

Guidance on Meeting National Requirements for New Programmes of Study

1. Introduction

- 1.1. This guidance outlines the minimum national requirements for higher education degree programmes in the UK and is intended to assist departments in the design of new programmes.
- 1.2. The guidance is based on the [Framework for Higher Education Qualifications in England](#) (FHEQ) and the [Higher Education Credit Framework for England](#).
- 1.3. As the College awards credits according to the European Credit Transfer & Accumulation System (ECTS) this guidance is also based on the [Framework for Qualifications in the European Higher Education Area](#) (FQ-EHEA) and the [ECTS User Guide](#). Further details are available in the College's [Guidance on allocating ECTS Credit](#).
- 1.4. The FHEQ was [verified in October 2008](#) to be compatible with European requirements in the FQ-EHEA. Where inconsistencies between the frameworks exist the FHEQ and the HE Credit Framework for England take precedence.
- 1.5. Departments designing new programmes should refer to the [UK Quality Code for Higher Education](#), in particular [Chapter B1](#); Programme Design, Development & Approval as well as the relevant [Subject Benchmark Statements](#).
- 1.6. Additional details and College specific requirements are available in the College's [Academic & Examination Regulations](#), and the College Precepts for [Master's level](#) and [research](#) programmes.

2. Credit Allocation

- 2.1. Credit must be applied to modules, where the College defines a module as 'a self-contained, formally structured unit of study, with a coherent and explicit set of learning outcomes and assessment criteria'.
- 2.2. Credit volume for a module is determined by the notional hours of student effort required to successfully complete the module. Notional hours of student effort are calculated using the ratio 25 notional hours:1 ECTS
- 2.3. Credit level for a module is determined by the level of the intended learning outcomes for the module. Learning outcomes are developed with reference to the FHEQ Level Descriptors and the relevant QAA Subject Benchmark Statements.
- 2.4. Credit is not awarded to clinical programmes (e.g. MBBS) however programme and module learning outcomes must be set at the appropriate level.
- 2.5. Credit is not awarded to doctoral programmes (e.g. PhD) however the programme learning outcomes must be set at the appropriate level.

3. Programme Structure

- 3.1. An undergraduate programme must contain a minimum of 60 ECTS per full-time year; a Master's level programme must contain a minimum of 90 ECTS per full-time year. Part-time programmes are calculated pro-rata.
- 3.2. A Bachelor's degree must contain a minimum of 180 ECTS with a minimum of 60 ECTS in each full-time, year of study. The programme must include at least 60 credits at level six as detailed in table (i) below.
- 3.3. An integrated Master's degree must contain a minimum of 240 ECTS with a minimum of 60 ECTS in each full-time, year of study. This must include at least 60 credits at level seven as detailed in table (i) below.
- 3.4. A Postgraduate Certificate must contain a minimum of 30 ECTS with at least 20 ECTS at level seven or above as detailed in table (i) below.
- 3.5. A Postgraduate Diploma must contain a minimum of 60 ECTS with at least 45 ECTS at level seven or above as detailed in table (i) below.
- 3.6. A stand-alone Master's degree must contain a minimum of 90 ECTS with a minimum of 90 ECTS per full-time, year of study. This must include at least 75 ECTS at level seven or above as detailed in table (i) below.

4. Module Structure

- 4.1. A module must be assessed by at least one assessment method. A module which is not assessed cannot be credit-bearing.
- 4.2. The number and type of assessment methods and the weighting assigned to each method must be specified in the module outline.
- 4.3. Each assessment method must be directly linked to one of more of the module's intended learning outcomes as stated in the module outline.

Table (i)

Award	Minimum ECTS	Minimum ECTS at FHEQ level		
		Level 6	Level 7	Level 8
Research Degree (PhD, EngD, MD(Res))	N/A			N/A
Master's Degree (MSc, MBA, MRes, MPH, MEd)	90		75	
Integrated Master's Degree (MSci, MEng)	240		60	
Postgraduate Diploma (PGDip)	60		45	
Postgraduate Certificate (PGCert)	30		20	
Bachelor's Degree (BSc, BEng, MBBS)	180	45		

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