

Credit Points and Student Workload Policy

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| Linked policies | |
| Linked forms | |

Purpose of this policy

This policy provides the basis for the allocation of credit-point values to units and the associated student workload hours assumed within a unit, for all higher degree courses offered by The Cairnmillar Institute (the Institute).

The subjects in the courses, the awards covered by this policy, and the conditions on which those subjects may be taken, are those prescribed by the Head of School on the recommendation of the Academic Board (Senatus).

1. Graduate Certificates and Diplomas

- 1.1. The term 'graduate' in the title of a certificate or diploma course indicates a course that does not require the prerequisite course to be in a similar area.
- 1.2. Graduate certificate courses consist of 50 credit points (0.5 EFTSL) unless otherwise approved by the Academic Board.
- 1.3. Graduate diploma courses of 100 credit points (one EFTSL) unless otherwise approved by the Academic Board.
- 1.4. The minimum entry requirement to be considered for selection for a graduate certificate/diploma course is a pass-level undergraduate degree in any discipline. Substantial professional experience at a high level may be considered equivalent to a prerequisite degree.
- 1.5. Graduate certificate/diploma courses may draw on undergraduate subjects (including pass-level subjects), in particular either a major sequence of study or later-year undergraduate subjects, provided that they provide a consistent program appropriate for students. A graduate diploma course must not consist entirely of earlier-year undergraduate subjects.
- 1.6. A graduate certificate course is the first 50 points of a graduate diploma course, with 50 points of credit granted towards the graduate diploma course, whether or not the graduate certificate award has been granted.
- 1.7. When a graduate certificate course is the first 50 points of a graduate diploma course, and there are no internal requirements within the graduate diploma after 50 points, the entry requirements for the graduate certificate course is the same as for the graduate diploma course.
- 1.8. Where progression from a graduate certificate course to a graduate diploma course requires a certain level of performance, students enrolled in the graduate diploma course must meet the same requirement after completing the first 50 points to progress.
- 1.9. Where the entry requirements for a graduate certificate course and a graduate diploma course are different because special background requirements (e.g. professional experience) are mandatory to undertake the graduate diploma course, students must meet those requirements before progressing from the graduate certificate course to the graduate diploma course.
- 1.10. Graduate certificates and graduate diplomas meet the requirements of an AQF level 8 qualification.

2. Postgraduate Certificates and Diplomas

- 2.1. The term 'postgraduate' in the title of a certificate or diploma course denotes a course that requires the prerequisite degree to be in a similar area as it builds on previous study in that degree.
- 2.2. Postgraduate certificate courses are 50-point courses (0.5 EFTSL).
- 2.3. Postgraduate diploma courses are 100-point courses (one EFTSL).

- 2.4. The minimum entry requirement for a postgraduate certificate/diploma course is a pass-level undergraduate degree in a similar area. In some instances, substantial professional experience at a high level may be considered equivalent to a prerequisite degree.
- 2.5. A postgraduate certificate/diploma course must consist of at least 50% of subjects that are on par with honours or graduate level.
- 2.6. Master-level subjects may be taken at postgraduate certificate/diploma level, provided that the student has the appropriate academic and/or professional background to succeed in the subject.
- 2.7. A postgraduate certificate course may be the first 50 points of a postgraduate diploma course, with 50 points of credit granted towards the postgraduate diploma course, whether or not the postgraduate certificate award has been taken out.
- 2.8. When a postgraduate certificate course is the first 50 points of a postgraduate diploma course and there are no internal requirements within the postgraduate diploma course after 50 points, the entry requirements for the postgraduate certificate course is the same as for the postgraduate diploma course.
- 2.9. Where progression from a postgraduate certificate course to a postgraduate diploma course requires a certain level of performance, students enrolled in the postgraduate diploma course must meet the same requirement after completing the first 50 points to progress.
- 2.10. Where the entry requirements for a postgraduate certificate course and a postgraduate diploma course are different because a special background (e.g. professional experience) is mandatory to undertake the postgraduate diploma course, students must meet this requirement before progressing from the postgraduate certificate course to the postgraduate diploma course.
- 2.11. Postgraduate certificates and postgraduate diplomas meet the requirements of an AQF level 8 qualification.

2.12. A student who has-

- a) Pursued a course of studies for at least one year as a full-time student, or for at least two years as a part-time student, unless a different point of entry has been approved by the Academic Board on the recommendation of the Head of School;
- b) Attended lectures and classes and met any alternative or additional conditions set by the Academic Board and Head of School; and
- c) Completed to the satisfaction of the examiners' set assessments or otherwise satisfied by the Academic Board and Head of School that he or she has gained sufficient training and experience in the required areas of study;

may be granted the graduate or postgraduate diploma appropriate to the discipline or specialty undertaken, with the award title listed by the Academic Board and Head of School.

3. Masters Degree (Coursework)

- 3.1. Depending on the entry requirements, Master degree courses may consist of:
 - 100 points (one EFTSL)
 - 150 points (1.5 EFTSL)
 - 200 points (two EFTSL)
 - More than 200 points where there is a requirement for additional study to meet professional accreditation requirements, research training prerequisites or some other desired outcome.
- 3.2. The minimum entry requirement for a Master degree course of 150 points or more is completion of a three-year undergraduate course. The following may also be required:
 - Preliminary studies in related disciplines.
 - Achievement at a certain level (e.g. H2B).
- 3.3. The minimum entry requirement for a 100-point Master degree is one of:
 - An honours degree in a similar area.
 - 50 points of graduate study (e.g. a (post)graduate certificate) in a similar area.
 - At least two years of relevant professional experience, if the undergraduate degree was in a similar area.
- 3.4. Where professional work experience is an element of the pathway to entry to a Master degree course, only appropriate, documented professional work experience gained prior to admission is considered.
- 3.5. A Master degree course consists of a coherent program of study aimed to achieve outcomes appropriate to at least 1.5 years of full-time study beyond an undergraduate degree.
- 3.6. Master degree courses meet the requirements of an AQF level 9 qualification.
- 3.7. Course coherence is shown by clarity of the Master-level outcomes and the way in which each element in the course contributes to them.
- 3.8. Subjects at Master level may cover similar material to undergraduate subjects, particularly in professional-entry programs, but are directed at a more sophisticated level of delivery of content and the increased demands made on students. This is reflected in subject objectives, knowledge, skills outcomes, content descriptions, presentation and expectations in assessment.
- 3.9. Subjects in Master degree courses may be taught across levels 4 and 5, provided that students have the appropriate background to succeed in the subject, and the subject contributes to a coherent program to achieve the Master-level outcomes.
- 3.10. 50 points of a Master degree course of 200 points or more may be at an undergraduate level, but the remaining points must be all at Master level.
- 3.11. The final 100 points of a Master degree must consist of graduate subjects.
- 3.12. Credit is not granted toward a Master degree course of 150 points or less for subjects taken in an undergraduate degree course. Where a student is granted an exemption from compulsory subjects in a Master degree course due to having

completed similar material in their undergraduate course, the student must still complete the 150 points required for completion of the Master degree course.

- 3.13. Credit may be granted toward a professional entry Master degree course of more than 150 points for subjects taken at an undergraduate level, on the proviso of the following conditions:
- Completion of 150 points of study.
 - The subjects for which credit is being given must not be in the final 100 points of the Master degree course.
 - Where feasible, the undergraduate subjects for which credit is given must be part of a nested program (planned pathway) leading to the Master program.
- 3.14. A (post)graduate certificate or (post)graduate diploma course is the first part of a Master degree course, providing that the certificate or diploma course is both coherent in itself and contributes to achieving the outcomes of the Master degree course.
- 3.15. If the first part of a Master degree course can be awarded as a certificate or diploma (e.g. an exit award), the certificate/diploma course must be approved as a separate course and have a separated CRICOS code. Such a course must meet the requirements for (post)graduate certificate and diploma courses.
- 3.16. The following progressional rules and entry requirements apply where a (post)graduate certificate is the first 50 points or a (post)graduate diploma is the first 100 points of a Master degree course:
- If there are no internal requirements within the Master degree before the final 100 points, the entry requirements for the certificate or diploma course must be the same as for the Master degree course.
 - Where progression from the certificate or diploma course to the Master degree course requires a certain level of performance, students admitted directly to the Master degree course must meet the same requirement to progress to the final part of the Master degree course.
 - Where the entry requirements for the certificate or diploma course vary to those for the Master degree course because special background knowledge (e.g. professional experience, research training) is required to undertake the Master degree course, students must meet this requirement before progressing from the certificate or diploma course to the Master degree course.
- 3.17. **A student who has-**
- a) Pursued a course of advanced studies for the required full-time or part-time point of entry, unless a different point of entry has been approved by the Academic Board on the recommendation of the Head of School;
 - b) Attended lectures and classes and met any alternative or additional conditions set by the Academic Board and Head of School; and
 - c) Completed to the satisfaction of the examiners' set assessments or otherwise satisfied by the Academic Board and Head of School;

may be admitted to the Masters degree course appropriate to the discipline or specialty undertaken, with the award title listed by the Academic Board and Head of School.

4. Nested programs

- 4.1. The Institute conducts accredited courses with nested sub-courses, to enable multiple entry and exit points.
- 4.2. Courses in nested programs are established as exit awards only. Students initially enrolled in the higher award courses may choose to exit the course and take the award for one of the lesser qualifications, as long as they have met all requirements of the lesser qualification.
- 4.3. Minimum requirements for satisfactory completion are set for each point in a nested program. A required standard of performance is normally required to progress from one stage of the nested program to the next stage.
- 4.4. Each award in a nested program is taken out upon meeting the requirements for the award.

5. Articulated courses

- 5.1. Articulated courses may be developed. These may be between graduate courses or from an undergraduate to a graduate course.
- 5.2. Where courses enable articulation from an undergraduate to a graduate course, the graduate component of the course must meet the graduate course structure requirements of this policy.

6. Course objectives, learning outcomes and graduate attributes

- 6.1. All graduate courses must include statements of course objectives and learning outcomes which address the types of skills and knowledge students are expected to demonstrate in the course.
- 6.2. Course objectives and learning outcomes must be approved by the Academic Board and the Senatus when the course is established.
- 6.3. Course objectives must cover both specific and generic learning outcomes.
- 6.4. Course objectives must be designed, at a minimum, to be consistent with students acquiring the AQF learning outcomes (knowledge, skills, and application of knowledge and skills) as set out in the criteria and descriptors for the appropriate qualification type.
- 6.5. Course coherence must be demonstrated by clarity of the learning outcomes, the way in which each component in the program contributes to them and how the learning outcomes enable students to achieve the course graduate attributes.

7. Progression rules

- 7.1. Where the Academic Board has approved specific requirements for a course, these must be published in the Handbook.

- 7.2. Progression rules may specify a performance level to transition from a nested course to a subsequent course or to articulate from one course to another.

8. Publication of entry requirements

- 8.1. The specific minimum entry requirements for consideration for selection into courses, must be published. General entry requirements for courses, is published in the Admission policy.

9. Management and administration of graduate courses

- 9.1. The Head of School and the Academic Board are responsible for all matters regarding the administration and management of graduate courses assigned to them for administrative purposes including:
- Design, development and delivery of the courses
 - Quality Assurance and Monitoring
 - Proposing any necessary course changes to the Academic Board through the members of the Academic Board and Head of School.
- 9.2. Each course has a Course Coordinator assigned to it, whose primary responsibilities are oversight of the integrity of the course and oversight of the provision of advice to students on matters regarding their course. Specific roles of Course Coordinators are determined by the Head of School and may be set out in various policies and procedures of the Institute.