Course and Subject Procedure - Coursework Design

Section 1 - Purpose

(1) This procedure supports the Course and Subject Policy by:

a. stating principles and requirements for design of coursework courses and subjects, including the maximum completion times for such courses
b. addressing compliance requirements including:
    i. Higher Education Standards Framework (Threshold Standards) 2021 (HESF)
    ii. National Code of Practice for Providers of Education and Training to Overseas Students 2018 (National Code) standards 11.1 - 11.3 (to register a full-time course at a location).

Scope

(2) This procedure:

a. applies to coursework courses, coursework subjects (including those in higher degree by research courses) and research component subjects for coursework courses
b. does not apply to course design requirements for higher degree by research courses.

Section 2 - Policy

(3) This procedure supports the Course and Subject Policy.

Section 3 - Procedure

Part A - Course design requirements

Course design elements

(4) Each course of study must include:

a. the specific course entry requirements in accordance with the Admissions Policy and the pathways for students exiting and transferring courses (qualifications)
b. a clear description of the curriculum elements, structure and design, course requirements and the duration of the course (expressed as subject units) that are consistent with the Australian Qualifications Framework (AQF)
c. any professional accreditation requirements and design elements that conform to HESF standard 3.1.1
d. discipline-related and generic course learning outcomes, consistent with HESF standard 1.4.2.

Course learning outcomes

(5) All courses will have defined course learning outcomes that address and integrate the following:

a. AQF knowledge, skills and application descriptors for the qualification.
b. Any relevant professional or discipline standards.
c. Subject to clause 9, the graduate learning outcomes.
d. For courses containing a significant research component (including undergraduate and higher degree by research), research training aligned to graduate learning outcomes for research.

(6) Course learning outcomes will describe, in plain English, what students must know and be able to demonstrate to achieve these outcomes.

(7) The course and subject documents will demonstrate how subjects required for the course are aligned to the course learning outcomes.

(8) Assessment in the course will be coherently sequenced and aligned to enable students to build their capabilities and skills progressively towards subject and course learning outcomes. Student performance in assessment tasks will demonstrate their progress towards meeting course learning outcomes by the time they complete the course.

Graduate attributes and graduate learning outcomes

(9) Graduate learning outcomes will enable students to demonstrate the University's graduate attributes (as stated in the Course and Subject Policy), and must be integrated into course learning outcomes for:

a. undergraduate courses of more than 64 points volume of learning
b. masters courses that prepare students for a specific profession (other postgraduate courses may address the graduate learning outcomes as appropriate).

(10) The Graduate Learning Outcomes web page states what students are expected to know, do, or demonstrate at the completion of their course to show that they have attained each outcome. The graduate learning outcomes cover:

a. academic literacy and numeracy
b. information, research and digital literacies
c. professional practice
d. First Nations cultural safety
e. global citizenship
f. sustainable and ethical practice.

(11) Courses in some discipline areas may concentrate more effort on some graduate learning outcomes than others. Likewise, graduate learning outcomes do not need to be included in all subjects, as long as they are integrated into the overall course.

Indigenous Australian course content

(12) The Indigenous Australian Content in Courses and Subjects Policy states design requirements for this type of content in courses, to ensure students can demonstrate their achievement of the graduate attribute of meaningful engagement with the culture, experiences, histories and contemporary issues of First Nations communities.

Inherent requirements

(13) Courses with inherent requirements must define these with reference to the guidelines on inherent requirements.

Early assessment tasks

(14) Courses must include one or more subjects with a low weighting assessment task that is graded and returned

before the census date, to identify students who need academic skills, English language or other support. As far as possible, these subjects should be:

a. in the first teaching period of study, for students who enter the course without credit, and
b. at points where students are likely to enter from credit pathways.

Language, literacy and numeracy

(15) Courses that integrate the graduate learning outcomes will be structured to develop students' English language, literacy and numeracy (LLN) skills, employing the following strategies:

a. Core subjects and restricted electives for each course will include assessment tasks that focus on discipline-specific LLN skills.
b. In the opening stages of the course, students will be required to:
    i. gather ideas and information from critical reading, listening and observing, to ensure they can engage with the necessary variety of traditional and digital texts
    ii. build the conceptual and factual foundations of their discipline
    iii. understand and develop proficiency in the basic mathematical knowledge and methods needed for the discipline/profession.
c. In the middle stages of the course, students will be required to:
    i. analyse, reason and produce well argued and carefully constructed accounts of complex thinking
    ii. where appropriate, interpret and use mathematical information and concepts to solve problems and communicate results.
d. In the final stages of the course, students are required to demonstrate the threshold LLN proficiencies required for their profession/discipline to a level appropriate to the AQF qualification.

Equitable and inclusive design

(16) The course will be designed to enable, as far as practicable, a diversity of students to succeed, including students with disability.

Discipline specific skills

(17) The course will equip students with current knowledge and skills in its discipline(s), including research where appropriate.

Academic integrity

(18) The course will provide students with opportunities to develop and demonstrate their academic integrity skills.

Work-integrated learning and work-integrated learning placements

(19) Each course is expected to include a range of work-integrated learning activities structured across the course to meet the employability elements of the University's graduate attributes and graduate learning outcomes.

(20) The Work-integrated Learning Procedure states detailed requirements for the design of work-integrated learning placements in subjects.

International study

(21) Undergraduate courses will as far as possible provide an opportunity for students to undertake study in another country. This international study may be:

a. study at an institution outside Australia that is equivalent to subjects required for the course, or that fulfils elective requirements for the course
b. an elective subject that provides an international study or work-integrated learning placement experience
c. an elective subject that provides an international research experience or training experience

(22) International study should normally occur later than the first full-time year of the course structure.

Part B - Course duration and maximum completion times

(23) The University Handbook will provide the standard full-time and part-time duration for each course.

(24) Actual course duration may vary based on student enrolment patterns and progress. To ensure currency of graduates' knowledge and skills, the maximum allowed period for coursework components of an award course is 10 years.

(25) Any approved leave of absence taken by the student is included when calculating their period enrolment.

(26) Academic Senate may approve:

a. longer maximum completion times for individual courses, however students must be informed that subjects studied outside the 10-year limit will be subject to recency requirements if used for credit towards another course, as per the Credit Policy.
b. shorter maximum completion times for individual course where this is a condition of professional accreditation of the course. Where used as a criterion to assess students' academic progress, a shorter maximum period must be stated in the course's University Handbook entry at the time a student begins their study in the course.

(27) Nothing in this procedure prevents the relevant approver from determining to exclude or not to exclude a student under the academic progress provisions of the Assessment Policy and Support for Students - Academic Progress Procedure.

(28) The Higher Degree by Research Policy states minimum and maximum periods of candidature for higher degrees by research.

Part C - Course structure components

Structure

(29) Course structural specifications are outlined in the Curriculum Architecture Principles (CAPs) and degree structures.

Combined degrees

(30) The following courses may be combined into a single course that meets the requirements of both:

a. an undergraduate degree and a postgraduate coursework degree
b. two bachelor degrees (double degree)
c. a bachelor degree and a one-year bachelor (honours) degree.

(31) For combined undergraduate/postgraduate coursework degrees:

a. two existing undergraduate and postgraduate courses that each lead to a single qualification will be combined into one set of course requirements that enable students to achieve all learning outcomes of both component

courses

b. there is no reduction of volume of learning, students complete the requirements of the undergraduate award prior to the postgraduate award
c. students will graduate with a single award (see Award Nomenclature Procedure).

(32) For double degrees:

a. two existing courses that each lead to a single qualification are combined into one set of course requirements that enable students to achieve all learning outcomes of both component courses
b. there is a reduced volume of learning compared to the total volume of the two component single degree courses, through cross-credit given for subjects required for either component course, that can fulfil the requirements of the other component course.
c. students will graduate with either:
    i. two awards (i.e. a testamur for each course) if both component courses are offered separately, or
    ii. a single award if the component courses are not offered separately.
d. students are provided with cross-credit, and the minimum volume of learning is the volume of the component single degree course with the greater volume of learning, plus 64 points (consistent with the limits on cross-credits between Charles Sturt University courses stated in the Credit Policy).

(33) To maximise cross-credit between its component single degrees, a double degree may:

a. constrict the choice of majors, minors and/or restricted elective
b. give cross-credit towards restricted electives that are only required to be in a specified discipline, where the other component single degree includes subjects of that discipline that are not used for cross-credit to meet another requirement
c. remove points allocated to unrestricted elective requirements in a component single degree, since these are met by any subject in the other component single degree that is not used for cross-credit to meet another requirement
d. give cross-credit towards a core work-integrated learning placement subject only when the other component single degree has a core work-integrated learning subject at the same level, with the same point value and meeting the same learning outcomes.

(34) A double degree may be designed with component single degrees that are not offered as a separate course but are accredited. In such cases:

a. the component single degree(s) must comply with AQF specifications for such a qualification, and provide students with the same substantial discipline specialisation and learning outcomes as they would achieve for any single degree award of the University at that level
b. the faculty must provide approval authorities with a map of the subjects that would be required for the two component single degrees if they were offered separately, to demonstrate that a component single degree would meet all requirements of such courses if it were offered separately, and the extent of cross-credit between the two degrees.

(35) For bachelor (honours) integrated or combined courses:

a. An integrated bachelor honours degree typically combines a three-year bachelor degree with a one-year honours degree.
b. Students enrol in the bachelor degree (AQF7) with the option of entering the integrated bachelor (honours) course if they achieve a required grade point average and/or level of performance in specific subjects.

This document may be varied, withdrawn or replaced at any time. Printed copies, or part thereof, are regarded as uncontrolled and should not be relied upon as the current version. It is the responsibility of the individual reading this document to always refer to the CSU Policy Library for the latest version.

c. A bachelor pass stream provides an exit option for students not transferred into the honours stream.
d. The honours level subjects may commence before the bachelors level subjects are completed and be interspersed with these, but requirements for both courses must be met.
e. The duration of the honours stream will typically be either one year (combined bachelor and honours) or two years (integrated honours).
f. The honours component may require students who enter the honours stream to complete different points total to complete the course, with a different course load and, in some cases, different duration.
g. Where necessary for professional accreditation reasons, the two component courses can continue to be offered separately alongside the integrated course.

(36) The faculty will state the criteria to be used for determining graduates' level/class of honours (set out in the Graduation Policy) in each bachelor (honours) course, as part of the course approval. The criteria may be:

a. the student's grade in the research component alone
b. the student's grades in the research component and specified coursework subjects
c. the student's grades in all subjects required for the course.

Nested sets of courses

(37) Nested sets of courses must (see also the Curriculum Architecture Principles):

a. meet the AQF qualification specification for each award in the set
b. normally comprise courses at different levels, but may comprise two courses at the same level with differing durations
c. include core subjects which scaffold from lower to higher level courses to ensure volume of leaning and course learning outcomes are aligned
d. enable subjects completed while enrolled in the lower-level awards to be credited towards the higher-level awards (beyond the maximum credit limits stated in the Credit Policy)
e. enable subjects completed while enrolled in a higher-level award to be credited towards a lower-level award if the student chooses to exit with the lower-level award
f. ensure that lower-level awards have CRICOS registration if early exit points are made available to international student visa holders
g. ensure professional accreditation statements are included where a lower-level course does not receive professional accreditation conferred on the higher-level course.

(38) The Graduation Policy states conditions for students to exit from a nested set of courses and graduate with any of the awards.

Courses with shared subjects

(39) Courses leading to different levels of qualifications may share subjects under the conditions set out in the Curriculum Architecture Principles.

Part D - Subject design requirements

(40) Subject weightings are based on their credit point value, where one point is equivalent to between 17.5 to 20 hours volume of learning and assessment activities.

(41) Subjects will be weighted as either:

a. a standard subject of 8 points (requiring 140 to 160 hours of student engagement)
b. any even number of points (normally divisible by eight)
c. for work-integrated learning subjects, as a variation to point values or hours of engagement required depending on whether:
    i. hours spent working in the workplace are considered to be learning and assessment activities
    ii. professional accreditation and/or professional registration require large numbers of work-integrated learning hours
d. where necessary and justified for administrative reasons, an administrative subject with no credit points value.

(42) Subjects will be designed so that:

a. their learning activities and assessment tasks are constructively aligned to the subject learning outcomes
b. the subject learning outcomes are aligned with and construct the learning outcomes of any course for which the subject is listed as a core subject or restricted elective subject
c. the subject as far as possible enables a diversity of students (including those with disability, health conditions, or ongoing carer responsibilities) to succeed
d. where it is necessary for a subject offering to use a different assessment task, it will test the same learning outcomes, at the same level of complexity, as the task in other offerings of the subject.

Guidance on subject design

(43) The Education Framework and Curriculum Architecture Principles provide detailed guidance on designing subjects to ensure:

a. assessment criteria and performance standards
b. alignment between assessment tasks and learning activities in subject, subject learning outcomes and course learning outcomes
c. optimal use of face-to-face and online learning activities.

Prerequisite subjects and assumed knowledge

(44) A subject may specify:

a. prerequisite subjects for reasons of safety or safe professional practice, to meet professional accreditation requirements, and/or for subject scaffolding. Prerequisite subjects will be enforced as a requirement for enrolment in the subject that specifies them (see the Enrolment and Fees Procedure)
b. assumed knowledge, learning or experience (including other subjects) that a student should have completed, to have a reasonable likelihood of success in the subject. Assumed knowledge will not be enforced as a requirement for enrolment in the subject that specifies it.

Incompatible subjects

(45) Incompatible subjects are those subjects that cover much of the material covered in a given subject, so that 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.

(46) Incompatible subjects may be:

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)

b. new subjects that supersede existing subjects (either for all students or for students in specified courses)
c. subjects in a discipline area that cover material in that area at either a more introductory or more advanced level
d. paired subjects.

Enrolment restrictions

(47) A subject may set conditions that restrict enrolment in a specific student cohort, for example, it may be available only to associate students or students in a particular course, or not available to students in a particular course.

Student workload requirements

(48) The Charles Sturt Calibrating Student Workload Framework provides information for determining appropriate student workloads for subjects in undergraduate and postgraduate coursework subjects, including assessment load and contact hours.

(49) The Pro Vice-Chancellor (Learning and Teaching) can approve exemptions to student workload for proven professional accreditation requirements and work-integrated learning subjects where appropriate.

Indigenous Australian content in subjects

(50) The Indigenous Australian Content in Courses and Subjects Policy states requirements for:

a. subjects, if they are to be classified as Indigenous Australian studies subjects
b. modules of Indigenous Australian content within subjects.

Work-integrated learning placements

(51) The Work-integrated Learning Procedure states the subject design requirements for work-integrated learning placements.

Intensive schools

(52) Subjects may require students to attend intensive schools as part of the subject assessment or as a compulsory attendance requirement to pass the subject.

(53) Courses may also offer non-compulsory intensive schools that are not part of assessment for a specific subject.

Third-party content in subjects

(54) A subject may contain content developed by an approved third party. Where third-party providers develop content they must comply with the necessary AQF standards by level, and be available for scrutiny against the Admissions Policy, Assessment Policy and other University standards.

Animal use in courses and subjects

(55) The Australian Code for the Care and Use of Animals for Scientific Purposes 2013 requires the University to seek alternatives to animal use for teaching and assessment, applying the principles of replacement, reduction and refinement to achieve humane experimental techniques. Alternatives include computer simulations, supervised clinical experience, ethically sourced tissue, surgical and anatomical models and mannequins.

(56) Where animal use is required, information must be provided as set out in Course and Subject Procedure - Information and Representation.

Subject codes

(57) Subject codes are issued by Student Administration in accordance with the Curriculum Architecture Principles. Faculties can request specific subject codes provided these meet the requirements and are available.

(58) A subject code is unique to a subject and should not be re-used when that subject is made obsolete. The same code will be used for different versions of the one subject.

(59) Micro-credential subject code information pending – to be provided by DLT. Principles for micro-credential subject codes are the same as those for other subjects and cannot be reused.

Part E - Course and subject design processes

Course development and design

(60) Course design will be informed by:

a. a collaborative approach
b. input from the external advisory committee
c. analysis of the market and its trends, as part of a faculty planning process informed by other relevant divisions of the University and the University strategy
d. student feedback and, if possible, involvement of student representatives in course design work
e. the Education framework and Curriculum Architecture Principles

(61) A Course Director will be appointed and a working party convened to develop and design a new course or make changes to an existing course, and to prepare the related course documents for approval.

(62) For a double degree comprising degrees in two faculties, or a shared course, the host faculty will be decided between the Executive Deans or by the Provost and Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Academic) in the event of a dispute.

(63) Working party requirements include:

a. for a course with service-taught subjects, academic staff of the other faculty or school
b. for a double degree or shared course comprising two faculties, a person or group satisfactory to both faculties to develop the business case and up to three members nominated by the relevant Associate Dean (Academic or Research) from each faculty.
c. for courses requiring professional accreditation consultation with the relevant professional body during course development.

(64) As part of the design of a new course or changes to an existing course, facilities must be checked, including facilities where placements are undertaken, to ensure they are fit for educational and research purposes to accommodate student numbers and relevant activities planned.

Subject development

(65) The Head of School (or head of unit) will nominate an academic staff member to convene a panel to develop and design a new subject or changes to an existing subject and:

a. the design team (including support staff from divisions, etc) will work in consultation with the Course Director
b. where the subject is a component of courses managed by more than one school or faculty, the subject design/redesign team will consult the relevant Course Directors to ensure that the design work does not compromise course learning outcomes

c. where the subject is a research coursework subject, the relevant Associate Dean, Research or delegate, and/or Honours Course Director, will be included in the design process.

Support for course and subject design

(66) The Division of Learning and Teaching:

a. supports academic staff as a partner in course and subject design
b. collaborates with faculties to provide the Charles Sturt Education Framework to guide staff in this work.

(67) The Division of Library Services:

a. supports faculties to design courses and subjects so that students can achieve digital and information literacy
b. advises on textbooks and other learning materials for subjects.

(68) The Indigenous Board of Studies and School of Indigenous Australian Studies advise faculties on design of Indigenous Australian content in courses and subjects.

Subject design process

(69) Subjects that are part of course requirements contribute to students' learning journey through the course.

(70) The mapping of subjects to course learning outcomes and graduate learning outcomes confirms the subject's effectiveness for this purpose.

(71) Subject redesign must maintain alignment with the course or courses to which the subject contributes.

Learning resources and educational support

(72) In the development of courses and subjects, there will be a requirement to incorporate particular resources and support that align with specific learning outcomes:

a. The learning resources, such as library collections and services, creative works, notes, laboratory facilities, studio sessions, simulations and software, that are specified or recommended for a course of study, relate directly to the learning outcomes, are up to date and, where supplied as part of a course of study, are accessible when needed by students.
b. The relevant educational support services offered by the University and particular resources to support students to achieve the required learning outcomes.
c. The relevant research support and infrastructure required to comply with research course and subject requirements.

Section 4 - Guidelines and other supporting documents

(73) The following guidelines and resources support this procedure:

a. Charles Sturt Calibrating Student Workload Framework
b. Education Framework

(74) Detailed work instructions are maintained in the Knowledge Base (in Confluence, under Faculty Admin) by the functional area supporting the specific task.

Staff who require access to the Confluence pages above should log a DIT Service Request to request access to the Faculty Administration Confluence page.

Section 5 - Glossary

(75) This procedure uses terms defined in the Course and Subject Policy, as well as the following:

a. Core subject – a subject that all students undertaking a course are required to pass.
b. Equivalent full-time study load (EFTSL) - where EFTSL 1.0 is 64 points of study, or 8 standard subjects completed in one year of study.
c. Full-time duration - the length of time it takes to complete a course if the student studies full time: e.g. is enrolled in 64 credit points each year (1.0 EFTSL).
d. Graduate attributes – see the Course and Subject Policy Part C.
e. Inherent requirements – as defined in the policy library glossary.
f. Major – as defined in the policy library glossary and Curriculum Architecture Principles.
g. Minor – as defined in the policy library glossary and Curriculum Architecture Principles.
h. Articulated set of courses - as defined in the policy library glossary.
i. Non-award offering – as defined by the Course and Subject Policy.
j. Point – as defined in the policy library glossary.
k. Prerequisite subject - a subject that a student must have completed before they can begin study in the subject for which it is specified as a prerequisite.
l. Restricted elective – a course requirement whereby a student can choose a subject or a specified number of subjects from a list of subjects or from a specified discipline; that is, not an unrestricted elective choice, see Curriculum Architecture Principles.
m. Short course - as defined in the policy library glossary.
n. Specialisation – as defined in the policy library glossary and Curriculum Architecture Principles.
o. Unrestricted elective – a requirement of a course that a student can meet by completing a subject they can choose freely from any subject of the University subject to requirements, see Curriculum Architecture Principles.
p. Work-integrated learning (WIL) - any learning activity in which students engage in realistic work activities or activities closely related to work:
    i. WIL activities include WIL placements and simulated work activities such as simulated workplaces, role-plays and case studies.
    ii. A WIL activity must involve partnership between the teaching school and an employer to design, deliver and/or assess students' performance in the activity.

Status and Details

Status	Current
Effective Date	22nd June 2026
Review Date	25th November 2029
Approval Authority	Provost and Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Academic)
Approval Date	22nd June 2026
Expiry Date	Not Applicable
Unit Head	Janelle Wheat Pro Vice-Chancellor (Learning and Teaching)
Author	Vanessa Salway Manager, Policy and Records
Enquiries Contact	Division of Learning and Teaching

Glossary Terms and Definitions

"Point" - A measure of volume of learning, equivalent to between 17.5 and 20 learning hours.

"Major" - a sequence of subjects in a discipline or on an interdisciplinary theme that: totals 64 points in volume requires students to complete at least 48 points above 100 level, and requires students to complete at least 16 points above 200 level.

"Minor" - a sequence of subjects in a discipline or on an interdisciplinary theme that: totals 32 points in volume; and includes at least 16 points above 100 level.

"Short course" - a learning activity or series of learning activities, for which students may receive a certificate of completion but which is/are not recorded as a subject with a grade on a formal transcript of results and have no relationship to award courses.

"Articulated set of courses" - means a sequence of courses in which the subjects required for the earlier course(s) in the sequence are a subset of the subjects required for the later course(s).

"Inherent requirements" - the fundamental components that demonstrate the abilities, knowledge and skills required to achieve the core learning outcomes of a course. They are based on course learning outcomes, which are designed to reflect professional standards. Reasonable adjustments can be made to meet the requirements, however, any adjustment must not fundamentally change the nature of the inherent requirement.

This document may be varied, withdrawn or replaced at any time. Printed copies, or part thereof, are regarded as uncontrolled and should not be relied upon as the current version. It is the responsibility of the individual reading this document to always refer to the CSU Policy Library for the latest version.