

ACADEMIC AWARDS FRAMEWORK

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Prepared by Academic Quality and Standards

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Version 9.1 – Summary of Amendments

| Section | Detail of Amendment |
|-------------|--|
| 2 | Clarification that the Academic Awards Framework (AAF) is applicable to all credit-bearing provision. |
| 3 & 4 | Update of the External & Internal points of reference |
| 5 | Inclusion of Curriculum Structure principles |
| 7 | Exemptions to course design principles must be approved by Curriculum Management Group |
| 13 | Clarification that the University's position is that intermediate awards must be conferred when sufficient credit is achieved. |
| 14 | Clarification of institutional approach for alternative exit awards (for example, where practice placement modules have not been passed) |
| 19 | Updated institutional approach to Recognition of Prior Learning |
| 21 | Elaboration of Curriculum Structures course design principles. Clarification that the institutional position is not to have pre-requisite modules unless a PSRB requirement. Clarification of Independent Study Module request process and maximum amount of credit that can be achieved through Independent Study Modules. Articulation of approach to Ordinary Degree learning outcomes. |
| 23 | Clarification that Integrated Masters awards are expected to comply with Scheme A of Curriculum Structures. |
| 25 | Clarification on institutional approach to Small and Short Awards – and distinguishing between the two (Short awards being provided through central government's Lifelong Learning Entitlement strategy). |
| 27 | Clarification that Foundation years are referred to as Level 0 and do not carry transferable academic credit. |
| 28 | Clarification of institutional approach for managing credit for Higher & Degree apprenticeships and Higher Technical qualifications. Explicit articulation that the University is required to align to Institute for Apprenticeship and Technical Education requirements for these areas of provision. |
| 30 | Clarification that students must have passed a minimum of 120 credits on a SHU award before being awarded an honours or ordinary degree. |
| Annex A – D | Inclusion of Curriculum Structure schemes A – D |
| Annex E | Inclusion of Collaborative Typologies |

1. Purpose

To set the parameters within which all the University's academic courses are designed and approved, thereby ensuring consistency both within the University and against external benchmarks.

2. Scope

Academic courses (sometimes called 'programmes') which are validated by Sheffield Hallam University. The University defines a course as any stand-alone, approved curriculum followed by a student, which carries academic credit or otherwise contributes to an award of the degree-awarding body.

For clarity, and given the breadth of provision that the University delivers, this framework includes:

- Standalone, CPD modules that may not be attached to any particular academic award but which are credit bearing
- Credit bearing courses and modules that are delivered online
- Collaborative provision delivered by UK or TNE partners

3. External Points of Reference

- The Framework for Higher Education Qualifications in England, Wales and Northern Ireland (QAA, 2008, revised 2014) - adherence to which ensures that the University's awards are comparable with those offered by the HE Sector in England, Wales and Northern Ireland and within the broader international context.
- The Office for Student's Conditions of Registration
- The Office for Student's Sector Recognised Standards
- Office for Students documentation in relation to award, student experience and student outcome datasets
- Higher Education Credit Framework for England (QAA, 2008, revised 2014 and 2021).
- Subject Benchmark Statements, as published by the Quality Assurance Agency (QAA).
- Higher Education Statistics Agency (HESA)
- Frameworks published by accrediting professional, statutory and/or regulatory bodies (PSRBs)
- Institute for Apprenticeships and Technical Education (IfATE) (Apprenticeships and HTQ)
- Education and Skills Funding Agency (ESFA) (Apprenticeship and HTQ)
- Ofsted Education and Skills Handbook (Apprenticeships)

4. Internal Points of Reference

- [University's Transforming Lives Strategy, including the multiple strands of the Future Strategy Programme](#)
- The University's principles for Curriculum Structures (which can be found in Annex A)
- The University's agreed delivery models
- [University Quality Framework](#)
- [Standard Assessment Regulations](#)
- [Policies and Procedures for Assessment](#)
- Access and Participation Plan
- The University's End Point Assessment policy for apprenticeship provision
- Sub-contracting policy wording
- [Guidance for course design from wider University initiatives](#)

5. Course Design Principles

All University award-bearing courses should be designed to ensure that there is academic coherence, educational challenge and is current in supporting students to develop relevant knowledge and skills. Students should experience a range of learning, teaching and assessment methods along with appropriate use of learning technologies and other resources. Students should gain skills, knowledge, scholarly attitudes and graduate attributes that are relevant to employment or career advancement, and they should be well prepared for both local, national and global employment and citizenship.

All provision will be inclusive, supporting students from all background, providing the best opportunity to succeed.

The University's Course Design Principles are referred to as Curriculum Structure Schemes, of which there are 5.

Scheme A – 32-week Undergraduate Provision

Scheme B – Taught Postgraduate Provision

Scheme C – Extended-year Practice-focused Provision

Scheme D – Apprenticeship Provision (both Undergraduate and Postgraduate)

Scheme E – Online Provision – *NB: please note as of March 2023 it is yet to be determined whether online provision with a third party will require its own scheme or be a subset of Scheme B*

All collaborative provision is expected to comply with the relevant Scheme's principles, aside from externally validated provision (see Annex E) which is beyond the scope of Curriculum Structures.

While each scheme has its own set of distinctive characteristics, a common set of principles underpins them all. These are:

- At undergraduate level, modules can be 20, 40 or 60 credits and with normally no more than 4 modules per level of study.
- At postgraduate level, modules can be 20, 30, 40 or 60 credits and with normally no more than 6 modules per 180 credits of postgraduate credits.
- All modules will be delivered and assessed within a semester/trimester (with the exception of scheme D provision).
- No electives at Foundation Year/Level 4.
- All courses comply with the relevant academic calendar start dates.
- All courses are compliant with current UKVI guidance.
- Each UG course will have a non-credit bearing module associated with it to support non-curricular activities e.g., induction, academic advising. This is currently under development and will not apply to the work of this project at this stage.

An exemption from the Academic Awards Framework is required for any courses that propose to run contrary to the principles of University Schemes (A-E). These exemptions are considered by the University Curriculum Management Group, chaired by the Pro Vice-Chancellor for Learning, Teaching and Student Success.

Further detail in relation to the University Schemes in Annex A of this framework.

6. Learning Outcomes

A course learning outcome is defined by the Quality Assurance Agency as 'What a learner is expected to know, understand and/or be able to demonstrate after completing a process of learning' (QAA, FHEQ, 2008, revised October 2014). Learning outcomes for courses should align with the Office for Student's Sector-recognised Standards, QAA's Framework for Higher Education Qualification (FHEQ) Qualification Descriptors, national Subject Benchmark Statements and/or other relevant external reference points. Course learning outcomes are of paramount importance and should reflect the totality of learning, and be appropriate, for each level of study. A maximum of 12 learning outcomes per award should be adopted and these should be aligned to the University Grade Descriptor.

Module learning outcomes should be appropriate for achievement at the associated level. Whilst there should be a broad alignment between module learning outcomes at a particular level, most particularly where the course is accredited by a Professional, Statutory, Regulatory Body (PSRB), care should be taken not to 'over engineer' this to the extent that the student learning and assessment experience is weakened. There should also be evidence of progression in the learning outcomes as the level of study increases, culminating in the ability to meet the course level learning outcomes and thereby evidence achievement appropriate for the award.

Learning outcomes should be easily understandable by students and other stakeholders and should be expressed in clear English.

7. Course Structure

A 'course structure' refers to the way in which the associated modules contribute towards both the intended award and all intermediate awards. This structure must be articulated for the course to be validated.

Course structures are primarily influenced by the University Schemes principles, which can be found in the annexes to this Framework. In the event that it is not possible to comply to the relevant curriculum structures scheme, an exemption request should be submitted to the Curriculum Management Group and is subject to approval by the PVC LTSS. The design and structure of a course will be assessed at the point of validation and then reviewed over time through the normal quality and academic management processes.

The inclusion of opportunities for international exchange in the design of the course is strongly encouraged (aligned to internationalisation priorities), except where the requirements of an external accrediting body preclude such an arrangement.

8. Award title

The title of the intended award must relate to the course content and should adhere to relevant external reference points, including national Subject Benchmark Statements and QAA guidance on qualification nomenclature (The Frameworks for HE Qualifications of UK Degree-Awarding Bodies, Section 6, QAA, 2014). Intermediate award titles must also clearly relate to the learning outcomes of the associated modules. Awards which form a component of an apprenticeship or a Higher Technical Qualification (HTQ) must pay due regard to any condition regarding titles mandated by the Institute for Apprenticeships and Technical Education.

9. Joint Honours Degrees

A joint honours degree award title should be used where a course comprises **two different academic subject areas / disciplines** in approximately equal proportions by credit value. The award title should reflect this balance of subject disciplines by using the standard format, in alphabetical order of subject unless otherwise validated, as follows: **A (subject 1) AND B (subject 2)**

10. Major-Minor Honours Degrees

A major-minor honours degree award title should be used where a course comprises **two different academic subject areas / disciplines** and will normally consist of 80 credits in the major subject and 40 credits in the minor subject at both levels 5 and 6. The award title should reflect this balance of subject disciplines by using the standard format of listing the major subject followed by the minor subject, as follows: **A (subject 1) WITH B (subject 2).**

Award titles should normally be limited to two subject components. Requests to combine three subject disciplines will be considered on a case by case basis by the Curriculum Management Group, chaired by the Pro-Vice Chancellor, Learning, Teaching and Student Success.

11. Routes

The term '**route**' is used to describe a designated route through the available modules on a course which leads to a distinct specialism. This is reflected in the award title. For example, a main award of BSc (Hons) Engineering may have an associated route leading to the award of BSc (Hons) Engineering (Sustainable Technologies). It is possible to have an associated 'route' where the modules and the learning outcomes are identical to the 'normal' course; in this instance the specialism would come from the dissertation or project module.

Where a student opts to take a specific route, they will be transferred from the 'generic' course - for example, BSc (Hons) Engineering, onto the 'specific' course - for example, BSc (Hons) Engineering (Sustainable Technologies). Students may transfer to a route at either Level 5 or Level 6 of the course. It should be noted that although these courses can be aggregated for the purposes of internal reporting, they may appear as separate courses within the NSS, the DLHE survey and HESA reporting. It should also be noted that named routes will not feature as separate entries on the Online Prospectus, however the prospectus information for the main award can detail available

routes.¹

12. Joint, Dual and Multiple Awards

According to the QAA 'Characteristics Statement for Qualifications involving more than one Degree-Awarding Body' (QAA, 2020 pp 7 - 8):

Joint Degrees arrangements

'... may be joint in all aspects, involving all partners (of which there may be more than two) in roughly equal proportions in all aspects of programme design, development, delivery, assessment, management and decision-making on student achievement. Students may spend time studying at each of the partners involved in the arrangement. Students successfully completing the programme gain a single certificate'

Double or Multiple Degrees occur where:

'students completing a programme that is otherwise wholly joint (as described above) are awarded two (or more) certificates, one from each degree-awarding body involved. The certificate and/or transcript or record of achievement, or Diploma Supplement, of at least the UK degree-awarding body or bodies refer to the existence of the other(s) and makes clear that they refer to the completion of a single, jointly conceived, programme. Where legally permissible, the same reference is included on the documents issued by the other degree-awarding body or bodies.'

Dual Degrees occur where

'a student does not need to satisfy the requirements of all the partners to receive an award. In this case, the programmes are designed to enable students to achieve more than one distinct set of criteria (learning outcomes or other requirements), although in some arrangements the different sets may overlap.'

'One example of this type involved two degree-awarding bodies jointly designing a programme of study comprising a joint initial curriculum (or two parallel and equivalent curricula), followed by two separate blocks taken consecutively at each partner in turn, leading to two separate qualifications awarded individually by the two degree-awarding bodies. The qualifications may be at different levels. Students who successfully complete both programmes receive separate institutional or national certificates, one for each of the two separate qualifications, granted by each of the awarding bodies involved. Each degree-awarding body is responsible for its own award but the two components form a single package, and the overall arrangement is a joint enterprise that requires elements of joint management and oversight. Each degree-awarding body generally delivers a substantial proportion of the programme at the level of the qualification they award. A distinguishing feature of this type of arrangement is that the overall study period and volume of learning is longer than for either of the individual awards separately, but typically shorter than if each of the programmes of study had been taken consecutively. This is because they are designed to lock together with overlapping curricula.'

Proposals for dual/double or joint degrees will be examined in the context of the partner and the educational framework operating if the partner is beyond the UK. The university cannot devolve standards to another institution and so how SHU assures itself of these standards in designing the award(s) with its partners will be at the heart of the approval process. As per the University's Quality Framework, partners will be subject to the University's collaborative quality processes to provide assurance that the University's expectations in relation to quality and standards continue to be met subsequent to approval. Joint degrees require **a single set of regulations**

¹ The term '**pathway**' is an informal term used to describe a designated pathway through the available modules on a course which implies a specialism, where this is not reflected in the award title. For example, BA(Hons) History may include a collection of modules on the history of the Soviet Union which students may elect to follow, but which will not make any difference to the title of their main award which will remain as BA(Hons) History. It should be noted that under the 'pathway' model, the students all remain on same the course (in contrast to the 'route' model) throughout.

agreed by both parties which are academically jointly managed. Dual or Double degrees should have a single agreed set of regulations though this is not an absolute requirement as it is with Joint awards.

13. Intermediate Awards

An intermediate award is a separate qualification from that intended to be achieved when a student sets out on a programme of study. A set of standard intermediate awards, with defined learning outcomes, must be available for all award-bearing courses as defined within the Academic Awards Framework (See Awards Table, Section 31). These will be approved at validation. Intermediate award titles must be justified by the relevant learning outcomes and modules studied.

Intermediate awards are only conferred to students who choose to (or are required to) exit the course at an intermediate stage and who have met the requirements for the intermediate award. Students cannot re-join the same course with the intention of achieving the intended award without first forgoing the intermediate award. This is to prevent the use of the same credit for more than one award. The preceding sentence does not apply to discreetly constructed 'step on – step off'/'credit escalators' professional qualifications where the CPD nature requires to student to build up credit, awards and competencies as they progress in their professional lives.

14. Alternative Awards

Courses accredited by a relevant professional, statutory and/or regulatory body (PSRB) must have alternative awards available to students who may pass the requisite academic modules and gain academic credit appropriate to the named award, but who are not eligible for the accredited award because they have not met the specified PSRB requirements (such as the successful completion of practice placement hours). Students who are unable to meet the requirements for an accredited award must be provided with opportunities to transfer to a non-accredited, but academically related award, at the appropriate stage within the programme. For example, a student on a nursing course who did not successfully complete their practice placement hours would not be awarded a BSc. Hons Nursing degree but rather a BSc. Hons Nursing Studies degree to distinguish that he placement hours had not been completed.

15. Exemptions for Accredited Programmes

All courses are expected to adhere to the Academic Awards Framework, except where the requirements for accreditation as specified by a relevant Professional, Statutory and/or Regulatory Body (PSRB) require a deviation. Exemptions from the Academic Awards Framework are considered by the University Curriculum Management Group, chaired by the Pro-Vice Chancellor for Learning, Teaching and Student Success.

16. Modes of Study and Intensity of Study

Courses can be validated with any of the following modes of study: full time, sandwich, part time with attendance, part time by distance learning, full time by distance learning

In accordance with Office for Students definitions, full time students are normally required to study for periods amounting to at least 21 hours per week, for 24 weeks within the year of study. Part-time students study, on average, less than 21 hours per week for less than 24 weeks per year or are studying on a FT course which lasts for less than 24 weeks.

Distance Learning Mode

Courses which are not delivered at a University campus or at an offsite partner campus or other location but are wholly delivered by the University 'at a distance', using online delivery methods only or a combination of online delivery and a limited amount of residential or block delivery, are termed 'distance learning' courses. Distance learning courses can be validated in either full time or part time mode (FT DL or PT DL).

Where the University delivers provision online wholly, through a platform provided by a partner, this will still be referred to as being delivered in distance learning mode.

Sandwich Mode

The 'sandwich mode' of study applies to courses which incorporate a significant period of supervised work

experience or industrial placement of at least an academic year, which is non-credit bearing. Sandwich courses are distinct from other courses that are offered in FT or PT mode which may include credit bearing work- based learning modules involving shorter periods of placement. For external reporting purposes, sandwich years are defined by HEFCE as either a 'thick' or a 'thin' sandwich according to the following criteria:

- **Thick sandwich** students are those for which an industrial (or other) placement causes a continuous absence from full-time study of at least one academic year.
- **Thin sandwich** must involve the student in an average of more than 21 hours study a week for a minimum of 24 weeks study/placement.

To carry an award title of 'degree in sandwich mode', a course must adhere to one of these definitions.

Where a course is offered in sandwich mode, it must also be offered in full time mode. This is to ensure an alternative for students who are unable to gain a sandwich year placement.

Sandwich courses should incorporate both pre- and post-placement modules that enable students to prepare for their sandwich year and allow an opportunity to reflect on their learning during the sandwich year after they have returned to full time study during the fourth and final year of the sandwich course.

Note on Blended Learning

Blended Learning is not a recognised mode of study by HESA and as such it is not possible to use the term to be the formal designator of how a course is delivered. The term is usually used when describing a course which integrates face to face taught and distance learning/online learning delivery methods and this is to be encouraged as part of good course design; however, the mode of study would remain Full Time, Part Time or Sandwich.

17. Credit Values

A full time **undergraduate** course should consist of 120 credits per academic year, and must consist of at least 90 credits per academic year. A part time academic year of study at undergraduate level must consist of less than 90 credits (i.e. 90 credits equals full time and 89 credits equals part time). This maximum amount of study that can be undertaken in the part time mode does not apply to apprenticeship provision given the work-based learning nature of such programmes.

A full time **postgraduate** course should consist of 180 credits per calendar year. A part time postgraduate course should consist of between 60 and 90 credits per academic year. This maximum amount of study that can be undertaken in the part time mode does not apply to apprenticeship provision given the work-based learning nature of such programmes.

18. Maximum Course Duration

In order to protect the integrity, currency and relevance of awards, a maximum duration is specified for all taught courses (based on the assumption that students enter at the lowest level of the award). The maximum duration applies to the highest level (the intended target award of the student) and does not preclude the awarding of intermediate awards to students who do not achieve their intended award.

Undergraduate Awards

Normal Full Time

Maximum Full Time

Maximum Part Time

| | | | |
|---|---------|---------|---------|
| Integrated Masters* (incl SW mode) | 5 years | 7 years | 9 years |
| Sandwich Degree with Honours | 4 years | 7 years | 9 years |
| Honours Degree | 3 years | 6 years | 8 years |
| Degree (non honours) | 3 years | 6 years | 7 years |
| Honours Degree (top-up degree, L6 only) | 1 year | 2 years | 3 years |
| Foundation Degree | 2 years | 4 years | 6 years |
| DipHE | 2 years | 4 years | 6 years |
| CertHE | 1 year | 2 years | 3 years |
| HND | 2 years | 4 years | 6 years |
| HNC | 2 years | 2 years | 3 years |
| Graduate Diploma | 1 year | 2 years | 3 years |

| | | | |
|----------------------|--------|--------|---------|
| Graduate Certificate | 1 year | 1 year | 2 years |
|----------------------|--------|--------|---------|

** Integrated Masters meet the requirements for a first UG degree for course duration, fees and funding purposes.*

Professionally accredited UG courses may have a lower maximum duration to meet the requirements of the Professional, Statutory and/or Regulatory Body (PSRB). Such courses will be subject to formal exemption being granted by the University.

Postgraduate Awards

| | Normal Duration | Maximum Full Time | Maximum Part Time |
|---|-----------------|-------------------|-------------------|
| PGCE or Professional Certificate in Education (PCE) | 1 year | 2 years | 4 years |
| PgCert | 1 year | 2 years | 2 years |
| PgDip | 1 year | 2 years | 4 years |
| Masters Degree (taught) | 1 year | 3 years | 6 years |

**does not apply to Integrated Masters - see UG durations table, above*

19. Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL)

The University has procedures for the approval of claims for RPL from individual applicants. The University's approach to RPL procedures, regulations and maximum credit values can be found in the [Recognition of Prior Learning policy](#), published separately. Some accredited courses may be exempt from the recognition of prior learning in order to meet all requirements for accreditation. Where this is the case, this will be stipulated by the relevant Professional, Statutory and/or Regulatory Body.

20. Accredited Courses – Additional Regulations or Criteria

Courses may incorporate additional regulations or other criteria for passing the whole course or elements of the course to meet professional requirements for accredited courses. In such cases, this must be considered as part of the validation process.

21. Modules and Course Design Principles

Module Definition

A module is defined as a self-contained, structured learning experience with a coherent and explicit set of learning outcomes and assessment criteria. A number of credits are assigned to each module to indicate the amount of learning undertaken (see also notional study hours, where 1 credit equates to 10 study hours) and a single level is assigned to indicate the relative depth of learning involved. Together, these are known as the **credit value of a module**.

Curriculum Structures Course Design Principles

While each scheme has its own set of distinctive characteristics, a common set of principles underpins them all. These are:

- At undergraduate level, modules can be 20, 40 or 60 credits and with normally no more than 4 modules per level of study.
- At postgraduate level, modules can be 20, 30, 40 or 60 credits and with normally no more than 6 modules per 180 credits of postgraduate credits.
- All modules will be delivered and assessed within a semester/trimester (aside from scheme D provision)
- No electives at Foundation Year/Level 4.
- All courses comply with the relevant academic calendar start dates.
- All courses are compliant with current UKVI guidance.

- Each UG course will have a non-credit bearing module associated with it to support non-curricular activities e.g., induction, academic advising. This is currently under development and will not apply to the work of this project at this stage.

Curriculum Structures Schemes

The Curriculum Structures schemes, associated principles and explanatory diagrams can be found in the annexes to this framework.

Module Duration and Assessment

Modules should be delivered within a specified period, normally not more than once per academic or calendar year (NB: students who do not complete the specified final module assessment task within a period of 13 months may be defined as 'non-completers' for external reporting purposes).

As articulated within the Curriculum Structures principles, all University provision (aside from Scheme D) is expected to align to the Academic Calendar and the principles of semesterisation & trimesterisation. Any exemptions from these principles must be agreed by the University's Curriculum Management Group, chaired by the Pro Vice Chancellor, Learning, Teaching and Student Success.

Module Designation and Course Design

Core Modules are required within all awards and are approved at validation. Core modules are those which a student must pass in order to achieve a named award and are designated as 'core' because they deliver the essential content and skills required for the achievement of the course learning outcomes. The relationship between the learning outcomes of core modules and the overall course learning outcomes is considered and approved at validation. Core modules may be compensated (unless an exemption from [Standard Assessment Regulations](#) has been approved), but cannot be substituted.

Elective Modules are modules chosen from an agreed list of electives which is specific to the course and is approved at validation. Elective modules also contribute to the overall course learning outcomes. The list may change from year to year and modules can be added or removed throughout the time a course is operational. Amendments to agreed electives will need to be agreed by CPG and UTPG, and where this poses any sense of change to the CLOs should also be referred to the Curriculum Management Group. Elective modules may be compensated or substituted. The overall number and availability of elective modules will be determined by individual Colleges and Departments, aligned to the University's approach to elective viability.

Prerequisite Modules

Pre-requisite modules are not usually acceptable unless there is an exceptional rationale (such as a requirement from a key PSRB). If a pre-requisite module is required for the study of another module, this must be agreed by the University's Curriculum Management Group through an exemption request. The expectation is that the prerequisite module will be at a lower level of study than the related module.

Modules delivered as part of apprenticeship provision which develop the required knowledge, skills and behaviours articulated as part of the apprenticeship standard are regarded as pre-requisite modules to undertaking End Point Assessment. An apprentice's readiness for End Point Assessment is determined by an Apprenticeship Progression Board who will determine whether the apprentice should enter the gateway period.

Courses using zero credit modules (Non-Credit Bearing Modules)

Some courses may include modules which, although non-credit bearing, must be passed in order to gain a sandwich degree or an accredited degree (for example, a placement module on a sandwich course). Examples of this may include clinical practice on health courses which must be passed but do not carry any academic credit, or other nationally recognised qualifications that require a pass but do not carry academic credit (QTS / IQTS). Non-Credit bearing modules are approved as part of a course at validation and cannot be introduced or modified, post-validation, without University approval. **These modules are recorded on SITS (the student and curriculum management system) as carrying one credit to signify that they must be passed in order to gain an award, this**

one credit is purely procedural and is not credit awarded to the student. The exception to this is modules on non-credit bearing courses, where the credit count is zero in line with the non-credit bearing status of the course. Finally, there are also activities which are sometimes informally represented as modules, such as 'study enhancement sessions'. These will always carry zero credits.

Independent Study Modules (ISMs)

Independent Study Modules (ISMs) consist of credit-bearing, individually-negotiated learning activities and outcomes that fall outside of a taught module. ISMs should only be used in truly exceptional circumstances for individual students and should not be managed to address credit deficits for whole cohorts of students. ISMs should not be considered for level 4 study.

Independent Study Modules are not formally approved as taught modules within an award and therefore require approval from the Curriculum Management Group before an ISM is offered to a student and must comply with the University's policy, regulations and requirements for ISMs. The request for an ISM will need to provide a strong rationale detailing why all other alternatives considered are not plausible.

ISM requests may be permitted up to a maximum of 20 credits at level 5 or 6 within an undergraduate award and, exceptionally, up to a maximum of 40 credits per level.

At postgraduate level, an ISM may be permitted up to 20 credits and, exceptionally, up to a maximum of 40 credits within a Masters award. Where an ISM is to be undertaken to retrieve a credit deficit (eg. as a replacement for a failed mandatory module that is no longer available) to enable the student to gain an award, the agreed learning outcomes for the ISM must be consistent with those of the module that has been replaced.

Notional Study Hours

Notional study hours are the average hours of study which will be required for a student to complete a module successfully. These are based on 10 notional study hours per 1 academic credit, e.g. 200 hours per 20 credits and continuing on the same scale for modules of higher credit values. A typical full-time undergraduate year of 120 credits will require 1,200 notional study hours.

Credit and Notional Study Hours

If modules are delivered according to the standard academic calendar then it is recognised that all notional study hours must be accommodated within the student study year. For a FT undergraduate degree course delivering 120 credits per academic year, 1200 notional study hours will normally be delivered within an academic year equating to two semester (though there are exceptions to this, e.g. pre-registration nursing). For a FT postgraduate Masters degree course delivering 180 credits in 1800 notional study hours these will normally cover a calendar year or longer. The overall period allowed to incorporate the relevant number of notional study hours will cover teaching weeks, study weeks, the submission of all coursework and/or completion of all scheduled examinations. Notional Study Hours per module are approved at validation and are documented in standard module descriptors. **The overall delivery of the course should ensure students (either UG or PG) are not required to study for more than 48 hours per week to achieve the correct number of notional study hours required for the course - i.e. scheduled hours plus guided independent study.**

Arrangement of Modules across Semesters

Each semester does not need to have the appearance of a balanced credit number (i.e. 60 credits) but course designers must ensure that student work and assessment loads are appropriate to the award and are not more onerous than needed to assure the standard of the award.

Ordinary Degrees

The University only offers Ordinary Degrees as intermediate qualifications where students are unable to meet the requirements for a Bachelors with Honours degree. The minimum requirements for an Ordinary Degree are

that 300 credits are achieved, with 60 at Level 6, a minimum of 120 at Level 5 and the remaining 120 at Level 4 or higher.

The following are the expected learning outcomes for students to demonstrate to be conferred with an Ordinary Degree:

- A comprehension of the essential aspects of their field of study, comprising of the acquisition of coherent and comprehensive knowledge, some of which is at the cutting edge of the field.
- The capacity to apply established methods of analysis and inquiry within the field of study.
- The ability to formulate arguments and/or solve problems using ideas and techniques, some of which are at the forefront of the field of study.
- The skill to describe and analyse specific areas of current research or scholarship in the field of study.
- An awareness of the limitations, uncertainties, and ambiguity associated with knowledge.
- The ability to manage their own learning and academic growth.
- The proficiency to utilize scholarly reviews and primary sources such as refereed research articles and original materials that are suitable for their field of study.

22. Foundation Degrees

All Foundation Degrees must incorporate the following features:

- Significant sector involvement relevant to the main subject of the FD
- Significant experiential / work-related learning element for both full-time and part-time students
- Flexible pathways into Foundation Degrees to promote access for students studying on a part-time, full-time or distance learning basis, on and off-campus
- Articulation arrangements with at least one University Honours Degree for Foundation Degree graduates, plus a statement of progression opportunities to professional qualifications or higher-level NVQs
- An appropriate use of recognition of prior learning (RPL) to facilitate both entry to a Foundation Degree and progression to an associated Honours Degree. As with other University awards, RPL may lead to exemption from academic and/or work-based learning elements of the curriculum – this should be clearly specified in course documentation.

23. Integrated Masters Awards and Course Structure

Integrated masters degrees are level 7, second cycle qualifications and are positioned at masters level in alignment with the Framework for Higher Education Qualifications (FHEQ), and the HE Credit Framework for England (QAA, 2008, revised 2014). Integrated masters degrees are normally delivered over a minimum of 4 years and contain at least 480 credits, including a minimum of 120 credits at level 7 to meet the requirements for a masters level award. Integrated Masters awards are required to the FHEQ Qualification Descriptors for levels 6 and 7 in full. The remaining 360 credits are designed to meet the requirements for a first honours degree and are recognised as such for funding, fees and external reporting purposes. These awards comply with the University's [Standard Assessment Regulations](#) and are classified in line with the classification system for first degrees (i.e. bachelor's degrees with honours). Integrated masters must apply Scheme A principles across all levels, including Level 7.

24. PGCE, ProfGCE and PGDE

The awards of Postgraduate Certificate in Education (PGCE), Professional Graduate Certificate in Education (ProfGCE) and Postgraduate Diploma in Education (PGDE) are specialist education and teacher training courses in primary, secondary or Post-16 education and lead to qualified teacher status (QTS). The courses are designed to provide a range of routes into teaching and incorporate a substantial proportion of time on placement in partner schools (typically 120 days / 24 weeks) to enable students to meet the professional Teaching Standards requirements for QTS. The courses are aimed at graduates but can be studied either at masters level (PGCE or PGDE) or undergraduate level (ProfGCE). PGCE and PGDE courses are delivered in full time or part time mode over one or two years and comprise 60 or 120 masters/level 7 academic credits, respectively. The Professional Graduate Certificate in Education (ProfGCE) is similar in structure to the PGCE and allows trainee teachers to work towards Qualified Teacher Status (QTS) but comprises academic credit at level 6. On successful completion of an award, the University

will make a recommendation to the National College for Teaching and Leadership (NCTL) for the award of QTS. The courses are offered via a range of delivery and funding models. Delivery may be University-led with study based both at the University and on placement in schools or may be School-led, whereby students are based in a school setting throughout their studies. The University offers a range of School-led delivery models in partnership with external organisations or schools' consortia, including School Direct, School-centred initial teacher training (SCITT) and Teach First.

These awards are expected to align with the University's Curriculum Structures Scheme C.

25. Small & Short Awards and Transcripts for Academic Credit

Small & Short Awards

The University's range of 'small' awards are generally aimed at those returning to higher education, particularly in the context of work-based learning (pre-degree) or for the purposes of recognising achievement in continuing professional development (post experience and/or postgraduate). Small awards fall within the scope of the Academic Awards Framework and are subject to the same formal approval processes as standard awards.

Short awards are distinguished from small awards in that they are delivered as part of Life-long Loan Entitlement and are specifically designed to support the development of professional and technical skills. These are in the form of a 'Certificate of CPD' which constitute 40 credits at level 4, 5 or 6.

Only coherent course of study that are formally validated as award- bearing provision (with credit and level requirements as specified in Table 6.3 below) will lead to eligible students being conferred with the appropriate small or short award and will be recognised by a relevant formal award certificate.

Table of Credit and Level Requirements for Small & Short Awards

| Award | Minimum Number of Credits Required | Minimum Number of Credits at the Level of Award | FHEQ Level |
|---|--|---|--|
| Transcript of Credit Only | Undergraduate (Levels 4, 5, 6) Minimum of 20 credits, up to 60 credits Postgraduate (Level 7) Minimum of 15 credits, up to 30 credits | Transcript of credit only. The amount and level of credit will vary depending on the module or combinations of modules taken as unprogrammed. | Transcript of credit only. The amount and level of credit will vary depending on the module or combination of modules taken as unprogrammed. |
| Pre-degree (the following awards are subject to validation) | | | |
| Certificate of CPD | 40 | 40 @ L4, L5, L6 | 4,5,6 |
| University Certificate | 60 | 40 @ L4 | 4 |
| University Diploma | 60 | 40 @ L5 | 5 |
| University Advanced Diploma | 60 | 60 @ L6 | 6 |
| Post-experience (the following awards are subject to validation) | | | |
| University Professional Certificate | 60 – 100 | 60 @ L5 | 5 |
| University Professional Diploma | 60 – 100 | 60 @ L6 | 6 |
| University Advanced Professional Certificate | 30 – 45 | 30 @ L7 | 7 |
| Practice Certificate in Independent Prescribing | 30 | 30 @ L7 | 7 |

The conferment of any of the small or short awards described in the table above will **not** lead to eligibility to attend any of the University's main graduation ceremonies.

Transcripts of Academic Credit for CPD or Extra-Curricular Activity

Individual, unprogrammed or free-standing modules or groups of modules amounting to a total of credit less than 60 credits (UG) or 30 credits (PG) are not normally approved as leading to a formal University award, but will be recognised through a formal transcript of academic credit. These exception to this is the Certificate of CPD (**40 credits**) which will be awarded to support the to the Life-Long Loan/Learning Entitlement.

Individual or groups of modules may be approved as part of validated, award-bearing provision, but may also be used for unprogrammed, free-standing delivery outside a specific award-bearing course.

Alternatively, individual credit-bearing modules or groups of modules may be approved separately, for the purposes of providing CPD provision or other extra-curricula activities such as short, credit-bearing courses which do not lead to a University main or 'small' award.

26. Non-Credit Bearing Activity / Short Courses, Events, Exchanges

This may include:

- short training courses
- conferences, workshops, seminars, single day or residential events designed for the purposes of continuing professional development
- 'taster' course, summer schools, other recruitment activities or extended induction course for potential applicants/students
 - UK, Europe or overseas exchange visits that are not part of a formal, approved course structure

The duration of the above may vary in length from a day or more to a significant number of weeks. This type of activity cannot require any formal summative assessment leading to the award of academic credit or any other type of academic award.

Specific requirements for **non-credit bearing** short course are not defined within the Academic Awards Framework and are not subject to quality processes described within the [Quality Framework](#). Such activities do not lead to academic credit or academic awards and therefore do not form part of formally validated awards as specified by the Academic Awards Framework. On this basis, formal University approval is not required for this type of activity. Departmental Quality Boards may wish to consider as good practice having some mechanism to assure themselves that such activity is being undertaken to standards commensurate with all other University activity. Business planning, costing, fees and specific resource requirements for this type of non credit-bearing, non award-bearing activity are a matter for local determination by individual College's planning groups. Colleges should negotiate with relevant University Directorates in cases where access to specific learning resources (including BlackBoard) is required to support non credit-bearing, non-award bearing activities.

27. Foundation years, extended degrees and sub HE credit.

Extended degrees, preparatory years, foundation courses and all other pre or sub HE qualifications are outside of UK and European HE frameworks. Please note that the term 'foundation' in this context is in no way related to 'Foundation Degrees' which are a Level 5 nationally defined HE qualification. Unless explicitly stated and agreed at validation any such awards and its constituent credit is not a part of the Qualifications and Credit Framework (QCF). Credit within such courses can only be defined as Level 0. The term Level 3 was previously used within the University and may still be used in reference to provision that was approved some time ago. It is important if using the term 'Level 3' that it is made explicit that this is not QCF Level 3 but rather Sheffield Hallam University's own internal credit, which unlike HE credit (Levels 4 to 7), has no currency beyond the University. Other Universities may accept such credit as part of entry onto Level 4 of an award but they are not required to do so. When designing Foundation years/courses it must be explicit what the successful student can progress onto as result of completing the foundation course. The appropriate educational challenge to allow students to be successful as they progress

onto the main award should be designed into the curriculum and assessment of the foundation year.

28. Employer Led Provision

The University supports a flexible, cross-College approach to the 'fast-track' development of new work-based provision to meet a growing demand for employer-led, CPD-type provision aimed at corporate clients and collaborative partners. In doing so, this aligns to government initiatives such as the development of technical and work-based provision in the form of apprenticeships and Higher Technical Qualifications. The developments in this area correspond with University strategy to improve the economy of the Sheffield City Region and support small businesses and large, regional and national, private and public Sector organisations to recruit well qualified and highly skilled employees. Employer Led provision is designed in partnership with employers and professional organisations to ensure they are able to meet the occupational requirements of a particular sector or the specific needs of employers through closed employer provision.

Higher Degree Apprenticeships

The University as a main apprenticeship provider, listed on the Register of Apprenticeship Training Providers (RoATP), operates within the terms and conditions of its funding contract with the Education Skills Funding Agency (ESFA). Apprenticeships are employer-led programmes of learning which are linked to a specific occupation and develop Knowledge, Skills and Behaviours (KSB) required for a specific job role. Qualifications offered as part of an apprenticeship are aligned to the relevant subject benchmarks and positioned at the appropriate level for the award. To be eligible for an apprenticeship, the apprentice must be in paid employment and have a job role within organisation that provides the opportunity for them to gain the required KSB's set out in the Apprenticeship Standard.

Higher and degree apprenticeships are available at levels 4 to 7. They combine work with study and may include a work-based, academic or combined qualification or a professional qualification relevant to the industry. Levels 4 and 5 are equivalent to a Higher Education Certificate/ Diploma or a foundation degree, level 6 is equivalent to a Bachelor's degree and level 7 is equivalent to a Master's degree.

Apprenticeship provision will align to the Scheme D course design principles. The management of quality and standards in relation to apprenticeship provision operates in line with all credit and award bearing provision at the University in accordance with the internal and external reference point set out in sections 3 and 4 of this Framework. In addition, the University aligns apprenticeship provision to:

The Quality Assurance Agency (QAA) Characteristics Statement for Higher Education in Apprenticeships (July 2019, June 2022), particularly with regards to the embedding of best practice within provision in relation to the integration of on and off-the-job learning and collaboration with employers.

The principles and practice informed by the QAA Quality Assuring Higher Education in Apprenticeships, Current Approaches (July 2018) guidance document.

The QAA Quality Code Advice and Guidance within the Quality Framework for apprenticeship delivery, with a focus on the Partnerships, Work Based Learning and Course Design and Development themes.

The Institute for Apprenticeships and Technical Education (IfATE) Apprenticeship Standards to ensure that the Knowledge, Skills and Behaviours (KSBs) articulated in the Standard meet the needs of the industry that the apprenticeship is relevant to.

The Education and Skills Funding Agency (ESFA) (the executive agency of the government of the United Kingdom, sponsored by the Department for Education with responsibility for the funding and regulation of Higher and Degree Apprenticeships).

Ofsted requirements as the regulatory body responsible for the quality assessment of apprenticeship provision at all levels. Courses are designed and delivered to meet the requirements of Ofsted aligned to the Further Education and Skills Inspection handbook and the Education Inspection Framework.

NB: The University will ensure continued alignment of its employer-led provision to the above as and when they are reviewed/revised.

All apprenticeship provision incorporates an End Point Assessment (EPA) which must be performed according to the specific Apprenticeship Standard published by the Institute for Apprenticeships and Technical Education (IfATE). For each Apprenticeship Standard there is a specified *Assessment Plan*. This dictates that for some Standards the EPA should be conducted as “Integrated” to the Degree programme and performed by the Apprenticeship Training Provider, for example Sheffield Hallam University (SHU) as an ESFA-registered *EPA Organisation* (EPAO).

For other Apprenticeship Standards the EPA is not integrated and therefore undertaken by another EPAO, after the completion of the mandated credits. In these cases, SHU contracts with that EPAO and pays for those services out of the Apprenticeship Levy, or direct ESFA funding/employer contribution. **Please refer to the University’s EPA Policy for more information on the management, delivery and assessment of EPA.**

Higher Technical Qualifications

HTQs are either new or existing Level 4 and 5 qualifications (such as HNDs/Foundation Degrees/Diploma HE) that have been approved by the Institute for Apprenticeships and Technical Education (IfATE) as meeting occupational standards for the relevant sector. These are the same set of standards that are the foundation of apprenticeships and T Levels.

HTQs are developed in collaboration with employers and businesses to ensure that the Knowledge, Skills and Behaviours that a student will learn, and acquire, are aligned to those identified by employers. HTQs also provide an option for all learners looking to progress from T Levels or apprenticeships.

HTQs are largely classroom based, giving the opportunity for practical skills to be learnt in an education setting, through workshops and simulated work environments for example. HTQs are different to apprenticeships which combine practical training in a job with study. HTQ provision will align to the course design principles set out for Scheme A.

29. Research Degrees

Research Degree Courses

Research degree courses are individual programmes of guided research designed to meet a set of specific aims and objectives. Research degree programmes are not credit rated at Sheffield Hallam University. Specific outcomes, which must be met by a candidate to be eligible for the award of each type of research degree at Masters’ or Doctoral level, are as set out in the section on Research Degree Outcomes below.

Research Degree Courses will comprise the following elements:

- An approved title
- A statement of the Aims and Objectives which defines the research problem to be addressed or the hypothesis to be tested
- A supporting programme of related studies or guided reading tailored to the needs of the student, with an emphasis on relevant research methodologies
- A review of existing scholarly work in the field of study, through a review of literature or other work, thus setting the programme in an appropriate disciplinary context
- Collection, analysis and ordering of data relevant to the research, using appropriate methodologies
- Generation of findings from the research process, coherently related to the research problem or hypothesis, evidenced by the relevant data and related to the framework of existing knowledge in the field.

All research projects leading to a research degree award require formal Ethics approval through the relevant University Ethics process or External Research Ethics body.

And will culminate in:

- The production of a written thesis, supported by artefacts and other media as appropriate, which demonstrates the achievement of the programme’s aims and objectives and which is defended at an oral

examination. Doctoral candidates will clearly establish a contribution to knowledge and/or professional practice in the chosen research topic.

Research Degree Outcomes

The following outcomes must be demonstrated by all research degree candidates in order to be eligible for the relevant award to be conferred:

Masters Degree by Research (LLM) will be awarded to successful candidates on the basis of:

- Mastery of an approved research topic or an area of professional practice, correlated with the established field of knowledge and/or professional practice
- Demonstration of competence in research methods appropriate to the field
- Demonstration of achievement of Learning Outcomes at Level 7

Master of Professional Studies Degree (MProf) will be awarded to successful candidates on the basis of:*

- Mastery of an approved research topic or an area of advanced professional practice, correlated with the established field of knowledge and/or professional practice
- Demonstration of competence in research methods appropriate to the field
- Demonstration of achievement of Learning Outcomes at Level 7
-

***Note on MProf Awards:** Candidates who are unable to complete a Professional Doctorate programme, or leave the programme before the final assessment, may apply for an MProf award provided they have successfully completed 2 years of study and meet all other eligibility criteria for the award of MProf as set out above. An MProf can also be awarded to candidates who are assessed for a Professional Doctorate award but who do not meet the requirements outlined above.

*Master of Philosophy degree (MPhil)** will be awarded to successful candidates on the basis of:*

- Mastery of an approved research topic, correlated with the established field of knowledge
- demonstration of competence in research methods appropriate to the field
- demonstration of achievement Learning Outcomes at L7

****Note on MPhil Awards:** Candidates may apply to study for MPhil only. PhD candidates who leave the PhD programme before the final assessment may apply to write up for MPhil. Candidates who fail at Confirmation of Doctorate stage may be advised to write-up for MPhil. An MPhil can also be awarded to candidates who are assessed for a PhD but who do not meet the requirements outlined above. In all cases, candidates must meet all other eligibility criteria for the award of MPhil as set out above.

Professional Doctorate (e.g., DBA/EdD) will be awarded to successful candidates on the basis of:

- Mastery of an approved research topic or an area of advanced professional practice that extends the understanding of an established field of knowledge and/or advanced professional practice
- consolidation of competence in research methods appropriate to the field
- demonstration of achievement of Generic Learning Outcomes at L8

Doctor of Philosophy (PhD) will be awarded to successful candidates on the basis of:

- Mastery of an approved research topic, extending the understanding of an established field of knowledge
- consolidation of competence in research methods appropriate to the field
- demonstration of achievement of Generic Learning Outcomes at L8

Research Programme Supervision

Research students will be supervised by supervisory teams with appropriate subject expertise and experience, in accordance with the Policy on Research Degree Supervision.

Research Programme Duration

Programme durations depend on the type of degree studied, and the mode of study. These timescales are stated in the Research Degree Regulations. In order to protect the integrity and relevance of awards, students will be

expected to submit a thesis for examination normally within the following minimum and maximum permissible timescales.

All Doctoral candidates will undertake the Confirmation of Doctorate process as a formal interim assessment point in order to progress towards assessment for a Doctoral award.

| Degree & Mode | Normal minimum permissible time for completion from date of enrolment* | Normal maximum permissible time for completion from date of enrolment** |
|--------------------------------|--|---|
| MPhil | | |
| Full-time | 18 months | 24 months |
| Part-time | 30 months | 36 months |
| LLM by Research | | |
| Full-time | | 12 months |
| Part-time | | 24 months |
| PhD FT/PT | | |
| Full-time | 24 months | 48 months |
| Part-time | 36 months | 84 months |
| Professional Doctorates | | |
| Full-time | 36 months | 60 months |
| Part-time | 48 months | 84 months |

**The Research Degree Durations included here were confirmed by Research Degrees committee for the start of the 2022-23 academic year (durations may be subject to change following approval of further revisions to the University's Research Degree Regulations)*

***Allowing for any period of enforced interruption of study approved via break in study.*

30. Minimum Level Credit Requirements and Maximum Duration of Study²

| University Award | Minimum Overall Credits | Minimum Required at Highest Level | Other Credit and Level Requirements | QAA FHEQ Qualification Level | FQ-EHEA Cycle | ECTS Credits Equivalence | Intermediate Awards | Max Duration of Course in FT Mode |
|---|-------------------------|-----------------------------------|--|------------------------------|--|--------------------------|---------------------|-----------------------------------|
| University Preparatory Year (Extended Degree Programmes) <i>NB: this does not confer an HE award and is only available as part of an extended degree</i> | 120 | 120 @ L3 (not QCF L3) | | - | | 60 | n/a | 2 years |
| University Certificate of Higher Education (Cert HE) | 120 | 120 @ L4 | | 4 | | 60 | n/a | 2 years |
| BTEC Higher National Certificate (HNC) | 120 | 120 @ L4 | | 4 | | 60 | n/a | 2 years |
| Certificate in Education (CertEd) | 120 | 60 @ L5 | Remaining 60 @ L4 or higher | 4 | | 60 | n/a | 2 years |
| University Diploma of Higher Education (DipHE) | 240 | 120 @ L5 | Remaining 120 @ L4 or higher | 5 | SHORT CYCLE (within or linked to the first cycle) qualifications | 120 | Cert HE | 4 years |
| BTEC Higher National Diploma (HND) | 240 | 120 @ L5 | Remaining 120 @ L4 or higher | 5 | | 120 | Cert HE | 4 years |
| Foundation Degree eg. FdA / FdSc / FdEng | 240 | 120 @ L5 | Minimum of 100 @ L4 or higher | 5 | | 120 | Cert HE | 4 years |
| Advanced Diploma of Higher Education | 300 | 60 @ L6 | Minimum of 120 @ L5 and remaining 120 @ L4 or higher | 5 | | 150 | n/a | 3 years |
| Graduate Certificate | 60 | 60 @ L6 | | 6 | | 30 | n/a | 1 year |
| Graduate Diploma | 120 | 120 @ L6 | | 6 | | 60 | Grad Cert | 2 years |

² Students must have studied and passed a minimum of 120 credits on a SHU validated award before they can be awarded an honours or an ordinary degree.

| | | | | | | | | |
|--|-----|----------|---|---|--|-----|---|--|
| Professional Graduate Certificate in Education (ProfGCE) | 60 | 60 @ L6 | Includes compulsory non-credit bearing modules designed to meet the requirements for Qualified Teacher Status (QTS) or equivalent | 6 | | 60 | n/a | 1 year |
| Bachelor's Degree* (ordinary degree) e.g. BA / BSc / BEng | 300 | 60@L6 | Minimum of 120 @ L5 and remaining 120 @ L4 or higher | 6 | FIRST CYCLE (end of cycle) quals | 150 | Cert HE Dip HE | 5 years |
| Bachelor's Degree with Honours* (honours degree) e.g. BA (Hons), BSc (Hons), BEng (Hons), LLB (Hons) | 360 | 120 @ L6 | Minimum of 120 @ L5 and remaining 120 at L4 or higher | 6 | | 180 | Cert HE Dip HE Ordinary Degree | 6 years or 7 years in SW mode; 2 years for L6 'top-up' |
| Postgraduate Certificate in Education (PGCE) | 60 | 60 @ L7 | Includes compulsory non-credit bearing modules designed to meet the requirements for Qualified Teacher Status (QTS) or equivalent | 7 | | 60 | PgCert (non-QTS) to recognise L7 credit | |
| Postgraduate Certificate (Pg Cert) | 60 | 60 @ L7 | | 7 | | 30 | n/a | 3 years |
| Postgraduate Diploma in Education (PGDE) | 120 | 120 @ L7 | Designed to meet the requirements for Qualified Teacher Status (QTS) or equivalent | 7 | | 60 | PgCert (non-QTS award) to recognise level 7 credits or PGCE | 3 years |
| Postgraduate Diploma (Pg Dip) | 120 | 120 @ L7 | | 7 | | 60 | Pg Cert | 3 years |

| | | | | | | | | |
|---|------------------|----------|---|---|--|-----|-----------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| Integrated Masters Degree (first degree)* eg. MEng / MSci / MArt / MComp / MArch / MDes See Note 6. | 480 | 120 @ L7 | Remaining 360 meets the requirements of an honours degree | 7 | SECOND CYCLE (end of cycle) quals | 240 | Cert HE Dip HE Degree | 7 years |
| Masters Degree (PG taught) eg. MA / MSc / MTL / MBA / MRes / MMedSci / LLM / Med/MFA | 180 | 180 @ L7 | MFA 240 2 years plus in PG award Master of Fine Art | 7 | | 90 | Pg Cert Pg Dip | 6 years (including all stages) |
| Masters Degree by Research eg. LLM by Research; MA in English by Research | Non credit-rated | | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mastery of an approved research topic or an area of professional practice, correlated with the established field of knowledge and/or professional practice • Demonstration of competence in research methods appropriate to the field • Demonstration of achievement of Generic Learning Outcomes at Level 7 | 7 | | | | 24 months |
| Master of Professional Studies (MProf) | Non credit-rated | | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mastery of an approved research topic or an area of advanced professional practice, correlated with the established field of knowledge and/or professional practice • Demonstration of competence in research methods appropriate to the field • Demonstration of achievement of Generic Learning Outcomes at Level 7 | 7 | | | | 24 months |

| | | | | | | | |
|--|------------------|---|---|-------------------------------------|---|--|-----------|
| Master of Philosophy (MPhil) | Non credit-rated | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mastery of an approved research topic, correlated with the established field of knowledge • demonstration of competence in research methods appropriate to the field • demonstration of achievement of Generic Learning Outcomes at L7 | 7 | | | | 24 months |
| Professional Doctorate eg. DBA / EdD / DProf | Non credit-rated | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mastery of an approved research topic or an area of advanced professional practice that extends the understanding of an established field of knowledge and/or advanced professional practice • consolidation of competence in research methods appropriate to the field • demonstration of achievement of Generic Learning Outcomes at L8 | 8 | THIRD CYCLE (end of cycle) quals | - | | 60 months |
| Doctor of Philosophy (PhD) | Non credit-rated | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mastery of an approved research topic, extending the understanding of an established field of knowledge • consolidation of competence in research methods appropriate to the field • demonstration of achievement of Generic Learning Outcomes at L8 | 8 | | - | | 48 months |
| Higher Doctorate eg. DEng / DLitt / DSci / LLD | Non credit-rated | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Demonstration of a major original contribution to the advancement or application of knowledge and the status of the individual as a leading authority in the field of study | 8 | | - | | |

Notes on Sheffield Hallam University Academic Awards Framework

1. The University's Academic Awards Framework is a common Framework for the design of undergraduate and postgraduate courses through which the academic standards of all the University's awards can be defined and can be cross-referenced to relevant external frameworks and benchmarks including [The Frameworks for Higher Education Qualifications of UK Degree-Awarding Bodies \(QAA, October 2014\)](#)
2. Sandwich Mode: University awards marked with an asterisk * are also available as 'sandwich' awards. In addition to the credit requirements shown in the table above, these awards include a substantial period of supervised work experience as a requirement of the award (see AAF, Section 3.9, Mode of Study). Achievement of a sandwich award is indicated on University Certificates and Transcripts.
3. Awards may include credit that has been recognised through the University's procedures for the Recognition of Prior Learning. Credit derived from such procedures is indicated on the University Transcript.
4. Substitution of higher level credit, for deficiencies at lower levels, may be permitted subject to the relevant [Standard Assessment Regulation](#) and to meeting the specific aims, learning outcomes and other requirements of individual named awards.
5. Compensation may be applied to all the main Undergraduate awards defined in the table above unless an exemption has been approved. The rules for compensation are detailed in the University's Assessment Regulations. Compensation is not available for any Postgraduate award.
6. Integrated Masters degrees are level 7, second cycle qualifications and are positioned at masters level in alignment with the Framework for Higher Education Qualifications (FHEQ), (QAA, 2008, revised 2014) and the HE Credit Framework for England (QAA, 2008). Integrated masters degrees are normally delivered over a minimum of 4 years and contain at least 480 credits, including a minimum of 120 credits at L7 to meet the requirements for a masters level award. The remaining 360 credits are designed to meet the requirements for a first honours degree. Integrated masters awards are recognised as undergraduate for funding, fees and external reporting purposes. Integrated masters awards are required meet to the FHEQ Qualification Descriptors for levels 6 and 7 in full. These awards conform to the University's Assessment Regulations for undergraduate awards and are classified in line with the classification methods for bachelor's degrees with honours. Further information is provided in the [Standard Assessment Regulations](#).
7. An associated PGCE award (see below) may be approved for the purposes of providing an alternative award to recognise achievement of 60 credits and eligibility for QTS, subject to meeting all requirements for QTS.
8. The minimum credit and level requirements must be met for all awards, as specified above. Exemptions will be required where credit and level requirements would be exceeded and this will only be considered for the purposes of meeting the specific requirements for accreditation by a relevant Professional, Statutory and/or Regulatory Body (PSRB).

Annex A – Curriculum Structure Scheme A

(32-week undergraduate provision)

At a glance...

All modules will be delivered and assessed in a Semester

No more than 4 modules per level of study

Modules can be 20, 40 or 60 credits

In Semester 1 FY and L4, consideration should be given to delivering modules sequentially so that students leave for the Christmas break with provisional results for at least 40 credits.

No electives at Level 4

Department, College and University electives and / or placement will occur in Semester 2, Level 5

Principles

In our design of curriculum structures, we strive to maintain a balance between academic innovation in pedagogy, an equitable, consistent, and empowering student experience, with simplicity and consistency in our course structures:

- In designing our courses we will balance student expectation of choice with the need to ensure a stable and consistent timetable. This will mean less elective modules in some courses as well as consistent approach to when electives are offered.
- By limiting how we structure our courses we will free up systems and support which will allow the University to ensure we are efficient (in both academic and professional service support) in delivery and can support innovation.

Additionally, we seek a significant reduction in the total number of modules delivered in any one session, this will:

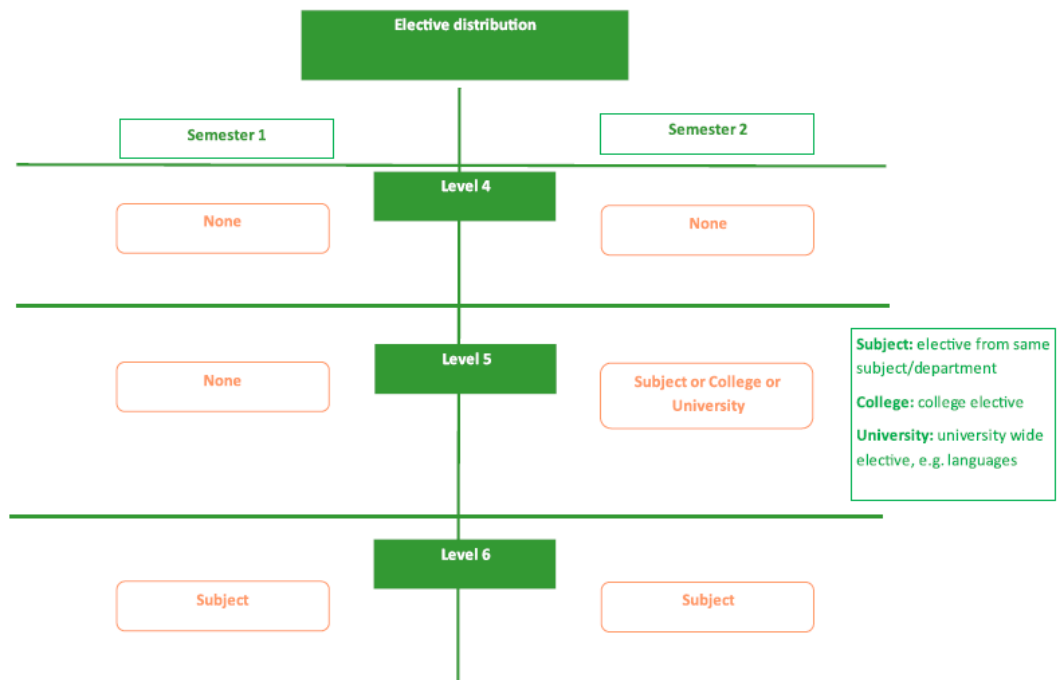
- Counter the fragmentation of course design (typical in modular schemes) and aid course cohesion and course focus
- Reduce the overall assessment burden on students (via review of the assessment tariff) and simplify the logistics of managing assessments
- Reduce overhead of module leadership which will reduce burden on academic staff

Framework for 32 week, UG courses (Foundation Year, Levels 4, 5 and 6 and Integrated Masters)

The following should be read in conjunction with the diagrams in *Annex 1 and 2*.

- Normally no more than 4 modules per level of study.
- All modules 20 credits and multiples (20, 40 and 60 being only allowed values).
- All modules delivered and assessed in semesters.
- No electives at Level 4.
- Level 5, semester 2 and Level 6 -course-based electives, the volume of electives offered will be determined by student numbers (benchmark 25 students)
- Level 5 Semester 2 – college and university electives as well as exchanges/semester abroad etc for those courses which wish to utilise this optionality. University electives to be available as Level 5 modules only.
- In semester 1 FY and L4, consideration should be given to delivering modules sequentially so that students leave for the Christmas break with provisional results for at least 40 credits. Consultation suggests students welcome this.
- If sequential modules are not used (i.e., modules are delivered concurrently as is current practice) there will need to be sufficient formative and summative assessment undertaken to provide students with a 'progress grade' prior to the Christmas vacation.
- Where practical Departments will be encouraged to use a common model across the levels of a course, that is if Level 4 is delivered 20+40/20+40 then Levels 5 and 6 will also use 20+40/20+40; or if this is not practical to try and use a common Level 4 across most/many of their courses. This is not a formal requirement but if it is broadly adopted it will further streamline and aid the setup of curriculum on SITs, etc.
- Each course will have a non-credit bearing module associated with it to support non-curricular activities e.g. induction, academic advising.

| Semester 1 | | | Semester 2 | | |
|---|----|----|---|----|----|
| Model 1 | | | Model 1 | | |
| 20 | | | 20 | | |
| 40 | | | 40 | | |
| Model 2a | | | Model 2a | | |
| 20 | | | | | |
| 40 | | | | | 60 |
| Model 2b | | | Model 2b | | |
| | | 60 | | | 20 |
| | | | | | 40 |
| Model 3a | | | Model 3a | | |
| | | 60 | | | 60 |
| Model 3b | | | Model 3b | | |
| 60 | Or | 20 | 20 | Or | 60 |
| | | 20 | | | 20 |
| | | 20 | | | 20 |
| Model 4 | | | Model 4 | | |
| Level 4 sequential delivery in semester | | | Level 4 sequential delivery in semester | | |
| 20 | 20 | 20 | | | 60 |
| 20 | | 40 | | | 20 |
| 40 | | 20 | | | 20 |
| | | | | Or | 40 |
| | | | | | 20 |



Taught Postgraduate provision

At a glance...

- *All modules will be delivered and assessed in a Trimester*
- *Masters (180 credits) maximum of 6 modules (includes min 40 credit project / dissertation in final Trimester)*
- *Modules can be 20, 30, 40, 60 credits with departments adopting a consistent course structure and limit the different module sizes on a course to 30,60 or 20,40,60*
- *Course duration should be either 3 trimesters (12 months, fulltime), or 6 trimesters (24 months, part time).*
- *A placement occurrence will extend the duration to 18 or 24 months for FT. The ‘wrap up period’ for international students of 4 months is added to the course duration. Student records must be completed before the end of the ‘wrap up period’ for students to benefit from the post study visa.*
- *Placement routes run with a September start date only.*
- *For students on a student visa, placements cannot form more than 50% of the total course duration.*
- *All placements must be embedded and be completed before Trimester 3 and associated assessment submissions.*

Principles

In our design of curriculum structures, we strive to maintain a balance between academic innovation in pedagogy, an equitable, consistent, and empowering student experience, with simplicity and consistency in our course structures:

- In designing our courses we will balance student expectation of choice with the need to ensure a stable and consistent timetable. This will mean less elective modules in some courses.
- By limiting how we structure our courses we will ensure we are efficient (in both academic and professional service support) in delivery and can support innovation.

Additionally, we seek a significant reduction in the total number of modules delivered in any one session, this will:

- Counter the fragmentation of course design and aid course cohesion and course focus.

1

- Reduce the overall assessment burden on students (via review of the assessment tariff) and simplify the logistics of managing assessments.
- Reduce overhead of module leadership and reduce burden on academic staff.

See Annex 2 for additional rationale.

Framework for Taught Postgraduate courses

The following should be read in conjunction with the diagrams at the end of this annex.

1. All modules are delivered and assessed in a Trimester and in alignment to the academic calendar; NB preparatory work for dissertation modules cantake place in the preceding trimester and prior to placement.
2. Course start and end dates must be aligned to the academic calendar.
3. PgCert (60 credits) will be a maximum of 2 modules.
4. PgDip (120 credits) will be a maximum of 4 modules.
5. Modules can be 20, 30, 40, 60 credits.
6. Departments should adopt a consistent course structure and limit the different module sizes on a course to 30,60 or 20,40,60.
7. Sequential study can be adopted.
8. Electives are subject to minimum cohort size (details TBC).
9. Masters course durations should be either 3 trimesters / 12 months (fulltime) or 6 trimesters / 24 months (part time). A placement occurrence would extend the duration up to 18/24months for FT subject to length of placement.
10. A 'wrap up period' of 4 months is added to student visas for courses of 12 months or more in duration. Student records must be completed before the end of this 'wrap up period' for students to benefit from the post-study visa. 12-month courses must be at least 365 days in duration.
11. Placements will be 6 or 12 months in duration and only for September starts. If a placement fails or is withdrawn, the student will transfer to the shorter route. Students on a Student Visa on will need to secure a placement for the entire placement period by a fixed deadline, this is to ensure that if they are not successful in securing a placement, they can transfer to the non-placement version of the course.
12. September and January cohorts should be treated as distinct and experience the course as validated. Collaborative working between students from different cohorts must be based on a pedagogic rationale. Both cohorts should have an equitable student experience and opportunities to thrive.
13. All placements must be embedded and completed before the final trimester and assessment submission.
14. Courses and their delivery should be designed to comply with UKVI requirements which means placement activity must be embedded within the course and not at the end, consist of no more than 50% placement, have scheduled teaching activity in all three trimesters and follow the academic calendar.

| | Trimester 1 | Trimester 2 | Trimester 3 |
|----|-------------|-------------|-------------|
| B1 | | Model B1 | |
| | 20 40 | 20 40 | 20 40 |
| B2 | | Model B2 | |
| | 20 40 | 20 40 | 60 |
| B3 | | Model B3 | |
| | 30 30 | 30 30 | 60 |
| B4 | | Model B4 | |
| | 60 | 60 | 60 |

(Extended-year practice-focused provision)

At a glance...

- *Undergraduate courses run across three trimesters*
- *Postgraduate courses run across two or more trimesters depending on the level of award (PgCert, PgDip, Masters) and practice learning requirements*
- *Modules can be:*
 - *20, 40 or 60 credits at undergraduate and postgraduate level*
- *No more than:*
 - *4 modules per undergraduate level of study (120 credits)*
 - *6 modules per postgraduate 180 credits*
- *All modules will be delivered and assessed within a Trimester*
- *At least 20 credits to be delivered each trimester*
- *Placements and Practice Based Learning to be 1 credit (or multiples thereof)*

Common characteristics

Suggest a set of ‘must do’ overarching principles that would be true for all schemes:

- All courses have standardised start dates and are compliant with current UKVI guidance
- At undergraduate level, modules can be 20, 40 or 60 credits and with no more than 4 modules per level of study
- At postgraduate level, modules can be 20, 40 or 60 credits¹ and with no more than 6 modules per 180 credits of postgraduate credits.
- All modules will be delivered and assessed within a semester/trimester

Unique Characteristics

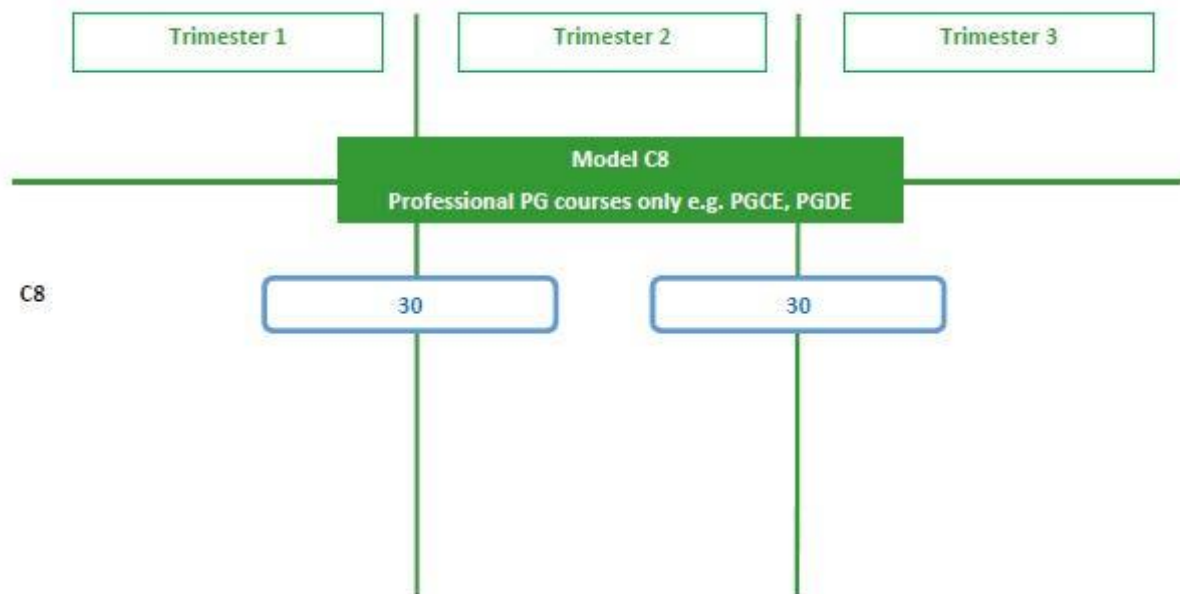
Scheme C courses are extended length, professional programmes, with mandated practice learning or evidenced work experience requirements.

The unique principles of Scheme C are:

- Includes both undergraduate and postgraduate extended-length practice-focused provision.
- Modules are delivered across all three trimesters.

¹ Note that Scheme B (Postgraduate Taught) also includes 30 credit modules.

- Teaching is scheduled in all three trimesters with a minimum of 20 credits and a maximum of 60 credits in each trimester.
- The third trimester of undergraduate study to have 20 credits only (not including practice learning) and will take place over the first 6-weeks of the trimester. This structure supports student progression and completion and deliver timing that allows final year students to meet professional registration and begin employment. Practice learning may take place over the full trimester.
- The final trimester of postgraduate study to have a 40 or 60 credit masters dissertation/project module.
- Practice learning modules are multiples of 1 credit and may cross over different trimesters in terms of delivery and assessment. These modules include the assessment of professional competency and do not include academic teaching, learning or assessment.
- Placements or practice-focused learning are an essential, integral and substantial part of the course that lead to registration, qualification, or advanced professional practice.



| | Trimester 1 | Trimester 2 | Trimester 3 | Trimester 4 | Trimester 5 | Trimester 6 |
|-----|-------------|-------------|-------------------------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|
| | | | Model C6 40 C Dissertation | | | |
| C6a | 20 | 40 | 20 | 40 | 20 | 40 |
| C6b | 40 | 20 | 40 | 20 | 20 | 40 |
| C6c | 20 | 40 | 40 | 20 | 20 | 40 |
| C6d | 40 | 20 | 20 | 40 | 20 | 40 |
| C6e | 40 | 40 | 20 | 20 | 20 | 40 |
| | | | Model C7 60 C Dissertation | | | |
| C7a | 40 | 20 | 20 | 20 | 20 | 60 |
| C7b | 20 | 40 | 20 | 20 | 20 | 60 |

Annex D – Curriculum Structure Scheme D

At a glance...

No more than 4 modules per level of study for undergraduate provision, and no more than 6 modules per 180 credits for postgraduate (not including 1 credit modules)

UG & PG Modules can be 20, 40 or 60 credits. In addition, Postgraduate modules can be 30 credits however departments should adopt a consistent course structure and limit the different module sizes on a course to either 30,60 or 20,40,60

All levels of study must include the equivalent of at least 20 credits of portfolio and reflective practice learning

No electives at any Level

Block delivery is the standard model. Day-release delivery will be allowed by exception where there is a clear market driver

Block delivery cohorts will normally start in either October, February, or March

All cohorts should be treated as distinct and experience the course as validated. Collaborative working between students/learners from different cohorts must be based on a pedagogic rationale. All cohorts should have an equitable student experience and opportunities to thrive.

Why Apprenticeships require a scheme

Apprenticeships are in the main delivered through sequential block delivery teaching with non-standard module start dates, therefore they cannot be semesterised and aligned to the academic calendar. See the diagrams at the end of this annex for illustrative examples.

Principles

In our design of curriculum structures, we strive to maintain a balance between academic innovation in pedagogy, an equitable, consistent, and empowering student/learner experience, with simplicity and consistency in our course structures:

- In designing our courses, we will balance student/learner expectation of choice with the need to ensure a stable and consistent timetable.

- By limiting how we structure our courses we will free up systems and support which will ensure we are efficient (in
- academic and professional service support) in delivery and can support innovation.

Additionally, we seek a significant reduction in the total number of modules delivered in any one session, this will:

- Counter the fragmentation of course design (typical in modular schemes) and aid course cohesion and course focus
- reduce the overall assessment burden on students/learners (via review of the assessment tariff) and simplify the logistics of managing assessments
- Reduce overhead of module leadership which will reduce burden on academic staff

The pedagogic rationale for developing Scheme D is consistent with Schemes A-C.

Framework for UG Higher and Degree Apprenticeships (Levels 4, 5 and 6)

- No more than 4 modules per level of study (not including 1 credit modules)
- All modules 20 credits and multiples (20, 40 and 60 being the only allowed values)
- All levels of study must include the equivalent of at least 20 credits of portfolio and reflective practice learning
- Block delivery is the preferred model to meet regional and national employer requirements
- Block delivery cohorts will normally start in either October, February, or March
- Day-release delivery will be allowed by exception where there is a clear market driver. All modules within a day-release delivery model delivered and assessed in semesters
- Students/learners must receive a progress review with a SHU Work Based Learning coach and their employer, focusing on their progress as an apprentice at 12-week intervals from starting, to completing the course. This is in addition to the standard academic feedback for each module
- No electives at any level
- Where practical Departments will be encouraged to use a common model across the levels of a course; that is if Level 4 is delivered 20+40/20+40 use a common Level 4 across most/many of their courses. If this is not practical, then try a common model at course level; if Level 4 is delivered 20+40/20+40 then Levels 5 and 6 will also use 20+40/20+40. This is not a formal requirement but if it is broadly adopted it will further streamline and simplify curriculum data and space management supporting a more consistent and stable timetable for students
- All cohorts should be treated as distinct and experience the course as validated.
Collaborative working between students/learners from different cohorts must be based on a pedagogic rationale. All cohorts should have an equitable student experience and opportunities to thrive.

Framework for PG Higher and Degree Apprenticeships (Level 7)

- No more than 6 modules per 180 credits (not including 1 credit modules)
- PgCert (60 credits) will be a maximum of 2 modules (not including 1 credit modules)
- PgDip (120 credits) will be a maximum of 4 modules (not including 1 credit modules)
- Modules can be 20, 30, 40 or 60 credits. Departments should adopt a consistent course structure and limit the different module sizes on a course to either 30,60 or 20,40,60. Courses cannot mix 20 and 30 credit modules
- All levels of study must include the equivalent of at least 20 credits of portfolio and reflective practice learning
- Block delivery is the preferred model to meet regional and national employer requirements
- Block delivery cohorts will normally start in either October, February, or March
- Day-release delivery will be allowed by exception where there is a clear market driver. All modules within a day-release delivery model delivered and assessed in semesters
- Students must receive a progress review with a SHU Work Based Learning coach and their employer, focusing on their progress as an apprentice at 12-week intervals from starting, to completing the course. This is in addition to the standard academic feedback for each module
- Where practical Departments should adopt a consistent course structure and limit the different module sizes on a course to 30, 60 or 20, 40, 60
- Standard course durations should be 24 months, part time (excluding the End Point Assessment)
- All cohorts should be treated as distinct and experience the course as validated. Collaborative working between students/leaners from different cohorts must be based on a pedagogic rationale. All cohorts should have an equitable student experience and opportunities to thrive.



Annex E – Collaborative Typologies

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|---|
| SHU Typology |
| <p>EXTERNAL VALIDATION (aka VALIDATION ARRANGEMENTS) SHU considers a programme or module(s) developed, designed and delivered by a partner organisation and approves the provision as being of an appropriate standard and quality to lead to (or contribute to) a University award. Students normally have a direct contractual relationship with the delivery organisation. Mainly used for collaborative partnership arrangements with UK Further Education College Partners and other HE providers without Degree Awarding Powers (DAPs).</p> |
| <p>FRANCHISE (aka SUB-CONTRACTUAL) A process by which SHU agrees to authorise a partner organisation to deliver (and sometimes assess) all or part of one (or more) of its (SHU's) own approved programmes. Students normally have a direct contractual relationship with the degree-awarding body. May be used in collaboration with UK FEC partners and overseas partners without DAPs.</p> |
| <p>COLLABORATIVE DEVELOPMENT AND/OR DELIVERY (aka SHARED ARRANGEMENTS) Both SHU and a partner organisation jointly contribute to the design, development and/or delivery and assessment of provision leading to an award, each with an agreed and specific allocation of responsibilities for teaching, assessing and supporting students. Students may have a direct contractual relationship with either partner, subject to agreement and depending on which organisation has the major share of responsibilities for teaching, assessing and supporting students (more than 50%).</p> |
| <p>ARTICULATION A process whereby cohorts of students who satisfy academic criteria on one programme (delivered and awarded by a partner organisation) are automatically entitled, on academic grounds, to be admitted with advanced standing to a subsequent stage of a SHU programme leading to a SHU award. The two separate components are the responsibility of the respective partner organisations delivering each of them but, together, contribute to a single award of the degree-awarding body.</p> <p>NB: Articulations are distinct from <i>Progression Arrangements</i>, whereby individual student applications are assessed prior to entry to a specified programme. Entry to the specified programme is neither automatic nor guaranteed. Entry may be to the initial stage or to a later stage of an individual programme, subject to meeting relevant entry requirements and / or requirements for advanced standing.</p> |
| <p>DUAL/JOINT/MULTIPLE AWARD Dual: arrangement where SHU and one or more partners (with degree awarding powers) together provide a single jointly delivered programme leading to separate awards and separate certification being granted by both, or all, of the awarding bodies. Joint: arrangement under which two or more awarding bodies together provide a programme leading to a single award made jointly by both, or all, participants. A single certificate or document (signed by the competent authorities) attests to the successful completion of this jointly delivered programme, replacing separate institutional qualifications.</p> |
| <p>CREDIT RATING (eg. of learning/training/CPD provided by employers/other organisations) SHU assesses, recognises and assigns a general and specific academic credit rating to provision designed, developed and delivered by another delivery organisation, support provider and/or University partner. Credit rating may subsequently provide progression to specified SHU award with advanced standing.</p> |
| <p>SUPPORT PROVIDER / AGENT (provider of specialist facilities/equipment/student services) An external organisation which supplies support, resources or specialist facilities for student learning opportunities for students studying on SHU programmes, leading to a University award.</p> |