



Course and Program Design Principles - Procedures

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3.20.02 Course and Program Design ^[3]

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PPL 3.20.03 Course Coding ^[4]

PPL 3.20.04 Program Nomenclature ^[5]

Senate Rules ^[6]

PPL 3.60.01 Student Charter ^[7]

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PPL 3.20.02a Course and Program Design Principles ^[8]

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Notes:

June 2017 - Nomenclature update

1. Purpose and Objectives

These procedures are intended to give effect to the uniform implementation of PPL 3.20.02a Course and Program Design Principles – Policy ^[16].

2. Definitions, Terms, Acronyms

Academic Programs – sequence of study leading to the award of a qualification such as an undergraduate degree or diploma, and/or postgraduate coursework qualification.

Australian Qualifications Framework (AQF) – a single comprehensive national qualifications framework that represents the national policy for regulated qualifications in Australian education and training.

Course (formerly known as subject) – a distinct unit of study within a program, for which a grade is given. Each course is identified by its alpha-numeric code, a title and a fixed unit value. Courses are normally completed in one or two semesters.

Late year course – a course at level 3 or higher.

Units – represent the value of individual courses which contribute to the total unit requirement of an academic program.

3. Procedures Scope/Coverage

These procedures apply to the design and implementation of the common standardised structure of all coursework programs and courses of the University.

4. Procedure Statement

The University uses a common standardised structure to apply to undergraduate and postgraduate coursework awards and the standardisation is a fundamental aspect of the University's program structure.

Likewise, a standardised course coding structure must be used, when new courses are being developed. Please refer to PPL 3.20.04b Program Nomenclature – Procedures ^[17] and PPL 3.20.03b Course Coding – Procedures ^[18].

5. Program Design Principles

The University's standardised program structure is intended to:

- be transparent and readily intelligible to students and staff;
- aid comprehension and marketability of the University's programs;
- promote equitable financial liability for students;
- enhance portability of credit transfer across the University's programs and of the University's awards across the Australian university sector;

- rationalise program and course offerings; and
- rationalise teaching loads and promotes resource efficiency.

All programs offered must meet:

- AQF volume of learning requirements (refer AQF guidelines at <http://www.aqf.edu.au/> ^[19]);
- AQF learning outcome requirements (i.e. knowledge, skills, application of skills and knowledge (refer AQF guidelines at <http://www.aqf.edu.au/> ^[19]);
- AQF requirements for research for each program level, as specified in the AQF guidelines at <http://www.aqf.edu.au/> ^[19];
- A standard annual workload of 16 units; and
- A standard semester workload, other than for summer, of 8 units.

Proposals to vary principles and procedures relating to the University's standardised program structure must be considered by the Committee for Academic Programs Policy (CAPP).

5.1 Academic Program Review process

The University's Academic Program Review process ensures the major generalist degrees are reviewed every seven years, and that all other teaching programs (or suites of programs) are reviewed comprehensively every five years.

Academic Program Reviews comprise a broadly-based and comprehensive review of a program of study, including the structure, focus and outcomes of the program. Procedures and guidelines for University policy PPL 3.30.05 Academic Program Review ^[9] refer.

The Course and Design policy provides a reference to inform reviews of program structure and program curricula.

5.2 Undergraduate programs

Requirements for all undergraduate awards are outlined below. All undergraduate awards of the same duration comprise the same number of units.

Award	Minimum Units	Minimum duration of FTE study	AQF level	Comments
Associate degree	32 units	2 years (four semesters)	AQF level 6 Associate Degree	Associate Degree in Business is 32 units delivered in intensive mode over 1.3 years full time.
3-year Bachelor degree	48 units	3 years (6 semesters)	AQF level 7 Bachelor Degree	AQF volume of learning is 3 years.

4-year Bachelor degree	64 units	4 years (8 semesters)	AQF level 7 Bachelor Degree May include option to transfer to AQF level 8 Bachelor Honours Degree	AQF volume of learning is 4 years. AQF volume of learning for honours is embedded as an additional year.
5-year Bachelor degree	80 units	5 years (10 semesters)	AQF level 7 Bachelor Degree May include option to transfer to AQF level 8 Bachelor Honours Degree	AQF volume of learning is 5 years. AQF volume of learning for honours is embedded as an additional year.
4-year Bachelor Honours degree	64 units	4 years (8 semesters)	AQF level 8 Bachelor Honours Degree May include option to transfer to AQF level 7 Bachelor Degree	AQF volume of learning is 4 years.
5-year Bachelor Honours degree	80 units	5 years (10 semesters)	AQF level 8 Bachelor Honours Degree May include option to transfer to level 7 Bachelor Degree	AQF volume of learning is 5 years.

5.3 Honours programs

The Australian Qualifications Framework (AQF) specifies that level 8 Bachelor Honours Degree qualifications must:

- be (typically) one year following a Bachelor Degree; or
- be embedded in a Bachelor Degree, (typically) as an additional year;
- provide graduates with knowledge of research principles and methods; and
- qualify as a pathway for graduates to undertake research and further learning, and incorporate a supervised research component.

The following principles apply to honours programs:

- it is not acceptable under the AQF for some students in a program to be graduated with a level 7 bachelor degree and other students in the same program to be graduated with a level 8 bachelor degree with honours;
- the level 8 Bachelor Degree Honours program must incorporate a minimum supervised research component of at least 4 units;
- the 4-unit research requirement could be split into two 2-unit components; such as a combination of a substantial piece of research and/or research preparations (for example, a 2-unit research preparation course and a 2-unit individual research project); and

- in line with the AQF guidelines and advice, the honours program structure must be 'academically defensible' based on the learning outcomes.

Refer to PPL 3.50.12 Bachelor Honours Degrees ^[10]— policy, procedures and guidelines for additional information.

5.4 Dual undergraduate programs

The following principles are applied to dual programs:

- the total program requirements for dual programs are fully standardised (i.e. evenly divisible by 8);
- it is desirable that the component parts of a dual program also be equally divisible by 8;
- combination of two three-year programs: the overall length of the program is no less than 64 units and no more than 80 units;
- combination of a four-year and a three-year program: the overall length of the program is no less than 80 units and no more than 96 units; and
- combination of two four-year programs: the overall length of the program is no less than 96 units and no more than 112 units.

5.5 Postgraduate Coursework programs

The following principles are applied to all postgraduate coursework awards.

The minimum units required and minimum duration of full time equivalent study for postgraduate coursework awards are outlined below.

Award	Minimum Units	Minimum duration of FTE study	AQF level	Comments *
Graduate Certificate	8 units	0.5 year (one semester)	AQF level 8 Graduate Certificate	All Graduate Certificates are 8 units.
Graduate Diploma	16 units	1 year (two semesters)	AQF level 8 Graduate Diploma	All Graduate Diplomas are 16 units. Transfer credit may be granted toward a Graduate Diploma from other parts of a suite of postgraduate awards.
Masters Degree (Coursework) (16 units)	16 units	1 year (two semesters)	AQF level 9 Masters degree (Coursework)	AQF volume of learning is 1 year. Entry is following a level 8 qualification in same discipline. AQF requires some research for Masters Degree (Coursework).

				UQ requires a minimum research component of 4 units for all Masters Degree (Coursework) programs.
Masters Degree (Coursework) (24 units)	24 units	1.5 years (three semesters)	AQF level 9 Masters degree (Coursework)	<p>Transfer credit may be granted toward a coursework masters from other parts of a suite of postgraduate awards.</p> <p>AQF volume of learning is 1.5 years.</p> <p>Entry may be:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • following a level 7 or level 8 qualification in same discipline; • following a level 8 qualification in a different discipline. <p>AQF requires some research for Masters Degree (Coursework).</p> <p>UQ requires a minimum research component of 4 units for all Masters Degree (Coursework) programs</p>
Masters Degree (Coursework) (32 units)	32 units	2 years (four semesters)	AQF level 9 Masters degree (Coursework)	<p>Transfer credit may be granted toward a coursework masters from other parts of a suite of postgraduate awards.</p> <p>AQF volume of learning is 2 years.</p> <p>Entry may be:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • following a level 7 or level 8 qualification in the same discipline; • following a level 7 or level 8 qualification in a different discipline. <p>AQF requires some research for Masters Degree (Coursework).</p> <p>UQ requires a minimum research component of 4 units for all Masters Degree (Coursework) programs.</p>

Professional (coursework) Doctorate	Minimum 48 units	3 years (six semesters) (maximum 10 semesters)	AQF level 10 Doctoral Degree(Professional)	AQF volume of learning is typically 3-4 years AQF requires minimum 2 years research for the Doctoral Degree (Professional)
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* refer to AQF guidelines at <http://www.aqf.edu.au/> ^[19] for detailed requirements.

5.6 Principles for entry to Masters Degree (Coursework) programs

5.6.1 AQF compliant pathways are:

- A student with an AQF level 8 qualification in the same discipline may undertake 16-unit Masters Degree (Coursework).
- A student with an AQF level 8 qualification in a different discipline may undertake 24-unit Masters Degree (Coursework).
- A student with an AQF level 7 qualification in the same discipline may undertake 24-unit Masters Degree (Coursework).
- A student with an AQF level 7 qualification in a different discipline may undertake 32-unit Masters Degree (Coursework).

5.6.2 Candidates with or without a degree/s, and with Recognised Prior Learning (RPL), are to be assessed as above.

- for example, potential students without a degree could undertake a 32-unit Masters Degree (Coursework) program, but would need to meet stated RPL requirements.

Credit and RPL will be determined in accordance with University rules and policies (*refer: PPL 3.50.03b Credit for Previous Studies and Recognised Prior Learning – Procedures* ^[11], sections 5.1 Admission and 8.2 Articulation of policies and requirements).

5.6.3 A level 7 or level 8 degree in a related discipline must be assessed to be identified as a level 7 or level 8 qualification in the same or different discipline.

- The assessment decision must be made by the Faculty in line with guidelines approved by CAPP to ensure consistency in accordance with agreed UQ disciplines.

5.7 Courses offered in postgraduate coursework programs

This section specifies coding requirements for courses offered within postgraduate coursework programs, as follows:

5.7.1 A student must gain 75% of the credit required for the award for postgraduate level courses.

5.7.2 At least 75% of the credit required for a 16-unit Masters Degree (Coursework) program must be for courses coded at masters level or higher.

5.7.3 At least 50% of the credit required for a Masters Degree (Coursework) program greater than 16 units must be for courses coded at masters level or higher.

5.7.4 Undergraduate level courses are not to be included in postgraduate program lists.

5.7.5 The executive dean or associate dean (academic) may permit a student to enrol in and gain credit for up to 25% of advanced undergraduate courses not included on the program list.

5.7.6 Where a Masters degree is offered both standalone and as part of an integrated Bachelor Honours/Masters program in the same discipline, variations to the requirements in clauses 5.7.1 to 5.7.5 above may be possible. Such requests must be submitted through CAPP for consideration.

5.7.7 Section 5.7 of these Procedures overrides any program rule.

6. Transition Arrangements

6.1 This section contains information about the principles that guide the development of transition arrangements where one program is being discontinued or superseded by another program.

6.2 A student who has started a program must be given a reasonable opportunity to finish it even if the program is no longer offered to others. This intent is echoed also in Senate Rule – Miscellaneous Provisions 2 [20].

6.3 A student's 'contract' with the University relates to the program they have been admitted to. It is not an automatic entitlement that a student enrolled in a program that is being replaced by another program will have access to a transition arrangement.

6.4 Where a transition arrangement is made available, the arrangement can not guarantee that all students eligible to access the provision will be able to complete the new program in the same duration as would have applied, had they remained in the original program.

6.5 A student is not compelled to access a transition arrangement but may do so if they believe it is in their best interests.

6.6 Care should be taken when transition arrangements are established to preserve, for the good of past and future graduates, the enduring value of the existing qualification that is being replaced.

6.7 Any transition arrangement established must ensure:

- academic standards are not lowered; and
- the arrangement will not be unfair to another student.

6.8 Senate may establish a transitional scheme to allow students to transfer from an undergraduate program to a postgraduate program if the undergraduate program is being discontinued or replaced, wholly or partially, by a postgraduate program.

6.9 A transitional scheme established under 6.8 must be set out in the program rules for the postgraduate program.

6.10 Where transition arrangements involve moving from an undergraduate program to a postgraduate program, the following conditions for establishing a transition arrangement must be observed:

- (a) define the cohort of students entitled to access the transitional scheme; and
- (b) specify the program of study and minimum number of units a student is required to obtain to be eligible for the postgraduate award; and
- (c) not lower academic standards.

6.11 When applying 6.10(b), PPL 3.50.03 Credit for Previous Studies and Recognised Prior Learning ^[21] and PPL 3.20.02 Course and Program Design ^[8] do not apply if Senate considers the late year courses undertaken by students while enrolled in the undergraduate program are comparable to the courses a student is required to undertake in the postgraduate program.

6.12 The minimum units for 6.10 (b) must not be less than 50% of the program requirements for the postgraduate program.

6.13 Students entitled to access the transitional arrangements are not eligible to apply for credit under PPL 3.50.03 Credit for Previous Studies and Recognised Prior Learning ^[21].

6.14 Sections 6.12 and 6.13 override any program rule or other PPL.

6.15 Proposals to discontinue a program or supersede a program by another program must be considered by CAPP; proposals must include appropriate transition arrangements for students affected by the change.

7. Enrolment Requirements

This section contains information on the minimum enrolment requirements for postgraduate coursework awards.

Enrolment requirements for undergraduate programs, including provisional entry to the Doctor of Medicine (MD), are contained in PPL 3.40.06 Undergraduate, Non-Award and CSP Admissions ^[12]. General entry requirements for postgraduate coursework awards are contained in PPL 3.40.07 Postgraduate Coursework Admissions ^[13]. Admission requirements for postgraduate research awards are listed in PPL 4.60.04 Higher Degree by Research Admission ^[14]. PPL 4.70.03 Professional Doctorates ^[15] contains the entry requirements for professional doctorates.

7.1 Specific entry requirements for each program are listed in the program rules and should reflect generic statements of tertiary or post-secondary qualifications, work experience and other requirements needed to enter the program.

7.2 The entry requirements field in the Programs Information table of SI-net ^[22] expands upon the generic requirements in the program rules (e.g. specific bachelor degrees required, years or type of work experience generally required, particular undergraduate study or courses).

7.3 Unless a strong case for exceptional circumstances can be made, students without tertiary qualifications normally enter a suite of postgraduate awards at the graduate certificate level.

7.4 Students who do not qualify for direct entry to another part of a suite of postgraduate programs may progress step-wise through the suite provided they meet the criteria set out in PPL 3.40.07 Postgraduate Coursework Admissions ^[23] or the individual program rules.

7.5 It may be appropriate to admit students to a postgraduate coursework program (except professional doctorates) without prior academic training in the discipline. The following principles apply.

- The program proposal submitted to CAPP outlines program quality assurance measures to demonstrate that the proposed program is of the appropriate rigour and standard expected of a postgraduate qualification from The University of Queensland.
- The enrolment requirements in the program rules detail expected undergraduate study and work experience (if required). Students entering without prior tertiary study should be through the Graduate Certificate and Graduate Diploma.
- Prospective students may be required to undertake preparatory programs or courses prior to entry into a Masters program (e.g. specific undergraduate courses that provide required prerequisite knowledge).

7.6 The minimum enrolment requirements for suites of postgraduate programs are set out below.

Note that the specific type of study and work experience is determined by the Executive Dean and the details are to be included in the entry requirements field in the Programs Information section of SI-net ^[22].

Graduate Certificate – Post-secondary study (or equivalent) and/or work experience in a related discipline or a bachelor degree.

Graduate Diploma – Post-secondary study (or equivalent) and/or work experience in a related discipline or bachelor or the graduate certificate in the suite of programs.

Masters Degree by Coursework – Bachelor degree in the discipline; or the graduate certificate or graduate diploma in the suite of awards, in accordance with AQF requirements.

Where no specific bachelor degree is required, see section 7.5 above.

8. Course Design Principles

Refer to PPL 3.20.03b Course Coding – Procedures ^[18] for additional information.

Courses are assigned a unique 8 character alpha-numeric code. Disciplines are identified by the leading 4-digit alpha characters. The first of the trailing four numeric characters in the course code indicates the level of the course offering.

8.1 All courses are assigned a unit value and are the same proportion of a full-time enrolment, regardless of the program in which they are offered.

8.2 Courses normally have a value of 2 units. The unit value of any course is determined by the faculty to which the school or academic discipline teaching the course belongs.

8.3 Courses of 1 unit, 3 units or of multiples of 2 units are permitted in some circumstances, but specific justification for their introduction must be provided to the Academic Board through CAPP.

8.4 A unit represents the same student workload (contact plus study) in all faculties. The University does not equate the unit value with hours of contact or study per week. However, as a rough guide, enrolment in 8 units in a semester could be regarded as equivalent to 'full-time employment' of approximately 40 hours per week.

8.5 Where a postgraduate course is substantially the same in content as an undergraduate course, there must be a clear and explicit distinction between the courses, including distinct assessment offered at the postgraduate level.

8.6 Where a postgraduate course is delivered concurrently with an undergraduate course (i.e. some learning activities are delivered jointly to both cohorts), the course profiles of each course must give notice of the shared teaching activities.

8.7 Wherever possible, honours programs should be separated into single semester courses. However, a 16-unit course may be offered on the grounds that it is a substantial and highly integrated research project undertaken over an entire year. Such requests must be submitted through CAPP for consideration.

8.8 The AQF requires level 9 Masters Degree (Coursework) qualifications to incorporate 'some independent research and project work or practice-related learning' (see 8.9).

8.9 Masters Degree (Coursework) and Masters Degree (Extended) programs offered at The University of Queensland must incorporate the following compulsory research requirements:

- a. a minimum research component of 4 units for all Masters Degree (Coursework) programs;

- b. a minimum research component of 4 units for all 64-unit Masters Degree (Extended) programs;
- c. the required minimum of 4 units of research may be distributed across the Masters Degree (Coursework) and Masters Degree (Extended) program and does not have to be a stand-alone course;
- d. components of courses that contribute towards the minimum research requirement for all Masters Degree (Coursework) and Masters Degree (Extended) programs may include practice-based research, literature reviews, presentations, essays and published papers, case studies, clinical and work-based research and write-up, in line with 'disciplinary norms';
- e. the compulsory minimum 4 unit research requirement for all Masters Degree (Coursework) and Masters Degree (Extended) programs is required to be individual work, and research undertaken within a group project may contribute if it is an individual assessment; and
- f. the mandated minimum research component required for any 2-unit course contributing to research is 20% research for that course, based on assessment.

8.10 All courses must form part of a sequence of study in a program and must be included in a program course list. Courses that are not attached to a program course list are not to be created.

Custodians

Academic Registrar Mr Mark Erickson

academic.registrar@uq.edu.au ^[24]

Links:

- [1] <http://ppl.app.uq.edu.au/print/node/578>
- [2] <http://ppl.app.uq.edu.au/printpdf/node/578>
- [3] <http://ppl.app.uq.edu.au/content/3.20.02-course-and-program-design#Procedures>
- [4] <http://ppl.app.uq.edu.au/content/3.20.03-course-coding>
- [5] <http://ppl.app.uq.edu.au/content/3.20.04-program-nomenclature>
- [6] <https://senate.uq.edu.au/legislation-and-rules>
- [7] <http://ppl.app.uq.edu.au/content/3.60.01-student-charter>
- [8] <http://ppl.app.uq.edu.au/content/3.20.02-course-and-program-design>
- [9] <http://ppl.app.uq.edu.au/content/3.30.05-academic-program-review>
- [10] <http://ppl.app.uq.edu.au/content/3.50.12-bachelor-honours-degrees>
- [11] <http://ppl.app.uq.edu.au/content/3.50.03-credit-previous-studies-and-recognised-prior-learning>
- [12] <http://ppl.app.uq.edu.au/content/3.40.06-undergraduate-non-award-and-csp-admissions>
- [13] <http://ppl.app.uq.edu.au/content/3.40.07-postgraduate-coursework-admissions>
- [14] <http://ppl.app.uq.edu.au/content/4.60.04-higher-degree-research-admission>
- [15] <https://ppl.app.uq.edu.au/content/4.70.03-professional-doctorates>
- [16] <https://ppl.app.uq.edu.au/content/3.20.02-course-and-program-design#Policy>
- [17] <http://ppl.app.uq.edu.au/content/3.20.04-program-nomenclature#Procedures>
- [18] <http://ppl.app.uq.edu.au/content/3.20.03-course-coding#Procedures>
- [19] <http://www.aqf.edu.au/>
- [20] <http://www.uq.edu.au/senate/content/legislation-and-rules>
- [21] <https://ppl.app.uq.edu.au/content/3.50.03-credit-previous-studies-and-recognised-prior-learning>
- [22] <http://ppl.app.uq.edu.au/glossary/term/171>

[23] <https://ppl.app.uq.edu.au/content/postgraduate-coursework-admissions-procedures>

[24] <mailto:'+'academic.registrar@uq.edu.au>+