UNIVERSITY OF LIMERICK
OLLSCOIL LUIMNIGH

Awards Titles Framework v2.2

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1 Overview

The award title of all new programmes of study at the University of Limerick (UL) should align with the framework outlined in this document. This framework has been developed following a review of existing award titles and the National Framework of Qualifications (NFQ). As a sub-committee of Academic Council, the Academic Programme Review Committee (APRC) will consider, on a case-by-case basis, proposals for the creation of a new award title where it is demonstrated that the title being proposed is appropriate to the programme being considered and will recommend accordingly to Academic Council. Retirement of award titles will also be considered by APRC.

2 Programmes of study leading to awards approved by Academic Council

The UL Academic Council approves the entry requirements, programmes of study and award titles of all degrees, diplomas and certificates that are offered by the University[1]. Each student's performance is considered at the University Exam Board, and award recommendations are then considered at the next meeting of Academic Council.

Learners who successfully complete programmes leading to major, minor, supplemental or special-purpose awards receive a University of Limerick parchment fixed with the UL seal. Graduands in receipt of awards of 30 credits or greater are normally conferred at the next scheduled conferring ceremony. Unless otherwise approved by the Provost & Deputy President, graduands in receipt of awards of less than 30 credits are conferred in absentia. Refer to Appendix 1 for definitions of major, minor, supplemental and special-purpose awards.

2.1 Existing programme titles that will no longer be approved

There are current UL programmes that have been approved by Academic Council that no longer fit with the current framework. A list is provided in Appendix 2. These award titles will no longer be available for new programmes by default. Programmes that use award titles that do not appear in this document will be required to align with the standard award titles in the future and should consider such alignment during the programme review process.

Table 2.1 Research programmes leading to UL awards

Award title (approved by Academic Council)	Level (NFQ)	Type	Nominal credits[2]
Doctor of Philosophy	10	Major	270
Doctor of Medicine (MD)	9	Major	180
Master of Arts	9	Major	180
Master of Architecture	9	Major	180
Master of Business Studies	9	Major	180
Master of Education	9	Major	180
Master of Engineering	9	Major	180
Master of Laws	9	Major	180
Master of Science	9	Major	180
Master of Surgery	9	Major	90
Master of Technology	9	Major	180

[1] These include awards for joint and other programmes which are developed in accordance with the University's Policy on Collaborative and Transnational Provision

[2] Credits refer to ECTS (European Credit Transfer and Accumulation System) credits.

Table 2.2 Taught postgraduate programmes leading to UL awards

Award title (approved by Academic Council)	Level (NFQ)	Type	Credits
Doctor of (*Named Discipline*)	10	Major	270
Professional Master of Education	9	Major	120
Professional Master of Education in (*Named Discipline*)	9	Major	120
Master of Science in (*Named Discipline*) (Professional Qualification)	9	Major	180
Master of Arts in (*Named Discipline*)	9	Major	90, 120
Máistreacht sna hEalaíona sa (*disciplín ainmnithe*)	9	Major	90
Máistir sna Dána sa (*disciplín ainmnithe*)	9	Major	90
Master of Architecture	9	Major	90
Master of Business Administration – Executive MBA	9	Major	120
Master of Business Studies in *(Named Discipline)*	9	Major	90
Master of Education	9	Major	90
Master of Education in (*Named Discipline*)	9	Major	90
Master of Engineering in (*Named Discipline*)	9	Major	90
Master of Landscape Architecture	9	Major	120
Master of Laws	9	Major	90
Master of Laws in *(Named Discipline)*	9	Major	90
Master of Professional Practice	9	Major	90
Master of Science in (*Named Discipline*)	9	Major	90, 120
Master of Taxation	9	Major	90
Master of Technology in (*Named Discipline*)	9	Major	90
Postgraduate Diploma in (*Named Discipline*)	9	Major	60
Professional Diploma in (*Named Discipline*)	9	Special-purpose	30
Postgraduate Certificate in (*Named Discipline*)	9	Special-Purpose	30

Table 2.3 Undergraduate programmes leading to UL awards

All level 8 Bachelor Degrees are Honors Degrees, and will be titled accordingly on the parchments.

Award title (approved by Academic Council)	Level (NFQ)	Type	Credits
Bachelor of Architecture	8	Major	300
Bachelor of Arts	8	Major	240
Bachelor of Arts in (*Named Discipline*)	8	Major	240
Bachelor of Business Studies	8	Major	240
Bachelor of Business Studies with (*Named Subject*)	8	Major	240
Bachelor of Education	8	Major	240
Bachelor of Education in (*Named Discipline*)	8	Major	240
Bachelor of Engineering in (*Named Discipline*)	8	Major	240
Bachelor of Medicine Bachelor of Surgery	8	Major	240
Bachelor of Laws	8	Major	240
Bachelor of Laws in (*Named Discipline*)	8	Major	240
Bachelor of Science in (*Named Discipline*)	8	Major	240
Bachelor of Technology in (*Named Discipline*)	8	Major	240
Bachelor of Technology (Education) in *(Named Discipline)*	8	Major	240
Bachelor of Science (Education) in *(Named Discipline)*	8	Major	240
Higher Diploma in (*Named Discipline*)	8	Major	60
Diploma in (*Named Discipline*)	8	Special Purpose or Supplemental	60
Professional Diploma in (*Named Discipline*)	8	Special Purpose	60
Certificate in (*Named Discipline*)	8	Special Purpose or Supplemental	30
Bachelor of Arts (Ordinary) in (*Named Discipline*)	7	Major	180
Bachelor of Business (Ordinary) in (*Named Discipline*)	7	Major	180
Bachelor of Science (Ordinary) in (*Named Discipline*)	7	Major	180
Diploma in (*Named Discipline*)	7	Minor, Special Purpose, or Supplemental	60
Certificate in (*Named Discipline*)	7	Special Purpose, or Supplemental	30
Higher Certificate in (*Named Discipline*)	6	Major	120
Certificate in (*Named Discipline*)	6	Special Purpose, Supplemental	30
Certificate in (*Named Discipline*)	5	Special Purpose	30

3 Exit routes leading to UL awards

3.1 Exit awards related to Professional Accreditation Related Elements (PARE)

Exit awards may be made available to students who have enrolled on professionally accredited programmes and cannot proceed to the next stage of their programme of study due to professional accreditation requirements. Course boards should consider including exit routes for students in cases where the opportunity to repeat a component of the programme is restricted. The relevant regulations related to Professional Accreditation Related Elements (PARE) and the programmes this policy applies to are outlined in section 3 of the UL Handbook of Academic Regulations and Procedures, and of the MIC Handbook of Academic Regulations and Procedures.

3.2 Exit awards related to early exit from programme of study at Level 9

As approved by Academic Council in June 2009, course boards should also consider making exit awards available to students registered on taught master's programmes of study who have completed at least 60 nominated credits of study unless otherwise stated by Academic Council. In such cases, the student cannot re-present for the master's degree within the same academic year. The exit award title should align with the approved titles in Section 2.2.

3.3 General guidelines

Academic Council considers the provision of exit awards on an individual-case basis. When doing so, Academic Council ensures that the title of an exit award is clearly differentiated from that of the programme the student originally enrolled on. The table below provides *examples* of exit award titles that are currently approved by Academic Council.

Table 3.1 Examples of exit award titles

Exit award title (approved by Academic Council)[3]	Level (NFQ)	Type	Credits
Master of (*Subject Area*[4]*)* in (*Named Discipline*)	9	Major	≥90
Postgraduate Diploma in (*Named Discipline*)	9	Major	≥60 – <90
Bachelor of (*Subject Area*) (Ordinary) in (*Named Discipline*)	7	Major	≥180 – <240
Diploma in (*Subject Area*)	7	Minor	≥60
Certificate in (*Subject Area*)	7	Minor	≥30

[3] The combined elements of the exit award title must represent the achievement of the student on the original programme but the title must be clearly different to the award title of the original programme.
[4] For example, Architecture, Arts, Business, Education, Engineering, Science, Technology.

4 Professional Education Studies

UL recognises that learners may wish, for personal or professional purposes, to register for approved modules or participate in other forms of learning that do not lead to UL awards approved by Academic Council. Such learning can be classified as accredited or non-accredited.

The Graduate and Professional Studies (GPS) division sets the direction for professional education at UL and manages the development and delivery of UL's professional education programmes. The GPS division uses a hybrid model: academic schools/departments retain ownership of programmes and academic material, and the division provides the support, procedures and processes that enable the seamless delivery of world-class continuing and professional education. In a similar fashion, the Doctoral College provides accredited training and upskilling opportunities for postgraduate researchers that complements the taught and research elements of PhDs and Professional Doctorates that reside within academic departments and schools.

4.1 University Certificate of Study/Certificate of Completion (accredited learning)

Learners who register for modules, including 'Microcredentials', accredited by Academic Council but do not enrol on a programme of study that leads to an award approved by Academic Council are registered on the generic programme title 'University Certificate of Study'. After they have completed their modules, learners are issued with a transcript of their results and, in some cases, with a Certificate of Completion (designated purpose) issued by GPS in collaboration with the module leader and/or head of school/department. The transcript will act as a record of the accredited modules taken by the learner during the academic year. Because the modules do not constitute a programme of study, award classification does not apply.

The grades attained are approved by the UL Academic Council Grading Committee. While the University Certificate of Study does not constitute an award of the University, the resultant transcript records the achievement of learners in approved modules. At the end of each academic year, learners will receive a transcript showing: (i) that they were registered on a University Certificate of Study; (ii) the modules they had registered for during the previous academic years; and (iii) the grades attained. As the learning and grades in each module are accredited by the University, learners may use these grades when seeking entry to or credit towards any programme they wish to enrol on in the future.

4.2 Certificate of Attendance (non-accredited learning)

Learners may wish to avail of education, training or continuing professional development programmes that are independent of awards approved by the Academic Council of the University. Learners may take such programmes (or their employers may wish them to do so) to enhance their personal or professional development or employment prospects or to meet professional registration requirements. Where UL does not provide an approved award or accredited module to meet these requirements or where the nature of the learning programme does not meet the requirements of a UL award, a programme of study to address the learners' needs may be developed and approved by the GPS division in collaboration with the head of the school/department delivering the learning.

After a learner has successfully completed the programme, the learner may receive a Certificate of Attendance (designated purpose, e.g., Summer Schools). In collaboration with the school/department, GPS will be responsible for designing and developing the certificates but may not produce the certificates on UL parchment paper. Because the Certificate of Attendance (designated purpose) is not a programme approved by Academic Council, students will not be considered at the University Exam Board or have their certificates presented at UL conferring ceremonies.

Where the education and training programme offered by GPS/school/department includes an approved UL module, GPS/school/department will ensure that the learner is registered for the approved module. In addition to receiving the Certificate of Attendance, a learner who registers for approved modules will receive an official UL transcript detailing his/her performance in the approved modules only and may also receive a Certificate of Completion.

Appendix 1: National Framework of Qualifications

The National Framework of Qualifications describes what learners need to know, understand and be able to do to achieve a qualification or award. It lists the main qualifications awarded at each level on the framework and pathways from one NFQ level to the next.

The 10 levels of qualification in the framework range from Level 1 certificate award to Level 10 doctoral award. The university sector is responsible for providing awards in the Level 7 to Level 10 range; in addition, awards at Level 5 and Level 6 may be awarded where they are part of a progression process to a Level 8 award.

Awards are described by Class and by Type as set out below

Award Classes:

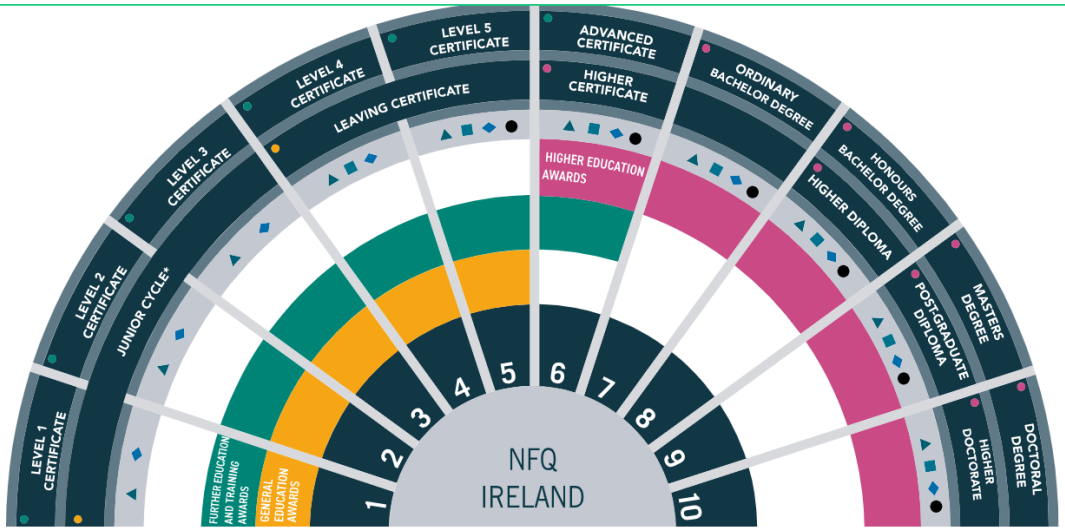
- Major awards have volume and breadth and are the principal class of award made at a level.
- Minor awards are associated with a major award and represent part completion of the major award but have relevance in their own right.
- Supplemental awards are for learners who already have a major award and may need training and updating as part of continuing professional development (CPD).
- Special-purpose awards have a narrow focus and are associated with legislative, regulatory, economic, social or personal learning requirements.

Major Award Types at Levels 6-10 on the NFQ

- Higher Certificate
- Ordinary Degree
- Honours Degree
- Higher Diploma
- Postgraduate Diploma
- Masters Degree
- Doctoral Degree

Further information on the NFQ including award type descriptors and international comparisons can be found on QQI's website (The qualifications system | Quality and Qualifications Ireland (qqi.ie))

As a designated awarding body, University of Limerick has signed up to the Joint-Sectoral Protocol between Designated Awarding Bodies and Quality and Qualifications Ireland for the Inclusion of Qualifications within the National Framework of Qualifications. This protocol provides for the formal inclusion of awards made by designated awarding bodies within the National Framework of Qualifications (NFQ). The operation of this protocol is designed to fulfil the relevant requirements of Section 55B of the Qualifications and Quality Assurance Act (2012) as amended.



Major Awards: named in the outer rings, are the principal class of awards made at a level

Minor Awards: are for partial completion of the outcomes for a Major Award

Supplemental Awards: are for learning that is additional to a Major Award

Special Purpose Awards: are for relatively narrow or purpose-specific achievement

Professional Awards: are for occupation-orientated qualifications including apprenticeships

Document Control

Document Version	2.2
Document Owner	Provost & Deputy President
Approved by	Academic Council
Date	24 June 2026
Effective Date	24 June 2026
Amended by	Academic Programme Review Committee
Amendment Date	15 June 2026
Amendments	1. Define exact credits (removal of "minimum" from last column Table 2.2, 2.3 2. Addition of Level 7 Ordinary Degree 3. Removal of Awards not on National Framework of Qualifications 4. Standardise minimum UL award at 30 ECTS 5. Diplomas standardised to 60 ECTS 6. Removal of Level 9 'Diploma', all level 9 are now 'Postgraduate Diploma'
Formal Review Date	January 2029

Document Version	2.1
Document Owner	Provost & Deputy President
Approved by	Academic Council
Date	5 March 2025
Effective Date	5 March 2025
Amended by	Academic Programme Review Committee
Amendment Date	6 February 2025
Amendments	Inclusion of 'Master of Landscape Architecture' award title in Section 2.2.
Formal Review Date	January 2029