

Bachelor Degree (AQF Level 7) Policy

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Advisor	Academic Registrar, Academic Administration academic-registrar@griffith.edu.au (07) 373 57334
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Description	This policy describes the bachelor degree which is a program typically equivalent to three or more years of full-time study for which the University grants the award of Bachelor of X. It also defines the structure and requirements for the double bachelor degree, the vertical degree and the Bachelor Honours Degree which is four or more years (full-time equivalent in length).

Related documents

[Structure and Requirements of Qualifications Awarded by Griffith University](#)

[Bachelor Honours Degree \(AQF Level 8\) Policy](#)

[Credit and Recognition of Prior Learning Policy](#)

[The Griffith Graduate](#)

[Student Administration Policy](#)

[Course Catalogue, Coding and Other Course Attributes Policy](#)

[Schedule 1: Requirement to Complete the English Language Enhancement Course](#)

[\[Definitions\]](#) [\[AQF Level 7 Bachelor Degree Learning Outcomes\]](#) [\[signature\]](#) [\[experience\]](#) [\[Structure and Requirements\]](#) [\[Double Bachelor Degree\]](#) [\[Vertical Degree\]](#) [\[Bachelor Honours Degree\]](#) [\[Credit\]](#)

1. DEFINITIONS

Australian Qualifications Framework (AQF) is a national system of qualifications encompassing all post-compulsory education. Higher education awards are located at AQF Levels 5-10.

AQF level is the nomenclature used in the AQF to demonstrate the relative complexity and/or depth of achievements and the autonomy required of graduates of AQF qualifications to demonstrate that achievement e.g. AQF level 1 has the lowest complexity and AQF Level 10 has the highest complexity.

Qualification type is the nomenclature used in the AQF to describe each category of AQF qualification e.g. Bachelor Degree, Bachelor Degree Honours, Graduate Certificate, Masters Degree (Coursework). Each qualification type is defined by a descriptor expressed as learning outcomes.

Learning Outcomes are the expression of the set of knowledge, skills and the application of the knowledge and skills a person has acquired and is able to demonstrate as a result of learning.

Bachelor Degree (AQF Level 7) is a program typically equivalent to three or more years of full-time study designed to equip graduates with learning outcomes (knowledge, skills and application) at the level of the qualification type, consistent with the discipline and the characteristics of *The Griffith Graduate*, for which the University grants the award of Bachelor of X.

Double Bachelor Degree is an approved program of study of at least four years (full-time equivalent) duration, in which the core requirements of two bachelor degree programs are undertaken simultaneously and for which two separate awards are granted: Bachelor of X and Bachelor of Y. A double bachelor degree may comprise two bachelor degrees, one bachelor degree and one bachelor honours degree or two bachelor honours degrees. A Bachelor Honours Degree in a double bachelor

degree is normally a concurrent honours degree. In a double bachelor degree the core requirements of each degree are able to be satisfied in less time than is required to complete each degree separately,

Bachelor Honours Degree (AQF Level 8) is typically equivalent to one year of full-time study, normally taken after the completion of a three year bachelor degree, referred to as “**end-on honours**”. The requirements for the end-on honours program are set out in the *Bachelor Honours Degree (AQF Level 8) Policy*. For the Bachelor Honours Degree the University grants the award of the Bachelor of X (Honours).

A Bachelor Honours Degree (AQF Level 8) of four or more years in length may be studied concurrently with the bachelor degree, with the honours typically included in the final year/s of the program, referred to as “**concurrent honours**”. In a concurrent Bachelor Honours Degree there is no differentiated study program and all students awarded the degree receive one award the Bachelor of X (Honours).

The term “**embedded honours**” refers to the award of Honours on the basis of a differentiated study program within a Bachelor degree (AQF Level 7) program which is four or more years (full-time equivalent) in length. Students who meet specified admission criteria may apply to change programs to the AQF Level 8 Bachelor Honours Degree and on successful completion receive one award the Bachelor of X (Honours).

Courses in bachelor degrees are identified as core (including level 1, designated, capstone and English language enhancement [ELE]), and elective (listed and free choice).

Capstone Course is a core course which offers students nearing graduation the opportunity to summarise, evaluate and integrate learning from across a range of learning experiences to engage with a task which addresses a contemporary issue or problem facing a particular discipline or profession.

Vertical Degree is an approved program of study of at least four years (full-time equivalent) duration, in which the core requirements of a bachelor degree and a masters degree program or a bachelor honours degree and masters are undertaken simultaneously and for which two separate awards are granted: Bachelor of X and Master of Y. In a vertical degree the core requirements of each degree are able to be satisfied in less time than is required to complete each degree separately.

2. AQF LEVEL 7 BACHELOR DEGREE LEARNING OUTCOMES

The Bachelor Degree is located at level 7 of the Australian Qualifications Framework (AQF). A bachelor degree is designed and accredited to enable graduates to demonstrate the learning outcomes expressed as knowledge, skills and the application of knowledge and skills specified in the AQF level 7 criteria and the Bachelor Degree descriptor as set out below:

Knowledge	Graduates of a Bachelor Degree will have a broad and coherent body of knowledge, with depth in the underlying principles and concepts in one or more disciplines as a basis for independent lifelong learning.
Skills	<p>Graduates of a Bachelor Degree will have:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ cognitive skills to review critically, analyse, consolidate and synthesise knowledge ▪ cognitive and technical skills to demonstrate a broad understanding of knowledge with depth in some areas ▪ cognitive and creative skills to exercise critical thinking and judgement in identifying and solving problems with intellectual independence ▪ communication skills to present a clear, coherent and independent exposition of knowledge and ideas.

Application of knowledge and skills	<p>Graduates of a Bachelor Degree will demonstrate the application of knowledge and skills:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ with initiative and judgement in planning, problem solving and decision making in professional practice and/or scholarship ▪ to adapt knowledge and skills in diverse contexts ▪ with responsibility and accountability for own learning and professional practice and in collaboration with others within broad parameters.
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In its planning and accreditation processes the University assures itself that every student undertakes a coherent program of study that supports the development of the learning outcomes specified for the bachelor degree, the discipline and *The Griffith Graduate*.

3. STRUCTURE AND REQUIREMENTS

In accrediting a bachelor degree, the Programs Committee on the recommendation of the relevant Group Board, establishes the award and the requirements that need to be attained for the conferral of the award. The requirements normally include one or more of the following:

- Core Courses
- Academic Plan/s
- Elective Courses
- Research component.

These requirements in the bachelor degree vary depending on the purpose of the qualification in terms of broadening, extending or deepening the student's existing knowledge and skills.

3.1 Core Courses

Core courses are mandatory for all students to successfully complete in order to meet the degree requirements.

3.1.1 *Level 1 Courses*

Each program provides a common learning experience for commencing students, the default being 60CP core level 1 courses, to facilitate progression to a variety of academic plans that allow breadth and/or depth in learning outcomes.

3.1.2 *Designated Courses*

Some programs classify one or more of their core courses as designated courses as the learning outcomes are critical to graduate competence and it is impractical for the student to continue in the program without meeting a satisfactory level of competence. A designated course is normally a performance-based or work integrated learning course or a course requiring the development of particular practical skills and/or demonstration of certain personal qualities. A student may be eligible for exclusion on the basis of failure in one or more designated courses. The designated courses are specified in the program requirements and a schedule of designated courses is maintained on the *Programs and Courses website*.

3.1.3 *English Language Enhancement (ELE) Course*

An outcome of a Griffith bachelor degree is a graduate level of competency in English language skills in writing, reading, speaking and listening. The English Language Enhancement (ELE) course is a core course and therefore a mandatory requirement for all bachelor degree programs that enrol international students in first and second year unless the program restricts entry to students who are not required to complete the ELE course as specified in Schedule 1 to this policy. ELE course requirements are stipulated on the *Programs and Courses website* for the specific program.

For those international students required to complete the ELE course, it is normally to be undertaken within their first trimester of enrolment in the bachelor degree. Where the program is required to include an ELE course, the program structure must enable the ELE course to be taken in any trimester/teaching period into which international

students are first admitted. Program structures are to include the ELE course in a manner that enables students to complete the ELE course within the annual academic load for the program. Schedule 1 specifies which students are required to complete the ELE course.

Students who are native speakers of English are not permitted to enrol in the ELE course. Domestic students for whom English is not their first language, may enrol in the ELE course as one of their free choice electives.

3.2 Academic Plans

Within the program requirements a set of courses that develop a particular academic theme are identified and designated as an academic plan. There are two designated types of academic plans available within the Bachelor Degree:

- Major (60CP).
- Minor (40CP).

The program requirements may specify the completion of a prescribed academic plan or a minimum number of academic plans to be completed from a range available within the program.

3.2.1 *A Prescribed Academic Plan*

Where the degree structure includes a prescribed academic plan, the prescribed plan must include at least 60 CP of courses at level 2 or higher which comprise a sequence of courses that develop a coherent academic theme culminating in advanced level courses. At least 20 CP of courses in the prescribed plan must be at final year level (level 3 or above) and one of those courses may be designated as a capstone course for either the degree or for the academic plan. The prescribed academic plan is included on the testamur.

In addition to the prescribed academic plan, the program may include other academic plans from which the student may select in order to complete the degree requirements.

3.2.2 *A Range of Academic Plans*

Where the degree structure offers students a choice of academic plans and there is no prescribed academic plan:

- The academic plans will have one or more designated types. The preferred plan type for bachelor degrees is the major (60CP) which is included on the testamur. However other plan types may be used, alone or in combination.
- A major must include at least 60 CP of courses at level 2 or higher which comprise a sequence of courses that develop a coherent academic theme culminating in advanced level courses. At least 20 CP of courses in the major must be at final year level (level 3 or above) and one of those courses may be designated as a capstone course. Level 1 courses may be designated as foundation courses for a major, but are not included in the requirements for the major.
- The majority of courses in a major will be unique to that major and not shared with other majors. (This condition is consistent with the requirement for a coherent sequence of courses).
- Where a plan type other than major is used, at least some of the plans must satisfy the conditions prescribed for a major, and students must be required to complete at least one academic plan of at least 60 CP.

3.2.3 *Other Academic Plan Provisions – Minors*

A bachelor degree may include academic plans, Minors, which include 40CP of courses.

The degree requirements may permit or require students to undertake more than one academic plan.

3.2.4 *Inclusion of Majors (60CP) on the Testamur*

A student may be awarded the bachelor degree with a maximum of two majors.

3.3 Elective Courses

Electives are either:

- listed electives - a set of courses specified in the requirements of a program or an academic plan from which students are required to choose a specified number to fulfil the requirements of the program or plan; or
- free choice electives - students are permitted to select a number of courses which are not specified in the program or plan requirements in order to fulfil the requirements of the program or plan.

Where the program requirements permit a student to undertake free choice elective courses, the student may select any course from within the University provided that:

- the course is an undergraduate course; and
- the program requirements concerning the maximum number of credit points at particular course levels (e.g. level 1, 2 etc.) are complied with; and
- pre-requisite and co-requisite conditions are satisfied; and
- the course is not a restricted course; or
- in the case of a restricted course, the student meets the conditions specified in the restrictions, or is given approval by the Head of School or nominee to undertake the course.

3.4 Research Component

Within the requirements of a program a course or set of courses that include as learning outcomes the capacity to plan, execute and report on the findings of a research project may be designated as a research component.

3.4.1 *Bachelor Degree*

In the Bachelor Degree, courses with learning outcomes requiring students to demonstrate their ability to collate research and findings on a particular topic, to apply their knowledge in analysing this information and incorporating it into a written response meet the research component requirement.

3.4.2 *Bachelor Honours Degree*

In a four or more year Bachelor Honours Degree a significant research component is required including at least 30 CP of supervised research leading to a dissertation or a comparable activity in the visual, performing or creative arts. The research component may also include research preparation courses, supervised reading courses, and colloquia, which are assessed. To be eligible for scholarships and admission to a postgraduate research qualification completion of a research component of at least 40CP which may include a research methodology course equivalent to 10CP is required. See [Higher Degree Research Scholarship Application Assessment and Award Policy](#).

3.5 Degree Requirements

Each bachelor degree has a set of requirements specific to it, within the following general framework.

To be eligible for the award of the Bachelor degree, the student will have successfully completed 240 credit points (CP) in the case of a three year degree, or 320CP in the case of a four year degree, including:

- all courses specified as being core and therefore mandatory for the award including level 1 courses, designated courses, capstone course and the ELE course;
- where applicable, one or more academic plans, selected from the set of academic plans approved for inclusion in the degree structure, with the number of academic plans to be completed specified;
- where applicable, the specified number of credit points to be taken as electives;
- where applicable the specified number of credit points to be taken as a research component;
- where applicable, other requirements, such as field experience, employment experience;

- no more than 100CP at level 1 for a three year program or 120CP at level 1 for a four year single degree program; and
- at least 60CP of courses at level 3 or above.

3.6 Awarding the Bachelor Degree (AQF Level 7) with Distinction

The Bachelor degree (AQF Level 7) may be awarded with distinction where a student achieves a minimum program GPA of 6.5 with no failed courses. Additional criteria may be included with the approval of the Programs Committee. The wording 'with distinction' will not form part of the award title. The words 'This award was achieved with Distinction' are recorded on the testamur.

4. DOUBLE BACHELOR DEGREE

A double bachelor degree has the following characteristics:

- the core requirements and learning outcomes of each single degree including any professional registration requirements must be effectively satisfied within the structure of the double degree, and its total credit point value;
- the minimum requirements of a double degree include:
 - core courses specified in the single degree;
 - an academic plan, other than a minor, in the form specified in the single degree;
 - a research component (where the double includes a Bachelor Honours degree);
- elective requirements may be met by the requirements of the other degree;
- the minimum duration of a double degree will be as follows:
 - for a combination of two single degrees of three years duration (240CP) the minimum duration of the double degree shall be (320CP);
 - for a combination of two single degrees where either single degree is greater than three years duration the minimum duration of the double degree shall be (400CP);
- the courses to be undertaken within the double degree will normally be taught and assessed in English, regardless of the partner institution's language of instruction;
- two awards are conferred on the successful completion of a double degree;
- under certain circumstances, a student may be permitted to transfer from the double degree program to one of the single degree programs.

Proposals to establish double degrees will be approved by the Deputy Vice Chancellor (Academic). Proposals for double degrees to be offered in conjunction with an international partner will be considered in accordance with the [Procedure for Planning, Developing and Approving Transnational Programs](#). In establishing double degrees the Programs Committee shall take into account the comparability and equivalence of the learning outcomes, the volume of learning, the balance of learning, the program of study including content, and learning and assessment approaches.

5. VERTICAL DEGREE

A vertical degree has the following characteristics:

- the core requirements and learning outcomes of each single degree including the research component and any professional registration requirements must be effectively satisfied within the structure of the vertical degree;
- elective requirements will be met by the requirements of the other degree;
- the minimum duration of a vertical degree shall be four years or part time equivalent (320CP);
- two awards are conferred on the successful completion of the vertical degree.

Progression to the masters component of the vertical degree may require a specified level of achievement. Such requirements shall be specified for each vertical degree program. Where a student does not meet the specified level of achievement or does not wish to complete the masters degree component they may be permitted to transfer from the vertical degree program to an equivalent bachelor degree program.

Proposals to establish vertical degrees will be approved by the Deputy Vice Chancellor (Academic). In establishing vertical degrees the Programs Committee shall take into account the comparability and equivalence of the learning outcomes, the volume of learning, the balance of learning, the program of study including content, and learning and assessment approaches.

6. BACHELOR HONOURS DEGREE (AQF LEVEL 8)

This section refers to Bachelor Honours degree programs which are four or more years in length (concurrent and embedded Honours). Refer to [Bachelor Honours Degree Policy](#) for end-on honours programs which are an additional year of full-time study following the completion of a three or more year bachelor program.

6.1 Structure of the Honours Program

The award of Honours in a four year program is based on meritorious performance across the whole program or a defined sub-set of the program including a research component weighted at 30CP or more. Students eligible for the award of Bachelor Honours Degree (AQF Level 8) may undertake a concurrent honours program or may be required to undertake a differentiated program in the final year/s of a Bachelor Degree (AQF Level 7) program. Where a differentiated program is required for the Bachelor Honours Degree, the credit points required in the differentiated program should normally be the same as the credit points for the standard (non-Honours) program.

6.2 Admission

Where the award of Honours is based on a differentiated program, the criterion for admission for the Bachelor Honours Degree (AQF Level 8) shall be based on an average level of performance of at least a GPA of 5.0 in a specified set of courses taken in the program up to the point of entry to the Honours program.

6.3 Assessment

The coursework component of the Bachelor Honours Degree (AQF Level 8) shall be subject to the same provisions as the Bachelor degree (AQF Level 7). The organisation, supervision and assessment of the research component including the dissertation shall be subject to the same provisions which apply to Honours programs involving an additional year of study (refer to [Bachelor Honours Degree Policy](#)).

6.4 Honours Classification

The classes of Honours degrees awarded in concurrent honours will be Class I, Class IIA, Class IIB and Class III. In embedded honours the classes of Honours degrees awarded will be Class I, Class IIA, and Class IIB. In specific programs, Programs Committee may approve only the award of unclassified Honours where this is the established norm in the profession.

The relevant Program Director recommends the Honours classification for each candidate to the Dean (Learning & Teaching) for approval via the School Assessment Board.

Students may appeal against their honours classification in accordance with the [Student Review and Appeals Policy](#) and [Procedures](#).

The Dean (Learning & Teaching) is responsible for approving candidates for the award of the University Medal, under the terms of the [University Medal Policy](#).

7. CREDIT

Under the *Credit and Recognition of Prior Learning Policy* credit may be granted towards the requirements of a bachelor degree on the basis of the level of the prior study and the level of the award program. The *Credit and Recognition of Prior Learning Policy* describes the types of credit and limitations on credit. The credit and recognition of prior learning provisions specifically for bachelor degrees (AQF Level 7) are as follows:

7.1 Maximum Amount of Credit

For Bachelor degrees where the program is three or more years of full-time study or equivalent, the maximum amount of credit which may be granted is two-thirds of the program. In granting credit consideration needs to be given to the balance of the components of the program at the bachelor degree level (AQF 7) and the program's learning outcomes.

7.2 Minimum Requirements for the Award of the Degree

Notwithstanding the amount of credit which may be granted towards a bachelor degree as set out in [7.1 above](#), the student undertaking a three year degree (240CP) is required to complete a minimum of 80 credit points of level 2 and 3 courses which are part of the degree requirements* and which have not been credited towards another award. In the case of a four year bachelor degree (320CP), the requirement is 110 credit points at level 2, 3 and 4. For bachelor degrees of other lengths, the application of this rule relates to the minimum portion of the program for which credit may not be granted according to [7.1 above](#) and requires that these courses must not be level 1 courses which are part of the degree requirements* and which have not been credited towards another award.

* The degree requirements of the Griffith degree which the student is undertaking.

7.3 Advanced Standing, Articulation Pathways and Structured Upgrading

The *Credit and Recognition of Prior Learning Policy* prescribes the conditions under which provisions for advanced standing, articulation pathways and structured upgrading may be approved in bachelor degrees.

7.4 Guidelines for credit and recognition of prior learning in bachelor degrees are as follows:

Where the bachelor degree provides for electives, unspecified credit may be granted on the basis of prior study at Diploma level or higher. [Table 1](#) sets out the maximum amount of unspecified credit which may be granted on the basis of study at the level indicated, provided that the bachelor degree has sufficient free choice electives to accommodate the credit. In this case, the prior study may be in an area unrelated to the area of the bachelor degree.

Where the prior study is relevant to the bachelor degree, specified credit can be granted for particular course(s) in the bachelor degree on the grounds that the student has substantially completed the content of the course. [Table 1](#) sets out the standard amount of credit (specified and unspecified combined) which is granted in this case.

The maximum amount of credit (specified and unspecified combined) set out in [Table 1](#) is only granted where the prior study is considered to have such a high degree of overlap to the content of the bachelor degree, that program structure requirements can be met by the completion of the minimum amount of further study.

Regardless of the amount of credit indicated in [Table 1](#), the conditions of [section 7.2](#) must be satisfied.

The amount of credit awarded may not be greater than the amount of study successfully completed at the same or lower level (expressed as Griffith equivalent credit points) on which the award of credit is based.

Table 1: Guidelines for Amount of Credit

Level of Prior Study	Maximum CP of Unspecified Credit	Standard CP of credit (specified and unspecified combined)	Maximum CP of credit (specified and unspecified combined)
AQF Level 5 Diploma	40	80	120
AQF Level 6 Advanced Diploma	60	120	160
AQF Level 6 Associate Degree	80	120	160
AQF Level 7 Bachelor degree	80	160	160 or as in 6.2

No credit will be awarded for studies completed at Certificate I and II levels.

Credit for studies completed at Certificate III and IV level may be granted where the assessed learning outcomes are judged to be equally acceptable within the structure of the University award.

Where Certificate III and IV studies have been completed as part of a Diploma program, credit will be awarded on the basis of partial completion of Diploma studies.

Courses undertaken in programs within the University which may formally articulate with the bachelor degree may be counted towards satisfying the requirements of the degree. These arrangements are not limited by the restrictions on the amount of credit which may be granted as set out above.