

# Subject Policy

## Section 1 - Subject Coding

(1) The coding system:

- a. incorporates a three character subject discipline prefix by three digits, the first indicating the level of the subject and the latter two being the distinguishing number of the subject;
- b. was introduced in 1992 for all subjects being taught for the first time in 1992;
- c. will be introduced for all current subjects by the start of the 1993 academic year.

### Principles

(2) In designing subject codes the following principles or guidelines were adopted:

- a. The codes should be alpha numeric to make them user friendly to staff and students.
- b. There should be as few characters as possible in the codes to speed the data entry to codes and to reduce the possibility of keystroke errors.
- c. The codes should group subjects by subject areas which may or may not relate to the discipline groups used for other purposes e.g. government reporting.
- d. The codes should indicate the level of subjects where for example level 1 indicates a first year undergraduate subject.
- e. Notwithstanding that the level of a subject may in rare circumstances change, information about a subject that may change should not be encoded.
- f. To avoid the possibility of duplicating existing codes, the codes should be of a different format to the codes of former constituent institutions.
- g. A subject code is unique to a subject, and should not be re-used when that subject becomes obsolete. The same code may be used for different versions of the one subject.

## Section 2 - Format of Codes

### Discipline Areas

(3) The subjects of the University will be assigned to particular discipline areas for the purposes of coding. Each discipline area will be represented by a three letter code (eg ACC for Accountancy, LAW for Law). These discipline areas need not relate directly to those used for other purposes e.g. government reporting.

(4) A particular discipline code, LAW for example, need not be Faculty specific. For example subjects coded LAW could be offered by any faculty.

### Subject Level

(5) The level of a subject is an indication of the intensity or depth of treatment of a discipline.

Level 0 = bridging, enabling or other non-award subject.

Level 1 = Introductory

Level 2 = Building on Level 1

Level 3 = Building on Level 2 up to a level expected of a graduate of a three year undergraduate degree

Level 4 = Level expected of a graduate of an undergraduate degree of more than three years duration or in a postgraduate study that goes beyond an undergraduate degree

Level 5 = Expected to involve a level of analysis or application of knowledge that meets the AQF Masters Guidelines

Level 6 = Codes assigned to the research component of Master courses

Level 7 = Subjects taken in a Doctoral Program and codes assigned to the research component of Doctoral courses (including professional doctorates).

## **Distinguishing Numbers**

(6) This will be a number from 01 to 99 for each subject within each level within each discipline group.

(7) Where the distinguishing numbers for a particular prefix have been exhausted, the faculty will need to apply to the University Course Planning Committee (UCPC) for an additional prefix in that discipline area.

# **Section 3 - Subject Types**

## **Charles Sturt University Subject**

(8) A Charles Sturt University subject is defined for academic policy purposes as a subject for which Charles Sturt University has governance responsibility, and which may be awarded a Charles Sturt University substantive grade. Governance responsibility in this context means that Academic Senate both approves the subject and revisions to the subject, and that it quality assures its delivery, including but not limited to: subject evaluation; subject outlines; subject assessment; and subject delivery mechanisms.

(9) A Charles Sturt University subject must be designed so that a student's engagement in the specified learning and assessment activities of 140-160 hours is clearly articulated. Subjects that do not conform to this range are required to provide an indication of the workload expectation and reasons for the variation from the standard,

(10) A Charles Sturt University subject may therefore contain content developed by third parties, and the subject delivery may also be undertaken by third parties, provided in every case that governance of the subject is by the Academic Senate, via its own or equivalent quality assurance and approval processes. Equivalence of such processes must be demonstrated in each case, and may be audited by the Academic Senate.

(11) A subject that is not a Charles Sturt University subject may have a Charles Sturt University code. However Charles Sturt University grades, apart from credit grades, shall only be awarded for Charles Sturt University subjects.

## **New and Revised**

(12) Subjects undergoing approval may be either new or revised. New subjects receive a new and unique code, while revised subjects retain their existing code. The subject title may be changed in a subject revision.

## **Award and Non Award**

(13) Award subjects are those which are normally a component of an award course, leading to an award of the University. Non award subjects cannot be credited towards an award of the University, and are normally enabling subjects.

## **Administrative Subjects**

(14) Administrative subjects are developed to assist in the administration of Charles Sturt University offerings. They have a Charles Sturt University code, but contain no content or assessable work, and therefore receive no Charles Sturt University grades. They are sometimes called 'dummy' subjects.

## **Multi-Session Subjects**

(15) A multi-session subject is any subject with duration of more than one official teaching session or term. A multi-session subject typically has duration of two or four sessions or terms for a coursework-based subject. A research-based multi-session subject can be much longer (refer to Section 7 below).

# **Section 4 - Subject Profiles and Subject Outlines**

## **Subject Profiles**

(16) Subject profiles define a subject's core academic characteristics, and are approved by Academic Senate. The subject profile is not altered except when the subject is revised.

## **Subject Outlines**

(17) Academic Senate policy on subject outlines may be found in the Subject Outlines Policy. Most generally subject outlines act as an enabling document for the delivery of a subject on a session by session basis.

# **Section 5 - Subject Profile Information**

(18) The information in this section defines the core academic elements of a subject as approved in the subject profile. There are also additional administrative fields in the profile that are not described here.

## **Point Value and Duration**

(19) Subjects are allocated a point value, where the number of points represents the relative contribution of the subject to the total content of the course. Each subject also has a specified duration, in sessions. Points and durations have no direct relationship i.e. an 8-point subject, for example, could be offered over one or multiple sessions.

## **Abstract**

(20) The subject abstract is a clear and concise statement of the purpose and scope of a subject. It is not intended as a marketing statement about the subject.

## **Objectives**

(21) Objectives identify outcomes in terms of the skills, attributes and knowledge that a student who has successfully completed a subject should possess. While outcomes should clearly relate to the syllabus and assessment, they should not be simply a list of activities either undertaken in the subject or able to be undertaken by the graduate.

## Syllabus

(22) The syllabus lists the major topics to be covered by the subject.

## Residential School

(23) As part of the teaching and support strategies for distance education students, residential schools need to be planned and organised in advance. The inclusion of a residential school is seen as an integral component of the subject and is not to be varied session by session.

## Prerequisites

(24) Prerequisites are subjects that must be passed before a student may commence a subject.

(25) From 2011, prerequisites as a formal bar to enrolment are used only where there is a risk to students or the public which cannot be managed in any other way. For example, prerequisites would be appropriate for practicum or clinical practice subjects.

(26) Enrolment in subjects is the responsibility of students. The University will advise of any assumed knowledge in a subject.

## Co-requisites

(27) The use of co-requisites was discontinued by Academic Senate in September 2009.

## Incompatible Subjects

(28) From 2011 incompatible subjects will no longer be listed in subject outlines.

(29) Incompatible subjects are those subjects that cover much of the material covered in a given subject. For this reason it is not acceptable for students to count both subjects towards the one award. Generally if a student has already passed or is currently enrolled in an incompatible subject, enrolment restrictions for the other subject are set so that those students are not permitted to enrol.

(30) There are three categories of incompatible subjects.

- a. Sets of subjects that are similar (for example where basic skills such as statistics are presented for students in different courses under a variety of subject codes). In this case, each of the subjects should list all others as being incompatible.
- b. New subjects that supersede existing subjects (either for all students or for students in specified courses). In this case, the newer subject would list the older subject as an incompatible subject, but the older subject would not need to be updated unless it was still being offered (either to cohorts of students in a specified course who are completing an older course structure, or to students in a course for which the older subject is still appropriate).
- c. Subjects in a discipline area that cover material in that area in either a more introductory or more advanced level. In this case, each of the subjects should list the other as incompatible unless the incompatibility works in one direction only.

## Enrolment Restrictions

(31) Enrolment restrictions are conditions which restrict enrolment in a subject to students having particular characteristics.

(32) Restrictions may be of the following types.

- a. Student type-based - for example available only to single subject study students.
- b. Subject-based - where subjects are incompatible [see clauses 28-30: Incompatible Subjects].
- c. Requiring special approval from either the Course Director or Course Coordinator, Subject Coordinator, or Head of teaching School as appropriate.
- d. Course-based - for example, available to students in course X, or not available to students in course X.

(33) Any student in the University may enrol in a subject that has no enrolment restrictions as a unrestricted elective, provided he/she has the required prerequisite(s).

## **Student Workload**

(34) All new and revised subjects should include an indication of the prior knowledge assumed in the design of the subject and an estimation of how many hours of student workload is involved.

## **Development Panel**

(35) All new and revised subjects should have a development panel to advise on their construction. Where the subject is part of a double degree program, or serves a course of another Faculty, the second Faculty should be represented on the development panel.

## **Appendices**

(36) Subject profiles for new subjects require identification of a body of literature which informs the subject, some indication of teaching strategies to be employed, and an indication of assessment strategies to be employed. This indicative information assists in assuring the approving bodies that the subject is well constructed, but for ongoing delivery of the subject this information is either not required to be updated, or is updated in the subject outline.

# **Section 6 - Paired Subjects**

(37) 'Paired' subjects are those which have substantially the same content, but differ in their teaching, delivery and/or administration in some way. For example, an undergraduate subject may be paired with a postgraduate subject, with the same content but with a higher level of assessment in the postgraduate offering of the subject. Or subjects offered to students undertaking a transition program may be paired with existing subjects, but with modifications to teaching, support and assessment.

(38) Paired subjects are also called 'related' subjects in the Course and Subject Information Management System (CASIMS). They may have different names and subject codes.

## **Types of Paired Subjects**

(39) There are two types of paired subjects: *horizontally-paired* , and *vertically-paired* . A horizontally-paired subject is one paired with another subject of the same Charles Sturt University subject level (for example, both subjects may be level 5 subjects). Vertically-paired subjects are at different Charles Sturt University subject levels, for example a level 3 subject paired with a level 5 subject.

## **Commonalities and Differences**

(40) In paired subjects, the subject name and abbreviation and the syllabus may be the same. Assessment and learning experiences would generally be different.

(41) In the delivery of paired subjects the student experiences should be clearly differentiated, to reflect the different levels of difficulty of study being undertaken by cohorts within the subjects. For example assessment tasks should

differ (and align with the respective objectives), and the cohorts should have different forums and forum questions, blogs etc.

### **CASIMS and Paired Subjects**

(42) The commonalities and differences described in the above clause should be clearly described in the Course and Subject Information Management System (CASIMS) subject profiles for each of the subjects.

(43) Under subject relationships, the pairing relationship should be described and the 'paired subject' indicator selected.

(44) Under enrolment restrictions for both of the subjects in the pair should be a clear statement of the pairing relationship with each other (as otherwise students may enrol in these subjects without being aware of the close link between them).

(45) Similarly paired subjects should be listed as 'incompatible subjects' in that field, so that students do not enrol in both subjects in a pair and then potentially not be able to have both credited towards a degree.

### **Assessment and Moderation**

(46) The assessment criteria for the different cohorts in a paired subject relationship should be clearly set out in the subject outline. Moderation of paired subjects should explicitly examine the operation of the pairing arrangement.

## **Section 7 - Subject Delivery Models**

(47) The subject delivery models that are applied within Charles Sturt University are detailed in the document: Subject Delivery Models

(48) The business rules that apply to multi-session subject delivery are detailed in the document: Subject Delivery Models.

## Status and Details

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