



Academic Awards Policy

1. Context

Trinity College Dublin, the University of Dublin, is a Designated Awarding Body whose awards are recognised nationally on the [National Framework of Qualifications \(NFQ\)](#), and internationally on equivalent frameworks. The University of Dublin is the awarding body for degrees and Trinity College Dublin is the awarding body for certificates and diplomas.

This policy should be read in conjunction with (and is subject to) the relevant provisions of the [University Calendar](#) and [the 2010 Consolidated Statutes of Trinity College Dublin and the University of Dublin](#).

2. Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to inform stakeholders that the University of Dublin and Trinity College Dublin have the power to create awards and to confer these awards on students following the successful completion of a programme of study.

3. Benefits

The certification of awards provides evidence of qualifications attained.

4. Scope

- 4.1 This policy applies to all awards made by the University of Dublin and by Trinity College Dublin (including those for validated programmes delivered by linked providers).
- 4.2 This policy applies to Dual and Joint awards delivered collaboratively with partner institutions, nationally and internationally.
- 4.3 This Policy does not apply to Microcredentials. While credits may be obtained through micro-credentials, they cannot at present be accumulated or 'stacked' toward the attainment of a Trinity award.

5. Principles

- 5.1 Students are entitled to receive an award following the successful completion of a programme of study for which they are registered.
- 5.2 The authenticity of awards is verifiable.



6. Definitions

- 6.1 The **National Framework of Qualifications (NFQ)** is a system of ten levels used to describe the Irish qualifications system. The NFQ describes what learners should know, understand and be able to do on the basis of a given qualification (Ref. 9.4).
- 6.2 An **award** is an academic qualification (degree, diploma or certificate) conferred in recognition of the successful completion of a higher education programme of study, either at undergraduate or postgraduate level, and issued by a designated awarding body. The National Framework of Qualifications sets out the criteria for major and non-major awards. Non-major awards include minor awards, special purpose awards and supplemental awards.
 - 6.2.1 **Major awards** are the principal class of awards made at a given NFQ level and reflect a significant volume of learning, e.g. Honours Bachelor Degree (NFQ, Level 8), Master Degree (NFQ, Level 9), Doctoral Degree (NFQ Level 10), Higher Doctorates; (NFQ Level 10).
 - 6.2.2 **Minor awards** are for partial completion of the outcomes of a Major Award.
 - 6.2.3 **Special Purpose** awards are made for narrow/purpose specific achievement, e.g. Special Purpose Certificate in Academic Practice.
 - 6.2.4 **Supplemental awards** are for learning that is additional to a Major Award.
- 6.3 A **certificate** is a non-degree award granted upon successful completion of a prescribed programme of study.
- 6.4 A **diploma** is a non-degree award granted upon successful completion of a prescribed programme of study.
- 6.5 A **degree** is a major award granted upon the successful completion of a prescribed programme of study, i.e. Bachelors, Masters or Doctorate.
- 6.6 An **exit award** is a recognised qualification (such as a certificate, diploma, or ordinary degree) granted to a student who leaves a higher-level academic programme early but has successfully met the learning requirements for a lower-level, pre-defined qualification within that subject area.
- 6.7 **Certification** is the process of verifying and evidencing educational achievements and awards through the issuing of transcripts and parchments.
- 6.8 An award **parchment** is evidence of the academic qualification attained and is presented to successful candidates at a Commencement/Diploma/Certificate ceremony.
- 6.9 A **transcript** is a detailed record of a student's studies, which confirms the course of study, period of registration, the modules that have been taken, the number of credits and grades achieved.
- 6.10 A **Diploma Supplement** is a document accompanying a higher education diploma that describes the nature, level, context, content, and status of the studies completed by its holder. It is designed to support fair academic and professional recognition of qualifications by providing clear, objective information.



6.11 A **linked provider** is a provider that is not a designated awarding body but enters into an arrangement with a designated awarding body under which arrangement the provider delivers a programme of education and training that satisfies all or part of the prerequisites for an award of the designated awarding body (Ref. [Qualifications and Quality Assurance \(Education and Training\) Act 2012](#)).

7 Policy

Awards¹

- 7.1 All awards granted by the University of Dublin and Trinity College Dublin are aligned with the National Framework of Qualifications (NFQ).
- 7.2 Degrees are awarded by the University of Dublin.
- 7.3 Certificates and diplomas are awarded by Trinity College Dublin.

Parchments

- 7.4 Trinity issues parchments on the conferral of awards to its graduates.
- 7.5 Degree parchments are issued in Latin.
- 7.6 Certificate and diploma parchments are issued in English.
- 7.7 Parchments for joint award programmes normally include details of the relevant institutions.

Transcripts

- 7.8 Trinity provides academic transcripts for undergraduate and postgraduate students (see [Academic Registry website](#)).
- 7.9 Trinity will not issue an academic transcript to a third party without the written consent of the person named on the transcript.
- 7.10 Linked provider institutions will issue transcripts locally in accordance with their rules and regulations with respect to Trinity-validated programmes.

Diploma Supplements

- 7.11 Trinity provides diploma supplements for undergraduate and postgraduate students (see [Academic Registry website](#)).
- 7.12 The format of the diploma supplement adheres to the formal format developed by UNESCO and the Council of Europe.
- 7.13 Trinity will not issue a diploma supplement to a third party without the written consent of the person named on the transcript.
- 7.14 Linked provider institutions will issue diploma supplements locally in accordance with their rules and regulations with respect to Trinity-validated programmes.

¹ A full list of degrees and diplomas awarded can be found at <https://www.tcd.ie/media/tcd/calendar/general-information/degrees-and-diplomas.pdf>



8. Responsibility

8.1 The responsibility for this policy lies with the Registrar.

9. Related Documents

9.1 [The 2010 Consolidated Statutes of Trinity College Dublin and the University of Dublin](#)

9.2 [Dual and Joint Awards Policy](#)

9.3 [Non-EU Collaborative Transnational Educational Partnerships Policy](#)

9.4 [National Framework of Qualifications \(NFQ\)](#)

9.5 [Descriptors for Minor, Special Purpose and Supplemental Award-Types, QQI](#)

9.6 [Qualifications and Quality Assurance \(Education and Training\) Act 2012](#)

10. Document Control

10.1 Approved by: University Council

10.2 Date of initial approval: October 2016

10.3 Date revised policy approved: 8 April 2026

10.4 Date policy effective from: 5 June 2026

10.5 Date of next review: 2028/29