

Common Course Rules - Bachelor Honours Degree

INTRODUCTION

In Higher Education (HE), all courses offered by the University must comply with national regulatory requirements, for example, the Australian Qualifications Framework (AQF), and many courses are also accredited through professional organisations. The University as a self-accrediting institution has a Council that determines course rules which, provide course structures and rules for HE awards. These course rules apply to HE AQF Levels 5 to 10.

For each category of award, there is a common set of rules applicable to all programs leading to an award in that category. In addition, each course may have associated with it specific rules that apply only to that course in addition to the common rules; specific rules are described in the course curriculum documentation.

STATEMENT OF AUTHORITY

The authority behind this policy is the [Charles Darwin University Act 2003](#) section 47 under the authority of the Council.

COMPLIANCE

This is a compliance requirement under the [Australian Qualifications Framework](#).

RELEVANT DEFINITIONS

In the context of this document

Associate Supervisor means an individual who has demonstrated expertise in the candidate's research area and who provides advice in specialised aspects of the research program. This person may not necessarily be a University staff member;

Award means a recognised certification of achievement or competence, which may be granted to a student after successful completion of all the requirements of a course;

College Dean means the Dean of the College in which the student is enrolled;

Common Units means a group of units intended, among other things, to provide an introduction to higher education study, and to assist students to develop a degree of academic literacy and the capacity to critically explore social and cultural issues of local, national and international relevance. Common units are offered at the 100 level only;

Core unit means a unit that is compulsory for the course;

Course means a formally approved/accredited program of learning that leads to the award of a qualification;

Credit point means a value allocated to individual higher education units to indicate their contribution to the overall course requirements and to the enrolment load of a student e.g. a 10 credit point unit represents a quarter of a standard load for a semester;

Dissertation means a written thesis based on original research;

Elective means a unit selected by the student from any of the University's higher education units. Where appropriate an elective may include certain specified VET units or combinations of modules. Unit selection is governed by the Units and Courses Policy;

Exceptional circumstances means an extended and serious illness of the student or an immediate family member; extreme financial hardship; long-term cultural obligations; or other circumstances such that failure to recognise them would result in an unfair or unreasonable outcome;

Exegesis means a critical interpretation or explication of text, a project or creative work;

Honours class means a traditional grading scale used in recognition of achievement in an Honours degree;

Integrated qualification means a purposely designed qualification that enables explicit articulation pathways and encompasses more than one AQF level and/or qualification type and/or education and training sector;

Major area of study means an approved sequence of units, which develop a coherent academic theme culminating in advanced level units within a course leading to the qualification of Bachelor degree. A major area of study constitutes a substantive quantum of learning within the qualification;

Principal Supervisor means a full-time academic staff member of the University who holds a degree and/or experience deemed by the University Research and Research Training Committee as at least equivalent to the qualification being undertaken by the candidate and who is primarily responsible for the rigorous supervision of the candidate's program of study;

Program of learning means a course, curriculum, training package, unit of study or structured workplace learning that leads to the award of a qualification;

Qualification means the result of a completed accredited program of learning that leads to formal certification that a graduate has achieved learning outcomes as described in the AQF;

Research comprises systematic experimental and theoretical work, application and/or development that results in an increase in the dimensions of knowledge;

Sequence means an approved progression of units, which develop a coherent academic theme within a course. A sequence normally comprises a minimum of one quarter of the credit points within the qualification;

Specialist elective means a unit selected by the student from a group of units identified as highly relevant to the course;

Standard load means a real or notional program of learning which a full-time student would be required to undertake in a full year of a particular course. The University has adopted 80 credit points as its standard Honours degree load;

Thesis means the presentation of results of a research project, whether by written or other means. An Honours thesis may take many forms and can include a production or performance component, a dissertation and/or exegesis; and

Unit means the smallest credit-bearing component of a qualification that has been accredited. A unit may also be called a 'module', 'subject', 'unit of competency' or 'accredited unit'.

RULES

Courses Leading to the Qualification of Bachelor Honours Degree

These Rules apply to all courses of study leading to a qualification of Bachelor Honours Degree.

These Rules may be cited as the "Honours Rules".

General

The distinctive feature of Honours study is that it provides training in research and the development of higher-level skills. This includes the development of organisational, writing, oral, analytical and problem-solving skills to an advanced level, and the ability to work independently. For this reason, Honours entails an individual program of study, unique to, and tailored to suit, each student's research project.

Many Honours courses also aim to provide some advanced theory and breadth of advanced level training in the discipline. This objective is met by Honours level coursework. The amount of coursework varies considerably between Honours courses.

There are two (2) types of courses leading to the qualification of Bachelor Honours Degree referred to in these Rules:

- A course leading to the qualification of Bachelor Honours Degree which follows a three (3) year course leading to the qualification of Bachelor Degree ('add-on course'); and
- A course leading to the qualification of Bachelor Honours Degree within a Bachelor Degree course of at least four (4) years' duration ('embedded').

Course Requirements

Courses leading to the qualification of Bachelor Honours Degree must meet the requirements for AQF Level 8 Bachelor Honours Degrees.

Unless otherwise specified in the course curriculum documentation, a course leading to the qualification of Bachelor Honours Degree will include:

- Common units;
- Core units;
- Specialist elective units;
- Elective units; and
- A research component.

to a total value of 80 credit points for an add-on course leading to the qualification of Bachelor Honours Degree, and 320 credit points for an embedded course leading to the qualification of Bachelor Honours Degree. Some courses may not include all unit classifications i.e. common, specialist elective and/or elective.

The Bachelor Honours research component will comprise at least 40 credit points including research preparation and a Bachelor Honours research project.

The Bachelor Honours research project will comprise at least 20 credit points and no more than 60 credit points.

All research component units in a course leading to the qualification of Bachelor Honours Degree must be designated at the 400 level or above.

All units in an add-on course leading to the qualification of Bachelor Honours Degree must be designated at the 300 level or above.

Embedded courses leading to the qualification of Bachelor Honours Degree may include major areas of study as designated in the course curriculum documentation including:

- No more than 20 credit points at level 100; and
- A minimum of 30 credit points at level 300 or above;

to a total of at least 60 credit points

Unless otherwise specified in the course curriculum documentation, no more than 10 credit points may be counted towards more than one major area of study.

Courses leading to the qualification of Bachelor Honours Degree may include sequences as designated in the course curriculum documentation.

Prerequisites and Co-requisites

All prerequisites and co-requisites for core units will be core units; and all prerequisites and co-requisites for specialist elective units may be either core units or specialist elective units.

A candidate may not enrol in any unit until all prerequisite units (or their equivalents as approved by the Dean) have been completed satisfactorily. The College Dean may waive prerequisite requirements in special circumstances.

Periods of Candidature

Unless otherwise specified in the course curriculum documentation, the maximum period of candidature for an add-on course leading to the qualification of Bachelor Honours Degree will be three (3) years, and for an embedded course leading to the qualification of Bachelor Honours will be ten (10) years.

In exceptional circumstances, the College Dean may extend the period of candidature.

Supervision of Research Project

A supervisor will be appointed by the relevant College Dean to supervise the research project.

Examination

A report of the results of the Bachelor Honours research project will be presented in the manner as prescribed by the relevant committee of the College

Where the Bachelor Honours thesis includes a production or performance component involving collaboration with others, the student's role/responsibility must be clearly specified for the purposes of examination.

The College Dean will appoint at least one (1) appropriately qualified examiner depending on disciplinary requirements. No examiner will have participated in the supervision of the candidate and at least one (1) examiner will be external to the College. In exceptional circumstances where a case can be made that it is not possible to obtain an external examiner and that an examiner internal to the College should be appointed; this case may be presented in writing to the College Dean for approval.

Classes of Honours

A candidate for a Bachelor Honours Degree who has reached the required standard of proficiency may, on the recommendation of the College Research and Research Training Committee, be awarded a Bachelor Honours Degree class as per the University [Grading Policy](#).

Alternative Exit Awards

In some cases, a student enrolled in a course leading to the qualification of Bachelor Honours Degree may elect not to complete the course leading to a Bachelor Honours Degree but instead seek to exit with an alternative award.

Award of the Qualification

To receive a University award, a student must complete a minimum of one-third of the award or a minimum of one (1) year full-time equivalent, whichever is the lesser, through enrolment in the University course leading to the awarding of that qualification unless the course leads to an approved integrated qualification.

Unless otherwise specified in the course curriculum documentation, to be eligible to receive the qualification of Bachelor Honours Degree which follows a three (3) year course leading to the qualification of Bachelor Degree ('add-on course'), a student must complete units to a specified value which will normally be 80 credit points and, unless otherwise specified, must include:

- All specified core units;
- Specialist elective units with points value at least that specified in the course curriculum documentation;
- Elective units as specified in the course curriculum documentation;
- A research component as specified in the course curriculum documentation; and
- Meet any other requirements as may be specified in the course curriculum documentation.

Unless otherwise specified in the course curriculum documentation, to be eligible to receive the qualification of Bachelor Honours Degree within a Bachelor Degree course of at least four (4) years' duration ('embedded'), a student must complete units to a specified value, which will normally be 320 credit points and, unless otherwise specified, must include:

- Common units totalling at least 20 credit points;
- All specified core units;
- Specialist elective units with points value to at least that specified in the course curriculum documentation;
- Elective units as specified in the course curriculum documentation;
- A research component as specified in the course curriculum documentation;

- For a course with a total credit points value of 320, no more than 120 credit points at the 100 level and, for longer courses, no more than 20 additional credit points at the 100 level for each additional 80 credit points;
- A minimum of one-third of the total credit points at level 300 or above; and
- Meet any other requirements as may be specified in the course curriculum documentation.

Where a candidate completes the requirements of a course leading to the qualification of Bachelor Honours Degree, Council will award that qualification.

Termination of the Course

When a course is approved for termination or is superseded:

- Transition/completion arrangements for existing students must be clearly documented and disseminated to all existing students;
- As far as possible, students will not be disadvantaged by the transition/completion;
- The course will be offered for re-enrolment only until all existing students have completed/transitioned or for a period not to exceed twice the period required for a student undertaking a standard load to complete the course, whichever is less; or
- At the conclusion of the period for which the course is offered for re-enrolment only, the course will be closed.

ESSENTIAL SUPPORTING INFORMATION

Internal

[Admissions Policy](#)

[Advanced Standing Policy](#)

[Grading Policy](#)

[Higher Education Course Accreditation and Reaccreditation Procedures](#)

[Higher Education Course Delivery Relationships with Other Entities Policy](#)

[Higher Education Students - Academic Progression Procedures](#)

[Units and Courses Policy](#)

External

[Australian Qualifications Framework](#)

Document History and Version Control

Last amendment:	Jun 2019	Next Review:	Jun 2021
Sponsor:	Vice-Chancellor		
Contact Officer:	Provost		

Version	Date Approved	Approved by	Brief Description
1.00	26 Jun 2002	Council	Creation of original document and upload to CDU website.
1.01	2 Mar 2006	Secretary to Council	Editorial Change NTU to CDU TAFE to VET Remove invalid NTETA link
2.00	7 Dec 2012	Council	Major review of document to remove procedural details and ensure compliance with AQF
2.01	6 Mar 2013	Governance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Assigned document number Updated and added hyperlinks Minor changes to formatting, wording and grammar
2.02	15 Dec 2017	Governance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Conversion to new Governance template due to new University branding Updated hyperlinks Added Sponsor, Vice-Chancellor <p>Essential supporting Information</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Removed Academic Qualifications and Unit Level Policy (under development), Advanced Standing Policy (under development) and Integrated Qualifications Policy (under development) Higher Education Students Progression Procedures changed to Higher Education Students - Academic Progression Procedures
2.03	13 Jun 2019	Council	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Remove definitions for Faculty and PVC due to restructure and add definition for College Dean Add <i>Unit selection is governed by the Units and Courses Policy</i> to definition of Elective Removed definitions for Combined course, Joint course and Nested qualifications as the terms are not used in the document Remove Admissions paragraph, this information now contained in the Admissions Policy Remove reference to Integrated Qualifications Policy under Alternative Exit Awards paragraph as the policy was never developed Remove <i>All students must successfully complete University common units as per the Advanced Standing Policy</i> under Award of the Qualification paragraph Add to Essential Supporting Information Admissions Policy and Units and Courses Policy Amended Contact Officer from PVC ESS to Provost due to restructure