

Undergraduate First Year Experience Policy

Section 1 - Background and Purpose

(1) The primary aim of this Policy is to ensure that La Trobe University's First-Year Experience (FYE) contributes to improving the overall engagement, retention, satisfaction, learning and success of first-year students. Further, it is to ensure that FYE is designed, coordinated, and delivered in ways that are efficient, financially and administratively sustainable, relevant and useful to commencing students and staff, and attractive to prospective students.

Section 2 - Scope

(2) Applies to:

- a. All campuses
- b. All commencing students
- c. All courses in which students are commencing;
- d. Colleges, academic services, student support services, student services and student organisations.

Section 3 - Policy Statement

(3) The University will provide a coordinated, coherent and equivalent undergraduate First-Year Experience (FYE) Program for all commencing students across all campuses. The core purpose of the FYE Program will be to provide all commencing students with useful information and positive impressions and experiences of the University, its staff, its academic programs, support programs, and related resources.

(4) La Trobe University's FYE, and its constituent elements, will be designed and evaluated against guidelines that are consistent with Design for Learning. The overall design, planning, coordination, provision, and evaluation of FYE will be the responsibility of a University-wide steering group.

(5) Each College will appoint an academic First-Year Coordinator who will be responsible within the college for overseeing all academic aspects of the First Year Experience.

(6) Each Bachelor-level course will identify academic preparation and student success indicators and undertake an early evaluation of commencing students' potential for successful completion of the course.

(7) Evaluation and provision of feedback on commencing students' preparation related to a defined set of critical academic preparation indicators will be completed within the first three (3) weeks, or first 25%, of the students' first term of enrolment.

(8) The evaluation of the defined subset of academic preparation indicators may best be embedded in Cornerstone subjects.

Evaluation and provision of feedback on student achievement to meet the agreed Cornerstone college standard for

each College Graduate Capability should be completed by end of their first semester.

Section 4 - Procedure

(9) Nil.

Section 5 - Definitions

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

- a. Commencing Student: A student who is new to the University and undertaking the first year of a course.
- b. Cornerstone Subject: Any subject teaching, evaluating 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.
- c. Course: A program of study leading to one or more qualifications and in which a student may study one or more Majors.
- d. Graduate Capabilities (GC): High-level learning outcomes that are described in discipline-specific terms
- e. Standard: Component criteria comprising a GC against which a student's achievement is evaluated.
- f. Subject: A unit of study within a course.

Section 6 - Stakeholders

(11) Responsibility for implementation – Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Academic); College Pro Vice-Chancellors; Heads of School.

(12) Responsibility for monitoring implementation and compliance – Associate Pro Vice-Chancellors (Coursework), Executive Director, Student Services and Administration; Education Committee; Pro Vice-Chancellor (Learning, Quality and Innovation); University Orientation Committee.

Status and Details

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