Qualifications Framework

The GCU Qualifications Framework sets out the requirement for awards of the University in line with the QAA Framework for Qualifications of Higher Education Institutions in Scotland

Prepared By	Governance and Quality Enhancement
Approved By	Academic Policy Committee 18 February 2015 APPC 10 May 2017 / Senate 2 June2017
Source Location	https://www.gcu.ac.uk/aboutgcu/supportservices/qualityassuranceandenhancement/regulationsandpolicies/qualificationsf
Publication Location	https://www.gcu.ac.uk/aboutgcu/services-and-facilities/qualityassuranceandenhancement/regulations-and-policies
Other documents referenced	University Assessment Regulations
Related documents	University Assessment Regulations

Version	Date issued	Author	Update information
V6	18 February 2015 (To APC)	G&QE	APC request minor updates to text.
V6.1		G&QE	
V6.2	01/09/2017	Academic Quality and Development	Amendment to 4.8 to resolve conflict between the UG Assessment Regulations (awarding of Merit/Distinction) (Undergraduate Assessment Regulations and Qualifications Framework section 19)
			Sections 3.8 and 5.5 amended to reflect the the move to a standard unit of credit for programme structures, approved by Senate.
			Section 3.1, minor updates to the outline academic year
V6.3	01/09/2019	Academic Quality and Development	Minor textual amendment to Section 4.2 – additional of the word 'normally'
V6.4	01/09/2020	Academic Quality	Minor update to Max. Period of Registration (Section 5.2)
V6.5	01/09/2021	Quality Assurance and Enhancement	Minor update to include, Doctor of Physiotherapy (Pre-Registration) – DPT – in the Awards Portfolio.
V6.6	08/06/23	Quality Assurance and Enhancement	Minor update to include, Integrated Masters of Optometry awards (MOptom)

V6.7	24/06/24	Quality Assurance and Enhancement	Minor update to include Senate approved, BBA award for exceptional use in Nepal (Bachelor of Business Administration)
V6.8	01/08/25	Quality Assurance and Enhancement	Minor revision to reflect academic calendar change. Section 3.1 has been revised to link to GCU's published academic calendar.
V6.9	1/11/26	Quality Assurance and Enhancement	Minor revision, Honorary Degree titles (removal of DBA as an Honorary award, replaced by Doctor of Business (BusD)). Approved by Senate March 2026.

GLASGOW CALEDONIAN UNIVERSITY

QUALIFICATIONS FRAMEWORK

1. Introduction

The GCU Qualifications Framework sets out the requirement for awards of the University in line with the QAA Framework for Qualifications of Higher Education Institutions in Scotland *(revised June 2014)*[1].

2. Awards of the University

All awards of the University, with the exception of MPhil and PhD which are research degrees, are credit based, using the Scottish Credit and Qualifications Framework (SCQF)[2], and conform to the QAA framework. The current University awards portfolio is set out in Appendix 1. The University has a Credit Accumulation and Modular Scheme (CAMS). Table 1 below shows the University CAMS against the framework of qualifications and awards including minimum credit and level of credit required for each.

3. Structure of Taught Awards

3.1 The academic year is divided into three trimesters. Full details, including dates for; induction, teaching, revision, exam diets and statutory holidays are published on the University's academic calendar.

Academic work and assessments will normally be carried out within the trimester in which the module is taught and completed, unless the module runs over two trimesters in the same academic year.

[1] http://www.qaa.ac.uk/en/Publications/Documents/FQHEIS-June-2014.pdf

[2] http://scqf.org.uk/

3.2 Modules

Academic study shall be organised into modules based normally on a standard unit of 20 credits for undergraduate programmes including a 40 credit SCQF level 10 dissertation/project module or equivalent, and 15 credits for postgraduate programmes including a 60 credit SCQF level 11 dissertation/project module. In addition to these standard credits, other credit values may be permitted, subject to approval by the University's Exceptions Subcommittee. All modules will be taught and assessed at one level.

3.3 Credit Weighting

Modules are valued in terms of credit. One credit is equated to 10 hours of notional student learning effort. One academic year of full-time undergraduate study is equivalent to 120 credits[3]. One calendar year of full- time postgraduate study is equivalent to 180 credits.

3.4 Levels of Study

Modules in undergraduate programmes shall be offered at one of four levels

(SCQF 7, SCQF 8, SCQF 9, or SCQF 10).

Modules in graduate programmes shall be offered at any level provided the student achieves the minimum number of credits at SCQF level 9 appropriate for the award.

Modules in taught postgraduate programmes shall be offered at SCQF level 11. Subject to approval by the University Exceptions Subcommittee and students achieving the minimum number of credits at SCQF 11, taught postgraduate programmes may include modules at SCQF levels 7 to 10.

[3] 2 GCU credits = 1 ECTS credit

Table 1: Credit Accumulation and Modular Scheme[4]

AWARD	LEVEL	CREDIT
Undergraduate		
Certificate of HE	SCQF 7	120 with min 90 at SCQF 7
Diploma of HE	SCQF 8	240 with min 90 at SCQF 8
Diploma in Nursing	SCQF 8	300 with min 60 at SCQF 9
Diploma in Midwifery	SCQF 8	300 with min 60 at SCQF 9
Bachelors Degree	SCQF 9	360 with min 60 at SCQF 9
Bachelors Degree with Honours	SCQF 10	480 with min 180 at SCQF 9 and SCQF 10 of which a minimum of 90 is at SCQF 10
Masters (following an integrated programme from undergraduate to Masters	SCQF 11	Min 600 with min 120 at SCQF 11
Masters with Honours (following an integrated programme from undergraduate to Masters level study)	SCQF 11	Min 600 with min 120 at SCQF 11
Graduate		
Graduate Certificate	SCQF 9	60 at a min of SCQF 9
Graduate Diploma	SCQF 9	120 at a min of SCQF 9
Post Graduate		
Postgraduate Certificate	SCQF 11	Min 60 with min 40 at SCQF 11
Postgraduate Diploma	SCQF 11	Min 120 with min 90 SCQF 11
Masters	SCQF 11	Min 180 with min 150 at SCQF 11
Prof D DPsych DApPsy DBA DMan DPT	SCQF 12	Min 540 with min 420 at SCQF 12
MPhil	SCQF 11	Not Credit-rated
PhD	SCQF 12	Not Credit-rated
Post Experience/CPD		
Glasgow Caledonian University Certificate	SCQF 7	20 Credits at SCQF 7 and/or SCQF 8
Glasgow Caledonian University Advanced Certificate	SCQF 9	20 credits at SCQF 9 and/or SCQF 10
Glasgow Caledonian University Post-Experience Certificate	SCQF 11	20 credits at SCQF 11

[4] *Within the table above, at any level, credit at a higher level may substitute for the minimum credit required at that level to achieve an award (but see also paragraph 3.4).*

4. Undergraduate Credit Accumulation and Modular Scheme

4.1 All undergraduate programmes in the University, including those by Learning Contract, are based on the University Credit Accumulation and Modular Scheme as outlined above.

4.2 Students may study full-time or part-time, *at a campus*, at the work place, by distance learning, online learning or by a combination of delivery modes as specified in individual approved programme documentation.

A student will normally study for a minimum of 3 years and a maximum of 5 years full- time for a Scottish Bachelors Degree and normally a minimum of 4 years and a maximum of 6 years for a Scottish Bachelors Degree with Honours.

A part-time student will study for a minimum of 4 years and a maximum of 6 years for a Scottish Bachelors Degree and a minimum of 5 years and a maximum of 7 years for a Scottish Bachelors Degree with Honours.

4.3 All undergraduate degree programmes will normally aim to provide opportunities for students to exit with the following awards:

- Certificate of Higher Education (with or without a subject identifier)
- Diploma of Higher Education (with or without a subject identifier)
- Degree
- Degree with Honours

4.4 Degree and Honours degree programmes will either be:

- Single Subject or
- Combined (major/minor, joint, triple minor)

4.5 All programmes may have approved single honours, major, joint and minor pathways.

A **major** will normally comprise 200 credits in the major subject for a degree and 260 for a degree with honours**.** Of the total credit required for a major subject of a degree, at least 60 credits must be at SCQF level 9. Of the total credit for a major subject of an honours degree, a minimum of 120 Credits must be a SCQF Levels 9 and 10 of which 60 must be at Level 10.

A **minor** will normally comprise 100 credits in the minor subject for a degree and 140 credits for a degree with honours. A student studying a **triple minor** will normally take 120 credits in each subject for a degree and 160 credits in each subject for an honours degree. Of the total credit required for a minor subject at degree level, at least 20 must be at SCQF Level 9. Of the total credit required for a minor subject of an honours degree, a minimum of 60 credits is required at SCQF Levels 9 and 10 of which at least 20 must be at Level 10.

A **joint** pathway will normally comprise at least 160 credits in each subject for a degree and 220 credits for an honours degree. Of the total credit required for a joint degree, at least 40 credits in each subject must be at Level 9. Of the

total credit required for a joint honours degree, a minimum of 90 credits in each subject is required at SCQF Levels 9 and 10 of which 40 must be at Level 10. These are the minimum number of credits and allow for a student to take some optional modules outside the two disciplines they are studying.

A student must normally gain at least 20 credits in each subject being studied at each level prior to progression to the next level.

Table 2: Major, Joint and Minor Credit

Award	**Total Credits**[5]	**Credits at SCQF Level 9 or 10 in each subject**[6]
Degree: Major	200 in major	At least 60 at SCQF 9
Honours Degree: Major	260 in major subject	At least 120 at levels SCQF 9 and SCQF 10 of which 60 must be at SCQF 10
Degree: Minor	100 in minor	At least 20 must be at SCQF 9
Honours Degree: Minor	140 in minor subject	At least 60 at levels SCQF 9 and SCQF 10 of which at least 20 must be at SCQF 10
Degree: Triple minor	120 in each subject	At least 20 must be at SCQF 9
Honours Degree: Triple Minor	160 in each subject	At least 60 at levels SCQF 9 and SCQF 10 of which at least 20 must be at SCQF 10
Degree: Joint	160 in each subject	At least 40 must be at SCQF 9
Honours Degree: Joint	220 in each subject	At least 90 credits at levels SCQF 9 and SCQF 10 of which 40 must be at SCQF 10

4.6 All programmes of study will, where possible, enable students to have the opportunity to gain academic credit for work experience. This can be either by the accreditation of work placement or by the provision of a specific programme module(s) that enables students to gain credit for work experience. This can include voluntary work and part-time work being undertaken by the student as well as project work for an agency/employer.

4.7 All students in the honours year will take a dissertation/project or equivalent module, normally attracting 40 credits.

4.8 To progress from:

- SCQF level 7 to SCQF level 8 a student must have been awarded 80 credits in total at SCQF 7[7].
- SCQF level 8 to SCQF level 9 a student must have been awarded 200 credits in total of which at least 80 are at SCQF 8.

[5] This represents the minimum number of credits

[6] Credits at a higher level can substitute for those at a lower level

[7] At any level, credit at a higher level may substitute for the minimum credit required at that level to progress. Normally students must have gained 60 credits at a level before taking modules credited at a higher level.

- SCQF level 9 to SCQF level 10 a student must have been awarded 320 credits in total of which at least 90 are at SCQF 9..

- Subject to meeting professional body requirements where necessary, and achieving at least 90 credits at SCQF levels 7 and 8, and 60 at SCQF level 9 for a degree and 90 credits at SCQF levels 7, 8, 9 and 10 for an honours degree, students may take the remaining required credit at any level, normally from SCQF levels *7 to 10*.

5. Taught Postgraduate Modular Framework

5.1 All taught postgraduate programmes in the University *including* those by Learning Contract with the exception of Research degrees (MPhil and PhD) are based on the University Credit Accumulation and Modular Scheme as outlined in Table 1.

5.2 Students may study full-time or part-time, at a campus, at the work place, by distance learning, online learning or by a combination of delivery modes. Normally to obtain a Masters degree a student will study for a **minimum** of one calendar year full-time or two years part-time. The maximum period of registration, except where there are specific PSRB requirements, is:

- In the case of an award for which the period of study is specified as 2 years or less, the period can be extended by a maximum of 1 year; and,

- In the case of awards for which the period of study is specified as more than 2 years, the period can be extended by a maximum of 2 years[8].

5.3 Postgraduate programmes normally provide the following exit awards:

Postgraduate Certificate (named or un-named)
Postgraduate Diploma (named)
Masters Degree (named)

5.4 Integrated Masters degrees are awards which follow an approved route from SCQF level 7 to SCQF level 11. These awards require that the student gains 600 credits with 120 at SCQF 11 and the remaining credits conform to those required for the Degree with Honours. Integrated Masters programmes normally consist of the equivalent of 5 years full-time study.

5.5 Academic study for all taught postgraduate programmes shall be organised into modules based normally on a standard unit of 15 credits. In addition other credit values may be permitted, subject to approval by the University's Exceptions Subcommittee (See Section 8 below). A module may be taught and assessed over one trimester or over two trimesters.

5.6 Masters degrees will normally include a dissertation, project or equivalent module, normally with a credit rating of a minimum of 60 credits. The dissertation may be partially or completely replaced by taught modules. The

[8] See section 7 of the *Assessment Regulations for Taught Postgraduate Programmes*.

case for replacing the dissertation with taught modules must be made as part of the submission for approval via the Exceptions Committee (see Section 8 below). Full-time students will normally take taught modules over two trimesters and complete the dissertation over a third Trimester. Part-time students will normally take taught modules over four trimesters. They may begin the dissertation in the third trimester of study and complete it over the summer.

5.7 There will be no progression points in taught postgraduate programmes of study.

6. Professional Masters/Doctorates (Prof M/Prof D), Doctor of Business Administration (DBA), Doctor of Management (DMan), Doctor of Psychology (DPsych), Doctor of Applied Psychology (DAppsy) and Doctor of Physiotherapy (Pre-Registration).

The regulations for these awards are contained in the Approved Programme Document for the awards.

7. Master of Philosophy (MPhil), Doctor of Philosophy (PhD)

The regulations for these awards are contained in the Regulations for the Award of the University's Degrees of Master of Philosophy, Doctor of Philosophy, Professional Masters and Professional Doctorate.

8. Deviations or exceptions

Any proposed exceptions to the Qualifications Framework should be first submitted to the Department of Academic Quality and Development for consideration and advice. Thereafter they may be submitted to the University Exceptions Subcommittee for consideration.

Appendix 1

GLASGOW CALEDONIAN UNIVERSITY AWARDS

PORTFOLIO

Title	Abbreviation	Included in award title
UNDERGRADUATE		
Certificate of Higher Education	CertHe	With or without subject
Certificate of Higher Education	CertHe	By Learning Contract
International Foundation Certificate		With subject International
Certificate of Higher Education[9] Int Cert HE	With subject	
University Diploma[10]	UD	Subject
Diploma of Higher Education	DipHE	With or without subject
Diploma of Higher Education	DipHE	By Learning Contract
International Diploma of Higher Education[7]	Int Dip HE	With subject
Diploma in Nursing	DN	Nursing
Diploma in Midwifery	DM	Midwifery
Diploma in Social Work	DipSW	Social Work
Bachelor of Science	BSc	With or without subject
Bachelor of Science	BSc	By Learning Contract
Bachelor of Science	BSc	By Negotiated Learning
Bachelor of Arts	BA	With or without subject
Bachelor of Arts	BA	By Learning Contract
Bachelor of Arts	BA	By Negotiated Learning
Bachelor of Business Administration	BBA	(Nepal operations only)
Bachelor of Engineering	BEng	Engineering
Bachelor of Nursing	BN	Nursing
Bachelor of Midwifery	BM	Midwifery
Bachelor of Law	LLB	Law
Bachelor of Science with Honours	BSc (Hons)	With or without subject
Bachelor of Science with Honours	BSc (Hons)	By Learning Contract
Bachelor of Science with Honours	BSc (Hons)	By Negotiated Learning
Bachelor of Arts with Honours	BA (Hons)	With or without subject
Bachelor of Arts with Honours	BA (Hons)	By Learning Contract
Bachelor of Arts with Honours	BA (Hons)	By Negotiated Learning
Bachelor of Engineering with Honours	BEng (Hons)	Engineering
Bachelor of Law with Honours	LLB (Hons)	Law
GRADUATE		
Graduate Certificate		With or without subject
Graduate Certificate		By Learning Contract
Graduate Diploma		With or without Subject
Graduate Diploma		By Learning Contract
International Graduate Diploma of Higher Education[7] Int Grad Dip		With subject

[9] for INTO Glasgow Caledonian University programmes
[10] as approved by GCU for exceptional use by Caledonian College of Engineering, Oman

INTEGRATED MASTERS

Master of Engineering	MEng	Engineering
Master of Science	MSci	Science
Master of Optometry (*with Independent Prescribing*)	MOptom (IP)	Optometry
Master of Optometry	MOptom	Optometry

POST GRADUATE

Post Graduate Certificate	PgC	With or without subject
Post Graduate Certificate	PgC	By Learning Contract
Certificate in Management	CiM	Management
Post Graduate Diploma	PgD	With or without subject
Post Graduate Diploma	PgD	By Learning Contract
Diploma in Management Studies	DMS	Management
Master of Science	MSc	Subject
Master of Arts	MA	Subject
Master of Business Administration	MBA	Management
Master of Law	LLM	Law
Master of Nursing	MN	Nursing
Master of Midwifery	MM	Midwifery
Master of Accounting	MAcc	With or without subject
Master of Finance	MFin	With or without subject
Diploma in Accounting	DipAcc	Accounting
Diploma in Finance	DipFin	Finance
Master of Research	MRes	Subject
Master of Accountancy	MAcc	Accounting
Master of Finance	MFin	Finance
Master of Science by Learning Contract	MSc	By Learning Contract
Master of Philosophy	MPhil	By thesis
Doctor of Philosophy	PhD	By thesis
Master of Professional Practice	Prof M	By subject
Doctorate in Professional Practice	Prof D	By subject
Doctorate in Professional Practice	Prof D	By Learning Contract
Doctorate in Professional Practice	Prof D	Without subject
Doctor of Philosophy	PhD	By thesis
Doctor of Philosophy	PhD	By previously produced work
Doctor of Psychology	DPsych	By teaching and research
Doctor of Applied Psychology	DApPsy	Psychology
Doctor of Business Administration	DBA	Management
Doctor of Management	DMan	Management
Doctor of Physiotherapy (Pre-Registration)	DPT	Physiotherapy

HIGHER DOCTORATES

Doctor of Laws	LLD
Doctor of Letters	DLitt
Doctor of Science	DSc
Doctor of Technology	DTech

HONORARY DEGREES

Master of Science	MSc
Master of Letters	MLitt
Master of the University	MUniv
Doctor of Science	DSc
Doctor of Letters	DLitt
Doctor of Technology	DTech
Doctor of Business	BusD
Doctor of the University	DUniv
Doctor of Laws	LLD
Honorary Fellowship	

POST-EXPERIENCE/CPD[11]

Glasgow Caledonian University Certificate	Subject
Glasgow Caledonian University Advanced Certificate	Subject
Glasgow Caledonian University Post-experience Certificate	Subject

Notes to Awards Portfolio

1. Students taking a degree by learning contract would negotiate the subject(s) of the award with the supervisor team.

2. Additional award titles may be agreed at the time of programme approval, subject to approval by Senate.

[11] Designated as in Continuing Professional Development or Continuing Education