6 FRAMEWORK FOR CURRICULUM DEVELOPMENT

INTRODUCTION

6.1 The university framework for curriculum development forms the basis for the development of all new programmes. Programme development teams must adhere to the criteria set out below.

Awards

6.2 The awards for which the university is responsible are set out in the table below. The levels indicated refer to the Scottish Credit and Qualifications Framework (SCQF). Under its degree awarding powers, the university may offer awards up to, and including, SCQF Level 11, and research degrees at SCQF Level 12.

SCQF Level	Qualification	Award
12	Doctorate, Professional Doctorate, Higher Doctorate	PhD, DLitt, DSc, DD, DTech, DEng, DEd, DSocSc, DArts
11	Masters by Research[2] Taught Masters Degree[3] Postgraduate Diploma Postgraduate Certificate	MRes, MPhil MA, MLitt, MSc, MTh, MBA, MMus, MEng PgDip PgCert
10	Scottish Bachelors Degree with Honours	BA (Hons), BSc (Hons), BEng (Hons)
9	Scottish Bachelors Degree	BA, BSc, BEng
8	Diploma of Higher Education Higher National Diploma	Dip HE HND
7	Certificate of Higher Education Higher National Certificate	Cert HE HNC

Notes

1 HNC, HND, PDA and SVQ awards offered by the university are externally validated by the Scottish Qualifications Authority (SQA). PDAs and SVQs are linked to National Occupational Standards. They have varying credit values, and are placed at Levels 6-11 in SCQF. For more information, see www.sqa.org.uk

2 Masters by Research degree may include up to 60 credit points through taught components

3 Within a taught Masters degree, no more than 90 credit points may be achieved through research component(s)

6.3 The title of an award should reflect the curriculum content of the programme, and will be confirmed at the point of approval. In determining the award title, programme teams should take due cognisance of sector norms and practice within their discipline, and the

expectations of any relevant professional or statutory body. Under no circumstances may different final award titles be available for a single programme.

6.4   The university may award a Scottish Bachelors Degree, Diploma of HE or Certificate of HE as general awards with no subject specified in their titles, where the normal credit requirements for such awards have been met.

6.5   The university may offer other vocational awards validated by other recognised awarding bodies, subject to approval through appropriate planning processes.

6.6   The university may also collaborate with other appropriate institutions to offer joint taught or research programmes, in accordance with the general provisions of its regulations.

LEVELS, CREDITS AND MODULES

Levels

6.7   The university has adopted the SCQF credit requirements, as set out below, as the basis for the development of all new taught programmes and this may only be varied with the prior approval of Academic Council.

University qualifications and their SCQF credit requirements	
Taught Masters Postgraduate Diploma Postgraduate Certificate	min 180 with min of 160 at Level 11 min 120 with min of 100 at Level 11 min 60 with min 40 at Level 11
Scottish Bachelors Honours Degree	min 480 with min of 200 at Levels 9 and 10 including at least 100 at Level 10
Scottish Bachelors Degree	min 360 with min 100 at Level 9
Diploma of HE Higher National Diploma	min 240 with min 100 at Level 8 or higher 240 with a min of 64 SCQF credit points at Level 8
Certificate of HE Higher National Certificate	min 120 with min 100 at Level 7 or higher 96 with a min of 48 SCQF credit points at Level 7

NB Research degrees are not credit-rated, except in the context of taught components within MRes.

Credits

6.8   Each SCQF credit point represents the outcomes of learning achieved through 10 notional hours of learning activity, making 1,200 hours at each level. It should be noted that all learning activities are included within this, ie managed learning time, directed student activities and time spent in private study, revision, preparation for assessments etc.

Core and option modules

6.9   A standard module has been adopted of 20 SCQF credits, ie 200 hours of student activity. There will, therefore, be six modules or equivalent at each level of a standard programme. 10-credit modules are exceptionally permitted within CPD awards only (see section below).

6.10 A programme specifies core and option modules within its defined structure, as set out in the programme specification and confirmed at the point of approval.

6.11 A core module has learning outcomes relating to knowledge and skills which are deemed to be fundamental to the programme of study and:
- o must be designated as such at the point of approval of a programme / scheme
- o must be undertaken by all students (full-time and part-time) enrolled on that programme (except in cases of advanced level entry by RPL or credit transfer)
- o must not normally be condoned.

6.12 Option modules are specified within the programme specification and confirmed at the point of approval. Students' choice of option modules may determine their eventual named award.

6.13 An elective module does not form part of the defined structure of a programme. Students may be permitted to undertake one elective module per SCQF level instead of an option module, for the purposes of broadening their educational experience, subject to approval by their PAT and timetabling constraints.

European Credit Transfer and Accumulation System (ECTS)

6.14 The university has recognised the ECTS for the purposes of award and transfer of credit, in line with common practice in Scotland and the UK. The university will award ECTS credits on the basis of one ECTS credit for every two SCQF credits at SCQF Levels 7-11.

6.15 The university will recognise ECTS credits achieved from European universities for students seeking admission to its programmes.

6.16 Academic transcripts issued by the university will show both SCQF and ECTS credit totals.

CONTINUING PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT (CPD) AWARDS

6.17 The university may approve credit-bearing CPD awards aimed at specific student groups which will consist of limited volume of credit, and will normally be of short duration. CPD awards may use flexible patterns of delivery, and may include 10-credit modules. 10-credit modules may only be used in approved CPD awards, and may not be used in standard undergraduate or postgraduate programmes.

6.18 CPD awards will consist of at least 20 credits and no more than 100 credits at undergraduate level and no more than 40 credits at postgraduate level.

6.19 CPD awards may comprise either 10-credit or 20-credit modules or a mixture of both.

6.20 CPD awards of up to 60 credits may be approved through the Faculty-led modification process (see Section 10A). CPD awards of 70-100 credits must be approved through the normal approval process.

SCHEMES

6.21 Undergraduate academic provision may be organised into schemes. A scheme will comprise a coherent group of programmes in a particular subject area, and may include both SQA and degree provision from SCQF Levels 7-10. It will demonstrate progression opportunities, student choice and efficient sharing of units/modules.

6.22 Each named award within a scheme will maintain programme integrity in the light of market expectations, and will take into account any relevant professional, statutory or regulatory body (PSRB) accreditation requirements.

6.23 Core modules may be specified at scheme or programme level within definitive documentation presented for approval. Students must successfully complete all specified core modules in order to achieve the named award.

PROGRAMME DESIGN

Normal duration of programmes

6.24 The normal planned length of undergraduate programmes is set out below. Students are expected to complete their studies in the timescales shown, but there is no maximum period of registration:

Normal planned length of programme	Full-time students complete within	Structured part-time students complete within
1 year	2 years	3 years
2 years	3 years	5 years
3 years	5 years	6 years
4 years	6 years	8 years

6.25 Programmes may specify a maximum period of registration, particularly where there are accreditation requirements set by a professional, statutory or regulatory body (PSRB).

Exit awards

6.26 Programmes should incorporate appropriate exit points at each level. Undergraduate degree programmes may incorporate SQA awards at Higher National Certificate and Higher National Diploma level, or the awards of Certificate of Higher Education (Cert HE) and Diploma of Higher Education (Dip HE) and beyond.

Projects and dissertations

6.27 At Level 9, one module will normally be devoted to a project or equivalent. At Level 10 one double module will normally be devoted to a dissertation or equivalent. [This section does not apply to SQA awards.]

Level descriptors (SCQF)

6.28 In developing any new programme, programme development teams must take cognisance of the relevant level descriptors that exist as part of the Scottish Credit and Qualifications Framework (www.scqf.org.uk/).

Subject benchmark statements (QAA)

6.29 In developing any new programme, and in particular Bachelors degrees with honours, programme development teams must also take cognisance of any relevant subject benchmark statements that have been issued by the Quality Assurance Agency for Higher Education (www.qaa.ac.uk).

Professional, Statutory or Regulatory Body (PSRB)

6.30 All taught degree provision will be subject to the assessment regulations set out in relevant sections of these regulations unless any variation is confirmed at the point of (re)approval. Variation from these standard assessment regulations may be approved due to professional, statutory or regulatory body (PSRB) accreditation requirements or for other reason, such as the nature of specialist provision.