



The University of Sussex Academic Framework 2023/24

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1. Introduction

- 1.1. The Academic Framework establishes the criteria and rules for courses validated by the University of Sussex. It sets out the basic criteria for awards by establishing the design parameters necessary to assure the quality and academic standing of those courses in accordance with the Regulated Qualifications Framework (RQF) (Ofqual 2015), Framework for Qualifications of Higher Education Institutions in England, Northern Ireland and Wales (FHEQ) (2014), the Higher Education Credit Framework for England: guidance on academic credit arrangements in higher education in England (2008); and the European Qualifications Framework for Higher Education (Bergen 2005).
- 1.2. Course-specific regulations may, following approval granted through the University's curriculum development processes, set additional requirements for the award of named degrees, diplomas and certificates and for which the requirements may be more stringent than those set out in this document, for example to meet the requirements of a Professional, Statutory and Regulatory Body (PSRB).

2. Changes to the Framework for 2023-24

- 2.1 For details of changes to the Academic Framework approved by the University Education Committee see Appendix 3.

3. Credit

- 3.1. The unit of measurement of time and workload for modules and courses is a credit. Credit is determined by calculating the required learning hours on the basis of 1 credit for 10 hours of learning. The credit volume reflects all student effort including taught provision, independent or guided study, and revision.
- 3.2 Credit is awarded to a learner in recognition of the verified achievement of designated learning outcomes at a specified level for a complete module. Credit is a quantified means of expressing equivalence of learning and enables comparing learning achieved in a variety of different contexts. The credit volume reflects the notional student effort required to complete a module successfully. All University of Sussex undergraduate and postgraduate modules between FHEQ Levels 3 to 7 shall be weighted as 15 credits or multiples thereof. Exceptions to this rule are limited to external provision validated by the University and delivered by affiliated partners of the University.
- 3.2. All credit-bearing modules are credit rated according to level and volume:
 - Level 3 (foundation year/stage 0)
 - Level 4 (undergraduate stage 1/certificate level)
 - Level 5 (undergraduate stage 2/diploma level)
 - Level 6 (undergraduate stage 3/honours degree level)
 - Level 7 (master's degree level)

4. Degree structures

Guidelines About Degree Structures

- 4.1. University of Sussex taught degrees, diplomas and certificates are designed in accordance with the credit values and rules stated in [Appendix 1](#).
- 4.2. Undergraduate courses are normally delivered in full-time mode and any changes must be formally approved by the Chair of the University Education Committee. Postgraduate courses may be delivered in full-time or part-time mode, subject to formal approval at validation.
- 4.3. To qualify for a University of Sussex undergraduate honours award or an integrated master's award, at least two stages of study must have been completed at the University, or on a course validated by the University.
- 4.4. PhD/DPhils are not typically credit rated under the FHEQ framework. However, Professional Doctorates, which usually include a substantial taught element, are assigned credit.¹

Maximum Period of Registration

- 4.5. The maximum period of registration for a taught award is normally calculated according to:
 - Undergraduate courses: the minimum period plus 3 years
 - Full-time postgraduate courses: the minimum period plus 1 year
 - Part-time postgraduate courses: the minimum period plus 2 years
 - Online postgraduate courses: the minimum period plus 2 years, resulting in a maximum of 4 years.
 - Online postgraduate diploma courses: the minimum period plus 1 year, resulting in a maximum of 2 years 4 months.
 - Online postgraduate certificate courses: the minimum period plus 1 year, resulting in a maximum of 1 year 8 months.
 - Online undergraduate Bachelor courses: the minimum period of registration is 5 years plus 3 years, resulting in a maximum period of 8 years.
- 4.6. The maximum period of registration, for all modes of attendance, is not extended for any time spent on temporary withdrawal.

5. Credits and Module Status in Undergraduate Courses

Credit Values

- 5.1. Credits are module specific and awarded upon completion of the modules. All modules contributing to an award must be credit-bearing. Undergraduate courses comprise 120 credits per academic year for students studying full-time ([see Appendix 1](#)). For full-time undergraduate courses the usual pattern of delivery will be 60 credits in the Autumn Semester and 60 credits in the Spring Semester.
- 5.2. The undergraduate final year project is expected to comprise at least 30 credits at Level 6.
- 5.3. Modules may be delivered within a single semester or across two semesters. If the primary assessment is not a project, a dissertation, or other research-based assessment, then there must be a strong pedagogic rationale for extended teaching and learning for the module

¹ Source: QAA Doctoral Degree Characteristics Statement, September 2015

topic. Requests for year-long non-research modules must be formally approved by the Chair of the School Education Committee. The School Education Committee is responsible for ensuring learning opportunities, feedback, assessment, and other workload is spread across both semesters. Where a module is delivered across two semesters, the minimum credit volume will be 30 credits. Modules weighted at 15 credits will not be delivered across two semesters as this leads to increased incompatibility with other courses and can lead to inefficient delivery models.

Modules at Lower and Higher Levels

- 5.4. Students may take up to 30 credits at the lower level as indicated by the credit requirements for the award above through requesting a Variation of Study. This is not permitted for students in the final stage of an Integrated Master's degree where all 120 credits must be at Level 7. On undergraduate language pathways, students may exceptionally take 30 credits at FHEQ Level 3 during Stage 1 of their studies, to enable entry to study of a language at the *ab initio* level.
- 5.5. Students are not permitted to take any credits at the higher level in any stage in an undergraduate course, with two exceptions:
 - 5.5.1. Students opting to study language electives or pathways may take up to 30 credits of language modules at the higher level if they are primarily studying at Level 3, Level 4 or Level 5, subject to verification by academic staff in the Sussex Centre for Language Studies (SCLS). Students taking language electives at the higher level are not permitted to simultaneously take language credits at the lower level.
 - 5.5.2. Foundation Year students may study the Level 4 modules;
 - Developing Role Models: Peer-Led Mentoring (X3604)
 - Social Justice, Leadership and Organising 1 (SL001)
 - Social Justice, Leadership and Organising 2 (SL002)

Modules Available to Multiple Cohorts

- 5.6. Individual undergraduate modules may contribute to more than one course, but the credit volume and level of the module shall be the same for all courses.
- 5.7. Exceptionally, two modules offered at different FHEQ levels may be co-taught. Where this occurs the shared teaching element must be at the lower level with an equivalent proportion of teaching delivered independently to the student studying at the higher level. In addition, both modules must have differentiated titles, learning outcomes and assessments. Exceptionally, alternative arrangements may be approved by the University Education Committee. Co-teaching of modules will normally not be approved following assessment of the impact upon timetabling (see [360 Timetable Review](#)), and also following consideration of likelihood that this will create a disincentive for undergraduate students to progress on to a master's course.

Module Designations

- 5.8. Undergraduate courses include 3 designations of modules (see table below). The designations are course-specific and will be set out in relevant published course documents (as exceptionally a core module on one course may be offered as an option on another). The following designations are possible:

Module type	Description
Core	<p>A module that all students must study as part of their course. Normally these modules are owned and delivered within a single School. Exceptionally, core modules may be explicitly approved by UEC for cross-school delivery² in single honours courses where there is a compelling pedagogical rationale. For joint honours courses where each component is provided by a different School, cross-school delivery of core modules will be permitted.</p> <p>All core modules shall be weighted as 15 credits or multiples thereof.</p>
Option	<p>A module that forms part of a group of options owned and delivered within a School. Exceptionally option modules may be explicitly approved by UEC for cross-school delivery in single honours courses where there is a compelling pedagogical rationale. For joint honours courses where each component is provided by a different School, cross-school delivery of option modules will be permitted.</p> <p>All option modules shall be weighted as 15 credits or multiples thereof.</p>
Elective	<p>A module timetabled into the University Elective Timetable for Single Honours undergraduate courses. Electives are designed to enable students to broaden their learning beyond the core subjects of Single Honours. An elective may be positioned at either RQF/FHEQ level 3, 4, 5 or 6 in the University's Academic Framework. All electives shall be weighted as 15 credits.</p> <p>Electives may exist as an individual module or as part of a 60-credit pathway or 90-credit Minor pathway. Electives are not available to students on Joint Honours courses as there is insufficient capacity within the syllabus if two major subject areas are to be adequately accommodated.</p> <p>Electives may be offered in each teaching semester, depending upon demand. Electives must be approved by University Education Committee and timetabled to be delivered within the University's Elective Timetable. Level 3 electives are only available to students taking language pathways, in order to enable study at the <i>ab initio</i> level.³ Students may be offered a choice between an approved option and an elective.</p>
Pathway type	Description
60-credit Pathway	<p>A 60-credit pathway consists of a cohesive course of study across 4 elective modules x 15 credits that provides academic progression between Levels 4 and 5, with at least 30 credits achieved at Level 5. Optionality within 60-credit pathways will not normally be permitted.</p>

² Cross-school delivery of core or optional modules requires exceptional approval owing to the additional burden upon the timetable created by allowing students from several Schools to be taught within the constraints of a single module.

³ Exceptionally, students taking language electives or pathways may also take credits at the higher level where this is considered appropriate by academic staff in SCLS.

	<p>The aim of the 60-credit Pathway is to provide students on single honours courses with an opportunity to broaden their learning beyond the main focus of their course. The Pathway shall consist of sufficient academic credit to warrant specific recognition on the degree certificate but does not constitute an entry pathway. These pathways shall be made available to students taking Single Honours degrees that opt into the Elective Scheme and shall be delivered within the University’s Elective Timetable.</p> <p>60-credit Pathways can be designated as either Type 1 and Type 2:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Type 1: a 60-credit pathway which is open to all students. • Type 2: a 60-credit pathway with approved pre-requisites and/or exclusions as determined by the host School. This type is employed where the School is targeting a particular cohort by course of study. <p>Elective modules that comprise a pathway must be delivered at the appropriate level of study. For example, Stage 1 modules must be at Level 4.</p> <p>Whilst the award certificate will record the achievement of a pathway, the subject of the pathway will not appear in the degree title. The pathway will be recognised on the degree certificate outside of the degree title in the form ‘<Major element> [with <pathway name> Studies]’. Alternatively, another form of words may be used where the University considers this to be more appropriate. The School will obtain approval for the pathway exit title from the University’s Portfolio Approval Committee.</p>
60-credit Language Pathways	<p>As for other 60-credit pathways, with the exception that Year 1 students may study modules at FHEQ Level 3, in order to obtain teaching at the <i>ab initio</i> level. Exceptionally, language elective modules forming part of a pathway may be delivered in Stage 3 where this complements a particular pattern of delivery, for example where a student is away from campus during a placement period or to enable entry to study a language at the <i>ab initio</i> level.</p> <p>In relation to languages the award certificate shall be recorded as “Degree title with proficiency in ‘language’ (intermediate)” where the language has been taken at FHEQ Levels 3 and 4 and “Degree title with proficiency in ‘language’ (advanced)” where the language has been taken at Level 4 or higher. The School will obtain approval for the pathway exit title from the University’s Portfolio Approval Committee.</p>
90-credit Pathway	<p>A 90-credit pathway consists of a cohesive course of study that provides academic progression with 30 credits achieved at each of FHEQ Levels 4, 5 and 6. Optionality within 90-credit pathways will not usually be permitted.</p> <p>The aim of the 90-credit pathway is to provide students on single honours courses with an opportunity to broaden their learning beyond the main focus of their course. The 90-credit Pathway shall consist of sufficient academic credit to warrant specific recognition on the degree certificate as a minor component of a major/minor award, following the titling</p>

	<p>convention for that type of degree award. The title of the award will be approved in all instances by the Portfolio Approval Committee.</p> <p>All major/minor degrees at the University will utilise a 90-credit pathway for their minor component.</p> <p>These pathways shall be made available to students taking Single Honours degrees that opt into the Elective Scheme and shall be delivered within the University’s Elective Timetable for the first two Stages. For students not entering the University on a specified major/minor award title, progression into Stage 3 of the pathway will be dependent on there being sufficient capacity within the relevant stage of their course. Students will be required to obtain explicit approval for this variation of study.</p> <p>The School will obtain approval for the new major/minor award titles which utilise 90-credit pathways from the Portfolio Approval Committee, thereby ensuring the academic coherence of the proposed award.</p>
90-credit Language Pathways	<p>These pathways shall be made available to students taking Single Honours degrees that opt into the Elective Scheme and shall be delivered within the University’s Elective Timetable for the first two Stages. For students not entering the University on a specified major/minor award title, progression into Stage 3 of the pathway will be dependent on there being sufficient capacity within the relevant stage of their course. Students will be required to submit a request for Variation of Study.</p> <p>The School will obtain approval for new major/minor award titles from the Portfolio Approval Committee, thereby ensuring the academic coherence of the proposed award.</p> <p>Taking a 90-credit language pathway will result in a major/minor award with a suffix referencing the level of language competency attained, as defined in the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR). This award will therefore take the form of <major component> with <language minor> [CEFR xx].</p>

6. Credit and Module Status in Postgraduate Courses

- 6.1. Credits are module specific and are available upon completion of the module. All modules contributing to an award must be credit-bearing.
- 6.2. For full-time postgraduate courses comprising 180 credits the usual pattern of delivery will be 60 credits in the Autumn Semester, 60 credits in the Spring Semester, and 60 credits in the Summer Semester. Exceptions to this may be explicitly approved by the Portfolio Approval Committee, subject to the delivery of a maximum of 75 credits in any semester.
- 6.3. Modules may be delivered within a single semester or across two semesters, where the primary assessment is a project, a dissertation, or other research-based assessment, or where there is a strong pedagogic rationale for extended teaching and learning for the module topic. Requests for year-long non-research modules must be formally approved by

the Chair of the School Education Committee. The School Education Committee is responsible for ensuring learning opportunities, feedback, assessment, and other workload is spread across both semesters. Where a module is delivered across two semesters the minimum credit volume will be 30 credits. Modules weighted at 15 credits will not be delivered across two semesters as this leads to increased incompatibility with other courses and can lead to inefficient delivery models.

- 6.4. Taught postgraduate courses will normally have at least 60 credits of core modules that are aligned to the award title.
- 6.5. Individual postgraduate modules may contribute to more than one course, but the credit volume and level of the module shall be the same for all courses. Cross-school delivery of modules is permitted for postgraduate courses.
- 6.6. Exceptionally, two modules offered at different FHEQ levels may be co-taught. Where this occurs the shared teaching element, must be at the lower level with an equivalent proportion of teaching delivered independently to the student studying at the higher level. In addition, both modules must have differentiated titles, learning outcomes and assessments. Exceptionally, alternative arrangements may be approved by the University Education Committee.
- 6.7. Postgraduate level modules will either be classified as core or option. Elective modules are not offered at the postgraduate level as there is insufficient capacity within postgraduate award to accommodate broader choice without compromising academic integrity of the award.

Approved: University Education Committee May 2023

Appendix 1: Award Titles Granted by the University of Sussex

Award Title (abbreviated form in brackets)	FHEQ /RQF Level	Minimum Credit requirement	Minimum Credit at the level of the award	Minimum Period of Registration	Award description and rules
Doctor of Philosophy (PhD)	8	N/A	N/A	2yrs FT	This is a research degree, the completion of which requires the submission of a thesis, typically of no more than 80,000 words in length.
Doctor of Philosophy by Published Works (PhD by Published Works) ⁴	8	N/A	N/A	6 months	This award requires the submission of a portfolio of published works.
Integrated Doctor of Philosophy (iPhD)	8	N/A	360	2yrs FT	This award is a research degree which also contains a Master of Research. Assessment is by taught modules in the first/second year and then by submission of a theses, typically of no more than 80,000 words. This is separate from the 1+3 route.
Professional Doctorates: Doctorate in Education (EdD) Doctorate in Social Work (DSW) Doctorate in Medicine (MD)	8	540 ⁵	360	4yrs PT	This award is a research degree which also contains a substantial taught element. Assessment is by taught modules in the first year and then by submission of a thesis, typically of no more than 50,000 words in length.
Professional Doctorate by Published Works: Doctorate in Medicine (MD by Published Works)	8	N/A	N/A	6 months	This award requires the submission of a portfolio of published works.
Master of Philosophy (MPhil)	7	N/A	N/A	1yr FT	This is a research degree, the completion of which requires the submission of a thesis, typically of no more than 40,000 words in length.
Master of Laws by Research (LLM by Research)	7	180	180	1yr FT	Typically delivered over a single academic year (12-month period), comprising a supervised research dissertation. Taught modules will not form part of the award.
Master's Degree: Master of Arts (MA) Master of Business Administration (MBA)	7	180	150	1yr FT 2yrs PT 2yrs Online	Typically delivered over a single academic year (12-month period) for FT, or over two academic years (24-month period) for PT/online provision, and incorporating a

⁴ The maximum period of registration for a PhD by Published Works is 1 year.

⁵ Source: QAA Doctoral Degree Characteristics Statement, September 2015

Award Title (abbreviated form in brackets)	FHEQ /RQF Level	Minimum Credit requirement	Minimum Credit at the level of the award	Minimum Period of Registration	Award description and rules
Master of Education (MEd) Master of Fine Art (MFA) Master of Laws (LLM) Master of Science (MSc)					research dissertation which is normally weighted at 60 credits.
Master of Research (MRes)	7	180	150	1yr FT 2yrs PT	Typically delivered over a single academic year (12-month period) and incorporating a research dissertation, normally weighted at 90 credits.
European Master's Degree (MSc Euromasters)	7	240	210	1yr FT	Typically delivered over two years (24 months) and normally incorporating a research dissertation ≥60 credits.
Intercalated Master's Degree (MSc)	7	180	150	1yr FT	Typically delivered over a single academic year (12-month period) and incorporating a research dissertation, normally weighted at 60 credits. This award is typically taken by medical students who intercalate the course into their primary degree studies in order to develop specialist knowledge in a related discipline.
Double Master's Degree (LLM, MA, MBA, MEd, MFA, MSc)	7	180	150	1yr FT	See Appendix 1 for details
Dual Master's Degree (LLM, MA, MBA, MEd, MFA, MSc)	7	300	240	2yrs FT	See Appendix 1 for details
Joint Master's Degree (LLM, MA, MBA, MEd, MFA, MSc)	7	180	150	1yr FT	See Appendix 1 for details
MA Physician Associate Studies (MA)	7	270	270	2yrs FT	This is an award comprising classroom-based learning, combined with significant time spent in Clinical placement over a two-year period of full-time study.
Postgraduate Clinical Diploma (PGClinDip)	7	240	240	2yrs FT	
Postgraduate Diploma (PGDip)	7	120	90	1yr FT 2yrs PT	These awards may be approved as stand-alone awards or as exit awards embedded within a Master's degree course. The name of the award (entry or exit) shall be specified in course documentation in the format 'Postgraduate Certificate/Diploma in Subject X'.
Postgraduate Certificate (PGCert)	7	60	45	1yr FT 2yrs PT	
Postgraduate Certificate in Education (PGCE)	7	90	45	9 months FT 2yrs PT	This is a postgraduate teaching training programme, comprising classroom-based learning and time spent in placement.

Award Title (abbreviated form in brackets)	FHEQ /RQF Level	Minimum Credit requirement	Minimum Credit at the level of the award	Minimum Period of Registration	Award description and rules
Integrated Master's Degree: Master of Arts (MArts) Master of Chemistry (MChem) Master of Computing (MComp) Master of Engineering (MEng) Master of Mathematics (MMath) Master of Pharmacy (MPharm) Master of Physics (MPhys) Master of Science (MSci)	7	480	120	4yrs FT	A 4-stage degree course normally incorporating an embedded exit route at Honours Level 6. Students typically decide during stage 2 whether to continue on the 4-stage pathway or to transfer to the 3-stage Honours route, subject to minimum levels of academic achievement. Students failing to achieve the progression threshold at the end of stage 3 on the 4-stage route may be eligible to exit with the Honours award. So as to meet the minimum 120 credits at the level of the award requirement, stage 4 will consist solely of level 7 credit.
Bachelor's Degree with Honours (Hons) Bachelor of Arts (BA) Bachelor of Engineering (BEng) Bachelor of Music (BMus) Bachelor of Science (BSc) Bachelor of Laws (LLB)	6	360	90	3yrs FT	This is a degree comprising a main area of study from a single School. It may include modules from outside the 'major' area of study, but shall incorporate at least 240 out of 360 credits from the major area. At least 90 credits shall be at Level 6.
Bachelor of Medicine, Bachelor of Surgery (BMBS)	7	780	180	5yrs FT ⁶	This is a 5-stage degree course leading to a Level 7 award. For historical reasons the BMBS is designated as a Bachelor's degree. At least 180 credits shall be at Level 7.
Intercalated Bachelor's Degree	6	120	90	1yr FT	Typically delivered over a single academic year (12-month period) and incorporating a research dissertation. This award is typically taken by medical students who intercalate the course into their primary degree studies in order to develop specialist knowledge in a related discipline.

⁶ The maximum period of registration for this course is 7 years on a full-time basis or 8 years if a student intercalates an additional year of study in a discipline related to their medical studies.

Award Title (abbreviated form in brackets)	FHEQ /RQF Level	Minimum Credit requirement	Minimum Credit at the level of the award	Minimum Period of Registration	Award description and rules
Bachelor of Medical Sciences with Honours (Hons) (BMedSci)	6	300	60	3yrs FT	This award is offered only as an exit route for students not progressing to years 4 and 5 of the BMBS.
Bachelor's Degree with Honours (Hons) (BA, BEng, BMus, BSc, LLB) Single Honours with named pathway	6	360	90	3yrs FT	<p>This is a degree comprising a main area of study from a single School and a secondary area of study known as a 'pathway', consisting of elective modules. The degree may include modules from outside the major area of study through the pathway, but shall incorporate at least 240 out of 360 credits from the major area. At least 90 credits shall be at Level 6. The pathway shall incorporate at least 60 credits (with 30 credits at level 5).</p> <p>The pathway does not constitute a named entry route as it is designed to facilitate student choice after entry. Where students successfully complete a 60-credit pathway alongside their single honours, the subject of the pathway will not appear in the degree title. Instead, the pathway will usually be recognised on the degree certificate outside of the degree title, using the format '<Main area of study> (with <pathway name> Studies)'. Students progressing from a foundation year may incorporate two pathways into their degree. The pathways will be recognised on the degree certificate outside the degree title, using the format '<Main area of study> (with <pathway name> Studies and <pathway name> Studies)'.</p>
Bachelor's Degree with Honours (Hons) (BA, BEng, BMus, BSc, LLB) Major (with Minor)	6	360	60 (major) 30 (minor)	3yrs FT	This is a degree comprising two main areas of study. The major component shall consist of 270 credits with a minimum of 60 credits at Level 6. The minor component shall consist of a coherent element of study to the value of 90 credits of which 30 shall be at level 6. The minor element shall be formed by the completion of a 90-credit pathway, typically consisting of elective modules in the first two stages. The minor element of

Award Title (abbreviated form in brackets)	FHEQ /RQF Level	Minimum Credit requirement	Minimum Credit at the level of the award	Minimum Period of Registration	Award description and rules
					<p>study warrants specific recognition on the degree certificate and constitutes a named entry route for applicants. The two elements of study will be linked by the word 'with' in the degree title, using the format '<Major area of study> with <Minor area of study>'.</p> <p>The project element of a major/minor award will normally relate to both parts of the degree, in order to realise an enhanced level of interdisciplinarity.</p>
Fast-track or Accelerated Bachelor's Degree with Honours (Hons)	6	360	90	2yrs FT	Each year consists of 180 credits, otherwise these degrees follow the framework of the standard delivery.
Bachelor's Degree with Honours (BA, BEng, BMus, BSc, LLB (Hons)) Joint Major	6	360	90 (of which a minimum of 30 credits shall be in each major)	3yrs FT	This is a degree comprising two major areas of study, each of which shall consist of 180 credits. At least 90 credits shall be at Level 6, to include a minimum of 30 credits in each major area of study. Each major element of study warrants specific recognition on the degree certificate and constitutes a named entry route for applicants. The two elements of study will be linked by the word 'and' in the degree title using the format '<Major area of study> and <Major area of study>'.
Bachelor of Arts Degree with Honours in Philosophy, Politics and Economics (PPE) (BA (Hons) Philosophy, Politics and Economics)	6	360	90 (of which a minimum of 30 credits will be in two of the three subject areas)	3yrs FT	BA Philosophy, Politics and Economics is a degree comprising three subject areas. It includes 360 credits with at least 60 credits in each discipline overall. There shall be 120 credits in the final stage, including 90 credits at Level 6, which will include 30 credits at Level 6 in two of the three subjects.
Graduate Diploma	6	90	90	1yr FT 2yr PT	A professional 'conversion' course, based largely on undergraduate material, and taken usually by those who are already graduates in another discipline.
Graduate Certificate		45	45	1yr FT	
Graduate Entry LLB with Honours (LLB (Hons))	6	240	90	2yrs FT	A law conversion course designed for graduates already in possession of an

Award Title (abbreviated form in brackets)	FHEQ /RQF Level	Minimum Credit requirement	Minimum Credit at the level of the award	Minimum Period of Registration	Award description and rules
					undergraduate degree in a non-law discipline.
Undergraduate award with voluntary placement year ⁷	(5)	(120)	(120)	1yr FT	<p>A voluntary placement year (professional/industrial⁸) outside of the University may be incorporated into an existing undergraduate course on entry or via post-entry transfer, so as to facilitate student choice. This will be an additional year of study equivalent to 120 credits leading to a course duration of 4/5 stages respectively. The placement year will usually take place between the second stage and the final stage of a course.</p> <p>The ability to take a voluntary placement year is not guaranteed but the University will support students via the Placement Preparation Programme in identifying/gaining access to a Placement Year. Students wishing to access a voluntary placement year once on a course shall register on the Placement Preparation Programme, normally by Semester 2 of Stage 1. In the case of students taking an industrial placement year, additional support in identifying/gaining access to the placement will be received from the School.</p> <p>Students cannot normally undertake both a voluntary placement year and a Study Abroad Year.</p> <p>When taken and passed the voluntary placement year shall be recognised on the degree certificate in the format – Degree</p>

⁷ All degrees containing a Study Abroad or Placement element will represent that element last in the award title.

⁸ The exact nomenclature for the award title is determined at the point of validation of the course. Schools can select whichever option most accurately describes the placement experience that their students will undertake.

Award Title (abbreviated form in brackets)	FHEQ /RQF Level	Minimum Credit requirement	Minimum Credit at the level of the award	Minimum Period of Registration	Award description and rules
					title (with a professional placement year or with an industrial placement year).
Undergraduate award with unfunded voluntary placement year	(5)	(120)	(120)	1yr FT	<p>This award shall bear largely the same characteristics as those for a voluntary placement year but will instead be limited to a maximum of 30 weeks. The rationale for this is that as students will not receive payment for any part of their placement, they should be afforded additional time to ensure that they can undertake paid work in the same academic year so as not be disadvantaged compared to their peers in placements attracting payment.</p> <p>This type of placement is only appropriate where the student is based in a non-profit organisation such as the National Health Service or in a charitable organisation. Unfunded voluntary placement years must not be used for placements involving private sector organisations.</p>
Integrated Masters with Summer Research Placements: Master of Chemistry (MChem) Master of Engineering (MEng) Master of Mathematics (MMath) Master of Physics (MPhys) Master of Science (MSci)	7	480	120	4yrs FT	<p>This award provides an opportunity for students to augment their studies by undertaking paid placements in research groups during the summer vacation period between each year of study.</p> <p>Students cannot normally also combine this type of degree with an industrial/professional placement year, as these tend to last 12 months and conflict with summer research placements, but may be able to undertake a voluntary placement year or a Study Abroad Year.</p> <p>When taken and passed the summer placements shall be recognised on the degree certificate in the format MChem Chemistry with Summer Research Placements.</p>
Undergraduate award with integrated placement year	(5)	(120)	(120)	1yr FT	An integrated placement year is incorporated into some of the University's 3 and 4-stage undergraduate courses, including some Integrated Master's Degree awards. This will be an additional

Award Title (abbreviated form in brackets)	FHEQ /RQF Level	Minimum Credit requirement	Minimum Credit at the level of the award	Minimum Period of Registration	Award description and rules
					<p>year of study equivalent to 120 credits leading to a course duration of 4/5 stages respectively. The placement year will usually take place between the second stage and the final stage of a course. The following types of integrated placement years are permitted:</p> <p>Professional practice placements which require students to undertake an integrated Placement Year for a recognised and accredited qualification.</p> <p>Research placements which require students to undertake an integrated placement year.</p> <p>Specialist industrial placements which require students to undertake an integrated Placement Year in an explicitly discipline-relevant context.</p> <p>The University guarantees access to an integrated placement to students on the above courses.</p> <p>Students cannot normally undertake more than one of an integrated placement year, a study abroad year and a Year in a Specialist Subject.</p> <p>When taken and passed the integrated placement year shall be recognised on the degree certificate in the format <Degree title> (with a professional/with an industrial placement year) or <Degree title> (research placement).</p>
Postgraduate Award with integrated placement year	7	(180)	(180)	1yr FT	<p>An integrated placement year is incorporated into some of the University's postgraduate courses. This will be an additional year of study equivalent to 180 credits leading to a course duration of two years full-time or three years part-time. The placement year will usually take place after the taught element of the course.</p> <p>When taken and passed the integrated placement year shall be recognised on the degree certificate in the format <Degree</p>

Award Title (abbreviated form in brackets)	FHEQ /RQF Level	Minimum Credit requirement	Minimum Credit at the level of the award	Minimum Period of Registration	Award description and rules
					title> (with a professional/with an industrial placement year) or Degree title (research placement).
Postgraduate Award with a Master's placement	7	(60)	(60)	3 months FT	<p>An integrated placement is incorporated into some of the University's postgraduate courses. This will be an additional period of study equivalent to 60 credits. The placement will usually take place after the taught element of the course.</p> <p>When taken and passed the integrated placement shall be recognised on the degree certificate in the format <Degree title> (with a Master's professional/industrial/research placement)</p>
Award with study abroad year (voluntary/integrated)	(5)	(120)	(120)	1yr FT	<p>A voluntary study abroad year outside the University may be incorporated into an existing 3/4 stage course (Bachelors or Integrated Master's Degree respectively) to facilitate student choice. This will be an additional year of study equivalent to 120 credits leading to a course duration of 4/5 stages respectively. A voluntary study abroad year is not guaranteed but the University will support students via the Sussex Abroad Office in identifying/gaining access to a study abroad year. Students wishing to access a voluntary study abroad year once on a course shall register with the Sussex Abroad Office normally by Semester 2 of Stage 1.</p> <p>Some courses have an integrated study abroad year outside the University embedded into a 4-stage course structure. A study abroad year integrated into the course structure requires that the University guarantees access to a study abroad year for all students on that course.</p> <p>Students cannot normally undertake both a study abroad and a placement year</p>

Award Title (abbreviated form in brackets)	FHEQ /RQF Level	Minimum Credit requirement	Minimum Credit at the level of the award	Minimum Period of Registration	Award description and rules
					(regardless of whether the study abroad or placement year is integrated into a 4-stage course or voluntary). When taken and passed the voluntary/integrated study abroad year shall be recognised on the degree certificate in the format <Degree title> (with a study abroad year).
A Study Abroad/ Placement Semester	(5)	(60)	(5)	1 Semester ⁹	Incorporated within a 3 or 4-stage (360/480 credit) degree course to broaden student learning. Incorporating a study abroad/placement semester warrants specific recognition on the degree transcript but does not constitute a named entry/exit route. Permissible in Semester 1 or Semester 2 as long as the curriculum has been explicitly approved to enable this. The one-semester placement/study abroad requires approval by the Chair of University Education Committee (UEC) and is not open to all students.
Ordinary Bachelor's degree (BA, BSc)	6	300	60	3yrs FT	This is an exit award granted in recognition of student learning where insufficient credit has been achieved to award an undergraduate honours degree in the subject.
Foundation Degree (FdA, FdSc)	5	240	90	2yrs FT	The course must include an assessed and credit-rated element of work experience comprising no fewer than 15 credits at Level 5.
Diploma of Higher Education (DipHE)	5	240	90	2yrs FT 4yrs PT	This is a degree comprising a main area of study from a single School. It may include modules from outside the 'major' area of study but shall incorporate at least 160 out of 240 credits from the major area. At least 90 credits shall be at Level 5. Where the Diploma is an exit award from a higher qualification the award appearing on the award certificate shall be Diploma of Higher Education without reference to a subject of study.
Certificate of Higher Education (CertHE)	4	120	90	1yr FT	This award may be approved as an exit award only. The name of the award

⁹ This is the maximum period allowed.

Award Title (abbreviated form in brackets)	FHEQ /RQF Level	Minimum Credit requirement	Minimum Credit at the level of the award	Minimum Period of Registration	Award description and rules
					appearing on the award certificate shall be Certificate of Higher Education without reference to a subject of study.
University of Sussex Certificate of Education	(3)	120	90	1yr FT	This is not a formally recognised award but an exit certificate of achievement for students successfully completing a Foundation Year but who decide not to progress on to, or subsequently withdraw from, undergraduate study.
Foundation Year	3	120	120	1yr FT	This entry route is for applicants who do not meet the threshold for direct entry into Year 1 of undergraduate courses. Following successful completion of the Foundation Year, students may progress to a named undergraduate course.

Appendix 2: Dual, Double and Joint Degrees

1. Initial and final approval of new collaborative partnerships by University Executive Group is facilitated by Collaborative Provision Approval Committee (CPAC).
2. Joint, double and dual degrees are distinct from other collaborative provision that the University is engaged in, as they involve working with at least one other degree-awarding body (in the UK or internationally) in a way that involves some pooling of those awarding powers. These degrees can be at undergraduate or postgraduate level and, even though they may incorporate existing Sussex modules, they should be a distinct offering to courses offered solely by the University of Sussex.
3. In each case, despite being offered through a partnership arrangement, the award issued by the University of Sussex otherwise complies with the normal requirements for the award as defined in the University's Academic Framework.
4. They are defined as follows:
 - i. **Joint degree (collaborative provision)** – this is a single award issued jointly by the University of Sussex and a partner institution(s). A single certificate bearing the signatures of the competent authorities of all degree-awarding bodies involved attests to the successful completion of this jointly delivered course, replacing the separate institutional qualifications. Receipt of the final award is dependent on students achieving a single, shared set of course learning outcomes, and awards are issued according to a common single set of assessment regulations.
 - ii. **Double degree** – this is similar to a joint degree but differs in that two separate, co-dependent and mutually contingent awards (separately certified) are granted by the University of Sussex and the partner institution(s) for the same jointly developed and delivered course of study. This type of award can be considered in jurisdictions where there are legal or regulatory impediments to the award of a single certificate or difficulties with the recognition or acceptance of a single joint certificate which mean that it is not in the interests of students to mark their achievement in this way. All credit delivered (by all partners) within the course counts towards the award of each institution involved. Receipt of the two final awards is dependent on students achieving a single, shared set of course learning outcomes, and awards are issued according to a common single set of assessment regulations.
 - iii. **Dual degree** – this is typically two awards designed to lock together with overlapping curricula. A distinguishing feature of a dual degree is that the overall study period and volume of learning is longer than for the University of Sussex award separately but typically shorter than if each of the courses had been taken consecutively. This jointly conceived course leads to separate awards (and separate certification) from the University of Sussex and the partner institution(s). The awards are integrated but independent, so a student does not need to satisfy the award requirements of all the partners to receive an award. There may be modules required by one partner that are not counted towards the award of the other(s), so a student may fulfil the award requirements at one institution but still have to complete further study to fulfil the requirements at the other(s).

Appendix 3

Changes to Academic Framework approved by **University Education Committee**

Minor changes:

- to increase accessibility, headings and subheadings have been re-formatted in line with the university guidance on [digital accessibility](#), including documents. This also enables hyperlinking between sections within this document.
- to increase readability and information locating, The Table of Award Titles has moved to the end of document (Appendix 1) from between items 4.5 and 5.1. “Dual, Double and Joint Degrees” is now Appendix 3. Text has also been re-ordered in Sections 3.1-3.2 and 5.4-5.6. **No changes to content have been made in these sections.** Section 5.7 (UG) and 6.5 (PGT) have been moved up to Section 5.3 and 6.3, respectively, because they relate to credit values. Similarly, Section 6.6 has been moved up to 6.4.
- to increase readability and accessibility, some subheadings, bulleted lists and minor word revisions have been made (e.g. ‘shall be’ to ‘are’).

Changes in response to the 360 Timetable Review: UEC (March 2023) approved several Recommendations from the review, including to reduce ‘cross-threading’ of modules – both teaching modules simultaneously to students at different levels and allowing a module to serve multiple designations (e.g. core and elective).

- In response ‘exceptionally’ has been added to Sections 5.7 (UG) and 6.5 (PGT) as we begin to reduce the number of modules taught simultaneously to multiple levels. Because the 360 Timetable Review demonstrated that cross-threading **across schools** is one of the drivers to the timetable issues and does not rationalise resources, the text “in order to rationalise resources” has been removed from both Sections. In Section 5.7 text has been changed from “Co-teaching of modules will only be approved following assessment of the potential impact upon timetabling...” to “Co-teaching of modules will normally not be approved following assessment of the impact upon timetabling (see [360 Timetable Review](#))”. This sentence only appeared in Section 5.7.
- Similarly, Section 5.3 (now 5.4) has been updated to better support the phasing out of cross-threaded modules (**across levels**). Text has been changed from “students can normally take...” to “students may take [...] through requesting a Variation of Study.” The Variation of Study proforma and process **has not changed**.
- ‘Exceptionally’ has also been added to Section 5.8 as we begin the process of re-designating modules (e.g. not allowing students to take core modules as electives). Reducing both types of cross-threading is part of ongoing work as part of the curriculum review (Curriculum Reimagined). Adding the ‘exceptionality’ is part of our phased work on cross-threaded modules **across schools**. Note, Footnote 2 **has not changed** and reads: “Cross-school delivery of core or optional modules requires exceptional approval owing to the additional burden upon the timetable created by allowing students from several Schools to be taught within the constraints of a single module.”

Changes in response to Curriculum Reimagined: The Curriculum Reimagined working groups and Steering Group have identified the following necessary changes to enable the Curriculum Reimagined Benefits to be met:

- Sections 5.7 (UG) and 6.5 (PGT) have been moved up for readability (now Sections 5.3 and 6.3, respectively) and have been updated to allow Schools to offer 30-year credit year-long modules that are not associated with a research project. The additional text reads: “or where there is a strong pedagogic rationale for extended teaching and

learning for the module topic. Requests for year-long non-research modules must be formally approved by the Chair of the School Education Committee. The School Education Committee is responsible for ensuring learning opportunities, feedback, assessment, and other workload is spread across both semesters.”

- Some text has been updated in the definitions of electives and pathways in the table in the [Module Designations](#) section. Specifically,
 - because electives and modules on minor programmes (‘90-credit pathways’) may be interchangeable, Level 6 has been included in the sentence about levels and some minor wording has been changed from Levels 4 and 5 to Levels 4 and above.
 - to reduce and prevent cross-threading of elective modules the following text was removed: ‘Stage 1 students shall study RQF/FHEQ level 3/4 electives and Stage 2 students shall study FHEQ level 4/5 electives.’ This change also better enables us to create academic progression across electives.
 - Optionality within 60-credit pathways has been updated from “will not be permitted” to “will not normally be permitted” as the curriculum review is not concluded. Similarly, “and only at Level 6” has been removed from the analogous statement for 90-credit pathway. The word ‘usually’ was previously in this document.