

Subject Lifecycle - Subject Design Policy

Section 1 - Background and Purpose

(1) This Policy provides guidance on the development of subjects to ensure compliance with the Australian Qualifications Framework (AQF) and their contribution to the aspirations articulated in the [La Trobe Strategic Plan 2013-2017](#).

Section 2 - Scope

(2) Applies to:

- a. All campuses
- b. All coursework subjects
- c. All academic staff

Section 3 - Policy Statement

(3) Subjects form the component parts of courses of the University and may be cornerstone, midpoint, capstone, core, core-choice and/or elective.

(4) In designing subjects staff will ensure that all subjects and their assessment items are clearly linked to Subject Intended Learning Outcomes, and that non-elective subjects link to relevant Course Intended Learning Outcomes and Graduate Capabilities.

(5) The combination of subjects within a course should ensure that all Course Learning Outcomes are addressed, and a suitable process should be adopted to demonstrate that this occurs. Subjects designed to build a major sequence should be designed in a complementary fashion to ensure that intended learning outcomes for that particular area of study are addressed.

(6) Subjects should also be designed to be generally consistent with the relevant AQF Learning Outcome levels:

- a. First year undergraduate broadly equates to AQF Level 5;
- b. Second year undergraduate broadly equates to AQF Level 6;
- c. Third year undergraduate and exit standard for undergraduate degrees broadly equates to AQF Level 7;
- d. For four year undergraduate degrees, fourth year subjects may be at AQF Level 7 or at AQF Level 8, depending on the AQF Learning Outcomes levels for those subjects.
- e. A four year program with AQF Level 8 learning outcomes is an Honours degree;
- f. An independent Honours year equates to AQF Level 8;
- g. At least 120 credit points of a Masters degree should have learning outcomes at AQF Level 9, whether the Masters degree is 120 credit points, 180 credit points or 240 credit points.

(7) In line with the AQF and the University requirement for subjects at different levels to have qualitatively different learning outcomes, multi-level coding of subjects will not be approved. Where subjects are developed to give breadth rather than strict progression the level coding should be set at the highest level of offer.

(8) When designing a subject, consideration of the means by which the subject may be offered on multiple campuses must be included.

(9) The use of subject aliases will require a case developing the educational rationale to be presented to the Education Committee.

(10) For subjects where discipline expertise is located outside the school/department from which a course emanates, Course Co-ordinators are required to give due consideration to the involvement of the 'external' discipline experts in the development and/or teaching of these subjects, as defined in the Service Teaching Policy and Procedures.

Section 4 - Procedure

(11) Nil.

Section 5 - Definitions

(12) For the purpose of this Policy:

- a. Aliases: Where a single subject with identical content, learning outcomes and assessment is given multiple names and subject codes.
- b. Capstone Subject: Any subject teaching, assessing and providing feedback on a GC of a course, that consolidates learning from across the course, and evaluates the level of student achievement towards achieving the standard set for Capstone.
- c. Core Subject: A compulsory subject, required to complete a particular course
- d. Core-Choice subjects: a subject that is part of a group from which at least one must be chosen. For example: XYZ111, XZY111 and XBC111 are all core-choice subjects, of which 2 out of the three must be completed.
- e. Cornerstone Subject: Any subject teaching, assessing and providing feedback on a GC of a course, specifically designed to provide commencing students with a firm grounding in the core threshold knowledge and skills required to learn successfully in more advanced subjects, and evaluates the level of student achievement towards achieving the standard set for Cornerstone.
- f. Course: a program of study leading to a qualification
- g. Elective Subject: Subjects which are not core subjects, but which are chosen by the student to give breadth and to complete course credit point requirements. Colleges may suggest a range of subjects from which electives may be chosen.
- h. Graduate Capabilities (GCs) or attributes: interdisciplinary skills, knowledge and attitudes that equip students to live and work in a rapidly changing and complex world. They are desirable and transferable attributes sought by employers.
- i. Intended Learning Outcomes (ILOs): Brief statements defining what students are expected to demonstrate that they know and are able to do at the end of a defined period of learning.
- j. Mid-point Subject: Any subject teaching/developing, evaluating and providing feedback on a GC of a course which evaluates the level of student achievement towards achieving the standard set for Mid-point.
- k. Multi-level subjects: Subjects coded at more than one year level. For example 2/3 level subjects.
- l. Subject: a unit of study within a course

Section 6 - Stakeholders

Responsibility for implementation – Pro Vice Chancellors (ASSC & SHE); Associate Pro Vice-Chancellors (Coursework); Heads of School; Subject Co-ordinators; and members of the subject teaching team.

Responsibility for monitoring implementation and compliance – College Academic Committees; Coursework Committee; and Education Committee.

Status and Details

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