

CHAPTER 3: QUALIFICATION AND COURSE FRAMEWORK

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This section outlines the awards currently offered by the University, including the level of each award and the corresponding descriptor for that level. Please note, exit awards that are not offered as standalone awards are detailed in **Chapter 5: Progression and Award for Taught Programmes**.

This section also outlines the relationship between the academic regulations and programme specifications; the difference between core and non-core modules; provides details about module level, status and value; and explains the marks required to pass a module component and an overall module.

Each taught programme of study will have a programme specification approved by the relevant Faculty Education Committee as part of the programme approval procedure and updated on an annual basis. Programme specifications specify the duration of the programme in full-time and, where applicable, part-time mode, and the minimum period of study for the award and the maximum period for which credit for the award may be counted. The period of study will normally be continuous unless an interruption has been permitted. Amendments to programme specifications will not normally be introduced during an academic year. For some programmes, particularly those with Professional, Statutory or Regulatory Bodies (PSRB) accreditation, any additional programme regulations are contained within programme specifications.

Awards of King's College London

- 3.1. The University offers teaching and research at undergraduate, postgraduate taught and postgraduate research levels. The University also offers teaching at pre-undergraduate level. All programmes will be assigned to a level from the Quality Assurance Agency (QAA) [Frameworks for Higher Education Qualifications of UK Degree Awarding Bodies \(FHEQ\)](#), except pre-undergraduate programmes which are assigned to a level from the [Regulated Qualifications Framework \(RQF\)](#), by the relevant Faculty Education Committee, as detailed below.

Level	Awards
Level 3	Foundation Certificate
Level 4	Undergraduate Certificate (UGCert) (available as exit award only)
Level 5	Undergraduate Diploma (UGDip) (available as exit award only)
Level 6	Honours degree (Hons) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bachelor of Arts (BA) • Bachelor of Engineering (BEng) • Bachelor of Laws (LLB) • Bachelor of Music (BMus) • Bachelor of Science (BSc) • Bachelor of Science (Engineering) (BSc (BEng)) • Intercalated Bachelor of Science (iBSc) Professional Graduate Certificate in Education (PGCE Professional) Graduate Certificate (GradCert) Graduate Diploma (GradDip) Ordinary degree (Ord) (available as exit awards only)
Level 7	First degrees <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bachelor of Dental Surgery (BDS) • Bachelor of Medicine and Bachelor of Surgery (MB BS)

	<p>First degrees - Integrated Master's degrees</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Master of Engineering (MEng) • Master of Pharmacy (MPharm) • Master in Science (MSci) <p>Postgraduate Certificate (PGCert)</p> <p>Postgraduate Certificate in Education (PGCE)</p> <p>Postgraduate Diploma (PGDip)</p> <p>Master's degrees</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Master of Arts (MA) • Master of Business Administration (MBA) • Master of Clinical Dentistry (MCLinDent) • Master of Laws (LLM) • Master of Music (MMus) • Master of Nursing (MNurs) • Master of Public Health (MPH) • Master of Research (MRes) • Master of Science (MSc) • Master of Teaching and Learning (MTL) (not currently offered) • Executive Master of Business Administration (EMBA) • Executive Master of Public Administration (EMPA)
Level 7 – Research degrees	<p>Master of Philosophy (MPhil)</p> <p>Master in Philosophical Studies (MPhilStud)</p>
Level 8 – Research degrees	<p>Doctor in Clinical Psychology (DClinPsy)</p> <p>Doctor in Education (EdD) (not currently offered)</p> <p>Doctor in Health Care (DHC)</p> <p>Doctor of Medicine (Research) (MD(Res))</p> <p>Doctor of Medicine (MD)</p> <p>Doctor in Theology and Ministry (DThM)</p> <p>Doctor of Ministry (DMin) (not currently offered)</p> <p>Doctor of Philosophy (PhD)</p> <p>Doctor in Professional Studies (DrPS)</p>
Level 8 – Higher Doctorates	<p>Doctor of Science (DSc) (not currently offered)</p> <p>Doctor of Letters (DLitt) (not currently offered)</p> <p>Doctor of Clinical Dentistry (DCLinDent)</p>
Other awards – no corresponding level	<p>Associateship of King's College London (AKC)</p> <p>King's Experience Awards</p>

In addition, the University offers programmes that have no corresponding award, including Pre-Sessional English Programmes, Summer Programmes, and credit-bearing Massive Open Online Courses (MOOCs).

3.2. All awards must have regard to the [SEEC Level Descriptors](#).

3.3. **Foundation Certificate (level 3):** An academically coherent programme of study that is aligned to the Regulated Qualifications Framework and designed to ensure students can demonstrate:

- the ability to identify and use relevant understanding, methods and skills to complete tasks,
 - address problems that, while well defined, have a measure of complexity,
 - take responsibility for initiating and completing tasks and procedures,
 - exercise autonomy and judgment within limited parameters,
 - an awareness of different perspectives or approaches within an area of study or work.
- 3.4. All awards, except pre-undergraduate awards, must have regard to the provisions of the [QAA UK Quality Code for Higher Education](#) and the more discipline-specific [subject benchmark statements](#) and [QAA Characteristics Statements](#).
- 3.5. All awards leading to professional registration and practice must be designed and taught in accordance with the requirements of the respective Professional, Statutory or Regulatory Body. This includes but is not limited to the General Dental Council, General Medical Council, Nursing and Midwifery Council and Health and Care Professions Council.
- 3.6. The following level descriptors are aligned to the QAA FHEQ descriptors and outline the depth and complexity of each award level. These must be used as a reference point in the development of programmes and modules, including any local marking criteria.
- 3.7. **Undergraduate Certificates (level 4):** An academically coherent programme of study that is designed to ensure students can demonstrate:
- knowledge of the underlying concepts and principles associated with their area(s) of study,
 - an ability to present, evaluate and interpret these concepts as well as qualitative and quantitative data to develop theories and sound judgements,
 - an ability to evaluate different approaches to problem solving,
 - an ability to communicate work reliably and accurately, and with structured and coherent arguments, and
 - an ability to undertake further training and develop new skills.
- 3.8. **Undergraduate Diplomas and Foundation Degrees (level 5):** An academically coherent programme of study that is designed to ensure students can demonstrate:
- critical understanding of the concepts and principles of the area of study and the way in which these have developed,
 - knowledge of the main methods of enquiry in the area of study and an ability to evaluate their application,
 - an ability to apply underlying concepts and principles within a wider context,
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- an ability to use a range of techniques to analyse information and propose solutions to problems, especially within a work context,
- an ability to communicate effectively information, arguments and analysis,
- an understanding of the limits of their knowledge, and how this influences analyses and interpretations based on that knowledge, and
- an ability to undertake further training to develop existing knowledge and skills.

In addition, for Foundation Degrees:

- the acquisition of skills relevant to employment, and
- an ability to progress to the final stage of an appropriate first-degree programme awarded with honours either directly or, where the nature of the programme for the Foundation degree and/or the first degree makes it appropriate, after further bridging study.

3.9. **First degrees (level 6 and 7):** An academically coherent programme of study that is designed to ensure students can demonstrate:

- conceptual understanding of key aspects of their field of study that enables students:
 - to devise and sustain arguments, and/or to solve problems, using a range of ideas and techniques,
 - to describe and comment upon particular aspects of current research, or equivalent advanced scholarship, in the discipline, and
 - to apply the methods and techniques that they have learned to review, consolidate, extend and apply their knowledge and understanding,
- an ability to deploy accurately established techniques of analysis and enquiry within a discipline,
- capacity for independent and critical thought to evaluate and identify a range of solutions to a problem,
- an appreciation of the uncertainty, ambiguity and limits of knowledge; and
- an ability to communicate information, ideas, problems and solutions to both specialist and non-specialist audiences.

3.10. **Postgraduate Taught degrees (level 7):** A programme of study beyond the standard first degree level which assumes the general level of educational competence required for the award of a first degree. This may include programmes of study which are 'conversion courses' where graduates in one discipline acquire knowledge and develop a set of skills in another discipline. The programme of study should normally include:

- a research project in a form appropriate to the discipline concerned as a core component of the programme, and
- some part of the curriculum should be concerned with research methods including awareness of ethical issues and, where relevant, health and safety matters.

The programme and scheme of assessment should be designed to ensure students can demonstrate:

- a systematic understanding of knowledge, and a critical awareness of current problems and/or new insights in their academic discipline, field of study or area of professional practice,
- a comprehensive understanding of techniques applicable to their own research or advanced scholarship,
- a conceptual understanding that enables students:
 - to evaluate critically current research and advanced scholarship in the discipline,
 - to evaluate methodologies and develop critiques of them and, where appropriate, to propose new hypotheses,
 - to demonstrate self-direction and originality in tackling and solving problems, and act autonomously in planning and implementing tasks at a professional or equivalent level, and
 - a practical understanding of how established techniques of research and enquiry are used to create and interpret knowledge in the discipline,
- deal with complex issues - both systematically and creatively, make sound judgements in the absence of complete data, and communicate their conclusions clearly to specialist and non-specialist audiences.

3.11. Additional criteria are specified for some awards as listed below. Further information on research degrees at level 8 can be found in regulation section 6.3 in the Framework for Postgraduate Research Awards.

3.12. **Bachelor of Engineering (BEng):** The programme of study shall give emphasis to preparation for professional practice. It shall provide the necessary understanding of the scientific basis of engineering and include a substantial engineering applications component as an integrated part of the programme, together with some appreciation of the industrial, social, environmental, and business environment.

3.13. **Master in Science (MSci):** The programme of study shall include a major project and provide a sound basis for a subsequent scientific or technically-based career or research.

3.14. **Master of Engineering (MEng):** The programme of study shall be followed over a period of time equivalent to four years full-time, of which not less than three academic years and

two semesters shall be full-time University based study (which may include a year at another institution of university status), and shall satisfy one or more of the following criteria:

- provide for study of a particular engineering discipline in greater depth than the Bachelor of Engineering,
- provide for multi-disciplinary study of a range of engineering disciplines,

together with all of the following criteria:

- include the teaching of design through the use of project work and case studies, preferably in an industrial context,
- include a major project,
- demand a level of study and attainment which is equivalent to that required for a postgraduate taught degree.

3.15. **Master of Pharmacy (MPharm):** The programme of study, taught in accordance with curricula that meet the requirements of the Royal Pharmaceutical Society of Great Britain, shall provide for the study of two or more elective disciplines and shall include a major research project.

3.16. **Master of Clinical Dentistry (MClintDent):** The programme of study shall include academic and clinical elements, the latter element providing a major component towards specialist training in a designated clinical dental discipline.

3.17. **Master of Public Health (MPH):** The programme of study should include a dissertation project which provides a sound basis for a subsequent career as a public health professional in an international, national or local government agency, in a non-governmental or charitable organisation concerned with public health, or in a community or public health environment, or in a university department concerned with community or public health.

3.18. **Master of Nursing (MNurs):** The Master of Nursing will meet the characteristics associated with a Professional or Practice Master's degree:

- Learning and programme curricula will be in accordance with the requirements of the Nursing & Midwifery Council (NMC),
 - Programmes with the MNurs award will include practice placements to allow students to complete the nursing proficiencies and practice hours required of registered nurses as part of their training, per the requirements of the NMC,
 - Programmes with the MNurs award will include research methods training, and a 30-credit module assessed by project completed through independent study,
 - Award of the Master of Nursing will meet the requirements for registration or entry to the nursing profession in accordance with the requirements of the NMC.
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3.19. **Master of Research (MRes):** The programme of study shall:

- be a free-standing and formally examined prescribed programme of fulltime study beyond the undergraduate degree level of at least one calendar year or its equivalent in part-time study,
- provide a structured and progressive research training programme which is an adequate foundation for doctoral study or a research career in industry or the public sector,
- include a grounding in research techniques relevant to the broad disciplinary area. At least one core module should be concerned with research methods including awareness of ethical issues and, where relevant, health and safety matters,
- include a significant research component, which enables students to demonstrate initiative and creativity and is assessed by means of a written report. The research component should form a significant proportion (at least 75 credits) of the whole programme and must be greater than the research dissertation for MA/MSc awards in the same discipline,
- include elements designed to broaden students' experiences by equipping them with a range of transferable skills.

3.20. **Doctorate in Clinical Dentistry (DClinDent):** The award will include a research project, plus three research-based modules. The portfolio element will consist of case studies, clinical portfolio, and work-based evaluations.

Programme Title (undergraduate only)

3.21. For single honours with a supporting discipline, the programme title will be the main discipline **with** the supporting discipline, on condition that students have obtained a minimum of 255 credits in the main discipline and a minimum of 90 credits in the supporting discipline.

3.22. For joint honours, the programme will be discipline A **and** discipline B, on condition that students have obtained a minimum of 120 credits in each discipline and an overall minimum of 255 credits across both disciplines.

3.23. For one-year intercalated BSc degree programmes:

- a. where at least 75 credits have been gained in an appropriate subject the title will be the appropriate subject with Basic Medical Sciences, Basic Dental Sciences or Basic Veterinary Sciences.
- b. where less than 75 credits have been gained, but at least 60 credits have been gained in an appropriate subject: Basic Medical Sciences, Basic Dental Sciences or Basic Veterinary Sciences with the appropriate subject or if 60 credits have been gained in each of two of these subjects: Basic Medical Sciences, Basic Dental Sciences or Basic Veterinary Sciences with one appropriate subject and the other of these subjects.

Programme Specifications

- 3.24. A programme of study and its associated modules must comply with the criteria established for programmes of study (see above) and be approved by the relevant Faculty Education Committee in accordance with the procedures agreed by the Academic Board and/or its sub-committees before the programme may be offered. Modifications to programmes of study or modifications to modules cannot normally be implemented in the same year they are approved. Some programmes, such as those with PSRB requirements, may have programme regulations in addition to the general academic regulations. These will be detailed in the relevant programme specification.
- 3.25. Programme specifications must provide the following details:
- a. the programme title,
 - b. the duration of the programme in full-time and, where applicable, part-time mode, including the minimum period of study for the award and the maximum period for which credit for the award may be counted,
 - c. credit and module options, including the credit value of all modules, the number of discipline specific credits that must be taken for both single and joint honours degrees, the status of modules, and if any conditions apply,
 - d. the combination of modules that students will have to take and pass and at what level in order to satisfy the requirements for the award and which, if any, must be attempted in order to complete the programme of study. In no case may the number of modules or level combinations be less than the minimum specified in the credit tables,
 - e. the maximum number of credits for which students may be registered in an academic year,
 - f. which faculty is responsible for offering reassessment for combined studies programmes and any associated conditions,
 - g. any additional programme or non-credit requirements, including:
 - Professional, Statutory and Regulatory Body (PSRB) requirements,
 - details of conditions applying to students on study abroad or year in industry programmes, and
 - h. any programme allowances:
 - if any level 7 modules can be taken outside of the usual range of credit levels specified in the award credit tables, and
 - if additional credits are permitted.

Modules

- 3.26. All modules are required to have a module specification that includes:
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- a. the module credit level and credit value,
 - b. whether the module is assessed by one or more methods,
 - c. the relative weighting of each assessment component and whether a pass or qualifying mark must be achieved in that component in order to pass the module overall,
 - d. the scheduling of assessments and reassessment opportunities, which are normally held prior to the start of the next academic year,
 - e. whether the module is available for study abroad students.
- 3.27. Modules can be core or non-core. Non-core modules will be one or more of the following:
- a. Compulsory
 - b. Optional
 - c. Introductory
 - d. Professional Practice
 - e. Study Abroad

In addition, core modules may be progression dependent which means a student must pass the module to progress to the next academic year. Modules may have pre-requisites or co-requisites. Further information on module definitions can be found in the [Regulations Glossary](#).

- 3.28. All pre-undergraduate and undergraduate modules at levels 3-6 have credit values in multiples of 15. Exceptionally, College Education Committee may approve modules of a lower credit value.
- 3.29. All level 7 modules have credit values in multiples of 15. Level 7 research/dissertation modules are normally worth 60 credits, or 120 for MRes programmes. Further details on the available models for Level 7 dissertation modules can be found in the [Postgraduate Taught Dissertations Framework](#). Some postgraduate modules have credit values of 5 or 10 for CPD or Executive Education purposes.
Exception to regulation 3.29: Integrated Apprenticeship of MSc Clinical Pharmacology programme includes a 20 credit End Point Assessment module in order to comply with the mandated structure for an integrated apprenticeship.
- 3.30. 5 and 10 credit modules at undergraduate level are only applicable to King's Health Partners short courses and credit bearing MOOCs.
- 3.31. Once enrolled, a student must complete a module that is part of their programme. In order to complete a module, students must undertake the prescribed period of study, which may include reaching a pass mark or qualifying mark for components of the module and satisfy any other conditions which may be set out by the University. A student cannot retake a completed module or enrol on a module with substantially overlapping content as per regulations 2.20-2.22.

3.32. To be awarded credit

- Core modules must be passed.
- Non-core modules must either be passed or compensated/condoned. See regulations 5.7-5.16 for the requirements for awarding compensation/condonement.

3.33. Partial credit for a module cannot be awarded.

Policies and Procedures

[Quality Assurance Handbook](#)

[Code of Practice for Research Governance and Dissertation Framework](#)

[Integrated Master's Programmes Policy](#)

[Programme Post-Launch Review Policy](#)

[Short Course Policy](#)

[Module & Teaching Evaluation Policy](#)

[Professional, Statutory & Regulatory Body \(PSRB\) Policy](#)

[Interruption of Study Policy and Procedure](#)

[Validated Provision Procedures](#)

Useful Links

[Programme Specifications](#)

[KEATS](#)

[Frameworks for Higher Education Qualifications of UK Degree Awarding Bodies](#)

[Glossary](#)
