



BIRMINGHAM CITY
University

ACADEMIC REGULATIONS:

Postgraduate Taught Students

These academic regulations apply to new and continuing postgraduate taught students in 2025/26



This handbook is published annually by Academic Services.
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TABLE OF CHANGES

Table of amendments to the 25/26 Postgraduate Taught Academic Regulations

These regulations use the same foundation regulations as those which govern undergraduate and integrated masters awards, therefore, the summary below is explicit where amendments have been made for the purpose of drafting a separate set of regulations to govern postgraduate taught awards.

Red highlight = regulatory change

No highlight = admin change

SECTION	25/26 CLAUSE NO	24/25 CLAUSE NO	CHANGE
Front Cover	-	-	Inclusion of which students the regulations apply to
Introduction	1.1.2	1.1.2	Clarification that these regulations apply to PGT only
	1.1.3	1.1.3	Removed reference to ESFA and replaced with DfE
	1.1.4	1.1.4	Clarification that separate regulations apply to UG including Integrated Masters (IM) as well as research degrees etc
	1.1.5	1.1.5	Clarification that these regulations apply to PGT
	1.1.6	1.1.6	Remains highlighted as reference to LTAQC may change following the governance review
	1.1.6	1.1.6	Removed reference to variations being available in course specifications
	1.1.7	-	New clause regarding teaching in English
	1.1.8	1.1.7	Updating of date Academic Board approve the final version
University Awards Framework	1.3.1	1.3.1	Remains highlighted as reference to LTAQC may change following the governance review
	1.3.1	1.3.1	Removed the process for approving variations and signposts to location of approved list of variations
Recognition of Prior or Experiential Learning	2.1	2.1	Removed reference to UG
Registration and Enrolment	3.1	3.1	Clarification of when new and returning students and students returning from a break in study should enrol/re-enrol
	3.2	3.2	Amended reference from UG to PGT
	3.2	3.2	Clarification of the normal maximum enrolled load for a full time PGT student
	3.3	3.3	Clarification of the normal maximum enrolled load for part time PGT student
	3.3	3.3	Added reference to the Change of Circumstances Policy
Change of circumstances	4.1	4.1	Removed procedural information
	4.2	-	New clause on re-application following academic decision to withdraw
	4.3	4.2	Removed procedural information
Maximum registration periods	5.2	5.2	Added reference to break in study
	5.2	5.2	Removed reference to the role of ad tesse
	5.2	5.2	Removed reference to Progression and Award Board and chair, replaced with progression and award board process
Attendance and engagement	6.2	6.2	Added reference to the Apprentices Attendance and Engagement Policy
Assessment	7.2.2	7.2.2	Removed reference to UG
	7.2.3	7.2.3	Added that module marks are automatically rounded
	7.2.5	7.2.5	Replaced examination boards with progression and award process

SECTION	25/26 CLAUSE NO	24/25 CLAUSE NO	CHANGE
Compensation	7.3.2 (II)	7.2.7 (II)	Removed reference to UG
	7.3.4	7.2.9	Removed reference to UG compensation within table
	7.3.5	7.2.10	Clarification that compensation is applied automatically and when
	7.3.5	7.2.10	Removed reference to PGT
	7.3.5	7.2.10	Replaced Progression and Award Board with progression and award process
	7.3.7	7.2.12	Removed reference to UG
Number of attempts	7.5.1	7.5.1	Clarification that a referred resit or assessment attempt is taken at the next available opportunity without repeating teaching
	7.5.2	-	NEW CLAUSE progression and award process applies at the end of the taught elements
Repeating or replacing a failed module after re-assessment	7.7	-	Replaced 'retaking' with 'repeating' throughout
	7.7.1	7.5.12	Replaced 'retake' with 'repeat' throughout
	7.7.4	-	NEW CLAUSE repeat modules incur a fee
	7.7.5	-	NEW CLAUSE apprentices repeating is subject to the employer
Repeating a year of study	7.8.1	7.5.15	Clarification that the requirement to pass at least 40 credits is on the first attempt at the course
	7.8.5	-	NEW CLAUSE repeat year will incur a fee
Achieving the final credit based academic award	7.10	7.6	Section title amended to incorporate two subtitles, 'Achieving the final award' and 'Credit based academic awards'
Classification of awards	7.12.1	7.6.5	Removed reference to UG
	7.12.1	7.6.5	Removed row 'below 49%'
Eligibility criteria for undergraduate awards	7.13.1	7.6.6	Removed reference to UG
	7.13.2	-	NEW CLAUSE An apprentices academic qualification will only be issued upon completion of the Apprenticeship Assessment (previously End Point Assessment)
	-	7.6.7	Removed reference to PGT
Methods for calculating award classifications	7.14	7.6.8	Removed reference to UG in table
	7.14	7.6.8	Added Advanced Postgraduate Diploma in Music to table
Consideration band (borderline decisions)	7.15	7.6.10	Removed table
	7.15.1	7.6.10	Clarification that marks are rounded to the nearest whole number to calculate the final degree classification
	7.15.2	7.6.11	Removed reference to UG
	7.15.2	7.6.11	Clarification that 80 credits applies to a full 180 Masters and added 60 credits for a 120 standalone PG Diploma
Aegrotat and Posthumous awards	7.17.1	7.6.14	Clarification that aegrotat awards will not be classified
	7.17.2	7.6.15	Clarification that aegrotat awards will reflect the full award
	7.17.3	-	NEW CLAUSE reflecting posthumous awards
Appendix A – Academic Framework	2.3	2.3	Added Advanced Postgraduate Diploma to table
	4.1 Bullet 2	4.1 bullet 2	Added Advanced Postgraduate Diploma
Table of Awards	UG Bachelor Arts (Level 6 top-up degree)		'BSc' add
	UG Bachelor Arts with Honours (Level 6 top-up degree)		'BSc' add

SECTION	25/26 CLAUSE NO	24/25 CLAUSE NO	CHANGE
Table of Awards		Integrated Master's Degree	Minimum credit at level of the award amended from 240 to 120
		Master of Music	Minimum credit requirement and minimum credit at level of the award amended from 240 to 180 credits
		Advanced Postgraduate Diploma in Music (Professional Practice)	Minimum credit values amended from 180/135 to 120
		Professional Doctorate	Maximum registration period amended from 5 years (PT)/6 years (FT) to 7 years (PT)
		Doctor of Psychology	Maximum registration period amended from 5 years (PT)/6 years (FT) to 4 years (FT)

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Status

- 1.1.1 The regulations apply to students from the time they accept the offer of a place until their registration ends.
- 1.1.2 They apply to all postgraduate taught courses leading to a Birmingham City University (BCU) award including courses offered in collaboration with approved partner institutions (except where otherwise agreed). They also apply, where appropriate, to students registered for taught modules for which credit is awarded on successful completion but which by themselves do not lead to a BCU award.
- 1.1.3 Apprentices adhere to the Academic Regulations for University awards integrated within, or offered as part of, apprenticeship training. Where Department for Education funding rules for providers specify an alternative requirement to that set out in the Academic Regulations, these rules will take precedence.
- 1.1.4 Separate regulations apply to BCU's undergraduate, integrated masters and research degrees including professional doctorates, higher doctorates and honorary degrees.
- 1.1.5 The regulations are the definitive statement over all other BCU documents of the regulatory framework for courses leading to a BCU postgraduate taught award. In the unlikely event of a discrepancy between the regulations and any other BCU publication, the regulations take precedence and are applied in all cases.
- 1.1.6 Any Variations to the regulations require the approval of the Learning, Teaching, Assessment and Quality Committee (LTAQC). Such exceptional Variations (see also regulation 1.3) will normally be for the purpose of meeting the requirements of a Professional, Statutory or Regulatory Body (PSRB) in respect of assessment.
- 1.1.7 All BCU provision including provision delivered by academic partners is taught in English.
- 1.1.8 The regulations are maintained by Student and Academic Services and are approved by Academic Board. This version (First Edition) was approved on 15 May 2025 and applies from 1 August 2025.

1.2 University Awards Framework

- 1.2.1 The University Awards Framework (UAF) is designed to ensure compliance with the Office for Students (OfS) Regulatory Framework and the 'sector-recognised standards' adopted in relation to the quality and standards conditions of registration. The UAF ensures that the University adheres to Part A (threshold standards for qualifications at all levels) of the sector-recognised standards through the adoption of standard conventions for qualification titles and the alignment of BCU awards with the relevant level of the Framework for Higher Education Qualifications (levels 7-8) and the typical volumes of credit for qualifications at levels 7 and 8. The UAF also describes the University's approach to credit and the award of credit and specifies the maximum period of registration for each postgraduate University award.
- 1.2.2 The UAF is approved by the University's Academic Board. Any changes to the framework, including the addition of new awards, removal of existing awards and/or any changes to credit requirements and periods of registration require the approval of Academic Board. The UAF forms part of the regulations and is included at Appendix A

1.3 Variations from the Academic Regulations

- 1.3.1 For particular courses, the Learning, Teaching, Assessment and Quality Committee (LTAQC) will consider a Variation to allow exemptions from aspects of the Academic Regulations. A full list of variations is provided within the Student Contract web page.

SECTION 2: RECOGNITION OF PRIOR OR EXPERIENTIAL LEARNING

- 2.1 The process through which students can be admitted with credit to a particular postgraduate course through formal recognition of prior learning (RPL) is detailed in the University's [Recognition of Prior Learning Policy](#).

SECTION 3. REGISTRATION AND ENROLMENT

- 3.1 Students must enrol at the start of their course and re-enrol for each year of study by the Friday of week four from the start date of their course unless a Break in Study (section 4.1) has been approved. New students can only take a Break in Study once they are fully enrolled. Returning students are eligible to take a Break in Study before they re-enrol for the next year, re-enrolment must be completed by Friday of week four from their resumption date.
- 3.2 Masters students are normally enrolled on modules totalling 180 credits over an extended academic year. Full-time students normally take modules totalling 60 credits per semester.
- 3.3 Part-time students are normally enrolled on modules totalling up to 120 credits in an extended academic year. Part-time students normally take modules totalling up to a maximum of 40 credits in any one semester.
- 3.4 While enrolled, students can request a course transfer, take a Break in Study for a specified period or permanently withdraw from the University. Details of the process and requirements are set out in the [Change of Circumstances Policy](#).

SECTION 4. CHANGES OF CIRCUMSTANCES

- 4.1 The process for students who may wish to either take a temporary break from their studies (Break in Study) or permanently withdraw (PWD) from the University is set out in the [Change of Circumstances Policy](#). It deals specifically with student-initiated breaks in study and permanent withdrawal. This is distinct from University-initiated permanent or break in study on the basis of an academic decision including, attendance and engagement, fitness to study/practice, non-payment of tuition fees, where an apprentice is no longer employed or able to continue their apprenticeship or failure to comply with enrolment terms.
- 4.2 The University Policy on re-application following an academic decision to withdraw a student is governed by the [Admissions Policy](#).
- 4.3 A student may be suspended from attendance at the University for alleged misconduct or other good or urgent cause for a limited period. Suspension is not a penalty but a precautionary measure which the University may use in order to exercise its duty of care or whilst necessary investigation takes place. See the [Student Suspension Guidance](#).

SECTION 5. MAXIMUM REGISTRATION PERIODS

- 5.1 There are no minimum registration periods, but each University award has a maximum registration period. These are specified in the University Award Framework (see Appendix A) and incorporate any permitted period(s) for suspension of studies and/or resubmission of assessed work.
- 5.2 The maximum period of registration (including any Breaks in Study) can exceptionally be extended for one further academic year at the discretion of the progression and award process. Any such decisions are reserved for instances where serious medium to longer term circumstances mean that a student has been unable to study for significant periods of time within the period of registration and it therefore becomes impossible to complete the course on a full-time basis within the specified period.

SECTION 6. ATTENDANCE AND ENGAGEMENT

- 6.1 Students are expected to participate fully in their course by attending regularly, engaging actively with learning opportunities and by taking responsibility for their learning and independent study.
- 6.2 The University monitors attendance and engagement. If there is cause for concern, students will be contacted and offered support. See the [Student Attendance and Engagement Policy](#) for more details. Apprentices should refer to the [Apprentices Attendance and Engagement Policy](#).

SECTION 7. ASSESSMENT

7.1 Introduction

7.1.1 The University's expectations regarding attendance and engagement also apply to student engagement with assessment. The expectation is that students should aim to complete all assessments first time, on time. Students who successfully complete assessments at the first attempt and who submit assessments on time are likely to achieve better marks, complete their course on time and achieve a better overall degree outcome.

7.2 Passing a module

7.2.1 The pass mark for a taught postgraduate module (level 7) is 50% and undergraduate (level 6) is 40%. Where the pass mark is achieved, credit is awarded for the module.

7.2.2 In modules where there is more than one element of assessment, a weighted average of 50% must be achieved to pass the module. Where an overall pass mark has been achieved, students are not required to pass all assessment elements. The only permitted exception will be in cases where there is a PSRB requirement that all assessments within a module are passed, in addition to achieving the overall pass mark. In such cases a variation will be required (see regulation 1.3).

7.2.3 Module marks are expressed as whole number percentages. Where weighted marks for elements of assessment are combined and the result is not a whole number, it is automatically rounded. For example: 69.5% is rounded to 70%; 69.4% rounded to 69%.

7.2.4 Some modules are marked as pass or fail and therefore will not have a percentage mark. Pass/fail modules do not contribute to the calculation of the overall mark required for progression or for award classification.

7.2.5 Marks are provisional until they have been confirmed through the progression and award process.

7.3 Compensation

7.3.1 Compensation is the practice of permitting marginal failure in one or more modules on the basis of good overall academic performance and in accordance with specified criteria.

7.3.2 Compensation is available for marginal failure provided a student meets the following criteria:

- (i) An overall module mark of 35-39% (UG) or 45-49% (PG) has been achieved.
- (ii) An average mark 50% or above for the course (PG) has been achieved.

7.3.3 If all the above criteria have been satisfied, the failed module(s) are automatically compensated. The original module mark is retained and the module is classified as a 'compensated pass'. Credit is awarded for the module in the same way as a module where the pass mark has been achieved.

7.3.4 Compensation is limited to the following maximum number of credits per level/award:

Award	Limits to volume and level of compensation
Master's Degree (MA, MSc, MBA, LL.M etc.)	Maximum of 40 credits for entire award
Postgraduate Diploma (PG Dip)	Maximum of 20 credits for entire award
Postgraduate Certificate (PG Cert)	Compensation not permitted
Major Project / Dissertation	Compensation not permitted

7.3.5 Compensation is automatically applied once all marks, including marks for resits, are ratified through the progression and award process after the taught phase of the course.

7.3.6 The principle of compensation applies to all taught postgraduate courses except those courses containing fewer than 120 credits. Compensation may be excluded from other courses (or modules within them) only if exclusion is required by a PSRB, for which LTAQC approval is required through a variation request.

7.3.7 Final year dissertations and/or major projects cannot be compensated.

7.3.8 Students who are awarded a compensated pass are not required to be reassessed in the compensated module.

7.4 Advancing through the stages of a master's degree

7.4.1 A standard master's degree is 180 credits at Level 7. This includes taught elements and an independent major project or dissertation. A master's degree is normally structured as shown in the table below, although there are a small number of master's degrees that are made up of a greater amount of credit*.

Award	Limits to volume and level of compensation
Postgraduate Certificate (PG Cert)	60 credits
Postgraduate Diploma (PG Dip)	60 credits
Dissertation/Major Project	40/60 credits

*MA Musicology, MMus, MArch are 240 credit awards. MFA is a 300 credit award

7.4.2 A PG Cert and PG Dip can be standalone awards and they can make up the taught elements of a full master's degree. When the taught elements of a master's are completed, students will generally move on to the dissertation/major project phase, which is classed as an independent study.

7.5 Number of attempts

- 7.5.1 Students who fail a module at the first attempt are permitted one further opportunity to pass the module. This is referred to as a resit or reassessment attempt (without repeat teaching) and will be taken at the next available opportunity.
- 7.5.2 The progression and award process determine whether students need to undertake any resit attempts following completion of the taught elements of the course. Where resits are required, they will be taken at the next available opportunity.

7.6 Re-assessment of failure

- 7.6.1 Where a student fails a module, they may only be re-assessed in the failed assessment elements. Students may not be re-assessed in assessment elements or modules which have already been passed.
- 7.6.2 There are no limits on the number of modules or assessment components a student can be reassessed in.
- 7.6.3 A student who passes a module after re-assessment will be awarded the module pass mark (50% for level 7 modules, 40% for modules at level 6). This includes modules with more than one element of assessment where a student may only be re-sitting one of a number of elements of assessment for the module. The overall mark for the module will be capped at the pass mark. This ensures that students who are undertaking resits do not have an unfair opportunity to improve marks.
- 7.6.4 Where a student has been assessed more than once in the same module but has still failed it, the highest mark achieved will be shown on the student's record.
- 7.6.5 Students will be automatically registered to take reassessments at the first opportunity provided.
- 7.6.6 If a student does not submit a reassessment when required or does not attend a resit examination as scheduled, the student will be recorded as having failed the reassessment.

7.7 Repeating or replacing a failed module after re-assessment

- 7.7.1 Any student who fails a 20, 40 or 60 credit module after re-assessment is permitted to repeat (restudy) the same module, whether compulsory or optional. Students can repeat modules totalling up to a maximum of 60 credits.
- 7.7.2 If the failed module is optional a student can replace it with an alternative module from the list of optional modules set out in the relevant course specification (subject to availability).
- 7.7.3 When repeating a module, or taking a replacement module, a student is required to fully engage with the module in its entirety, attending all scheduled learning and teaching. The student is entitled to an initial attempt at all assessment elements and, if unsuccessful, one further re-assessment attempt (as per regulation 7.5.1). The first attempt for a repeat or replacement module will not be capped at the pass mark. Resit attempts will however be capped (as per regulation 7.6.3).
- 7.7.4 Repeat modules will incur a fee.
- 7.7.5 If an apprentice on a Masters level apprenticeship is unsuccessful in all permitted resit attempts the right to repeat that module is subject to the consent of the apprentices Employer. If the apprentice is not permitted to repeat the module, this may result in the apprentice being withdrawn from the University.

7.8 Repeating a year of study

- 7.8.1 Where a student has not met the requirements to pass the course (full-time and part-time students) they will be eligible to repeat the year/level of study provided they have passed at least 40 credits at the first attempt at the course.
- 7.8.2 Students in this position will be given the choice to repeat the course in its entirety but it will be optional.
- 7.8.3 Students repeating the course are required to take the entire year again, as if for the first time. No marks or credit awarded for the original attempt at the year of study are carried forward. The expected completion date of the student's registration period is extended by one year.
- 7.8.4 Students will only be able to repeat a year of study on one occasion.
- 7.8.5 Repeat year will incur a fee.

7.9 Academic Misconduct

- 7.9.1 In cases where an allegation of misconduct is upheld, and it is deemed as Moderate, the mark for their work will be recorded as zero as per the Academic Misconduct Policy. Should a resit attempt be available, the student will be required to resubmit work for the element of the module in which the misconduct took place. The resubmitted work will be capped at the pass mark.
- 7.9.2 In cases where an allegation of cheating in an exam is upheld, the exam will be deemed void, and the student will receive a mark of zero as per the Academic Misconduct Policy. Should a resit opportunity be available, the student will be required to resit the exam.

7.10 Achieving the final credit based academic award

- 7.10.1 The majority of students studying at the University will be enrolled on a course which will lead to an academic award.
- 7.10.2 To gain an award a student must obtain a certain number of academic credits. The number of credits required for postgraduate awards are detailed below.
- 7.10.3 Credits are awarded either by passing a module or by a compensated pass for a marginal failure in a module(s).

7.11 Credits required for awards

- 7.11.1 The minimum credits needed to gain a university award are listed in the University Awards Framework (Appendix A).

7.12 Classification of awards

- 7.12.1 The table below shows the classification bands for the University's postgraduate awards.

Classification band	Postgraduate awards ¹
70% and above	Distinction
60-69%	Merit
50-59%	Pass
49% or lower	Fail

¹Postgraduate Certificate (PGCert) and Postgraduate Diploma (PGDip) exit awards are not classified. PGCE, PGCE (PCET) and PGDE awards are also not classified. Please refer to the UAF for full details.

7.13 Eligibility criteria for postgraduate awards

- 7.13.1 The University will make a postgraduate award if a student has met all the following criteria:
- (i) Gained the minimum number of credits required for that award, as set out in the University Awards Framework. This may include a proportion of passed and compensated credits. The requirements for each award are provided in the table under 7.14.1 below.
 - (ii) Achieved an overall average mark of at least 50% across the modules studied at the level of the award.
- 7.13.2 An apprentices academic qualification certificate will normally be issued upon completion of the Apprenticeship Assessment (previously End Point Assessment).

7.14 Methods for calculating award classifications

- 7.14.1 The methods for calculating the classification of postgraduate awards are set out in the table below. The outcome of this classification calculation is called the 'average for classification' and will determine which classification band a student will be awarded.
- 7.14.2 Where an award includes a Professional Placement the placement module must be passed in order for the award title to include the suffix 'with professional placement'.

Classification band	Postgraduate awards ¹	
Postgraduate Certificate	60 credits	Overall weighted average of 60 credits
Postgraduate Diploma	120 credits	Overall weighted average of 120 credits
Advanced Postgraduate Diploma in Music	120 credits	Overall weighted average of 120 credits
Master's Degree	180 credits	Overall weighted average of 180 credits
Master of Fine Art (MFA)	300 credits	Overall weighted average of 300 credits
Master of Music (MMus)	240 credits	Overall weighted average of the best 180 credits at Level 7
Master of Architecture (March)	240 credits	Overall weighted average of all Stage 2 module marks at Level 7 (equivalent to 120 credits)

1 PG Dip and PG Cert awards can include up to a maximum of 20 Level 6 credits. Where a course includes Level 6 credits these will be used alongside the Level 7 credits to calculate the final classification.

2 Master's degrees can include up to a maximum of 20 Level 6 credits. Where a course includes Level 6 credits these will be used alongside the Level 7 credits to calculate the final classification.

7.15 Consideration band (borderline decisions)

- 7.15.1 The process of rounding marks to the nearest whole number to calculate the final degree classification may result in the 'average for classification' coming close to but below a degree classification boundary. A consideration band is applied for all classified awards where a student's average for classification is within one percent of the next classification band (see table at 7.12.1)
- 7.15.2 If a student achieves an average for classification no more than one percent below the next classification band and at least 80 credits for a full 180 credit Masters or, 60 credits for a 120 credit standalone PG Diploma, within the higher classification band, the student will be automatically promoted to the higher classification.

7.16 Exit Awards

- 7.16.1 Sometimes a student is unable to achieve their intended award because they have run out of reassessment opportunities or reached the maximum period of registration for the award. In these cases the university will make an exit award, if possible, based on the credits the student has achieved. Permitted exit awards are listed in the University Awards Framework and in individual course specifications.
- 7.16.2 In making an exit award, passed modules at later stages in the course may be used to offset module failure at earlier stages to reach the minimum number of credits required. This principle applies to Master's courses where the credit for the dissertation or major project can be used to meet the credit requirement for a Postgraduate Diploma award.

7.17 Aegrotat and Posthumous Awards

- 7.17.1 An Aegrotat or Posthumous award is an award that may be awarded to a student who is unable to continue their studies, on the presumption that they would have satisfied the requirements for the award had they been able to continue. The award will not be classified.
- 7.17.2 Aegrotat awards will reflect the full award (non-accredited) for which the student was registered.
- 7.17.3 Posthumous awards will reflect the full award (accredited where applicable) for which the student was registered.
- 7.17.4 Before an award is made, consultation will take place with the student, if appropriate, or next-of-kin if the student is deceased or unable to make a decision. The student or next-of-kin will be asked to decide whether to accept the award. If a student does not accept the aegrotat award they may undertake the required assessments to gain the intended award or may leave the university with an exit award.

7.18 Revoking an award of the University

- 7.18.1 The university reserves the right to revoke an award if it is discovered at any time and proved to the satisfaction of the university that there is good cause to do so. Good cause may include (but is not limited to) the following:
- (i) Discovery, subsequent to the conferment of an award, of academic misconduct in work submitted for the qualification;
 - (ii) Discovery, subsequent to the conferment of an award that it was obtained by fraud and/or deception.

APPENDICES

APPENDIX A – ACADEMIC FRAMEWORK

1. Introduction

- 1.1 The Awards Framework sets out the criteria and regulations for awards offered by Birmingham City University. In setting out these criteria the framework seeks to ensure that the University's academic standards are set in accordance with the sector recognised standards published by the Office for Students for the award of academic credit and individual qualifications.
- 1.2 The Awards Framework is approved by the University's Academic Board. Any changes to the framework, including the addition of new awards, removal of existing awards and/or any changes to credit requirements and periods of registration require the approval of Academic Board.

2. Academic Standards

- 2.1 Birmingham City University uses learning outcomes to define academic standards and the level of student achievement. Learning outcomes describe at a threshold level the knowledge, understanding and transferable skills which students are expected to demonstrate on successful completion of a period of learning. Within the University's modular curriculum structure, learning outcomes are expressed for both courses and modules. Specifically:
- the primary level of student achievement is expressed in terms of intended learning outcomes at course level;
 - intended learning outcomes at module level collectively contribute to student achievement of intended learning outcomes at course level;
 - intended learning outcomes at module and course level define a threshold level of learning which all students who successfully complete a module and course are expected to demonstrate. Module and course learning outcomes are developed with reference to the Quality Assurance Agency's UK Quality Code for Higher Education and specifically the Frameworks for Higher Education Qualifications of UK Degree Awarding Bodies (FHEQ).
- 2.2 Level is an indicator of the academic standard set for a module and in its delivery and assessment. Level is also used to define the academic standard of a Birmingham City University award in terms of the knowledge, understanding and skills that an award holder is expected to demonstrate on successful completion of the course.
- 2.3 The Awards Framework recognises the following six levels within the curriculum⁶:

Level	Qualification
Level 3	Foundation Year
Level 4	Certificate Level
Level 5	Diploma Level
Level 6	Honours Level
Level 7	Master's Degree Level [including Integrated Master's]
Level 8	Doctoral Degree Level / Advanced Postgraduate Diploma

⁶ Birmingham City University's levels of study map directly to Levels 4-7 of the Frameworks for Higher Education Qualifications of UK Degree Awarding Bodies (FHEQ) within the QAA UK Quality Code. Where courses include an integrated foundation year (Level 3) the level of the final qualification is used as the reference point as set out within the FHEQ.

3. University-Wide Regulatory Framework

- 3.1 Birmingham City University's Academic Framework ensures the comparability of academic standards across its named awards by applying standard Academic Regulations to all taught courses. A single set of regulations govern undergraduate and taught postgraduate awards. A second set of regulations govern postgraduate research awards (eg MPhil, PhD and Professional Doctorate awards).

4. Credit and Credit Accumulation

- 4.1 Birmingham City University's Academic Framework is based on the accumulation of credit during a student's period of study. Credit is awarded to a learner in recognition of the verified achievement of designated learning outcomes. Specifically:
- a student who successfully completes a Foundation (level 3) module or an undergraduate module (levels 4-6) is awarded a mark of at least 40% and the associated volume and level of credit;
 - a student who successfully completes a postgraduate module (level 7 and Advanced Postgraduate Diploma) is awarded a mark of at least 50% and the associated volume and level of credit;
 - failure in a module can be retrieved through resit opportunities, the retaking or replacement of modules within prescribed limits and by repeating stages of study;
 - in certain circumstances and within prescribed limits compensation is permitted for a failed module(s) within both undergraduate and postgraduate courses;
 - credit volume for a module is based on the notional learning hours required for successful completion of the module, using the ratio 1 credit for 10 notional learning hours.

Table 1: Awards of the University

Award		Nomenclature	FHEQ	European Level (FQ-EHEA cycle)	Minimum Credit Requirement	Minimum credit at level of the award	Maximum period of registration	
Undergraduate	Certificate of Higher Education	Cert HE	4	Short cycle (within 1st cycle). Typically 120 ECTS	120	90	3 years	
	Certificate in Education	Cert Ed	5		120	120	5 years	
	Higher National Certificate	HNC	4		120	120	5 years	
	Diploma of Higher Education	Dip HE	5		240	90	5 years	
	Higher National Diploma	HND	5		240	90	5 years	
	Foundation Degree in Arts Foundation Degree in Engineering Foundation Degree in Science	FdA FdEng FdSc	5		240	90	5 years	
	Bachelor of Arts (Level 6 top-up degree)	BA BSc	6	First cycle Typically 180 to 240 ECTS	60	60	3 years	
	Bachelor of Arts Bachelor of Education Bachelor of Engineering Bachelor of Laws Bachelor of Science	BA BEd BEng LLB BSc	6		300	60	7 years	
	Bachelor of Music Bachelor of Music Jazz	BMus BMus Jazz	6		360	60	7 years	
	Bachelor of Arts with Honours (Level 6 top-up degree)	BA BSc	6		120	120	3 years	
	Bachelor of Arts with Honours Bachelor of Education with Honours Bachelor of Engineering with Honours Bachelor of Laws with Honours Bachelor of Science with Honours	BA (Hons) BEd (Hons) BEng (Hons) LLB (Hons) BSc (Hons)	6		360	90	7 years	
	Bachelor of Music with Honours Bachelor of Music Jazz with Honours	BMus (Hons) BMus Jazz (Hons)	6		480	180	9 years	
	Integrated Master's Degree Master of Accountancy Master of Business Master of Engineering Master of Finance Master of Planning Master of Science Master of Surveying	MAcc ⁷ MBus MEng MFin MPlan MSci MSurv	7		Second cycle Typically represented by 90-120 ECTS (min of 60 ECTS)	480	120	9 years
	Graduate	Graduate Certificate	Grad Cert			6	No equivalent in European Framework	60
	Graduate Diploma	Grad Dip	6	120	120	3 years		
Postgraduate [Taught]	Postgraduate Certificate	PG Cert	7	No equivalent in European Framework	60	40	2 years	
	Postgraduate Certificate in Education	PGCE	7		60	40	2 years	
	Postgraduate Certificate in Education (International)	PGCEi	7		60	40	2 years	
	Postgraduate Certificate in Education (Post-Compulsory Education and Training)	PGCE (PCET)	7		120	100	2 years	
	Postgraduate Diploma	PG Dip	7		120	90	4 years	
	Postgraduate Diploma in Education	PGDE	7		120	120	3 years	
	Postgraduate Diploma in Education (International)	PGDEi	7	Second cycle (end of cycle) qualifications	120	120	3 years	
	Master of Architecture	MArch	7		240	240	5 years	
	Master of Music	MMus	7		240	180	5 years	
	Master of Fine Art	MFA	7		300 ⁸	300	6 years	

⁷ The final intakes to the MAcc and MFin awards will be in September 2020. The awards will be removed from the Academic Framework once all students have completed (estimated to be 2026).

⁸ The requirement of 300 credits for the MFA award relates to the version of the award which commenced in September 2019. Students who commenced prior to September 2019 will be registered on the previous version of the MFA award which consisted of 360 credits (see 2018/19 academic regulations) and must therefore meet that credit requirement to achieve the award of MFA.

Award		Nomenclature	FHEQ Level	European Level (FQ-EHEA cycle)	Minimum Credit Requirement	Minimum credit at level of the award	Maximum period of registration
Postgraduate [taught]	Master of Arts Master of Business Administration Master of Education Master of Laws Master of Public Health Master of Research Master of Science Master of Teaching and Learning Master of Learning and Teaching Master of Education and Learning Master of Educational Practice Master of Education Leadership Master of Landscape Architecture	MA MBA MEd LLM MPH MRes MSc MTL MLT ⁹ MEL MEP ¹⁰ MEL ¹¹ MLA	7	Second cycle (end of cycle) qualifications	180	150	6 years
	Advanced Postgraduate Diploma in Music (Professional Practice)	Adv PG Dip	8	No equivalent.	120	120	5 years
Research	Master of Philosophy	MPhil	7	Second cycle (end of cycle) qualifications	N/A	N/A	2 years (FT) 3 years (PT)
	Professional Doctorate Doctor of Business Administration Doctor of Education Doctor of Health Doctor of Sport	DBA EdD DHealth DSport	8	Third cycle (end of cycle) qualifications	N/A	N/A	7 years (PT)
	Doctor of Psychology	DPsych	8		N/A	N/A	4 years (FT)
	Doctor of Philosophy	PhD	8		N/A	N/A	4 years (FT) 7 years (PT)
University awards	Foundation Certificate	FCert	3	No equivalent in European Framework	120	120	3 years
	Certificate in Professional Studies	CPS	4		60	60	2 years
	Diploma in Professional Studies	DPS	5		60	60	2 years
	Advanced Diploma in Professional Studies	Advanced DPS	6		60	60	2 years

Awards including the suffix 'with Professional Placement'

Undergraduate awards with Honours and Integrated Master's as set out in the table above may include the suffix 'with Professional Placement' where appropriate. Where a professional placement is included the minimum credit requirement for the award increases by 120 credits and the maximum period of registration increases by one year. As set out elsewhere in the regulations, the 120 credit professional placement module must be passed in order for the award to be conferred with the suffix 'with Professional Placement'.

Master's awards as set out in the table above may include the suffix 'with Professional Placement' where appropriate. Where a professional placement is included the minimum credit requirement for the award increases by 60 credits and the maximum period of registration increases by six months. As set out elsewhere in the regulations, the 60 credit professional placement module must be passed in order for the award to be conferred with the suffix 'with Professional Placement'.

⁹ The Master of Learning and Teaching (MLT) replaces the award of Master of Teaching and Learning (MTL) wef 2021/22 entry. The final intake to the MTL award was in September 2020 and the award will be removed from the Academic Framework once all students have completed.

¹⁰ The Master of Educational Practice (MEP) replaces the award of Master of Education and Learning (MEL) wef 2021/22 entry. The final intake to the MEL award was in September 2020 and the award will be removed from the Academic Framework once all students have completed.

¹¹ The Master of Education Leadership (MEL) replaces the award of Master of Education and Learning (MEL) wef 2021/22 entry. The final intake to the Master of Education and Learning was in September 2020 and the award will be removed from the Academic Framework once all students have completed.

Differentiation of Awards

The following awards are undifferentiated

- Foundation Certificate
- Certificate in Professional Studies
- Diploma in Professional Studies
- Advanced Diploma in Professional Studies
- Certificate of Higher Education
- Bachelors (Ordinary) Degree
- Graduate Certificate
- Graduate Diploma
- Postgraduate Certificate (undifferentiated as an exit award)
- Postgraduate Certificate in Education
- Postgraduate Certificate in Education (Post-Compulsory Education and Training)
- Postgraduate Diploma (undifferentiated as an exit award)
- Postgraduate Diploma in Education