

Subject Improvement Program Policy

Section 1 - Background and Purpose

(1) The Subject Improvement Program (SIP) works to enhance the quality of teaching and learning at the subject level through the development of Action Plans for subjects with low rates of student satisfaction or success.

Section 2 - Scope

(2) All coursework subjects delivered by La Trobe University are eligible for inclusion in the SIP.

Section 3 - Policy Statement

(3) The University is committed to the continuous improvement of its coursework subjects.

(4) Subject improvement at the University is a constructive and collaborative process, led by Heads of Schools (HOS).

Section 4 - Procedure

Part A - Action Planning Cycles

(5) Two rounds of SIP occur each year, the first for subjects delivered in the period 1 January to 30 June and the second for subjects delivered in the period 1 July to 31 December. A subject is eligible for inclusion in the period in which its results are ratified.

Part B - Subject Identification

(6) The Pro Vice-Chancellor (Teaching and Learning) (PVC(T&L)) is responsible for the identification of subjects for inclusion in each Action Planning round.

(7) Subjects are identified using the following criteria:

- a. Low overall student satisfaction, or low student satisfaction in one particular area, as measured by the Student Feedback on Subjects (SFS) instrument; and/or,
- b. Low student success rate (i.e. more than 20 per cent of enrolled students fail the subject).

(8) Multiple instances of a subject are treated collectively for the purposes of their inclusion in SIP.

(9) The decision of the PVC(T&L) to include a subject in the SIP is final.

(10) The Director, Planning and Institutional Performance (DPIP) is responsible for providing the PVC(T&L) with the data necessary to make an assessment of which subjects will be included in the SIP.

Part C - Development of an Action Plan

(11) Each HOS is responsible for the development of an Action Plan for any SIP subjects in his or her school.

(12) The PVC(T&L) is responsible for providing an online Action Plan template for each SIP subject for completion by the HOS.

(13) Each Action Plan must include a brief outline of the issues identified in the subject that contributed to poor SFS engagement, student satisfaction or student success.

(14) Elements of the Action Plan may include, but are not limited to:

- a. Directing teaching staff in the subject to engage in professional development, such as the Peer Assisted Teaching Scheme or Graduate Certificate in Higher Education;
- b. The redesign of the subject, or components of the subject. The approval of La Trobe Learning and Teaching (LTLT) is required for the inclusion of subject redesign in an Action Plan;
- c. The redeployment of teaching staff in the subject;
- d. The closure of the subject; and / or
- e. Other actions relevant to the subject.

(15) All elements of an Action Plan must specify a date by which the action will be completed. This will normally not be more than six months after the Action Plan is developed.

(16) The Associate Pro Vice-Chancellor (Coursework) (APVC (CW)) in each College is responsible for the approval of all Action Plans in his or her College.

Part D - Improvement Plan Review and Reporting

(17) Action Plans are presented by the PVC(T&L) to the Senior Executive Group (SEG), for noting, following their approval.

(18) The PVC(T&L) will provide Heads of School a progress report template, four times annually, according to a reporting schedule published on the SIP intranet site.

(19) The PVC(T&L) will present the completed progress reports to the SEG, according to the reporting schedule.

Part E - Ongoing Action Planning

(20) If a subject participating in the SIP is offered again prior to the implementation of the Action Plan, any further information gathered from that next round of the SFS survey should be addressed by revision of the Action Plan. Development of a new Action Plan is not required.

(21) Where a subject has an Action Plan implemented as part of a SIP round and, two rounds later, the subject is again identified for inclusion in the SIP, the PVC(T&L) may require the APVC (CW) to take responsibility for the Action Planning process. This will usually only occur where a subject's performance in either satisfaction, engagement or success has not appreciably improved from the initial round in which it was included in SIP.

Part F - Communication to Students

(22) In a teaching period during which an Action Plan is implemented, students enrolled in all instances of the subject will be informed (via an entry on the subject site on the Learning Management System) that the Action Plan is in place, and provided a summary of the actions being undertaken to improve the subject (excluding any actions related to the

redeployment of staff members).

Part G - Exemption from SIP

(23) A subject will be exempt from a further round of the SIP while an Action Plan is in the process of implementation.

Section 5 - Definitions

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

- a. an 'Action Plan' is the program of work proposed to improve student satisfaction and success in a particular subject.
- b. 'Intensive Mode' describes subject delivery in a condensed format over a period of less than one semester.

Section 6 - Stakeholders

(25) Responsibility for implementation of this policy lies with:

- a. Pro Vice-Chancellor (Learning, Quality and Innovation)
- b. Associate Pro Vice-Chancellors (Coursework)

(26) Responsibility for monitoring implementation and compliance with this policy lies with:

- a. Pro Vice-Chancellor (Learning, Quality and Innovation)

Status and Details

Status	Current
Effective Date	To Be Advised
Review Date	To Be Advised
Approval Authority	
Approval Date	To Be Advised
Expired Date	To Be Advised
Unit Head	Paula Baron Pro Vice-Chancellor (Learning, Quality and Innovation)
Author	Neridah Baker Senior Adviser, Learning and Teaching +61 3 9479 1686
Enquiries Contact	La Trobe Learning and Teaching