



Senate

<b>Paper title</b>	Academic Credit Framework
<b>Outcome requested</b>	Senate is asked to <b>approve</b> an amendment to the Academic Credit Framework.
<b>Points to note and further information</b>	<p>QMUL consulted on possible amendments to its Academic Credit Framework, with the aim of introducing increased flexibility in programme design.</p> <p>This paper, previously considered and endorsed by the Education Quality Board, summarises feedback from the consultation and makes recommendations for amendments.</p> <p>An amended version of the QMUL Academic Credit Framework, taking into account the recommended changes, is appended.</p>
<b>Questions to consider</b>	<p>Is Senate content to approve the following recommendations?:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. It is recommended that QMUL moves to a model based upon multiples of 5 credits, affording the flexibility desired by those schools and institutes, without compelling others to make radical changes to their taught provision. Where a school/institute makes changes as a result of this, they should be mindful of any effects on other schools/institutes, on timetabling, on total assessment load for students, and on staff workloads.</li> <li>2. If a change is approved, schools and institutes will be consulted to determine in more detail their plans for academic developments under the new scheme.</li> <li>3. Modules should be approved at only prescribed values, as follows: 5 (for QMUL model modules, only), 10, 15, 20, 30, 40, 45, 60, 90, 120.</li> <li>4. There should not be separate UG and PGT credit frameworks.</li> <li>5. Schools and institutes should revisit the credit values of non-standard-weighted modules to bring them into line with any revised framework.</li> </ol>
<b>Regulatory/statutory reference points</b>	<p>QMUL Academic Regulations  QMUL Academic Credit Framework  QAA Quality Code: Part A (Setting and Maintaining Academic Standards)</p>
<b>Strategy and risk</b>	<p>Aligns with strategic risks:</p> <p>7.01 Design and delivery of high quality portfolio of programmes  13.01 Maintain effective and constructive governance</p>

<b>Reporting/ consideration route for the paper</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Consultation across QMUL from October 2016-January 2017;</li> <li>• Review of feedback and drafting of recommendations by Education Quality Board, March 2017.</li> <li>• Review of recommendations by Deans for Taught Programmes Advisory Groups and the SMD School Education Board, March-May 2017.</li> <li>• Consideration of feedback and endorsement of final recommendations by EQB, May 2017.</li> <li>• Senate to consider the paper for approval in June 2017.</li> </ul>
<b>Author</b>	Simon Hayter Assistant Academic Registrar (Assessment Governance)
<b>Sponsor</b>	Professor Rebecca Lingwood Vice-Principal (Student Experience, Teaching & Learning)

## Academic Credit Framework Consultation Outcomes and Recommendations

QMUL consulted schools, institutes, the Students' Union, and other departments on the appetite for amendments to the academic credit framework and what form any amendments might take. The consultation asked whether QMUL should retain the existing system of multiples of 15 credits, or consider moving to multiples of either 10 or five credits. A response was received from each school and institute (including a joint response from the Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences), plus comments from QMSU, Strategic Planning, and one individual reply, for a total of 15 responses.

In March 2017, Education Quality Board reviewed those responses and a set of preliminary recommendations, which were then passed to the Deans for Taught Programmes Advisory Groups and the SMD School Education Board for comment. The paper was reconsidered by EQB in May 2017 in light of those comments. This current paper discusses the major issues that were considered, and makes recommendations for amendments to the Framework. A revised Credit Framework, the original consultation, and the full set of responses are attached as appendices.

### Support for an amendment to the credit framework

Respondents were generally supportive of an amendment, with 13 of the 15 responses giving full or qualified support. Most of these welcomed the prospect of the additional flexibility in programme design afforded by a more finely granulated credit system. However, respondents noted that the current system generally functioned well and opposed any wholesale change that would require revalidation of every module, with the associated developmental workloads. Those who opposed any amendment did so primarily out of concerns relating to one or more of: timetabling and resourcing (smaller modules could mean more modules overall), tessellation (running modules at a range of values could sometimes limit student choice by forcing them to make selections by credit value rather than by content), and programme design (particularly around joint honours programmes, where the partner schools might each use a different credit system). These issues are discussed in more detail, below.

### Multiples of 5, 10, or 15?

Three alternative credit frameworks were proposed in the consultation. Each system allowed for only prescribed values rather than any multiple of the relevant figure, in order to balance flexibility with manageability:

Multiples of 15:	15, 30, 45, 60, 90, 120
Multiples of 10:	10, 20, 30, 40, 60, 90, 120
Multiples of 5:	(5), 10, 15, 20, 30, 40, 45, 60, 90, 120

#### *Multiples of 10*

The system with multiples of 10 was overwhelmingly rejected. This would have required the redesign and revalidation of every programme and module at QMUL when, in a majority of cases, there was no desire or need for amendment. The 10 credit system was removed from consideration.

### *Multiples of 15*

Multiples of 15 – already in use – were generally viewed as working well. The main point in favour of this system was that no changes would be required, and it was noted by some that the resources invested in any amendment might not prove worthwhile. However, a significant number of respondents commented on the limited flexibility of this system, and a number of those explicitly stated that the current system was restrictive for their programmes (e.g. Dentistry, Physics and Astronomy).

### *Multiples of 5*

Multiples of 5 were generally received positively, with most respondents welcoming the flexibility this approach afforded. Several schools and institutes stated that they would like to make use of the new credit values permitted under this system, while others noted that they had no current plans to make changes but could see the benefits of allowing this flexibility for future developments. Three schools did not support this approach in their responses, though the School of Electronic Engineering and Computer Science later confirmed that this approach would be satisfactory given that there would be no requirement to move away from the use of 15 credit modules. The Schools of Geography and Mathematical Sciences did not support the 5 credit model on the following grounds (other schools also raised some of these points as factors for consideration, while still ultimately supporting the 5 credit model):

- *Management of joint programmes/ability of students to take a module outside of the home school.*

This can be managed through programme design. A major-minor programme, for example, could have 90 credits per year in one school, all made up of multiples of 15, and 30 credits in the partner school in multiples of 10. The use of different systems need not be an obstacle, but the issue should be considered in detail wherever a school or institute makes changes. Similar principles apply to students taking individual modules outside of the home school; choice may be limited in some areas, but this is likely to be balanced by more options becoming available (if one large module is replaced by multiple smaller ones). 30 credit modules fit with multiples of both 10 and 15, and would not be affected.

- *Restricted student choice in module selection (e.g. a student has a 10 credit gap in module selection, and can only choose a 10 credit options and not a 15 credit module that might otherwise have been preferred)*

Again, this is principally a matter of programme design. The concern is valid, but it is already the case that students have to factor in credit value as well as content in making choices – for example, a 30 credit module could not be taken where there was a 15 credit gap. Most schools will operate wholly with one system, but diets can if desired be designed so that the compulsory modules (if any) add up to a total that allows complete free choice in the electives (for example having one 10 or 20 credit compulsory module). If this still does not provide the desired flexibility, there is the option of running some modules at more than one credit value (with, for example, different assessment schemes); while perhaps not the most desirable approach, there is precedent for running multiple versions of a module with shared teaching at QMUL. In most cases, though, it is likely that all modules in a given school/institute will follow a single model.

Education Quality Board considered a suggestion to allow students to over-register by up to five credits each year in order to reduce issues around tessellation. This system was used at two institutions in the benchmark group, though it was unclear whether this was solely attributable to their usage of five credit modules. Over-registration was thought likely to present considerable administrative and operation difficulties, and to risk students completing their programmes with incorrect total credit loads. Funding for teaching would be divided more ways under such a model, and over-registered students would be advantaged over those with the correct number of credits, with more opportunities to achieve the minimum credits required for award. EQB did not support this suggestion, but agreed that the proposal might be revisited in future years, if desired.

- *Increased difficulties in timetabling to cope with an increased number of modules (if schools used the flexibility to, for example, create 12 modules each of 10 credits in place of eight modules of 15 credits).*

This is a valid concern if large numbers of schools/institutes seek to move to a structure such as that described above. However, feedback indicates that this is not the case – the majority of responses indicated an intention of retaining multiples of 15 credits. Where schools/institutes do plan to make changes, the issue should be given consideration; combinations of 20 (or greater) and 10 credit modules rather than only 10 credit modules would address the problem. Provided large numbers of schools do not move to wholesale use of 10 credit-only modules, the change is seen as manageable. The issue has been noted by the timetabling office.

- *QMUL Model*

A number of responses suggested that the consultation and proposed changes were intended purely to accommodate the QMUL Model. While the issue of the credit framework was raised in discussions about the Model, the consultation was not intended to directly address the Model – the Model could function under the existing system of multiples of 15 credits without any amendments to the framework. This would mean that the Model totalled 15 rather than 10 credits per academic year; some schools and institutes have suggested that this is too great a proportion of the degree, but this is a separate issue of content rather than the issue of structure under consideration here.

In cases where schools/institutes retained multiples of 15 credits as the standard model, students opting to take 10 (or 5) credit QMUL Model modules outside of the home school/institute would also need to take other modules outside the home school/institute to make a total of 15 credits, for tessellation purposes.

- *Five credit modules*

Respondents were specifically asked whether or not, in a system of multiples of five credits, it should be permitted to have modules valued at five credits. A number of respondents (including the Blizzard Institute and SBCS) saw these as valuable in that they provided the maximum possible flexibility in programme design. The majority of respondents disagreed, however, noting that this could lead to a major increase in the total number of modules, creating issues with timetabling, module selection, and potential overassessment (particularly with examinations) to a much greater extent than with modules of 10 or more credits. Most respondents agreed that five credit modules could and should be used for (and only for) QMUL Model modules.

### **Separate undergraduate and postgraduate frameworks**

The consultation asked whether respondents saw any need for discrete credit frameworks at undergraduate and postgraduate level. Almost without exception, respondents favoured a single framework; many of those schools that ran integrated masters programmes noted that it would be impossible to run level seven modules effectively under such a system (as some of the same modules needed to be delivered to both UG and PGT students). One institute did favour separate schemes to allow for different arrangements at UG and PGT level, but that could equally well be facilitated through use of the model with multiples of five credits.

### **Existing non-standard modules**

The consultation asked whether – potentially irrespective of whether any change to the credit framework was approved – QMUL should seek to standardise the values of existing modules in line with the specified normal values in the framework. Many respondents had no strong views on this matter as their modules were not affected, but a significant number did support harmonisation - these included CCLS, which has the greatest number of non-standard (mainly 22.5) credit values; CCLS welcomed harmonisation provided that QMUL moved to a system that allowed for 20 credit modules (multiples of either five or 10). The Barts Cancer Institute, which has a number of 7.5 credit modules, suggested that existing modules should be left intact but that no further non-standard modules should be approved.

## **Recommendations**

1. It is recommended that QMUL moves to a model based upon multiples of 5 credits, affording the flexibility desired by those schools and institutes, without compelling others to make radical changes to their taught provision. Where a school/institute makes changes as a result of this, they should be mindful of any effects on other schools/institutes, on timetabling, on total assessment load for students, and on staff workloads.
2. If a change is approved, schools and institutes will be consulted to determine in more detail their plans for academic developments under the new scheme.
3. Modules should be approved at only prescribed values, as follows: 5 (for QMUL model modules, only), 10, 15, 20, 30, 40, 45, 60, 90, 120.
4. There should not be separate UG and PGT credit frameworks.
5. Schools and institutes should revisit the credit values of non-standard-weighted modules to bring them into line with any revised framework.

Should Senate approve the amendments, they would come into effect from 2017/18. As programmes and modules for 2017/18 have already been approved, there will be no effect for students during that year, but schools and institutes will (where they wish to make any changes) be able to make changes to come into effect from 2018/19.

## Queen Mary Academic Credit Framework

### Introduction

1. The Queen Mary Academic Credit Framework (QMACF) provides a structure for all modules and programmes leading to taught awards of QMUL or the University of London.
2. The QMACF outlines the levels of relevant aspects of a programme in line with the 2008 QAA Frameworks for Higher Education in England and Wales<sup>1</sup>, and therefore aligns to the national standards.
3. This iteration of the QMACF is effective from 1 August ~~2015~~2017 and provides an update to the QMACF ~~2008~~2015. The Regulations covering progression, award, and other relevant factors are detailed in the Academic Regulations.
4. This document is intended to provide information about the QMACF to students, academic staff and professional staff. Any queries should be addressed in the first instance to the Academic Registry and Council Secretariat (ARCS).

### Scope

5. QMUL expresses the structure of most of its taught programmes in terms of credits. For each programme, a tariff of credits is assigned to indicate the volume of learning.
6. The QMACF applies to all taught awards and the programmes and modules leading to those awards. Some postgraduate taught modules that contribute to research degrees and research studies training may also be credit rated in accordance with the QMACF.

### Relationship to the Academic Regulations

7. The QMACF informs curriculum design and structure and the way in which QMUL understands and expresses its academic standards. The QMACF is reflected in the Academic Regulations and in programme and module regulations.
8. In order to be eligible for an award of QMUL or the University of London, a student must take an approved programme of study, obtain a specified number of credits - the number required depending on the award in question - and meet any other requirements specified for the programme.
9. Programme and module regulations determine those modules that students may or may not select as a part of their programmes.

### Exceptions

10. Exceptions to the QMACF are approved by Senate, or its delegated authority, through the programme and module approval processes.

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<sup>1</sup> <http://www.qaa.ac.uk/publications/information-and-guidance/publication?PubID=2718#.VQIhfo6sWNg>

## Notional Study

11. Notional study hours represent the entirety of student effort required to undertake and complete a module; this includes all aspects of learning and teaching activity such as classroom based activities, self-directed learning, coursework assessments, preparations for invigilated assessment, practical work, laboratory work, and clinical skills practise.
12. Each credit point is equivalent to 10 hours. A 45 credit point module represents 450 notional study hours. An academic year of undergraduate study equates to 1200 hours of full time study and an academic year of postgraduate study equates to 1800 hours of full time study.

## Module size

13. The QMUL standard minimum value for a module is normally 15 academic credit points. Larger modules may be developed; ~~and would normally be expected to be valued at a multiple of 15. the following are permitted values: 5 (QMUL Model modules, only), 10, 15, 20, 30, 40, 45, 60, 90, 120.~~
14. Modules offered on undergraduate programmes have a maximum value of 60 academic credit points. For postgraduate programmes, the maximum value for a taught module is 60 academic credit points and 120 academic credit points for a dissertation or research project.

## Designation of modules

15. In a set of programme regulations, modules may be designated as core or compulsory. This means that they are a specified requirement for progression and/or award.
16. In a set of programme regulations, modules may be approved as pre-requisite whereby they must be taken before the next specified module is taken.
17. In a set of programme regulations, two or more modules may be approved as co-requisites, whereby they must be taken at the same time as each other.
18. Overlapping modules may be identified to specify similar modules that cannot both be taken.

## Academic level

19. Each module has an associated academic level that reflects its depth, complexity, amount of pre-requisite knowledge, and the academic skills required. The academic level of a module is informed by the subject for that module and remains constant for all programmes within which it occurs.
20. For each approved module there is one academic level. Where significant elements of content and teaching are shared by more than one module, each module is approved separately at the appropriate academic level. Each module should be distinguished by different learning outcomes, teaching and learning activities and assessment that reflect the academic level.



21. Where it is academically desirable and compliant with the relevant award rules, programmes may be designed so that students are able take modules at different academic levels in the same developmental year.
22. A minimum of three quarters of the credits taken in each developmental year must be at the directly corresponding academic level.

### Assessment

23. All assessment for a programme is organised within modules and is designed to test the learning outcomes for the module separately.

### Award of academic credit

24. The award of academic credit relates to achievement in individual modules. Academic credit is awarded to candidates who have met the requirements to pass the module in question.
25. The academic credit awarded is that approved for the module; the amount of academic credit awarded does not vary in accordance with the level of achievement. The level of achievement is reflected by the module mark.
26. Where a student is required to first take a module, the Academic Regulations prescribe the arrangements for the award of academic credit: the academic credit replaces the credit for the original take.
27. It is possible for academic credit to be revoked where the Academic Regulations provide for it.

#### ***Award of academic credit in instances of failure***

28. It is possible to award academic credit in the event of module failure, where the Academic Regulations provide for this. The outcome is recorded as 'fail condoned, academic credit awarded'.

#### ***Advanced standing***

29. The Academic Regulations make provision for admission with advanced standing. Advanced standing is quantified in terms of academic credit to ensure that the overall academic credit requirements are met.
30. Credit that has contributed to a previous award cannot normally be used to gain advanced standing for a QMUL programme.

#### ***Academic credit requirements for award***

31. Each academic award has a normal total credit value. The total credit value includes a minimum amount of credit that is required at the academic level of the award and the maximum amount of credit at the lowest academic level.

## Intercalated programmes

32. Intercalated programmes allow students enrolled on a programme to be admitted to study for a one-year intercalated BSc or BMedSci, and to re-enter the original programme the following year.
33. Programmes designated as intercalated by Senate, or its delegated authority are only available to students undertaking MBBS, BDS, or BMedVet programmes. Intercalated programmes allow for advanced standing for the first two years of the programme (240 academic credit points). Those academic credit points are also counted towards the requirements for award for MBBS and BDS. The intercalated year does not count towards the academic credit requirements for MBBS or BDS.

## European Credit Transfer and Accumulation System (ECTS)

34. ECTS is based on the principle that 60 ECTS credits are equivalent to the learning outcomes and associated workload of a typical full-time academic year of formal learning. In everyday practice, two UK credits are equivalent to one ECTS credit. For the award of ECTS credits, the learning outcomes of a qualification must be consistent with the relevant outcomes set out by QMUL.
35. Where academic credit awarded by QMUL is to be converted to ECTS, this occurs on the basis of one QMACF academic credit point being the equivalent to 0.5 ECTS regardless of the academic level of the academic credit. The academic level and mark are not converted. Incoming ECTS are incorporated in accordance with the requirements of the programme, and where applicable the collaboration.

## Transcripts

36. Transcripts provide details of modules taken by students throughout their programme. They include the academic level, module mark achieved and academic credit points awarded.

Award	Academic level of award	FTE period of study	Normal total credit value	Range of academic levels	Normal maximum credit taken at lowest level	Normal minimum credit taken at level of award
Foundation Certificate (FdCert)	3	1 year	120	3	120	120
Certificate of Higher Education (CertHE)	4	1 year	120	4	120 at Level 4 (≤30 at Level 3 permitted within this)	90
Foundation Degree (FdA/FdSc)	5	2 years	240	4-5	150 at Level 4 (≤30 at Level 3 permitted within this)	90
Diploma of Higher Education (DipHE)	5	2 years	240	4-5	150 at Level 4 (≤30 at Level 3 permitted within this)	90
Bachelor's Degree (BA, BSc, BSc (Eng), BSc (Econ), BMedSci, BEng, LLB <sup>1</sup> )	6	3-4 years <sup>2</sup>	360-420 <sup>3</sup>	4-6	150 at Level 4 (≤30 at Level 3 permitted within this)	90
Integrated Masters Degree (MEng, MSci)	7	4 years	480	4-7	150 at Level 4 (≤30 at Level 3 permitted within this)	120
Bachelor of Dental Surgery (BDS)	7	5 years	600	4-7	120	240
Bachelor of Medicine and Bachelor of Surgery (MBBS)	7	5 years	600	4-7	120	240
Graduate Certificate (GradCert)	6	4 months	60	6	60	60
Graduate Diploma (GradDip)	6	8 months	120	4-6	30	90
Postgraduate Certificate (PGCert)	7	4 months	60	5-7	15	45
Postgraduate Diploma (PGDip)	7	8 months	120	5-7	15	90

Masters Degree (MA, MBA, MPA, MSc, LLM, MRes)	7	1 year	180	5-7	15	150
Masters Degree designated Euromasters	7	2 years	240	6-7	30	210
Master of Clinical Dentistry (MClintDent)	7	2 years	360	5-7	30	330
Professional Doctorates (DClinDent, DClinPsy)	8	3 years	540 (270 taught, 270 research notional credit <sup>2</sup> )	7-8	180	360

<sup>1</sup> Excepting the LLB Senior Status, a two-year 270 credit award at academic level six.

<sup>2</sup> Takes account of programmes that include a compulsory year abroad or placement.

<sup>3</sup> Credits are not normally offered for research at Level 8, and therefore notional credits are used for the framework. Further details can be found for Professional Doctorates within the QMUL Framework for Professional Doctorates.

## Glossary of terms

**Academic Credit:** An indicator of the amount and level of learning. Given in multiples of 15.

**Academic Level:** refers to the relative complexity, depth of study and learner autonomy required in relation to a module in the context of its discipline. Each module shall be assigned a level from the following scale:

- Level 3: Foundation or pre-degree level
- Level 4: Introductory
- Level 5: Intermediate
- Level 6: Final
- Level 7: Masters
- Level 8: Research level

**Academic year:** A period running from 1 August to 31 July. The developmental years of most undergraduate programmes follow academic years, and policies and regulations are normally written by academic year. See also *developmental year*, and *calendar year*.

**Advanced standing:** Prior, certificated study from another institution deemed equivalent to QM modules from which exemption is sought.

**Award:** Undergraduate, graduate, and postgraduate certificates, diplomas, bachelors degrees (with and without honours), and undergraduate and postgraduate masters degrees. The awards offered by QMUL are detailed in the *Ordinances* and the *Academic Regulations*.

**Calendar year:** A twelve month period. Many Masters programmes run for a full calendar year, which may cross two academic years. See also *academic year*, *developmental year*.

**Compulsory module:** A module that must be taken to meet requirements for progression or award.

**Core module:** A module that must be taken and passed to meet requirements for progression or award. Core

**Co-requisite module:** A module that must be taken at the same time as another, specified, module.

**Delegated authority:** Where the authority invested in an individual or body is delegated to another individual or body for a specified purpose.

**Developmental year:** A year of a programme. Normally one academic year of full time study, during which a student is normally required to be registered for 120 credits of modules. Developmental years for part time students normally last two years. See also *academic year* and *calendar year*.

**Dissertation, project, research project:** An extended piece of independent study assessed by an output report or extended essay. The dissertation or project comprises a significant part of most Masters programmes.

**Module Assessment:** Assessment of the performance of a student on a module. This may include a variety of elements and forms, including coursework, dissertations, and practical assignments.

**Module:** An approved block of teaching and learning leading to the award of academic credit and forming part of a programme of study. 'Module' also refers to course, course unit, subject, or any equivalent approved unit of assessed teaching.

**Module mark:** The overall module result. This may be an aggregate of marks from several elements of assessment, which may be weighted. It is held to one decimal place.

**Notional study hours:** The number of hours required to complete an academic credit, module, or programme.

**Pathway:** A specific combination of modules within a programme leading to a named award.

**Pre-requisite module:** A specified module that must be taken before the next specified module is taken.

**Programme regulations:** The regulations for an individual programme of study, approved by Senate or its delegated authority.

**Programme of study (programme):** A package of module approved by Senate, or its delegated authority, and leading to an award of QM or the University of London.

**Progression:** The process of moving from one developmental year to the next, or from the taught element to the dissertation or project element of a programme.

**Research students:** Students registered for a programme of study specifically designated as a research programme. Research programmes have separate *Academic Regulations*.

**Students:** Students of QMUL. Ordinance C1 describes 'those persons who are students of QMUL and associate students of QMUL'. The *Academic Regulations* apply to all students undertaking undergraduate or postgraduate study at QMUL, and to any persons who Senate declares to be a student of QMUL.

**Taught Component:** The parts of a programme delivered as taught modules, as opposed to dissertations or projects. The term is generally used in relation to postgraduate programmes.

**Total credit value:** The overall amount of academic credit required for an award.



## QMUL Academic Credit Framework Consultation

QMUL's Academic Credit Framework specifies the academic level and academic credit requirements for each of QMUL's awards, and details the permitted credit values for individual modules at QMUL. This consultation exercise seeks to determine whether QMUL should amend the permitted credit values for modules.

Currently, modules must have a credit value that is a multiple of 15:

*"13. The QMUL standard minimum value for a module is normally 15 academic credit points. Larger modules may be developed, and would normally be expected to be valued at a multiple of 15.*

*"14. Modules offered on undergraduate programmes have a maximum value of 60 academic credit points. For postgraduate programmes, the maximum value for a taught module is 60 academic credit points and 120 academic credit points for a dissertation or research project."<sup>1</sup>*

The consultation has been prompted by feedback to a 2015/16 consultation on the QMUL Model, though it is not in itself related to the Model. Several schools, in their responses to that consultation, noted that restructuring their programmes to operate on a basis of multiples of 10 credits would give more flexibility and would allow them to provide a more diverse academic offering to students (by offering a larger number of modules each year). In a system of multiples of 10 credits, the QMUL Model element would be set at 10 rather than 15 credits per developmental year. The feedback has been considered, and this consultation sets out three options – retaining a system of multiple of 15, moving to multiples of 10, or moving to multiples of 5 (accommodating both 10 and 15 credit modules). In each system there would be prescribed module sizes, i.e. only certain multiples would be valid.

This paper includes the results of a benchmarking exercise against the credit frameworks of other Russell Group institutions, and University of London institutions with whom QMUL regularly interacts. It then considers the implications of each approach for a number of relevant issues, and makes a preliminary recommendation, which will be subject to review and amendment based upon feedback from respondents.

**Each school/institute/directorate and the Students' Union is asked to consider all of the points in this document, and to send one consolidated response using the template at the end of this document stating their preferred approach (and whether or not they could accept one or both of the other approaches) to Simon Hayter ([s.n.hayter@qmul.ac.uk](mailto:s.n.hayter@qmul.ac.uk)) by Friday 27 January 2017.**

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<sup>1</sup> [QMUL Academic Credit Framework](#)

## Benchmarking

Credit frameworks at all Russell Group institutions, plus Goldsmiths and Royal Holloway (with whom QMUL has interfaces), were considered. The table details provision at each institution. Oxford, Cambridge and LSE do not express modules in credits terms and cannot be used in a comparison. The same may apply to Imperial, for which no reliable data was available.

Institution	Structure (multiples)
Birmingham	10
Bristol	10
Cambridge	N/A
Cardiff	10
Durham	10 (15 permitted, but not standard, for PG only)
Edinburgh	10
Exeter	5
Glasgow	10 (15 permitted)
Goldsmiths	15
Imperial	Unclear
Kings	15 (UG); 15 or 20 (PG)
Leeds	5
Liverpool	7.5 (UG); set values but non-standard multiples (PG)
LSE	N/A
Manchester	10 (UG); 15 (PG)
Newcastle	5 but encourages 20 (UG); 10 (PG)
Nottingham	5
Oxford	N/A
Queen Mary	15
Queen's Belfast	10
Royal Holloway	15 (UG); 30 (PG)
Sheffield	10
Southampton	15 (but also has multiples of 10 at PG)
UCL	15 (UG); 5 (PG)
Warwick	6 or 7.5 (UG); 10 (PG)
York	10, but 15 sometimes permitted (and 5 credit modules are allowed)

- Of the 22 comparable institutions (excluding Oxford, Cambridge, Imperial, LSE):
  - 10 use multiples of 10 as standard.
  - Six (including QMUL) use multiples of 15. Excepting Southampton, these are all University of London institutions and the structure is largely an inheritance from programme structures in the old, common regulations.
  - Four use multiples of 5.
  - Two use irregular multiples.
- In addition to those standard multiples, some institutions permit secondary systems, or permit only certain values (e.g. Liverpool PG: 2.5, 5, 7.5, 10, 15, 20, 30, 40, 45 credits).

### Summary

There is no standard approach, but multiples of 10 credits are commonly used elsewhere, and multiples of 15 are uncommon outside of the University of London. However, multiples of 5 allow for values of 10 *and* 15 credits.



## Points for consideration

### *Fixed values*

In line with many other institutions, it is suggested that not every multiple should be available for use, in order to facilitate tessellation of credits (allowing combinations that easily add up to the required total credit load for each developmental year).

The figures below detail the suggested permitted credit values for each model.

Multiples of 15:	15, 30, 45, 60, 90, 120
Multiples of 10:	10, 20, 30, 40, 60, 90, 120
Multiples of 5:	(5), 10, 15, 20, 30, 40, 45, 60, 90, 120

### *Flexibility*

The 10 and 5 credit systems allow additional flexibility for schools and institutes, permitting, for example, a school to run a larger number of smaller modules on a wider range of topics. This can be particularly valuable in disciplines with a large amount of prescribed content dictated by accrediting bodies.

### *Tessellation*

Tessellation refers to how individual modules fit together to add up to a required total credit value for a developmental year. In the 5 credit system this becomes slightly more complex – if a student takes (e.g.) some modules of 10 credits and some of 15, then the final module selection will be dictated by the credit values of the remaining choices to a greater extent than by the content (i.e. if a student had chosen 110 credits then the remaining choice would have to be 10 credits, rather than a 15 credit option in which the student may have had an interest). This can be managed to a large extent through appropriate programme design, however.

### *Five credit modules*

Under the 5 credit model, there is a question over whether modules of 5 credits would be permitted or not (except as part of the self-contained QMUL Model thread). These could be difficult to timetable, as they would in most cases have insufficient contact hours to run for a full semester. Are 5 credit modules desirable or necessary? One potential solution, if they are deemed desirable, would be to pair them up so that they formed packages of 10 credits (perhaps with five weeks of teaching for each).

### *Postgraduate/undergraduate split*

Some institutions operate different credit frameworks for their undergraduate and postgraduate provisions. Under a 5 credit model this would not be necessary, but you may wish to consider whether it would be desirable under the 15 or 10 credit multiple models.

### *The QMUL Model*

The QMUL Model (applicable to UG students, only) will account for 15 credits per developmental year under the 15 credit model. Under the 10 or 5 credit models this would be reduced to 10 credits per developmental year. Irrespective of the model adopted, QMUL Model modules could be established at 5 or 10 credits, allowing for small, activity-based modules; under the 15 credit model, 15 credit QMUL Model modules could also be used.

### *Changes to module and programme specifications*

Under the 15 credit model, no changes would be required. Under the 10 credit model, 30 credit modules would remain valid but 15 credit modules would require amendment. Under the 5 credit model all existing modules would remain valid, but some amendments would be required to accommodate the 10 credit QMUL Model strand (so as not to leave a 5 credit deficit in the programme diet) – it would be advisable for schools/institutes to offer modules at a range of values to allow interfaces with other schools, if a student takes a modules from elsewhere.

Changing the credit value of a module would not necessarily mean changing the contact hours. Amending the assessment load may be a more appropriate method; QMUL's contact hours have been noted as towards the lower end of the norm for the respective credit values, while many assessment loads have been noted as somewhat high for the respective credit loads. This could be an opportunity to rebalance those factors. In terms of timetabling, all modules would (as now) run for one, two, or (for PGT only) three full semesters.

#### *Intercollegiate modules*

QMUL students are generally permitted to take modules at one or more other colleges of the University of London, which in the main use multiples of 15 credits. This is problematic in the model with multiples of 10 credits, but not for the multiples of 5 or 15 credits. For incoming students, both the 10 credit model and 10/20 credit modules in the 5 credit model could also be problematic, but this can be managed (e.g. they might take three 10 credit modules, or a 10 and a 20, as 30 is a multiple of 15). There are already discrepancies in this area, which have historically been addressed on a case by case basis (e.g. QMUL PGT students have taken modules at KCL, which uses multiples of 20 at PGT level).

#### *Award rules*

QMUL's award and progression rules are based around multiples of 15 credits. A system using multiples of 5 would not require any changes, but a move to a multiples of 10 would necessitate reconsideration of those rules. For example, most undergraduate students need to pass 195 credits to progress from developmental year two to developmental year three. It would no longer be possible for a student to achieve 195 credits, so an amendment to either 190 or 200 credits should be considered in those circumstances.

#### *Existing non-standard credit values*

QMUL operates a number of modules that are not compliant with the standard provisions of the existing credit framework, notably modules of 7.5 and 22.5 credits. A 'normally' in the text does technically permit this, but these non-standard approaches prevent standardisation of processes, and access for students from other schools/institutes on to those modules (due to issues of tessellation). It is suggested that, whatever the outcome of the consultation, modules of non-standard credit values should be brought into line with the standard provisions.

#### *Timings*

Any change to the credit framework should be approved by, at latest, the June 2017 meeting of Senate. If a 15 credit model was chosen then no changes would be required. If the 5 credit model was adopted then schools would need to make some minimal changes to accommodate a 10 credit QMUL Model thread, and could choose to make more extensive changes. A 10 credit model would necessitate major changes for all modules, and consideration would need to be given as to whether to introduce the change for all modules/cohorts at once, or on a rolling basis (there are advantages and drawbacks to both approaches).

#### **Preliminary recommendation**

A number of schools have stated a clear desire to completely restructure their programmes, using multiples of 10 credits to afford increased flexibility and choice in programme design and student choice (particularly in disciplines with strict accreditation requirements that prescribe the programme content). QMUL would like to accommodate this request. It is recommended that QMUL moves to a model based upon multiples of 5 credits, affording the flexibility desired by those schools and institutes, without compelling others to make radical changes to their taught provision. This is a preliminary recommendation, which will be reviewed in light of the feedback from this consultation.

**QMUL Academic Credit Framework Consultation  
Response from [x]**

Please complete this response form with reference to the points for consideration in the main document.

**Do you support an amendment to the credit framework? Why/why not?**

**Which of the models (multiples of 5, 10, or 15 credits) do you favour, and why? Could you accept one or both of the other models, if your preferred model was not approved?**

**What, in your view, are the benefits and drawbacks of the model with multiples of 15 credits?**

**What, in your view, are the benefits and drawbacks of the model with multiples of 10 credits?**

**What, in your view, are the benefits and drawbacks of the model with multiples of 5 credits? Should modules valued at (exactly) 5 credits be permitted in this model?**

**Do you feel that there is a need for separate credit frameworks for undergraduate and postgraduate provision?**

**Should QMUL work to harmonise existing modules of non-standard credit values with the requirements of the credit framework? (even if no changes are made as the result of this consultation).**

**QMUL Academic Credit Framework Consultation  
Response from [HSS, including the Schools of Business Management;  
English and Drama; Economics and Finance; Geography; History; Law and  
CCLS; Languages, Linguistics and Film]**

Please complete this response form with reference to the points for consideration in the main document.

**SUMMARY:**

The HSS undertook a consultation of the Schools within its remit through several channels: two meetings of the Directors of Taught Programme Advisory Group, with the Directors reporting back from individual school/department consultations; and discussions in two joint meetings of the Heads of Schools led by VP Matthew Hilton, who fed back their own schools' views of the consultation in relation to existing curricula, the QMUL Model, and future plans. The Directors and Heads noted a Faculty-level approach is desirable, as students take modules from other Schools within the Faculty.

While there was understandably variation in response to the existing 15-cu and proposed 5- and 10-cu frameworks, details of which will be noted below, there is also a fair degree of unanimity, with caveats, for an amendment to the credit framework to allow the most flexibility and stability: **the 5-cu option**.

**NB:** Several schools asked for their reports to be included as appendices, which follow.

**Do you support an amendment to the credit framework? Why/why not?**

The short answer is a mitigated yes.

After consultation and discussion, most colleagues would support a well-substantiated and well-supported amendment to the credit framework if the benefits were clear and made sense and the work necessary to make the changes was accounted for. The potential extensive labour involved in making curriculum, syllabus, staffing, timetabling, and assessment changes was seen as a drawback especially if the endeavor was only to account for the variability of the QMUL Model.

**Which of the models (multiples of 5, 10, or 15 credits) do you favour, and why? Could you accept one or both of the other models, if your preferred model was not approved?**

The short answer is that **the 15-cu system is preferred although the value of the 5-cu system is evident and would be supported**. The 10-cu system, although seen as workable by some Schools, was dispreferred. The reasons:

- The 15-cu system, although less flexible, required the fewest changes to be made to existing modules and programmes, which by and large functioned well.

- The 5-cu system offered the most flexibility, which was an advantage, particularly to account for the QMUL Model and cross-Faculty programmes.
- The 10-cu system offered the fewest advantages while still requiring significant time-consuming change to be made to existing provision.

**What, in your view, are the benefits and drawbacks of the model with multiples of 15 credits?**

As noted, the existing system is functioning well and unless a change is required to fix something that is not working, the efforts involved are questioned. That said, the 15-cu system does not easily allow for changes beyond the classic 11-week/2-hour module setup and does not accommodate smaller options. It is the least flexible.

**What, in your view, are the benefits and drawbacks of the model with multiples of 10 credits?**

The drawbacks of the 10-cu model – the labour involved in making curriculum, syllabus, staffing, timetabling, assessment, and administrative changes on multiple levels – outweigh the benefits perceived by some Schools whose curriculum is more conducive to the 10-cu distribution. It was also seen as complicated with respect to the professional accreditation connected to some modules in some Schools.

**What, in your view, are the benefits and drawbacks of the model with multiples of 5 credits? Should modules valued at (exactly) 5 credits be permitted in this model?**

The key benefit of the 5-cu model is its flexibility, which allows both stability (such as the 15-cu model affords) and change (such as the QMUL Model promotes, and for which 5-cu modules could, singularly, exist).

**Do you feel that there is a need for separate credit frameworks for undergraduate and postgraduate provision?**

Ideally, they would be harmonized but this is not a priority.

**Should QMUL work to harmonise existing modules of non-standard credit values with the requirements of the credit framework? (even if no changes are made as the result of this consultation).**

Ideally yes, although the rationales for the non-standard credit values were appreciated. An alternative way of accounting for variation outside of the credit framework, possibly along the lines of the equivalency tables that students whose study abroad are applied to, could be a remedy.

## APPENDICES

### SBM

We are strongly in **favour of keeping the 15 credit framework** for various reasons, in particular a) it works very well for all of our single and joint honours programmes – even where other schools are using a 30 credit framework, b) we strongly believe that a 15 credit framework is providing the right amount of contact time Business and Management students need (two contact hours for UG and three contact hours for PG) and c) changes would create a massive disruption, cost us more resources for additional modules (if credits are going down to 10 and we are asked to introduce new modules) and would be an enormous administrative burden compared to the potential (which are?) benefits. **We are also happy with a 5 credit ‘currency’ if this implies that we can keep the multiply of 5, i.e. the 15 credit modules.**

### CCLS

We strongly welcome a change in the credit framework. Our modules are currently 22.5 credits and any change (base 5, 10, or 20) would make it extremely easy for us to convert to 20 credits all the existing modules and be - once again - in line with the rest of the college. **Ideally we would prefer a ‘base 5’ system allowing for any multiple of 5, including 5 credits modules.** This would permit us to easily align our certificate programmes with the new requirements for the IPReg accreditation system.

### Law

We have approached the credit framework consultation primarily from the perspective of the QMUL model. We see ourselves as unlikely to make use of the possibility of 5 or 10 credit modules otherwise than in the context of the QMUL model and, in that context, as a way to give curricular recognition to certain activities which are currently undertaken in a para-curricular form. We acknowledge that a new credit framework with multiple sized could potentially introduce unwelcome complexities for inter-disciplinary studies. From this perspective, **we would not welcome a proliferation of modules of variable lengths but can nevertheless see some merits in a limited use of modules outside the current 15/30 format for specific purposes.**

### SED

#### **Do you support an amendment to the credit framework? Why/why not?**

- SED is, in principle, supportive of an amendment to the credit framework that enables Schools and Faculties to organise their teaching in a way that best supports disciplinary needs.
- SED recommends that should a shift be made to a 5-credit base unit that each Faculty makes a decision as to the desired minimum unit (10 or 15) to be used consistently across that Faculty (or the majority of the Faculty, especially across Schools that share joint honours programmes). Schools within each Faculty would then normally offer modules with credit values that are multiples of the chosen minimum unit (i.e. 10, 20, 30 etc. or 15, 30, 45, 60). This would more easily support joint honours students, enable cross-disciplinary work within Faculties and reduce the risk that students may inadvertently become susceptible to a credit deficit by combining a ‘mixed economy’ of modules (e.g. 10s and 15s).

#### **Which of the models (multiples of 5, 10, or 15 credits) do you favour, and why?**

**SED strongly favours a 15-credit base unit in the first instance, with the flexibility for future changes generated by a base unit of 5.** There is some support in the School (primarily from colleagues in English) for a shift to organising our teaching in 20s/40s (i.e. multiples of 10). The rationale for this would be the need to concentrate students’ study over fewer modules and subject areas, to assess them less, and to make teaching

delivery for staff more pedagogically effective and administratively manageable. A shift to multiples of 10 would, however, require substantial further consultation. If agreed, the shift would result in a wholesale redesign of our programmes, which would require considerable lead-time (at least two academic years).

- A shift to multiples of 5 would be acceptable (we could still organise our teaching in 15 and 30-credit modules).
- There are, though, implications for cross-disciplinary opportunities and the operation of the QMUL Model if other Schools and Faculties were to operate primarily in multiples of 10 (see below).
- SED favours Faculty agreement as to what multiples should normally be used to enable sharing across Schools, especially for joint honours programmes (we have a strong preference for 15 credits in the first instance).

### **What are the benefits and drawbacks of the model with multiples of 15 credits?**

#### *Benefits:*

- 15 credits provides in SED an effective balance between offering students a good degree of choice and diversity in their programme (potentially 4 modules per semester) and allowing sufficient time to develop disciplinary skills and understanding, appropriate to each level of study.
- Efficient base unit in terms of staff time and room usage.
- Familiarity to advisers who are helping to create personalised programmes of study for individual students
- Minimises amount of disruption to existing 15-credit modules
- Relatively straightforward to balance JH students' programmes.

#### *Drawbacks:*

- 15 credits may not be necessary to develop subject-specific skills and knowledge in some disciplines (e.g. learning and applying a particular technique). Combining several smaller topics into a 15-credit module may alleviate this concern but this wouldn't necessarily clearly identify a student's learning (e.g. at the level of the transcript).
- Working in multiples of 15 may make it more challenging for some programmes to meet the demands of accreditation bodies, especially with the additional internal requirement of the QMUL Model, which would remain valued at 15 credits in the 15-credit model.

### **What are the benefits and drawbacks of the model with multiples of 10 credits?**

#### *Benefits:*

- 10 credits may suit some disciplines and programmes, potentially increasing student choice and signalling content more clearly, depending on the programme structure.
- Combining 10s into 20s and 40s may enable a more efficient programme delivery in terms of concentration of staff time and student effort (e.g. 3x20-credit modules per semester).

#### *Drawbacks:*

- 10 credits don't afford sufficient time/scope to develop disciplinary skills and understanding in SED without a wholesale redesign of our programmes (the same may also be the case for other disciplines).
  - Combining 10 credits into 20-credit modules would alleviate some of these concerns but would restrict student choice and force the redistribution of modules across whole levels of study, potentially causing significant disruption to students' programmes.
- Potential for inefficient use of staff time and room resources (e.g. through delivering many 10-credit modules). This could be resolved through teaching fewer modules (i.e. more 20-credit modules) though this would restrict student choice.

- Reduced compatibility with UoL intercollegiate modules (currently 15/30).
- Comparatively more difficult to balance JH students' programmes if the majority of Schools opt to use 20/40-credit modules to organise their teaching (e.g. using 20s/40s mean that a students wouldn't be able to balance their subject credit load evenly in each semester, though they would still be able to do so over the course of an academic year).

### **What are the benefits and drawbacks of the model with multiples of 5 credits?**

#### *Benefits:*

- Enables Schools/Faculties to organise their teaching to suit disciplinary requirements.
- Provides flexibility to structure developmental years differently (e.g. 15/30 for levels 4 & 5; 10/20/40 for level 6), though this would generate logistical and pedagogical challenges, especially with respect to the QMUL Model element.
- Provides greater flexibility to reorganize curricula in response to unforeseen circumstances than 10 or 15-credit models.

#### *Drawbacks*

- A mixed economy (e.g. of 10s and 15s) will likely make it more difficult for students to take modules from other disciplines where the other discipline primarily uses a different minimum unit (i.e. it may prove challenging to create a viable 120-credit programme with cross-disciplinary/centrally-run elements, complicated further by timetabling challenges, and thus undermine exactly the incentive to undertake interdisciplinary study which is enshrined in the QMUL Model).
- It could pose significant problems for JH students if one School uses predominantly 10s and the other uses predominantly 15s.
- A 5-credit base unit will result in the QMUL Model element dropping to 10 credits (though 15-credit QMUL Model modules would still be permitted). If a School chooses to organise its teaching in multiples of 15, the 10-credit element provided by the School (rather than centralised modules) will most likely be made into a component of a 15-credit module, or be valued (in excess of Model requirements) at 15 credits. Considerations:
  - Centrally-run QMUL modules would need to be offered in 10 and 15-credit versions (otherwise students operating in a 15-credit system would have a 5-credit deficit; it's not an efficient use of staff time for a School to offer a 5-credit subject-specific 'mop-up' modules routinely to accommodate the QMUL Model requirement), and it is difficult to see what the pedagogic value or content for such modules would consist of.
  - Opportunities for students to take a QMUL Model module from another subject may be restricted if the other subject uses a different minimum credit unit. Potential solutions:
    - Faculties to agree, where possible, a standard minimum credit unit (10 or 15) to facilitate student choice within Faculties, at least.
    - Schools that operate 15-credit modules would need to consider offering 10-credit versions of any QMUL Model modules for students from Schools/Faculties that operate in 10s. Credit difference could be articulated at the level of assessment. There are logistical and pedagogical challenges of running more than one version of the 'same' module.
    - Schools that operate 10-credit modules would need to consider offering 15-credit versions of any QMUL Model modules for students from Schools/Faculties that operate in 15s. Credit difference could be articulated at the level of assessment. There



are logistical and pedagogical challenges of running more than one version of the 'same' module.

#### *Viability of 5-credit modules*

- 5-credit modules should be permitted as long as they have appropriate aims, learning outcomes, assessment and contact time. Such modules (especially if there are many of them) may be resource intensive (rooms/staff time) relative to credit value.
- If a mixed economy (10s, 15s) is used, it will be essential to include 5-credit modules in Schools that usually teach in 15s so that students with an inadvertent credit deficit are able to graduate with the correct number of credits.

#### **Is a need for separate credit frameworks for undergraduate and postgraduate?**

No

#### **Should QMUL work to harmonise existing modules of non-standard credit values?**

Perhaps. Harmonisations would facilitate sharing modules but this may not be an issue for students enrolled on the programmes with non-standard credits (conversely, the modules offered on these programmes may not be suitable for students from other programmes). This question is more for those areas with non-standard credit values to comment.

#### **SEF**

We do not support a change to the credit framework. Such a change will cause significant administrative burden, especially in an era where we are encouraging students to be increasingly multidisciplinary in their studies (e.g. through the QMUL model and liberal arts programme).

**We have a strong preference to continue with the 15 credit system at both the undergraduate and postgraduate level.** The 10 credit system is considered to be unacceptable and would require a complete upheaval of all existing programmes. **The 5 credit system could be considered as it is compatible with the existing 15 credit system and we can see some benefit, in terms of offering a combination of smaller 5 credit QMUL model compatible modules.**

Maintaining the existing 15 credit system means that programmes will not have to be redesigned simply to adhere to a new credit framework, existing compatibility across schools will be maintained, which is especially important with the introduction of the QMUL model and the liberal arts degree, and existing compatibility with intercollegiate modules from the University of London will be maintained. There will also be no additional pressure on existing finite teaching resources and timetabling, which a move to smaller 10 or 5 credit modules would create.

A 10 credit framework would be extremely costly and burdensome to implement, requiring a complete upheaval of all existing programmes. We can see no benefits to this system.

The benefits of the 5 credit framework is primarily that it is compatible with the existing 15 credit system. However, as previously stated, we can see some possible benefit if we are able to construct QMUL model modules from smaller 5 credit units, as this could allow the flexibility to create QMUL model compatible modules from existing non-credit bearing activities. However there are significant issues and drawbacks of the framework which need considering, including:

- Tessellation problems if schools use different credit multiples
- Increased administrative burden of ensuring students enrol in 120 credits
- Concerns over timetabling pressures, both during term time and for examinations

- Consideration of appropriate contact hours and assessment for different credit modules

For example, if the 5 credit framework is adopted and some schools offer 10 credit modules and some 15 credit modules, then this will cause significant problems in advising students and ensuring that they consistently meet the required 120 credits per academic year. Where there are joint programmes working in different multiples, students taking intercollegiate modules which are in different multiples or simply due to the multi-disciplinary design of the QMUL model, it may be necessary to either offer (i) modules in both 10 and 15 credit variations or (ii) 5 credit top-up modules. The administrative burden of this seems very high, as well as confusing for students.

The preference at the postgraduate level is also strongly to maintain the 15 credit framework. A move to 10 credits would be extremely costly.

If the 5 credit framework is implemented then with the introduction of the QMUL model at the undergraduate level it will be necessary to ensure that there is a standard credit 'currency' for modules to ensure that students are not left short of the required 120 credits. For example, if a student's home school continues to work in multiples of 15 credits and the student chooses a 10 credit QMUL model module from another school, they will be 5 credits short of the required 120. Thus, we will either require QMUL model modules to be offered in both 10 and 15 credit versions or to maintain the standard 15 credit system to ensure compatibility. This will also be important to consider for future students enrolling on the liberal arts degree route.

### **SLLF**

Departments in the School were consulted and the general view was that there were neither enough clarity nor evidence about the benefits that a change in the credit system, such as the one proposed, would bring for SLLF. For a number of reasons listed below, it was felt that the proposed framework was not appropriate to the School curricula and that it would generate an unjustifiably disproportionate amount of administrative work.

The following are some of the main issues raised by colleagues in the various departments of the School:

1. Implications for an already unmanageable timetabling and room booking process don't appear to have been considered.
2. If students are allowed to take say twelve 10-credit modules instead of eight 15-credit modules, with all other resources remaining the same, i.e. the overall number of modules remaining the same, then class sizes will have to rise, which would be problematic.
3. If, however, the assumption is that staff will have to produce more modules, i.e. teach more hours, then there is a clear untold assumption that staff teaching load will rise. The claim that this could be offset by lesser examination load is unconvincing.
4. Students wouldn't only have less time to devote to a given subject, but would also have more subjects to study at once. The pressure on their time and task management, and hence the detrimental effect on their academic achievement, is a real risk in an institution where there is already a low overall proportion of "good honours" degrees by Russell Group standards.
5. In languages in particular, the students need time to learn the material, as the memorizing does not really happen in class. So scaling down of credits would be inappropriate. The same applies to literature (perhaps less so in the case of film): students

need time to read long novels, so on the same grounds, the proposed change would be unsuitable.

6. Changes to the credit framework would not only entail a huge effort by all staff to recast curricular provision (including revised programme specifications for all degrees), but would also make it exponentially more difficult to arrange joint honours degrees where different Schools are involved. For a School with as many programmes and joint degrees as SLLF, the effort involved would be so great as to squeeze out any other significant developments in teaching and student experience. This would only compromise NSS performance and delivery of the QMUL Model.

7. Changing the credit framework re-organises delivery only - it has subject benchmarks that set standards for student achievement, knowledge and learning. The consultation paper presents no evidence that 'flexibility' has any relationship to quality. None of the universities is shown to be achieving any higher or lower student standards whatever their credit framework. Present diversity among the universities evidences that it has no decisive impact.

8. Furthermore, there is no indication of research into the internal effectiveness of the academic existing credit system at QM, only feedback from an unnamed number of Schools. This evidence seems inadequate. It is important to recognise and understand QM's specific and unique contribution to the HE sector. These issues are not adequately accounted for in the report and should be analysed in depth before any further steps towards institution-wide changes to the credit system are proposed.

9. No risk register has been provided in terms of what the implications of this change might be. One might expect the unit(s) producing the proposal to conduct fuller internal research, using their own resources, before requesting consultation on such significant changes, and within the structure of the proposal to acknowledge and adequately account for the associated risks of such an exercise.

10. Every time consultation exercises like these are put forward, there is a heavy but usually unacknowledged resource cost on the time of staff, particularly but not exclusively, academic staff. The document does not acknowledge this cost, nor does it explain why this consultation is of strategic importance at this time (a note urges action by the June 2017 Senate meeting, but does not explain why this should be the case). If QM is to function with full transparency and accountability then these issues must be explicitly addressed in every top down request for information. The cost, particularly in terms of staff wellbeing, is significant and should be adequately taken into account in every consultation exercise. Given that the QM staff survey indicated significant problems with staff wellbeing and morale across the institution, these concerns need to be holistically addressed throughout the institution.

11. Finally, it was felt that if some other Schools need to have 5 and 10 credits to comply with the QMUL model and if the College decides to make effective the proposed change, **SLLF would support the multiples of 5 principle as the least disruptive one to our curricula.** Furthermore, experience in the School is showing very rapidly that in our teaching practice, what the QMUL model is calling for already happens, so the School finds no reason to abandon the existing framework.

## **SPIR**

The committee recommended **adoption of multiples of 5** in line with preliminary consultation recommendation. We would not be in favour of moving to a 10 credit

structure, as it would require a major overhaul of our programmes (though mainly in Year 3 at this stage). The 5 credit model will allow us to retain our current structure, while leaving options for changes in the future.

We support the recommendation for multiples of 5, as it would allow us to keep our programmes the same, while allowing for Schools who wish to change to a 10 and 20 credit format to do so, and for us to have some flexibility in the future.

As noted in the [consultation] report, the 15 credit system seems mainly a historical legacy within the University of London, and as such, the main benefit would be to not demand the entire restructuring of present programmes, and allow compatibility for inter-collegiate programmes.

As it stands, a 10-credit model would force us to change the majority of our final year UG programmes, and modify much of our planning for the QMUL model, which has been based around 15 credit modules.

The multiples of 5 credit model would be the most flexible solution so those who want to change right away can, but those who have based much of their programmes on multiples of 15 can adapt. It does bring some issues of having very different systems of utilising credit, which may become problematic in terms of 'tessellation' – this would potentially be a real issue on joint honours programmes.

We are happy with the multiples of 5 system to apply to the PGT programme as well, as it would allow our current programmes to remain the same.

As SPIR's programmes do not have any non-standard credit, we do not have strong views [about harmonizing], but it would make sense to have all credit systems compatible across the College, especially if a change is put in place.

### **History**

The School of History **does not support the proposed amendments to the credit framework**. The majority of History modules are 15 credits in value and the School has planned its teaching and assessments around this model and multiples of 15 (with 30 credit and 60 credit modules as well). Moreover, the School actively participates in intercollegiate exchanges within the University of London, and stepping out of the established credit framework is likely to undermine these valued links with other History schools.

The 15 credit model will allow the School to teach its modules in the manner that they have been planned and approved. Imposing a change would represent an unnecessary upheaval and one that may have a detrimental impact on teaching, assessment, and the student experience.

The primary drawback of the 10 credit system for History is that the School would have to amend the majority of its existing modules. In 2016-17 alone, the School is running 57 fifteen credit modules, and so this would be a very burdensome change to make. Of course we would be willing to do this if there was a compelling pedagogical rationale for the change, but we are not aware of one.

The School could work with the 5 credit system more readily than with the 10 credit system; that is, we could maintain our existing 15, 30 and 60 credit modules. However, the School is concerned that introducing 5 credit and 10 credit modules will make it more difficult for students to take modules outside of their own School, and this will

complicate arrangements for implementing the QM Model. Furthermore, we agree that introducing 5 and 10 credit modules is likely to complicate the already difficult issues around timetabling and room booking, and that would be a most unfortunate outcome.

### **Geography**

We are concerned that moving to a system based on multiples of 5 or 10 credits for undergraduate modules could create problems for timetabling, assessment and the management of joint programmes. Consequently we do not support amendment to the undergraduate credit framework.

The Geography Teaching & Learning Committee and Senior Management Group **favour retaining multiples of 15 credits**. We are not persuaded by arguments for adopting a framework based on multiples of 5 credits. We have serious concerns about a system based on multiples of 5; although it would allow us, as a school, to retain 15- and 30-credit modules, if other schools developed 5- and 10-credit QMUL Model modules we envisage serious difficulties for students building a 120-credit diet, and many might be forced to choose a module simply for its credit value regardless of its content, aims or learning outcomes. Such problems could be particularly acute where joint programmes are concerned. The School of Geography runs F850 Environmental Science and F8N2 Environmental Science with Business Management with modules offered from Geography, SBCS, Law and Business Management. It may not be possible to produce a satisfactory diet for these programmes if some Schools create 10 credit modules whilst others are working to multiples of 5 credits, meaning that students may not be able to choose the desired 120-credit diet per year. Another issue concerns timetabling and room allocations for classes; this is already extremely problematic and often results in being forced to use poorly equipped or otherwise unsuitable teaching spaces; any reduction of minimum module credit ratings could result in an increase in the number of modules being taught, which would only exacerbate the existing problems. An increase in the number of modules taken by students would also result in an unwelcome increase in the number of assessments.

Tessellation would be a major problem with a framework based on multiples of 5. Imagine, for example, that we as a school were able to continue with 15- and 30-credit modules, but the university adopted a 10-credit (or 2x5-credit) module(s) as standard for the QMUL Model in each developmental year, as has been suggested. We would then be forced to develop some 5- and/or 10-credit Model modules. Students taking seven 15-credit modules and one 10-credit Model module in any developmental year would be short of 5 credits and would have to find a 5-credit module to take (another 10-credit module would take them over the 120-credit limit).

We also envisage problems with identifying and developing existing modules as “QMUL Model modules”, particularly those to be made available to students in other schools. If we retained 15-credit modules but the “standard” QMUL model module was 10 credits, we would presumably be forced to change the credit ratings of such modules, potentially to the detriment of our existing programmes. Any system in which compliance with the QMUL Model results in negative impacts on degree programmes should be avoided.

### **What are the benefits and drawbacks of the model with multiples of 15 credits?**

Benefits are that they are what we have now. No particular drawbacks provided this is retained as “normal” across college, unless 10 credits (instead of 15) is adopted as standard for QMUL Model modules in which case there would be tessellation problems as outlined above.

### **What are the benefits and drawbacks of the model with multiples of 10 credits?**

Having 10-credit modules as standard should be avoided as it would lead to a proliferation of modules and consequent timetabling and assessment difficulties. Having a mixture of 10- and 20-credit modules could lead to problems with tessellation, especially in joint programmes.

Consider our level 5 curriculum as it will run in 2017-18. Students typically take 8x15-credit modules (total 120). In a system based on multiples of 10 we would have to re-arrange this into 10- and/or 20-credit modules. If 10-credit modules were standard, students would take 12 modules, resulting in a potentially disastrous proliferation of assessments and timetabling problems. Alternatively we could have 6x20-credit modules. However, to fit the QMUL Model, students may have to be able to take at least one 10-credit QMUL Model module, because the current 15-credit standard may be reduced to 10, as has already been suggested; it seems unlikely that it would be increased to 20. We would therefore have to provide at least two 10-credit modules to facilitate choice and ensure that 120-credit diets could be achieved, so the minimum number of modules we would offer would be 7 (5x20 credit modules + 2x10-credit modules). This would require revision of all our modules in all three developmental years and significantly impact on the structure and content of our curricula.

#### **What are the benefits and drawbacks of the model with multiples of 5 credits?**

Multiples of 5 credits would have a significant cost in terms of timetabling, assessment and diet construction.

The model with multiples of 5 credits which could be tessellated to create modules comprising multiples of 10 or 5 credits (e.g. 10, 15 or 20 credits) is especially problematic for degree programmes which run across faculties and Schools (see earlier comments). Inter-disciplinarity is being encouraged in both research and teaching contexts at Queen Mary but the adoption of a framework based on multiples of 5 credits would create unwelcome barriers to inter-disciplinarity for undergraduate teaching.

*We are strongly of the opinion that adoption of a system based on multiples of 5 could be a disastrous impediment to the smooth running of programmes across QMUL.*

#### **Is a need for separate credit frameworks for undergraduate and postgraduate?**

As far as we are aware, the apparent need to consider this question seems to arise from two separate and not directly related issues: (1) the existence of non-standard modules in some M-level programmes (e.g. 22.5 credits) and (2) the need for a credit framework that will allow the QMUL Model to operate across faculties and schools. Since the QMUL Model is intended to operate at undergraduate level and we are not aware of any plans to run it at M-level as well, we do not understand why the question is being asked and we have no particular opinion to offer.

#### **Should QMUL work to harmonise existing modules of non-standard credit values?**

As noted above, this question seems to be related only to M-level programmes. Where there is scope or a need to allow M-level students to take some Level 6 modules as part of their Level 7 programme, harmonisation might be desirable. Otherwise, if M-level programmes are running well it might be advisable to leave well alone.

## Simon Hayter

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**From:** Jo Brown  
**Sent:** 12 January 2017 12:35  
**To:** Simon Hayter  
**Subject:** RE: Consultation on the QMUL Academic Credit Framework

Dear Simon,  
Thank you for including us in this consultation. Please find below the response from the SMD.

Kind regards,  
Jo Brown

### QMUL Academic Credit Framework Consultation Response from the SMD

Please complete this response form with reference to the points for consideration in the main document.

**Do you support an amendment to the credit framework? Why/why not?**

We think it is logical for QM to wish to amend the credit framework to allow for maximum flexibility across the university.

**Which of the models (multiples of 5, 10, or 15 credits) do you favour, and why? Could you accept one or both of the other models, if your preferred model was not approved?**

We support both 5 and 10 credit modules as these would both fit with our plans for modularisation. We would accept either of these.

**What, in your view, are the benefits and drawbacks of the model with multiples of 15 credits?**

We feel 15 credits restricts flexibility and is mathematically less easy for clarity of calculation.

**What, in your view, are the benefits and drawbacks of the model with multiples of 10 credits?**

We would support this model

**What, in your view, are the benefits and drawbacks of the model with multiples of 5 credits? Should modules valued at (exactly) 5 credits be permitted in this model?**

We would support this model

**Do you feel that there is a need for separate credit frameworks for undergraduate and postgraduate provision?**

We believe a single credit framework is suitable for both under and postgraduate provision

**Should QMUL work to harmonise existing modules of non-standard credit values with the requirements of the credit framework? (even if no changes are made as the result of this consultation).**

We are mindful that the 'assessment and feedback' section of the National Student Survey has been an area of weakness for QM overall and would reason that standardisation across the university of credit values could only aid clarification and transparency in this area.

## **QMUL Academic Credit Framework Consultation Response from BCI**

Please complete this response form with reference to the points for consideration in the main document.

### **Do you support an amendment to the credit framework? Why/why not?**

Yes. If it introduces more flexibility into our award system then it can only be for the better.

**Which of the models (multiples of 5, 10, or 15 credits) do you favour, and why? Could you accept one or both of the other models, if your preferred model was not approved?**  
5 credit unit gives maximum flexibility. We would not accept 10 credit modules.

### **What, in your view, are the benefits and drawbacks of the model with multiples of 15 credits?**

None at present as we have all designed our courses to fit this model.

### **What, in your view, are the benefits and drawbacks of the model with multiples of 10 credits?**

EVERY MODULE would have to be redesigned so as to fit a 10 credit module. This would be an enormous amount of effort across the whole university for no added value. BCI would not accept a 10 credit module system.

### **What, in your view, are the benefits and drawbacks of the model with multiples of 5 credits? Should modules valued at (exactly) 5 credits be permitted in this model?**

Introducing the 5 point module has several advantages.

- It requires less change to the current module structures or contents.
- It gives the flexibility of introducing smaller modules (eg 3 x 10 credit modules) to address for novel and relevant developments in a field that are of insufficient content to form an entire module.
- It allows new courses to be designed with a much higher degree of flexibility.

### **Do you feel that there is a need for separate credit frameworks for undergraduate and postgraduate provision?**

No. Why complicate it.

### **Should QMUL work to harmonise existing modules of non-standard credit values with the requirements of the credit framework? (even if no changes are made as the result of this consultation).**

I would allow the current ones as they are operational but stop future ones (IF the new scheme is to have 5 credit modules).



## **QMUL Academic Credit Framework Consultation Response from the Blizzard Institute**

Please complete this response form with reference to the points for consideration in the main document.

### **Do you support an amendment to the credit framework? Why/why not?**

The institute feel that any amendment to the credit framework that provides the option of future flexibility would be a good thing, providing this change did not come with a requirement to re-invent or re-package existing programmes.

Some of the longer running degree programmes recall the time when they were initially required to modularise, and still believe they lost some of the programme dynamic as a result of this long process. They are fearful that a further change in credit structure would lead to compulsory programme restructures to fit the system.

### **Which of the models (multiples of 5, 10, or 15 credits) do you favour, and why? Could you accept one or both of the other models, if your preferred model was not approved?**

Whilst it is felt that harmony with the majority of the UoL should be pursued if possible, the advantage of a 10 credit system is apparent.

Having the option of multiples of 5 in future design would be helpful, particularly in UG programme design.

### **What, in your view, are the benefits and drawbacks of the model with multiples of 15 credits?**

This is the structure already in place. Overall it is felt that efforts and resources (both locally and centrally) should be focused on consolidation of existing teaching modules in which the college has already invested much time.

### **What, in your view, are the benefits and drawbacks of the model with multiples of 10 credits?**

The institute are not convinced of any benefits to support this amendment.

### **What, in your view, are the benefits and drawbacks of the model with multiples of 5 credits? Should modules valued at (exactly) 5 credits be permitted in this model?**

See above. There would be some potential future benefits in a 5 credit option, including flexibility for short course adaptation.

### **Do you feel that there is a need for separate credit frameworks for undergraduate and postgraduate provision?**

The institute are strongly in agreement that there should be separate credit frameworks for UG and PG provision. UG course leads have expressed a greater interest in having 5 and 10 credit options available, so this could be applied. PG course leads are generally happy with the existing 15 credit structure.

**Should QMUL work to harmonise existing modules of non-standard credit values with the requirements of the credit framework? (even if no changes are made as the result of this consultation).**

It is felt that QMUL resources would be better directed to support consolidation of existing module delivery.

**QMUL Academic Credit Framework Consultation  
Response from William Harvey Research Institute**

Please complete this response form with reference to the points for consideration in the main document.

**The credit framework consultation document was sent to all members of the WHRI education board and responses requested. It was also discussed at the December board meeting and all comments collated into a unified response.**

**Do you support an amendment to the credit framework? Why/why not?**

The WHRI education board would support an amendment based on the case put forward in the document to increase flexibility of approach in offering small modules, particularly in the context of the QMUL model. In the absence of this and the wish to fit additional learning credits into the student offering there is no particular imperative for change within the courses or pathways that we as an institute currently offer.

**Which of the models (multiples of 5, 10, or 15 credits) do you favour, and why? Could you accept one or both of the other models, if your preferred model was not approved?**

We would favour the multiples of 5 approach as this also encompasses the possibility of modules of both 10 and 15 credits as well as 5.

The model using multiples of 15 credits would not disadvantage any courses our institute offer but would not fulfil the case made in the document for the need for smaller modules to satisfy the QMUL model.

A model using a multiple of 10 would require an unacceptable amount of reconstruction of existing courses which have learning outcomes and delivery structures that are working well. Such programmes would be disrupted unnecessarily by this change. There would also be a need when changing to multiples of 10 to run parallel courses side by side for 3 years while students who were enrolled on one framework completed and this would create logistical and assessment difficulties.

**What, in your view, are the benefits and drawbacks of the model with multiples of 15 credits?**

Benefits – most courses are already built on this framework and therefore minimal amendment is needed at least at PGT level. Disadvantages relate to the limited flexibility to offer multiple smaller learning activities, perhaps from other institutes or schools in support of the QM model.

**What, in your view, are the benefits and drawbacks of the model with multiples of 10 credits?**

Some increased flexibility but at the expense of having to redesign and return through the QA process a huge number of existing programmes that are currently working well. A great deal of extra teaching and administrative time would be required for this.

**What, in your view, are the benefits and drawbacks of the model with multiples of 5 credits? Should modules valued at (exactly) 5 credits be permitted in this model?**

See above

**Do you feel that there is a need for separate credit frameworks for undergraduate and postgraduate provision?**

No particular need for this especially as some undergraduate programmes may wish to include elements from PGT offerings

**Should QMUL work to harmonise existing modules of non-standard credit values with the requirements of the credit framework? (even if no changes are made as the result of this consultation).**

There is only a need for harmonisation if there is a plan for such modules to be made available to other courses and / or students on these programmes have programmes modified to enable them to substitute such modules with those offered in other courses – ie if the overall philosophy and strategy of QMUL was to move to a modularised degree approach in which students could ‘pick and mix’ elements more freely and flexibly than at present.

**Simon Hayter**

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**From:** KS Bhui  
**Sent:** 14 November 2016 07:29  
**To:** C Mason; David Wald; Graham MacGregor; J Morris; Jonathan Bestwick; M Law; N Wald; P Hajek; PK MacCallum; Attila Lorincz; Ivana Sestak; Jack Cuzick; Peter Sasieni; Stephen Duffy; Andrea Palinski; Ania Korszun; Charlotte Clark; Constantinos Kallis; Erminia Colucci; Heidrun Bien; JW Coid; Julius Bourke; Mark Freestone; Mary Davoren; Nikolina Jovanovic; PD White; Raluca Topciu; RE Taylor; Simone Ullrich; S Priebe; SA Stansfeld; Victoria Tischler  
**Subject:** Re: Consultation on the QMUL Academic Credit Framework

Dear Cheryl

I don't think 15 to 10 is going to make much difference, and the time and effort spent introducing it may be too great to justify it, certainly no existing courses should switch for the sake of it. My comment is more about smaller credit modules in general. Most of our courses have a larger credit framework, that affords us considerable ability to ensure the learning process is layered and deepened over time, and students engage over with this; and that there is minimum assessment and administrative burden (for students and staff) so even 15 credit modules seem challenging to support; the one course we ran like this is likely to be discontinued for lack of take up (Msc course) but students did report that they were inundated with one learning challenge and assessment followed by another and they were unsettled by this. Our large credit modules are also efficient of staffing and administrative and feedback costs; so switching from 15 to 10 on the one hand is not going to change that much, but reducing the credits per module, and smaller credit frameworks in general will need appropriate costs models do support the additional modular level administration both centrally for assessing feedback and managing assessments and enrolment as well as local learning which might be fragmented.

best wishes

kam

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**From:** C Mason

**Sent:** 11 November 2016 09:05:05

**To:** David Wald; Graham MacGregor; J Morris; Jonathan Bestwick; M Law; N Wald; P Hajek; PK MacCallum; Attila Lorincz; Ivana Sestak; Jack Cuzick; Peter Sasieni; Stephen Duffy; Andrea Palinski; Ania Korszun; Charlotte Clark; Constantinos Kallis; Erminia Colucci; Heidrun Bien; JW Coid; Julius Bourke; KS Bhui; Mark Freestone; Mary Davoren; Nikolina Jovanovic; PD White; Raluca Topciu; RE Taylor; Simone Ullrich; S Priebe; SA Stansfeld; Victoria Tischler

**Subject:** FW: Consultation on the QMUL Academic Credit Framework

Dear All

Please see the email below and attachment.

SMD will submit a coordinated response and in order to manage that we require comments to me please by **20 December 2016**

Many thanks

Mrs Cheryl Mason BSc  
 Manager, Wolfson Institute of Preventive Medicine  
 Charterhouse Square  
 London EC1M 6BQ  
 020 7882 6263



## **QMUL Academic Credit Framework Consultation Response from [Dentistry]**

Please complete this response form with reference to the points for consideration in the main document.

### **Do you support an amendment to the credit framework? Why/why not?**

Yes. This would give a more flexible approach and closer alignment with majority of other university courses. Important, however, that the maximum credits for Dental and perhaps Medicine courses should not be restricted to 60 credits but should be able to be set at 120 credits to reflect holistic / whole patient approach to these courses.

### **Which of the models (multiples of 5, 10, or 15 credits) do you favour, and why? Could you accept one or both of the other models, if your preferred model was not approved?**

Multiple of 5, with a minimum of 10 per module. This will give the greatest flexibility, esp for courses that have multiple components and also allow current course structure to continue as established. 10 credit only modules would have a significant impact on current course organisation

### **What, in your view, are the benefits and drawbacks of the model with multiples of 15 credits?**

Potential Benefit – no changes required to the current course structures.

Drawback For courses with multiple components, esp for Distance Learning courses, and courses that that many selective options, a maximum of 8 modules (excluding research which is usually 60 credits for master programmes) is too restrictive.

### **What, in your view, are the benefits and drawbacks of the model with multiples of 10 credits?**

Drawback would be that the present programmes that run well with multiple of 15 credit modules will need to be restructured. Advantage would be alignment with other institutions

### **What, in your view, are the benefits and drawbacks of the model with multiples of 5 credits? Should modules valued at (exactly) 5 credits be permitted in this model?**

There should not be any modules that have less than 10 credits as it is too small. Modules values however should be in multiples of 5 to allow for course that need 15 or 45 credit modules

### **Do you feel that there is a need for separate credit frameworks for undergraduate and postgraduate provision?**

Some UG clinical modules may need to be greater more than 60 credits because they combine knowledge of various system is needed for holistic approach – see above

### **Should QMUL work to harmonise existing modules of non-standard credit values with the requirements of the credit framework? (even if no changes are made as the result of this consultation).**

Yes, however QM should recognise the necessity for some courses to stand outside the standard framework

## **QMUL Academic Credit Framework Consultation Response from EECS**

Please complete this response form with reference to the points for consideration in the main document.

### **Do you support an amendment to the credit framework? Why/why not?**

No. A change to a 10-credit framework would require complete revision of all EECS programmes. This would impact their accreditation by external bodies, and in the case of degree apprenticeships require consultation with the companies employing the students. The work required would prevent us meeting our current strategic goals, notably those related to enhancing the student experience. A move to a mixed system substantially increases administrative problems both for the University and for students making degree choices. Any option that would increase the numbers of modules being offered risks damaging consequences because of increased requirement for teaching spaces (which are not available) and an increased number of exams taking place during the examination period (already straining at the seams).

### **Which of the models (multiples of 5, 10, or 15 credits) do you favour, and why? Could you accept one or both of the other models, if your preferred model was not approved?**

Moving wholesale to the 10 credits is not viable as it would require a complete curriculum review and could affect external and accredited programmes such as Degree Apprenticeships. If a change were required, we would favour a mixed credit option.

### **What, in your view, are the benefits and drawbacks of the model with multiples of 15 credits?**

The benefit of multiples of 15 credit modules for EECS would be no change to current curriculum and programmes already accredited against this formula.

### **What, in your view, are the benefits and drawbacks of the model with multiples of 10 credits?**

See comments above, 10 credit modules do not sit with the current curriculum and would mean a total revision of all EECS programmes.

### **What, in your view, are the benefits and drawbacks of the model with multiples of 5 credits? Should modules valued at (exactly) 5 credits be permitted in this model?**

This would at least facilitate an opportunity for to replace 15 credit modules more easily (e.g. replace with one 10 and 5 credit module).

### **Do you feel that there is a need for separate credit frameworks for undergraduate and postgraduate provision?**

No. Our MEng framework would be affected by this. Logistical nightmare and lack of equity with BEng programmes.

### **Should QMUL work to harmonise existing modules of non-standard credit values with the requirements of the credit framework? (even if no changes are made as the result of this consultation).**

N/A for EECS.

## Simon Hayter

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**From:** Thomas Prellberg  
**Sent:** 24 January 2017 02:41  
**To:** Simon Hayter  
**Cc:** Thomas Prellberg; J Shelton  
**Subject:** Re: Consultation on the QMUL Academic Credit Framework (reminder - consultation closes 27 January)

Dear Simon,

The teaching and learning committee discussed this at two TLC meetings, and comments were solicited from the whole School. Following this, the SMS feedback is brief and unequivocal:

SMS has discussed this and the majority opinion is to stay with the 15 credit version.

SMS objects to a (multiples of) 10 credit only version, as this would necessitate a huge amount of repackaging of our modules, and no clear advantage can be seen.

Going for multiples of 5 credits (with minimum size 10 or 15 credits) seems mathematically sensible, but is bound to create havoc at institutional level, especially if Schools start operating different models within this framework.

For a version of the reply matching the original questions,

**Do you support an amendment to the credit framework? Why/why not?**

***No. The benefits are not obvious and the ensuing workload will be substantial.***

**Which of the models (multiples of 5, 10, or 15 credits) do you favour, and why? Could you accept one or both of the other models, if your preferred model was not approved?**

***SMS strongly favours the 15 credit model, and would not want to accept a different model.***

**What, in your view, are the benefits and drawbacks of the model with multiples of 15 credits?**

***15 credits for the QM model seems too much - this seems to be the actual reason for the consultation***

**What, in your view, are the benefits and drawbacks of the model with multiples of 10 credits?**

***The amount of work needed to repackaging the curriculum into 10 credit chunks is excessive. There seems to be no advantage.***

**What, in your view, are the benefits and drawbacks of the model with multiples of 5 credits? Should modules valued at (exactly) 5 credits be permitted in this model?**

***Having a model with multiples of 5 credits (with a minimum size set at 10 or 15 credits) seems at first sight sensible, but creates considerable logistical problems. To overcome some of these aspects, Leeds, for example, stipulates "Students must enrol on exactly 120 or 125 credits in each year of the programme" to compensate for some of these issues.***

**Do you feel that there is a need for separate credit frameworks for undergraduate and postgraduate provision?**

***No.***



**Should QMUL work to harmonise existing modules of non-standard credit values with the requirements of the credit framework? (even if no changes are made as the result of this consultation).**

***No opinion - it doesn't affect SMS at present.***

With best wishes,

Thomas

Prof. Thomas Prellberg  
Director of Taught Programmes, School of Mathematical Sciences  
Queen Mary University of London, Mile End Road, London E1 4NS, UK  
+44 20 7882 5490 | [t.prellberg@qmul.ac.uk](mailto:t.prellberg@qmul.ac.uk) | <http://www.maths.qmul.ac.uk/~tp/>

On 20 Jan 2017, at 14:35, Simon Hayter <[s.n.hayter@qmul.ac.uk](mailto:s.n.hayter@qmul.ac.uk)> wrote:

Dear All,

A reminder that the credit framework consultation will close next Friday, 27 January. Many thanks to those who have already responded or contributed to consolidated responses.

With best wishes,

Simon

**Simon Hayter**  
**Assistant Academic Registrar (Assessment Governance)**  
Queen Mary University of London  
E10 Queens' Building | Mile End Road | London E1 4NS | UK  
[www.arcs.qmul.ac.uk](http://www.arcs.qmul.ac.uk)

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**From:** Simon Hayter

**Sent:** 01 November 2016 17:01

**To:** '[se-heads@qmul.ac.uk](mailto:se-heads@qmul.ac.uk)' <[se-heads@qmul.ac.uk](mailto:se-heads@qmul.ac.uk)>; '[se-admin-heads@qmul.ac.uk](mailto:se-admin-heads@qmul.ac.uk)' <[se-admin-heads@qmul.ac.uk](mailto:se-admin-heads@qmul.ac.uk)>; '[se-directors-taught@qmul.ac.uk](mailto:se-directors-taught@qmul.ac.uk)' <[se-directors-taught@qmul.ac.uk](mailto:se-directors-taught@qmul.ac.uk)>; '[hss-heads@qmul.ac.uk](mailto:hss-heads@qmul.ac.uk)' <[hss-heads@qmul.ac.uk](mailto:hss-heads@qmul.ac.uk)>; '[hss-admin-heads@qmul.ac.uk](mailto:hss-admin-heads@qmul.ac.uk)' <[hss-admin-heads@qmul.ac.uk](mailto:hss-admin-heads@qmul.ac.uk)>; '[hss-directors-taught@qmul.ac.uk](mailto:hss-directors-taught@qmul.ac.uk)' <[hss-directors-taught@qmul.ac.uk](mailto:hss-directors-taught@qmul.ac.uk)>; '[smd-heads@qmul.ac.uk](mailto:smd-heads@qmul.ac.uk)' <[smd-heads@qmul.ac.uk](mailto:smd-heads@qmul.ac.uk)>; '[smd-admin-heads@qmul.ac.uk](mailto:smd-admin-heads@qmul.ac.uk)' <[smd-admin-heads@qmul.ac.uk](mailto:smd-admin-heads@qmul.ac.uk)>; '[smd-directors-taught@qmul.ac.uk](mailto:smd-directors-taught@qmul.ac.uk)' <[smd-directors-taught@qmul.ac.uk](mailto:smd-directors-taught@qmul.ac.uk)>; Julia Shelton <[j.shelton@qmul.ac.uk](mailto:j.shelton@qmul.ac.uk)>; Nick Bryan-Kinns <[n.bryan-kinns@qmul.ac.uk](mailto:n.bryan-kinns@qmul.ac.uk)>; Colleen Cotter <[c.m.cotter@qmul.ac.uk](mailto:c.m.cotter@qmul.ac.uk)>; Alastair Owens ([A.J.Owens@qmul.ac.uk](mailto:A.J.Owens@qmul.ac.uk)) <[A.J.Owens@qmul.ac.uk](mailto:A.J.Owens@qmul.ac.uk)>; Christina Perry <[c.perry@qmul.ac.uk](mailto:c.perry@qmul.ac.uk)>; Roberto Veneziani <[r.veneziani@qmul.ac.uk](mailto:r.veneziani@qmul.ac.uk)>; Anthony Warrens <[a.warrens@qmul.ac.uk](mailto:a.warrens@qmul.ac.uk)>; Bruce Kidd <[b.l.kidd@qmul.ac.uk](mailto:b.l.kidd@qmul.ac.uk)>; Jo Brown <[jo.brown@qmul.ac.uk](mailto:jo.brown@qmul.ac.uk)>; Su President <[su-president@qmul.ac.uk](mailto:su-president@qmul.ac.uk)>; [vpeducation@qmsu.org](mailto:vpeducation@qmsu.org); Brad Coales <[b.coales@qmul.ac.uk](mailto:b.coales@qmul.ac.uk)>; Jonathan Morgan <[j.d.morgan@qmul.ac.uk](mailto:j.d.morgan@qmul.ac.uk)>; Jane Pallant <[j.pallant@qmul.ac.uk](mailto:j.pallant@qmul.ac.uk)>; Trudy Mason <[t.j.mason@qmul.ac.uk](mailto:t.j.mason@qmul.ac.uk)>; JP Hinson <[j.p.hinson@qmul.ac.uk](mailto:j.p.hinson@qmul.ac.uk)>; Carole Davis <[carole.davis@qmul.ac.uk](mailto:carole.davis@qmul.ac.uk)>; Alison Anderson <[alison.anderson@qmul.ac.uk](mailto:alison.anderson@qmul.ac.uk)>; David Marks <[d.marks@qmul.ac.uk](mailto:d.marks@qmul.ac.uk)>

**Cc:** Rebecca Lingwood <[r.lingwood@qmul.ac.uk](mailto:r.lingwood@qmul.ac.uk)>; Simon Booy <[s.d.booy@qmul.ac.uk](mailto:s.d.booy@qmul.ac.uk)>

**Subject:** Consultation on the QMUL Academic Credit Framework

**QMUL Academic Credit Framework Consultation  
Response from the School of Biological and Chemical Sciences [SBCS]**

Please complete this response form with reference to the points for consideration in the main document.

**Do you support an amendment to the credit framework? Why/why not?**

YES the School of Biological & Chemical Sciences does support an amendment to the credit framework.

SBCS supports the introduction of the QMUL Teaching & Learning Initiative (“QM Model”) but recognises that it may not be feasible to devote 15 credits of study in each academic year of each programme to the QM Model, necessitating the introduction of 5 and/or 10 credit modules, which in turn entails amendments to the credit framework.

**Which of the models (multiples of 5, 10, or 15 credits) do you favour, and why? Could you accept one or both of the other models, if your preferred model was not approved?**

SBCS favours the model based on multiples of 5 credits, specifically a move to modules of the following range of credit values: 5, 10, 15, 20, 30, 60, 105, 120 or 135 credits.

Multiples of 5 credits are supported by SBCS in providing maximum flexibility and avoiding the need to amend all extant modules.

SBCS does not support a move to multiples of 10 credits since this would necessitate revision of all extant 15 credit modules at significant opportunity cost that outweighs the benefits (see *below*).

**What, in your view, are the benefits and drawbacks of the model with multiples of 15 credits?**

The obvious benefit in SBCS would be that retention of the model based on multiples of 15 credits requires the minimum amount of additional work/disruption. That said, it has to be acknowledged that even with retention of the 15 credit based model, for those externally accredited programmes (for SBCS, the degrees in Biomedical Sciences, Chemistry/Pharmaceutical Chemistry and Psychology), it would be necessary to redistribute content from 8 x 15 credit modules in each academic year into 7 x 15 credit modules if 1 module in each year were to be devoted to the QM Model.

The obvious drawback of retention of a “status quo” model would be that it would necessitate devoting a minimum of 45 credits (450 hours of student effort) across 3 years of a BSc degree (65 credits/600 hours of an MSci degree) to the QM Model.

**What, in your view, are the benefits and drawbacks of the model with multiples of 10 credits?**

SBCS sees the only benefit of moving from the current 15 credit based model framework to multiples of 10 credits in that it would allow explicit definition of 10 credits per annum of content addressing the learning outcomes of the QM Model. Members of this School believe that this benefit is vastly outweighed by the adverse impact on workloads/time and the associated opportunity costs required to review/revise the content and organisation of every extant 15 credit module. As noted above, this is complicated further for each programme which is accredited by an external body (for SBCS, the Institute of Biomedical Sciences, the Royal Society of Chemistry and the British Psychological Society, respectively). It is also recognised that a move to multiples of 10 credits would almost certainly require to the current progression requirement of a student passing 105 credits of 120 credits studied in each academic year; without modification of that progression criterion, this becomes 110 credit progression hurdle de facto (since students who pass 100 credits per annum would be unable to progress to the next year of study).

**What, in your view, are the benefits and drawbacks of the model with multiples of 5 credits? Should modules valued at (exactly) 5 credits be permitted in this model?**

SBCS sees the overwhelming benefit of moving to a framework based on 5 credits as providing maximum flexibility with the option to retain many of the extant 15 credit modules without requiring avoidable work for a large proportion (up to 70%) of modules and yet introduce 10 credit modules for the QM Model. The School sees no obvious drawbacks to adopting a model based on multiples of 5 credits.

YES; the School believes that it would be beneficial to permit modules which are valued at exactly 5 credits (such that a current 15 credit module might be replaced by one 10 credit and one 5 credit module). That said, it is not envisaged that there would be many 5 credit modules offered and that the majority of modules are likely to be valued at 10, 15, 20 or 30 credits.

**Do you feel that there is a need for separate credit frameworks for undergraduate and postgraduate provision?**

NO; it is the position of SBCS that a credit framework based on multiple of 5 credits can be applied equally effectively to both undergraduate and postgraduate provision.

**Should QMUL work to harmonise existing modules of non-standard credit values with the requirements of the credit framework? (even if no changes are made as the result of this consultation).**

YES; co-delivery of programmes across schools and faculties is facilitated by (if not dependent upon) harmonisation of the credit values for all modules/programmes.

**QMUL Academic Credit Framework Consultation  
Response from School of Engineering and Materials Science**

Please complete this response form with reference to the points for consideration in the main document.

**Do you support an amendment to the credit framework? Why/why not?**

Yes, SEMS supports an amendment to the credit framework. The increased flexibility provided by an amendment will facilitate the introduction of the QMUL Model and satisfying accreditation requirements.

**Which of the models (multiples of 5, 10, or 15 credits) do you favour, and why? Could you accept one or both of the other models, if your preferred model was not approved?**

We favour multiples of 5 credits, with a minimum of 10 credits for all non-QMUL-Model modules. The main reason for this is that it provides the greatest flexibility. We could accept the multiples-of-10 model if our preferred model was not approved. We could not accept the multiple-of-15 model if this means that 15 credits per year should be dedicated to the QMUL Model.

**What, in your view, are the benefits and drawbacks of the model with multiples of 15 credits?**

We don't see any benefits if this means that 15 credits per year should be dedicated to the QMUL Model. With programmes that are already heavily prescribed by accrediting bodies this is just too much.

**What, in your view, are the benefits and drawbacks of the model with multiples of 10 credits?**

The main benefit is that this allows to dedicate 10 credits per year the QMUL Model, even though this should then be done in just one module. The main drawback is that adoption of this model automatically means that we need to overhaul all our existing 15-credit modules, which may lead to a prohibitive amount of work.

**What, in your view, are the benefits and drawbacks of the model with multiples of 5 credits? Should modules valued at (exactly) 5 credits be permitted in this model?**

As this model effectively encapsulates both other models, we don't see any drawbacks, except when it leads to too many 5-credit modules. Therefore, we would only want to allow 5-credit modules if said modules are part of the QMUL Model offering.

**Do you feel that there is a need for separate credit frameworks for undergraduate and postgraduate provision?**

As most of our PG offering is shared with level 7 UG students, we feel that separate credit frameworks would be undesirable (and unnecessary when the multiple-of-5 model is adopted).

**Should QMUL work to harmonise existing modules of non-standard credit values with the requirements of the credit framework? (even if no changes are made as the result of this consultation).**

As we don't have any existing modules of non-standard credit values, we don't have strong opinions on this.

## **QMUL Academic Credit Framework Consultation Response from School of Physics and Astronomy**

Please complete this response form with reference to the points for consideration in the main document.

### **Do you support an amendment to the credit framework? Why/why not?**

Yes. Allowing 10 credit modules (in addition to the multiples of 15) would simplify changes needed to implement the QMUL Model while maintaining our compliance with external accreditation requirements as well as increasing flexibility in programme design.

### **Which of the models (multiples of 5, 10, or 15 credits) do you favour, and why? Could you accept one or both of the other models, if your preferred model was not approved?**

We would favour the flexibility of having the choice of 10 or 15 credit modules (this maps approximately onto the fixed value choices with multiples of 5 listed above). If the choice came down to being between only 10 credit modules and only 15 credit modules we would prefer to remain with 15 credit modules. A move to allow only 10 credit modules would create substantial upheaval and would create significant problems with intercollegiate provision within the University of London. Having modules allowed to be multiples of 5 credits would be fine and there are some examples where we might be able to make use of them to add some extra flexibility into the programmes. However, we would in the first instance only anticipate making use of modules with credit values of: 10, 15, 30 and 45.

### **What, in your view, are the benefits and drawbacks of the model with multiples of 15 credits?**

The main drawback of the current model with multiples of 15 credits is that it does not allow for as fine grained segmentation of the curriculum as we would like, given the requirements for external accreditation by the Institute of Physics. This is dealt with currently by having a small number of modules that cover multiple topics that are sometimes only very loosely related.

### **What, in your view, are the benefits and drawbacks of the model with multiples of 10 credits?**

The benefit is that this allows for a more fine grained control and flexibility in the structure of the curriculum. The drawback is that this would require considerable upheaval in the structure of our programmes and so the implementation would require great care to avoid serious problems. This would also have a very major impact on the provision and use of intercollegiate modules across the University of London.

### **What, in your view, are the benefits and drawbacks of the model with multiples of 5 credits? Should modules valued at (exactly) 5 credits be permitted in this model?**

This model – with fixed allowed values – would allow us to introduce some modest changes to our programmes to better meet our accreditation requirements whilst implementing the QMUL Model. We have no strong opinion on the provision of 5 credit modules – we can imagine scenarios where they might be useful but would not expect to make significant use

of them. The key danger with 5 credit modules is that they could lead to large increase in the number of final exams.

**Do you feel that there is a need for separate credit frameworks for undergraduate and postgraduate provision?**

We think that it is important to align the UG and PGT frameworks such that the level 7 provision in MSci UG programmes can be shared with level 7 MSc programmes.

**Should QMUL work to harmonise existing modules of non-standard credit values with the requirements of the credit framework? (even if no changes are made as the result of this consultation).**

We are not aware of an urgent need to harmonise existing arrangements if there are no changes as the result of this consultation.

## **QMUL Academic Credit Framework Consultation Response from the Strategic Planning Office**

Please complete this response form with reference to the points for consideration in the main document.

### **Do you support an amendment to the credit framework? Why/why not?**

We support the consultation for seeking views across the university of an approach to the academic credit framework and would welcome further detail of how the different options, or the one that is selected, will work in practice.

### **Which of the models (multiples of 5, 10, or 15 credits) do you favour, and why? Could you accept one or both of the other models, if your preferred model was not approved?**

It appears that moving to the model with multiples of five would allow for change without a complete overhaul. In this model all schools would need to make changes to their curriculum in order to accommodate the proposed 10 credit modules for the QMUL model. While the consultation suggests that not all schools are looking to change their credit framework, a move to five credits will ensure that those schools will not be required to change all their modules but there will need to be flexibility for interdisciplinary reasons.

From a statutory returns perspective any change to the model should not pose a problem in returning the data as long as the records on the student system (SITS) are updated and continue to be maintained as they currently are. One downside to having modules bearing less credit is that students will need to take more modules which has the potential to increase non-completion rates which inform HEFCE funding. This is a HEFCE funding rule whereby students need to sit their final element of assessment for each module where the student on the module has not already passed the module. Further details can be found in [Annex D](#) of the Higher Education Students Early Statistics (HESES) survey.

Provision to increase the number of modules could see an increase in coursework, leading to additional marking which all may have an impact on the assessment and feedback element of the National Student Survey. This continues to be a focus for the university through the TEF working group and NSS action matrices. More modules will also impact on timetabling which already has a range of pressures.

### **What, in your view, are the benefits and drawbacks of the model with multiples of 15 credits?**

Benefits:

- No change required
- In line with the credit framework of other UoL institutions with which we collaborate
- Allows interdisciplinary study as all modules are on the same framework

Drawbacks:

- The majority of the benchmark group are using a different credit framework so we may wish to align with this

### **What, in your view, are the benefits and drawbacks of the model with multiples of 10 credits?**

Benefits:

- In line with the majority of the benchmark group



- Tessellation and interdisciplinary study possible, but this is no more of a benefit than the current 15 credit framework

Drawbacks:

- Will require the most overhaul of the models requiring all schools/institutes to redraw the content of modules to meet the new credit framework except in cases where the modules are already multiples of 10
- Running a larger number of smaller modules may not be cost effective for the university. This has recently been discussed at the Taught Planning Programmes Group (TPPG) in relation to work currently being carried out by Rachel Dodd.

**What, in your view, are the benefits and drawbacks of the model with multiples of 5 credits? Should modules valued at (exactly) 5 credits be permitted in this model?**

Benefits:

- Would allow 10 credit modules for those schools keen to change and allow other schools to maintain 15 credit modules
- Allows interdisciplinary study as all modules are on the same framework

Drawbacks:

- As the QM Model modules will be 10 credits all schools/institutes would need to make changes to their current offer of modules for the purpose of tessellation and the flexibility of interdisciplinary study

**Do you feel that there is a need for separate credit frameworks for undergraduate and postgraduate provision?**

**Should QMUL work to harmonise existing modules of non-standard credit values with the requirements of the credit framework? (even if no changes are made as the result of this consultation).**

Harmonising the existing non-standard credit modules within the credit framework would be beneficial for the purpose of complying with the credit framework requirements. However, if exceptional circumstances are warranted these may need to be considered. An investigation of non-standard modules may find that the frameworks use of 'normally' has prompted this provision, rather than it being for industry/professional body requirements.

## **QMUL Academic Credit Framework Consultation Response from QMSU**

Please complete this response form with reference to the points for consideration in the main document.

### **Do you support an amendment to the credit framework? Why/why not?**

Yes, because an amendment will allow greater flexibility within programmes and recreate that balance between assessment load and contact hours as noted in the considerations above. It will also allow for more variety of smaller modules which will be useful for content heavy disciplines.

### **Which of the models (multiples of 5, 10, or 15 credits) do you favour, and why? Could you accept one or both of the other models, if your preferred model was not approved?**

The model with multiples of 5 is preferred as it is the one which allows most flexibility and no major changes to the already existing model. Modules of 5 can adapt to the QMUL Model easier than the other two options and can accommodate credits of 10, 15, 20 etc. Would not accept the 10 as it requires major changes.

### **What, in your view, are the benefits and drawbacks of the model with multiples of 15 credits?**

With regards to the QMUL model, the 15 credit model may be in some cases too large for certain activities, and may not require as many contact hours that a standard 15 credit model requires. However, 15 credits are a standard across other London universities, so this will be beneficial for intercollegiate modules and for those students which choose to study another module with another school.

### **What, in your view, are the benefits and drawbacks of the model with multiples of 10 credits?**

A 10 credit model would mean all schools in the institution would have to be able to recreate a 10 credit module. This may not favour some and would be difficult especially for intercollegiate modules which are a standard 15 across other London Universities. However, it would allow for greater flexibility and allow more choice for students as there will be more, smaller modules available.

### **What, in your view, are the benefits and drawbacks of the model with multiples of 5 credits? Should modules valued at (exactly) 5 credits be permitted in this model?**

As stated in the considerations above there are many benefits in adapting this model, but careful module design will be needed to ensure all the credits for a year are met. Modules should only be valued at 5 credits if they are QMUL Model modules.

### **Do you feel that there is a need for separate credit frameworks for undergraduate and postgraduate provision?**

With the introduction of the QMUL Model, there will be a need for separate credit frameworks for undergraduate and postgraduate provision, as postgraduate programme diets will not need to adapt to embed a QMUL Model.

### **Should QMUL work to harmonise existing modules of non-standard credit values with the requirements of the credit framework? (Even if no changes are made as the result of this consultation). Yes**

**QMUL Academic Credit Framework Consultation  
Response from Katherine Bevan, ARCS.**

**Do you support an amendment to the credit framework? Why/why not?**

I support an amendment to the credit framework, only so far as modules of non-standard credit values should be brought into line with the standard provisions. In particular, the non-standard credit values (22.5 and 45) operated by certain programmes within the Centre for Commercial Law Studies have periodically caused issues with their inclusion in other programmes e.g. some postgraduate taught programmes within the School of Medicine and Dentistry had initially expressed an interest in offering certain modules from the LLM programme, but the tessellation problem was considered too much of a barrier.

**Which of the models (multiples of 5, 10, or 15 credits) do you favour, and why? Could you accept one or both of the other models, if your preferred model was not approved?**

I prefer the current model, in which nearly all of the schools/institutes follow the same scheme, as I see no clear pedagogical evidence to think otherwise.

Regarding intercollegiate modules, where students are generally permitted to take modules at one or more other colleges of the University of London (UoL), the 'incompatibility' is relatively small - just with KCL and SOAS. These so-called discrepancies have been managed successfully for the last few academic years according to a process agreed and approved at TPB. Furthermore, based on the module selection of students during 16/17, more than half (55%) of the intercollegiate modules chosen by students were not from KCL. I don't regard compatibility with other UoL colleges to be a deciding factor here.

**What, in your view, are the benefits and drawbacks of the model with multiples of 15 credits?**

Benefits:

- Minimal change for schools/institutes at a time when a number of other significant developments are in train both locally (e.g. QMUL Model, Summer Schools) and within the sector as a whole.

Drawbacks:

- Accommodating the QMUL model could be more challenging. However, a number of 'smaller' QMUL model activities could be grouped together to form 15 credit modules.

**What, in your view, are the benefits and drawbacks of the model with multiples of 10 credits?**

I think that students may perceive that they have an increase in choice. However, I suspect that all that would happen in practice is that the same content is repackaged, and other practical considerations (e.g. timetabling, limits on availability of suitable rooms) would then either limit the student choice, or result in a greater strain on timetabling and the current estate, possibly resulting in a worse overall experience.

I think that schools will need a substantial amount of time and support in order to redesign their modules – for example, nearly all of the UG and PGT modules offered by schools within the Faculty of Science and Engineering are 15 credits. A significant fraction of the schools within the Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences also have predominantly 15 credit modules. Other impacts e.g. it will take longer for schools to enter marks because there are more modules, and we may have to host more examinations.

There will also be a resource implication as the current Academic Model / Quality Assurance Officers will have an additional reviewing/recoding burden, over and above their existing tasks. This will be the case whether any change is rolled out incrementally or through a “Big Bang” approach. More modules would also add additional burden on the team who process the module evaluation, Additional resource would also have to be found for ARCS in order to rework the current Progression and Award rules, the latest rework of which will be carried out through an 18-month secondment post, funded by a recent PAR bid.

**What, in your view, are the benefits and drawbacks of the model with multiples of 5 credits? Should modules valued at (exactly) 5 credits be permitted in this model?**

There is potential for the issues above to appear at a larger scale should modules valued at exactly 5 credits be permitted in this model. There is also a much greater potential for tessellation problems both within and between schools should a ‘mixed economy’ arise. This will particularly impact upon schools who offer joint programmes with others, and also discourage greater interdisciplinary.

**Do you feel that there is a need for separate credit frameworks for undergraduate and postgraduate provision?**

No.

**Should QMUL work to harmonise existing modules of non-standard credit values with the requirements of the credit framework? (even if no changes are made as the result of this consultation).**

Yes.