

ACADEMIC AWARD REGULATIONS
Approved Programmes of Study Leading to the Awards of the University

Name of regulation :	Approved Programmes of Study Leading to the Awards of the University
Purpose of regulation :	To define programmes of study and clarify the requirements of programmes of study at Staffordshire University
Approval for this regulation given by :	Academic Board
Responsibility for its update :	Dean of Students and Academic Registrar
Regulation applies to :	To all students studying on or requiring admission on to awards of Staffordshire University.
Date of Approval :	29 June 2011
Proposed Date of Review :	May 2012

1. Definition of a Programme of Study

A programme of study is the approved curriculum followed by an individual student; it may be identical with a “course”, or be one of a number of standard routes available within a named award 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.

All programmes of study must be subject to award regulations which have been approved by the Academic Board. All students within the Undergraduate Modular Framework and Postgraduate Modular Framework will be subject to the regulations of those Frameworks, as appropriate, as approved by Academic Board.

Each approved programme of study will be governed by written statements, available to students and lodged in the Quality Improvement Unit, setting out as a minimum:-

- i) the award to which it leads;
- ii) the planned duration and mode of study of the programme;
- iii) the aims and objectives of the programme;
- iv) the curriculum and structure of the programme of study;
- v) the regulations on the admission, progression and assessment of students.

The specifications may not be changed without reference to the Academic Board. However Academic Board may approve arrangements for changes to aspects of the programme of study, as defined by the Board, in advance of the next formal review. No changes to regulations concerned with the progression or assessment of students may be permitted without the consultation of the students concerned and without the written agreement of the relevant external examiner(s).

2. The Title of the Award

The title should be simple and accurate and should accord, as a description of content, with the normal expectations of higher education bodies, relevant professional bodies, students and employers about the level of knowledge and skills to be expected from a person holding such a qualification.

3. The Planned Duration And Mode Of Study Of The Award

The planned length of the award shall be related to the normal duration specified in the definition of the award. The student's period of registration, including the minimum and maximum periods within which a student must normally complete the award and associated assessments (including resits and periods of intermission unless), must be specified. For any mode of study, the level of knowledge and skills required at the entry point, the curriculum, teaching arrangements, time available for students' private study, and the length and nature of any supervised work experience should be designed to satisfy the duration requirements of the award. Awards must also satisfy any requirements for particular awards as set out in these Regulations.

A student's period of registration with the University, in respect of a particular award, shall normally end when the specified maximum period of registration has been reached unless an application from the student to extend his/her period of registration is made to the satisfaction of the Dean of Students and Academic Registrar. Any differences to the normal period of registration, due

to Professional Body requirements, will be specified at the time of validation and students informed in the Student Handbook.

The duration of an award designed for students who are not studying on a full-time basis shall, in all cases, be longer than the minimum full-time duration specified for the award.

When an award has been formally approved as a “sandwich” course, it shall be clearly stated on the award parchment that study was “in the sandwich mode”. An Award approved as one leading to the Degree or Honours Degree in the sandwich mode must include normally not less than 32 weeks of supervised work experience in addition to the period required for the full-time award. Any proposal for a sandwich award to be less than this period must be approved by Academic Board in advance.

To satisfy what is generally accepted as constituting a sandwich course, the period of supervised work experience should form a compulsory element of the award; its objectives must be specified and related to the objectives of the whole award; the performance of the students should be assessed; and satisfactory completion of and performance in the period of supervised work experience shall be a requirement for the award.

Provision may be made in specific award regulations for an alternative full-time award on sandwich degree schemes to be awarded to a student who is unable, for valid reasons, to undertake or complete the sandwich element of his/her course. Alternatively, and exceptionally, the award may be deferred until the sandwich element has been completed at the end of the taught part of the programme of study.

On full-time degree courses leading to the award of modern language degrees, a period of residence abroad shall be an integral part of each award. Where two main languages are studied to the same level, a student must spend a minimum of 6 consecutive months in the country of each language. Where only one main language is studied, or where the two periods abroad are consecutive, the overall period may be shortened to not less than 36 weeks.

4. Aims And Objectives Of The Award

An award must have stated aims and objectives which the curriculum, structure, teaching methods and forms of assessment are designed to fulfil. The aims must also include the development to the level required for the award of a body of knowledge and skills appropriate to the field of study and reflecting academic developments in that field; these are specific for the award.

The aims must also include the University’s 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. The programme must aim to stimulate an enquiring, analytical and creative approach, encouraging independent judgement and critical self-awareness.

The statement of objectives must show how the award will fulfil the aims. The statement of 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:-

- i) communicate clearly in speech, writing and other appropriate modes of expression;
- ii) argue rationally and draw independent conclusions based on a rigorous, analytical and critical approach to data, demonstration and argument;
- iii) apply what has been learned;
- iv) demonstrate an awareness of the programme of study in a wider context.

5. The Curriculum And Structure Of The Award

The curriculum must be appropriate to the aims of the award and to the level of the award to which it leads.

The structure should provide for the progression of students from their level of knowledge and skills required at admission to the level required for the award.

The Honours Degree shall provide the main reference point for the definition of awards and the structure of any first degree course should be structured on the assumption that all students who have the ability to benefit from higher education should be given the opportunity to reach Honours Degree standard, whilst providing the flexibility to allow those students who wish to study for Unclassified Degrees.

6. The Admission Of Students To Awards

The admission of each student should be based on the University's reasonable expectation that the student will be able to fulfil the objectives of the award and achieve the standard required for that award.

In considering an individual applicant for admission to an award, evidence shall be sought of personal, professional and educational experiences that provide indicators of ability to meet the demands of the programme. Consideration of all applications shall be in accordance with the University's Single Equality Scheme including its policy on the admission of Disabled Students.

Subject to the provision of these regulations and of any directives of Academic Board, Faculties/Schools may formulate admissions policies which are appropriate to the requirements of individual awards.

Admission regulations must describe the basis on which a student will be admitted to the beginning or to subsequent stages of an award by:-

- i) identifying the knowledge and skills required at admission and relating these to the length, content and objectives of the award;
- ii) setting out the criteria and means by which the suitability of the student for admission will be judged;
- iii) setting out how prior learning and prior experiential learning shall be assessed in terms of any credit given .

The minimum level of attainment required for entry to the start of programmes of study leading to awards at first degree level is equivalent to passes in;

- two subjects at Advanced GCE,
- or one 12-unit vocational A Level
- or two 6-unit Vocational A Levels
- or one Advanced GCE and one 6-unit Vocational A Level

All of the above must be supported by passes in three other subjects at GCSE (at Grade C or above).

The University shall accept a variety of vocational, professional and other qualifications for the purposes of entry as being equivalent the above.

Applicants to HND awards will normally be expected to pass, as a minimum:

- one subject at Advanced GCE
- or one 6-unit Vocational A level
- or one 12-unit Vocational A level

Mature students, with or without formal entry qualifications, may be admitted on the basis of life and/or work experience. Each application will be judged on its merits and admissions tutors will use the following criteria when assessing such applications:

- the applicant has the ability to study at the appropriate level
- the applicant has relevant experience, knowledge and skills
- the applicant is committed to their chosen award

The minimum level of attainment required for entry to the start of programmes of study at Level zero shall be:

- one subject at Advanced GCE or equivalent supported by passes in three other subjects at GCSE (at Grade C or above).

The normal entry requirements for postgraduate awards are:-

- i) for Master's awards, an Honours Degree or Postgraduate Diploma or recognised equivalent professional qualification;
- ii) for Postgraduate Diploma awards, a degree or other equivalent qualification;
- iii) for Postgraduate Certificate in Education, a recognised degree or equivalent qualification together with GCSE passes in English and Mathematics (at grade C or above).

Applicants for entry to awards offered by the University must have a sufficient command of English Language to enable them to cope with their intended award.

Staffordshire University's commitment to equality and diversity means that this policy has been screened in relation to the use of gender-neutral language, jargon-free plain English, recognition of the needs of disabled people, promotion of the positive duty in relation to race and disability and avoidance of stereotypes. This document is available in alternative formats on request. If you think we can improve the fairness of this policy, please contact the individual who has responsibility for its update.