

B2. The Operation of Programmes of Study

B2.1 Definition of a Programme of Study

2.1.1 A 'programme of study' is the approved curriculum followed by an individual student or group of students. It may be identical with a 'course', be one of a number of standard routes available within a larger academic scheme, or it may be unique to the student. In all cases, however, the programme of study must satisfy the requirements set out in this section.

2.1.2 All programmes of study must be subject to academic scheme/course regulations approved by the Academic Board as part of the validation process. Where a programme of study is the only available route on a course, or where possible routes are clearly defined, the course regulations must cover all the requirements set out below. Where there is a greater element of individual student choice the overall regulations for an academic scheme must be supplemented by a statement relating to how individual programmes will be constructed, approved and controlled by the appropriate academic authority.

2.1.3 Title of a Programme of Study

A title may be given to any validated taught programme of study leading to an approved Institute award as defined in Part A of Volume One of the Academic Handbook. Titles which will appear on award certificates should be simple, single-subject titles wherever possible, leaving further definition to a transcript of the areas studied. Where students study more than one subject, up to three separate subjects may be identified in the title unless the subjects are ancillary studies necessary to support the main subject study (for example Mathematics within Engineering degrees). The normal conventions will be:

- i. Single Subject Title: to be used where approximately 80% of the time devoted to study contributing to the final award is in one defined subject area

Minimum CAT Requirement: 200 out of 240 Level H Credits in 1 defined subject area

- ii. Subject A and Subject B: to be used where the time devoted to study contributing to the final award is approximately equally shared between two defined subject areas

Minimum CAT Requirement: 100 out of 240 Level H Credits in each defined subject area

- iii. Subject A and Subject B and Subject C: to be used where the time devoted to study contributing to the final award is approximately equally shared between three defined subject areas

Minimum CAT Requirement: 80 out of 240 Level H Credits in each defined subject area

- iv. Subject A with Subject B: to be used in the case of major/minor combinations where approximately 65% of the time devoted to study contributing to the final award is in one defined subject area and not more than 35% is in another defined subject area

Minimum CAT Requirement: 160 out of 240 Level H Credits to be in 1 subject area

- v. Subject A with Subject B and C: to be used in the case of major/minor/minor combinations where approximately 50% but not more than 75% of the time devoted to study contributing to the final award is in one defined subject area and not more than 50% or less than 25% is in 2 defined subject areas

Minimum CAT Requirement: 120 out of 240 Level H Credits to be in 1 subject area

- vi. Subjects A and B with Subject C: to be used in the case of major/minor combinations where approximately 75% of the time devoted to the study contributing to the final award is equally divided between 2 defined subject areas and approximately 25% is in 1 defined subject area

Minimum CAT Requirement: 180 out of 240 Level H Credits to be in Subjects A and B with minimum of 80 Credits in 1 of these subjects

- vii. Combined Studies: to be used where the time devoted to study leading to the final award is made up of more than 3 clearly defined and separate subject areas whether as part of an approved course of study or as part of an individually negotiated programme

Minimum CAT Requirement: 240 Level H Credits across all units of study.

2.1.4 Within the Institute CAT scheme or within individual modular schemes, it may be possible to identify a programme of studies

as leading to a named single titled award in areas of interdisciplinarity. Any such proposal must be made by the appropriate academic leader of a scheme or the Dean of Faculty concerned. They must be able to demonstrate that the programme of studies is based on a coherent and integrated set of academic units or modules which fulfils clear academic aims and objectives and provides a distinctive academic specialism. Such programmes will have to contain regular elements of a particular awards scheme or the Institute's CAT scheme. Programmes leading to named awards must not be created solely for the needs of individual students.

Programmes proposed on the above basis should have their own aims and objectives and the proposers will be expected to demonstrate the likely demand for, and recognition of, the proposed award by institutions, students and employers. The approval of Academic Standards Committee, by whatever procedures it chooses to apply, will be necessary for any such proposed award title.

2.1.5 Specific Use of Degree Nomenclature

Programmes of study leading to the award of a degree either at undergraduate or postgraduate level may be designated as leading to a Bachelor's or Master's award in Arts, Science, Engineering or Education on the basis of the criteria defined in Volume One, Part A, Section A1.2. Award titles for programmes of study will be approved by the Academic Standards Committee on behalf of the Academic Board in the light of the criteria defined in Section A1.2.

B2.2 Aims, Objectives and Standards of Programmes of Study

- 2.2.1 A programme of study must have stated *aims* and *objectives* which the curriculum, structure, teaching methods and forms of assessment are designed to fulfil.
- 2.2.2 The aims will include the development to the standard required for the award of a body of knowledge and skills appropriate to the field of study and reflecting academic developments and standards in that field; these are programme *specific* aims.
- 2.2.3 The aims must also include *general educational aims*: the development of students' intellectual and imaginative powers; their understanding and judgement; their problem-solving skills; their ability to communicate; their ability to see relationships within what they have learned and to perceive their field of study in a broader perspective. In addition programmes must develop technical, written oral and numerical skills as appropriate to the discipline area and to the needs of students in their future lives.

The programme must aim to stimulate an enquiring, analytical and creative approach, encouraging independent judgement and critical self-awareness.

2.2.4 The statement of objectives must show how the programme will fulfil the aims. The statement of *programme-specific* objectives will specify the knowledge and skills appropriate to the field of study and identify the ways in which these will be developed and evaluated in the students. The statement of *general objectives* will identify the ways in which the students' transferable intellectual skills will be developed and evaluated, in particular their ability to:

- a. communicate clearly in speech, writing and/or other appropriate modes of expression, using relevant forms and means of communication;
- b. argue rationally and draw independent conclusions based on a rigorous, analytical and critical approach to data, demonstration and argument;
- c. apply what has been learned to the investigation and analysis of specific problems;
- d. demonstrate an awareness of the programme of study in its wider social and economic context.

2.2.5 The aims and objectives of a programme may be stated as expected learning outcomes or competencies which students who successfully complete it will acquire.

2.2.6 The curriculum and structure of the programme

The curriculum must be appropriate to the aims of the course and to the level and standard of the award. The structure must provide for the progression of the student from the level of knowledge and skills required at admission to the level required for the award.

B2.3 The Planned Duration and Mode of Study of the Programme

2.3.1 The planned duration of a programme must be related to the normal duration specified in the definition of the award as set out in Part A of Volume One of the Academic Handbook and the student's period of registration as defined in Section B1.5. The registration period shall constitute the minimum and maximum periods within which a student must normally complete the programme and associated assessments (including re-assessments). For any mode of study (full-time, part-time or sandwich), the level of knowledge and skills required at the point of entry, the curriculum teaching arrangements, time for private study and the length and nature of any supervised work

experience must be designed to satisfy the duration requirements of the award and to bring students to the level of achievement associated with the award's definition.

2.3.2 A student's period of registration with the Institute in respect of a particular programme of study shall end once the final result of an Examination Board (after all possible extensions, referrals and reviews) is confirmed or it has been deemed that the specified maximum period of registration has been reached (see Section B1.5). A student may be subsequently registered for another or the same programme of study in accordance with the regulations for Admission, subject to the Institute's right to refuse for good reason the applicant's request for re-registration.

2.3.3 Part-Time Study

The duration of a programme of study designed for students studying part-time will be longer than the minimum full-time duration specified for the award in Part A of Volume One of the Academic Handbook. The precise length will depend on factors such as the pace of study and whether or not the time spent away from formal study is spent in activities which contribute to the student's studies. A part-time programme must provide for adequate contact with staff and sufficient time for private study and consolidation.

2.3.4 Sandwich degrees

- i. A programme of study designated as being offered 'in the sandwich mode' shall have the words 'by the sandwich mode of study' printed on the final award certificate. A programme of study designated as being offered in the sandwich mode must normally include not less than 44 weeks of supervised work experience in addition to the period required for the full-time award, except that for the award of BEng or BEng with Honours the period must be not less than 36 weeks with no possibility of exemption. For the award of BA in the field of art and design studied as a single subject the period must be not less than three months and not more than twelve months in a four-year course.
- ii. The period of supervised work experience must form a compulsory element of the programme of studies with specified objectives related to the period of work experience; the performance of students must be assessed and satisfactory completion of and performance in the period of supervised work experience must be a requirement for the award.

- iii. There should be provision for an alternative full-time award on all sandwich degree schemes, which may be awarded to all students who do not take the sandwich element of the course.

2.3.5 Courses including Work Experience other than those designated 'sandwich' courses

- i. Learning based in a workplace may be included in whole or in part in the normal full-time length of a course provided that the standards of the tuition, supervision, course content and resources provided for students are approved by the Academic Board as appropriate to the fulfilment of the objectives of the programme. However, the inclusion in a programme of study of supervised work experience which does not fulfil these requirements will extend the planned length of the programme normally by the length of time which the work experience itself takes up. Where completion of suitable placements cannot be guaranteed, provision should be made for students to follow an alternative full-time programme.
- ii. Where courses are designed to fulfil the requirements of a professional or liaising body in addition to an academic award of the Institute they may incorporate periods of work experience for this purpose which will normally add to the minimum period of study required for the award. In such courses, provision should be made for students who fail to satisfy the professional requirements to be given appropriate credit for any academic achievement. The assessment criteria should be defined so as to enable students to be recommended for an academic award without being recommended for a professional award or licence to practise. Where appropriate, a course may lead to awards with different titles to distinguish those who have gained a professional qualification from those who have not.

2.3.6 Modern Language Degrees

In full-time degree courses in modern languages, where language study is the sole component of the course, a period of residence abroad should be an integral part of the course. Where two main languages are studied to the same level, it is expected that a student should spend a substantial period of residence in countries where the languages are spoken (normally six months in the country of each language).

Where only one main language is studied it is expected that a substantial period of residence in a country where the language is spoken (normally six months) will be a compulsory part of the course.

B2.4 The Length and Structure of Programmes of Study

2.4.1 The definition of Institute awards given in Volume One, Part A, Section A1.2 of the Academic Handbook states the normal minimum planned duration of a programme in terms of full-time study in academic years (defined as 30 weeks) based on a particular level of entry. Programmes of study may need to be longer or more intensive where they are designed for students whose knowledge and skills are not yet at the level normally required for entry. Alternatively programmes designed for students whose qualifications or experience are of a higher standard than that normally required may be shorter than the normal minimum duration. Equally, programmes of study may be offered on a different pattern to the normal academic year and may be expressed in terms of credits and their related time values. The guiding principle will be that the Academic Board must be satisfied that all programmes of study provide the necessary time for students to achieve the level and standard consistent with the national norm for a particular award. In addition any proposal to vary the normal time devoted to a programme of study would be required to demonstrate at the time of validation of the programme that account had been taken of the need for students to have time for private study and consolidation.

2.4.2 Entry with Academic Credit

Students may be admitted to a programme of study at various stages beyond the initial point of entry on the basis of prior academic study and learning or appropriate experience. The institutional framework for considering such arrangements is defined in Part B, Section B1 of this Volume of the Academic Handbook and also in Part D (Regulations and Procedures Governing the Operation of the Institute's Credit Accumulation and Transfer Scheme). Proposers of such arrangements should define their intentions at the time of the initial validation of a programme of study or should make formal application to the Academic Standards Committee for approval of specific arrangements for entry with academic credit to an already approved course. The framework defined in Section B1 must be used when making proposals for entry with academic credit, the determination of the period of time students are to be given to complete the programme and the parts of the programme from which they are to be exempted. Alternatively, students may be admitted under special circumstances through the BICATS regulations.

B2.5 The Structure of Programmes of Study leading to Honours and Unclassified Degrees

- 2.5.1 Where possible, programmes of study should be designed to enable all students to have the opportunity to reach Honours Degree standard. Students should also have the possibility of obtaining an Unclassified Degree if they reach an appropriate standard but not the standard required for Honours. Honours students are expected to demonstrate a greater capacity for sustained independent work at high level, which may also be expressed as a requirement to complete a greater quantity of high-level work.
- 2.5.2 Where a programme may lead either to an Honours or to an Unclassified award, the structure should allow for students who successfully complete the Unclassified route to go on to complete the Honours element. This may be done by designing the Unclassified programme as a sub-set or stage of the Honours programme, with additional elements demanding high level independent work being required for the award of Honours. Students on the Honours programme whose performance did not meet the requirements for Honours but was equivalent to the level expected on the unclassified route would receive the award of Degree. A programme of this type will be known as a BA (or BSc etc)/BA Hons course. Provision may be made for the award of Distinction to students who perform well in the assessment for the Unclassified award.
- 2.5.3 Where a programme is designed to lead to an Honours award without a differentiated route to an unclassified award, final assessment criteria (in terms of structure and weighting) should be established for a pass award as well as for First, Second and Third Class Honours. The Pass award will require the fulfilment of the objectives of the course at a minimum acceptable standard, while the higher classifications will demand increasingly high levels of performance demonstrating the ability to analyse, synthesise and creatively apply what has been learned on the course. A student's fulfilment of the criteria for the pass award may be demonstrated either through performance across the whole range of assessments or by allowing students who fail in some specified elements of the course to be deemed to have fulfilled the minimum acceptable standard for an unclassified degree and to be entitled to the award of a Pass Degree. A course of this type will be known as a BA(or BSc etc) Hons course and there will be no provision for the award of Distinction.

B2.6 Regulations on Admission and Progression for Programmes of Study

- 2.6.1 Regulations on the admission of students to a programme

The admission regulations must describe the basis on which a student will be admitted to the beginning or to subsequent stages of the programme of study, by:

- i. identifying the abilities, knowledge and skills required at admission and relating these to the length, content and objectives of the programme;
- ii. describing the way in which these arrangements will accord with the Institute's requirements relating to the standard of the award, as set out in Part A of Volume One of the Academic Handbook;
- iii. setting out the criteria and means by which the suitability of the student for admission will be judged in accordance with the Institute's general Admissions regulations as defined in Volume One, Part B, Section B1 of the Academic Handbook;
- iv. setting out, where appropriate, the procedures to be used in assessing for the purposes of Honours classification any relevant previous work of students admitted with specific credit.

2.6.2 Regulations on progression

- i. Progression regulations must set out the way(s) in which students progress through the programme, and identify the elements that are compulsory, optional or alternative.
- ii. Where the objectives of the programme are such that attendance is compulsory for certain elements, the regulations must give details of the attendance requirements to be met by students.
- iii. The regulations must give details of any formal arrangements designed to monitor students progress and warn students of possible failure.
- iv. Regulations dealing with assessments which do not formally contribute to the recommendation of an award must specify what form the assessment will take and what provision is made for retrieval of initial failure and for exclusion from the programme on academic grounds. The Institute does not require external examiners to be associated with such assessments.

B2.7 The Management and Control of Programmes of Study designated as Courses

- 2.7.1 In this section, the term course shall be used to refer to all programmes of study taken by a group of students which are award bearing, whether they be taken full-time, part-time or

sandwich. Short Courses, namely those of less than 15 weeks per year or 450 hours of study time, are subject to separate arrangements but may be accredited as part of an award bearing course under the procedures defined in Section 6.5 of the Credit Accumulation and Transfer Regulations. Arrangements relating to modular provision are defined in Section B2.8.

2.7.2 Every course shall be operated in accordance with the policies, principles, regulations and procedures of the Institute and where appropriate, the regulations of the relevant validating body. The Institute's regulations require Deans of Faculty or other designated senior managers to establish the following framework for the management and control of courses, subject to the approval of the Academic Standards Committee:

- i. a Course Leader (or in grouped courses, the use of a different title may be approved)
- ii. a Course Committee (the responsibilities of which are defined below)
- iii. an Examination and Assessment Board (the responsibilities of which are defined below)
- iv. as appropriate to the circumstances, designated positions relating to admissions, student tutoring and guidance, subject leadership, examinations and assessment, work experience or placement, timetabling.

In addition, it shall be the responsibility of Deans of Faculty or other designated senior managers to provide adequate administrative support for the efficient operation of the course.

2.7.3 Role and Responsibilities of a Course Leader

A Course Leader is normally appointed by the Dean of Faculty in which the course is based. The Course Leader has overall responsibility for the day to day operation of the course in accordance with institutional and Faculty policies, principles, regulations and procedures and the regulations of any external validating body responsible for the award to which the course leads. In discharging this responsibility the Course Leader would normally work with a group of colleagues with specific areas of responsibilities (eg. Admissions) which may be designated as the Course Management Team. He/she will also lead the Course Team, which consists of all the members of staff responsible for the teaching and delivery of the course. A Course Leader shall be responsible to the relevant Dean of Faculty and accountable to the Course Committee (see para 2.7.4 below) in respect of the operation of the course. In accordance with the policies, principles, regulations and procedures of the Institute (and any external validating body) the

duties of the Course Leader will normally entail, either in person, or by delegation:

- i. regular consultation with the Course Management Team on the development and administration of course policy;
- ii. the recruitment, selection and admission of students (normally in liaison with an Admissions Tutor);
- iii. the arrangement of the teaching, assessment and other duties associated with the course;
- iv. keeping effective records of course numbers, class sizes and attendances and achievements of individual students;
- v. convening meetings of the Course Committee at least once a term or once per semester;
- vi. maintaining effective means of ensuring the academic and personal welfare and progress of students on the course;
- vii. making reports on the general and academic progress of students and the operation of the course to internal and relevant external bodies;
- viii. ensuring that the Institute's annual course monitoring procedures are implemented and responded to;
- ix. leading the preparation of documentation relating to course monitoring, validation and progress review;
- x. convening and preparing papers for meetings of the Course Committee and ensuring that significant policy issues are brought to it for consideration;
- xi. chairing the Course Committee;
- xii. ensuring that the decisions of the Course Committee are implemented;
- xiii. preparing papers and material relating to the operation of Examination Boards, ensuring that such Boards are convened at the appropriate time and that the recommendations of the Boards are carried out.
- xiv. reporting as necessary to the appropriate Dean of Faculty and senior management on matters relating to the academic development of the course, the progress and achievements of students and the resource requirements

(including staff development) relating to the course's operation.

- xv. Ensuring that copies of the minutes are forwarded to the Academic Affairs and for the course record.

2.7.4 Role and Responsibilities of Course Committees

Purpose

The purpose of Course Committees is to provide a forum for the discussion of all matters which affect the operation of a course by the teachers, students, support staff and other interested parties associated with the delivery of a particular course. The role of Course Committees is to keep under review the academic quality of a course, to ensure that it is meeting its aims and objectives as defined at the time of validation, regularly to evaluate the currency of those aims and objectives and to ensure that they are leading to a worthwhile experience for the students on the course. They are also to discuss the continuing academic development of the course. Under the terms of the Institute's Policy and Procedures Relating to the Assurance and Enhancement of the Academic Quality of Taught Programmes of Study (Part A of Volume Two of the Academic Handbook), Course Committees are responsible to the Academic Board, via the Academic Standards Committee, for carrying out this role effectively.

Establishment and Operation of Course Committees

- i. Every course in the Institute (excluding Short Courses) once it has been validated must establish a Course Committee and have its membership and terms of reference approved by the Academic Standards Committee on behalf of the Academic Board. Details of the proposed Course Committee membership and terms of reference should be included in the validation document. A Course Committee may represent more than one course within a Faculty or between Faculties, but in such cases the proposed grouping and membership will be subject to the approval of the Academic Board. All Course Committees must have adequate student representation and ensure that their decisions are made known to students on the course.
- ii. In the case of large and combined courses, the operational arrangements for the effective performance of the Course Committee's role may require substantial devolution of responsibilities to sub-groups or sub-committees which will remain accountable to the main Course Committee. In all such cases, it will be the responsibility of the Course Committee to propose

such arrangements to Academic Standards Committee for its approval and to have these approved.

- iii. In the case of collaborative courses, parts of which are offered in other institutions and courses run by other institutions which may be validated by the Institute, appropriate arrangements must be made to ensure either representation on the main Institute Course Committee or other forms of accountability by such courses to the Academic Standards Committee and Academic Board. Such arrangements must be approved at the time of validation.
- iv. All Course Committees shall meet at least once a term or once per semester, have a Chair and Secretary and have their proceedings properly minuted. The Chair of the Course Committee shall normally be the Course Leader. Minutes should normally be taken by a representative of the Faculty's administrative staff. Minutes should be circulated to all staff and student representatives, displayed on student notice boards and a copy sent to the Senior Academic Affairs Officer in the Academic Affairs Office.

Terms of Reference of the Course Committee

The Course Committee shall have principal academic responsibility for the course, within the framework and policies formulated by the Academic Board and the external Validating Body (where applicable). This responsibility shall include:

- a. Determination and development of the course curriculum.
- b. Advising on general course organisation and administration.
- c. Review of academic regulations, admissions policy, assessment and examination methods for the course, methods of teaching and learning and the initiation of any proposals for change in these to the Academic Board.
- d. Monitoring and evaluation of the academic standards and effectiveness of the course and drawing up necessary action plans as a consequence.
- e. Reviewing resources required by the course and making recommendations via the Course Leader to the appropriate Dean(s) of Faculty.
- f. Identifying needs for staff development required to maintain and enhance the academic standards of the course.

- g. Production of such annual or other reports as required by the Academic Board.
- h. Eliciting the views of students upon the operation of the course and taking appropriate action as a consequence, including drawing them to the attention of Faculty or Institute Committees and appropriate members of Institute management.
- i. Receiving reports from the Course Leader on the operation of the course and ensuring that matters relating to the course's effectiveness and student satisfaction are followed up.
- j. Considering and implementing at course level, such policies as may be determined by the Academic Board in relation to:
 - teaching, learning and curriculum content;
 - assessment;
 - admissions;
 - staff development and research.

Membership of the Course Committee

Membership of the Course Committee will vary, depending on contingent factors, but it must include all the persons listed below:

Course Leader/Course Coordinator

Year Tutors

All staff teaching on the course (or an acceptable scheme of delegation approved by the Academic Standards Committee)

Elected students enrolled on the course (at least one from each year or stage of the course)

Dean of Faculty (ex-officio).

Additionally, Course Committees may include representatives from:

Learning Support Services

Student Guidance and Support Services

At the beginning of each academic year, the Course Leader is responsible for the production and circulation of the membership list of the Course Committee and its schedule of meetings for that year to the Senior Academic Affairs Officer acting on behalf of the Academic Standards Committee and to all Course Committee members.

The composition/structure and terms of reference of every Course Committee must be approved by the Academic Standards Committee when a course is initially validated.

Course Committees shall have the power to set up sub-committees, panels or working parties as required.

Course Committees shall have the power to co-opt other staff and also other persons from outside the Institute. A Course Committee may decide to co-opt without voting rights.

B2.8 The Management and Control of the Institute Modular Framework

2.8.1 The Institute is committed to developing a common modular framework for the majority of its academic programmes and linking this framework with the Credit Accumulation and Transfer Regulations defined in Part D of Volume One of the Academic Handbook. The operation of the Institute Modular Framework will be based on the levels of academic organisation and responsibility which are defined in subsequent paragraphs.

2.8.2 The Institute Modular Framework

The Institute will operate a single credit based Modular Framework which will be available at pre-degree, undergraduate and postgraduate levels. The purpose of this Framework will be to provide an organisational context within which Faculties of Study, either individually or in collaboration, may develop programmes of study which meet the requirements of the Institute and the needs of students, employers and society as a whole. All such programmes of study must have the approval of the Academic Board and satisfy the Institute's validation and quality assurance requirements. The Framework will endeavour to meet the following educational objectives derived from the Institute's mission statement and key aims:

- a. to encourage access, educational opportunity and progression;
- b. to provide entry to and exit from Institute programmes at appropriate points in line with student requirements;
- c. to give students credit for prior learning (formal and informal) which they may have acquired in education or via the workplace or general life experience;
- d. to provide flexibility of mode, pace and level of progression of study, including opportunities for the

individual negotiation of academic programmes to suit particular needs and aspirations;

- e. to maintain and enhance the quality of the student experience;
- f. to enhance the range of academic programmes offered in an efficient and cost-effective manner;
- g. to respond to the changing demands of students, employers and society and to the growth of new knowledge which may be disciplinary or interdisciplinary based.

The Institute Modular Framework will operate using the Institute's academic regulations and the regulations for Credit Accumulation and Transfer contained in Part D of Volume One of the Academic Handbook and will be subject to the control of the Academic Board. The Academic Standards Committee of Academic Board and designated senior managers will be responsible (using such other Boards, Committees and Groups as may be constituted and approved by them for the purpose) for ensuring the implementation of the framework and compliance with the Institute's academic regulations by all Faculties within the Institute. All levels of award from pre-degree to postgraduate awards (with the exception of research awards) will be available within the Institute Modular Framework.

2.8.3 Structure of the Institute Modular Framework

The Institute Modular Framework will be based on the following academic structure and its allocations of time and level to programmes and academic units of study or modules:

the normal three year Full-time Honours and Unclassified degree will = 360 credits, made up of 6 modules per year or 12 half modules per year, worth 20 or 10 credits respectively and amounting to 120 credits per year.

The normal Masters degree will = 120 credits made up of taught modules and a project.

The above awards and the levels they incorporate will act as benchmarks against which other programmes/courses will be credit rated and assigned to a particular level. Within the Institute's Modular Framework and Credit Accumulation and Transfer Scheme (see Part D of Volume One of the Academic Handbook) modules and awards will be assigned to either Level 0, Level 1, Level H (2 and 3) and Level M.

The Institute Modular Framework will contain the following subdivisions as defined in subsequent paragraphs: the Academic Scheme, the Programme of Study; the Pathway; the Module.

2.8.4 Academic Schemes

Within the Institute Modular Framework and its structure, and subject to the Institute Academic Regulations, Faculties or cognate academic areas may establish Academic Schemes which embrace a variety of programmes of study and named awards. Academic Schemes will be required to have in place a set of regulations consistent with the Institute Academic Regulations, covering all the programmes of study and named awards. Specifically, Academic Schemes will require regulations and procedures for the oversight and control of:

- i. the operation of programmes of study leading to the awards covered within the Scheme including a definition of the academic and organisational responsibilities for all programmes within the Scheme;
- ii. the admission of students (including the accreditation of prior learning);
- iii. the progress of students (including those taking programmes by credit accumulation and transfer);
- iv. the examination and assessment of students;
- v. the operation of Examination Boards in accordance with the requirements of Institute Academic Regulations, including any tiered structure which is proposed and the precise powers and responsibilities of each tier;
- vi. the quality assurance of programmes of study in accordance with the requirements of the Institute's quality assurance procedures (and subject to the authority of the Academic Standards Committee of Academic Board), including:
 - a. scheme-wide responsibilities for the oversight of the operation of programmes of study and their quality;
 - b. leadership and committee arrangements to ensure the continuous monitoring of programme quality at pathway or course level and the production of the necessary reports required by the Academic Standards Committee:

- c. student representation arrangements.

2.8.5 Programmes of Study (See also Section 2.1)

Programmes of Study are collections of validated academic units of study which may be made up of single or integrated subject study or be made up by approved forms of independent or negotiated study. A programme of study must meet the requirements of the Institute Academic Regulations and relevant Scheme, or Course Regulations in order to lead to an approved Institute academic award. Programmes of study may correspond to defined courses which lead to named awards; be made up of different pathways which lead to named awards of an integrated or combined nature, or be created by negotiated or independent study via the Institute's Credit Accumulation and Transfer scheme. Programmes of Study in cognate academic areas will normally be subject to the regulations and control of a defined Academic Scheme, and acting within the Institute Academic Regulations. Programmes of Study which are not drawn from cognate academic areas will be subject to the Institute Academic Regulations and the control of the Institute's Modular Board for Awards Board of Examiners. All programmes of study which correspond to defined courses leading to named awards will operate under the regulations governing Institute courses as defined in Section B2.7 and be subject to the quality assurance arrangements defined in Part A of Volume Two of the Institute's Academic Handbook.

2.8.6 Academic Pathways

Academic Pathways are the defined and coherent disciplinary or interdisciplinary collections of modules (normally stretching through all levels) which form part of the Institute Modular Framework. They may lead singly or be combined, into programmes of study subject to the regulations laid down in Section B 2.1. They may also be part of a designated Academic Scheme and subject to the specific regulations associated with such schemes. In general, academic pathways should be open to all students deemed able to benefit from them, subject to specific entry qualifications approved at the time of validation and availability of places. Pathways will be accountable to the Institute's Academic Standards Committee and subject to the Institute's quality assurance procedures, as part of an approved Academic Scheme and its approved Programmes of Study or Courses. Quality assurance arrangements for the validation, monitoring and evaluation and periodic review of academic pathways are defined in Part A of Volume Two of the Institute's Academic Handbook.

2.8.7 Modules

Modules are self-contained blocks or units of study with their own academic objectives, coherence and assessable outcomes, which have been validated by the Institute's quality assurance procedures. They may be formally taught blocks of study or their approved and assessable experiential or independent learning equivalents. Modules may be interrelated by pre-requisite or co-requisite equivalents and may be part of several approved pathways and programmes of study within the Institute Modular Framework. They may be designated within approved pathways and programmes of study as Core (compulsory components), Optional (chosen from within a prescribed range of units specific to a pathway or programme of study) or Elective (designated as being available to students on specific pathways or programmes of study, from the range of modules validated within the Institute Modular Framework, as part of the approved named award).

2.8.8 Modular Board for Awards

Programmes of study which do not fall within the authority of one of the Academic Schemes approved as part of the Institute Modular Framework will be subject to the authority of the Institute's Modular Board for Awards Board of Examiners which will operate at both undergraduate and postgraduate level and also will be responsible for Combined Studies awards available under the Credit Accumulation and Transfer regulations.