

**ACADEMIC POLICY  
RELATING TO  
TAUGHT AWARDS**

Policy and practice relevant to learning, teaching and assessment at the University of Greenwich accompany the [Academic Regulations for Taught Awards](#) ensure the University maintains high standards of academic quality and integrity.

This policy outlines the general principles underpinning the Academic Regulations for Taught Awards. Additional policies and guidelines are available on a wider range of matters, such as those listed below, which can be found on the [Greenwich Learning and Teaching](#) pages and on the following links:

[Learning, Teaching and Assessment Strategy](#)

[Assessment and Feedback Policy](#)

## Mission Statement

*The University of Greenwich has a long and proud history of delivering excellent teaching and learning, and of widening access to higher education to ensure that all who have the motivation and ability to succeed have the opportunity to realise their ambitions.*

We will achieve our core mission of ‘Transforming lives through inspired teaching and research’ by:

1. Changing student lives through outstanding teaching and learning.
2. Enhancing science and society with excellent research and enterprise.
3. Delivering a high-quality university experience through engaging campus environments and services.
4. Supporting and developing our staff so that they can reach their full potential and maximise their contribution.
5. Enhancing student employability to optimise prospects for graduate employment and further study.
6. Internationalising Greenwich so that we take our place in a global society.
7. Embedding our values – ambition, creativity, determination, excellence, and inclusivity – in all that we do.

We provide high-quality and distinctive undergraduate and postgraduate education at Greenwich. Our programmes of study are research led, technology enhanced and professionally relevant: over 100 of them are accredited by external professional statutory and regulatory bodies (PSRBs), covering just over half of all students. They are taught to the highest standards by well-qualified expert lecturers and professors.

## Principles

### Standard of Awards

The fundamental principle underlying the work of the University of Greenwich is that the Degrees, Diplomas, Certificates and other academic awards and distinctions conferred by the University should be consistent and comparable in standard with awards granted and conferred throughout higher education in the United Kingdom. All the University’s awards will adhere to the criteria and qualification descriptors of the Framework for Higher Education Qualifications

(FHEQ) for England, Wales and Northern Ireland.

Academic awards should be defined in terms of standard, learning outcomes, duration and level of entry, and the minimum standard for each of these should be no less than that of any other institution of higher education in the United Kingdom and should take account of subject specific benchmarks.

### **Mode and Structure of Programmes of Study**

Whilst the standard and learning outcomes of an academic award should conform to what is acceptable throughout the United Kingdom, the route by which these are achieved by students should not be rigid.

The advancement of education and the extension of educational opportunities demand the availability of a variety of modes of study and programme structures. The curriculum, structure, teaching methods and forms of assessment of a programme should be such as to ensure the realisation of its aims and learning outcomes.

The aims of a programme should include the development to the level required for the award to which it leads, of a body of knowledge and skills appropriate to the field of study and reflecting academic developments in that field.

The aims should also include general educational aims, particularly the development of:

- students' intellectual and imaginative powers;
- their understanding and judgement;
- their problem-solving skills;
- their ability to communicate;
- their ability to see relationships within what they have learned and to examine their field of study in a broader context.

Each programme should stimulate in each student an enquiring, analytical and creative approach and encourage independent judgement and critical self-awareness.

The outcomes of a programme should specify the knowledge and skills to be developed as a result of the programme and evaluated in the assessments.

### **Quality of Learning**

The quality of learning is a crucial element in the attainment and maintenance of standards and of the motivation of students, and it must be upheld and when possible enhanced. Not only should teaching staff be properly qualified and experienced, their teaching should also be invigorated and informed by their participation in research and related scholarly or professional activities.

### **Students' Environment**

Students need to receive the academic supervision appropriate to the level at which they are studying. The University of Greenwich will seek to ensure the provision of: adequate learning resources; appropriate support services; opportunities to contribute in an informed way to programme development and an atmosphere in which rational debate is encouraged.

### **Powers**

The University of Greenwich shall have the following powers:

- a) To grant and confer Degrees, Diplomas, Certificates and other academic awards and distinctions on persons who shall have successfully pursued programmes of study or supervised research approved by the University and shall have passed such examinations or other assessments as may from time to time be required by the University
- b) To determine the terms and conditions for the granting and conferment of such academic awards and distinctions
- c) To grant and confer, subject to such conditions as the University shall from time to time determine, Honorary Degrees and distinctions to and on persons selected by the University
- d) To approve, validate and review, on such conditions as the University may from time to time determine, programmes or supervised research pursued by candidates to qualify for the University's academic awards and distinctions
- e) To accept in partial fulfilment of the study and assessment requirements for the awards of the University such periods of learning or experience and such assessments as may be recognised by the University and have been successfully completed and passed by students otherwise than on programmes approved under (a) and (d).

No religious, racial or political test shall be imposed on any person as a condition of receiving any Degree, Diploma, Certificate or other academic award or distinction from the University.

## Responsibilities

The University of Greenwich shall have the following responsibilities in fulfilling its Mission and exercising its powers relating to the overall management of academic quality and standards:

- a) To ensure that its degrees, diplomas, certificates and other academic awards and distinctions are consistent in standard and are comparable in standard with awards granted and conferred throughout higher education in the United Kingdom.
- b) To ensure that its programmes are of such high academic standard as required in (a) and that for each programme regard has been paid to:
  - The curriculum and syllabus including arrangements for practical training and experience
  - The qualifications and experience of the lecturing staff
  - The facilities available
  - The standard required for admission
  - The quality of teaching
  - The achievements of the students
  - The arrangements for student assessment and for the appointment of external and internal examiners
  - The arrangements for monitoring, sustaining and developing both the standard of student performance and of the quality of learning and teaching.
- c) To co-operate and collaborate with institutions, public bodies, industrial and commercial concerns, or professional bodies with a view to the achievement of the mission of the University.

## Quality Assurance

In exercising the power to grant and confer academic awards, the University of Greenwich is required to demonstrate that it has the capacity and resources to establish procedures for the initial validation, approval, regular monitoring, periodic review and modification of its modules and programmes. Its quality assurance system will adhere to the QAA Code of Practice, and it will be ready to demonstrate its capacity and effectiveness as a self-critical academic

community, and the responsiveness to peer review of its processes and procedures for academic quality assurance. [For procedures and guidelines see the University's Academic Quality Assurance Handbook at [http://www.gre.ac.uk/offices/lqu/qa\\_handbook](http://www.gre.ac.uk/offices/lqu/qa_handbook)].

The University will periodically examine its systems for developing and sustaining academic quality, including the standards actually achieved by students; its approaches to teaching and learning and to research and scholarly activity in support of the curricula. The institutional evaluation will aim to demonstrate:

- a) Clear channels of accountability from subject and programme teams to the Academic Council
- b) Executive and administrative structures which support the collective processes of academic policy-making and sustain academic leadership
- c) Arrangements for staff and students to contribute in an informed way to the formulation of academic policy and priorities
- d) Effective communication which fosters internal relationships and the transmission of good practice.

The University's self-evaluation will enable it to demonstrate that:

- a) The methods adopted by the Academic Council effectively enable it to satisfy itself that the quality and standards of the University's awards is being maintained and the University's mission statement is being achieved
- b) The sources of evidence used by the Academic Council in judging academic quality and standards are appropriate
- c) The Academic Council is provided with sufficient information to enable it to determine whether all students are receiving a broad, balanced and stimulating higher education experience, and to enable it to monitor progression
- d) The Academic Council's policies have been successful in enhancing the quality of teaching and learning and the student experience through the promotion of developmental activities, the arrangements for the identification and exchange of good innovative practice, and responsiveness to module and programme teams.

## Academic Framework

### Aims

The University Academic Framework provides a model within which Faculties may develop taught programmes which are undergraduate (pre-degree and degree) and postgraduate (in level and/or in time). The Framework provides a structure which:

- a) Allows students freedom to negotiate an approved curriculum most suited to their needs and aspirations
- b) Makes the university more accessible to a wider range of students from different backgrounds and with different expectations
- c) Gives students credit for learning (formal and experiential) they have acquired both inside and outside the workplace
- d) Provides entry to, and allows exit from, the university at appropriate points to match individual student requirements
- e) Provides flexibility of pace, mode and level of individual students' programme of study
- f) Enables the quality of the student experience to be maintained and enhanced

- g) Enables the university to maintain and enhance the diversity and range of available programmes in a cost effective way
- h) Is capable of responding to changes and demands from students and employers, and external agencies

The Framework encompasses all of the University's credit bearing provision contributing to taught awards, and includes provision at Partner Colleges and other collaborative partners. It provides overarching principles, regulations, mechanisms, and procedures allowing comparability and compatibility across the University, whilst ensuring that Faculties can develop the programmes in a way that is appropriate to the professional and disciplinary needs of both their students and staff. Whilst doing this, however, it also maximises the ability of students and staff to move across traditional disciplinary and administrative boundaries and create new opportunities which will more closely reflect the changing demands of students and employers.

### **Structure of the Academic Framework**

As endorsed by Academic Council the principles underpinning the Regulatory Framework establish:

- regulations which are flexible, non-restrictive, overarching and paramount;
- that no Programme Regulatory Framework can deviate from the requirements of the University Regulations without Council endorsement of them as 'exceptions' (see 2.6 below)
- That regulations will be monitored and if necessary updated annually and will apply to all students (i.e. students will no longer be subject for their whole time at the University of Greenwich to the Regulations in force when they first enrolled.)

### **Academic Levels**

The Framework is divided into a series of sequential levels which relate to the standards of work and not necessarily to the year in which the module is taken during a programme of studies. At each level awards are available in line with the Framework for Higher Education Qualifications (FHEQ).

## **Awards**

### **Joint, Dual and Multiple Awards**

Provided expectations and legal capacity is met, the University reserves the right to engage with one or more authorized awarding bodies jointly to provide a programme of study leading to dual, joint or multiple academic awards.

The fundamental principle of such awards is that the University, as a degree-awarding body, is directly responsible for the academic standards of any awards granted in its name (whether these are in the forms of academic credit or qualifications), as well as for the accuracy of any transcript or record of achievement summarising these, regardless of where the learning takes place and whoever provides it.

### **Joint awards**

Joint academic awards, where a single qualification is granted for successful completion of one programme of study offered collaboratively by two or more awarding bodies, require the

University to satisfy itself that it has the legal and regulatory capacity to grant academic awards jointly with the other organisation(s) in question, especially where this involves pooling or combining awarding powers granted within different legal jurisdictions.

### **Dual and multiple awards**

Programmes of study that lead to dual or multiple awards involve the granting of separate qualifications by each of the awarding bodies involved, based on the same student work. Where grades awarded for credits studied at the partner are imported into the University of Greenwich record/transcript, the University's Grade Translation Policy (Appendix A of Academic Regulations for Taught Awards) will be used. Regardless of the collaborative nature of the programme, responsibility for each award, and its academic standard, remains with the body awarding it.

## **Admission of Students**

### **Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL)**

Where the award of general or specific credit has been agreed, the student will be exempt from those modules against which the prior learning has been adequately mapped.

The grade for any credits gained via RPL will not be transferred for the purpose of University of Greenwich unless it has been recognised as a result of Faculty external credit-rating activity or where there is an agreement with another HEI to recognise such transfer of grades.

Part-time students may make a claim for RPL at any time during their programme of study to enable learning undertaken concurrently with their programme of study to be considered.

### **Direct Entry**

Applicants holding a pre-degree award in a relevant subject area may be considered for admission with general credit, normally to the start of the applicable year of the programme.

Unless the programme has been specifically designed to build on EDEXCEL or SCOTVEC HND/C qualifications and makes provision for entry direct to the third year, HND/C students will not normally be admitted to the third year of a degree programme without satisfactorily completing assessments equivalent to those required for progression from the second to the third year of the degree programme, or the equivalent stage of a part-time programme.

### **Exchange Students**

Exchange students may not be registered for an award of the University, as they remain registered in their home institution. Performance is reported to their home institution under ECTS regulations. Where students wish to transfer to the University to complete an award, their performance during funded study at the University can form the basis of a claim for RPL.

### **Associate Students**

An Associate Student is a student undertaking an approved curriculum of one or more module(s) who is not currently registered for a University award. Such students are not required to undertake the formal module(s) assessments, but if they do, and complete the requirements satisfactorily, they may make use of the credit gained.

## **University Erasmus, Study Abroad and Dual Award Students**

University of Greenwich students may undertake a period of study abroad if it is authorised by the University. Where this period of study at a recognised partner is deemed by the University to contribute to the grades required for an award, assessment grades achieved by the student at that partner (excluding pass/fail) should be translated and integrated into the student's record using the tables in the University's Grade Translation Policy (Appendix A of Academic Regulations for Taught Awards) and shall be considered as part of the Progression and Award Board's classification or awarding processes.

## **General Principles of Assessment**

### **Fulfilment of learning outcomes**

All programmes relate assessment requirements to specific learning outcomes. Students are expected to demonstrate the attainment of these in their overall performance at module/programme level. Progression through and completion of awards are subject to the University Assessment Regulations.

### **Confirmation of standard**

Assessment reflects the achievement of the individual student in fulfilling the programme learning outcomes. At the same time, it relates that achievement to a consistent national standard of awards. It should, therefore, be carried out by impartial examiners, using methods which enable them to assess students fairly. To that end, external examiners are involved in assessments which count towards an award. Their role is to ensure that the University's assessment procedures are appropriate in the context of the assessment set for a module or award, that the decisions reached in respect of students being assessed are fair, and that the standard of the University's awards is being maintained.

### **Language of Instruction**

For overseas collaborations it is normal practice for the medium of instruction and assessment to be in English. In exceptional circumstances, at the discretion of Academic Council, permission may be granted for the teaching and/or assessment of a programme or module to be a language other than English.

### **Examiners' judgement**

Within the constraints of paragraph 5.1, the Progression and Award Board has discretion in reaching decisions on the awards to be made to individual candidates. The Progression and Award Board is responsible for interpreting the assessment regulations for the programme of study concerned if any difficulties arise, in the light of the University's requirements and good practice in higher education; and its academic judgements should not, in themselves, be questioned or overturned.

### **Information for students**

These academic regulations and any programme specific regulations will be made known to students. This includes the publication of definitive regulations on the University website. The assessment requirements for each module shall be notified to every student in writing at the start of the module.



### **Responsibilities of students**

The copies of dissertations or project reports at undergraduate and postgraduate levels submitted for examination shall remain the property of the University but the copyright shall be vested in the student. Students' examination scripts shall be retained in accordance with the University Records Retention Schedule.

Where a member of University staff is enrolled on an award, normally their assignments should be seen by the appropriate External Examiner, as should any claim for RPL.

### **Conferment of Awards**

Unless the award is made by an external body the certificate will be in the format approved by the University. Certificates will bear the signature of the Vice-Chancellor and the Chancellor. Certificates without these signatures, or which have been amended after issue, are not valid.