



UNIVERSITY
OF BAHRAIN

ASSIGNING CREDIT HOURS TO COURSES

Authority / Owner of Owner: Competitiveness & Organizational
Development Directorate

Effective: 10/3/2024

Table of Contents

1	Definitions	3
2	Policy Purpose.....	6
3	Policy Scope	6
4	Policy Statement	7
5	Roles and Responsibilities.....	10
6	Credit Assignment Guidelines.....	11
7	Contact Information	18

POLICY INFORMATION

Title:	Assigning Credit Hours to Courses
Policy Description:	This policy establishes guidelines for defining and assigning credits to academic courses and programs.
Policy Scope:	☒ Academic ☐ Administrative ☐ Research ☐ Student ☐ General
Policy Status	☐ New policy ☒ Revision of existing policy
Approval Authority:	University of Bahrain Council
Authority/ Owner of Policy:	Competitiveness and Organizational Development Directorate
Approval Date:	6/11/2025
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University Council Resolution Number:	589/2025 - November 6, 2025
Document Number:	UOB-CODD-PO-007
Related Documents:	• Regulations for Offering Developing, Terminating and Suspending Academic Programs and Courses at the University of Bahrain • Study and Examination Regulation at the University of Bahrain. • eLearning and Distance Learning Regulation at the University of Bahrain.

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- Internship Policy
 - National Qualifications Framework
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Policy Stakeholders

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| ☐ President | ☒ Faculty members |
| ☒ Vice President | ☒ Students |
| ☐ Legal Advisor | ☐ Admin Staff |
| ☒ Deans | ☐ All University Affiliates |
| ☒ Directors | |

1 Definitions

The University University of Bahrain

Instructional Time Instructional time may occur in the classroom or outside the classroom, depending on the type of course

Independent learning The amount of time students spend outside of scheduled contact hours with the instructor to achieve the course learning outcomes. Examples include, but are not limited to, working on a project or assignment or report, preparing for exams, group work, design work, preparing for a lab, etc.

Credit The value assigned to the amount or volume of learning required to complete a unit of learning or achieve a qualification

Course types: The following course types are considered in this policy.

First- courses with classroom-based instructional time: Are courses where instructional time is generally defined as time spent in a physical classroom with the instructor during regularly scheduled instruction, as well as seated exams, final papers, and projects during the scheduled exam period. Classroom-based courses carry an expectation of independent learning time spent outside of the classroom. This time may include homework, assignments, preparation for the course, group meetings, and project work. Instructional time for classroom-based courses does not include vocational periods, travel, or orientation.

These types of courses are divided into two categories:

- a. **Lectures or equivalent courses:** Instructor-led courses that involve an instructor taking a central role in delivering content, leading discussions, and facilitating learning activities. In these courses, the instructor is more directly responsible for the delivery of information and the overall direction of the learning experience.
- b. **Practical or equivalent courses:** Instructor-supervised courses in which an instructor oversees and monitors the progress of learners, providing guidance, support, and feedback. The emphasis is on the instructor's role in supervising the students' work and ensuring they meet the required objectives.

Second- courses with instructional time generally outside the classroom: These courses are generally outside the formal classroom instruction, where instructional time is defined as time spent on tasks under the supervision or guidance of the instructor. This includes time spent on research, project-based work, or time that is academic in nature, spent in the field. They are calculated based on a 60-minute hour and do not carry an expectation of independent learning time outside

of the instructional time, as the instruction time in such courses is based mainly on independent effort.

Notional Hours	Time in hours that an average learner would take to successfully complete all learning activities, including assessments, required for achieving the learning outcomes and subsequently a qualification. Notional Hours include instructional time in addition to independent learning time (if applicable). Examples of activities that may be considered in the calculation (or estimate) of notional learning hours include: a. Formal teaching sessions: (lectures, classes, coaching, seminars, tutorials) b. Practical work: (in laboratories and other locations) c. Studio and design activities d. ICT activities e. Use of the library or learning resource centers for reading and research f. Private study time g. Self-directed study time using online and/or text-based open learning materials. h. Informal learning activities: (e.g. community groups, community-based workshops)
National Qualification Framework (NQF):	An instrument for the classification of qualifications according to a set of criteria for specified levels of learning achieved. It integrates and coordinates national qualifications sub-systems and improves quality, transparency, access and progression.

2 Policy Purpose

This policy establishes guidelines for assigning credits to the academic courses based on the expected amount of learning required by an average student to achieve the course's intended learning outcomes.

3 Policy Scope

This policy applies to all academic courses that carry credit hours at the University, including those offered within undergraduate and postgraduate programs. It is applicable to courses delivered through all modes of instruction, including traditional, blended, online, and distance learning, in alignment with the requirements of the NQF and the University's approved Study and Examination Regulation. In cases where courses are offered without credit hours, the related academic activities shall provide students with meaningful learning opportunities; however, such activities shall not entitle students to the award of credit hours.

4 Policy Statement

- 4.1 This policy establishes the relationship between the credits assigned to a course and the amount of learning required by an average student to achieve the course intended learning outcomes.
- 4.2 This policy aims at ensuring a consistent credit assignment across all academic programs offered at the University, while recognising that minor differences in credit assignment might exist according to the discipline.
- 4.3 All credit hours awarded by the University comply with the NQF¹ credit framework, the University Study and Examination Regulations and the University Postgraduate Studies Regulations:

Degree	NQF level	Minimum NQF Credits	Equivalent UOB Credits (NQF Credits/4)	Minimum and Maximum UOB Credits
Diploma	6	240	60	N/A
Associate Degree	7	360	90	90-105

¹ Refer to the National Qualification Framework for more about the titles and descriptions of higher education qualification.

Bachelor's Degree	8	480	120	120-175
Postgraduate Diploma	9	72	18	18-21
Master's Degree	9	120	30	33-36
Doctoral Degree	10	N/A	N/A	75
Professional Awards	7 or 8 or 9	12	3	N/A

4.4 The NQF considers a standard academic year to involve 1200 Notional Learning Hours or 12 NQF Credit (equivalent to 30 UOB Credits per year or 15 UOB Credits per semester).

4.5 Credit hours assigning and mapping information.

The University (American) Credits	NQF Notional Hours Per Semester	NQF Credits
1 Credit Hours x 40	40 Notional Hours	4 NQF Credits
	Acceptable Range 40 to 60	Acceptable Range From 4 to 6 NQF Credits
	Less than 35 is Not Accepted	Less than 3 NQF Credits is not Accepted
2 Credit Hours x 40	80 Notional Hours	8 NQF Credits
	Acceptable Range 75 to 100	Acceptable Range from 7 to 10 NQF Credits
	Less than 75 is Not Accepted	Less than 7 NQF Credits is not Accepted
3 Credit Hours x 40	120 Notional Hours	12 NQF Credits
	Acceptable Range 115 to 140	Acceptable Range from 11 to 14 NQF Credits

	Less than 115 is Not Accepted	Less than 11 NQF Credits is Not Accepted
4 Credit Hours x 40	160 Notational Hours	16 NQF Credits
	Acceptable Range 155 to 190	Acceptable Range from 15 to 19 NQF Credits
	Less than 155 is Not Accepted	Less than 15 NQF Credits is not Accepted
5 Credit Hours x 40	200 Notational Hours	20 NQF Credits
	Acceptable Range 195 to 230	Acceptable Range from 19 to 23 NQF Credits
	Less than 195 is Not Accepted	Less than 19 NQF Credits is not Accepted
6 Credit Hours x 40	240 Notational Hours	24 NQF Credits
	Acceptable Range 235 to 280	Acceptable Range from 23 to 28 NQF Credits
	Less than 235 is Not Accepted	Less than 23 NQF Credits is not Accepted

For courses that require more than six (6) credit hours, the number of credit hours is calculated in accordance with the University's system by dividing the total notional hours allocated to the course by 40, in line with the University's policy for determining credit hours. The result is then rounded to the nearest whole number to establish the appropriate credit hour value.

Example:

A course includes a total of **294 notional hours**, to calculate the number of credit hours:

$$294 \div 40 = 7.35 \approx 7 \text{ credit hours}$$

Accordingly, the course is assigned 7 credit hours.

5 Roles and Responsibilities

Credit assignment occurs through the process of curriculum development and review at the appropriate levels of curriculum governance, as per the Regulations for Offering/Developing Academic Programs and Courses at the University.

- 5.1 The faculty in each College are responsible for all aspects of the curriculum and degree program requirements. Each College has committees that reviews proposed new courses and degree programs, as well as revisions to existing programs. These reviews include an assessment of the credit hours associated with each.
- 5.2 The Vice-President of Academic Affairs with the Deanship of Registration will ensure that classes are scheduled according to the amount of instructional time for the credits assigned. Any discrepancies are reported back to the College to correct.

6 Credit Assignment Guidelines

- 6.1 Credit hours are assigned to courses and are calculated on the basis of instructional time and independent learning (if applicable), depending on the type of the course.
- 6.2 Syllabi for all courses must include an explanation of the amount of time students are expected to devote to the course and must include a breakdown of time expected in the classroom, as well as an expectation of time spent on the course outside of the classroom-based time, if applicable.
- 6.3 eLearning and distance education asynchronous and synchronous, hybrid, blended and traditional courses all comply with this policy. Regardless of instruction mode or delivery method, the same minimum amount of combined instructional time and independent learning (if applicable) is required for credit, and faculty must provide regular and substantive interaction with students in courses offered using eLearning and distance education. However, in a distance education course, instructional time may take different forms, such as reading, watching synchronous or asynchronous course lectures, participating in faculty-moderated online discussions and other required academic interactions with faculty.
- 6.4 Each credit is comprised of a number of notional learning hours that includes either classroom instruction plus independent learning hours for courses with classroom-based instructional time or just non-classroom-based instructional time for courses with instructional time generally outside the classroom.
- 6.5 Credit hours at the University and credit hours of the NQF are calculated in whole numbers only; fraction credit hours are rounded to the nearest whole credit in accordance with the basic rules of rounding.

- 6.6 One notional hour of classroom-based instruction for theoretical courses or equivalent is accompanied with 1.6667 (rounded to 2) hours of independent learning.
- 6.7 One notional hour of classroom-based instruction of practical courses or equivalent is accompanied with 0.3335 hours (rounded to 0.5) of independent learning.
- 6.8 Notional hours of courses with instructional time generally outside the classroom are not accompanied with independent learning time.
- 6.9 Notional hours of internship courses are normalised by a factor of 0.45.
- 6.10 The calculation of notional hours is based on fifteen weeks (one semester, excluding the mid-semester break).
- 6.11 Notional hours are equal to 50 minutes for courses with classroom-based instructional time and 60 minutes for courses with instructional time generally outside the classroom.
- 6.12 The table below clarifies the expected number of minutes for each notional hour of classroom-based and non-classroom-based instruction time, including independent learning time for each credit hour for the different types of teaching and learning methods.

Courses with classroom-based instructional time.					
Type	Number of minutes of classroom-based instructional time per credit per week	Number of minutes of classroom-based instructional time per credit per semester of 15 weeks.	Number of minutes of independent learning per credit per week	Number of minutes of independent learning per credit per semester of 15 weeks	Notional hours per credit per week
Lecture or equivalent courses					
Lectures (LEC): Instructor-led course where instruction occurs primarily through a presentation	50	750	100	1500	3

format. Lecture courses may include various pedagogies such as recitation, discussion, testing, evaluation, and other active learning techniques. Lecture courses may have affiliated discussion and/or laboratory components.					
Seminars (SEM): Instructor-led, interactive course that emphasizes exploration and focused discussions of advanced or discipline-specific topics and may result in the creation of an intellectual product.	50	750	100	1500	3
Discussions (DIS): Instructor-led course, usually associated with a lecture, designed to give students the opportunity for more engagement and interaction with the course content and instructor.	50	750	100	1500	3
Class Clinical (CCL): Instructor-led course that	50	750	100	1500	3

requires the application and practice of theories through experience in a professional setting. Courses are led by a faculty.					
Design Studio (DES): Instructor-led course that requires the application and practice of design and artistic theories. Studio instruction is delivered through a variety of pedagogies, including formal instruction, presentations, discussion, collective reviews, critiques, independent work, and other active learning techniques.	50	750	100	1500	3
Practical or equivalent courses					
Studio (STU): Instructor-supervised course that requires the application and practice of design, ecological, cultural, and aesthetic theories under the guidance of an instructor or faculty member.	100	1500	50	750	3

Laboratory (LAB): Instructor-supervised course that requires application of methods and principles through experimentation, observation, or practice in real-world or simulated settings. Labs often require a defined physical setting and may be stand-alone or affiliated with another component.	100	1500	50	750	3
Practicum (PRC): Instructor-supervised Course in which the student has an immersive experience for the purpose of the practical application of theory in a classroom, field, and/or work setting under the guidance of faculty.	100	1500	50	750	3
Tutorial (TUT): Instructor-supervised course that requires students to participate in problem-solving activities led by the lecturer. The sessions involve	100	1500	50	750	3

small groups working together to solve problems using concept taught in course. The instructor guides and supports the students, introducing strategies and techniques.					
Courses with instructional time generally outside the classroom					
Type	Number of minutes of non-classroom-based instructional time per credit per week	Number of minutes of non-classroom-based instructional time per credit per semester	Notional hours per credit per week		
Internship (INT)*: Course in which the student has an independent, immersive experience in a work setting that provides opportunities for the student to apply knowledge gained through coursework. *As per the University Internship guidelines, notional hours for internships are normalized by a factor of 0.45.	700	5600 (For the Summer Semester of 8 weeks) and 10,500 (For a Semester of 15 Weeks- Regular semester excluding the mid-semester break)	12 (5.25 after normalization)* for the summer semester Or 5.83 (2.625 after normalization) * For a regular semester		
Clinical (CLN): Courses that requires the	180	2700	3		

practical application of theories through an experience in a professional setting, typically outside the classroom. Courses are under the supervision of a clinical supervisor or faculty.			
Senior Project (SPR): Courses that involve comprehensive independent work individually or in groups on a chosen topic, allowing students to apply the knowledge and skills acquired throughout their academic journey, supervised by a faculty or industrial supervisor.	180	2700	3
Independent Study (IND): Courses that are individualized based on a plan of study negotiated between the student and faculty. Students study and work independently, and faculty provide guidance and supervision.	180	2700	3

Graduate Thesis/Dissertation (GTD): Required activity in which graduate research students create new knowledge through original research, culminating in the production and defence of a scholarly treatise that may be suitable for publication.	180	2700	3
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7 Contact Information

To provide further assistance in implementing this policy or for any related questions, you can contact the Competitiveness and Organizational Directorate.

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