



Higher Education Courses policy

Section 1 - Preamble

- (1) This Policy is effective from 1 March 2022.
- (2) This Policy is pursuant to the [Deakin University Statute](#), [Academic Board Regulations](#) and [Vice-Chancellor Regulations](#) and includes:
 - a. [Schedule A: Higher Education Award Courses](#); and
 - b. the Deakin Curriculum Framework set out in Section 6.

Section 2 - Purpose

- (3) This Policy governs the design, development, approval and review of the University's higher education award and non-award courses.

Section 3 - Scope

- (4) This Policy applies to higher education award courses and non-award offerings offered by the University.

Section 4 - Policy

- (5) The Academic Board will maintain a Register of Academic Awards, Courses and Credentials in accordance with regulation 11 of the [Academic Board Regulations](#). The University offers courses leading to Higher Education awards of the University listed in [Schedule A: Higher Education Award Courses](#).
- (6) The University may also offer units, micro-units or modules that do not lead to an award of the University.
- (7) The University ensures that the courses it offers (including joint or dual courses offered with a partner institution):
 - a. maintain appropriate academic standards
 - b. are consistent with the objects in the [Deakin University Act 2009 \(Vic\)](#)
 - c. are consistent with external legislation, including the Higher Education Standards Framework, [Education Services for Overseas Students Act 2000 \(Cth\)](#) and the [Higher Education Support Act 2003 \(Cth\)](#)
 - d. advance the achievement of the University's mission and core commitments as set out in its Strategic Plan
 - e. in the case of coursework programs, are designed with reference to the Deakin Curriculum Framework (refer section 6) that specifies Deakin Graduate Learning Outcomes and the principles that guide assessment, learning experiences and course enhancement
 - f. in the case of higher degrees by research, are consistent with the requirements of the [Higher Degrees by Research \(HDR\) policy](#) and associated procedures.

- (8) In accordance with Part 4 - Accreditation and Course Requirements of the [Academic Board Regulations](#), the

Academic Board sets standards, policies and procedures that govern:

- a. the design and delivery of courses
- b. the approval and review of courses
- c. assessment in courses
- d. the conferral of awards.

Responsibilities

(9) The Academic Board is responsible to University Council for:

- a. the approval of academic proposals for new higher education award courses or revisions to existing courses that affect academic standards
- b. quality assurance of courses and assessment and for ensuring compliance with relevant legislation, external standards and internal academic requirements.

(10) The Deputy Vice-Chancellor Education is responsible for managing course approval and review processes to assure compliance with legislation, external standards (including the Higher Education Standards Framework) and internal policy requirements.

(11) Faculties are responsible for:

- a. developing proposals for new higher education award courses or revisions to existing courses
- b. establishing an Advisory Board for each coursework program to provide advice on the development of that course and its continued appropriateness and relevance in accordance with clauses 13 to 17
- c. conducting course and unit reviews in accordance with the [Higher Education Courses Approval and Review procedure](#) (as part of the University's approach to continuous quality improvement) and at the request of the Academic Board or the Deputy Vice-Chancellor Education
- d. facilitating reviews by professional accreditation bodies as required
- e. appointing course directors and course and unit teams to develop and review coursework programs in accordance with the [Curriculum Design and Delivery procedure](#)
- f. appointing assessment panels to ensure the quality of assessment in accordance with the [Assessment \(Higher Education Courses\) procedure](#).

(12) The responsibilities of Faculty Boards in assuring the quality of teaching, learning and research training in courses are specified in relevant procedures.

Advisory Boards - terms of reference and composition

(13) Course Advisory Boards are established by Faculty Boards during the planning stage for each higher education award course and remain operative while the course is offered. Where appropriate, Faculties may establish Course Advisory Boards at discipline or sub-course levels. A single Board may operate in relation to more than one related course or discipline.

(14) Course Advisory Boards meet at least twice a year and provide a report to Faculty Board at least annually.

(15) Members are appointed to Course Advisory Boards by the Faculty Board on the advice of the Faculty Executive Dean. The term of appointment of members is three years, with one year for students, all of which is renewable for further terms.

Composition of Advisory Boards

(16) The membership of an Advisory Board is:

- a. at least three external representatives of the relevant industry, including the Chair. As a matter of priority, these should include employers providing internships and/or recruiting Deakin graduates. Representatives should have intimate knowledge of the employment market and graduate employability
- b. a graduate of the course
- c. the Faculty Executive Dean and/or Head of School/Department
- d. a course or discipline coordinator
- e. at least one student enrolled in the course or discipline.

Other staff of the School/Department or Faculty may be invited to attend as observers.

Terms of Reference of Advisory Boards

(17) The terms of reference of the Advisory Board are:

- a. to provide advice to the Faculty Board on all aspects of a course or discipline offered, including:
 - i. the skills, knowledge and attributes sought by the employers of graduates from the course or the discipline opportunities for the provision of full fee-paying programs both within Australia and overseas
 - ii. potential areas for the development of new courses
 - iii. areas of potential and opportunities for improvement of the courses or disciplines offered by the Faculty, including, where appropriate, plans for online and flexible delivery of courses or disciplines
 - iv. areas for potential applied and collaborative research, industry links and placements, and consultancy opportunities.
- b. to make recommendations to the Faculty Board regarding new higher education award courses and combined courses
- c. to assist with the panel that undertakes major course reviews in accordance with the [Higher Education Courses Approval and Review procedure](#), in particular with relation to employment and recruitment trends and the employability of Deakin graduates
- d. to provide advice on any other matters the Faculty Board deems appropriate.

Section 5 - Procedure

(18) The following procedures document how to comply with this Policy:

- a. [Academic Awards procedure](#)
- b. [Assessment \(Higher Education Courses\) procedure](#)
- c. [Curriculum Design and Delivery procedure](#)
- d. [Higher Education Courses Approval and Review procedure](#)
- e. [Posthumous Awards procedure](#).

Section 6 - Deakin Curriculum Framework

(19) Deakin courses, underpinned by research, are designed and continually enhanced to enable all students, through engaging learning and assessment experiences in the cloud or on a campus, to create and curate compelling evidence of their achievements for graduate employability and engaged citizenship. Employability means that students and

graduates can discern, acquire, adapt and continually enhance the skills and attributes that make them more likely to find and create meaningful paid and unpaid work that benefits themselves, the workforce, the community and the economy.

(20) Deakin's Curriculum Framework focuses on these elements through four key aspects:

- a. Expectations: Outcomes and standards are clearly articulated and relevant to graduate destinations and are aligned with the Australian Qualifications Framework and relevant professional standards.
- b. Evidence: Assessment and feedback are carefully designed authentic opportunities to enable students to demonstrate, improve and evidence achievement of outcomes.
- c. Experience: Inspiring educators offer personal, interactive and inclusive learning experiences and resources on campus, in the cloud and wherever learning occurs.
- d. Enhancement: Emphasis is on systematic and systemic evidence-based enhancement of courses.

(21) Deakin courses align these four aspects to create integrated and coherent learning in a partnership between teaching teams, students and industry. Deakin course design and delivery is grounded in evidence, benchmarked against external reference points and regularly reviewed and enhanced.

Expectations

(22) Deakin Graduate Learning Outcomes describe the knowledge and capabilities graduates demonstrate at the completion of their course:

Graduate Learning Outcome	
GL01	Discipline-specific knowledge and capabilities: appropriate to the level of study related to a discipline or profession
GL02	Communication: using oral, written and interpersonal communication to inform, motivate and effect change
GL03	Digital literacy: using technologies to find, use and disseminate information
GL04	Critical thinking: evaluating information using critical and analytical thinking and judgment
GL05	Problem solving: creating solutions to authentic, real world and ill-defined problems
GL06	Self-management: working and learning independently, and taking responsibility for personal actions
GL07	Teamwork: working and learning with others from different disciplines and backgrounds
GL08	Global citizenship: engaging ethically and productively in the professional context, and with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples as well as diverse communities and cultures in a global context. [On 23 September 2020 the Academic Board approved the extension for compliance to include Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples within this Graduate Learning Outcome. All coursework programs must comply with this requirement by 31 December 2022.]

(23) These outcomes are specified at the course level, contextualised to the discipline, assessed against clearly articulated standards throughout the course and warranted by the qualification.

Evidence through assessment

(24) All course learning outcomes are assessed and evidenced by the end of the course.

(25) Evidence includes qualitative judgements and quantitative measures. Graduate performance in professional settings is multilayered and complex, and evidence of success is best captured from multiple perspectives in a range of tasks over time.

(26) Assessment at Deakin is a partnership between learners and teaching teams and:

- a. places assessment for learning at the centre of unit and course design
- b. prompts diagnostic, timely and meaningful formative feedback, and summative judgments about performance against clearly articulated criteria and standards
- c. is reliable and valid
- d. simulates the challenges students will encounter in their future professional, personal and civic lives
- e. ensures academic and (where relevant) research integrity and elicits inclusive and trustworthy evidence of student achievement
- f. ensures students are inducted into assessment practices and cultures
- g. includes self-assessment and peer assessment where appropriate
- h. is manageable and sustainable for staff and students
- i. inculcates in students the lifelong practice of creating and curating evidence of their achievements and professional readiness.

Experience

(27) Learning experiences at Deakin maximise personal connection and interaction with and between students and teaching teams who engage, enthuse and inspire. Learning experiences are created using premium design and delivery principles for units and courses and provide all learners with equivalent opportunities to learn. All learners at Deakin are provided with premium cloud learning experiences which support students who study wholly online and enhance the experience of located learners.

(28) Principles for Premium Learning and Teaching:

- a. All learning at Deakin is active and collaborative: learners use active investigation to develop skills and knowledge and explore application in authentic professional contexts. Learning enhances student autonomy, develops evaluative judgement and fosters lifelong learning.
- b. Learning is designed across units and courses to build towards achievement of graduate learning outcomes. Learning activities, assessment and outcomes are aligned to create a consistent and integrated learning pathway that fosters deep learner engagement.
- c. Learning is inclusive: learning experiences and environments are designed to accommodate student diversity, and create equivalent opportunities for academic success for all learners in rich online (cloud-first) and located learning activities and spaces.
- d. Learning is scaffolded in a clear narrative sequence that communicates the relationship between activities, tasks and learning outcomes
- e. Learning is activity-focused: there are clear calls to action and a mix of learning activities that lead to defined, summative assessment tasks
- f. Learning is feedback-focused: activities and assessments provide multiple opportunities for formative feedback from both staff and peers.
- g. Learning is social: students are welcomed into a respectful, vibrant learning community with multiple opportunities for dialogue and interaction with teaching staff and fellow learners
- h. Learning is supported by student services which enable participation and success, academic support services to develop underpinning knowledge and skills, and high production-value learning resources
- i. Learning progress is tracked through data on learning behaviours and achievement and acted upon to maximize student success and improve curriculum design
- j. Learning design at Deakin is a collaborative multidisciplinary activity that engages a range of discipline based academics, education specialists and support staff that match content expertise with expertise in learning design, delivery, support and resource production.

Enhancement and review

(29) Deakin's courses are regularly evaluated and continually improved by evidence-based review. Evidence includes:

- a. feedback from students about what helps and hinders their learning
- b. progress and achievement of students during their study
- c. advice from peers, professional bodies and Advisory Boards
- d. evidence that graduates are successful as employable and engaged citizens.

(30) Courses are managed efficiently, make best use of the University's study periods and digital environments for optimal intake, ensuring that regulatory and professional accreditation requirements are met or exceeded.

Section 7 - Definitions

(31) For the purpose of this Policy:

- a. Accreditation: means the process for approval or accreditation or re-approval or re-accreditation by Academic Board of a program of study leading to an academic award, as defined in the [Academic Board Regulations](#).
- b. Award: means a qualification that is conferred on completion of a University accredited course, as defined in the [Deakin University Statute](#).
- c. Combined course: a course of study leading to not more than two awards of the University in accordance with Regulation 17 - Combined Courses, Dual Courses and Joint Courses of the [Academic Board Regulations](#).
- d. Course: means a program of study that leads to a degree, vocational education and training product or other award, as defined in the [Academic Board Regulations](#).
- e. Coursework: means studies undertaken for any undergraduate or postgraduate degree or other award but does not include studies undertaken in satisfaction of a requirement to submit a thesis for a Higher Degree by Research, as defined in the [Academic Board Regulations](#).
- f. Dual Course: an approved combination of one or more courses developed collaboratively with a higher education provider in Australia or overseas, leading to the separate conferral of an academic award by Deakin University and the partner provides, the components of dual courses being typically designed and delivered separately by the two providers in accordance with regulation 17 of the [Academic Board Regulations](#).
- g. Higher Education award course: a course that leads to a higher education award of Deakin University including an award offered jointly with a partner institution.
- h. Joint Course: a single course arranged and delivered jointly by the University in conjunction with one or more higher education providers in Australia or overseas, leading to the conferral of a single academic award that is typically conferred jointly by the providers involved in accordance with regulation 17 of the [Academic Board Regulations](#).
- i. Micro-credential: an award made on completion of a micro-unit that warrants achievement of clearly articulated learning outcomes that is not sufficient, in itself, to lead to the award of a macro-credential.
- j. Micro-unit: a type of unit with clearly articulated learning outcomes which are assessed and that leads to the award of a micro-credential.
- k. Non-award offering: a course, unit, (excluding micro-units) or module, offered by Deakin University that does not lead to an award of the University.
- l. Unit: means a component of a program of study having a discrete designated code and title in which students enrol and complete specific requirements, as defined in the [Academic Board Regulations](#).

Status and Details

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