

**Proposed revision to the Ordinances for the Birmingham Foundation Academy
Certificate**

Background

1. Students enrolling on the Birmingham Foundation Academy Programme are registered on either of the following two programmes, depending on the level of their English language qualifications at the point of entry:
 - a) A 4 year programme entitled 'Bachelor's Degree with Integrated Foundation Year (College X pathway)'; OR
 - b) Birmingham Foundation Academy Programme, College X pathway (one-year)
2. At the end of the first (Foundation level), year, students on both programmes may progress to a University of Birmingham Honours degree programme, provided they meet the specified English language and subject-specific progression requirements (usually an average mark of 60% in the modules). At this point, their registration would transfer to a 'standard' University degree programme and they would subsequently receive that award if it is successfully completed.

Proposal

3. The Project Board of the Birmingham Foundation Academy Programme **recommends** the following amendment to the University Ordinances in order to provide for the award of a 'Foundation Certificate' only as an exit award for those BFA students who leave the University after year zero (regardless of whether they were registered on the four-year or one-year programme), and who have achieved an average mark of 40% across the modules. The Certificate will provide them with confirmation of their successful completion of the Foundation year of the programme, and will enable them to apply for a Bachelor's degree at another UK institution.
4. The Foundation Certificate might also be awarded to those students who achieve the progression requirements at the end of year zero and transfer to a University of Birmingham degree programme, but then fail to progress satisfactorily from year one and are required to withdraw. In these circumstances, the BFA Certificate might then be awarded as an exit award, if they were not eligible for a HE Certificate.
5. It is proposed that a Foundation Certificate would not be awarded to those on the four-year programme who successfully complete year zero and progress onto a Birmingham Bachelor's degree, as this would imply an element of conditionality in progression which would not be in accordance with the UKBA award of a 4 year visa for these students. Similarly, a Foundation Certificate would not be awarded to those on the one-year programme who successfully complete the year and progress onto a Birmingham Bachelor's degree (for consistency with other routes).
6. An amendment to Regulations will be required in order to set out the circumstances in which the Foundation Certificate might be awarded, as an exit award, to certain BFA students (as outlined above). This will be submitted to APRC as part of a separate paper,

setting out a number of amendments to and exemptions from Regulations in order to accommodate the BFA.

Recommendations

7. APRC is invited to **consider** and, if thought appropriate, **approve** the following amendment to Ordinances to take effect from 1 August 2012. Additions are underlined.

4.2 Diplomas and Certificates of the University

4.2.1 In the University there shall be the following Diplomas and Certificates:

Foundation Certificate

University Certificate

University Diploma

Certificate of Higher Education

Diploma of Higher Education

Advanced Certificate

Graduate Certificate

Graduate Diploma

Postgraduate Certificate

Postgraduate Diploma

Certificate in Education (Further Education)

4.2.2 The subject titles of Diplomas and Certificates shall be those of the Degree, Diploma or Certificate programmes on which the students concerned have been registered except where specified otherwise in a Programme Specification.

8. APRC is also invited to **note** that there are other Foundation programmes within the College of Engineering and Physical Sciences, for home/ EU students, which do not currently award a Certificate as an exit award from year zero. APRC is therefore asked to **consider** whether a broader consultation is needed to determine whether or not there should be consistency across all types of Foundation programme in this respect.
9. APRC is asked to **consider** which particular programmes (e.g. the BFA) should use the award of Foundation Certificate, and in what circumstances.

Dr Steve Minchin, Director of the Birmingham Foundation Academy Programme
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