has discharged all academic debt to the University (i.e. tuition fees).
 - Registry and Programme Support Office has confirmed that the student completed the programme leading to the award recommended.
 - The award has been recommended by the appropriate Progression and Award Board.
 - The recommendation for the award has been approved by the Chair of the Progression and Award Board confirming that all assessments have been carried out in accordance with the requirements of Senate.
2. The University will issue a certificate for each award it confers, on which will be recorded:
- the name of the University
 - the name of the student as it appears on the list of recommendations submitted by the Progression and Award Board
 - the award and any classification

- the title of the programme as approved by Senate
 - where appropriate, an endorsement that the programme was studied in association with an approved partner institution
 - any other approved endorsement
 - the date of the Progression and Award Board's recommendation for the award
 - the signatures of the Chair and Secretary of Senate.
3. The University will issue to each student on completion of their studies a European Diploma Supplement which may include additional information.

8.11 Titles of Named Awards

The title will reflect accurately the field of study and should not mislead students or potential employers. An award may be untitled if the award itself sufficiently describes the content of the programme.

8.12 General Regulations relating to Awards of the University

Interim Awards

1. When a student withdraws from their programme of study, or a Progression and Award Board excludes them on academic grounds or determines that their maximum period of registration has expired, it will recommend the conferment of any interim award for which the student is qualified.
2. If the student subsequently uses that interim award within two years to gain admission with credit to the same programme or another programme leading to an equivalent award, then they must surrender that interim award.

3. The Postgraduate Certificate in Education is not an interim award and is not to be surrendered if it is used to gain admission with credit to a taught postgraduate programme of study.
4. A Foundation Degree is not an interim award and is not to be surrendered if it is used to gain admission with credit to an Honours Degree programme.

Aegrotat and Posthumous Awards

5. Where there is insufficient evidence to determine the class of an award, but the Progression and Award Board is nevertheless satisfied that the student would have qualified for the award for which they were a candidate, had it not been for illness or other good cause, an unclassified Aegrotat award may be recommended.
6. Senate will not confer the Aegrotat award until the student, or a person authorised to act on behalf of the student, has signified acceptance of the Aegrotat award, or the maximum period of registration as defined in these regulations has elapsed.
7. An award may be conferred posthumously to a student who was a registered student at the time of death and satisfied the remaining general conditions for the conferment of the award as far as was practicable. If there is insufficient evidence to classify the award, the PAB will recommend an Aegrotat award be conferred posthumously.

Deprivation and withholding of award

8. In exceptional circumstances, on the recommendation of the relevant Progression and Award Board or a Student Misconduct Panel, Senate may deprive any person of any award conferred by the University. Such a recommendation may be made, for example, if the person was found to have been admitted to the University or recommended for the award on the basis of material misrepresentation or non-disclosure of facts, or following academic misconduct. In the case of an honorary graduate whose conduct in public life

might harm the reputation of the University, the Vice-Chancellor may present a case to Senate for the annulment of the award.

9. The University will not permit a student who has undischarged liabilities to the University to attend any graduation ceremony. In addition, certification will be withheld if there are unpaid tuition fees.

Academic Dress

10. Graduands who attend a University graduation ceremony for the formal presentation of their academic award must wear Academic Dress, as defined by the University.

Document Title	Plymouth Marjon University Student Regulations Framework – Section 8 Regulations for Academic Awards
Document Reference	L:\Student Regulations Framework\Student Regulations Framework 2025-26
Version	3.14
Issuing Authority	Senate
Custodian	Academic Standards Officer
Document Date	16th October 2009
Last Amended	19 th May 2025
Sensitivity	Unclassified
Circulation	Website
Effective from	September 2025
Review Date	Ongoing
Effective until	September 2026
History	Updated annually and subject to routine ongoing revision, most recently on 04/11/22.
Equality Impact Assessment	Preliminary EIA conducted for SRF, December 2010. Updated Equality Analysis Form to be submitted.