

Module Title:	Dissertation
Language of Instruction:	English
Credits:	10
NFQ Level:	8
Module Delivered In	No Programmes
Teaching & Learning Strategies:	The research provides the student with the opportunity to develop critical and independent thinking. Students are directed by their supervisor who will encourage the development of the students' self-motivated independent research skills. The supervision of the learner's independent work will be in 15 minutes meetings each week over the course 20 to 25 academic weeks.
Module Aim:	This is an inter-disciplinary subject which aims to consolidate and integrate the students' knowledge, skills and competences across the range of subject areas. This subject will provide students with the opportunity to complete a major piece of research-based work. Students will produce a dissertation of approximately 10,000 to 12,000 words in length which will be applied to a particular agri-problem area. The subject matter will reflect specific areas of interest to the student. The research will thus have a practical element, and will reinforce educational, industrial and farm placement linkages. The aims of the dissertation module are to equip students with the knowledge and skills to carry out an ethical piece of research and to extend their existing knowledge, expertise and skills in their chosen topic, to gain experience at managing a dissertation and to make contact with external bodies. Its further aims are to develop written and verbal communication skills, to carry out research in an area that reflects specific personal interest to the student, with a practical element designed to reinforce education/organisational linkages and to demonstrate their ability to carry out an independent piece of research and development work.
Learning Outcomes	
<i>On successful completion of this module the learner should be able to:</i>	
LO1	Plan, design and implement a project from the initial problem definition in a research proposal, to the presentation of results in a completed project in an ethical and professional manner.
LO2	Demonstrate the ability to search, select and critically assess literature and material relevant to a chosen area.
LO3	Demonstrate the ability to exercise judgement, independent thought, initiative, intellectual achievement, understanding of the chosen subject matter and the principles being applied.
LO4	Demonstrate the ability to critically apply the tools of quantitative and qualitative research, theory and techniques analysis.
LO5	Critically apply theories and techniques developed during the programme to the chosen area.
Pre-requisite learning	
Module Recommendations <i>This is prior learning (or a practical skill) that is recommended before enrolment in this module.</i>	
No recommendations listed	
Incompatible Modules <i>These are modules which have learning outcomes that are too similar to the learning outcomes of this module.</i>	
No incompatible modules listed	
Co-requisite Modules	
No Co-requisite modules listed	
Requirements <i>This is prior learning (or a practical skill) that is mandatory before enrolment in this module is allowed.</i>	
No requirements listed	

Module Content & Assessment

Indicative Content

Module Management

Within the first month of the programme, students will decide, in consultation with programme lecturers, on a title for their dissertation. Each student will be assigned a supervisor based on the interest of the student and each supervisor will supervise not more than four students. The supervisor will guide the student on a path of self-directed and self-motivated learning. The exact theme of dissertation will be a result of discussion and compromise between the student and the supervisor. The actual topic of research must be in line with the programme content. The student and supervisor will meet up at regular intervals during the academic year to discuss progress, deal with any issues or problems that may arise and ensure that work is progressing satisfactorily. A record will be kept of all meetings between the student and the supervisor. Each student will be provided with a Dissertation Project Guideline Information Pack at the commencement of the module which gives the specific details on the requirements for the dissertation. Each completed dissertation will be marked by two supervisors separately to ensure a consistent standard is maintained across all dissertations.

Possible Dissertation Titles

Possible Dissertation titles include: 1. Feasibility of setting up an artisan food enterprise on a small to medium size farm 2. Survey of the various forms of off-farm employment in a selected rural parish and their contribution to overall farm income. 3. Investigation into the contribution of agri tourism to the viability of farming in an area. 4. Dairy herd fertility in South-East Ireland, current situation, causes and future improvement 5. Lameness in dairy herds, extent, causes and preventive measures, 6. Lameness in sheep, extent, causes and preventive measures 7. Production of quality malting barley: Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, Threats. 8. Winter wheat production: Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, Threats 9. Spring barley production: Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, Threats 10. Quality potato production and marketing: Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, Threats 11. Suckler beef production: Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, Threats 12. Study of soil test results from South-East Ireland and their implications for sustainable agriculture 13. Study of silage analyses by area from various laboratories and their implications for sustainable agriculture 14. Economics of modern pig production systems 15. Costing of dairy expansion on a typical farm 16. Economics of conacre in cereal, potato and vegetable production 17. Environmental effects of conacre system.

Dissertation

Research will be marked according to the points set out. The relevant weighting of each of the points shall be determined by the research supervisor. Research Element; Topic and thesis definition; Literature review; Structure and methodology; Breadth and depth of the research; Analysis of relevant material and issues; Conclusions and recommendations; Management of individual research and development work; Demonstration of independent thought and initiative; Demonstration of understanding of the chosen subject matter; Quality and style of written presentation; Quality and style of oral presentations; Student's personal learning and development;

Assessment Breakdown	%
Continuous Assessment	100.00%

Continuous Assessment

Assessment Type	Assessment Description	Outcome addressed	% of total	Assessment Date
Written Report	Report	1,2,3,5	20.00	n/a
Other	Statistics Assessment	4	10.00	n/a
Other	Project Proposal	3,4,5	20.00	n/a
Project	Project	1,2,3,4,5	30.00	n/a
Presentation	Presentation	1,3,4,5	10.00	n/a
Performance Evaluation	Performance Evaluation	4,5	10.00	n/a

No Project

No Practical

No End of Module Formal Examination

SETU Carlow Campus reserves the right to alter the nature and timings of assessment

Module Workload

Workload: Full Time		
<i>Workload Type</i>	<i>Frequency</i>	<i>Average Weekly Learner Workload</i>
Contact Hours	Every Week	0.25
Independent Learning	Every Week	5.00
Total Hours		5.25

