

Double, Combined, Dual and Joint Qualifications Policy

Section 1 - Background and Purpose

Preamble

(1) La Trobe University allows students to qualify for two awards of the University. Students may enrol concurrently, sequentially or as part of a formally approved double or combined qualifications course.

(2) Where a formal agreement exists, students from other institutions may enrol in a La Trobe University course and a course offered by another institution, in which case the course requirements of both institutions must be met.

(3) The University may enter into formal agreements with other institutions to offer joint or dual qualifications.

General

(4) Double qualifications occur where two qualifications of the same AQF level (eg Bachelor/Bachelor) are completed concurrently, and in less than the minimum time required to complete each qualification separately.

(5) The requirements for double qualifications courses are that at least two thirds of the credit point requirements for each qualification must be completed, including any compulsory subjects or major sequences. Additionally, at least 75% of the final year requirements of each course must also be completed.

(6) Combined qualifications are where two qualifications of different AQF levels (eg Bachelor/Masters, completed at levels 7 and 9 respectively) are packaged. There is no cross accreditation of subjects between the courses where there is no overlap of AQF levels. Some cross-accreditation may be granted where there is some overlap (eg Masters/PhD) but the cross-accredited subject(s) must be completed at the higher level.

(7) These various types of qualifications are distinct from articulation arrangements where credit for previous studies is awarded into a La Trobe University qualification.

Section 2 - Scope

(8) Applies to:

- a. all campuses
- b. all qualifications
- c. all students
- d. all staff involved in the development or administration of courses

Section 3 - Policy Statement

(9) La Trobe University students may qualify for two La Trobe University coursework awards of the same AQF level (eg. Bachelor/Bachelor) by completing a minimum of two thirds of the combined credit points of the two courses (eg 480 credit points to obtain two three-year degrees of 360 credit points each. This minimum is only likely to occur where there is substantial overlap in the curriculum of the two qualifications).

(10) Individual course requirements must be met, including any compulsory subjects and/or major sequences. Students must also complete a minimum of 75% of the final year subjects from each qualification. The course requirements may be varied only in exceptional cases and on the authority of the Academic Board. Two testamurs are awarded.

(11) In the case of combined qualifications of different AQF levels (eg Bachelor/Masters, respectively completed at levels 7 and 9), the completion of both qualifications with no cross-accreditation of subjects is the norm. If there is some cross-over between AQF levels (eg Masters/PhD) some cross-accreditation may be permitted. Two testamurs are awarded.

(12) Under the same provisions, a student may concurrently complete any combination of two awards of the University, if a formally approved double or combined qualification does not already exist, by applying through the relevant colleges. Such 'concurrent study' is not intended to provide an alternative entry to a formally accredited double degree, unless the student meets the entry criteria for that course.

(13) Where a formal agreement exists, La Trobe students and students of other institutions may enrol in a Dual qualification of a La Trobe University course and a course offered by another institution. In this case the course requirements of both institutions must be met and two testamurs (one from each institution) are awarded.

(14) The University may also enter into agreements with other institutions to offer Joint qualifications where a single double-badged testamur is awarded.

Section 4 - Procedure

Allowable Double Qualifications

Bachelor + Bachelor
Master + Master

Allowable Combined Qualifications

Bachelor + Graduate Diploma
Bachelor + Master
Master + PhD

Additional Requirements

(15) Combined Qualifications: A combination of two La Trobe University qualifications of different AQF levels (eg. Bachelor/Master). The full requirements for each course must be met. There is normally no cross-accreditation of subjects and therefore no reduction in credit point requirements. In some cases (eg Masters/PhD combinations) where there are overlapping AQF levels cross-accreditation and consequent reduction in credit points may be permitted.

(16) Double Qualifications: Cross-accreditation of subjects is permitted. However, the total number of credit points studied must equal at least two thirds of the total number of credit points required to complete the two qualifications.

(17) Bachelor/Master combinations: Students enrolled in a combined Bachelor/Master course must complete at least 180 credit points of Masters level subjects (Levels 8 and 9 in the Australian Qualifications Framework).

(18) Joint Qualifications: A formal agreement with another institution is required to offer a single jointly badged award.

(19) Dual Qualification: Where two qualifications of the same type (eg Bachelor/Bachelor) are completed at La Trobe University and another higher education provider (most commonly an overseas provider as a form of Transnational Education). Students must meet all the requirements for the awards of the respective institutions. Where this is for the award of a bachelor degree or higher, students must complete at least 120 credit points at La Trobe.

Duration of Course

(20) Double qualifications courses can be completed in a shorter time than two single qualification courses. In addition to the reduced requirements (ie a minimum of two thirds of each course), students enrolled in double qualifications courses are permitted to over enrol relative to single qualification students. Further details may be found in specific course outlines.

Related Disciplines

(21) Double qualifications courses may involve related disciplines (eg Occupational Therapy/Ergonomics) or disparate areas (eg Science/Commerce).

(22) In related disciplines or situations where the compulsory coursework is very similar, the requirement to complete a minimum of two thirds of the total number of credit points for each individual qualification cannot be waived. This is true even if the requirements for both of the individual qualifications could be satisfied by a selection of subjects totalling fewer credit points.

(23) Double qualifications comprising less than two thirds of the total number of credit points for the two qualifications are not permitted.

Approval of Joint, Dual and Twinning Qualifications

(24) In the case of joint qualifications offered under a formal agreement with another institution, approval for coursework programs is via the Coursework Committee and the Academic Board. Approval for research programs is via the Board of Graduate Research and the Research and Graduate Studies Committee.

(25) The process for approval of Dual Qualifications or twinning programs offered under a formal agreement with another institution is the same as above.

(26) The Coursework Program Structure template (found on the Course Lifecycles intranet website) must be completed.

(27) A Business Case Calculator for all proposals and a Due Diligence form for proposals involving a new external provider should also be completed and submitted. If the external provider is already part of an agreement, reference to when the agreement was approved should be made in the application.

Approval of Joint Research Qualifications

(28) In the case of jointly badged research qualifications, the proposal must be approved by the Board of Graduate Research.

Administration of Courses

(29) In double qualifications courses involving two Colleges, one College must be designated to administer the course.

(30) In dual or joint qualifications courses involving La Trobe University and another institution, each university must designate a contact to administer the course, ensuring due quality assurance processes are in place.

Approval of Double Qualifications

(31) Where the degree combinations are of two existing approved awards of La Trobe University, the approval process comprises a simple request (in the form of a memorandum and course structure) to the Coursework Committee to approve the combination, demonstrating that the workload and other requirements meet those in this Policy.

(32) If either of the degrees in the combination is a new award, in recognition of potential resource implications, normal course approvals processes must be followed (ie through the Course Portfolio and Scholarships Committee as well as Coursework Committee). This involves requesting approval for both the new stand-alone award and the new combination of awards (with course structures for both options).

Performance Hurdles

(33) At the time of developing a new formal double qualifications course, or of allowing a student to enrol in two qualifications simultaneously, any performance hurdles must be clearly explained in the course approval documentation and provided in writing to the enrolling student.

Reversion to Single Qualification

(34) To discontinue a double or combined qualifications course and take out one qualification, the student must meet all of the requirements of the single qualification – credit points, hurdle requirements, compulsory subjects and major sequences.

Testamurs Double Qualifications

(35) A student who completes the requirements for a double or a combined qualifications course where both are accredited as stand-alone La Trobe University awards will receive two testamurs one for each accredited qualification.

(36) In cases where a double qualification includes an award that has not been accredited in its own right as a stand-alone award, a single testamur naming the double degree will be awarded.

Testamurs - Joint Qualifications

(37) A single double-badged testamur may be awarded in a manner specified in the formal agreement. However the Australian Qualifications Framework requires that there is one issuing organisation. All certification documentation needs to be traceable back to the single issuing organisation which is responsible for authentication of the documents, replacement documents, etc. This is intended to protect the qualification and the person's entitlement to receive it and to protect against fraudulent or mistaken issuance. The AQF allows for multiple logos to be used on certification documentation. The signature and the seal (or other unique identifier) needs to be of the issuing organisation only.

Testamurs - Dual Qualifications

(38) Where these are awarded under a formal agreement with other institutions, each institution may award a standard testamur for their component of the dual award.

Graduation

(39) Normally a student will wear the colours of and participate in the ceremony according to the guidance provided in the [Academic Dress Policy](#).

Section 5 - Definitions

(40) For the purpose of this Policy and Procedure:

- a. **Articulation:** the process of linking two or more qualifications together by creating/identifying the content relationships between them. These may be two La Trobe University courses or one LTU course and one course from another institution. The awards are normally at different AQF levels, with one having learning outcomes at an AQF level implied within the other. For example a Level 5 Diploma would be considered as having learning outcomes broadly equivalent to the first year of a Level 7 Bachelor degree.
- b. **Articulation Agreement:** Outlines the broad principles and conditions in an agreement between La Trobe University and a partner institution to match courses or requirements to coursework completed at a partner institution to facilitate advanced standing for students moving between La Trobe and the partner institution.
- c. **Combined Qualifications:** A combination of two La Trobe University qualifications of different AQF levels (eg. Bachelor/Master). The full requirements for each course must be met. There is normally no cross-accreditation of subjects and therefore no reduction in credit point requirements. In some cases (eg Masters/PhD combinations) where there are overlapping AQF levels cross-accreditation and consequent reduction in credit points may be permitted.
- d. **Course of Study:** A single course leading to a higher education award; a course recognised by the provider as a combined or double degree leading to one or more higher education awards; or an enabling course.
- e. **Double degree:** Where two awards of the same AQF level (e.g Bachelor/Bachelor) are combined to allow completion in less than the time normally expected for the completion of each individual qualification. For administrative and enrolment purposes, a double degree is treated as a single course of study.
- f. **Dual award:** Where a course leads to the conferral of two awards from two institutions. In this case, two separate testamurs and transcripts are usually provided.
- g. **Dual Qualification:** Where two qualifications of the same type (eg Bachelor/Bachelor) are completed at La Trobe University and another higher education provider (most commonly an overseas provider as a form of Transnational Education) and in less than the minimum time required to complete each qualification separately. At least one full year must be completed in residence at each institution and students must meet all the requirements for the awards of the respective institutions.
- h. **Joint award:** Where a collaborative arrangement is made by two institutions to design and deliver a single qualification. This may be recognised on the testamur by the presence of the logo and seal of each institution.
- i. **Qualification:** A degree, diploma or course that comprises approved studies at La Trobe University as prescribed by the Academic Board.
- j. **Transnational education:** a course delivered in one country using educational resources (curriculum, materials and instructors) from another. Also known as Third Party Teaching.
- k. **Twinning:** One qualification, where part of the La Trobe University course is taught at another institution (usually offshore) and the students must complete the qualification through completing at least one year in residence at La Trobe University. In China, these are referred to as “joint ventures”.

Status and Details

Status	Historic
Effective Date	22nd November 2016
Review Date	30th June 2017
Approval Authority	Academic Board
Approval Date	20th November 2016
Expiry Date	13th June 2017
Unit Head	Nicolette Lee Executive Director, Quality and Standards +61 3 9479 6480
Author	Nicolette Lee Executive Director, Quality and Standards +61 3 9479 6480
Enquiries Contact	Educational Partnerships and Quality