



The Open
University

Credit transfer UK framework and Open University practice

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About the UKOU

- UK's largest academic institution
 - 173,889 students 2014-15
 - 26,371 FTE in STEM
- Equal status to all other UK universities
- Undergraduates all distance learners
- World leader in distance learning
- Full range of academic subjects
- Full range of HE qualifications
 - bachelors to PhD
- 72% of research world class
- 86 FTSE 100 companies sponsor staff to study with us



The Open University offer

Credit Transfer

Use your previous study to help you gain an OU qualification

If you have previously studied elsewhere you may be able to count your study towards an Open University qualification.

For example if you have:

- studied some modules or courses at university level
- completed part of a degree
- completed a professional or vocational qualification listed on the Ofqual register
- completed an HNC or HND
- studied at a university overseas
- completed other study listed in our [previous study finder](#)

then you may be able to count this study towards your OU qualification.



If you are planning to start your studies in February 2017, the

What is 'credit'



Director and Diversity
in Higher Education



Credit is awarded to a learner in recognition of the achievement of designated learning outcomes at a specified level

Academic credit in higher education in England - an introduction

Characteristics of credit

1. Awarding body
where did the learner study?
2. Volume of study
how much study did they complete?
3. Level of study
what academic level was the study at?
4. Date awarded
when was study completed?
5. Grade achieved
how well did the learner perform?

Awarding body

Degree awarding powers in the UK are granted by royal charter.

In the UK there are 139 providers of higher education that can award their own degrees.

108 universities and university colleges

21 colleges and other providers

Credit must be certified by an awarding body to be recognised

Volume of study

A measure of how much time is required by the 'average student' to complete the programme of study and achieve the designated learning outcomes.

In England

10 'notional study hours' = 1 credit

120 credits = 1 academic year

3 academic years = 1 bachelors degree

Level of study

Different levels “reflect different levels of intellectual achievement” (QAA).

Captures the idea that students develop in outlook from entry to graduation.

Outcomes of first year study are less sophisticated than those on graduation.

What do you need to transfer credit?

1. Widespread agreement over equivalence of
 1. volume of study
 2. level of study
 3. criteria for student success
2. Evidence you can trust
 1. published information
 2. official transcripts/certificates

The European context



Standards and Guidelines for
Quality Assurance in the European
Higher Education Area

The Bologna process

A Framework for Qualifications of the European Higher Education Area (QF-EHEA)

The QF-EHEA provides a mechanism for relating the national qualifications frameworks of different countries to each other.

European Qualifications Framework (EQF)

First cycle

bachelors degrees

Second cycle

masters degrees

Third cycle

doctoral research

Levels frameworks – Europe

Descriptors defining levels in the European Qualifications Framework (EQF)

Each of the 8 levels is defined by a set of descriptors indicating the **learning outcomes** relevant to qualifications at that level in any system of qualifications

EQF Level	Knowledge	Skills	Competence
	In the context of EQF, knowledge is described as <i>theoretical and/or factual.</i>	In the context of EQF, skills are described as <i>cognitive</i> (involving the use of logical, intuitive and creative thinking), and <i>practical</i> (involving manual dexterity and the use of methods, materials, tools and instruments)	In the context of EQF, competence is described in terms of <i>responsibility and autonomy.</i>
Level 1	Basic general knowledge	Basic skills required to carry out simple tasks	Work or study under direct supervision in a structured context
		Basic cognitive and practical skills required to use relevant	

Levels frameworks – Europe

Level 1 – primary school

Level 2 – secondary school (age 16)

Level 3 – high school (post 16)

Level 4 – 1st year undergraduate

Level 5 – 2nd year undergraduate

Level 6 – final year undergraduate

Level 7 – masters

Level 8 – doctorate

European Credit Transfer Scheme

By using learning outcomes and work-load in curriculum design and delivery, ECTS places the student at the centre of the educational process.

Moreover, using credits makes it easier to create and document flexible learning pathways, thus allowing students greater autonomy and responsibility.

The UK context

- Quality and standards are the responsibility of the Higher Education Funding Councils
- Quality assurance activities are contracted out
- All HE providers must comply with requirements of *The Quality Code*

UK Quality Code Part A

1. Qualification frameworks
 - aligned with European frameworks
2. Characteristics statements
 - distinctive features of each qualification
3. Credit frameworks
 - allowing comparisons
4. Subject benchmark statements
 - expectations in the subject



**UK Quality Code
for Higher Education**

Part A: Setting and Maintaining Academic
Standards

UK Quality Code Part A

Credit frameworks potentially facilitate the transfer of credit between programmes and between higher education providers but this process is not automatic. Individual degree-awarding bodies are solely responsible for determining what credit they will accept for the purpose of credit transfer or accumulation towards their individual awards. Credit recognition implies eligibility to be considered for, but not entitlement to, admission with advanced standing and exemption from part of a programme.

UK Quality Code Part C

Expectation that higher education providers **publish information** about their provision that is:

1. valid
2. reliable
3. useful
4. accessible



**UK Quality Code
for Higher Education**

Part C: Information about Higher Education
Provision

UK qualifications framework

Typical higher education qualifications awarded by degree-awarding bodies within each level	FHEQ	FQHEIS	Corresponding QF-EHEA cycle
	FHEQ level ^a	SCQF level ^b	
Doctoral degrees (eg, PhD/DPhil, EdD, DBA, DCLinEd, etc)	8	12	Third cycle (end of cycle)
Bachelor's degrees with honours (eg BA/BSc Hons)	6	10	First cycle (end of cycle) qualifications
Bachelor's degrees		9	
Professional Graduate Certificate in Education (PGCE) in England, Wales and Northern Ireland ^g			Graduate diplomas
Graduate certificates ⁱ			
Foundation degrees (eg, FdA, FdSc)		5	NA
Diplomas of Higher Education (DipHE)	8		
Higher National Diplomas (HND) awarded by degree-awarding bodies in England, Wales and Northern Ireland under licence from Pearson ⁱ	NA		
Higher National Certificates (HNC) awarded by degree-awarding bodies in England, Wales and Northern Ireland under licence from Pearson ⁱ	4		NA
Certificates of Higher Education (CertHE)		7	

Non-EU qualifications

- **ECCTIS**

“Our multi-lingual team of regional education experts possess in-depth understanding of comparative education models, recognition criteria, international qualifications and skills, qualification frameworks and quality assurance and accreditation systems.”

- **UK-NARIC**

designated United Kingdom national agency for the recognition and comparison of international qualifications and skills



What are the OU's rules?

- Time-limits apply to credit depending on qualification
- Each individual item of credit (each module, unit etc.) is separately considered
- Only credit achieving a pass mark is accepted

What does the OU tell applicants?

- Qualification description
- Credit transfer website
- Application process

What does the OU tell applicants?

How do I transfer my credit?



Step 1: Check if my previous study is eligible for credit transfer



Step 2: See how much credit can be transferred into my chosen OU qualification



Step 3: Make a formal application for credit transfer

What does the OU tell applicants?

Top 6 things you need to know

- 1 Your study can be up to 16 years old
- 2 We award credit at OU levels 1, 2 and postgraduate
- 3 You have to be able to provide evidence of your previous study
- 4 We only recognise study where the pass mark has been achieved

If you were exempted from any part of your previous qualification, or your transcript shows details of any condoned passes, we cannot award credit for this part of your study. However in most cases, we can make an award based on the modules or elements of the study you did complete. [What if I was exempted from part of my study?](#)

- 5 Study is transferred in 30 credit multiples

Example – Bachelor of Laws

Total	Number of credits left to complete	Number of years to complete qualification	Credits
Max	1. Credit requirements For this qualification we can consider previous study completed up to 16 years ago for credit transfer. We will calculate the age of your previous study using the date we receive your completed application with all required supporting evidence.		
Min	2. Time limits 3. Age of previous study		
	210 – 240 credits left to complete	12 years	
	270 – 300 credits left to complete	14 years	
	330 credits left to complete	16 years	

Credit Transfer Factsheet

BACHELOR OF LAWS (HONS) Q79

What do applicants send us?

1. Completed application form
2. Academic transcript (original or certified copy)
3. Syllabus information if available

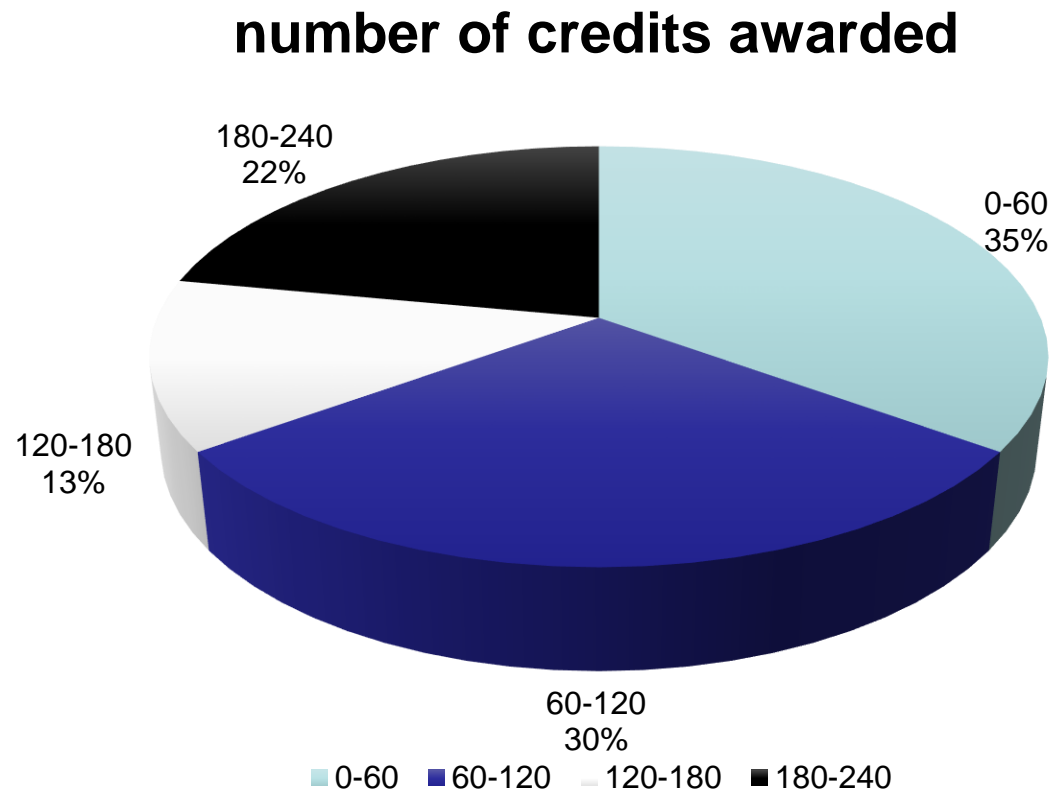
How are applications handled?

1. Credit Transfer Centre
 1. checks documents
 2. checks age of previous study for eligibility
 3. assesses volume of credit
 4. assesses level of credit
 5. sends to specialist subject assessors where needed
2. Specialist assessors
 1. reviews learning outcomes achieved
 2. maps against OU requirement for qualification
 3. approves CT award
 4. returns to Credit Transfer Centre for processing
3. Credit Transfer Centre
 1. records award
 2. notifies applicant

Specialist assessment

- We ask ourselves
 - What has the applicant done that is relevant to our qualification?
 - How much of it have they done?
 - Where does it overlap with what we offer?
 - What gaps are left?
 - Is the applicant ready for the next stage?

OU credit transfer activity (2014/15 data)



OU credit transfer activity (2014/15 data)

- 11716 awards made
 - 9% professional qualifications
 - 13% completed bachelors degrees
 - 53% incomplete bachelors degrees
 - 18% vocational qualifications
 - 3% masters qualifications
- ~9% awards based on non-UK qualifications
- 27% of OU graduates have some CT award (of ~120000 graduates)

Useful sources

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Thank you!
谢谢!

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