

University of Glasgow**Academic Standards Committee – Friday 4 October 2013****Revised Degree for Initial Teach Education – further proposal for
4th Year exit award(s)**

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Following the decision of ASC to approve the new M Educ with Teaching Qualification (which replaces the current B Ed), the University of Glasgow is well-placed as a strategic leader of teacher education nationally and internationally. No other Scottish university which has gained GTCs accreditation for its post-Donaldson programmes, has taken the initiative of including Masters credits in the undergraduate experience. Only the University of Glasgow has worked out how to meet this new policy aspiration. The School of Education is proud of the academic backing of its University for the professional enhancement of teachers because the School believes that the use of M-level credit is crucial to enhancing career-long teacher learning, an enriched Early Phase experience for student teachers and ultimately a cutting-edge experience of schooling for pupils.

However, in the middle of the year, the School of Education encountered some questions from the profession because students will be leaving in fourth year with a Masters Diploma in Education. Some members of the profession 'hear' this title as regressive because it reminds them of the time before a graduate profession which teachers qualified with a Diploma. There were also questions about the nature of the qualification which would be achieved in 4th year and whether there would be a graduation.

The School of Education is steadfast in its view that in order to meet the Scottish Government aspiration for a Masters-level profession, that Masters credits should be awarded to students during their first four undergraduate years as already indicated and agreed. However, in order to enable this transition, it would be helpful for the School of Education if we nuanced the Year 4 Exit point in the following way.

At the end of fourth year we propose that students choose whether they wish to graduate with an Honours degree or exit with a Masters Diploma (as current PGDE students do). This would mean that the student would have the choice of whether they wanted to carry on their professional learning in a structured way or whether they wanted to graduate with an Honours degree and, say, teach abroad. They would not therefore be eligible to continue on the M Ed professional pathway during their probation year or in the first five years after graduation.

This proposal raises the issue of what would happen if graduates changed their mind during the first five years and, realising the way the professional career-structures were moving, requested that they should be allowed to complete the fifth year of the Masters in Education with Teaching Qualification. Our understanding is that if the student had used 90 M-level credits to graduate with an Honours degree, then it would be double counting if they were then to use the credits with which they had already graduated towards a new qualification.

We will be very clear with students that the implications of graduating with an Honours degree would mean that any subsequent Masters study would have to be on a conventional model. There would be significant differences in the student experience. In order to align the fifth year of the M Ed with Teaching Qualification, the School of Education is in the process of

extending its partnerships with local authorities in order to ensure that both the university's curriculum and the local authorities' strategic priorities meet in the student experience.

The reality is that this occurrence is five years away and during that time we will be able to work with students in order to help them see the value (both educational, professional and personal) of completing a Masters degree. Current students when asked how they would decide on that issue have until now opted for the Masters provision. However, it may be useful in some as yet, unforeseen circumstances if there is the option of graduating after 4 years with an MA Honours.