



TAUGHT PROGRAMMES AT UNIVERSITY COLLEGE LONDON

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION TO ACCOMPANY TRANSCRIPTS FOR AFFILIATE STUDENTS

This leaflet contains the following information:

- Key to the grades used on transcripts produced by UCL
- Marking Scheme and Information on the interpretation of grades/credits for overseas students
- A description of Higher Education in England, Wales and Northern Ireland

KEY TO GRADES USED ON TRANSCRIPTS

Grade Used		Explanation
Prior to 2006-07 Session	From 2006-07 Session	
C	-	Credit
E	-	Exempt
G	-	Diploma Level Pass
J	-	Undergraduate Level Pass
M	-	Minimum Pass
A	AB / AZ	Absent
L	CP	Allowed / Condoned Pass (Postgraduate and MBBS students only)
D	D	Distinction (for Postgraduate Students only)
F	F / F1 / F3	Fail
-	FQ / FZ	Failure to Qualify
X	IR	Result not yet available
Q	LA	Deferred / Late Assessment expected
K	M	Merit (for LLM Students only, excluding 2007-08 session)
T / U	NC / NZ	Incomplete
N	NX	Result not expected
P	P	Pass
-	PF	Pass but required to re-sit (LLB / MBBS students only)
R	R / RQ	Referred
W	WD	Withdrawn
I	WH	Result Withheld
Z	ZZ	Ineligible for Assessment

UNDERGRADUATE COURSE-UNITS / UCL CREDITS

A course-unit (or UCL credit) is defined in terms of a year's academic work of full-time study which should comprise modules to the value of four course-units, each to carry an equal work load within that year. Individual modules are valued according to their length and content and may therefore be given a value of more or less than one course-unit.

A full course-load for a regular undergraduate student at UCL is four course-units (or UCL credits) for the full academic year. This would be equivalent to 60 ECTS credits or 30-32 US credits.

POSTGRADUATE LEVEL COURSES

The pass mark for postgraduate-level courses is 50%.

A full-time UCL postgraduate student would normally be expected to study taught modules to the value of 120 UCL postgraduate credits which is the equivalent of 60 ECTS credits.

In September 2015 UCL reviewed the conversion value of its academic credits to the European Credit Transfer System (ECTS). As a consequence, the ECTS value of a significant number of modules and qualification was increased, this ensured that UCL ECTS values of UCL qualifications are aligned with the Higher Education Credit Framework. A full table of the UCL credit and ECTS conversion for UCL qualifications can be found in the UCL Academic Manual (<https://www.ucl.ac.uk/srs/academic-manual/>).

MARKING SCHEME

Marks are released for all examinations held in and after October 1987. The significance of marks is as follows:

UCL Mark (%)	Recommended US Grade	UCL Grade (not shown on Transcript)	Equivalent to UCL Degree Class
70-100	A	A	First
65-69	A-	B	Upper Second
60-64	B+		
55-59	B	C	Lower Second
50-54	B-		
46-49	C+	D	Third
43-45	C		
40-42	C-		
0-39	F	F	Fail

Prior to October 1987 a marks were not released, and passes were recorded as grades A, B and C.

Prior to 2006-07 the undergraduate pass mark for course-unit programmes was 35% and marks in the 35-39% range were equivalent to a UCL grade of E and a degree classification of Pass (i.e. without honours).

Registrars and other interested persons should be aware that at UCL, as at many other UK institutions, the pass mark in the majority of first degree programmes is 40% and most students score between 40% and 70%. Indeed, despite the competitive nature and high entry standards of institutions, only about 10% of students achieve an average score of higher than 70% and by the nature of marking involved this figure is much lower for arts-based than for science-based students.

INTERPRETATION OF MARKS FOR US STUDENTS

Any scheme used for translating marks obtained in a university in the United Kingdom to those used by colleges and universities in the United States is fraught with difficulties. The recommended U.S. equivalents of the University College London marks are based on a system developed over many years experience of working with U.S. colleges and universities. However, it is only a guideline and individual institutions may wish to interpret the UCL grade differently.

Description of Higher Education in England, Wales and Northern Ireland

In England, Wales and Northern Ireland¹, higher education institutions are independent, self-governing bodies active in teaching, research and scholarship. They are established by Royal Charter or legislation and most are part-funded by government.

Higher education (HE) is provided by many different types of institution. In addition to universities and university colleges, whose charters and statutes are made through the Privy Council which advises the Queen on the granting of Royal Charters and incorporation of universities, there are a number of publicly-designated and autonomous institutions within the higher education sector. Publicly funded higher education provision is available in some colleges of further education by the authority of another duly empowered institution. Teaching to prepare students for the award of higher education qualifications can be conducted in any higher education institution and in some further education colleges.

Degree awarding powers and the title 'university'

All universities and many higher education colleges have the legal power to develop their own courses and award their own degrees, as well as determine the conditions on which they are awarded. Some HE colleges and specialist institutions without these powers offer programmes, with varying extents of devolved authority, leading to the degrees of an institution which does have them. All universities in existence before 2005 have the power to award degrees on the basis of completion of taught courses and the power to award research degrees. From 2005, institutions in England and Wales that award only taught degrees ('first' and 'second cycle') and which meet certain numerical criteria, may also be permitted to use the title 'university'. Higher education institutions that award only taught degrees but which do not meet the numerical criteria may apply to use the title 'university college', although not all choose to do so.

All of these institutions are subject to the same regulatory quality assurance and funding requirements as universities; and all institutions decide for themselves which students to admit and which staff to appoint.

Degrees and other higher education qualifications are legally owned by the awarding institution, not by the state.

The names of institutions with their own degree awarding powers ("Recognised Bodies") are available for download at: <http://www.dcsf.gov.uk/recognisedukdegrees/index.cfm?fuseaction=institutes.list&InstituteCategoryID=1>

Higher education institutions, further education colleges and other organisations able to offer courses leading to a degree of a Recognised Body are listed by the English, Welsh and Northern Irish authorities, and are known as "Listed Bodies". View the list at: <http://www.dcsf.gov.uk/recognisedukdegrees/index.cfm?fuseaction=institutes.list&InstituteCategoryID=2>

Qualifications

The types of qualifications awarded by higher education institutions at sub-degree and undergraduate (first cycle) and postgraduate level (second and third cycles) are described in the Framework for Higher Education Qualifications in England, Wales and Northern Ireland (FHEQ). This also includes qualification descriptors that were developed with the HE sector by the Quality Assurance Agency for Higher Education (QAA - established in 1997 as an independent UK-wide body to monitor the standard of higher education provision - www.qaa.ac.uk). The FHEQ was self-certified as compatible with the Framework for Qualifications of the European Higher Education Area, the qualifications framework

adopted as part of the Bologna Process, in February 2009. Foundation degrees, designed to create intermediate awards strongly oriented towards specific employment opportunities, were introduced in 2001. In terms of the European Higher Education Area they are "short cycle" qualifications within the first cycle. The FHEQ is one component of the Credit and Qualifications Framework for Wales (CQFW). The Qualifications and Curriculum Authority (QCA), the Department for Children, Education, Lifelong Learning and Skills, Wales (DCELLS) and the Council for Curriculum Examination and Assessment, Northern Ireland (CCEA) have established the Qualifications and Credit Framework (to replace, in time, the National Qualifications Framework (NQF)). These authorities regulate a number of professional, statutory and other awarding bodies which control VET and general qualifications at all levels. The QCF is also incorporated into the CQFW. There is a close association between the levels of the FHEQ and the NQF (as shown overleaf), and other frameworks of the UK and Ireland (see 'Qualifications can cross Boundaries' <http://www.qaa.ac.uk/standardsandquality/otherrefpoints/Qualsboundaries09.pdf>)

Quality Assurance

Academic standards are established and maintained by higher education institutions themselves using an extensive and sophisticated range of shared quality assurance approaches and structures. Standards and quality in institutions are underpinned by the universal use of external examiners, a standard set of indicators and other reports, by the activities of the QAA, and in professional areas by relevant professional, statutory and regulatory bodies. This ensures that institutions meet national expectations described in the FHEQ: subject benchmark statements, the Code of Practice and programme specifications. QAA conducts peer-review based audits and reviews of higher education institutions with the opportunity for subject-based review as the need arises. The accuracy and adequacy of quality-related information published by the higher education institutions is also reviewed. QAA also reviews publicly funded higher education provision in further education colleges.

Credit Systems

Most higher education institutions in England and Northern Ireland belong to one of several credit consortia and some operate local credit accumulation and transfer systems for students moving between programmes and/or institutions. A framework of national guidelines, the Higher Education Credit Framework for England, was launched in 2008. Credit is also an integral part of the CQFW and the QCF. It may be possible for credit awarded in one framework to be recognised by education providers whose qualifications sit within a different framework. HE credit systems in use in England, Wales and Northern Ireland are compatible with the European Credit Transfer System (ECTS) for accumulation and transfers within the European Higher Education Area, and are used to recognise learning gained by students in institutions elsewhere in Europe.

Admission

The most common qualification for entry to higher education is the General Certificate of Education at 'Advanced' (A) level. Other appropriate NQF level 3 qualifications and the kite-marked Access to HE Diploma may also provide entry to HE. Level 3 qualifications in the CQFW, including the Welsh Baccalaureate, also provide entry, as do Scottish Highers, Advanced Highers or qualifications at the same levels of the Scottish Credit and Qualifications Framework. Part-time and mature students may enter HE with these qualifications or alternatives with evidenced equivalent prior formal and/or experiential learning. Institutions will admit students whom they believe to have the potential to complete their programmes successfully.

¹ The UK has a system of devolved government, including for higher education, to Scotland, to Wales and to Northern Ireland. This description is approved by the High Level Policy Forum which includes representatives of the Department for Business, Innovation and Skills, the Scottish Government, the Welsh Assembly Government, the Higher Education Funding Councils for England, Scotland and Wales, the Quality Assurance Agency (QAA), Universities UK (UUK), GuildHE and the National Recognition Information Centre for the UK (UK NARIC).