

**MANUAL OF ACADEMIC REGULATIONS
AND PROCEDURES 2025-26
PORTFOLIO OF AWARDS
(APPLICABLE FROM OCTOBER 2025)**

Academic Quality, Standards and Conduct

Student and Education Services

MARP 2025-26

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PORTFOLIO OF DEGREE AWARDS AND OTHER ACADEMIC QUALIFICATIONS

PA 1 OVERVIEW

PA 1.1 All programmes leading to Lancaster University qualifications, wherever delivered should be aligned with the criteria set out below. Where there is good reason for variation from these criteria this must be approved by Senate or the relevant body or officer with delegated authority from Senate.

PA 2 ACADEMIC QUALIFICATIONS APPROVED BY SENATE

PA 2.1 MAIN HIGHER EDUCATION AWARDS

PA 2.1.1 All academic qualifications: degrees, diplomas, certificates and other credit-bearing awards to which programmes of study lead must be approved by the Senate. The University currently offers the following awards:

Main higher education awards	Level of award	FTE period of study (normal)	Normal total credit value
Professional Doctorate: DCLinPsy; DMgt; EngD ; MD	8	— ¹	—
Doctor of Philosophy: PhD	8	3 years	n/a
Master of Philosophy: MPhil	7	2 years	n/a
Masters by Research: LLM; MA; MSc; M.Ed	7	1 year	n/a
Masters degree: LLM; MA; MBA; MMus; MRes; MSc; M.Ed	7	1 year	180 (minimum of 150 at FHEQ level 7)
Masters degree (Architecture): MArch	7	2 years	240 (120 at FHEQ level 7)
Postgraduate Diploma (PGDip)	7	Up to 1 year	120 (minimum of 90 at FHEQ level 7)
Postgraduate Certificate (PGCert)	7	Up to 1 year	60 (minimum of 40 at FHEQ level 7)
Postgraduate Certificate of Achievement (PGCertA)	7	Under 1 year	Between 20-50 (inclusive; at FHEQ level 7)
Graduate Diploma ²	6	1 year	120 (minimum of 90 at FHEQ level 6)

¹ Professional Doctorates vary in the period of study and may or may not be credit based. Where they are credit based, the normal total credit value is 540 credits, with a minimum credit value of 360 at the level of the award.

² Although the Graduate Diploma is based on undergraduate material, it is designed for those who are already graduates in another academic discipline. Thus it is 'postgraduate' in time, but not in level.

Main higher education awards	Level of award	FTE period of study (normal)	Normal total credit value ³
Masters degree (integrated): MArts (Hons); MChem (Hons); MEcon (Hons); MEng (Hons); MLang (Hons); MPhys (Hons); MPsych (Hons) MSci (Hons); MSocial Wk (Hons); MStat (Hons)	7	4 years	480 (minimum of 120 at FHEQ level 7)
MBChB	7	5 years	600 (minimum of 120 at FHEQ level 7)
Bachelors degree with honours, with integrated foundation year: BA (Hons); BSc (Hons)	6	4 years	480 credits (120 at RQF level 3, and a minimum of 90 at FHEQ level 6)
Bachelors degree with honours, with year abroad or placement year/year in industry: BA (Hons); BEng (Hons); BMus (Hons); BSc (Hons); LLB (Hons)	6	4 years	Minimum of 380 credits (minimum of 90 at FHEQ level 6)
Bachelors degree with honours: BA (Hons); BEng (Hons); BMus (Hons); BSc (Hons); LLB (Hons)	6	3 years	360 (minimum of 90 at FHEQ level 6)
Bachelors degree unclassified – Pass degree: BA; BEng; BMus; BSc; LLB	6	3 years	360 (minimum of 90 at FHEQ level 6)
Bachelors degree as top-up to Foundation degree: BA (Hons); BEng (Hons); BSc (Hons)	6	1 year	120 (minimum of 90 at FHEQ level 6)
International Graduate Diploma	6	Under one year	90-120 ⁴ (minimum of 90 at FHEQ level 6)
Foundation degree: FdA; FdEng; FdSc	5	2 years	240 (minimum of 90 at FHEQ level 5)
Diploma of Higher Education (DipHE)	5	2 years	240 (minimum of 90 at FHEQ level 5)
Certificate of Higher Education (CertHE)	4	1 year	120 (minimum of 90 at FHEQ level 4)
Higher Education Award	4,5,6,7	Open	20-90

³ Please note that European Credit Transfer and Accumulation System Credits (ECTS) are converted to Lancaster credits at a ratio of 1:2.

⁴ Credit value of award can vary depending on English language scores upon entry. For more information, see the INTO Assessment Regulations chapter.

University Certificate ⁵	4,5,6,7	Open	30-80 (minimum of 30 at FHEQ level 4, fewer than 90)
International Foundation Certificate	3	1 year	120 credits at RQF L3
University Foundation Certificate	3	1 year	120 credits at RQF L3

PA 2.2 CRITERIA FOR DEGREE AWARDS AND OTHER ACADEMIC QUALIFICATIONS APPROVED BY SENATE

- PA 2.2.1 All programmes leading to awards of the University must comply with criteria agreed by the Senate in terms of level of study, duration of programmes, numbers of modules, student learning hours and credit frameworks (see below).
- PA 2.2.2 In addition to complying with the criteria agreed by the Senate, all awards and programmes offered by the University must be aligned with the QAA "[Frameworks for Higher Education Qualifications of UK Degree Awarding Bodies](#)" (FHEQ), as well as the "[Higher education credit framework for England](#)", which aligns UK qualifications with European qualifications.
- PA 2.2.3 Reference should be made to the FHEQ and the credit framework to ensure that:
- (a) qualifications are positioned at an appropriate level with appropriate credit weightings;
 - (b) new and revised programmes have an appropriate title for the level and subject content (as set out in the QAA FHEQ – see PA 2.2.3 above);
 - (c) an existing approved degree award is assigned as the target qualification;
 - (d) intended learning outcomes and assessments for programme elements such as modules are appropriate to the level at which the module is specified and for the degree programme to which they contribute.

PA 3 AWARD AND PROGRAMME CRITERIA APPROVED BY SENATE

PA 3.1 UNDERGRADUATE PROGRAMMES

Foundation Degrees

- PA 3.1.1 Foundation Degrees comprise learning across levels 4 and 5, normally with 120 credits of assessment at each level. Learning levels 4 and 5 comprise all credit upon which final classification of awards is determined. All Foundation Degrees are required to offer successful students an opportunity to progress to Honours/Level 6 study and qualification, either through admission to the final Level 6 year of a 360 credit Bachelors degree programme or through admission to a one-year 120 credit Hons Top-up degree.

⁵ Please see Sub-Degree Awards Assessment Regulations for further details.

Bachelors degrees and Integrated Masters degree programmes

- PA 3.1.2 Bachelors degrees, comprise learning across levels 4, 5, 6 (normally with 120 credits of assessment at each level) and, in the case of the Integrated Masters degrees, 120 credits at level 7. Bachelors degrees with integrated Foundation Year comprises of an additional 120 credits at RQF Level 3, in addition to 120 credits of assessment at levels 4, 5 and 6. For all awards, level 4 learning is collectively referred to as Part I and is qualificatory, i.e. successful completion is required for progression to further study but obtained credit does not contribute to the final classification of the Lancaster degree awards. Learning levels 5, 6 and, as appropriate, 7, are collectively referred to as Part II and comprise all credit upon which final classification of Lancaster degree awards is determined.
- PA 3.1.3 Undergraduate degree programmes and assessment arrangements for Part II are based on the principle that the study load on students in terms of total teaching, learning and assessment activities should be equally distributed between each academic year i.e. normally four modules or equivalent (totalling 120 credits at Level 5) in the second year and four modules or equivalent (totalling 120 credits at Level 6) in the third and/or final year. A commensurate arrangement applies to students undertaking programmes of study (mostly in FST) that are divided into Part IIA (level 5) and Part IIB (Level 6) – the study of the latter commencing during the second year.
- PA 3.1.4 The equal distribution of study load across academic years does not preclude the attribution of a differential assessment weighting between Level 5 modules and Level 6 modules.

PA 3.2 POSTGRADUATE TAUGHT PROGRAMMES

Diplomas, certificates and taught Masters degrees (leading to the award of LLM, MA, MBA, MMus, MSc and MRes)

- PA 3.2.1 Taught Masters degrees, diplomas and certificates have a variety of objectives. Some are designed to advance the knowledge and the professional competencies within a discipline or multidisciplinary area of students who already have an appropriate background in the subject; others enable students to change the focus of their undergraduate specialisations by means of an advanced course. In each individual case the department or group responsible for a scheme of study or course shall provide a statement of its aims and objectives, specifying the areas upon which advanced study is concentrated.
- PA 3.2.2 Masters of Research degrees (MRes) give greater emphasis to training in research methods; and the dissertation or research project element takes a greater role in final assessment. These degrees are covered by the same regulations as taught Masters degrees, except that the contact hours specified may, with approval, be modified.
- PA 3.2.3 All taught Masters degrees (with the exclusion of the Integrated Masters degree), postgraduate diplomas and postgraduate certificates shall conform to the following common credit framework for taught postgraduate awards:
- (a) for a taught Masters degree, a total of at least 180 credits of assessment of which a substantial portion represents a dissertation, with no more than 30 credits having been defined as being undergraduate in level;

- (b) for a postgraduate diploma, a total of at least 120 credits, with no more than 30 credits having been defined as being undergraduate in level;
 - (c) for a postgraduate certificate, a total of at least 60 credits, with no more than 20 credits having been defined as being undergraduate in level.
- PA 3.2.4 All taught Masters degree programmes, with the exception of the MRes and Integrated Masters degree, will automatically have the PGCert and PGDip as defined exit awards for the appropriate credit achieved, unless, at the time of approval, a rationale for this not to be the case is proposed and approved.
- PA 3.2.5 The normal duration of taught Masters degrees, postgraduate diplomas and postgraduate certificates shall be as follows:

Programme type	Full-time	Part-time
Taught Masters	12 months	24 months
Postgraduate diploma	9-12 months	12-24 months
Postgraduate certificate	6-12 months	9-24 months

- PA 3.2.6 Other periods of study may be prescribed in exceptional circumstances with the approval of the body or officer with delegated authority from Senate acting on the recommendation of the faculty or equivalent concerned.
- PA 3.2.7 All Masters programmes (except those offered on a part-time only basis or those that end at other times of the year) should finish by the Friday nearest to 15 September in any one year.
- PA 3.2.8 All Masters programmes shall include a substantial dissertation or project work, of a form or length that is appropriate for the significant weight that it will carry in final assessment. Programmes shall make explicit statements concerning the nature of the dissertation or project required and the weight that it will carry in the final assessment.

PA 3.3 POSTGRADUATE RESEARCH DEGREE PROGRAMMES

Degrees of LLM/MA/MSc by Research

- PA 3.3.1 The degree shall be awarded on the examination of a dissertation embodying the results of the candidate's research. An oral examination will also be required. The work for the degree shall consist mainly of research and directed study; the candidate may in addition be required to undertake coursework, and the award of the degree may be conditional on satisfactory performance in this coursework.
- PA 3.3.2 A successful candidate for the degree of LLM/MA/MSc by Research shall display a convincing grasp of the techniques of research appropriate to the field of study on a scale which can be completed during one year, or at most two years, of full-time study or equivalent. The dissertation embodying the results of the research shall demonstrate evidence of originality, at least in the exercise of an independent critical faculty, and shall achieve a good standard of competence in argument and presentation. The dissertation shall comply with the requirements for the form, submission and deposit of MPhil theses except that the dissertation should not normally exceed 35,000 words (including any footnotes and appendices but excluding the bibliography).

Degree of MPhil

- PA 3.3.3 The degree shall be awarded on the examination of a thesis embodying the results of the candidate's research, and on an oral examination. The work for the degree shall consist mainly of research and directed study; the candidate may in addition be required to undertake coursework, and the award of the degree may be conditional on satisfactory performance in this coursework.
- PA 3.3.4 A successful candidate for the degree of MPhil shall display a convincing grasp of the techniques of research appropriate to the field of study on a scale which can be completed during two years, or at most three years, of full-time study or equivalent. The thesis embodying the results of the research shall demonstrate evidence of originality, at least in the exercise of an independent critical faculty, and shall achieve a high standard of competence in argument and presentation. The thesis shall comply with the requirements for the form, submission and deposit of theses.

Degree of PhD

- PA 3.3.5 The degree shall be awarded on the examination of a thesis embodying the results of a candidate's research, and on an oral examination. The nature of the student's research programme should be on a scale which should be completed during three years, or at most four years, of full-time study or equivalent. In addition the candidate may be required to undertake such other tests as the examiners may decide.
- PA 3.3.6 A successful candidate for the degree of PhD shall show convincing evidence of the capacity to pursue scholarly research or scholarship in their field of study on a scale which should be completed during three years of full-time research. The results of this research shall then be embodied in a thesis which makes an original contribution to knowledge and the completed thesis must contain material of a standard appropriate for scholarly publication. The thesis shall comply with the requirements for the form, submission and deposit of theses.

PhD by Published Work

- PA 3.3.7 To be awarded a PhD by Published Work a candidate must show that their work makes a significant contribution to knowledge in a particular field. The publications must also provide evidence of the capacity of the candidate to pursue further research, representing a coherent contribution to research in a given field and demonstrating a depth of scholarship and originality comparable with that required in a PhD thesis. The material submitted shall be sufficiently extensive as to provide convincing evidence that the research constitutes a substantial contribution to knowledge or scholarship.