

# Qualifications and Credit Framework

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# 1 Introduction

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3.1.1 All programmes of study must be approved through the Goldsmiths procedures for the approval, amendment and review of programmes and modules. They must meet the requirements of the Goldsmiths Credit and Qualifications Framework.

## 1.1 General

- 1.1.1 The policies and procedures set out in this document underpin the regulations which all staff and students are expected to follow. They provide greater details of the principles behind the regulations and the rules and processes that Goldsmiths puts in place to positively impact on the student and staff experience and to ensure compliance with external regulatory frameworks.
- 1.1.2 The relevant regulations appear in text boxes at the start of each section.

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## 2 Scope

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- 2.1.1 The Goldsmiths Qualification and Credit Framework provides a consistent, unified structure which governs all modules and programmes taught at Goldsmiths leading to awards of Goldsmiths or of the University of London.
- 2.1.2 It provides a reference point for setting and assessing academic standards when designing, approving, monitoring and reviewing programmes of study and their constituent modules and in the development of partnerships with other institutions.
- 2.1.3 It facilitates the sharing of modules across departments and student mobility through the portability of credit.
- 2.1.4 It is informed by and consistent with the Quality Assurance Agency's (QAA) Higher Education Framework for England: Guidance on Academic Credit Arrangements in Higher Education in England, and the Framework for Higher Education Qualifications of UK Degree Awarding Bodies as well as the credit guidelines published by the different UK credit consortia.

## 2.2 Key Contacts

2	<b>Quality Office</b>	3	Advice on problems relating to the interpretation of the Framework and the development of new modules or programmes
4	Quality Office	5	020 7919 7279
6	Associate Director	8	Advice on Goldsmiths' Regulations and good practice
7	(Student Administration)		

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## 3 Goldsmiths Qualifications

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### 3.1 Goldsmiths awards the following qualifications:

#### 3.1.1 Further Education Qualifications Level 3

Foundation Certificate  
International Foundation Certificate

#### 3.1.2 Undergraduate Qualifications Level

##### **Level 4**

Certificate of Higher Education (Cert HE)

##### **Level 5**

Diploma of Higher Education (Dip HE)

##### **Level 6 Bachelors**

**Degrees** Bachelor of Arts (BA)  
Bachelor of Laws (LLB) Bachelor of Music (BMus)  
Bachelor of Science (BSc)  
Pass Degree (Bachelors without Honours)

##### **Level 7 Integrated Masters Degrees**

Master in Science (MSci)

#### 3.1.3 Graduate Qualifications

##### **Level 6 Graduate Certificates**

Graduate Certificate (Grad Cert)  
Professional Graduate Certificate in Education (PgCE)

**Level 6 Graduate Diplomas**  
Graduate Diploma (Grad Dip)

3.1.4 Taught Postgraduate Qualifications Level 7 Postgraduate Certificates

Postgraduate Certificate (PG Cert)  
Postgraduate Certificate in Education  
(PGCE)

**Level 7 Postgraduate Diplomas**  
Postgraduate Diploma (PG Dip)

**Taught Masters  
Degrees** Master  
of Arts (MA)  
Master of Fine Art  
(MFA)  
Master of Music  
(MMus) Master of  
Research (MRes)  
Master of  
Science (MSc)

3.1.5 Postgraduate Research Qualifications Level 8 Masters Qualifications

Master of Philosophy

**Level 8 Doctorates**  
Doctor of Philosophy (MPhil/ PhD)

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## **4 Academic Level**

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- 4.1 Each module and qualification must have an associated academic level that reflects the depth and complexity of knowledge and understanding and the relevant prior knowledge and academic skills required to successfully complete it.
- 4.2 The numbers used to describe the different academic levels in the Goldsmiths Qualifications and Credit Framework are consistent with the QAA's Framework for Higher Education Qualifications of UK Degree Awarding Bodies (FHEQ). Undergraduate degrees are made up of modules at Levels 4, 5 and 6 respectively, Masters' degrees programmes are at Level 7 and Doctorates at Level 8.
- 4.3 The academic level of a module remains unchanged irrespective of the programme in which it is offered.
- 4.4 Each module must have specific learning and teaching activities, methods of assessment and learning outcomes that are appropriate to its academic level. There must be a clear distinction in these elements when modules are offered at more than one level.

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## **5 Award and Recognition of Credit**

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- 5.1 Credit is a widely used means of quantifying and expressing equivalence of learning. Learners are awarded credit on successful completion of an individual module at a particular level.
- 5.2 All modules have a credit value, and a certain amount of credits must be taken and passed at any level to progress to the next level or to complete an award. The requirements for specific qualifications are set out in the Policy for Progression and Award on Taught Programmes.
- 5.3 The credit value of a module is a fixed value based on an estimation of the notional learning hours required to successfully complete it. It does not vary according to a student's level of achievement.
- 5.4 In certain circumstances, on undergraduate programmes, credit may be awarded for a narrowly failed module when the overall mark for the modules at the same level is high enough to compensate for the failed mark. The requirements and process for the application of compensation are set out in the Policy for Progression and Award on Taught Programmes.

- 5.5 Credit awarded to a student by another institution or for learning that has taken place outside of formal education may be used to grant exemption from some parts of a programme of academic study at Goldsmiths judged to be equivalent. Details of this process are set out in the Policy and Procedures for the Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL).
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## 6 Credit Schemes

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- 6.1 Goldsmiths uses two schemes for the award and recognition of credit.
- 6.2 Credit Accumulation and Transfer Scheme (CATS). Goldsmiths, in line with most other UK higher education institutions, uses this system for the award and recognition of academic credit on its modules and programmes. Under this system, one credit is equal to a notional 10 hours of study time. This includes both contact hours and independent study. A 30-credit module therefore involves a notional 300 hours of study time.
- 6.3 European Credit Transfer Scheme (ECTS). This scheme was introduced as part of the Erasmus framework and is the common currency facilitating recognition of periods of study across Europe. The officially agreed equivalence is that two CATS credits are equal to one ECTS credit. This is the ratio adopted by Goldsmiths when awarding or recognising ECTS credits. Details of the Scheme are set out in the ECTS User Guide: [http://ec.europa.eu/education/ects/users-guide/index\\_en.htm](http://ec.europa.eu/education/ects/users-guide/index_en.htm)
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## 7 Modules

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- 7.1 A module is a self-contained unit of teaching and study which has its own formally assessed learning outcomes. All modules have a credit value and a level. They may be taught over a whole academic year or completed within one or two terms.
- 7.2 As a minimum, students must achieve the overall pass mark for the module to pass and be awarded the associated credit. For some modules students may be required to achieve the pass mark and also to pass specific elements of assessment.
- 7.3 Module Size. The credit framework is based on modules with a value of 15 credits or multiples of 15. Modules at both undergraduate and postgraduate level are usually worth either 15 or 30 credits. Larger modules may be used for dissertations and projects.

- 7.4 Module type. Modules belong to one or more of the following categories dependent on the programme in which they are offered:
- 7.5 Optional module. A module that students may choose to study, sometimes from a restricted list, as part of their programme.
- 7.6 Compulsory module. A module that students must take as part of their programme.
- 7.7 Non-compensatable module. A compulsory module on an undergraduate programme which is central to the achievement of the programme learning outcomes and which students must therefore pass to be awarded the degree. Failure of a non-compensatable module cannot be compensated by achievement in other modules. (see “Compensation” above).
- 7.8 Prerequisite module. A module that must be passed in order to be able to take a subsequent module.
- 7.9 Co-requisite module. A module that must be taken at the same time as another specified module.
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## **8 Programmes**

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- 8.1.1 A programme is a coherent and structured suite of modules and has its own specific learning outcomes. Each module is at a specified level. Students must achieve the required number of credits at specified levels in order to progress between levels and to successfully complete the programme and obtain the award. Programmes at both undergraduate and postgraduate level may have interim exit awards. Details of the particular requirements are set out in the Goldsmiths Progression and Award Policy.
- 8.1.2 Students may replace up to 30 credits of optional modules per level with modules from outside their programme or department, except in cases where PSRB restrictions would prevent this or in cases where the programme learning outcomes would not be met. Free choice modules must be approved in all cases by the Head(s) of Department concerned.

### **8.2 Field of Study**

- 8.2.1 Programme Title – the title of a programme should communicate accurately its content and learning outcomes.
- 8.2.2 Naming Conventions - A programme may focus on one or more subject area. Where there is more than one subject area, the following conventions should apply.

- 8.2.3 Combined programmes - where two subjects studied have approximately equal importance and the subject mentioned second has a minimum value of one third of the overall credit within a programme, the conjunction “and” should be used.
- 8.2.4 Major / Minor programmes - where a subject has been taken with an essential supporting subject “with” should be used. In this case the major subject should account for at most three quarters and not less than half of the total overall credit within a programme.

### **8.3 Pathways**

- 8.3.1 Individual programmes may contain more than one defined route with a specific curriculum structure which lead to distinctly titled awards. In these instances, the learning outcomes for the programme should also be distinct to reflect this difference.

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## **9 Qualifications and Credit Values**

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### **9.1 Undergraduate programmes**

- 9.1.1 An Honours degree is made up of 360 credits: 120 at level 4, 120 at level 5 and 120 at level 6.
- 9.1.2 (This may include compensated credit. No more than 30 credits may be compensated at any one level and no more than 60 credits in total on an undergraduate degree).
- 9.1.3 1 x 30 credit level 4 module in a modern foreign language may be included at level 5 or 6. It will be treated as a level 5 or 6 module, as appropriate, for the purposes of award and classification.
- 9.1.4 A Diploma of Higher Education is made up of 240 credits: 120 at Level 4 and 120 at least at Level 5.
- 9.1.5 A Certificate of Higher Education is made up of 120 credits at least at Level 4.

### **9.2 Postgraduate programmes**

- 9.2.1 A Master’s degree is made up of at least 180 credits, of which a minimum of 150 credits must be at Level 7. The remaining 30 credits cannot be lower than Level 6.

- 9.2.2 The remaining 30 credits may also include beginners' level foreign language modules. Any request to include level 6 credit within a level 7 programme must be approved by the Programme Scrutiny Sub-Committee. The proposal will need to be considered in the context of the overall content of the programme to ensure that the overall learning outcomes are appropriate for a Masters degree.
- 9.2.3 An Integrated Masters degree is made up of 480 credits with 120 at Level 7, 120 at Level 6, 120 at Level 5 and 120 at Level 4. A Bachelors degree with honours is the interim exit award.
- 9.2.4 A Postgraduate Diploma is made up of 120 credits at Level 7.
- 9.2.5 A Postgraduate Certificate is made up of 60 credits at Level 7.
- 9.2.6 A Master of Fine Art degree is made up of 300 credits (one academic year and one calendar year) or 360 credits at Level 7 (two calendar years).

### 9.3 PGCE

- 9.3.1 A Postgraduate Certificate in Education is made up of 120 credits: 60 at Level 7 and 60 at Level 6.
- 9.3.2 A Professional Graduate Certificate in Education is made up of either 120 credits at Level 6 or 90 credits at Level 6 and 30 credits at Level 7.

<b>Goldsmiths' Qualification level</b>	<b>FHEQ level</b>	<b>Minimum Number of credits</b>	<b>Minimum number of credits at the level of the qualification<sup>1</sup></b>
PhD	8	Not credit rated	
Professional doctorate	8	Not credit rated	
Master of Fine Art (MFA)	7	300/360	300/360
Taught master's degree (e.g. MA, MMus, MSc, MRes)	7	180	180
Integrated Master's degree (e.g. MEng, MSci)	7	480	120
Postgraduate Diploma	7	120	120
Postgraduate Certificate in Education (PGCE).	7	120	60
Postgraduate Certificate	7	60	60
Bachelor's degree with honours (e.g. BA/BSc/BMus Hons)	6	360	120
9 Bachelor's degree without honours (Pass degree)	6	300	60

Professional Graduate Certificate in Education (PGCE)	6	120	120
Graduate Diploma	6	80	80
Graduate Certificate	6	40	40
Diploma of Higher Education (Dip HE)	5	240	120
Certificate of Higher Education (Cert HE)	4	120	120