

# Imperial College London

## Regulations for the award of the degrees of Bachelor of Science (BSc) and Master in Science (MSci)

*[These Regulations apply to students registering in and before October 2007. They do not apply to the intercalated BSc degree for candidates registered for the MBBS degrees.]*

- 1.1 The degree of Bachelor of Science or Master in Science will be awarded to any student who has completed the appropriate course and passed examinations as a student at the College in accordance with the following Requirements and in accordance with such other Regulations for Students of the College as may be applicable.
- 1.2 The same courses and examinations are taken for the degree and for the Associateship of the Royal College of Science (ARCS) or the Royal School of Mines (ARSM). Both the degree and the appropriate Associateship will be awarded to successful students provided they have satisfied the requirements of the College.
- 1.3 The College provides programmes of study for the BSc and MSci degrees in main fields of study as determined by the Senate.
- 1.4 To obtain a BSc degree under these Regulations a student must complete<sup>1</sup> to the satisfaction of the College courses valued at a minimum of nine course-units (see paragraph 4.2), and must satisfy the examiners to a value of at least nine course units, except with regard to certain four year or five year courses where additional course-units may be awarded. If these are assigned two course-units, a student must complete courses valued at a minimum of 11 course-units and must satisfy the examiners to a value of at least 11 course-units. In cases where the additional study is assigned four course-units, a student must complete courses valued at a minimum of 13 course-units and must satisfy the examiners to a value of at least 13 course units. To obtain an MSci degree a student must complete courses valued at a minimum of 13 course-units and must satisfy the examiners to a value of at least 13 course-units, of which at least two course-units must have been successfully completed in the final year.

Examiners may exceptionally consider for the award of a degree a candidate who satisfies the examiners in courses to the value of at least eight, 10 and 12 course units as appropriate according to the particular degree and field of study.

Some exemptions from courses and corresponding examinations may be granted under paragraphs 2.3, 2.5 and 2.6.

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<sup>1</sup> The completion of a course must be understood to include the examination as defined under Regulations 5.2 and 5.3.

- 1.5 Students who complete the requirements for a BSc degree and who achieve a sufficient standard will be awarded Honours for the degree. A successful student will therefore receive an award classified in one of the following ways: First Class Honours, or Second Class Honours (Upper Division), or Second Class Honours (Lower Division), or Third Class Honours.
- 1.6 Students registered for the MSci degree who achieve a sufficient standard will be awarded Honours for the degree. A successful student will therefore receive an award classified in one of the following ways: First Class Honours, or Second Class Honours (Upper Division), or Second Class Honours (Lower Division), or Third Class Honours.

## **2 Entrance Requirements**

- 2.1 All students, before admission to the course, must satisfy the general entrance requirements of the College.
- 2.2 In addition to the general entrance requirements, students will normally be required to satisfy certain individual programme requirements, specified by the Senate, for admission to the first year programme; these requirements are expressed in terms of passes at a recognised General Certificate of Education examination.
- 2.3 The following categories of students (Transfer Students) may, subject to the approval of the College, be admitted direct to the second year of a BSc or MSci degree programme in the College, with exemption from the admission conditions specified in paragraphs 2.1 and 2.2:
- (a) Students who have completed to a satisfactory level as determined by the College at least one year of a first degree programme or its equivalent as determined by the College in science or engineering;
  - (b) Holders of an award at the Intermediate level of the Framework for Higher Education Qualifications in England, Wales and Northern Ireland.
- 2.4 The admission conditions specified in paragraphs 2.1 and 2.2 may be waived, with the approval of the College, in the case of a student (Transfer Student) who has completed part of the first year of a full-time first degree programme in science or engineering.
- 2.5 The following categories of students (Advanced Students) may, with the approval of the Senate, be admitted to the second year of a BSc or MSci degree programme in the College, with exemption from the admission conditions specified in paragraphs 2.1 and 2.2:
- (a) Graduates of another university;
  - (b) Holders of a Diploma in Technology awarded by the National Council for Technological Awards;
  - (c) Holders of a degree awarded by the Council for National Academic Awards;
  - (d) Holders of a Higher National Diploma, or a Higher National Certificate (together with at least one Supplementary Certificate).

2.6 The following categories of students (Transfer and Advanced Students) may, with the approval of the Senate, be admitted direct to the third year of a four-year MSci degree programme in the College, with exemption from the admission conditions specified in paragraphs 2.1 and 2.2:

- (a) Students who have completed to a satisfactory level as determined by the College at least two years of a first degree programme or its equivalent as determined by the College in science or engineering;
- (b) Graduates of another university;
- (c) Holders of a degree awarded by the Council for National Academic Awards.

### **3 Period of Study**

3.1 The minimum period of study for the BSc degree is three academic years, except where the Senate has determined that a main field of study shall have a minimum period of study of four or five years. The minimum period of study for the MSci degree is four academic years. For students admitted under paragraph 2.3 (Transfer Students) or 2.5 (Advanced Students) the minimum period of study may be reduced to two years for three-year programmes and to three years for four-year programmes. For students admitted to the third year of the MSci degree under paragraph 2.6 (Transfer and Advanced Students) the minimum period of study may be reduced to two years.

3.2 For the Associateship, the minimum period of study at the College is two years in the case of three year programmes and must include the second and third years of the appropriate programme; in the case of four year or five year programmes the minimum period of study is three years or four years respectively and must include the second, third and fourth year of a four year programme and the second, third, fourth and fifth year of a five year programme.

3.3 The period of study must be continuous except by special permission.

3.4 A student may be required to spend a period of study following an academic programme at an approved university abroad, or on approved project work away from the College or a period of industrial placement as an integral part of the degree programme under arrangements approved by the Senate.

3.5 A student admitted under paragraph 2.3 or 2.5 who successfully completes the second and third year examination requirements after a programme of study extending over two years, or who successfully completes the second, third and fourth year examination requirements after a programme of study extending over three years, or who successfully completes the second, third, fourth and fifth year examination requirements after a programme of study extending over four years, will be eligible for the immediate award of the Degree and Associateship.

3.6 A student registered for the MSci degree under paragraph 2.6 who successfully completes the third and fourth year examination requirements after a programme of study extending over two years will be eligible for the immediate award of the Degree and Associateship.

- 3.7 A student admitted under paragraph 2.4 may, with the approval of the College, be granted remission of the prescribed period of study not exceeding the period spent in study for his/her degree elsewhere.
- 3.8 A student transferring his/her degree registration under paragraphs 4.6 or 4.7 who subsequently completes the programme of study and satisfies the examiners in the relevant examinations will be eligible for the immediate award of the Degree and Associateship.

#### **4 Programmes of Study**

- 4.1 The programme of study in each subject shall be specified on departmental webpages; alterations and additions to programmes of study must be authorised by the Senate or committee acting on its behalf.
- 4.2 The work done by students is divided into courses, i.e. prescribed sections of teaching and study each of which is separately examined and to which a course-unit value has been assigned. A course-unit is defined in terms of a year's academic work of full-time study which should comprise courses to the minimum value of three course-units and a maximum value of four course-units, each to carry an equal work load within that year. Students will not be permitted to take courses valued at more than four course-units in any one year without the special approval of the College. Where a student follows a course during the long vacation, the value of that course shall be assigned to either the previous or next year as appropriate, but in neither year may the total exceed the maximum of four course units. In assessing degree requirements in accordance with paragraph 1.4 the College may designate certain courses or fractions of courses as introductory.
- 4.3 A student whose registration is transferred from a degree at another University may, if the College approves, be credited with some course-units on account of the work which he/she has done and the examinations which he/she has passed in that other degree. Such a student will be credited with the marks which he/she obtained in the examinations which he/she passed for the previous degree subject to any adjustments necessary to align them with the marking scheme of the College degree.
- 4.4 A student who is admitted to the College under paragraph 2.3, 2.5 or 2.6 may, if the College approves, be exempted from courses and the corresponding examinations to a maximum value of four course-units per year.
- 4.5 A student who is registered for the BSc degree at the College, and who is qualified to proceed to the second or third year of the programme (as appropriate), may apply for transfer of registration to the MSci degree provided that such a programme is available in the same subject and may be deemed by the relevant Board of Examiners to have satisfied them in suitable course-units for the MSci degree. On the recommendation of the Head of Department concerned, such a student may be deemed to have satisfied the admission requirements for the degree programme. Transfer between the BSc and MSci will be possible up to 31 March of the third year of full-time study so far as respective curricula make this practicable.
- 4.6 A student who is registered for the MSci degree at the College, and who is qualified to proceed to the second or third year of the programme (as appropriate), may apply for transfer of registration to the BSc degree provided that such a programme is available in the same subject and may be deemed by

the relevant Board of Examiners to have satisfied them in suitable course-units for the BSc degree. On the recommendation of the Head of Department concerned, such a student may be deemed to have satisfied the admission requirements for the degree programme. Transfer between MSci and BSc will be possible at any time up to 31 March of the third year of full-time study so far as respective curricula make this practicable.

4.7 Subject to the approval of the Senate a student registered for the MSci degree who does not maintain a satisfactory academic record may be required by the Head of Department to transfer at the end of the second year to the third year of the BSc degree programme provided that such a programme is available in the same subject. Such a student shall be deemed to have satisfied the admission requirements for the degree programme and may be allowed to proceed to the third year examinations for the BSc degree, being granted exemption from all first- and second-year courses.

4.8 At the end of the third year of study, a student registered for the MSci degree must satisfy the examiners to the value of at least 10 course-units, and have achieved a sufficient standard to qualify for admission to the final year. A student registered for the MSci degree who does not satisfy these conditions will be expected:

*either* (a) to remain registered for the MSci and re-enter failed course-units on not more than two further occasions;

*or* (b) to be considered for the award of BSc, where this is available, if all conditions of the award have been satisfied, passes in any MSci courses not included in the BSc programme having been discounted;

*or* (c) to transfer to the BSc, where this is available, and to sit the final year BSc examinations on not more than two occasions in an attempt to satisfy the conditions of the award of a BSc.

4.9 A student who by the end of the programme of study for the MSci fails to satisfy the examiners in the minimum number of requirements within the degree programme may opt:

*either* (a) to re-enter failed course-units on not more than two further occasions;

*or* (b) to be considered for the award of BSc, where this is available, if all the conditions of the award have been satisfied, passes in any MSci courses not included in the BSc programme having been discounted;

*or* (c) to transfer to the BSc, where this is available, and to sit the final year BSc examinations on not more than two occasions in an attempt to satisfy the conditions of the award of a BSc.

4.10 A student opting for 4.8 (a) or 4.9 (a) above, who fails to satisfy the MSci examiners after the first or second repeat of failed course-units may be considered for the award of the BSc degree under 4.8 (b) and (c) and 4.9 (b) and (c) above, although in the case of 4.8 (c) and 4.9 (c) only one further attempt to satisfy the BSc examiners will be allowed.

## 5 Examinations

- 5.1 The overall responsibility for the conduct of the course examinations for the degree and the Associateship lies with the Science Studies Committee<sup>2</sup>. Boards of Examiners are appointed and joint Boards as appropriate may be appointed, to deal with the papers and examinations in each main field of study specified in paragraph 1.3.
- 5.2 There will be one course examination for each course. The examination may be conducted by a variety of examining methods including one or more of the following: written examination(s) taken at appropriate times during the year; assessment(s) of coursework; practical examination(s); assessment(s) of field work; multiple-choice question examination(s); and oral examination(s). A course will not normally be examined for more than one year after it ceases to be taught.
- 5.3 Students entering an examination for a course must be examined in all parts of the examination prescribed for that course. Unless prevented by illness or other adequate cause for which certification must be provided a student must take each prescribed test and must submit sufficient work to enable him/her to be examined. A candidate who has passed a course examination may not repeat the examination, nor enter a course examination which is deemed to overlap a course-unit examination already taken and passed.
- 5.4 No books, notes or other material relevant to the examination may be introduced into any examination room by a student unless specifically authorised by the examiners. Reports and records of laboratory or field work submitted by a student as part of the examination assessment may be returned to the student at the discretion of the examiners.
- 5.5 Examiners may set comprehensive papers intended to test a student's knowledge of the whole or part of his/her field of study. Such papers will cover fields appreciably wider than the examinations on individual courses. Examiners may also test any candidate by means of an oral examination which may cover the candidate's entire field of study.
- 5.6 When an Advanced Student is credited with any course-units under the provisions of paragraphs 2.5 and 2.6, the examiners will assess his class of Honours entirely upon his/her performance in the course examinations in which he/she is required to be examined.
- 5.7 A student who is prevented from attending any course examination in any year other than the final year of his/her programme through illness, or other cause judged sufficient by the Board of Examiners, may apply to the Academic Registrar to be alternatively assessed for the examinations missed by any of the examination methods indicated in paragraph 5.2, and selected at the discretion of the examiners. Any such alternative assessment shall take place at a time to be determined by the examiners concerned but not later than six months from the date of the examination missed. No student shall be credited during the whole period of his/her programme with more than two course-units on the basis of alternative assessment. Where a course is alternatively assessed the total marks obtained for the course may be credited to the student.

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<sup>2</sup> Where a BSc or MSci degree programme is taught within the Faculty of Engineering, this responsibility is delegated to the Engineering Studies Committee.

- 5.8 A student who on his/her first entry does not complete successfully the examination for a course-unit may re-enter the failed examination on not more than two further occasions, in accordance with the conditions specified in General Regulation 13.7.
- 5.9 First and second year students, third year students on four year degree programmes and third and fourth year students on five year degree programmes may, at the discretion of the examiners, be permitted to resit, before the start of the following session first, second, third or fourth year examinations in which they have failed.
- 5.10 Before a student may proceed to the next year of his/her programme of study he/she must have complied with all requirements of the College, including the payment of all due sessional fees, and must have satisfied the examiners at the appropriate course-unit examination.

## **6 Field of Study**

- 6.1 The examiners shall determine the field of study in accordance with the guidelines laid down in paragraph 6.3 below.
- 6.2 The College is responsible for determining curricula which might be described by various fields of study. This generally means defining a minimum number of courses in a subject before that subject is regarded as the field of study or as a constituent of the field of study.
- 6.3 Except where a single subject is appropriate, the subjects named in the field shall be determined as follows:
- (a) where appropriate, comprehensive titles will be used, for example, Biological Sciences;
  - (b) where two subjects studied have approximately equal importance and the subject mentioned second has a minimum value of four course-units or one-third of the curriculum, whichever is the less, the conjunction 'and' will be used;
  - (c) where a subject has been taken with an essential supporting subject, 'with' will be used; the supporting subject will be expected to have a minimum value of three course-units, or one-quarter of the curriculum, whichever is the less; the main subject in this case will have a minimum value of six course-units, or one-half of the curriculum, whichever is the less;
  - (d) where it is inappropriate to describe a curriculum in terms of one or two subjects or by a comprehensive title as in (a) above, the degree will be awarded without reference to a field.

## **7 Award of Associateship and Degree**

- 7.1 The Associateship of the Royal College of Science (ARCS) or the Associateship of the Royal School of Mines (ARSM), as appropriate, will be awarded to successful students who have complied with the requirements of the College, including the payment of all due sessional fees. A diploma of Associateship will be sent to each successful student.

- 7.2 A degree diploma will be sent to each successful student who is awarded the degree, together with a transcript stating the courses successfully completed and the value in course-units and the main field of study.

## **8 Aegrotat Provisions**

- 8.1 A student may be considered for the award of an Aegrotat or classified degree under these provisions if:

(i) through his/her illness or the death of a near relative or other cause judged sufficient by the Senate, he/she has been absent from examinations during his/her final year.

OR

(ii) though present at the whole of the examination during his/her final year, he/she considers that his/her performance has been adversely affected by any of the causes referred to in sub-clause (i).

The student must have completed his/her full programme of study for the degree and have satisfied the requirements of the College as described in the General Regulations.

- 8.2 An application for consideration to determine eligibility for the award of a degree under the Aegrotat Provisions must be made to the Academic Registrar within six weeks from the last day of the final year examination and must be accompanied by a medical certificate or other statement of the grounds on which application is made.
- 8.3 If a candidate has satisfied the requirements for the award of a degree as laid down in paragraph 1.4, the examiners shall recommend the award of a degree with an Honours classification and shall not consider the candidate for the award of an Aegrotat degree.
- 8.4 In the case of a student not deemed eligible to be recommended for a classified degree under paragraph 8.3 the Science Studies Committee, having considered a report from the examiners on the work submitted for such examinations as he/she attended (if any), together with records of the student's performance during the programme of study and assessments provided by the student's teachers, will determine whether evidence has been shown to their satisfaction that, had he/she completed the examination in normal circumstances, the student would clearly have reached a standard (and completed the necessary course-units) qualifying him/her for the award of the degree. If so, the student will be notified accordingly and asked whether he/she wishes to proceed formally with the Aegrotat degree application or to re-take the examination(s) at the next normal time.
- 8.5 If the award of an Aegrotat degree is conferred on a student he/she will not be eligible thereafter to re-enter for the examination for the classified degree.
- 8.6 A student who re-enters for the examination for the classified degree, having previously been informed, under paragraph 8.4, that he/she is eligible to apply for the award of an Aegrotat degree, ceases to be eligible so to apply.

- 8.7 An Aegrotat degree will be awarded without distinction or class.
- 8.8 Holders of an Aegrotat degree may not subsequently enter for examinations for a first degree of the College or, in the case of students registered for a degree of the University of London, for a first degree of the University of London in the same field of study, but they may apply for permission to proceed to a first degree in a different field, or to a higher degree, on complying with the appropriate Regulations for such degrees.
- 8.9 Students who have been awarded an Aegrotat degree after complying with the relevant Regulations will also be awarded, as appropriate, an Aegrotat Associateship of the Royal College of Science (ARCS) or of the Royal School of Mines (ARSM). The procedures, described in paragraphs 8.1 to 8.6, will apply, as appropriate, to students who are candidates for the award of the Associateship only.

**Note**

There is no provision for the award of a Pass degree to MSci students. Pass degrees are not available to BSc students registering in and after October 2008.