University Qualifications & Entry Requirements

Entry Requirements

In order to gain entry to an International University Undergraduate course, you will typically need to have achieved some recognised qualifications, such as 'A' levels or 'International Baccalaureate (IB)' certificates achieving a certain level of grades. The University may also require that you have achieved the required level in an English language qualification. The exact requirements in terms of grades and qualification will vary by University and also depend on the course you plan to take so you will need to clarify with the University admissions department. They may also advise on 'bridging' course options that would help you, once completed. to eventually gain admission on the course in the absence of other required qualifications.

Qualifications Frameworks

To advance in your education, it’s important to understand the different types of qualifications offered by Universities, Colleges, and major Professional training providers. Qualifications are the official certifications that recognize your knowledge, skills, and readiness for the next stage of learning or career. Broadly, they can be divided into academic qualifications and professional qualifications, each opening different pathways for your future.

Credits

The nature of the qualifications offered by a University are normally organised into a framework, where 'credits' are the building blocks for the different qualifications awarded. The concept of credits is important, as it often links to hours of practical and academic study, and leads to a more widely recognised system, where credits are recognised between Universities within a country and internationally. So for example a credit you have obtained from studying a course in one country, may be recognised for a different course in another University, meaning that you already have a recognised credit that counts towards the qualification in the University you are switching to. This can benefit you in terms of flexibility, cost and time it takes you to complete your course, as you may gain exemptions from some modules in the course and University you are transferring to.

Types of Course

Short course +

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A short course offered by a University, may be a 'taster' so you can explore whether a longer course could be right for you. It may also be offered as a bridging option and if you get a good pass, you may then be able to enrol for a certificate, diploma, undergraduate or masters course. It may or may not carry a credit.

Certificate +

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A certificate course could be offered at the Undergraduate or Graduate level, and can be completed over a shorter period than a full Undergraduate or Graduate degree. It will cost less, and lets you study a topic of interest, and gain a recognised qualifcation without comitting to the larger cost and time it takes for a higher level qualification. It will often carry credits towards one or more degree level courses.

Diploma



This is similar to a certificate, but typically involves more study, takes a bit longer and carries more credits. It should be noted that in some cases students may register for an Undergraduate or Masters degree, but for some reason be unable to complete, but have gone far enough in their course of study for the University to be able to award them a Certificate or Diploma.

Bachelors



A Bachelors course is a full undergraduate degree, and typically takes 3-5 years full time study to complete depending on the course and country. Depending on your course you may get a different type of Bachelors degree e.g. Bachelor of Arts (BA), Bachelor or Science (BSc), Bachelor of Engineering (BEng), Bachelor of Laws (LLB). Depending on your course marks you will also be awarded a different level of degree, ranging from the highest level (1st class honours(, to 2/1, 2/2, 3rd class, Pass and Fail).

Masters



A Masters degree is a post graduate degreee, meaning that in most cases you need to have completed an Undergraduate degree before you are eligible for entry. In some work experience or other types of qualification may be considered. It typically takes one or two years to complete a full time masters degree, and once again there are different types e.g. MA, MSc, MPhil (Master of Philosophy)

Doctorate (PhD)

A Doctorate is a research based degree, that lets you specialise in a topic of particular interest to you, and conduct some detailed research typically over a period of 3-5 years. You normally need a Masters degree or strong Undergraduate degree (e.g. 1st class or 2/1) to gain entry to study a PhD. Many PhD programmes, start by requiring you to complete an MPhil and then allow you to progress to the PhD. The MPhil will typically enable you to develop your research skills, and do some initial exploration of the topic you want to focus on for your PhD.

It is also worth noting that

1) Many courses offer a part time mode of study, so that you can work and study and gain the same qualification over a longer time period, and increasingly courses with the same widely recognised certificate awards are being made available by Universities for online study

2) Some Universities, known as Open Universities (which typically offer online/distance education courses), are more relaxed about entry requirements, and you may be able to start courses at different levels at such Universities without the same stringent entry requirements