



Guide to

**Master of Science [MSc]/PgDip/PgCert/BA Hons/BA/ BEng Hons/ BEng/
BSc Hons/BSc/ GradDip/GradCert Professional Studies**

And

**Master of Science [MSc] Master of Arts, Master of Arts and
Sciences/PgDip/PgCert/BA Hons/BA/ BEng Hons/ BEng/BSc
Hons/BSc/BASc Hons/BASc/ GradDip/GradCert Open Studies**

Incorporating:

Health Professionals and Sports Scientists Continuing Professional Development
Framework

Further information:

Dr Jo-Anne Tait BSc MA PhD SFHEA
Flexible Studies Framework Lead
Robert Gordon University
Garthdee Road
Aberdeen
AB10 7FY

Email: j.e.tait@rgu.ac.uk

Contents

1. Flexible Studies Framework	4
1.1 Awards	4
1.1.1 Postgraduate Level Awards	4
1.1.2 Undergraduate Level Awards	5
1.1.3 Named Framework Awards	5
1.2 Purpose and Principles of the Framework	6
1.3 Professional and Open Studies Awards with Subject Specialism	7
1.4 Flexible Studies Named Frameworks	7
1.5 Students who have failed a Course/Programme	7
2. Framework Rules and Regulations	8
2.1 Introduction	8
2.2 Entry Requirements	8
2.3 Academic Credit Recognised for an Award	9
2.3.1 Academic credit awarded by RGU.	9
2.3.2 Recognition of Prior Certificated Learning (RPCL)	9
2.3.3 Currency of Credit used for an Award	9
2.3.4 Failed or Condoned Modules	9
2.4 Assessment Attempts	10
2.5 Awards with Subject Specialism	10
2.5.1 Eligibility for Award with Subject Specialism	10
2.5.2 Subject Review Panel	10
2.6 Students who have failed a Course/Programme	11
2.6.1 Eligibility for a Award with a Subject Specilaism	11
2.7 Submitting a Claim for a Framework Award	11
2.7.1 Award Claim Process	11
2.7.2 Award Board	12
3. Further Information	12
Appendix: Flow Chart outlining the process	13

1. FLEXIBLE STUDIES FRAMEWORK

1.1 Awards

The Flexible Studies Framework offers a range of awards at postgraduate and undergraduate levels that provides the opportunity to accumulate credits from across a variety of subject areas. Once the appropriate amount of credit has been achieved the student may submit a claim for a particular award of the Framework.

The undernoted awards, at postgraduate and undergraduate level, are available within the Flexible Studies Framework. In some cases, it is possible to apply for an award with a subject specialism in the award title (refer Section 2.5 below). Furthermore, in some subject areas, approved Named Frameworks are offered.

Learning outcomes at Masters and Graduate level are detailed within the *Course Specification: Core Award Data* document, which is under the first listing on the 'Postgraduate Courses' drop-down in the *Course Information Database*: <http://www4.rgu.ac.uk/coursedb/>

1.1.1 Postgraduate Level Awards

Master of Science (MSc) Professional Studies

Master of Art (MA) Professional Studies

Postgraduate Diploma (PgDip) Professional Studies

Postgraduate Certificate (PgCert) Professional Studies

Master of Science (MSc) Open Studies

Master of Art (MA) Open Studies

Master of Arts and Sciences (MASt) Open Studies

Postgraduate Diploma (PgDip) Open Studies

Postgraduate Certificate (PgCert) Open Studies

Students can apply to be considered for the award of:

PgCert Professional or Open Studies on successful completion of 60 credits (with a minimum of 45 credits at SCQF level 11 with the remaining deriving from levels SCQF 9 or 10); or

PgDip Professional or Open Studies on successful completion of 120 credits (with a minimum of 90 credits at SCQF level 11 with the remaining deriving from levels SCQF 9 or 10); or

MSc/MA/ Professional or Open Studies or MASc Open Studies on successful completion of 180 credits (with a minimum of 150 credits at SCQF level 11 with the remaining deriving from levels SCQF 9 or 10). This must include an SCQF level 11 Project/Dissertation module, admission to which will normally require research underpinning. Module choice should be discussed with the appropriate Module Co-ordinator.

Students claiming a Professional Studies title need to meet the following requirements:

- The credit claimed is from an agreed subject area with up to 30 credits from a different subject area
- The credit claimed is within a 6-year timeframe.

Students claiming an Open Studies title need to meet the following requirements:

- The credit claimed is within an 8-year timeframe.

Students claiming a Master of Arts and Sciences title need to meet the following requirements:

- A balance of arts and sciences credit
- An interdisciplinary project as part of the credit

1.1.2 *Undergraduate Level Awards*

Graduate Diploma (GradDip) Professional Studies

Graduate Certificate (GradDip) Professional Studies

Bachelor of Science (Hons) (BSc Hons) Professional Studies

Bachelor of Science (BSc) Professional Studies

Bachelor of Engineering (Hons) (BEng Hons) Professional Studies

Bachelor of Engineering (BEng) Professional Studies

Bachelor of Arts (Hons) (BA Hons) Professional Studies

Bachelor of Arts (BA) Professional Studies

Graduate Diploma (GradDip) Open Studies

Graduate Certificate (GradDip) Open Studies

Bachelor of Science (Hons) (BSc Hons) Open Studies

Bachelor of Science (BSc) Open Studies

Bachelor of Engineering (Hons) (BEng Hons) Open Studies

Bachelor of Engineering (BEng) Open Studies

Bachelor of Arts (Hons) (BA Hons) Open Studies

Bachelor of Arts (BA) Open Studies

Bachelor of Arts and Sciences (Hons) (BASc Hons) Open Studies

Bachelor of Arts and Sciences (BASc) Open Studies

Students can apply to be considered for the award of:

Graduate Certificate Professional or Open Studies on successful completion of 60 credits at SCQF levels 9, 10 or 11; or

Graduate Diploma Professional or Open Studies on successful completion of 120 credits at SCQF levels 9, 10 or 11.

- BA/BEng/BSc Professional or Open Studies or BASc Open Studies on successful completion of 360 SCQF credits (with a minimum of 90 credits at level SCQF 9 and the remaining credits deriving from SCQF 7, SCQF 8, SCQF 10 or SCQF 11)
- BA/BEng/BSc (Hons) Professional or Open Studies or BASc (Hons) Open Studies on successful completion of 480 SCQF Credits (with a minimum of 90 credits at level SCQF 10 and the remaining credits deriving from levels SCQF 8, SCQF 9 or SCQF 11)

1.1.3 *Named Framework Awards*

The following Named Framework is currently available:

Health Professionals and Sports Scientists Continuing Professional Development Framework with the following awards:

Master of Science (MSc) Health, Wellbeing and Physical Activity

Postgraduate Diploma (PgDip) Health, Wellbeing and Physical Activity

Postgraduate Certificate (PgCert) Health, Wellbeing and Physical Activity

Students can apply to be considered for the award of:

PgCert Health, Wellbeing and Physical Activity on successful completion of 60 credits at SCQF level 11; or.

PgDip Health, Wellbeing and Physical Activity on successful completion of 120 credits at SCQF level 11; or

MSc Health, Wellbeing and Physical Activity on successful completion of 180 credits at SCQF level 11. This must include an SCQF level 11 Project/Dissertation module, admission to which will normally require research underpinning. Module choice should be discussed with the appropriate Module Co-ordinator.

1.2 Purpose and Principles of the Framework

All graduates and professionals need to continually update their knowledge and skills to ensure currency of expertise and competence to practice. Continuing Professional Development (CPD) offers professionals a flexible means of addressing their lifelong learning requirements and supporting career development and progression.

The modules of the University offer a range of learning opportunities that reflect the range and complexity of the knowledge and skills required in contemporary practice in commerce, industry, health, and the public and voluntary sectors. Students may therefore study a range of individual modules in order to meet their work-related learning needs without the immediate aim of achieving an award.

If a student who has studied modules or short courses on a CPD basis later decides they wish to achieve an academic award, the Professional Studies Framework (the Framework) provides the mechanism for converting the credit achieved into an academic award. In certain circumstances, the award title can reflect the predominant subject studied (subject to approval). Furthermore, in some subject areas, subject specialist "Named Frameworks" have been approved.

The Framework is not a course, or a programme and students do not enrol or register on the Framework at the outset of their studies. Rather, they accumulate credit and, once sufficient credit has been achieved, they use this to form the basis of a claim for a Framework award.

The Framework provides a flexible approach to learning by enabling students to study only those modules most appropriate to their career. Credits can be accumulated from a range of subjects, across different Schools and Faculties, offering further flexibility in terms of which subjects are studied. This flexibility is beneficial for students for whom it is not feasible to enrol on a full-time course or those who are unable to find a course which meets their precise needs. This offers flexibility to students by providing options as to how many modules they undertake in a semester or academic year, helping them to balance

work/life/study commitments. Although, it must be noted that credit being used towards an award must be completed within a defined period.

The Framework has been designed in accordance with the Scottish Credit and Qualifications Framework (SCQF). Postgraduate modules attract academic credits at SCQF level 11 whilst modules at undergraduate level attract credits at SCQF level 9 or 10. Most modules attract 15 credits whilst some may be larger and attract 30 credits. Research projects and dissertations normally attract 60 credits.

1.3 Professional or Open Studies Awards with Subject Specialism

A student who has undertaken the required number of credits (fifty percent of the credit for the award plus 15 credits) in a specific subject area will be eligible to be considered for a Professional or Open Studies Framework award which includes a subject specialism in brackets e.g., MSc Professional Studies (Public Health), MSc Open Studies (Creative Entrepreneurship).

Refer Section 2.5 below for further information.

1.4 Professional Studies Named Frameworks

The Professional Studies Framework acts as an umbrella for approved subject specialist frameworks that are referred to as Named Frameworks and are aligned with subject areas in Schools and Faculties. In this instance students accumulate credits from within a specific subject area only.

Named Frameworks are normally developed where there is an identified case for meeting the needs of individuals who are looking for a set of modules in a specific field. The student can tailor these to their own needs so that modules can be undertaken in a more flexible manner than that normally allowed when enrolling on a named course/programme. These Named Frameworks offer a pre-defined portfolio of modules in a specific subject area from which students can select.

Named Frameworks are approved by the Academic Development Committee and undergo a University approval process in order to meet the requirements for inclusion as a Named Framework within the Flexible Studies Framework. These Frameworks are subject to the same rules and regulations as apply to the Flexible Studies Framework, as outlined in Section 4, and will present students for the awards of the Framework at the University Flexible Studies Framework Award Board.

The Named Frameworks that are currently approved are listed under Section 1.1.3 above.

1.5 Students who have failed a Course/Programme

In addition to its primary aim of supporting CPD, the Framework provides an opportunity for students who have failed a course or programme that leads to a named award of the University. These students can use all the credits they have achieved in that course/programme towards an award by undertaking additional credit. Refer Section 2.6 below for further information.

2. FRAMEWORK RULES AND REGULATIONS

2.1 Introduction

The Flexible Studies Framework and all approved Named Frameworks (referred to collectively as “the Framework” for ease of reference) are governed by the provisions of the University’s Academic Regulations, which are available at www.rgu.ac.uk/academicregulations. In particular:

Regulation A1: Courses

Regulation A2: Admission

Regulation A3: Student Conduct, Appeal and Complaints

Regulation A4: Assessment and Recommendations of Assessment Boards

Students claiming an award of Professional Studies must meet the following additional requirements:

- The credit claimed is from an agreed subject area with up to 30 credits from a different subject area
- The credit claimed is within a 6-year timeframe.

Students claiming an award of Open Studies must meet the following additional requirements:

- The credit claimed is within an 8-year timeframe.

Students claiming an award of Arts and Sciences must meet the following additional requirements:

- A balance of arts and sciences credit
- An interdisciplinary project as part of the credit

Given that the Framework does not follow the same pattern as a standard course/programme of the University, Framework specific regulations also apply, and these are outlined in the following sections.

2.2 Entry Requirements

Students will apply for, undertake, and complete modules at School level. Applicants must satisfy the University's general admission requirements for undergraduate and postgraduate modules as contained in Academic Regulation A2: Admission, including proficiency to a minimum standard in the English language.

Some modules may have specific entry requirements over and above the standard qualifications for entry as defined within the Academic Regulations. Host Schools will be able to provide advice on specific entry requirements, module fees (which will vary across the University) and module availability i.e. when, where and how the module will be delivered. Any alternative qualifications for entry to specific modules will be defined by the Host School. Any interview procedures for individual modules will be defined by the Host School.

The University's modules can be viewed in the Module Database which is accessible online at <http://www.rgu.ac.uk/module-database>.

In the case of Named Frameworks, there will be a defined pool of modules related to the identified CPD needs of the discipline from which to choose. These modules will be specified in the relevant Course Specification document which can be accessed via the *Course Information Database*: <http://www4.rgu.ac.uk/coursedb/>.

2.3 Academic Credit Recognised for a Framework Award

2.3.1 *Academic credit awarded by RGU*

Academic credit that has been achieved from the successful completion of modules of the University can be presented for consideration for a Framework award. Timescales for the use of credit are outlined in Section 2.3.3 below.

2.3.2 *Recognition of Prior Certificated Learning (RPCL)*

Regulations governing Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) are contained within Regulation A2: Admission. For the purposes of a Framework award, normally only prior certificated learning will be considered. Recognition of Prior Experiential Learning may be considered at the Host School's discretion.

Submissions for RPCL as a contribution to a Framework award will be considered subject to the following conditions:

- The credit must have been achieved and submitted for award within the timescales outlined in Section 2.3.3 below.

- Credit from institutions other than RGU can only contribute a maximum of 50 percent of each award of the Framework for Masters awards.
- Credit from institutions other than RGU can only contribute towards a Named Framework award if the credit can be mapped to specific RGU modules.

Claims for prior certificated learning must be submitted to the Flexible Studies Framework Lead with appropriate evidence e.g. module transcripts, and will be assessed thereafter by the appropriate Course/Programme Management Team at School level.

2.3.3 *Currency of Credit used for an Award*

For Professional Studies awards all credit being presented for an award should have been successfully achieved within a six-year period. For Open Studies awards all credit should have been successfully achieved within a ten-year period.

The 'start' date would normally be the date of the first Assessment Board (or equivalent) to award credit for a module/short course counting towards the Framework award and the 'end' date would be the date of the final RGU Assessment Board awarding credit, with the final modules being undertaken at the University.

The deadline for the submission of academic credit for conversion to an award is no later than 12 months after the date of the final RGU Assessment Board awarding credit.

2.3.4 *Failed or Condoned Modules*

Condoned or failed modules cannot be used towards a Framework award.

2.4 **Assessment Attempts**

In accordance with the University's Academic Regulations:

- All modules contributing to the award of PgCert/PgDip/MSc must be achieved at either **first or second** attempt; and
- All modules contributing to the award of GradCert/GradDip/BA/BEng/BSc/BASc/BA/Beng/BSc/BASc Hons must be achieved at **first, second or third** attempt.

2.5 Awards with Subject Specialism

2.5.1 Eligibility for Award with Subject Specialism

To be eligible to apply for a Flexible Studies award in which the title includes a subject specialism in brackets the following conditions must have been met:

- The candidate must have achieved the required number of credits at the appropriate SCQF level for the award.
- A minimum of 50 percent of the SCQF credit required for the award plus a further 15 credits must be within the specific subject specialism.
- All modules should have been successfully achieved within the timescales outlined in Section 2.3.3 and evidence of this must be provided.
- Confirmation must be received from the appropriate Subject Review Panel (refer Section 2.5.2 below) that the subject specific credits being claimed are from modules directly related to the subject specialism.

In addition, an award with subject specialism must include:

- A dissertation/project within the specific subject specialism.

It will not normally be possible to use a course/programme name that has been in use within the last 6 years, in the bracketed part of an award title.

Guidance relating to students who are transferring credit from a course/programme that they have failed is provided in Section 2.6.

2.5.2 Subject Review Panel

Subject Review Panels at School level, comprising a minimum of three subject specialists, will consider claims by candidates for an award with a subject specialism. The Panel will review the particular modules undertaken and successfully achieved by the student and confirm that these pertain to a particular subject or discipline. The Subject Review Panel will then provide the Flexible Studies Award Board with formal confirmation that these are appropriate to be considered as subject/discipline specific. The Panel will make a recommendation to the Award Board regarding the subject title that should be used.

2.6 Students who have failed a Course/Programme

Students who have studied on a named course/programme of the University and failed to achieve an award are permitted to use the credit they have achieved towards an award from the Framework.

In order to be eligible to apply for an award which includes a subject specialism in the title, the student must have failed no more than 15 credits on their previous course/programme. The student must therefore successfully complete one further module within the subject specialism in order to be permitted to apply for an award title which includes a subject specialism.

A student who has failed more than 15 credits on a course/programme and is using the remaining credits achieved towards a Framework award will only be eligible for an award of Professional or Open Studies e.g. PgDip Professional Studies, with no bracketed subject specialism. Failure of the previous course indicates that they have not achieved the standard required for that particular subject specialism.

2.7 Submitting a Claim for a Framework Award

2.7.1 Award Claim Process

Students who wish to use the academic credit that they have accumulated from undertaking modules of the University will be required to complete a *Claim Form for FSF Award*. This is available on the University website [www.rgu.ac.uk/professionalstudies] or from the Flexible Studies Lead (refer Section 3 for contact details), who can also provide staff and students with advice on the:

- process for seeking an award;
- award for which they are eligible (PgCert, PgDip etc.)
- evidence required to be provided to the Award Board;
- completion of the *Claim Form for the Flexible Studies Framework Award*;
- schedule of claim submission dates (normally March and September) and Award Board meetings (normally May and November);
- submission of subject specific modules for endorsement by relevant Subject Review Panel.

2.7.2 Award Board

All Award Claims will be submitted to an Award Board for approval. The Flexible Studies Award Board will convene twice per year, normally in May and November. Claim forms must be submitted by published deadlines; claims that are not submitted by the published deadlines will be considered at a subsequent Board meeting.

The Board will operate in accordance with the University's Assessment Boards and will be governed by Regulation A4: Assessment and Recommendations of Assessment Boards:

[www.rgu.ac.uk/academicregulations]

All of the component modules contributing to an award will have been quality assured at the Host School level in accordance with standard University procedures. This enables the Framework Award Board to be assured that standards for each individual module have been met.

The Award Board will determine if an individual candidate demonstrates that they have accumulated the requisite academic credits, within the permitted number of attempts to be eligible for an award of the University.

The Flexible Studies Framework Award Board Membership consists of the following:

- Flexible Studies Framework Lead (Convener)
- Representative Head of School from each Faculty
- Named Framework leaders
- Member of staff not associated with the course
- External Examiner (refer 2.7.3 below)
- Officer in Attendance

3. Further Information

Further details on the Framework can be found within the Course Specification at: www.rgu.ac.uk/coursedb/

The Award Board dates and the *Claim Form for FSF Award* are published on the website at: www.rgu.ac.uk/professionalstudies

Any queries should be directed to the Flexible Studies Lead. Dr Jo-Anne Tait j.e.tait@rgu.ac.uk .

Appendix: Flow chart outlining the process

