

**UNIVERSITY COLLEGE BIRMINGHAM  
ACADEMIC REGULATIONS**

**PART 1: AWARDS AND PROGRAMMES**

**Purpose**

This section contains information about the awards which the University may offer, and the processes and criteria for obtaining a University award. This document may be amended or augmented by the Academic Regulations Committee of Academic Board.

## **Section 1: Degrees, Diplomas and Certificates**

### **1.1 Degrees**

1.1.1 In the University there shall be the following degrees:

- (a) Foundation Degree in Arts FdA  
Foundation Degree in Science FdSc  
Foundation Degree in Engineering  
FdEng
- (b) Bachelor of Arts BA  
Bachelor of Science  
BSc
- (c) Bachelor of Arts with Honours BA (Hons)  
Bachelor of Science with Honours BSc  
(Hons)
- (d) Master of Arts MA  
Master of Science  
MSc

1.1.2 Degrees included in the above list may be awarded jointly with other institutions, subject to the approval by the Academic Board of the arrangements for such joint awards. A list of degrees awarded jointly with other institutions shall be maintained by the Deputy Registrar.

1.1.3 Where stated in the Programme Specification degrees may be awarded with or without placement subject to the successful completion of a period of industrial placement.

### **1.2 Diplomas and Certificates**

1.2.1 In the University there shall be the following Diplomas and Certificates:

- International Foundation Certificate
- International Foundation Diploma
- Certificate of Higher Education
- Diploma of Higher Education
- Advanced Certificate
- Graduate Certificate
- Graduate Diploma
- Postgraduate Certificate
- Postgraduate Diploma
- Certificate in Education
- Certificate Professional Development
- Diploma Professional Development
- Management Certificate
- Management Diploma

1.2.2 The subject titles of Diplomas and Certificates shall be those of the Degree, Diploma or Certificate programmes on which the students concerned have been registered except where specified otherwise in a Programme Specification.

### **1.3 Award of Substantive Degrees, Diplomas, Certificates, Scholarships,**

#### **Prizes and Honours**

- 1.3.1 The substantive Degrees, Diplomas, Certificates, Scholarships, Prizes and Honours of UCB shall be awarded by the Academic Board of UCB.
- 1.3.2 The substantive Degrees, Diplomas, Certificates, Scholarships, Prizes and Honours of the University of Birmingham shall be awarded by the Senate of The University of Birmingham.
- 1.3.3 The substantive Degrees, Diplomas, Certificates, Scholarships, Prizes and Honours of the University of Warwick shall be awarded by the Senate of The University of Warwick.

### **1.4 Conferment of Awards at Congregations**

Awards whether substantive or honorary shall be conferred at a congregation of members of the University to be held for the purpose at least once a year unless the University Corporation on the recommendation of Academic Board decides that on account of special circumstances it would be undesirable to hold a congregation. Where awards are those of The University of Birmingham, the regulations of the Senate of the University will apply. Where awards are those of The University of Warwick, the regulations of the Senate of the University will apply.

### **1.5 Revocation of Awards**

- 1.5.1 For UCB awards: The Academic Board may, on the recommendation of the University Corporation, revoke the Degree or Degrees, Diplomas, Certificates, distinctions, honours and all privileges connected therewith of a member of the University:
  - (a) who is convicted of a criminal offence triable on indictment; or
  - (b) who, in the reasonable opinion of the Academic Board, after investigation, has obtained such Degree, Diploma, Certificate, distinction or honour by fraud or deception; or
  - (c) whose name shall have been removed for misconduct by a properly constituted legal authority from any official register or roll of members of the profession to which he belongs. The Academic Board may, on cause being shown, restore to any such person, without examination, the Degree or Degrees, Diplomas, Certificates, distinctions and honours which have been revoked.
- 1.5.2 For awards of The University of Birmingham: A Degree or Degrees, Diplomas, Certificates, distinctions, honours and all privileges connected therewith of a member of the University may be revoked by the University of Birmingham Senate following the procedures laid out in its Regulations.
- 1.5.2 For awards of The University of Warwick: A Degree or Degrees, Diplomas, Certificates, distinctions, honours and all privileges connected therewith of a member of the University may be revoked by the University of Warwick Senate following the procedures laid out in its Regulations

## **Section 2: Programmes Of Study**

### **2.1 Programmes of Study**

#### **2.1.1 Introduction**

These regulations apply to students on all undergraduate and postgraduate programmes. Some programmes may require additional regulations to these general ones. Where this is the case, these will be included in published programme requirements. In the event of any conflict, these general regulations shall have precedence over any such additional regulations. Where exemptions to these general regulations are necessary they are articulated as such within the main body of the regulations. The requirements of such programmes in relation to credits, levels, time limits and decisions on progression and awards shall be as specified in published programme specifications.

#### **2.1.2 Programme Approval**

- a) The Validation and Approvals Committee shall approve the introduction of all programmes of study on behalf of the Academic Board. Where the programme leads to an award of University of Warwick, the further approval of the Joint Accreditation Board is required.
- b) The University shall normally recruit and admit students to a programme of study only once the programme has been approved; however, in circumstances where a programme has not yet received the approval of the Validation and Approvals Committee or (where relevant) the Joint Accreditation Board, and enrolment has already commenced, this may be approved by the Chair of the Validation and Approvals Committee, with the decision being communicated to Academic Board at the earliest opportunity.

#### **2.1.3 Taught Programmes**

- a) A programme consists of a set of modules, which together have a defined set of learning outcomes including intellectual and practical skills, and which a Student must complete to the satisfaction of a Board of Examiners in order to be eligible for the Award. Certain programmes may also include professional training and other elements, which a Student must complete to the satisfaction of the Board of Examiners.
- b) A Student may be awarded only one qualification following completion of a programme.

#### **2.1.4 Modules**

- a) Modules shall only be advertised and have Students registered upon them once they have been approved by the Validation and Approvals Committee.
- b) All modules must be defined by level and credit value. The level of a module is an indicator of the relative complexity, depth of study and the learner autonomy involved in the module, and the demands made by the module. It does not necessarily coincide with the stage or year of the programme in which the module is taken. Level criteria shall be approved by Academic Board or under delegated authority.

- c) Levels of study are defined on the following progressive scale:

<i>UCB level</i>	<i>QAA FHEQ Level</i>	<i>Often described as</i>	<i>Equivalent to</i>
P	3	Level P	Progression Level
C	4	Certificate Level	Undergraduate year 1
F	5	Foundation Level	Undergraduate year 2
H	6	Honours Level	Undergraduate year 3
M	7	Masters Level	Postgraduate, pre-doctoral level

- d) Only one level may be assigned to a module, although there may be occasions when it is possible for some or all of the content to be delivered in common for modules at different levels. In these instances, the modules will be clearly differentiated by separate learning outcomes and assessment and will be identified by separate module code numbers.
- e) The credit values of modules shall be expressed in multiples of 10 credits up to a maximum of 60 credits, unless otherwise permitted by Academic Board or under delegated authority. As exceptions, study undertaken as a semester or year abroad/in industry may be defined in terms of a single module of 60 or 120 credits respectively, and dissertations / projects may be more than 20 credits.
- f) All modules shall have a module description which shall include: the School and the member(s) of staff responsible for the module, its title, code number, level and credit value; any co-requisites, pre-requisites and/or prohibited combinations; the form of delivery and where applicable the semester in which it is delivered; the objectives and learning outcomes; an overview of the content; the key texts and means of assessment.
- g) Students may substitute modules undertaken during a semester abroad at an overseas institution for University College Birmingham (UCB) modules. Such modules shall be of a level that is broadly comparable with UCB modules and in content shall contribute to a coherent programme of study.
- h) The Academic Board, or delegated authority, has the discretion to decide whether or not a student shall be permitted to undertake specific modules at a "host" institution (i.e. where they will be spending their period of study abroad). In reaching this decision they will consider the appropriateness of level and content of the replacement modules. The decision of the Academic Board, or their nominee, shall be final.
- i) In the case of Students undertaking UCB defined Continuing Professional Development activities, parts of modules may be offered. In such instances, no module mark will be ascribed to a student until all learning outcomes of the module are satisfied. A Student who completes part of a module may be awarded a certificate of achievement.

### **2.1.5 Programme Specification and Requirements**

- a) A programme shall have a programme specification which shall include the information prescribed by the Validation and Approvals Committee of Academic Board.
- b) The specific requirements for every Award approved by the Validation and Approvals Committee are detailed in the programme requirements. Programme requirements must include, as appropriate, the reference number, title, level and credit value of the modules to be completed, clearly indicating which modules are compulsory or optional, together with any information about other additional elements which may be required for the award. The programme requirements shall specify the duration of the programme. Where a programme is to be delivered in several different modes, the programme duration for each mode shall be specified.
- c) In certain circumstances, as detailed in the programme requirements, Students may be permitted or obliged to take a module outside the main discipline chosen from a list of such modules.
- d) The programme requirements may indicate specific modules which must be passed and any other requirements for progression between stages and/or for successful completion of the programme.
- e) The main content of programmes at UCB will be in the form of credit bearing modules. Where additional cross-modular or extra-modular requirements for progress are considered appropriate by a programme team, approval should be sought through the Validation and Approvals Committee as for modules.
- f) Programmes may include modules consisting wholly or in part of work-based learning. Such modules shall be specified in programme requirements.

### **2.1.6 Availability of Programmes**

Details of the programmes and modules available to Students, the programme requirements, and methods of assessment shall be published annually on the UCB website.

## 2.1.7 Specific Provisions

2.1.7.1 The following provisions apply to undergraduate programmes of study.

a) For each Award, a Student shall attempt the full number of credits as outlined below:

<i>Award</i>	<i>Number of credits to be attempted</i>
Certificate in Professional Development	Any 30 credits from UG modules
Diploma in Professional Development	Any 60 credits from UG modules
International Foundation Certificate	60 credits from defined set
Advanced Certificate, Management Certificate, Management Diploma	60 credits from defined set
International Foundation Diploma	120 credits from defined set
Certificate of Higher Education	120 credits from defined set
Diploma of Higher Education; Foundation Degree	240 credits from defined set
Bachelors degrees (Ordinary)	300 credits from defined set
Bachelors degrees with honours	360 credits from defined set
Bachelors with an additional year in industry or year abroad;	480 credits from defined set

- b) The credit numbers listed are exclusive of any foundation year taken as part of the award.
- c) Exceptions to the credit values listed shall be agreed by the Validations and Approvals Committee and shall be specified in the programme requirements.
- d) Each programme comprises a number of stages, at the completion of which a formal decision is taken as appropriate on progress to the next stage or on the award of the qualification. Each stage normally consists of modules amounting to 120 credits (taken, in the case of full-time students, within a single University session) except Level 5 with placement which consists of 240 credits (taken, in the case of full-time students, over two University sessions).
- e) Subject to programme requirements approved by the Validation and Approvals Committee, modules taken for a Bachelors degree with honours (360 credits or 480 credits) shall normally:
- at Stage 1 be at level 4;
  - at Stage 2 be at level 5, but may include up to 20 credits at level 4;
  - at Stage 3 of a 360 credit Bachelors degree with honours be at level 6, but may include up to 20 credits at level 5;
  - at Stage 3 of a 480 credit Bachelors degree with honours be at level 6, but may include up to 20 credits at level 5.

- f) Where an additional year of study abroad/in industry is included in the programme to which a Student has been admitted, the year abroad shall be regarded, for purposes of credit and progression, as an additional stage between Stages 2 and 3. It must be passed but it will not contribute to the final degree classification. The additional year abroad/in industry shall normally comprise 60 or 120 credits in order to denote the notional learning hours undertaken. Where exceptions are necessary (e.g. for years leading to separate qualifications) they must be specifically approved by the Validation and Approvals Committee.

All Bachelors degree programmes should include at least 20 credits of independent learning (e.g. dissertation, project work) at level 5 or higher.

- g) Programmes leading to a Foundation Degree qualification should normally include work-based or experiential learning modules of at least 20 credits at each of levels 4 and 5.
- h) Modules may, for sound academic reasons, require inputs outside the normal semester period.

2.1.7.2 The following provisions apply to postgraduate and graduate taught programmes.

- a) For each Award, a Student shall attempt at least the full number of credits as outlined below:

<i>Award</i>	<i>Number of credits to be attempted</i>
Taught Postgraduate Degree	180 credits from defined set
Postgraduate Diploma; Graduate Diploma	120 credits from defined set
Postgraduate Certificate, Graduate Certificate	60 credits from defined set

- b) The programme requirements for a programme leading to a taught postgraduate degree shall provide for the award of a Postgraduate Diploma and Postgraduate Certificate upon completion of appropriate modules, unless the Validation and Approvals Committee permits an exception.
- c) Programmes shall consist wholly or mainly of level 7 modules but may consist partly of credit at levels 4, 5 or 6. The maximum total number of credits from modules at levels 4, 5 or 6 which may contribute to a taught postgraduate degree, postgraduate diploma or postgraduate certificate shall be as follows:

Taught Postgraduate Degree	30 credits
Postgraduate Diploma	30 credits
Postgraduate Certificate	20 credits

- d) The programme requirements for a programme leading to a Taught Postgraduate Degree shall designate one or more Level 7 modules to be “dissertation components” which shall (individually or as a collection of related modules with a

total credit value of 60) consist of a research project and a substantial piece of written work or such other work as may be accepted by the Validation and Approvals Committee as equivalent.

### **2.1.8 Recognition of Prior Learning and Prior Experiential Learning (RP(E)L)**

- a) Recognition of Prior Learning(RPL) is the process by which the University awards credit against learning achieved by an individual before entry to a programme of study.

Applicants may be admitted onto taught programmes of study on the basis of credit achieved on another programme or at another institution or through work experience which has been accredited. Credit achieved in this way may, where relevant, contribute towards the achievement of the credit requirements of the programme concerned in accordance with procedures approved by the Academic Board or under delegated authority. Submission of an RPL application does not guarantee that exemption credit will be granted.

- b) The use of pre-awarded credit towards an undergraduate award is subject to a maximum of two-thirds of the total credits required for the award, except in the case of BSc (Hons) Adult Nursing ([see RPL Policy](#)). The use of pre-awarded credit towards a postgraduate award is subject to a maximum of one third of the total credits required for the award, Successful completion of the award depends on achievement of the remaining credits at the same level as, or at a more advanced academic level than, the pre-awarded credits. These credits must include the compulsory dissertation element stated in the programme requirements.
- c) The marks awarded in assessment of pre-awarded credit do not count towards the final degree classification, which is therefore determined entirely upon marks taken from modules taken within this institution. Only credit gained through study on the programme at UCB for which RPL credit has been granted will count towards the degree classification.
- d) Exemption from part of a module is not permissible
- e) It is not possible to request exemption from modules that the applicant has already begun to study.
- f) Requests for a review of an RPL decision may only be made on the basis of additional evidence that was unavailable at the time of the application.

## **2.2 Duration of Programmes**

The University reserves the right to impose a compulsory Leave of Absence (LOA) where students are suspended on conduct grounds, excluded for tuition fee debt or are suspended on grounds stipulated in the [General Student Regulations](#).

### **2.2.1 Undergraduate Programmes of Study**

For entrants to the University from 2016/17, Regulations 2.2.1 a) and g) shall apply. For all Students that registered in 2015/16 or earlier, 2.2.1 a) of the [2014/15 Regulations](#) apply.

- a) The minimum and maximum periods of study permitted for programmes prescribed for Undergraduate awards shall be as follows: For full time students, the normal period of study as stipulated in the programme requirements plus two years; for part time students the normal part time period of study as stipulated in the programme requirements plus two years.
- b) Foundation years, when taken, shall extend the minimum period of prescribed study by a period of at least one year.
- c) The period of study required in the University of individual Students may be reduced in accordance with any Regulations which the Academic Board may approve from time to time.
- d) The maximum period within which a Student may complete an award is calculated from the date of first registration to the date of the final award except in the case of the University Certificate, University Diploma and Advanced Certificate for which the maximum is 3 years.
- e) Notwithstanding the above, there may be occasions where these time limits are necessarily reduced as a result of the requirements for registration imposed by professional bodies. It is the responsibility of the individual Student to keep informed of the time limits set by the relevant professional body.
- f) UCB cannot guarantee that the programme of initial registration will be available throughout the registration period as detailed above. Where the programme of initial registration is no longer available students will be given the opportunity to transfer the period of registration to a suitable, alternative programme.
- g) Periods of Leave of Absence shall be excluded from the calculation of the maximum period of registration.
- h) Students who do not complete their programme of study within the maximum period of study as set out in regulation 2.2.1 a) will be deemed to have withdrawn. A Student may be eligible for the award of an alternative qualification based on the marks for modules that the Student has already completed. In individual cases, the Pro Vice-Chancellor (Curriculum, Teaching and Learning) may approve applications to extend the maximum period of study.

### **2.2.2 Postgraduate and Graduate Taught Programmes of Study**

For entrants to the University from 2016/17, Regulations 2.2.2 a) and d) shall apply. For all Students that registered in 2015/16 or earlier, 2.2.2 a) and d) of the [2014/15 Regulations](#) apply.

- a) The minimum and maximum periods of study permitted for programmes prescribed for Postgraduate and Graduate awards shall be the normal period of study as stipulated in the programme requirements plus two years.
- b) Students are normally expected to complete an Award within the period specified in the programme requirements.
- c) The maximum period within which a Student may complete an award is calculated from the date of first registration to the date of the final Award except in the case of a Graduate Certificate for which the maximum is 3 years.
- d) Periods of leave of absence are excluded in the calculation of the maximum period of registration.
- e) In individual cases, the Pro Vice-Chancellor (Curriculum, Teaching and Learning) may approve applications to extend the maximum period of registration to reflect part of or all periods of leave of absence, even when the end date is not specified.
- f) Students who do not complete their programme of study within the maximum period of study as set out in regulation 2.2.2 a) will be deemed to have withdrawn. A Student may be eligible for the award of an alternative qualification based on the marks for modules that the Student has already completed. In individual cases the Pro Vice-Chancellor (Curriculum, Teaching and Learning) or delegated authority may approve applications to extend the maximum period of study as per the Code of Practice for Taught Modules and Module Assessment.
- g) Notwithstanding the above, there may be occasions where these time limits are necessarily reduced as a result of the requirements for registration imposed by professional bodies. It is the responsibility of the individual Student to keep informed of the time limits set by the relevant professional body.

### **2.2.3 Modes of study**

- a) The Validation and Approvals Committee may approve programmes to be offered in full-time, part-time, block teaching or e-learning modes.
- b) Students will normally be registered on one mode only, but may be permitted to transfer from one mode to another with the agreement of the Pro Vice-Chancellor (Curriculum, Teaching and Learning).

## **2.3 Delivery**

### **2.3.1 Quality Assurance and Enhancement**

All programmes shall be subject to the UCB quality assurance system.

### **2.3.2 Monitoring of Progress and Support Arrangements**

- a) All Students shall be monitored and informed of their individual academic progress as per the Code of Practice for Programme and Module Assessment.
- b) All Students, irrespective of the number of credits completed within a University session, shall have their academic performance formally reviewed by a Board of Examiners at least once within every Session.
- c) Provision for student development and support shall be as described in the [Code of Practice for Programme and Module Assessment and Feedback](#).

## **2.4 Collaborative Provision**

- 2.4.1 Collaborative arrangements for institutions or organisations offering programmes of study leading to UCB awards or dual or joint awards with other institutions or organisations are subject to these Regulations, but may be subject to separate programme regulations approved by Academic Board or its delegated authority. In the event of conflict between these Regulations and the separate programme regulations, the separate programme regulations applicable to the collaborative arrangements shall apply. Such institutions or organisations shall not be involved in establishing Regulations for University College Birmingham, but will be kept informed of any changes.
- 2.4.2 Any programme regulations should be recorded in the programme specifications. These may only be amended with the consent of Validations and Approvals Committee. All quality assurance processes will examine programme-specific regulations.
- 2.4.3 Those institutions or organisations offering programmes leading to UCB Awards must ensure their regulations are broadly comparable to those of UCB. The Validation and Approvals Committee will determine whether such regulations are comparable to those of UCB.
- 2.4.4 Students on programmes leading to UCB Awards have the right to make one final appeal to UCB on the grounds of procedural or administrative irregularity in the operation and implementation of the programme regulations on the part of institutions or organisations concerned. Such an appeal may only be undertaken after the appeal procedure of the institution or organisation offering the programme of study has been exhausted and providing that this does not conflict with any formalised agreement already in place between University College Birmingham and the Collaborative Institution.
- 2.4.5 The delivery of learning and teaching by Graduate Teaching Assistants shall be governed by the Head of Department.

## **2.5 Student Complaints**

2.5.1 The University recognises the need for students to be able to express their dissatisfaction, which can be raised via the Student Complaints Procedure.

2.5.2 Students who raise concerns or complaints through the [Student Complaints Procedure](#) may do so without fear of recrimination.