

## Award Course Structure Standards

1. Overview
2. Educational Quality Framework, Policy & Procedures
3. Courses
  - 3.1. Modular Course
  - 3.2. Prescribed Course
  - 3.3. Diversified Course
  - 3.4. Honours Program
  - 3.5. Combined Degree
4. Course components
  - 4.1. Topic
  - 4.2. Minor
  - 4.3. Major
  - 4.4. Double Major
  - 4.5. Specialisation (as course component)
  - 4.6. Honours Program (as course component)
5. Additional course rules
  - 5.1. Aims
  - 5.2. Learning Outcomes
  - 5.3. Program of Study
  - 5.4. Australian Higher Education Statement (AHEGS)
  - 5.5. Permissible Awards
6. Course Structure Examples
  - 6.1. Example – Modular Course
  - 6.2. Example – Prescribed Course
  - 6.3. Example – Course Components

### 1. Overview

These mandatory standards apply to new and restructured AQF Level 7 Bachelor Degree and four-year AQF Level 8 Bachelor (Honours) degree courses. These Standards do not apply to dual awards, double degrees, courses at AQF Level 6 and below (Associate Degree, Advanced Diploma, Diploma) and postgraduate courses at AQF Level 8 and above (Graduate Certificate, Graduate Diploma, Masters, Doctoral Degrees).

Approved courses are categorised as Modular, Prescribed, or Diversified. All courses must comply with the requirements for one of these structures. The composition and placement of course components (e.g. Minors, Majors and Specialisations) determines the category and requirements for course design.

### 2. Educational Quality Framework, Policy & Procedures

Curriculum is developed and approved in accordance with the Award Courses Policy and Award Course Approval Procedures.

These Standards are to be read in conjunction with the:

- [Educational Quality Framework](#)
- [Award Courses Policy](#) and [Award Course Approval Procedures](#)
- [Award Course Improvement and Accreditation Procedures](#)
- [Honours Programs Policy](#).

### 3. Courses

All new and restructured AQF Level 7 Bachelor Degree courses (and course components) must comply with the requirements for one of these approved course categories:

- Modular (refer 3.1)
- Prescribed (refer 3.2)
- Diversified (refer 3.3)

Articulations must be considered and maintained when designing new, or restructuring existing, courses.

#### 3.1. Modular Course

AQF Level 7 Bachelor Degree courses and four-year AQF Level 8 Bachelor (Honours) Degree courses are to be developed with a Modular structure where possible to offer flexibility and choice for students.

A Modular Course consists of a common first year and must include at least one Major or Specialisation course component. Generic, non-specialised course components are generally not permissible.

##### 3.1.1. Common First Year

A Modular Course features a common first year, with the same Program of Study for all admitted students.

A Modular Course must include:

- 36 units of topics
- minimum of 22.5 units of Core topics
- maximum of 13.5 units of Option topics

##### 3.1.2. Subsequent Years

The second and third years (or part-time equivalent) of a Modular Course may include:

- 1 Major plus 36 units of Option and/or Elective topics<sup>#</sup>, or
- 1 Major plus 2 Minors, or
- 1 Major plus 1 Minor plus 18 units of Core topics, Option and/ or Elective topics
- 2 Majors, or
- 1 Specialisation.

The fourth year (or part-time equivalent) of a Modular Course may contain embedded 36-unit Honours Program/s (as course component/s).

<sup>#</sup> Maximum of 18 units of Elective Topics permitted

Refer 6.1 *Example – Modular Course*

#### 3.2. Prescribed Course

A Prescribed Course includes Core Topics throughout the Program of Study with limited Elective topics. Many Prescribed Courses are designed to meet requirements for external professional accreditation.

A Prescribed Course must include:

- maximum of 9 units of Option topics in the first two years (or part-time equivalent)<sup>^</sup>, or
- maximum of 18 units of Option topics in the first three years (or part-time equivalent)<sup>^</sup>.

<sup>^</sup> Inclusive of any Minor or Major.

The fourth year (or part-time equivalent) of a Prescribed Course may contain embedded 36-unit Honours Program/s (as course component/s).

Refer 6.2 *Example – Prescribed Course*

### 3.3. Diversified Course

A Diversified Course does not comply with requirements of a Modular Course or a Prescribed Course structure.

The fourth year (or part-time equivalent) of a Diversified Course may contain embedded 36-unit Honours Program/s (as course component/s).

### 3.4. Honours Program

An Honours Program is either a:

- i. Standalone, one year full-time (or part-time equivalent) AQF Level 8 Honours Program comprising 36-units, taken after completion of an appropriate undergraduate AQF Level 7 Bachelor Degree course, or
- ii. 36-unit course component, embedded in a four-year (or part-time equivalent) Bachelor (Honours) Degree course.

### 3.5. Combined Degree

A Combined Degree must consider the requirements of the two separate Bachelor Degree courses and adhere to the relevant Award Course Structure Standards.

## 4. Course components

### 4.1. Topic

Topics are units of learning that form part of a course. A standard full-time study load is 18 units per semester or study period, which is normally equivalent to four 4.5-unit topics.

#### 4.1.1. Topic Level

Some courses specify the number of units that must be completed at each level. The topic code indicates the level of learning and assessment:

Topic level	Codes from	Codes to
Undergraduate	XXXX1000	XXXX4999
Level 1	XXXX1000	XXXX1999
Level 2 ('upper level')	XXXX2000	XXXX2999
Level 3 ('upper level')	XXXX3000	XXXX3999
Honours	XXXX7000	XXXX7999
Postgraduate	XXXX8000	XXXX9999
Microcredentials and other	XXXX0000	XXXX0999

#### 4.1.2. Core Topic

- i. A Core topic is compulsory and must be completed to meet the requirements of the course, or course component.
- ii. There is a minimum quantity of Core topics in courses and course components.
- iii. Core topics must be the same for each course offering, i.e. various locations and modes of delivery.
- iv. Students must be able to progress with full time study load irrespective of when they commence the course. The student experience, and course duration, must not be adversely impacted by availability of Core topics.

### 4.1.3. Option Topic

A Program of Study in a course, Minor, Major or Specialisation (course component) may direct students to select from a list of Option topics.

An Option topic is selected by the student from a curated, defined list. Option topics are related, or complementary, to the course area of study.

An Option topic must:

- i. be approved by the College Dean (Education)
- ii. be presented in the Program of Study, within a list that contains no more than 10 Option topics per year level, and
- iii. be related or complementary to the area of study.

### 4.1.4. Elective

A Program of Study in a course, Minor, Major or Specialisation (course component) may direct students to select one or more Elective topics in any area of interest where requisites are met.

Elective topics:

- i. must not account for more than 18 units in a course, and
- ii. are selected by students from any area of study across the University where requisites are met.

## 4.2. Minor

All Minors must include:

- i. 18 units of topics, and
- ii. minimum of 13.5 units of Core topics, and
- iii. maximum of 4.5 units of Option topics.

A Minor in AQF Level 7 Bachelor Degree, or AQF Level 8 Bachelor (Honours) Degree, course must include:

- i. maximum of 4.5 units of level 1 topics, and
- ii. maximum of 9 units of level 2 topics, and
- iii. maximum of 9 units of level 3 topics

*And:*

- iv. is not required to commence until the student has attempted the equivalent of 36 units of common first year topics, and
- v. can be selected by a student who has gained admission to the course, and
- vi. is relevant, or complementary to the field of study aligned with the course, and
- vii. will appear on the Academic Transcript but will not appear on the Testamur nor form part of the Award qualification title.

## 4.3. Major

All Majors must include:

- i. 36 units of topics, and
- ii. minimum of 22.5 units of Core Topics #, and
- iii. maximum of 13.5 units of Option topics.

# Refer 4.4iii for Core Topic requirements for Double Majors.

A Major in AQF Level 7 Bachelor Degree, or AQF Level 8 Bachelor (Honours) Degree, course must include:

- iv. maximum of 9 units of level 1 topics, and
- v. minimum of 9 units of level 2 topics, and
- vi. minimum of 18 units of level 3 topics, and
- vii. no more than 4 topics that overlap with another Major.

*And:*

- viii. is not required to commence until the student has attempted the equivalent of 36 units of common first year topics, and
- ix. represents a specific sub area of a discipline that is recognised as a valuable discipline sequence of study in its own right or a discipline sequence of study that will add value to or accommodate the individual interests and aspirations of students, and
- x. is selectable by a student who has gained admission to the course, and
- xi. will appear on the Academic Transcript, and
- xii. may appear on the Testamur if approved as a Permissible Award for the course.

#### **4.4. Double Major**

A Double Major may be undertaken if:

- i. two Majors are permitted by the course Program of Study, and
- ii. each Major contains a minimum of 18 units of Core Topics, and
- iii. no Core Topics overlap in the Majors, and
- iv. no more than 18 units of topics overlap with another Major in the course Program of Study, and
- v. each Major contains Options, and
- vi. topic requisites are met

*And:*

- vii. will appear on the Academic Transcript, and
- viii. may appear on the Testamur if approved as a Permissible Award for the course.

#### **4.5. Specialisation (as course component)**

A Specialisation must include:

- i. 72 units of topics, and
- ii. minimum of 45 units of Core topics, and
- iii. maximum of 27 units of Option topics, and
- iv. maximum of 9 units of level 1 topics, and
- v. minimum of 18 units of level 2 topics, and
- vi. minimum of 36 units of level 3 topics

*And:*

- vii. is not required to commence until the student has attempted the equivalent of 36 units of common first year topics, and
- viii. represents a specific sub area of a discipline that is recognised as a valuable discipline sequence of study in its own right or a discipline sequence of study that will add value to or accommodate the individual interests and aspirations of students, and
- ix. may be available to students at entry and/or for selected by students admitted to the course, and
- x. will appear on the Academic Transcript, and
- xi. may appear on the Testamur if approved as a Permissible Award for the course.

#### **4.6. Honours Program (as course component)**

An Honours Program may be embedded in the Program of Study and is typically undertaken wholly in the fourth year (or part-time equivalent) of the course.

An Honours Program must include:

- i. 36 units of topics, and
- ii. will appear on the Academic Transcript, and
- iii. will appear on the Testamur if approved as a Permissible Award for the course.

## 5. Additional course rules

### 5.1. Aims

#### 5.1.1. Course Aims

Aims are required for all courses and must:

- i. provide a concise summary of the main aims of the course, and
- ii. contain a maximum of 5 bullet-point aims.

#### 5.1.2. Course Component Aims

Aims are required for all Minors, Majors and Specialisations and must:

- i. provide a concise summary of the main aims of the course component
- ii. contain a maximum of 5 bullet-point aims.

### 5.2. Learning Outcomes

Learning outcomes (LOs) are essential for courses and course components. They clarify the knowledge and skills that students should acquire and develop by the end of their studies.

All Core topic Learning Outcomes must scaffold to course Learning Outcomes and support students to apply the knowledge and skills required for successful completion of the course.

#### 5.2.1. Course Learning Outcomes

Learning Outcomes are required for all courses and must:

- i. align with outcomes of Core Topics in the Program of Study, and
- ii. contain a minimum of 6 Learning Outcomes
- iii. contain a maximum of 8 Learning Outcomes<sup>#</sup>
- iv. be presented in a numbered list.

#### 5.2.2. Course Component Learning Outcomes

Learning Outcomes are required for all Minors, Majors and Specialisations and must:

- i. align with outcomes of Core topics in the Program of Study, and
- ii. contain a minimum of 2 Learning Outcomes
- iii. contain a maximum of 3 Learning Outcomes<sup>#</sup>
- iv. be presented in a numbered list.

<sup>#</sup> Additional Learning Outcomes may be approved for professionally accredited courses and course components.

### 5.3. Program of Study

The Program of Study (PoS) lists the approved curriculum items that must be completed by students to satisfy requirements for an Award.

A Program of Study is required for courses and course components, including Minors, Majors, Specialisations and embedded Honours Programs.

The Program of Study for AQF Level 7 Bachelor Degree courses must include:

- i. minimum of 27 units of Level 1 topics
- ii. maximum of 45 units of Level 1 topics
- iii. minimum of 27 units of Level 3 topics.

#### 5.4. Australian Higher Education Statement (AHEGS)

The Australian Higher Education Graduation Statement (AHEGS) provides a description of the nature, level, context and status of the studies that were pursued by the graduate named on the statement. The AHEGS complies with Department of Education specifications and is provided to graduating students upon conferral together with a Testamur and Academic Transcript.

There is one AHEGS per course and this must be appropriate for all permissible awards in the Program of Study.

#### 5.5. Permissible Awards

A Permissible Award is the name of the Award qualification that appears on the Testamur and AHEGS.

### 6. Course Structure Examples

The following examples of course and course component structures comply with the Award Course Structure Standards and may guide curriculum development and review.

#### 6.1. Example – Modular Course

<b>Year 1</b>			
Common First Year	Core Topics (min. 22.5 units)		Options (max. 13.5 units)
<b>Years 2 and 3</b>			
Major	Major (36 units)		Options* (36 units)
OR			
Minor	Major (36 units)	Minor 1 (18 units)	Options* (18 units)
OR			
Double Minor	Major (36 units)	Minor 1 (18 units)	Minor 2 (18 units)
OR			
Double Major	Major 1 (36 units)		Major 2 (36 units)
OR			
Specialisation	Specialisation (72 units)		
<b>Year 4 (if applicable)</b>			
Honours	Honours Program (36 units)		

\* Refer topic requirements in Section 3.1.2

## 6.2. Example – Prescribed Course

<b>Year 1</b>			
100% Core	Core Topics # (36 units)		
<b>Years 2 and 3</b>			
100% Core	Core Topics # (72 units)		
OR			
75% Core	Core Topics (54 units)	Options (18 units)	
OR			
Major	Core Topics (36 units)	Major (36 units)	
OR			
Major / Minor	Core Topics (18 units)	Major (36 units)	Minor (18 units)
<b>Year 4 (if applicable)</b>			
Honours	Honours Program (36 units)		

# Refer topic requirements in Section 3.2

## 6.3. Example – Course Components

<b>Minor</b> (18 units)	Core Topics (min. 13.5 units)	Options (max. 4.5 units)
<b>Major</b> (36 units)	Core Topics (min. 22.5 units <sup>^</sup> )	Options (max. 13.5 units)
<sup>^</sup> Refer 4.4iii for Core Topic requirements for courses with Double Major		
<b>Specialisation</b> (72 units)	Core Topics (min. 45 units)	Options (max. 27 units)
<b>Honours Program</b> (36 units)	Honours Program (36 units)	



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\* Unless otherwise indicated, this policy or procedures still apply beyond the review date.

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