

Associate Degree - Awards and Programs Schedule

Schedule to the [Awards and Graduation Policy](#)

Section 1 - Introduction

(1) As a higher education provider authorised to self-accredit, the University of Newcastle (University) is responsible under the [Tertiary Education Quality and Standards Agency Act 2011](#) (Cth) for ensuring that programs comply with the Provider Course Accreditation Standards. This Schedule provides the detailed principles and criteria that underpin the self-accreditation process for each Associate Degree award that may be delivered and conferred by the University.

(2) This Schedule supports the implementation of the [Awards and Graduation Policy](#) and [Governance Rule](#). The [Governance Rule](#) describes each type of qualification offered by the University and describes the role of Academic Senate in approving and monitoring programs.

(3) Within this Schedule the general program principles and structures have been tabulated and the approved programs that are offered under it will be listed in the [Associate Degree - Approved AQF Compliant Programs](#) covered by this Schedule. For the specific descriptions and requirements of an approved program, refer to the relevant Program Handbook.

(4) In the event of an inconsistency between subordinate policy documents and any Rule(s) or Schedule to the Rule(s), the Rule(s) made by Council prevails to the extent of the inconsistency.

Section 2 - Principles and Program Structures

Model: Associate Degree

(5) This table describes an AQF level 6 program leading to the award of Associate Degree under the [Governance Rule](#).

Volume of learning	The volume of learning required for an Associate Degree is typically 160 units of study that will be completed in two (2) years of full-time study or equivalent.
Purpose	The Associate Degree qualifies individuals to apply broad technical and theoretical knowledge of a specific area or a broad field of work and learning to undertake paraprofessional work or highly skilled work, and as a pathway for further learning.
Maximum Time	Maximum time to complete a Level 6 Associate Degree will be six calendar years from date of admission, calculated on the basis of (2N+2) (Note 1), inclusive of periods of leave, exclusion or academic suspension. Approved variations are included in the Associate Degree - Approved AQF Compliant Programs covered by this Schedule.
Principles and Structure	Graduates of this program will have completed 160 units of study that: i) requires the completion of a 40 unit sequence of core courses; and ii) includes at least 10 units of electives. This structure will be varied only in response to particular articulation agreements or external requirements as approved by the Program and Course Approval Committee (PCAC).

Admission and Selection Criteria	Admission criteria will: i) be appropriate for an AQF Level 6 and its required learning outcomes; ii) take into account external benchmarks; and iii) ensure that students have adequate prior knowledge and skills to complete the program successfully. English language entry requirements will be set to ensure that students who are admitted will be competent in the English language to participate effectively in the program and achieve the learning outcomes (please see English Language Proficiency Policy). The minimum admission and selection criteria for each program are set by the relevant College and approved by Academic Senate. This may include special admission procedures and selection criteria.
Specialisation or Major	This section is intentionally blank.
Additional Requirements	Any approved compulsory program components (CPC) or pre-requisites approved by the Program and Course Approval Committee on the recommendation of the relevant College Board.
Graduate Learning Outcomes	Graduate learning outcomes underpin the design of all academic programs offered by the University. Graduate learning outcomes will be developed for each program in accordance with and as prescribed by the AQF and are expressed in this Schedule as knowledge, skills and application of knowledge and skills.
i Knowledge	Graduates of an Associate Degree will have discipline specific broad theoretical and technical knowledge with some depth in the underlying principles and concepts in one or more disciplines.
ii Skills	Graduates of an Associate Degree will have: i) cognitive skills to identify, analyse, and evaluate information and concepts from a range of sources; ii) cognitive, technical, and creative thinking skills to demonstrate a broad understanding of knowledge and ideas with some depth in a discipline; iii) cognitive, communication, and analytical skills to interpret and transmit responses to sometimes complex problems; and iv) communication skills to make a clear and coherent presentation of knowledge and ideas with some intellectual independence.
iii Application of Knowledge and Skills	Graduates of an Associate Degree will apply knowledge and skills to demonstrate autonomy, judgement, and defined responsibility: i) with initiative and judgement in planning, problem solving and decision making in paraprofessional practice; ii) to adapt knowledge and skills in a range of contexts and/or for further studies in one or more disciplines; iii) to adapt fundamental principles, concepts, and techniques to known and unknown situations; and iv) with responsibility and accountability for own learning and work and in collaboration with others within broad parameters.
Qualification for the Award	Completion of the prescribed courses leading to an Associate Degree totalling not less than 160 units.
Grading of the Award	The award will be conferred as an ordinary award.
Qualification Title	Associate Degree (Field of Study)
Pathways - General	Our pathways for students have been developed in accordance with the AQF Qualifications Pathways Policy supporting student mobility and eliminating unfair and unnecessary barriers to our qualifications. Approved entry pathways are described in Admission and Selection Criteria, above.
Pathways - Credit and Advanced Standing	Credit is granted in accordance with the AQF Qualifications Pathways Policy (especially clause 2.1.9) to a maximum of 80 units, ensuring that the integrity of the program is preserved and the learning outcomes are achieved.
Pathways - RPL	Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) is possible for both formal and informal prior learning. RPL may be used for admission purposes or to grant advanced standing. RPL will be evaluated on a case by case basis and must be current and relevant to the program's learning outcomes. Please refer to Credit and Recognition of Prior Learning Policy .
Pathways - Combined Degrees	A combined degree may be formally approved by the Program and Course Approval Committee (PCAC) and listed in the Associate Degree - Approved AQF Compliant Programs or determined on a case by case application in accordance with the Combined Program elements of the Program Structure Policy described in the Program Design and Management Manual .

Pathways - Nested or Integrated Qualifications	Nested qualifications are qualifications that include articulated arrangements from a lower level qualification to a higher qualification to enable multiple entry and exit points. These are purposely designed qualifications that enable explicit articulation pathways and encompass more than one AQF level and/or qualification type. An Associate Degree may be nested (or integrated) with the following qualifications - Diploma (level 5); and - Bachelor Degree (level 7). Approved qualifications will be listed in the Associate Degree - Approved AQF Compliant Programs.
Pathways - Exit	An exit award may be available to a student where: i) an exit award has been linked to the program in which the student is enrolled; ii) the student has satisfactorily completed the program of study to the point where they are eligible for the approved exit award; iii) the student is unable to complete the remaining requirements for their original enrolment; iv) the student has made an application, in writing, to have their enrolment transferred and therefore be awarded an exit award; and v) the relevant College Pro Vice-Chancellor has approved the application. Approved Exit awards will be noted in the Associate Degree - Approved AQF Compliant Programs of this Schedule.
Pathways - Graduate	Graduates of this program may seek admission to a Bachelor Degree or a Bachelor Honours Degree.
Professional Accreditation	This section is intentionally blank
Additional Information	This section is intentionally blank

Section 3 - Notes

(6) Other Information about Programs – may be added here. 1. $2N+2$ where N is equal to the notional duration identified by the Volume of learning.

Section 4 - Relaxing Provision

(7) To provide for exceptional circumstances arising in any case, the President of Academic Senate, on the recommendation of the relevant Deputy Vice-Chancellor or relevant Pro Vice-Chancellor may relax any provision of this Schedule provided that the relaxation:

- does not compromise compliance with external obligations (including but not limited to contractual, legislative or accreditation requirements);
- does not override a decision made under a formal delegation of authority;
- does not replace a decision that is subject to a formal delegation of authority; and
- gives due consideration to the principles of procedural fairness.

Section 5 - Reporting

(8) The President of the Academic Senate will report all applications of the relaxing provision of this Schedule to the Academic Senate.

Section 6 - Appendices

(9) [Associate Degree - Approved AQF Compliant Programs](#)

Status and Details

Status	Current
Effective Date	12th November 2025
Review Date	12th November 2025
Approval Authority	President Academic Senate
Approval Date	11th November 2025
Expiry Date	Not Applicable
Responsible Executive	Belinda Yourn Senior Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Academic)
Enquiries Contact	John Radvan Senior Manager, Academic Governance & Compliance Student Central

Glossary Terms and Definitions

"Academic Senate" - The Academic Senate of the University as described in the University of Newcastle Act 1989.

"Council" - The governing authority of the University established under section 8A of the University of Newcastle Act 1989.

"Graduate" - (Noun) Has the same meaning as in section 3(2) of the University of Newcastle Act 1989.

"University" - The University of Newcastle, a body corporate established under sections 4 and 5 of the University of Newcastle Act 1989.

"Core course" - A course within a program which is necessary to fulfil the requirements of that program.

"Elective" - Any non compulsory course which may be undertaken within a program of study.

"Advanced standing" - A form of credit for any previous learning as defined by the Australian Qualifications Framework.

"Articulation agreements" - An agreement between the University and another education provider that enables students to progress from a completed qualification to another with admission and/or credit in a defined pathway.

"Award" - When referring to a University qualification, this term means an academic qualification approved by Academic Senate that is conferred when a student has met the relevant program requirements. For all other uses of this term, the generic definition applies.

"Bachelor Honours" - Refers to AQF level 8 Bachelor Honours programs. These may be a one year 'end-on' and following a level 7 (240 unit) Bachelor program or be embedded in a 320 unit, level 8, program.

"Course" - When referring to a course offered by the University, a course is a set of learning activities or learning opportunities with defined, assessed and recorded learning outcomes. A course will be identified by an alphanumeric course code and course title. Course types include core courses, compulsory courses, directed courses, capstone courses and electives. For all other uses of this term, the generic definition applies.

"Credit" - When referring to course credit, credit is the recognition of equivalence in content and learning outcomes between different types of learning and/or qualifications. Credit can reduce the amount of learning required to achieve

a qualification. For all other uses of this term, the generic definition applies.

"Student" - A person formally enrolled in a course or active in a program offered by the University or affiliated entity.

"Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL)" - Means an assessment of an individual's prior learning to determine where credit will be granted. RPL includes formal, informal, and non-formal learning.

"Volume of learning" - Identifies the notional duration of all activities required for the achievement of the learning outcomes specified for a particular AQF qualification type. It is expressed in equivalent full-time years.

"Exit award" - An academic qualification that is conferred when a student has met the program requirements of a linked program within the same field of study as listed in the relevant Awards and Programs Schedule.

"Learning outcome" - In accordance with the AQF definitions, the expression of a set of knowledge, skills and the application of the knowledge and skills a person has acquired and is able to demonstrate as a result of learning.

"Program" - When referring to learning, a program is a sequence of approved learning, usually leading to an Award. For all other uses of this term, the generic definition applies.

"Unit" - When referring to an academic unit, unit means the proportional amount of academic credit allotted to a course. This term is used to define the requirements for a program award of the University and indicate a student's enrolment load. For all other uses of this term, the generic definition applies.

"College" - An organisational unit established within the University by the Council.

"College Board" - The principal governance committee of the College.