

Council for National Academic Awards (CNAA)

The CNAA was established by Royal Charter in **1964** with the object of advancing education, learning, knowledge, and the arts by means of the granting of academic awards. The Council achieved this principally by approving courses at high education institutions, outwith the university sector, and was the largest single degree-awarding body in the UK. At its peak there were over 140 institutions offering first degrees and postgraduate level courses approved by the CNAA. The institutions involved included polytechnics, institutions of higher education, Scottish Central Institutions and colleges of education, and colleges of art. CNAA awards were comparable to those of universities and recognised by professional associations and employers.

The Council developed a partnership model with its higher education institutions, with the aim of enabling them to have a greater degree of responsibility for the validation of their courses.

CNAA was abolished in 1992 through the passing of the UK Further and Higher Education Act. This Act also meant that there would in future be no formal distinction remaining between the universities and the polytechnics. The latter were consequently able to award their own degrees. However, this option was not available to smaller higher education institutions.