Course Design Policy

Section 1 - Key Information

Policy Type and Approval Body	Academic – Academic Board
Accountable Executive – Policy	Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Academic)
Responsible Manager – Policy	Pro Vice-Chancellor (Learning and Teaching)
Review Date	15 April 2029

Section 2 - Purpose

(1) This Policy outlines the overarching principles by which the University's coursework subjects and awards are designed and delivered.

(2) In addition to aligning with the University's key teaching and learning frameworks and strategies, this Policy supports the University's compliance with the Australian Qualifications Framework, the Higher Education Standards Framework (2021), and the Education Services for Overseas Students Act 2000 (ESOS).

(3) This Policy should be read in conjunction with:

a. the Assessment Policy, in particular the Assessment Standards;
b. the Course and Subject Management Policy;
c. the Library and Digital Learning Resources Policy.

Section 3 - Scope

(4) This Policy applies to:

a. subjects and sub-subjects;
b. all coursework awards (undergraduate and postgraduate) of the University;
c. microcredentials.

Section 4 - Key Decisions

Key Decisions	Role
Assuring that all course and subject proposals arising from a school meet the requirements of the La Trobe Course and Subject Design Framework	Deans or their nominees

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Section 5 - Policy Statement

(5) All subjects and coursework awards of the University are designed to align with this Policy and other documents that together make up the La Trobe Course and Subject Design Framework, being:

a. the La Trobe Course Architecture which outlines course structures for all coursework courses, including course archetypes and sub-subject architecture;
b. the Course Design Standards;
c. the Assessment Standards;
d. the La Trobe Employability Framework.

Principles

(6) Courses and subjects demonstrate contemporary academic and industry relevance and are informed by subject matter expertise. This means that:

a. course design is informed by industry and student input, along with national and international comparators, as prescribed under the Course and Subject Management Policy and in the Minimum Employability Standards outlined in the La Trobe Employability Framework;
b. subject learning materials are relevant to the field and inclusive of contemporary and emerging scholarship; and
c. courses develop the skills and knowledge for professional practice in relevant disciplines, and meet registration and recognition requirements of accrediting bodies where required.

(7) Courses and subjects are supported by the deployment of appropriately qualified staff (as outlined in the Academic Staff Qualifications Policy) and fit-for-purpose learning environments.

(8) The design of subjects and courses is student-centred, inclusive and responsive to diverse learner needs:

a. subject rules are limited to those critical for progression through levels of study;
b. courses support the development of pathways and enhance student progression into and between qualifications;
c. multiple perspectives, particularly those of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, are integrated with curriculum design across subjects and courses as appropriate;
d. students are provided with learning materials in a timely manner, and access is enabled through digital versions wherever possible, as outlined in the Library and Digital Learning Resources Policy;
e. subjects and courses are designed to enable achievement of learning outcomes and acquisition of the La Trobe Graduate Capabilities, regardless of mode, teaching period or location of study; and
f. student workload is set appropriately to the level and learning outcomes of courses and subjects.

(9) Curriculum is coherent and fosters a deep approach to learning:

a. learning activities, teaching methods and assessment are aligned;
b. the approach to curricula privileges active, authentic and engaged learning experiences, and encourages independent and critical thinking;
c. subjects within courses are sequenced to foster progressive learning with breadth and depth appropriate to the type and level of the course; and
d. development of concepts, skills and awareness in academic integrity, and the appropriate use of Artificial Intelligence tools are integrated throughout courses and at appropriate points in subject design.

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(10) Course and subject design are informed by robust review and consultation.

Section 6 - Procedures

Part A - Roles and Responsibilities

(11) Academic staff proposing any new or amended subjects or courses are responsible for:

a. ensuring that Subject Intended Learning Outcomes (SILOs), and Major Intended Learning Outcomes (MILOs) (where applicable), align with Course Intended Learning Outcomes (CILOs) and that these in turn align with the Graduate Capabilities (GC);
b. designing assessment to align with the Assessment Standards and, for capstone subjects, with the principles of capstone learning as outlined in the Course Design Standards;
c. accounting for all learning resource requirements, including supervision and materials; and
d. the recording of key elements of alignment with the La Trobe Course and Subject Design Framework in the course management system.

(12) Course Coordinators have overall responsibility for ensuring that:

a. all course and subject proposals submitted for school approval within their scope of responsibility are designed to align with all elements of the La Trobe Course and Subject Design Framework, and the Assessment Policy and Assessment Standards; and
b. courses are designed to facilitate international students enrolling in two thirds of subjects where the primary mode of delivery is face-to-face.

(13) In accordance with the Course and Subject Management Procedure – Approvals, Deans or their nominees are responsible for assuring that all course and subject proposals arising from their school meet the requirements of the La Trobe Course and Subject Design Framework (see Course Design Standards).

Part B - Quality Assurance and Review

(14) The design of subjects and courses is reviewed and approved through the processes outlined in the Course and Subject Management Procedure - Approvals, and the Course and Subject Management Procedure - Monitoring and Review.

(15) Individual elements of subjects and courses are also monitored and assured through processes outlined in the Assessment Policy and the La Trobe Employability Framework.

Section 7 - Definitions

(16) For the purposes of this Policy:

a. Course Intended Learning Outcomes (CILOs): brief statements defining the knowledge, skills and dispositions that a student should have attained and can reliably demonstrate at the end of a course of study.
b. Major Intended Learning Outcomes (MILOs): brief statements defining the knowledge, skills and dispositions that a student should have attained and can reliably demonstrate at the end of a major.
c. Microcredentials: short courses consisting of multiples of five credit points that are assessed and which, in approved sequences, may be used to apply for credit towards an award of the University. In this Policy the term

is also used to denote the qualification that is awarded on successful completion of the course.

d. sub-subjects: subjects with a weighting of under fifteen credit points that are assessed and which, in approved sequences, may be used to apply for credit towards an award of the University.
e. subject: a unit of study involving students in a series of learning activities, the outcomes of which are assessed.
f. Subject Intended Learning Outcomes (SILOs): brief statements defining the knowledge, skills and dispositions that a student should have attained and can reliably demonstrate by the end of a subject.
g. subject rules: rules that govern admission to subjects, either by requiring enrolment or by prohibiting enrolment.
h. teaching period: the time between the start of teaching and the end of teaching for any given subject.

Section 8 - Authority and Associated Information

(17) This Policy is made under the La Trobe University Act 2009.

(18) Associated information for this Policy includes:

a. the La Trobe Course Architecture via the Course Architecture intranet
b. Education and Experience Plan 2030
c. Indigenous Strategy 2022-2030
d. La Trobe Employability Framework
e. Guidelines: Structured and Unstructured Teaching and Learning Hours.

Status and Details

Status	Current
Effective Date	4th May 2026
Review Date	15th April 2029
Approval Authority	Academic Board
Approval Date	4th May 2026
Expiry Date	Not Applicable
Responsible Manager - Policy	Sarah Midford Pro Vice-Chancellor (Learning and Teaching)
Enquiries Contact	Office of the Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Academic)

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