

Part 1: Context

Section 2: Statutes and Principles

The University of Westminster Statutes and Principles were approved in 1992 when University status as an awarding body was granted by Privy Council on behalf of the UK Government.

A note on terminology

- 2.1. The term '**programme of study**' is used to denote an approved set of modules by which a student may obtain a specified award of the University.

The term '**course**' is used to denote a subject or one or more discipline-based sets of modules having a single or closely-related focus, leading to a common award and being administered as a single structure.

The term '**module**' is used to denote a discrete study element within a course.

The term '**course scheme**' is used to denote the form and content of a course as presented to and validated and approved by the University.

The term '**course programme**' is used to denote a larger grouping of courses.

Each student of the University will therefore follow a programme of study which will be composed of a number of modules within a course or course programme.

The term '**academic programme**' is used to denote in the widest sense academic activities relating to a course, a subject or a discipline within the University.

The term '**doctoral research programme**' is used to denote a registered programme of independent research, with associated training and development activities, leading to a research degree award of the University

Note: A definitions section is included at Part 7: Definitions of the regulations. This provides a useful guide for students and staff on commonly used terminology.

Awards of the University

Awards

- 2.2. The University will make available programmes of study which lead to awards at levels of achievement as described below:

- Certificate (sub-degree)
- Diploma (sub-degree)
- Foundation Degree
- Degree
- Degree with Honours
- Graduate Certificate
- Graduate Diploma
- Postgraduate Certificate
- Postgraduate Diploma
- Master's Degree
- Doctor of Philosophy
- Master of Philosophy
- Professional Doctorate

A full list of the University's awards is given in [Annexe 1](#).

- 2.3. The University will award higher doctorates.
- 2.4. The University will confer honorary degrees upon persons whom it deems to have made major contributions to the field of education, business, culture, creative work, public service or science and technology.
- 2.5. The University will confer honorary fellowships of the University upon persons of distinction whom it deems to have made a significant contribution to the work of the University.

Collaboration with other awarding bodies and with other institutions

- 2.6. The University will act jointly with professional associations and with other awarding bodies to make available courses leading to recognised awards of such associations and bodies.
- 2.7. The University may permit other institutions to offer courses leading to an award of the University. Such courses will be validated and approved by the University in accordance with the statutes and principles.

Validation of the University's taught courses

- 2.8. Academic Council is responsible for ensuring the academic standards of the University and is the final arbiter in all matters relating to validation, approval, review and monitoring. Academic Council may designate a specially constituted committee, sub-group or panel to act on its behalf in matters relating to validation, approval, review, or monitoring and may delegate some of its powers of decision to that body.
- 2.9. The overall aim of course validation and review is to secure for students a high quality of educational and academic experience. Its most important function is to assess the quality and standards of the University's academic programmes. It also stimulates curriculum development by requiring staff to evaluate their courses and to open them to the thinking and practices of external peers. All courses leading to an award of the University will be subject to a continuous monitoring process to ensure the academic health of the courses between formal reviews. Further information regarding validations and reviews is provided within the [Quality Assurance and Enhancement Handbook | University of Westminster, London](#).
- 2.10. The University will work in close partnership with institutions which offer courses leading to an award of the University to ensure that the University's procedures for course validation and review are complementary to, and where possible combined with the institution's own internal procedures for the scrutiny of courses. Further information regarding collaborative provision can be read in the [Collaborations Handbook](#).
- 2.11. The University's regulations and processes for taught courses provide for Dual Awards, or Double Degrees, Joint Awards and Multiple Awards within prevailing legislative and advisory frameworks of the European Union (EU), UK, and the states of current and potential partner institutions.

Maintenance of academic standards within the University taught courses

General principles

- 2.12. The University is dedicated to providing the means whereby its students can attain the highest levels of achievement of which they are capable. To this end it undertakes to provide adequate and appropriate facilities to ensure the continuing quality of its courses.
- 2.13. The University undertakes to ensure a learning environment commensurate with the quality of teaching and learning in its courses.
- 2.14. The University subscribes to the principle that the quality of the staff, their qualifications and experiences and the calibre of leadership at all levels are of paramount importance.

- 2.15. The University expects its staff to demonstrate a commitment to personal, academic and professional development, and to engage in a variety of scholarly and professional activities appropriate to their subject specialism, with a view to maintaining and updating their expertise.
- 2.16. In respect of the validation of a course the University will seek to ensure that both the teaching and support staff are adequate in number and appropriately qualified for the objectives of the course to be fulfilled.
- 2.17. The University will formally agree policies for staff development and research and will actively promote staff development and research to support teaching and learning at all levels.
- 2.18. The University will provide the physical resources needed to sustain its courses.
- 2.19. Responsibility for the maintenance of academic standards in the University lies with Academic Council (see 2.9).

Admission of students to the University's taught courses

- 2.20. The University will admit students to its courses on the basis of the following principles:
 - a) reasonable expectation that the applicant will be able to fulfil the objectives of the course and achieve the academic standard required for the award;
 - b) the University's requirements for admission to the course leading to a particular award;
 - c) equality of opportunity for all applicants.
- 2.21. In considering individual applicants for admission to a course the University will seek evidence of personal, professional and/or educational experiences that provide indications of ability to meet the demands of the course.
- 2.22. Each approved course handbook will specify the requirements for admission to that course.
- 2.23. The University bases its admissions requirements on nationally recognised formal minimum attainment levels. Other qualifications and/or experience which demonstrate that the applicant possesses appropriate knowledge and skills may be accepted in lieu of the stated formal minimum requirement. The University will use its discretion to interpret such formal minimum attainment levels in terms of equivalence.
- 2.24. In admitting individual students to its courses, the University will have regard principally to the applicant's ability to achieve the aims and objectives of the course.

Admission to a course with advanced standing

- 2.25. If the University is satisfied that the applicant has fulfilled some of the attainment and progression requirements of the course by means other than attendance on the planned course, and will be able by completing the remaining requirements to fulfil the objectives of the course and attain the standard required for the award, that student may be admitted to any appropriate point in the course, subject to the limits imposed by the undergraduate and postgraduate modular frameworks.
- 2.26. In exercising its discretion in this respect, the University will ensure that such admissions are in accordance with the University's requirements relating to the standards of its awards and with good practice throughout higher education in the UK.
- 2.27. The University will consider admission to a course with advanced standing on the basis of accredited prior certificated learning (RPCL) and/or prior experiential learning (RPEL) in accordance with the regulations stated in Section 4.
- 2.28. Admission 'with academic credit' will be subject to the same principles as admission to the beginning of a course. Subject to the requirements of the relevant course regulations, the

University may admit a student with exemption from certain elements of a course. This means that the student is not required to take those elements but may, as appropriate, be required to take alternatives; or with specific credit, the latter means that the student is considered to have passed certain elements and will, where course regulations permit, be graded. Further information is provided Section 4.

Programmes of study and taught courses leading to awards of the University

Definition of a programme of study

- 2.29. A programme of study is the approved curriculum leading to a specified and named award of the University as followed by an individual student; the programme may be identical with a course or may be one of a number of standard routes within a larger course programme. The University will admit students to its courses on a full-time, part-time, mixed-mode or distance-learning basis as appropriate. All programmes of study will conform to the University's regulations and requirements.

Aims and intended learning outcomes of the course

- 2.30. Every approved course will have stated aims and intended learning outcomes, which the curriculum, structure, teaching and learning methods and forms of assessment are designed to fulfil.
- 2.31. The aims will include the development, to the level required for the award, of a body of knowledge and skills appropriate to the field of study and reflecting academic developments in that field: these are course-specific aims.
- 2.32. The aims will also include general educational aims: the development of students' intellectual and imaginative powers; their understanding and judgement; their problem-solving skills; their ability to communicate; their ability to see relationships within what they have learned and to perceive their field of study in a broader perspective. Each approved course will aim to stimulate an enquiring, analytical and creative approach, encouraging independent judgement and critical self-awareness.
- 2.33. The statement of objectives will show how the course will fulfil the aims. The statement of course-specific objectives will specify the knowledge and skills appropriate to the field of study and identify the ways in which these will be developed and evaluated in the students learning. The statement of general objectives will identify the ways in which the students' transferable intellectual skills will be developed and evaluated.

Course regulations

- 2.34. Each designated course or pathway leading to a specified and named award of the University will be subject to course regulations approved in accordance with the general regulations of the University. The regulations will include:
- a) **Regulations on the admission of students to a course**
The admission regulations will describe the basis on which a student will be admitted to the beginning or to subsequent stages of the course;
 - b) **Regulations on progression**
Progression regulations will set out the way(s) in which students progress through the course, and identify the elements that are compulsory, optional or alternative;
 - c) **Regulations on assessment**
The assessment regulations for a course will state the basis on which students will be assessed for an award by relating the assessment requirements to the aims and intended learning outcomes of the course, the academic standard of the award, and any special assessment requirements associated with the award.

Course management

- 2.35. In respect of its designated courses leading to specified and named awards the University will establish:

- a) clear channels of accountability from course teams to Academic Council;
 - b) executive and administrative structures which support the collective processes of academic policy-making and sustain academic leadership;
 - c) arrangements for staff and students to contribute in an informed way to the formation of academic policy and priorities;
 - d) effective communication which fosters internal inter-relationships and the transmission of good practice.
- 2.36. The University will appoint a suitable member of the academic staff to be the leader of a designated course of the University. The responsibilities of a course leader will include:
- a) ensuring that the course meets its specified aims and intended learning outcomes;
 - b) ensuring that the course is conducted in accordance with its approved regulations;
 - c) administration of the course in respect of academic matters;
 - d) the provision of documentation in respect of the monitoring and review process.

Assessment of students on the University's taught courses

Principles of assessment

Fulfilment of intended learning outcomes

- 2.37. The purpose of assessment is to enable students to demonstrate that they have fulfilled the intended learning outcomes of the module or course and achieved the academic standard required for the award they seek. Examiners will make their judgements on student performance in relation to the assessment regulations approved for the course.

Confirmation of academic standards

- 2.38. Assessment will reflect the achievement of the individual student in fulfilling intended learning outcomes for the module or course, and at the same time relate that achievement to a consistent national standard of awards. It will therefore be carried out by competent and impartial examiners and by methods which enable them to assess students fairly.

Types of assessment

- 2.39. In respect of designated courses a wide variety of assessment methods and types are used. The University will ensure that types of assessment, including re-assessment, test the intended learning outcomes accurately and fairly, and are appropriate to the subject being studied, the mode of learning, and to the students taking the module or programme.

Assessment regulations

- 2.40. Each designated course or pathway leading to a specified and named award of the University will be subject to a set of assessment regulations specific to the course and approved in accordance with the general assessment regulations of the University.

External examiners

- 2.41. The University will appoint an appropriate number of external examiners to each of its designated course schemes including those offered as collaborative provision in order to ensure that the assessment process is conducted in a manner which provides parity of judgement for all students for the designated course and subject and that the standard of the University's awards is maintained in accordance with national standards.
- 2.42. External examiners are required to report annually on the conduct of the assessments and on issues related to assessment and the quality of the subject or course as revealed through the assessments (see Section 13: The determination of results - the role of examiners).

Progression and Award Boards

- 2.43. For every course or pathway approved as leading to an award of the University there will be one or more Progression and Award Boards whose constitution and terms of reference are in accordance with the approved regulations for the course and which include the external examiner(s) appointed by the University. The constitution of the Board may include provision for the appointment of subsidiary examination committees and the same Board may be responsible for more than one course or pathway.
- 2.44. The Progression and Award Board is appointed on behalf of Academic Council and is accountable to Academic Council for the fulfilment of its terms of reference.
- 2.45. Arrangements for Progression and Award Boards on collaborative courses are set out in Section 14: The Operations of Assessment Boards.
- 2.46. The University will ensure that the assessment requirements for courses are published to students.

Research Degrees of the University

- 2.47. University regulations relating to Research Degrees are available at [Academic programme | University of Westminster, London](#)

Conferment of the University's awards**Conditions of conferment**

- 2.48. An award of the University will be conferred when the following conditions are satisfied:
- a) the student was fully enrolled at the University at the time of their assessment for an award and has paid all fees and dues to the University;
 - b) the student has completed a programme of study approved by the University as leading to the award being recommended;
 - c) the award has been recommended by an Assessment Board convened, constituted and acting under regulations approved by the University and involving all members appointed by the University as external examiners for the award;
 - d) the recommendation of the Assessment Board has been formally ratified on behalf of Academic Council.
- 2.49. In addition to the requirements above, the following conditions apply to the Conferment of awards within a Dual Award scheme, Joint and Multiple awards.
- a) The same titles should be used by all partners contributing academic credits to a Dual Award scheme, both in terms of the academic qualification and the subject specific title.

Note: This should ensure direct parity of outcome and avoid students and the public being led to believe that two separate awards are conferred on successful completion of a Dual Award programme of study. While the academic qualification title may differ from that awarded by a UK HEI, the level of the award should be demonstrably equivalent as indicated in the qualifications framework for each state and any Professional, Statutory or Regulatory Body or Association which accredits the programme or its equivalent in any of the partner institution states.

- b) The Conferment date for all awards should be identical.

Note: The Conferment date for all partners should be the final Assessment Board meeting date of the consortium, irrespective of which partner hosts the final meeting, i.e. this may not be the same date as the final meeting at Westminster.

2.50. The University retains the right to rescind an award previously conferred. Please refer to Section 20 Regulations for the Conferment of Awards.

Annexe 1: Awards for validation and conferment by the University

Academic awards at undergraduate and postgraduate level and research degree awards which accord with the Sector-recognised standards as published by the Office for Students (OfS).

- Certificate of Competence
- Certificate of Higher Competence
- Diploma of Competence
- Diploma of Higher Competence
- Certificate of Special Study (Cert SS)
- Diploma of Special Study (Dip SS)
- Award in Education and Training
- Foundation Certificate (Fdn Cert)
- Edexcel BTEC Higher National Certificate (HNC)
- Edexcel BTEC Higher National Diploma (HND)
- Certificate (Cert)
- Professional Certificate (PCert)
- Diploma (Dip)
- Certificate in Education (Cert in Ed)
- Certificate in Education (Diploma in Education and Training)*
- Certificate of Higher Education (Cert HE)
- Certificate in Lifelong Learning Sector (Certificate in Education and Training)*
- Diploma of Higher Education (DipHE)
- Foundation Degree in Arts (FdA)
- Foundation in Science (FdS)
- Bachelor of Arts (BA)
- Bachelor of Arts and Science (BASc)
- Bachelor of Science (BSc)
- Bachelor of Engineering (BEng)
- Bachelor of Laws (LLB)
- Bachelor of Music (BMus)
- Graduate Certificate (Grad Cert)
- Graduate Diploma (Grad Dip)
- University Certificate of Special Study (Pg Cert SS)
- University Diploma of Special Study (Pg Dip SS)
- Postgraduate Certificate (Pg Cert)
- Postgraduate Diploma (Pg Dip)
- Professional Graduate Certificate in Education
- Professional Graduate Certificate of Education (Diploma in Education and Training)*
- Erasmus Mundus European Master's
- Master of Arts (MA)
- Master of Architecture (MArch)
- Master of Engineering (MEng)
- Master of Fine Arts (MFA)
- Master of Laws (LLM)
- Master of Law (MLaw)
- Master of Music (MMus)
- Master of Osteopathic Medicine (MOst.Med)
- Master of Public Health (MPH)
- Master of Research (MRes)
- Master in Science (MSci)
- Master of Science (MSc)
- Master of Business Administration (MBA)

Note: Awards marked with an asterisk were formally Diploma or Certificate in Lifelong Learning