



THE UNIVERSITY OF
NOTRE DAME
A U S T R A L I A

Procedure:

Program and Course Design

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Policy category: academic

Policy sub-category: programs and courses

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Responsible officer:	Head, Curriculum and Quality
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1 PURPOSE

- 1.1 This procedure supports the *Policy: Programs and Courses* by stating requirements for design of coursework programs and courses.
- 1.2 The Interpretation and definitions section at the end of this procedure:
 - 1.2.1 states requirements for interpreting this procedure and
 - 1.2.2 explains its hierarchical relationship with other policy documents in the University's *Policy Framework*.
- 1.3 **Scope**
 - 1.3.1 This procedure applies to:
 - 1.3.1.1 all coursework programs of the University of Notre Dame Australia (the University), and
 - 1.3.1.2 staff who design, monitor or review programs and courses.
- 1.4 **Later effective dates of some requirements**
 - 1.4.1 Although this procedure as a whole takes effect at the date stated at the bottom of each page, clause 11.4 and its subclauses take effect on 1 January 2024.

2 RELATED POLICIES AND REGULATIONS

- 2.1 This procedure should be read alongside the *Policy: Programs and Courses*, which it supports.
- 2.2 The *Policy: Assessment in Higher Education Coursework and Enabling Courses* and *Procedure: in Higher Education Coursework and Enabling Courses* states design requirements for assessment tasks in programs and courses.
- 2.3 The *Procedure: Program and Course Life Cycle* requires staff involved in endorsing or approving academic proposals in relation to programs and courses to ensure that they meet the design requirements stated in this procedure.
- 2.4 The *Procedure: Program and Course Information* states requirements for program requirements documents and course outlines, which are the University's authoritative statements of what students are required to do to complete programs and courses.
- 2.5 The *Regulation: Research Degrees* states requirements for design of higher degrees by research.

3 PROGRAM DESIGN

- 3.1 **Alignment with Australian Qualifications Framework**
 - 3.1.1 A program that leads to an award of the University will be consistent with the relevant qualification specification of the Australian Qualifications Framework in:
 - 3.1.1.1 its volume of learning and
 - 3.1.1.2 the level of knowledge and skills it enables students to acquire.
- 3.2 **Program learning outcomes**
 - 3.2.1 Program learning outcomes will be consistent with:
 - 3.2.1.1 the level of knowledge and skills specified by the Australian Qualifications Framework for the qualification to which the program leads, and
 - 3.2.1.2 where the program is accredited by an external body, the accreditation standards.
 - 3.2.2 Learning activities and assessment tasks in courses required for completion of a program will be aligned to enable students to achieve the program learning outcomes.

3.3 Award titles

3.3.1 The titles of awards to which programs lead will be:

3.3.1.1 consistent with sector practice in titles for similar awards, and

3.3.1.2 aligned with other award titles to ensure the University has a coherent suite of such titles to facilitate marketing of programs and student choice of programs.

3.4 Compulsory courses, prescribed elective and general elective courses

3.4.1 Requirements for students to complete a program, a major or a minor may include:

3.4.1.1 a compulsory course (a course the student must complete)

3.4.1.2 a prescribed elective course (a course from a list of courses, from which the student must complete a specified number or units of credit weighting of courses), or

3.4.1.3 a general elective course (where the program requirements permit a student to complete any course in which the student is eligible to enrol, up to a specified units of credit weighting).

3.5 Directed individual study courses and special topics courses

3.5.1 A directed individual study course is a course in which an individual student, under the direction of an academic staff member, undertakes study and assessment on a topic that meets a need of the student or is of particular interest to them.

3.5.2 A special topics course is a course undertaken by two or more students on a topic in the discipline not covered by other courses offered in the relevant teaching period.

3.6 Referencing

3.6.1 All courses in a discipline will use the same referencing style.

3.6.2 Each program and each discipline major will, in an introductory course in the program or major, introduce students to the referencing style used in, as relevant, the primary program discipline or the discipline of the major.

4 MAXIMUM PROGRAM DURATION

4.1 The maximum duration of a program is the total period of enrolment within which a student is expected to complete all program requirements, for their knowledge and skills gained in the program to be considered current.

4.2 The maximum duration of a coursework program is:

4.2.1 where students are only permitted to enrol full time in the program, the period it would take a student to complete the program if they passed all their courses, plus two years, or

4.2.2 where students are permitted to enrol part time in the program, twice the number of years it would take a student studying full-time to complete the program if they passed all their courses, plus two years (up to a maximum period of 10 years).

4.2.3 Where knowledge and skills in a discipline change more rapidly, program regulations may state a shorter maximum duration than that prescribed by clauses 4.2.1 or 4.2.2.

4.3 The *Procedure: Academic Progress* states requirements for the situation where a student's total enrolment will reach or exceed the maximum duration of their program.

5 CORE CURRICULUM

5.1 In accordance with the University Statutes, each coursework program will normally require students to complete courses in the Core Curriculum of the University.

- 5.2** The objectives of the Core Curriculum are to:
- 5.2.1 communicate the Catholic view of the integration of faith and reason
 - 5.2.2 provide introduction to ethics as an academic discipline in preparation for life and work
 - 5.2.3 introduce the concept of liberal arts education and its capacity to enrich education within both professional and humanities degree courses, and
 - 5.2.4 enable a coming together of students of different backgrounds and interests, and
 - 5.2.5 create of habits of philosophical and theological reflection that will last for life and have a positive effect upon autonomous and rational decision-making.
- 5.3** The Core Curriculum is comprised of the following types of Core Curriculum course:
- 5.3.1 a first-year undergraduate compulsory Core Curriculum course and
 - 5.3.2 undergraduate elective Core Curriculum courses at either 2000 level or 3000 level, or
 - 5.3.3 postgraduate elective Core Curriculum courses at either 5000 level or 6000 level.
- 5.4** There are five types of elective Core Curriculum course available to students:
- 5.4.1 electives embedded in professional studies, which must be co-designed and co-taught with the School of Philosophy and Theology
 - 5.4.2 electives in liberal arts, theology, and philosophy
 - 5.4.3 that involve international travel and experiences
 - 5.4.4 pilgrimages, and
 - 5.4.5 community service and charity activities.
- 5.5** For elective Core Curriculum course types indicated for clauses 5.4.3, 5.4.4 and 5.4.5 the School of Philosophy and Theology will provide:
- 5.5.1 an intellectual preparation for the experience
 - 5.5.2 readings and activities to coincide with the experience, and
 - 5.5.3 a reflection or integrative assessment task at the end of the experience to enable students to bring together their intellectual and experiential learning.
- 5.6** Elective Core Curriculum courses through their content and learning outcomes will:
- 5.6.1 integrate faith and reason, and
 - 5.6.2 foster and promote at least three of the objectives of the Core Curriculum listed in clause 5.1 and its sub-clauses, and in particular this must include:
 - 5.6.2.1 the objective in clause 5.1.5, 'to create of habits of philosophical and theological reflection that will last for life and have a positive effect upon autonomous and rational decision-making'.
- 5.7** The Core Curriculum requirement for different types of coursework programs is stated in the following table.
- 5.7.1 This requirement does not apply to undergraduate certificate and graduate certificate programs.
 - 5.7.2 Where a program does not have standard-sized courses, the Vice-Chancellor may approve an exception whereby the program embeds the equivalent of the required Core Curriculum course(s) within larger courses.

Type of program	Requires completion of
Undergraduate diploma	The undergraduate compulsory Core Curriculum course.
Bachelor degree Embedded bachelor (honours) degree	The compulsory Core Curriculum course and one undergraduate elective Core Curriculum course.
Bachelor degree (graduate entry) Embedded bachelor (honours) degree (graduate	One undergraduate elective Core Curriculum course. Where a student has already completed the Core

entry) One-year bachelor (honours) degree	Curriculum when enrolled in another undergraduate program, they may enrol in a general elective course in its place of an undergraduate elective Core Curriculum course.
Graduate diploma Masters by coursework	One postgraduate elective Core Curriculum course.

6 WORK INTEGRATED LEARNING AND COMMUNITY SERVICE LEARNING

- 6.1** Each undergraduate degree program will provide students with opportunities for work integrated learning (WIL) and/or community service learning.
- 6.2** WIL is:
- 6.2.1 assessed learning designed in collaboration between academic staff and a business, industry, profession or community partner that
 - 6.2.2 enables students to apply knowledge and skills developed in their program in
 - 6.2.2.1 a workplace (via a placement or internship)
 - 6.2.2.2 a simulated workplace or
 - 6.2.2.3 a project for a workplace.
- 6.3** Community service learning is assessed learning that involves performing service to a community or for a community organisation.
- 6.4** In addition to WIL and/or community service learning opportunities, it is good practice for an undergraduate degree programs to include, in the first 200 units of credit of courses, employability activities such as simulations, case studies, role-plays and/or talks by graduates of the program who have entered employment.
- 6.5** Where a masters by coursework program is intended to prepare graduates for a specific profession, the school will collaborate with the relevant professional, statutory or regulatory body to design courses required for the program that will prepare graduates for the profession.

7 UNDERGRADUATE CERTIFICATES

- 7.1** A program that leads to an undergraduate certificate will require students to complete courses totalling 100 units of credit or less.

8 MAJORS, MINORS AND SPECIALISATIONS

- 8.1** A bachelor degree program or embedded bachelor (honours) program may require students to, or allow students to, complete a major, minor and/or specialisation.
- 8.2** A masters by coursework program may require students to, or allow students to, complete a specialisation.
- 8.3 Majors**
- 8.3.1 A major will require students to complete courses in a discipline or on an academic theme totalling at least 200 units of credit, of which:
 - 8.3.1.1 no more than 75 units of credit of course can be at 1000 level, and
 - 8.3.1.2 at least 50 units of credit of courses will be at 3000 and/or 4000 level.
 - 8.3.2 Where the program regulations permit a student to undertake two majors (a double major), the student may count one course towards completion of both majors (provided there is a course that can fulfil requirements of both).

- 8.3.2.1 Where a student counts a course to fulfil requirements of two majors, the student may undertake a general elective course to make up the volume of learning required for the program.

8.4 Minors

- 8.4.1 A minor will require students to complete courses in a discipline or on an academic theme totalling at least 150 units, of which:
- 8.4.1.1 no more than 50 units of credit of courses can be at 1000 level, and
 - 8.4.1.2 at least 25 units of credit of courses will be at 3000 or 4000 level.

8.5 Specialisations

- 8.5.1 A specialisation will require students to complete courses in a discipline or on an academic theme totalling at least 100 units of credit.

9 DOUBLE DEGREES

9.1 A double degree is a program that enables students to:

- 9.1.1 complete degrees in two different disciplines in a lower total volume of learning than if they undertook each degree separately, by providing cross-credit between the two degrees, and
- 9.1.2 on successful completion of all requirements of the program, receive a separate testamur for each of the two degrees.
- 9.1.3 The amount of reduction of volume of learning which a double degree program provides in relation to each component single degree may vary depending on the number of required courses for the component single degree.
- 9.1.4 Where one or both component single degrees in a double degree program have an honours stream, and a student is invited to undertake the honours stream(s):
 - 9.1.4.1 the student cannot take both honours streams concurrently, and
 - 9.1.4.2 where an honours stream requires a further year of study, the school will make clear to the student that undertaking the honours stream will extend the duration of their double degree.
- 9.1.5 A double degree program will:
 - 9.1.5.1 combine two degrees that are also offered as separate single degree programs (the component single degrees), unless Academic Council approves an exception
 - 9.1.5.2 have a volume of study that is
 - greater than the volume of either component single degree program by at least 200 units of credit, and
 - at least 70 percent of the combined total volume of learning of both component single degree programs, and
 - 9.1.5.3 enable students to study both single degree disciplines from early in the program.
 - 9.1.5.4 The courses required for completion of the double degree program will:
 - require students to undertake the Core Curriculum courses only once
 - include all courses that are required for completion of each component single degree program, and
 - include courses from each component single degree program (other than the Core Curriculum courses) that total at least 50 percent of that degree program's total required units of credit.

- 9.1.5.5 Where the component single degrees are managed by two different schools, the double degree will be managed by one of the two schools in consultation with the other. The managing school will be identified as part of the program proposal approved by Academic Council.
- 9.1.6 Where a student enrolled in a double degree program completes all requirements of one of the component single degrees stated in the program regulations for that degree program, and wishes to graduate with that single degree, they can do so by transferring their enrolment to the single degree program.

10 BACHELOR (HONOURS) DEGREE PROGRAMS

- 10.1** A bachelor (honours) degree program is considered an undergraduate program, but:
 - 10.1.1 has program learning outcomes at Australian Qualifications Framework level 8, and
 - 10.1.2 a 200-units-of-credit bachelor (honours) may require an undergraduate degree in the same discipline for entry.
- 10.2** A bachelor (honours) degree program will be either:
 - 10.2.1 a 200-units-of-credit program in a discipline to which students may be admitted if they have previously completed a bachelor degree in the discipline, or
 - 10.2.2 an undergraduate degree program of 800 or 1000 units of credit that includes an honours stream of courses (an embedded honours program).
- 10.3** Where an undergraduate degree includes an honours stream of courses, all courses in that stream must be at an advanced level.
- 10.4** A bachelor (honours) program will:
 - 10.4.1 require students to complete a research component that
 - 10.4.2 includes in the work the student will submit for assessment a written paper to demonstrate advanced theoretical and technical knowledge in the relevant discipline or area of practice.

11 POSTGRADUATE COURSEWORK PROGRAMS

- 11.1** A graduate certificate program will require students to complete courses totalling 100 units of credit.
- 11.2** A graduate diploma program will require students to complete courses totalling 200 units of credit.
- 11.3** The *Australian Qualifications Framework* qualification specification for masters degrees allows the volume of learning of such a degree to be reduced where students enter the masters program on the basis of a qualification in the same discipline as that of the program or a closely-related discipline.
 - 11.3.1 Accordingly, the minimum volume of learning of a masters by coursework program varies depending on the minimum qualification required for entry to the program, as follows:
 - 11.3.1.1 where the entry requirement is that applicants have completed a bachelor degree, with no discipline specified: 400 units of credit
 - 11.3.1.2 where the entry requirement is that applicants have completed a bachelor degree in the same discipline as the masters program or a closely-related discipline: 300 units of credit
 - 11.3.1.3 where the entry requirement is that applicants have completed a bachelor

(honours) degree, graduate certificate or graduate diploma in the same discipline as the masters program or a closely-related discipline: 200 units of credit.

11.4 (This clause and its subclauses will take effect on 1 January 2024.) A masters by coursework program will require students to undertake a research component:

11.4.1 comprising a course or courses totalling at least 50 units of credit, on either:

11.4.1.1 a topic in the program discipline, or

11.4.1.2 a topic on an aspect of practice in the profession for which the program prepares them, and

11.4.2 which includes in the work the student will submit for assessment a written paper in which the student will demonstrate advanced and integrated understanding of a complex body of knowledge in the discipline or area of practice.

11.4.3 The *Procedure: Assessment and Examinations* states requirements for supervision and examination of students' work submitted in such research component courses.

12 NESTED AWARDS, INCLUDING EXIT AWARDS

12.1 Nested awards are a set of closely-related awards at different levels of the Australian Qualifications Framework, in which courses that fulfil the requirements of a lower award are the same as the courses required for a stage of the higher award. Examples are:

12.1.1 a nest comprising two or more of an undergraduate certificate, undergraduate diploma, associate degree and bachelor degree in the same discipline, and

12.1.2 a nest comprising two or more of a graduate certificate, graduate diploma and masters by coursework in the same discipline.

12.2 Awards may be nested so that one or both of the following is true:

12.2.1 A separate program leads to each award in the nest (sequenced nested awards), and

12.2.1.1 students enrol in a program for a lower award in the set and, on completing it successfully:

- receive the award to which the program leads, and
- may progress to a program that leads to a higher award in the nest, receiving credit towards it for all the courses they completed for the lower award.

12.2.2 Students enrol in a program leading to the highest award in the nest, but have the option of exiting the program part-way through with a lower award (an exit award).

12.3 In sequenced nested awards, the programs will be designed as a single coherent sequence of courses to ensure that:

12.3.1 students undertaking a lower program are prepared to undertake the higher program(s) successfully

12.3.2 assessment is designed coherently across the whole set of programs, and

12.3.3 learning outcomes of lower programs are aligned to learning outcomes of higher programs).

12.4 The *Procedure: Admission* states requirements for admission to nested awards.

12.5 The *Procedure: Credit* states requirements for credit transfer between nested awards.

13 COURSE DESIGN

13.1 Volume of learning, units of credit and student workload

- 13.1.1 The volume of learning of a typical full-time year of study (two semesters of full-time enrolment) is 1200 student learning hours.
- 13.1.2 The University uses units of credit to describe the volume of learning of a course.
- 13.1.3 In a coursework course or microcredential, one unit of credit is equivalent to an expected student workload of six learning hours, irrespective of the mode of learning or length of teaching period in which the course is delivered.
 - 13.1.3.1 A faculty board may approve a higher workload for a course than its unit of credit value indicates where it is needed to meet a professional program accreditation requirement.
- 13.1.4 A standard-sized course is 25 units of credit or a multiple of 25 units of credit.
- 13.1.5 A microcredential will have a units of credit value of five or a multiple of five.

14 MICROCREDENTIALS

- 14.1** A microcredential is:
 - 14.1.1 an assessed piece of learning
 - 14.1.2 based on a component of a course
 - 14.1.3 with a unit of credit value of 5 or a multiple of 5
 - 14.1.4 in which a student is enrolled and for which they receive a grade on their academic transcript.
- 14.2** Microcredentials must be graded on the grading basis NGP (pass – no range of passing grades) / F (fail).
- 14.3** The *Procedure: Credit* states requirements in relation to credit transfer towards courses on the basis of microcredentials.

15 SHORT COURSES

- 15.1** A short course is a learning activity or set of activities that:
 - 15.1.1 may or may not involve assessment
 - 15.1.2 in which students are not enrolled on the student management system, and
 - 15.1.3 for which students do not receive a grade on an academic transcript.
- 15.2** The school that manages a short course will issue a certificate of completion to students who complete it.

16 PROGRAM AND COURSE CONFIGURATION

- 16.1** The Academic Registrar will maintain detailed instructions for configuration of aspects of curriculum design, to ensure that specification of programs and courses will:
 - 16.1.1 meet requirements for funding and reporting
 - 16.1.2 avoid presenting difficulties to students in enrolling, and
 - 16.1.3 enable operational efficiency.
- 16.2** Staff who design programs and courses will ensure that the design complies with the Academic Registrar's configuration instructions
- 16.3** The Deputy Vice-Chancellor, Learning and Teaching may approve an exception to the Academic Registrar's instructions for curriculum configuration if persuaded that there is a strong rationale for the exception.

17 RESPONSIBILITIES AND DECISION-MAKING AUTHORITIES

- 17.1** This section summarises the requirements and decision-making authorities stated in this procedure that apply to each of the positions, committees or roles listed below.
- 17.1.1 Should any decision-making authority stated in this procedure be inconsistent with a delegation in the schedule of academic delegations to the *Standing Delegations of Authority*, the *Standing Delegations of Authority* states the correct delegation of the decision-making authority.
- 17.2 Academic Registrar**
- 17.2.1 The Academic Registrar will maintain detailed instructions for curriculum configuration aspects of curriculum design (see clause 16.1)
- 17.3 Deputy Vice-Chancellor, Learning and Teaching**
- 17.3.1 The Deputy Vice-Chancellor, Learning and Teaching may approve an exception to the Academic Registrar's instructions for curriculum configuration (see clause 16.3).
- 17.4 Faculty boards**
- 17.4.1 A faculty board may approve a higher workload for a course than its unit of credit value indicates where it is needed to meet a professional program accreditation requirement (see clause 13.1.3.1).
- 17.5 Schools**
- 17.5.1 The school that manages a short course will issue a certificate of completion to students who complete it (see clause 15.2).
- 17.6 Staff who design programs and courses**
- 17.6.1 Staff who design programs and courses will ensure their design complies with the Academic Registrar's instructions on configuration aspects of program and course design, unless the Deputy Vice Chancellor, Learning and Teaching has approved an exception (see section 16).
- 17.7 Vice-Chancellor**
- 17.7.1 The Vice-Chancellor may approve an exception whereby a program that does not have standard-sized courses may embed the equivalent of the required Core Curriculum courses within larger courses (see section 5).

18 RELATED DOCUMENTS

None.

19 INTERPRETATION AND DEFINITIONS:

19.1 Interpretation

- 19.1.1 The following rules of interpretation apply to this procedure:
- 19.1.2 The University's *Policy Framework* sets out the hierarchy of the University's policy documents.
- 19.1.3 Should any provision in this procedure be inconsistent with a provision of a document higher in the University's hierarchy of policy documents as stated in the [Policy Framework](#), the higher document prevails and overrules this procedure to the extent of the inconsistency.
- 19.1.4 This procedure must be read alongside other closely-related policy documents:
- 19.1.4.1 the policy that it supports, identified in the Purpose section

- 19.1.4.2 closely-related policies and regulations listed in the Related policies and regulations sections
- 19.1.4.3 the *Code of Conduct (Staff)* and *Code of Conduct (Students)*, which include a requirement to comply with policy documents of the University, and
- 19.1.4.4 any other documents listed in the Related documents section.
- 19.1.5 Where this procedure uses:
 - 19.1.5.1 the verbs 'will' or 'must', it states a requirement
 - 19.1.5.2 the phrases 'cannot', 'must not' or 'only [position title] can', it states a prohibition
 - 19.1.5.3 the words 'include', 'includes; or 'including' followed by a list, the words 'without limitation' are taken to follow immediately
 - 19.1.5.4 the phrase 'for example' or 'such as' followed by a single instance or list, the instance or list is not exhaustive
 - 19.1.5.5 the phrases 'described in', 'set out in', 'specified in' or 'stated in', it will be read as if the words 'expressly or impliedly' appeared immediately before them;
 - 19.1.5.6 the singular, it also means the plural, and vice versa
 - 19.1.5.7 any gender, it includes the other genders, and
 - 19.1.5.8 a reference to a statute, ordinance, code or other law, it includes regulation, by-laws, rules and other statutory instruments under it for the time being in force and consolidations, amendments, re-enactments, or replacements of any of them.

19.2 Definitions

- 19.2.1 The definitions section of the *Policy: Programs and Courses* defines the terms used in this procedure, other than the terms listed below.
- 19.2.2 The following terms are defined in clauses of this procedure, as follows:
 - 19.2.2.1 **Community service learning** has the meaning stated in clause 6.3.
 - 19.2.2.2 **Component single degree** has the meaning stated in clauses 9.1.5 and 9.1.5.1.
 - 19.2.2.3 **Compulsory course** has the meaning stated in clauses 3.4.1 and 3.4.1.1.
 - 19.2.2.4 **Directed individual study course** has the meaning stated in clause 3.4.1.
 - 19.2.2.5 **Double degree** has the meaning stated in clause 9.1 and its subclauses.
 - 19.2.2.6 **Exit award** has the meaning stated in clause 12.2.2.
 - 19.2.2.7 **General elective** has the meaning stated in clauses 3.4.1 and 3.4.1.3.
 - 19.2.2.8 **Major** has the meaning stated in clause 8.3.1 and its subclauses.
 - 19.2.2.9 **Microcredential** has the meaning stated in clause 14.1 and its subclauses.
 - 19.2.2.10 **Minor** has the meaning stated in clause 8.4 and its subclauses.
 - 19.2.2.11 **Nested award** has the meaning stated in clause 12.1.
 - 19.2.2.12 **Prescribed elective** has the meaning stated in clauses 3.4.1 and 3.4.1.2.
 - 19.2.2.13 **Sequenced nested award** has the meaning stated in clauses 12.2.1 and 12.2.1.1.
 - 19.2.2.14 **Special topic course** has the meaning stated in clause 3.5.2.
 - 19.2.2.15 **Specialisation** has the meaning stated in clause 8.5.1.
 - 19.2.2.16 **Unit of credit** has the meaning stated in clause 13.1.3.
 - 19.2.2.17 **Volume of learning** has the meaning stated in clauses 13.1.1 and 13.1.2.
 - 19.2.2.18 **Work integrated learning** has the meaning stated in clause 6.2.

Version	Date of approval	Approved by	Amendment
1	13/01/2023	Vice Chancellor	New procedure