Academic Framework

A. Introduction

The LIS Academic Framework defines the underpinning structure of Programmes at LIS.

All LIS Awards and associated Programmes of Study must be aligned with the Academic Framework.

Purposes

The main purposes of the Academic Framework are:

i.   To promote a shared and common understanding of LIS Awards;
ii. To provide a reference point for setting and assessing academic standards when designing, approving, monitoring and reviewing Programmes and Modules;
iii. To ensure that LIS Qualifications are of an academic standard consistent with the standards referred to in the UK Framework for Higher Education Qualifications (FHEQ);
iv. To ensure that LIS Qualifications are consistent with the Higher Education Credit Framework for England: Guidance on Academic Credit Arrangements in Higher Education in England

Reference Points

The Academic Framework is drafted with reference to the following:

i.   The UK Quality Code for Higher Education;
ii. The Frameworks for Higher Education Qualifications of UK Degree-Awarding Bodies (FHEQ);
iii. The Higher Education Credit Framework for England: Guidance on Academic Credit Arrangements in Higher Education in England;

Related Regulations and Procedures

This Academic Framework, together with the Assessment and Classification Framework, forms an overarching document for the School's General Academic Regulations. A Glossary is available to support the reading of these documents.

B. Framework Components

A number of components define the basic structures of LIS Awards:

Awards

An Award is a Degree, Diploma or Certificate accredited and conferred by LIS following the successful completion of an approved Programme of study, or of a Level or Level(s) of an approved Programme of study.

Awards may fall into one or more of the following categories:

- *Final Qualification*: The intended qualification from a Programme of Study which a student will be awarded if they meet all the requirements of the Programme for which they have registered.
- *Exit Award*: A qualification which may be awarded on completion of an intermediate point of study in a longer Programme of study (when the student leaves the Programme), but for which the student has not registered at the outset.

An Award must meet the minimum academic standards set out in the section: Threshold Qualification Requirements.

The form of the Award Title must signify both the Level of the Award and the area(s) of study in which the study has been undertaken (e.g. Bachelor of Arts and Sciences of Master of Arts and Sciences). The Award Title is combined with the Area(s) of Study to create the Degree Title e.g. Bachelor of Arts and Sciences in Interdisciplinary Problems and Methods.

The following Qualifications may be accredited and awarded by the School

Level 4

- Certificate of Higher Education (Cert HE)—*exit award only*

Level 5

- Diploma of Higher Education (Dip HE)—e*xit award only*

Level 6

- Bachelor of Arts and Sciences (BASc) Ordinary—*exit award only*
- Bachelor of Arts and Sciences (BASc) Honours—*final qualification*.

Level 7

- Master of Arts and Sciences (MASc) - final qualification
- Postgraduate Diploma - exit qualification
- Postgraduate Certificate - exit qualification

Proposals for new Programmes must be developed in line with this Academic Framework and the School's General Academic Regulations.

Programme of Study (Programme)

A Programme of Study (Programme) is an approved, coherent path of study with specified, assessed learning outcomes leading to a specified Award in a specified Area of Study.

Programmes of Study are approved by the School's academic authority, the Academic Council, in line with the School's Programme Approval Procedure, which is set out in the document, [Programme Design, Development, Monitoring and Evaluation Procedures.](#)

Approved Programmes of Study leading to an award must have:

- Educational aims appropriate to the academic Area of Study, in alignment with relevant sector benchmarks (e.g., Subject Benchmark Statements and Masters degree characteristics statement)
- Learning outcomes at specified and approved levels of the FHEQ, the demonstrated achievement of which determines the conferment of each associated award, including interim exit awards.

Programmes may include separate Pathways. A Pathway, in this instance, is defined as an informal 'specialism' within a Programme. A Pathway is created through the combination of different Compulsory and Optional Modules available within the Programme. A separate Pathways may have a different award title usually following the main award title. A pathway will appear on the student's degree certificate or transcript.

Programme Documentation

Each Programme must have a definitive Programme Specification which is published and available to students. The required coverage of the Programme Specification is set out in the Programme Approval Procedure in the document, [Programme Design, Development, Monitoring and Evaluation Procedures.](#)

An on-line Student Handbook area will containa summary of the programme, modules, and assessment strategies, with links to the full detailed Programme Specification, shall be provided to students when they register at the start of each Level of the Programme and will be available on the Learning Management System. The required coverage of the Student Handbook is set out in the [Student Handbook Policy.](#)

The contents of the Programme Specification and Student Handbook must be reviewed prior to each cohort intake through the Annual Programme Monitoring Procedure, which is set out in the document, [Programme Design, Development, Monitoring and Evaluation Procedures.](#) A copy of both the Programme Specification and Student Handbook will be lodged with the Registrar with a note on any changes.

The Learning Management System (LMS) will be maintained to provide information both current and historical for each Programme and its delivery.

Academic Level

As is set out in the School's Programme Approval Procedure, (in the document, [Programme Design, Development, Monitoring and Evaluation Procedures)](#), each Award must have an associated Academic Level which aligns with the [Frameworks for Higher Education Qualifications of UK Degree-Awarding Bodies (FHEQ)](#)

Programmes and Modules must be developed with reference to the FHEQ Level Descriptors. These describe the depth and complexity of each Academic Level and outline the academic skills, amount of prior knowledge and amount of learner autonomy required to pass a Programme or Module at each Academic Level.

Academic Year

An undergraduate programme runs over an academic year, starting in the Autumn and consisting of three terms:

Term 1 (10 taught weeks, one reading week)

Term 2 (10 taught weeks, one reading week)

Term 3 (7 taught weeks, with optional internships at the end of term)

A postgraduate (Masters) programme runs over an academic year and consists of three terms:

Term 1 (10 taught weeks, one reading week)

Term 2 (10 taught weeks, one reading week)

Term 3 (10 weeks of independent study and supervised study)

A postgraduate programme may have multiple start dates throughout the academic year (e.g. October, January).

Credit and Learning Hours

Credit is awarded to a student on successful completion of the outcomes associated with a particular block of learning at a specified Academic Level

In line with the [Frameworks for Higher Education Qualifications of UK Degree-Awarding Bodies (FHEQ), one credit equates to 10 notional learning hours.](#)

A Programme of Study must meet the minimum credit requirements for the Award being awarded.

The following table outlines the minimum credit requirements associated with the LIS Bachelor of Arts and Sciences:

Award Title	FHEQ Qualification level	Overall number of credits required	Levels of credit required
Certificate of Higher Education (CertHE)	4	120	120 at level 4
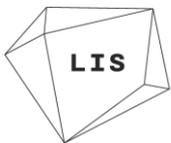
(exit award only)			
Diploma of Higher Education (DipHE) *(exit award only)*	5	240	120 at level 5
			120 at level 4
Ordinary Bachelor's degree (BASc) *(exit award only)*	6	300	60 at level 6
			120 at Level 5
			120 at level 4
Bachelor's degree with honours (BASc) *(final qualification)*	6	360	At least 105 at level 6
			No more than 135 at level 5
			120 at level 4
Postgraduate Certificate	7	60	60 at level 7
Postgraduate Diploma	7	120	120 at level 7
Masters degree (MASc)	7	180	180 at level 7

Intensity of Study

Full-time: Students study for an average of 40 hours per week over an Academic Year.

There is currently no provision for part-time study at the School. However, should part-time delivery be introduced a student will study no more than 90 credits in an academic year.

Location of Study

A programme may either be campus based or delivered wholly on-line. This should be clearly stated in the programme specification.

Campus-based: Students are required to attend LIS for enrolment and scheduled activities, such as lectures, seminars, tutorials. A campus-based programme may also include elements of on-line delivery as appropriate, however the dominant form of delivery is in person, on campus.

On-line based: all scheduled activities such as seminars, lectures, tutorials are delivered on-line only. Student support and learning resources are also provided only on-line.

The Attendance and Academic Progress Policy sets out the expectations on attendance.
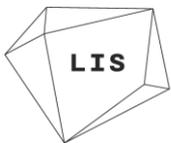
Modules

Modules are self-contained, credit-rated blocks of learning and teaching which make up a taught Programme of Study. The Programme Specification must specify the range of Modules which students must undertake in order to achieve the Final Award.

Credit-Weighting

All Modules should include a single, defined credit score; students will be awarded the credit upon successful completion of the Module and the number of credits will be used in the weighting of the calculation of a Student's Progression, and Award.

On modular programmes no module may be less than 15 credits nor more than 60 credits.

A Module must be assigned an Academic Level (e.g. Level 6) determining the difficulty of the Module.

A Module may be offered at more than one Academic Level (e.g. Level 5 and Level 6). Students may be taught in the same classroom, but the student will be required to achieve the learning outcomes associated with the Academic Level they are taking.

Module Characteristics

In relation to a Programme of Study, a Module may include one or more of the following characteristics:

- **Compulsory**: Modules which students must take to successfully complete a particular Programme.
- **Optional**: Specific, limited collections of Modules from which students may choose within their Programme of Study.
- **Supplementary**: Additional, non-credit-bearing Modules e.g. synoptic or comprehensive papers, generic skills Modules etc.
- **Prerequisite**: A specified preparatory Module which must have been successfully completed for a student to enroll on a subsequent Module.
- **Co-requisite**: A specified Module which must be taken at the same time as another Module.
- **Restricted**: A Module which cannot be taken by students on specified Programmes, or Pathways e.g. a Module with very similar content to one already undertaken.
- **Condonable**: Condonement is the award of credit for a Module despite the Pass Mark not having been achieved, provided other certain criteria have been met. The Condonable Range of marks is set out in the Assessment and Classification Framework. Optional modules are condonable
- **Non-condonable:** Compulsory modules are non-condonable.
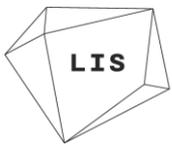
C. Progression and Continuation

Progression on Undergraduate Programmes

Progression applies to Undergraduate Programmes running over multiple Academic Years and multiple Academic Levels.

Progression is typically defined as the successful completion of one Academic Level and approval to commence the next Academic Level.

A student must meet minimum standards in order to Progress to the next Academic Year. This means that they must receive the full number of credits for the Academic Year that they have undertaken. A student achieves this by passing the modules for which they are registered for that Academic Year; the Pass Mark is defined in the Assessment and Classification Framework.

Students failing condonable modules may receive condoned passes under the Condonement regulations. There is also provision for resits. Section P of the Assessment and Classification Framework sets out the regulations on Condonement and Resits. The Assessment and Classification Framework also sets out how Recognition of Prior Learning and the application of Extenuating Circumstances may provide for students passing Modules for which they have not sat the prescribed Assessment Tasks.

Progression of a student from one Level to an adjacent higher Level within a Programme must be confirmed at a meeting of the Board of Examiners, as set out in the Assessment and Classification Framework.

Postgraduate programmes

There is no progression requirement for a full-time, one-year postgraduate programmes.

Students on part-time postgraduate programmes will be expected to have passed all prescribed modules for their year of study before embarking on a subsequent year.

D. Exit Awards

An approved Programme of Study may include one or more Exit Awards to recognise the achievements of any students unable to complete the intended Final Qualification.

Details of the minimum credit and Level requirements for each Exit Award are specified in the Minimum Award Requirements, in Section E of this Framework.

Exit Awards available in Programme Design

The Exit Awards in place on a given Programme are defined in the Programme Specification. Exit Awards are not awarded automatically, nor are they a student entitlement. The following Exit Awards may be considered as part of the Programme Approval process:

Final Qualification	Available Exit Awards
Bachelors with Honours Degree	Ordinary Degree (Bachelors)
	Dip HE
	Cert HE
Masters (MASc)	Postgraduate Diploma
	Postgraduate Certificate

E. Minimum Award Requirements

Award Requirements describe the minimum academic standards expected of each Programme of Study leading to a LIS Qualification.

The following definitions apply:

Years of FTE study: The minimum length of time needed to complete the Qualification if studied on a full-time basis (part-time modes of study are calculated pro-rata).

**Level:** The academic Level at which the Qualification is awarded.

FHEQ Credits: The minimum number of credits needed to successfully complete the Qualification, aligned to the UK Framework of Higher Education Qualifications.

Notional learning hours: The hours of study typically required to complete the Award, based on a ratio of 1 FHEQ credit to 10 notional learning hours.

Range of Levels: The Academic Levels included in the Qualification e.g. a three-year BASc includes Levels 4, 5 and 6. MASc is level 7 only.

Standard credits per Level: The number of FHEQ credits typically studied at each Academic Level to achieve the Qualification. The number of credits in each Level may be adjusted within defined parameters to suit the needs of the individual Programme/ field.

Possible Exit Awards: The range of Exit Awards which may be included as an approved component of a Programme of Study.
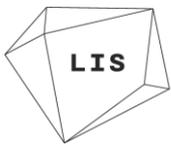
Qualifications offered by LIS.

| Qualification	Abbreviation	Years (FTE)	Hours (Notional)	Levels	Standard Credits	Possible Exit Awards
Bachelor of Arts and Sciences with Honours	BASc (Honours)	3	360	4,5,6	120 L4 & 135 max at L5 & 105 min at L6	Ordinary Degree, Dip HE, Cert HE
Masters degrees	MASc	1	1800	7	180 at level 7	Postgraduate Diploma Postgraduate Certificate

F. Period of Registration

The period of registration will commence on the date that the student first registers onto the School's programme. The minimum and maximum periods of registration for a programme are set out in the School's Registration Policy. A student will remain registered for the maximum period of the award or until they have achieved the award or the registration is terminated, whichever comes first.

VERSION CONTROL

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Related documents: (eg associated forms, underpinning processes, related policies or overarching policies)	General Academic Regulations - Assessment and Classification Framework Board of Examiners: Membership and Terms of Reference

Version Control			
Version	Author/Approval	Date	Brief summary of changes
1	Prof. Carl Gombrich (Director of Teaching and Learning)	10/03/2019	Original draft
2	Prof. Chris Maguire (Registrar)	10/03/2019	Clarification of language. Inclusion of CertHE and DipHE.
3	Prof. Carl Gombrich (Director of Teaching and Learning)	20/06/2019	Greater flexibility for students to fail one or two modules (so that they take risks); penalties for late submission.
4	Hannah Kohler (Director of Admissions Student Support)	24/06/2019	Clear statement on sector reference points (FHEQ, QCF)
5	Prof. Chris Maguire (Registrar)	28/06/2019	Clarification of wording
6	Hannah Kohler (Director of Admissions and Student Support)	15/08/2019	Minor wording changes
7	Ed Fidoe (Chief Executive)	04/11/2019	Minor wording changes
9	Dr. Michael Englard (Faculty, Director of Widening Participation)	05/11/2019	Clarification of condonement criteria and glossary in relation to different module types
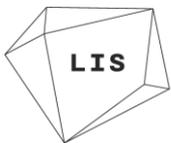
10	Jasper Joyce (Dir. Finance and Operations)	17/11/2019	Clarification of details on academic years.
11	Prof. Carl Gombrich	19/11/2019	Clarification of credits required at each Level
12	Academic Council	18/12/2019	Revision required given decision to pursue NDAPs
13	Hannah Kohler (Director of Admissions and Student Support)	04/02/2020	Updated given decision to pursue NDAPs, clarification of exit awards, clearer links to Assessment and Classification Framework
14	Academic Council	16/03/2020	Approved (with edits to resolve minor typos)
15	Academic Council	16/06/2022	Inclusion of MASc, PG Dip and PG Cert and corresponding credit requirements and term lengths