

10.1

MODULAR PROGRAMMES

FRAMEWORK

CARDIFF METROPOLITAN UNIVERSITY

MODULAR PROGRAMMES FRAMEWORK

1. Introduction

This Framework gives definitions associated with Modular Programmes at Cardiff Metropolitan University and lays down the structural rules adopted by Academic Board for Modular Programmes.

2. Definitions

The following definitions pertain to the modular system adopted by Cardiff Metropolitan University. They are presented for convenience in communication and are not intended to be exhaustive or prescriptive.

Programme: The coherent collection of modules taken by a student leading to a particular award. A programme is a validated entity.

Module: A discrete and academically coherent block of learning activity with defined learning outcomes and assessment criteria. Modules may have specified prerequisite requirements.

Credit: The value placed on the volume and level of successful study. The award of credits for a module is dependent upon the achievement of a pass mark for that module.

Compulsory Module (Compensatable): A module which the student must include in his/her programme route. Compensation across the profile may be applied to this module if not passed.

Compulsory Module (Non-compensatable): A module which the student must include in his/her programme route. Compensation across the profile may **not** be applied to this module, which must be passed.

Optional Module:	A module, which the student may, or may not, choose to include in his/her programme route.
Elective Module:	An additional module that students can take (above the required number of credits per level) which does not contribute to the award.
Recommended Module:	A module that the student is advised to take.
Prerequisite Module:	A module that should normally be completed before a subsequent specified module.
Co-requisite Module:	A module that must normally be taken at the same time as another, specified module.
Project/Dissertation Module:	One or more modules consisting of a project or investigation conducted by the student resulting in a written submission.
	Project modules associated with an Honours degree will not normally exceed 40 credits. For a Modular Master's degree the Project element will normally equal 40 or 60 credits (or 100-120 credits for the MRes).
Module Study Time:	The actual duration of a module depends upon the mode of study. The length of time spent in study will be a function of the ability and subject familiarity of the individual student, so that it is impossible to specify how much time and effort will be required in individual cases. However, the notional study time is anticipated to be 100 hours for all 10-credit modules at undergraduate level and represents the total study effort for a typical student to

complete the module successfully. It includes all timetabled and non-timetabled learning activities both in and away from the formal learning environment.

Level:

Modules are assigned to a particular level, which relates to the academic demand of the module. Levels 4, 5 and 6 (HE Levels 1, 2 and 3) will normally correspond sequentially to the first, second and third years of an undergraduate three year degree.

Modules designated with levels contribute ultimately to an award and are defined in terms of learning outcomes, have specified success criteria and be formally assessed.

Thus, modules, which incorporate industrial experience, professional practice, etc, may be included as award bearing modules provided that, as ascertained through programme validation, they meet the above requirements.

More detail regarding academic level is given in [Guidance on Academic Levels](#) in the Academic Handbook.

Single Subject Award:

An award for which all modules presented are deemed to be associated with a single subject area.

Joint or Major/Minor Award:

An award for which the validated programme contains modules, which are deemed to be associated with two distinct subject areas.

Pathway:

An award route through the modules of a validated programme.

3. The Academic Year

- 3.1 The academic year is based on 1200 hours of learning time for undergraduate study and 1800 hours of learning time for postgraduate study. The academic year is divided into three terms separated by the Christmas, Easter and Summer breaks.
- 3.2 This assumes that, in the majority of cases, full-time study for undergraduates is 40 hours per week for 30 weeks of the year, and for postgraduates 40 hours per week for 45 weeks of the year or its equivalent.
- 3.3 Normally 120 credits may be achieved in a full-time undergraduate academic year, whilst 180 credits may be achieved in a postgraduate year.

4. Module Levels

The Credit and Qualifications Framework for Wales (CQFW) (June 2004) has adopted the Northern Ireland Credit Accumulation and Transfer System (NICATS) hierarchy of levels that has also been adopted by England, Wales and Northern Ireland Credit Bodies. There are 9 levels comprising: 4 pre-HE levels (Entry, Levels 1, 2 and 3); 3 undergraduate levels (Levels 4, 5 and 6); and 2 postgraduate levels (Levels 7 and 8).

Modules within a programme are assigned a hierarchy of levels. The term 'level' rather than 'year' is used to allow for modules to be completed at different rates; for example, so that the same module may be used on a full-time and part-time programme where the year in which the module is taken may be different.

Level 4 (HE Level 1) modules develop a rigorous approach to the acquisition of a broad knowledge base; employ a range of specialised skills; evaluate information, using it to plan and develop investigative strategies and to determine solutions to a variety of unpredictable problems; operate in a range of varied and specific contexts, taking responsibility for the nature and quality of outputs.

Level 5 (HE Level 2) modules generate ideas through the analysis of concepts at an abstract level, with a command of specialised skills and the formulation of responses to well defined and abstract problems; analyse and evaluate information; exercise significant judgement across a broad range of functions; and accept responsibility for determining and achieving personal and/or group outcomes.

Level 6 (HE Level 3) modules critically review, consolidate and extend a systematic and coherent body of knowledge, utilising specialised

skills across an area of study; critically evaluate new concepts and evidence from a range of sources; transfer and apply diagnostic and creative skills and exercise significant judgement in a range of situations; accept accountability for determining and achieving group and/or personal outcomes.

Level 7 (HE Level M) modules display mastery of a complex and specialised area of knowledge and skills, employing advanced skills to conduct research, or advanced technical and professional activity; accepting accountability for all related decision making including use of supervision.

[For more detailed information on levels, see [Guidance on Academic Levels](#) in the Academic Handbook.]

5. Credit Transferability

- 5.1 Where a student terminates registration and accepts an award, the credit gained may be used to contribute towards an award of a higher qualification level. Except as in 5.3 below, credit for a completed award cannot be used towards another award at the same qualification level.

Acceptable examples of credit from a completed award being counted towards an award at a higher qualification level would currently include:

- HND or DipHE topped up to Bachelor's degree
- Foundation Degree topped up to Bachelor's degree
- Ordinary degree topped up to Honours degree
- Postgraduate Diploma topped up to Master's degree

- 5.2 Candidates in possession of an initial degree who return to study in a cognate subject may not re-use their existing credits at Levels 4 and 5 towards a subsequent initial degree. In such cases, candidates returning to study at Level 6 will be awarded a Graduate Certificate or Graduate Diploma, as appropriate.

- 5.3 In exceptional cases, candidates in possession of a Master's degree by examination and dissertation (usually MA, MSc or MBA) who return to study in a cognate subject may re-use up to a maximum of 60 existing credits at Level 7 towards a subsequent Master's degree, provided that it has been agreed by the relevant validation panel, having considered whether the module(s) concerned are sufficiently relevant to the learning outcomes of the qualification in question.

PROGRAMME STRUCTURES

6. Three-year Initial Degree Programmes

- 6.1 The vast majority of degree programmes at Cardiff Metropolitan University that are offered in full-time mode are of three years duration in terms of academic content. Some programmes - sandwich programmes - last for four years, but the academic content counts for only three years whilst a further year - usually year 3 - is spent by students on placement. Such four year programmes are classified in modular structure terms as being governed by the three year full time degree regulations.
- 6.2 Other degree programmes, which are governed by this category, will be part-time (or other mode) in nature and will last longer than three years for students who enter at the beginning of the programme.
- 6.3 For the award of an ordinary degree students will normally* successfully achieve 300 credits in total (120 credits at Level 4, 120 credits at Level 5 and 60 credits at Level 6). **An Ordinary degree cannot be awarded on the basis of failing to meet the requirements of an Honours degree.**
- 6.4 For the award of an Honours degree, students will normally* successfully achieve 360 credit points in total (120 at each of Levels 4, 5 and 6). **The award classification for Honours degrees is derived from the marks gained at Levels 5 and 6, or Level 6 only if agreed at validation.**

* Full details are given in the [Regulations for Modular Initial Degrees](#)

7. Four-year Initial Degree Programmes

- 7.1 Some degree programmes at Cardiff Metropolitan University incorporate professional practice (or similar) modules and, in full time mode, are one year longer than the normal degree programmes described above. The professional practice modules are a requirement of particular accrediting bodies. In order to count as modules at Levels 4, 5 and 6 they must have learning outcomes, specified success criteria and be formally assessed.
- 7.2 For the award of an ordinary degree students will normally* successfully achieve 300 credits in total (120 credits at Level 4, 120 credits at Level 5 and 60 credits at Level 6). **An Ordinary degree cannot be awarded on the basis of failing to meet the requirements of an Honours degree.**

- 7.3 For the award of an Honours degree students will normally* successfully achieve a minimum of 120 credits at each of Levels 4, 5 and 6, and a maximum of 240 credits at Level 6. The award classification for Honours degrees is derived from at least 120 credits at each of Levels 5 and 6, as agreed at validation.

* Full details are given in the [Regulations for Modular Initial Degrees](#)

8. Two-year Full-time Initial Degree Programmes (Year 2 Direct Entry)

Cardiff Metropolitan University currently has a small number of "shortened" degree programmes, which are of two years duration. However, entry requirements are such that candidates must have completed at least a year in higher education, such that the shortened programmes may be regarded as the final two years of a degree programme with entry at advanced standing. Structural rules for two year shortened degrees are therefore as for Levels 5 and 6 of programmes derived from a three-year full-time degree.

9. One-year Full-time Initial Degree Programmes (Year 3 Direct Entry)

9.1 "One year" and "one year-plus", "top up" degrees exist within Cardiff Metropolitan University for individuals who have achieved previous higher education success at an adequate level and in a cognate area of study. Such programmes are treated as examples of entry with advanced standing.

9.2 Entrants must have completed study in higher education sufficient for entry into the final year (Level 6) of a three year full time degree programme, which is in a cognate subject area, or, the "top-up" degree must extend sufficiently beyond the normal academic year to include appropriate and sufficient Level 5 material.

9.3 Criteria for the award of ordinary and Honours degrees are as in 6.3 and 6.4 above.

9.4 Only work undertaken during the "top-up" degree counts towards the final assessment marks.

9.5 The award classification for Honours degrees is derived only from the modules associated with the "top-up" degree.

10. Integrated Master's Degree Programmes

10.1 Integrated Master's degrees offered in full-time mode are of four years duration.

- 10.2 For the award of an Integrated Master's degree, students will normally successfully achieve 480 credits in total (120 at each of Levels 4, 5, 6 and 7). Between 40 and 60 credits at Level 7 shall be for a project. A candidate may also be required to complete a period or periods of professional training or practical experience, as specified in the approved Programme Document.
- 10.3 A candidate who is admitted to an Integrated Master's programme but is subsequently unable, or is not permitted, to progress to completion may, depending upon the number of credits attained at the time of exit, qualify for one of the following awards of Cardiff Metropolitan University: Certificate of HE; Diploma of HE; or Bachelors Degree.
- 10.4 The award classification for Integrated Master's degrees is the same as for Honours degrees. The overall mark for the Integrated Master's degree shall be calculated on the basis of the average of the marks for all Level 6 and Level 7 modules weighted according to the credit values of those modules.

* Full details are given in the [Regulations for Modular Integrated Master Degrees](#)

11. Certificate of Higher Education, Diploma of Higher Education

- 11.1 Certificates of Higher Education are awards given by Cardiff Metropolitan University for students who have successfully normally* achieved a minimum of 120 credits at level 4.
- 11.2 Diplomas of Higher Education are awards given by Cardiff Metropolitan University for students who have successfully normally* achieved a minimum of 120 credits at level 4 and 120 credits at Level 5.

* Full details are given in the [Regulations for Certificates and Diplomas of HE](#)

12. Modular Master's Degrees [Excluding MA in Education - see 13 below]

- 12.1 All modules on Master's programmes are at Level 7 (HE Level M). Each taught module bears a credit rating in multiples of 10 credits, though 5 and 15 credit modules may be permitted in exceptional cases.
- 12.2 Except as in paragraph 11.3 below for the MRes, a candidate shall be eligible for the award of a modular Master's degree upon successful attainment of not fewer than 180 credits at Level 7 (former HE Level M), between 40 and 60 of which shall be for the project. A candidate may also be required to complete a period or periods of professional

training or practical experience, as specified in the approved Programme Document.

- 12.3 For the degree of Master of Research (MRes), the total value of the modules shall be equal to 180 credits at Level 7 (HE Level M), with no fewer than 60 credits of taught modules and at least 100 credits comprising the project (e.g. dissertation). For example, a programme might consist of 70 credits (taught modules) and 110 credits (project).

* Full details are given in the [Regulations for Modular Master's Degrees](#)

13. Postgraduate Certificates and Diplomas [Excluding the PGCE and PGCE (PcET)]

- 13.1 All modules on Postgraduate Certificate and Diploma programmes are at Level 7 (HE Level M).
- 13.2 For the award of a Postgraduate Diploma, students must successfully normally* achieve a minimum of 120 credits at Level 7.
- 13.3 For the award of a Postgraduate Certificate students must successfully normally* achieve a minimum of 60 credits at level 7.

* Full details are given in the [Regulations for Postgraduate Certificates and Diplomas](#)

14. Degree of MA in Education

- 14.1 The degree of MA in Education differs in structure from that of other modular Master's degrees for reasons of coherence across Universities in Wales. Conditions relating to the award of Postgraduate Diplomas as intermediate exits from the MA in Education award are given in the "*Regulations for Modular Master's Degrees*".
- 14.2 For the award of Master of Arts in Education students must successfully complete a minimum of six 30 credit modules, 60 credits of which must be completed through independent study or a major project resulting in the presentation of a thesis or dissertation.

15. Edexcel Higher National Certificates and Diplomas

- 15.1 Cardiff Metropolitan University introduced modular structures for Edexcel Higher National Certificates (HNC) and Higher National Diplomas (HND) in 1998 under the auspices of Cardiff Metropolitan University's University Licence.
- 15.2 HNC awards are normally* made on the basis of successful achievement of a minimum of 120 credits at Level 4 by part-time study.

[Edexcel does not normally permit the award of HNC for full-time study.]

- 15.3 HND awards are normally* made on the basis of successful achievement of 240 credits (120 credits at each of Levels 4 and 5).
- 15.4 Normal maximum permissible study rates for HND and HNC students are 120 credits (full-time study) or 60 credits (part-time study) per academic year.

* Full details are given in the [Regulations for Modular HNDs and HNCs](#)

CATEGORIES AND TITLES OF AWARDS

16. Single Subject Award

- 16.1 A single subject award shall carry the appropriate generic designation (e.g. HND, BA, MSc, MRes) as determined by the type and level of the award, (to include the descriptor “Honours” where approved) followed by a title, which adequately describes the content of the programme.
- 16.2 The total numbers of modules, which shall be made available for a student to achieve the required number of modules for the named award, shall not be excessive and must be closely matched to the requirements of the relevant [Benchmark Statements](#)

17. Single Subject Awards with Named Pathways

- 17.1 Where optional modules exist such as to provide significant emphasis on a particular component (a specialism), this may also be signified in the award title. The number of compulsory modules, to be specified in the programme document, shall **normally** be at least equal to the number of Optional Modules.
- 17.2 Specialisms must contribute a minimum of 40 credits for an honours degree and a minimum of 30 credits for a postgraduate degree.

18. Joint Subject Awards

- 18.1 Awards combining **no more than two subject areas** are applicable to **initial modular degrees** and by exception to HNDs only. The normal [Assessment Regulations](#) and [Regulations for Modular Initial Degrees](#) shall apply in each subject area.
- 18.2 Joint subject award schemes shall contain no more than 230 credits for Honours and 150 credits for Ordinary Degrees in each subject area.

- 18.3 Ordinary Degrees shall comprise: 60 credits from each subject area at each of levels 4 and 5, and 30 credits from one subject area and 30 credits from the second subject area at level 6.
- 18.4 Honours Degrees shall comprise: an approximately equal contribution of credits from each subject area at levels 4, 5 and 6 (excluding the dissertation), the total number of credits from one subject area not normally being 40 more than those from the other; and a dissertation/project/independent study element equivalent to not less than 20 credits and not more than 40 credits at level 6, the subject of which shall reflect either that of just one of the subject areas or a combination of subject areas.

19. Major/Minor Awards

- 19.1 Awards combining **no more than two subject areas** are applicable to **initial modular degrees**. The normal [Assessment Regulations](#) and [Regulations for Modular Initial Degrees](#) shall apply in each subject area. By exception, Major/Minor awards may also apply to HNDs.
- 19.2 For awards of Honours Degrees (360 credits), defined major subject areas shall comprise a maximum of 270 credits and defined minor subject areas shall comprise a minimum of 90 credits and a maximum of 120 credits. Honours degrees shall comprise: a dissertation/project/independent study element equivalent to not less than 20 credits and no more than 40 credits at Level 6, the subject of which shall reflect either the major subject area or a combination of both subject areas; and

	Major Subject Area	Minor Subject Area
Levels 4 and 5 (each of)	Between 80 and 90 credits	Between 30 and 40 credits
Level 6	Credits not included in the dissertation or project or independent study element shall be divided between the two subject areas to reflect as closely as possible the overall ratio of subject area credits at levels 4 and 5.	

- 19.3 For awards of Ordinary Degrees (300 credits), defined major subject areas shall contain no more than 220 credits and defined minor subject areas shall comprise a minimum of 80 credits and a maximum of 120 credits.

	Major Subject Area	Minor Subject Area
Levels 4 and 5 (each of)	Between 80 and 90 credits	Between 30 and 40 credits
Level 6	Between 30 and 40 credits	Between 20 and 30 credits

20. Conventions for Titles

20.1 20.1 Validation, titles for Single Subject Awards with Named Pathways shall follow the following convention:

Undergraduate Degrees

BA Honours X (A), BA Honours X (B)

Master's

MSc/MA etc X (A), MSc/MA etc X (B)

20.2 Titles for Joint Awards shall follow the convention (Subject Area A) **and** (Subject Area B).

20.3 Titles for Major/Minor Awards shall follow the convention (Major Subject Area) **with** (Minor Subject Area).

Time Limits for Completion of Studies

Programmes	Maximum Period
Foundation Certificates - Full-Time - Part Time	2 Years 4 Years
Certificates of Higher Education - Full Time - Part Time	3 Years 6 Years
Diplomas of Higher Education - Full Time - Part Time	4 Years 8 Years
Foundation Degrees - Full Time - Part Time	4 Years 10 Years
Modular Higher National Certificates - Part Time	4 Years
Modular Higher National Diplomas - Full Time HND ab initio - Full Time HND from HNC level - Part Time HND ab initio - Part Time HND from HNC level	4 Years 2 years 8 years 4 years
Modular Initial Degrees - Full Time – 3 Year Programme - Full Time – Direct Entry to Year 3 (3 Year Programme) - Full Time – 4 Year Programme - Other Modes of Study (e.g. Part Time)	5 Years 3 Years 6 Years 10 Years
Graduate Certificates and Diplomas - Full Time - Part Time	2 Years 4 Years
Postgraduate Certificates - Full Time - Part Time - Part Time (PgCert in Teaching in Higher Education) - Part Time (PgCert in Practitioner Health Psychology)	1 Year 2 Years 5 Years 3 Years
Postgraduate Diplomas - Full Time - Part Time - Part Time (PgDip in Practitioner Forensic Psychology)	2 Years 3 Years 5 Years
Postgraduate Certificate in Education - Full Time	2 Years
Postgraduate Certificate of Education PcET (Post-Compulsory Education and Training) - Full Time - Part Time	2 Years 5 Years
Modular Master's Degrees - Full Time – 1 Year Programme - Full Time – 2 Year Programme – (normally incorporating professional practice element or internship) - Part Time - Final 60 Credits Only – (from PgDip entry or equivalent)	2 Years 3 Years 5 Years 1 Year
Note: Where a student enrolls at Cardiff Metropolitan University after completion of the 120 credits, the equivalent of a Postgraduate Diploma, elsewhere (e.g. those enrolling on a MBA dissertation only at LSC), the deadline for completion of studies shall be 12 months from initial enrolment at Cardiff Metropolitan University's.	
Integrated Master's Degrees - Full Time – 4 Year Programme - Full Time – 5 Year Programme - Part Time	6 Years 7 Years 12 Years
International Foundation Programme - Full Time	2 Years

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Note 1: Where a student joins a programme with accredited prior learning after the normal starting point, the period for completion of studies is taken from what would have been the normal entry point had the student undertaken the whole programme at Cardiff Metropolitan University.

Note 2: A sandwich Year in any programme increases the maximum enrolment period by one year.

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