

Module Title:	Dissertation
Language of Instruction:	English
Credits:	10
NFQ Level:	8
Module Delivered In	2 programme(s)
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, commencing in Semester 1 of Year 4 and continuing until the completion of the thesis.
Module Aim:	This is an inter-disciplinary module which aims to consolidate and integrate the students' knowledge, skills and competences across the range of discipline areas covered as part of their degree. This subject will provide students with the opportunity to complete a major piece of research-based work. Students will produce a thesis of approximately 10,000 to 12,000 words in length which will be applied to a particular area of agriculture. The subject matter will reflect the specific areas of interest to the student. The research will 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. Students will also gain experience in managing their research project, often through collaboration with external bodies. Written and verbal communication skills will be enhanced in during the completion of the thesis. This will cumulate in the completion of a written thesis as well as an oral presentation to their peers.
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 identification of the hypothesis, the methodology and the writing and communication of the results of the research.
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, an 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	Show leadership in the completion of the thesis project including setting up meetings with the thesis supervisor and third parties involved in the project.
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

Each student will be assigned a supervisor based on the interest of the student and each supervisor will supervise not more than four students. Following consultation with their thesis supervisor, students should decide upon the topic and hypothesis of their thesis. This should be completed within the first four to five weeks of Semester 1 in Year 4. 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.

Research areas:

Students are free to choose a research topic of their choice in so long as it is in keeping with the ethos of the agricultural programme to which they are enrolled. Topics may include experimentation with animals. However, such experiments must be based on productive traits and not be subject to an animal experimentation licence. Equally, crop and research and consumer attitude type research should also fall within the normal ethical guidelines of IT Carlow. Having decided on the research area, students should consult with their supervisor as to what is possible and realistic to complete within the timeline of their academic calendar.

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	25.00%
Project	75.00%

Continuous Assessment

Assessment Type	Assessment Description	Outcome addressed	% of total	Assessment Date
Written Report	Students will complete a literature review of ca. 4000 to 5000 words that reflects the depth and breadth of knowledge pertaining to their area of research.	1,2,3	15.00	n/a
Presentation	Students are to complete a presentation of their research findings to the wider agricultural community. This will be in the form of an industry showcase.	1,2,3,4	10.00	Sem 2 End

Project

Assessment Type	Assessment Description	Outcome addressed	% of total	Assessment Date
Project	Design and execution of the of the laboratory and field work associated with the thesis project	1,3,4,5	30.00	End-of-Semester
Project	Completion of the written thesis including an experimental chapter detailing the work completed. The thesis should demonstrate the depth and breadth of student knowledge in the specific area of their research.	1,2,3,4,5	45.00	End-of-Semester

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	12 Weeks per Stage	0.25
Independent Learning	12 Weeks per Stage	6.00
Total Hours		75.00

Module Delivered In

Programme Code	Programme	Semester	Delivery
CW_SWOAG_B	Bachelor of Science (Honours) in Organic Agriculture	8	Mandatory
CW_SWSFM_B	Bachelor of Science (Honours) in Sustainable Farm Management and Agribusiness	8	Mandatory