

Student Transition Experience Procedure - Coursework Students

Section 1 - Background and Purpose

(1) La Trobe University is committed to supporting the effective transition into higher education for all students. This procedure outlines the process through which this is achieved.

Section 2 - Scope

(2) This Procedure applies to all coursework students (hereafter 'students') regardless of mode or location.

(3) This Procedure does not apply to higher degree by research students who are covered by the [Graduate Research Candidature Policy](#).

Section 3 - Policy Statement

(4) Refer to the [Student Transition Policy](#).

Section 4 - Procedures

Part A - Planning

(5) Student Engagement collaborates with stakeholders to develop an annual transition framework which is comprehensive, integrated and coordinated. At a minimum, the framework includes an outline of and a corresponding delivery schedule for:

- a. an overarching student transition communication strategy
- b. available online resources, smartphone apps and other collateral
- c. pre- and post-enrolment activities to maximize enrolments at Census Date
- d. Orientation Week plan
- e. peer mentoring programs, and
- f. other transition programs, services, resources and activities not listed above (hereafter referred to as 'transition programs' for brevity).

(6) The transition framework is evidence-based, being informed by scholarship on student transition, data from student and staff evaluations of previous years' programs, and information about the anticipated bio-demographic background and entry pathways of the La Trobe commencing cohort.

(7) The transition framework is approved by the Student Transition Experience Steering Group who ensure it can:

- a. be delivered with consistent quality across campuses, and

- b. provide equivalent opportunities for a successful transition regardless of a student's educational background, entry pathway, location or mode of study.
- (8) The transition framework provides programs that are tailored to the needs of diverse groups of commencing students, including but not limited to:
- a. international students adjusting to living and studying in Australia
 - b. students from groups traditionally under-represented in higher education
 - c. rural and regional students
 - d. students studying fully online
 - e. students commencing at levels other than first year
 - f. students commencing in non-standard teaching periods
 - g. students who enrol after the commencement of the teaching period.
- (9) The transition framework is mapped to a timeline containing key student milestones such as receiving an offer, enrolment, orientation, census date, end of semester, start of second semester and end of a student's first year of study at La Trobe.
- (10) Implementation of the transition framework is a whole-of-University responsibility, coordinated by the Student Engagement. Departmental responsibilities are detailed in the [Student Transition Experience Responsibilities Matrix](#).
- (11) The transition framework has performance indicators for the organisational units responsible for various transition programs.
- (12) Student Engagement provides guidelines and standards to transition stakeholders each year based on best practice for the delivery of transition programs. The guidelines outline required content for particular activities, such as course information sessions delivered during Orientation Week.
- (13) Managers of relevant organisational units plan for their transition programs in their budgets, business plans and staff workload planning to ensure they are appropriately resourced, and that there are clear accountabilities and performance measures.

Part B - Delivery

- (14) Student Engagement and Media and Communications' staff collaborate on the development of the communication strategy that is subsequently delivered by multiple stakeholders, to ensure messages:
- a. are consistent, timely and effective in supporting transition
 - b. nurture a nascent sense of belonging and engagement with the La Trobe community
 - c. are tailored to diverse groups of commencing students
 - d. use the most appropriate communication channels
 - e. align with the timing, content and channels for other University communications
 - f. comply with the [Student Communications Policy](#).
- (15) A 'just-in-time' approach is adopted for the delivery of information to students, aligned with the different stages of the transition process, starting when offers are sent to prospective students. This ensures students are not overloaded by information and receive only the information relevant to their current circumstances at any given time.
- (16) The planning for and delivery of Orientation Week is overseen by campus-based orientation working parties who ensure campus-specific activities:

- a. align with the overall Orientation Week objectives outlined in the transition framework
- b. are delivered within budget
- c. are relevant to the specific cohorts of their campus.

(17) The timetable for Orientation Week is coordinated by Student Engagement to:

- a. ensure an intentional sequencing of transition activities
- b. ensure the most effective use of facilities
- c. minimize clashes with other large-scale student activities, and
- d. provide a balance of academic sessions and social activities.

(18) Wherever possible current student volunteers assist in the delivery of transition programs, particularly large events like Orientation Week.

(19) Orientation for students studying fully online is provided online at multiple times throughout the calendar year to cater to their non-standard enrolment and teaching periods.

(20) Students who enrol after teaching commences, those commencing mid-year and those commencing outside of the standard academic calendar are provided with access to comparable support and information as provided to other students prior to and during Orientation Week to facilitate engagement with their course, peers and staff.

(21) The University delivers ongoing targeted transition support throughout semester, such as study skills sessions, library introductions, and course and careers advice.

(22) The University utilizes enrolment data and academic preparedness data for an early intervention program which identifies and supports students at risk of not succeeding or of discontinuing their studies.

Part C - Evaluation

(23) Transition programs are reviewed annually for their effectiveness in supporting commencing students. Evaluations include both student and staff feedback and are informed by attendance data and other performance indicators.

(24) The reviews of the various transition programs are considered by all the relevant stakeholders and the Student Transition Experience Steering Group and feed into the development of subsequent iterations of the programs and the overall transition framework.

Section 5 - Definitions

(25) For the purpose of this Procedure:

- a. Commencing student: any undergraduate or postgraduate coursework student commencing studies with La Trobe University for the first time, including a student entering into a second year or Master's program, or returning to study at La Trobe after an absence of one year or more.
- b. Online orientation: a series of activities that occur online prior to commencement and into the early weeks of an online study period designed to support student engagement and to facilitate a student's transition to online learning and to La Trobe.
- c. Orientation Week: a coordinated series of academic and social activities that normally occurs in the week prior to commencement of each semester, although not necessarily a full week of activities, designed to facilitate a students' transition to La Trobe.

- d. Teaching period: the period between the commencement and completion of teaching in a specific subject.
- e. Transition: the ongoing process for commencing students of integration and engagement with University life, both academic and social.
- f. Transition programs: used in this document for brevity to describe activities, resources (physical or online), services and structured programs that support students who are new to the University.

Status and Details

Status	Current
Effective Date	23rd February 2018
Review Date	14th February 2021
Approval Authority	Academic Board
Approval Date	14th February 2018
Expiry Date	Not Applicable
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