

V2.0

**Undergraduate Academic Framework ONLY applicable from
academic year 2026/27 onwards**

Undergraduate Academic
Framework



BATH SPA
UNIVERSITY

1. Modular Structure

- 1.1 The credits and levels for different undergraduate awards are set out in the University's Qualifications Credit Framework.
- 1.2 The academic year will be delivered in two equal semesters.
- 1.3 Modules will be 20 credits in size or multiples thereof. The largest module size permitted is 60 credits. Exceptionally, the CertEd award is permitted to utilise modules of 15 credits in size or multiples thereof.
- 1.4 The default structure for a programme at levels 4 and 5 is as follows:

Level 4	
Semester 1	Semester 2
20 credits	20 credits
20 credits	20 credits
20 credits	20 credits

Level 5	
Semester 1	Semester 2
20 credits	20 credits
20 credits	20 credits
20 credits <i>(available for elective)</i>	20 credits <i>(available for elective)</i>

The structures permitted at level 6 are as follows:

Level 6 – model a	
Semester 1	Semester 2
20 credits	20 credits
20 credits	20 credits
20 credits <i>(available for elective)</i>	20 credits <i>(available for elective)</i>

Level 6 – model b	
Semester 1	Semester 2
20 credits	40 credits
20 credits	
20 credits <i>(available for elective)</i>	20 credits <i>(available for elective)</i>

Level 6 – model c	
Semester 1	Semester 2
20 credits	60 credits
20 credits	
20 credits <i>(available for elective)</i>	

Level 6 – model d	
Semester 1	Semester 2
20 credits	20 credits
20 credits <i>(available for elective)</i>	20 credits <i>(available for elective)</i>
40 credits	

Level 6 – model e	
Semester 1	Semester 2
20 credits	40 credits
20 credits (available for elective)	
40 credits	

Any programme wishing to deviate from the structures outlined above must make the proposal as part of the approval process. More than one of the above structures for level 6 might be offered by or, indeed, required (in the case of Combined Awards) for some subjects (see also paragraph 1.9 below).

1.5 Modules can be Core (these must be taken and passed by all students in the subject), Required (these must be taken and passed by all students on a particular route or pathway), Required* (these are modules within a defined list from which a selection must be taken and passed by students on a particular route or pathway) or Optional. Optional modules may be subject-specific (i.e. count towards the credit the student must pass to be awarded a particular degree) or, additionally, available to students from other subject as an Open module (i.e. outside of the subject-specific credit requirements for their named degree).

1.6 Differentiation of at least 40 credits of Core or Required modules is required between routes at each of levels 5 and 6.

1.7 120 credits must be Core or Required at level 4.

1.8 At least 40 credits at level 5 and at level 6 must be identified as Core. Core modules will normally be delivered as 20 credits in each semester (though this may differ at level 6 according to the structure selected: see tables in 1.4 above).

1.9 All subjects available as single honours will offer a minimum of 120 credits at each level. At level 4, a maximum of 120 credits may be offered. Subjects available as Joint Honours should offer 60 credits at Level 4 and at least 60 credits at each of Levels 5 and 6.

1.10 All students will have the opportunity to take a 20-credit open module at each of levels 5 and 6 from outside their degree subject(s).

1.11 No student is permitted to take more than one year-long 40-credit module at level 6; subjects available as Joint Honours must ensure that no student is enrolled onto multiple year-long 40-credit modules at level 6.

2. Types of Award

2.1. Single Honours (BA/BSc)

2.1.1 A single honours award will comprise 360 credits, as per the University's Qualifications Credit Framework, of which a minimum of 100 credits at each of levels 5 and 6 must be in the degree subject. At level 4, 120 credits which are subject-specific will be offered. A minimum of 40 credits, comprising the core modules of a subject, will otherwise normally be required at each level for a student to pursue that subject as a single honours degree.

2.1.2 A minimum of 20 credits and a maximum of 60 credits of Optional modules should be offered at each of levels 5 and 6.

2.1.3 No more than 40 credits of Required* modules should be offered at each of levels 5 and 6. Required* modules should be used sparingly and when there is a compelling justification for such choice (for example, relating to the requirements of subject benchmark statements or of PSRB accreditation).

2.2. Joint Honours (BA/BSc)

2.2.1 Joint Honours comprise two subjects which are reflected in the degree title as (Subject A and Subject B). Not all subjects are available as Joint Honours and combinations are subject to the University's approval processes.

2.2.2 60 credits at Level 4 are taken in each of the subjects named in a Joint Honours award.

2.2.3 Students on Joint Honours are required to take a minimum of 40 credits in each of their subjects at each of Levels 5 and 6.

2.2.4 Students on Joint Honours have the same opportunity as those on single honours awards to take a 20-credit open module at each of levels 5 and 6 outside of their degree subjects. Thus, students on Joint Honours at each of levels 5 and 6 can potentially take 60 credits in both subjects; or 80 credits in one subject and 40 credits in the other subject; or 60 credits in one subject, 40 credits in the other subject and a 20-credit open module.

2.2.5 No student on Joint Honours should be required to undertake dissertation modules in both subjects. In order to avoid this, dissertation and dissertation preparation modules must not be identified as Core where a subject is delivered jointly. Such modules may be Required for Single Honours and Required* for Joint.

2.2.6 In order to avoid an imbalance in credit for students on Joint Honours, 20 credits of Required/Core (and no more) must be provided from each subject per semester at Levels 5 and 6.

2.2.7 No more than 40 credits of Optional modules should be offered to Joint Honours students at each of levels 5 and 6 within each subject. Of those, no more than 20 credits should be Optional within each subject per semester.

2.2.8 Where a joint award comprises one subject designated as Science (normally indicated as BSc) and the other designated as Arts (normally indicated as BA), the degree awarded will be determined by the designation in which the greater proportion of credit has been achieved. Where the balance is exactly half of each, the student will be offered the option of BSc or BA for the designation of their final award.

2.2.9 As noted below, pathways are not recognised in award titles for Joint Awards.

2.3. Pathways

2.3.1 Named pathways are only available on single honours awards. A minimum of 40 credits at each of levels 5 and 6 must be pathway-specific. A named pathway will be reflected in the final award title when the credit weighting indicates a specialisation in one defined area over any others that may be available on that programme.

2.3.2 A minimum of 20 credits and a maximum of 60 credits of Optional modules should be offered at each of levels 5 and 6 within each pathway.

2.3.3 No more than 40 credits of Required* modules should be offered at levels 5 and 6 within each pathway.

2.4. Honours degree with Professional Placement Year

2.4.1 A 'Professional Placement Year will comprise a single 120-credit module. This will be Pass/Fail only and will be assessed against Level 5 of the Frameworks for Higher Education Qualifications. It will take place between Levels 5 and 6.

2.4.2 In exceptional circumstances, where through no fault of their own, a student has been unable to complete the full minimum requirement of 900 placement hours, but has completed at least 450 hours, students will be considered by the Progression and Awards Board for an award including the suffix "with professional experience".

2.5. Foundation degrees

2.5.1 Foundation degrees will comprise 240 credits as per the University's Qualifications Credit Framework, of which a minimum of 120 credits must be at Level 5 and 120 credits must be at Level 4. A minimum of 100 credits at level 5 must be in the degree subject.

2.6. Top-up year for Honours Degree

2.6.1 A top-up year to an Honours Degree is for students eligible to enter directly into level 6. The top-up year will comprise 120 credits at Level 6, of which a minimum of 100 credits must be in the degree subject.

2.7. Certificate of Higher Education

2.7.1 To be awarded a Certificate of Higher Education a minimum of 120 credits at Level 4 or above must be achieved.

2.8 Diploma of Higher Education

2.8.1 To be awarded a Diploma of Higher Education a minimum of 240 credits must be achieved, of which 100 credits at level 5 must be passed.

2.9 Certificate in Education

2.9.1 To be awarded a Certificate in Education a minimum of 120 credits at Level 5 must be achieved.

3. Module assessment

3.1 The pass mark for all modules is 40.

3.2 All assessments within a module must achieve the minimum mark of 40 in order for the module to be passed. Failure in one assessment cannot be compensated by a higher mark on another assessment within the module nor can success in one module compensate for failure of another one.

3.3 Where an item has been failed, the mark for any assessment item that is passed following reassessment will be capped at 40. The module mark will not be capped unless as a consequence of comprising only one assessment item weighted at 100%.

4. Progression and outstanding credit

4.1 A maximum of 40 credits outstanding can be carried over into the next level. Where there are more than 40 credits outstanding, the student will be required to retrieve the situation before being permitted to progress into the next level. If this includes the requirement to re-take with attendance, this may necessitate the student going part-time.

4.2 ¹Where any outstanding level 4 credit has not been retrieved by the end of level 5 study, students will be required to retrieve the situation with a progression break (for referred/deferred assessments) or return on a part-time basis to retake failed Level 4 credits with attendance, before being permitted to progress to level 6 study.

4.3 Where an outcome of 'fail' has been recorded, the student must re-take the module with attendance; where an outcome of 'defer' or 'refer' has been recorded, only the outstanding assessments need to be attempted.

4.4 Failure of 80 credits or more at any one level will automatically result in exclusion.

5. Determination of final award classification

5.1 The final degree mark for all Honours degrees will be calculated from the best 100 credits at level 5 and the best 100 credits at level 6 weighted at 30% level 5 and 70% level 6.

5.2 Ordinary Degrees are awarded unclassified and without honours.

5.3 To gain an Ordinary Degree students should complete and pass a minimum of 300 credits at levels 4, 5 and 6 with a minimum of 60 credits at Level 6 passed.

5.4 For students who join Bath Spa directly at Level 6; or register for a top-up year, an Ordinary Degree can be awarded on passing 100 credits at Level 6.

5.5 The final degree mark for a Foundation degree will be calculated from the best 100 credits at level 5.

5.6 The final degree mark for a top-up year to Bachelors with Honours will be calculated from the best 100 credits at level 6. Credit achieved prior to the top-up year will not be included in the calculation of the degree mark as credit for learning at another institution is recognised through pass/fail only.

5.7 Similarly, if a student has been on a part-year placement at another institution in level 5 or level 6 and taken fewer than 100 credits at that level at Bath Spa University, his/her mark for the level will comprise all of the credit taken at the University. The degree mark weighting for the two levels will be unaffected. Where a student has taken a full-year placement at another institution in level 5 or level 6, the degree mark will be based solely on the mark for the level that has been taken at Bath Spa University.

¹ For students who began their studies in Academic Year 2021/22 onwards only

5.8 Where a student has been granted direct entry or exemption through the APL Policy, only marks from modules studied at Bath Spa University are used to calculate the degree classification. No marks from APCL credits earned at another institution will be used to calculate the final award classification.

5.9 Certificates of Higher Education (CertHE), Diplomas of Higher Education (DipHE), and the Certification of Education (CertEd) are pass/fail awards and therefore unclassified.

5.10 For Bachelors with Honours, degrees are classified as follows:

Classification	Degree Mark
First Class	70.00% and above
Upper Second Class	60.00-69.99%
Lower Second Class	50.00-59.99%
Third Class	40.00-49.99%
Fail	39.99% and below

5.11 For Foundation degrees, degrees are classified as follows:

Classification	Degree Mark
Distinction	70.00% and above
Merit	60.00-69.99%
Pass	40.00-59.99%
Fail	39.99% and below

6. Transfer

6.1 Students who wish to transfer between modules must normally do so within the first two weeks of the semester. After that point, they will be considered to be taking the module and an assessment outcome must be recorded.

6.2 The latest opportunity for transfer between awards will be dependent on the precise nature of the transfer and students should seek advice as early as possible.

Document Details

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Related Policies and Procedures: Academic and Student Policies

<https://www.bathspa.ac.uk/about-us/governance/policies/>

Supersedes: Undergraduate Academic Framework v1.9

Next review due: October 2026