Curriculum Design Procedure

This procedure supports the Curriculum Design Policy

1.   Definitions

Name	Description
commencing students	A student is a commencing student if she/he is in their first year of study at ECU.
communication skills	Communication skills include written, oral, literacy and numeracy skills. In an academic and professional context these are reflected in a combination of literacies used by a student to communicate in day to day situations, academic contexts and in the workplace.
course consultative committee	The Course Consultative Committee is a forum comprising members from industry, employers and the community. It provides high level advice to the University about courses, teaching, research, and professional and community engagement.
course	A program of study necessary to qualify for an award of the University or a non-award course approved for delivery in accordance with University policy.
Course Learning Outcomes (CLO)	The expression of the set of knowledge, skills and the application of the knowledge and skills a person has acquired and is able to demonstrate as a result of completing a whole course.
entry standards	These are determined by the Academic Board and relate to the academic standards and conditions of entry for the admission of applicants to the University.
formative assessment	An activity which generates information (feedback) for students and staff on achievement in relation to learning
internationalisation	The integration of global and intercultural perspectives into the functions of the University.
Post Entry Language Assessment (PELA)	Post Entry Language Assessment (PELA) –An assessment of written English provided to all commencing students in the early part of their course via its instrument, the Communication Diagnostic Assessment (CDA).

Name	Description
Professional Accreditation	The formal accreditation of a course by, or on behalf of, a professional body, based on an assessment of the course that includes the attainment of profession-specific competence and/or practice by graduates.
Professional Body	An independent corporate entity, industry association, private organisation, or government agencies, and collectives of such entities, that represents a profession.
rubric	An assessment tool used to evaluate performance and provide guidance to students as to where and how they did or did not meet the required standard in an assessment.
summative assessment	An activity which contributes to a student's final grade in a unit or course
Volume of Learning	Volume of learning is the terminology used in the Australian Qualifications Framework (AQF) to denote the duration of an award, and is expressed in full time equivalent years.
Work Integrated Learning (WIL)	A generic term used to describe organised strategies and practices that integrate theoretical learning with directly related workplace experience in activities that may be required to be undertaken by a student for the successful completion of his or her course of study.

2. Purpose and Scope

The purpose of this procedure is to support the creation and revision of curriculum items at ECU by providing clear directives that align with the Curriculum Design Policy. The procedures set out in this document shall guide the development and renewal of the University's curriculum and form the basis for transparent approval and curriculum review processes irrespective of the location or mode of learning.

This procedure should be read in conjunction with the Curriculum Design Policy and with regard to related documents as outlined in section 6.

This procedure applies to all teaching staff involved in the design of higher education coursework programs and components including enabling, undergraduate and post-graduate coursework. It does not apply to teaching staff involved in the design Vocational Education and Training (VET) courses.

3. Procedures

3.1. Curriculum planning, development and support

a) For the development of a new course or a significant change to an existing course, the course development team normally consists of:

- Associate Dean, Teaching and Learning

- Associate Dean, Discipline

- Course Coordinator

- Staff with expertise relevant to the discipline of the proposed course (including staff outside the School offering the course) and staff who are likely to teach into the course

- Professional staff who support curriculum development in the School.

- Staff from the varied locations/modes of delivery as appropriate

b) For the development of a new unit, the development team normally consists of:

- Unit Coordinator

- Course Coordinator

- Staff with expertise relevant to the unit or are likely to assist with the teaching of the unit

- Professional staff who support curriculum development in the School

3.2. Course Structure Requirements

All curriculum must be compliant with the Australian Qualifications Framework for the required qualification level of the course (see Award Classifications and Structures table below).

3.3. Course Learning Outcomes

a) A set of distinct Course Learning Outcomes will be developed for each course.

b) Course Learning Outcomes are statements of the intended learning outcomes students will achieve on successful completion of a course.

c) Each course of study must be designed to enable achievement of defined Course Learning Outcomes regardless of a students' place of study or the mode of learning.

d) Course Learning Outcomes are informed by the following reference points:

- Australian Qualifications Framework (AQF);

- External professional accreditation standards (where applicable);

- Discipline Threshold Learning Outcomes (when applicable).

e) Course Learning Outcomes encompass discipline-related and generic outcomes and have several characteristics. They must:

- be consistent with the level and field of education of the award;

- describe what the graduate will know, be able to do, and be able to demonstrate on completion of a course;

- be linked into a whole-of-course design and define the scope and depth of the course;

- be measurable and achievable within the qualification type, level and the volume of learning, whether assessed at unit level, course level, or in combination;

- be clearly articulated to students.

f) An undergraduate course will have between six and ten Course Learning Outcomes customised from the ECU exemplars listed in Course Learning Outcomes – Exemplars for all courses.

g) A postgraduate course work course will have between three and six Course Learning Outcomes customised from the ECU exemplars listed in Course Learning Outcomes – Exemplars for all courses.

h) The Course Design will identify performance criteria for each Course Learning Outcome. Students must demonstrate the required performance standard on exit.

i) To assure achievement of Course Learning Outcomes, ECU has a compulsory mapping process at three junctures of the course where outcomes and feedback on outcomes to students are articulated (see Appendix 1 for Course Learning Outcomes):

- Introduced: How they are taught e.g. lecture, video, teamwork activity

- Consolidated: Where do they practise? How is feedback provided? e.g. assignment, peer review, in class laboratory session

- Demonstrated: Where they are assessed and a mark allocated? e.g. assignment, placement report, exam

j) Revisions to course and units must ensure that all Course Learning Outcomes remain mapped to Unit Learning Outcomes in prescribed units. Where revisions have impacts on other units or courses these must also be considered and addressed.

3.4. **Unit Learning Outcomes**

a) Distinct Unit Learning Outcomes will be developed for each unit. Unit Learning Outcomes are statements of the intended learning outcomes students will achieve on successful completion of a unit

b) Each unit of study must be designed to enable achievement of expected learning outcomes regardless of a students' place of study or the mode of learning.

c) Unit Learning Outcomes are informed by:

- the relevant Course Learning Outcomes; and

- the unit's level of application of knowledge and skills.

d) Unit assessment tasks are designed to provide evidence of student achievement of the learning outcomes; therefore, a constructive alignment between Unit Learning Outcomes and assessment items must be shown.

e) An undergraduate unit will have between three and five learning outcomes.

f) A postgraduate unit will have between three and five learning outcomes.

3.5. **Alignment of Learning Outcomes**

a) All courses will specify Course Learning Outcomes from which the course development team will develop the suite of aligned Unit Learning Outcomes.

b) Units, including learning, teaching and assessment, will be selected or designed and sequenced, to support progressive and coherent student achievement of the learning outcomes.

c) Methods of assessment must be consistent with the learning outcomes being assessed, capable of confirming that all specified learning outcomes are achieved, and assure that grades awarded reflect the level of student attainment.

3.6. **First year experience**

a) Introductory units in undergraduate and postgraduate courses will embed learning activities to support academic preparedness for study and build a sense of belonging to the course.

3.7. **Generic skills including communication skills**

a) All courses will systematically develop and assess generic skills including oral and written communication, team work and critical thinking.

b) Each course will specify entry standards for English Language Proficiency within each approved course documentation consistent with the Admissions Policy.

c) All courses will identify and articulate the exit standards for communication skills, including English Language Proficiency of their graduates as part of the Course Learning Outcomes. These exit standards should be developed in collaboration with the Course Consultative Committee and relevant regulatory bodies.

d) To support the attainment of the required exit standards, all commencing students, including those who enter with Advanced Standing or via other non-traditional pathways, will undertake a diagnostic assessment of relevant communication skills in a designated unit, as negotiated with the Course Coordinator and Post-entry Language Assessment (PELA) Adviser. The completion of this assessment is mandatory within the first year of study.

e) Course Coordinators will designate summative assessment tasks throughout the course which act as milestone requirements for assurance of the development communication skills.

f) Course Coordinators and Unit Coordinators and relevant support staff will actively collaborate in the design and delivery of appropriate interventions for students who are not able to meet these milestones. Consequences for not meeting milestones will be developed for each discipline.

g) Communication skill levels will be determined via key assessment tasks and documented in a standardised rubric.

h) Course Coordinators will facilitate moderation and benchmarking of all tasks that demonstrate exit standards for communication skills as per regular Course Evaluation and Review procedures.

i) Academic Teaching Staff will be supported by the Centre for Learning and Teaching to systematically and explicitly teach and assess communication skills across the course.

3.8. Internationalisation of the curriculum

a) Course coordinators will review opportunities for internationalisation of the curriculum, including exploring opportunities for mobility and experiential learning opportunities, and learning resources with international and intercultural perspectives.

b) Unit Coordinators will strive to include learning resources that have diverse authorship and cultural origin and, where appropriate, optimise the development of global perspectives.

3.9. Minimum standards for technology enhanced learning and teaching

a) Course Coordinators will ensure all units within a course are providing a consistent experience for students within Blackboard.

b) All units offered by ECU must have a Blackboard presence based on the ECU-provided template as the main conduit of information and communication with students.

c) ECU's Standards for Technology Enhanced Learning and Teaching will be used to guide the design of new units.

d) ECU's Standards for Technology Enhanced Learning and Teaching will be used to enhance the quality of existing units.

e) Unit Coordinators will ensure all instances of the unit Blackboard site use an ECU template appropriately and meet threshold requirements for the mode of delivery.

f) Teaching staff will be supported by the Centre for Learning and Teaching and Library Services to appropriately embed an ECU Blackboard template and implement the Standards for Technology Enhanced Learning and Teaching.

3.10. Unit Information Minimum Requirements

a) The CAPS Unit Outline contains mandatory minimum information for the student and the details within it are moderated by Academic Governance processes. Content within the unit outline can only be changed through an approved process, outlined in the Curriculum Approval Policy. All details within the unit outline, including unit learning outcomes, assessment, and content, must be adhered to throughout delivery of the unit. There must be no variation between the Unit Outline and unit information found on other sources, e.g. in the Blackboard unit site.

b) Critical information about requirements to satisfactorily complete the units, not contained within the Unit Outline, will be integrated into the unit's Blackboard site and include as a minimum:

- consultation and contact details for all teaching staff,
- the unit learning resources,
- an overview of the semester schedule,

- assessment information,

- academic integrity information,

- expectations and penalties,

- an overview of changes made to the unit as a result of UTEI feedback,

- relevant OHS material.

c) Unit Coordinators will update the unit's Blackboard site, in compliance with the ECU endorsed Blackboard template, and ensure critical information is available to students at least 14 days prior to the commencement of the relevant study period.

d) Schools and disciplines are able to add components to Blackboard, but will include the minimum requirements represented in the Blackboard Template in all units and will ensure consistency across the School and discipline.

e) If the unit is taught concurrently across different qualification levels and students from both levels share the same Blackboard site, distinct information for each unit is to be salient on Blackboard, and the units must have different Unit Outlines, for the respective unit codes/student cohorts, in light of requirements for differentiated assessment (and other aspects of teaching and learning).

3.11. **Experiential, Career Development and Work Integrated Learning**

a) Each undergraduate course will scaffold career development learning opportunities, inclusive of experiential and work integrated learning opportunities.

b) In compliance with the requirements described in the Work Integrated Learning Policy and Procedure, all undergraduate courses must provide opportunities for students to undertake Work Integrated Learning activities.

c) Course coordinators will ensure students are provided with assistance to identify suitable workplaces within which to complete their Work Integrated Learning activities.

d) Course coordinators will ensure students who are required to undertake work integrated learning activities are provided with comprehensive, meaningful and practical support to meet the requirements of their course of study.

3.12. **Inclusive Curriculum Design**

a) Curriculum design will intentionally value all learners and the experiences they bring by purposefully engaging students from diverse backgrounds and pathways including: Aboriginal, Torres Strait Islander, international, intercultural, low socio-economic backgrounds, rural or remote, first family member attending a university, return to study and people with accessibility issues.

b) Universal Design Principles will be used in all units to ensure built-in flexibility and improved access, availability and opportunity to information and learning for all students.

c) In all units a variety of resources, teaching methods and approaches to learning will be considered and adopted, in recognition of the diversity of the student body.

d) While meeting learning outcomes, assessment and accreditation demands, courses and units will be offered in ways that provide students with some flexibility and choice.

3.13. **Student engagement with Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander content**

a) An Acknowledgement of Country is to be provided at the commencement of each unit.

b) All undergraduate and postgraduate courses will provide opportunities for students to engage with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultural content in culturally appropriate ways.

c) Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultural content will be developed in partnership with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people.

d) All undergraduate courses will have units taught by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander teachers from and/or with Kurongkurl Katitjin.

e) All undergraduate courses will engage as appropriate with Aboriginal guest lecturers to supplement in-house teaching and course content.

f) Where practical, undergraduate courses will provide opportunities for Work Integrated Learning activities with Aboriginal organisations.

3.14. **Award Classification and Structure**

Qualification and volume of learning			
AQF Level	QualificationType	Volume of Learning	Credit Points
4	Certificate IV	Usually equivalent to one semester to two years of full-time study for which the University grants the award of *Certificate IV in X*. • 0.5 – 2 years	0
5	Diploma	Usually equivalent to one to two years of full-time study for which the University grants the award of *Diploma of X.* • 1-2 years	120 - 240
6	Advanced Diploma	Usually equivalent to one and a half to two years of full-time study for which the University grants the award of *Advanced Diploma of X*. • 1.5 -2 years	0
6	Associate Degree	Usually equivalent to two years of full-time study for which the University grants the award of *Associate Degree of X.* • 2 years	240
7	Bachelor Degree	Usually equivalent to three or four years of full-time study for which the University grants the award of *Bachelor of X.*	

Qualification and volume of learning			
AQF Level	**QualificationType**	**Volume of Learning**	**Credit Points**
		• 3 years • 4 years	360 480
8	Bachelor Honours Degree	Usually one year following a Bachelor Degree. A Bachelor Honours Degree may also be embedded in a Bachelor Degree, typically as an additional year for which the University grants the award of *Bachelor of X Honours.* • 1 year which follows a Level 7 Bachelor Degree in the same discipline • 4 years embedded	 120 480
8	Graduate Certificate	Usually equivalent to one semester to one year of full-time study for which the University grants the award of *Graduate Certificate in X.* • 0.5 – 1 year	 60 -120
8	Graduate Diploma	Usually equivalent to one to two years of full-time study for which the University grants the award of *Graduate Diploma of X.* • 1-2 years	 120 - 240
9	Masters Degree	Usually equivalent to one to two years full-time study for which the University grants the award of *Masters of X.* A Master degree may be designated as a **coursework** Master degree or **research** Master degree, in accordance with the AQF.	 120 - 240
9	Masters Degree (Extended)	Usually equivalent to three to four years of full-time study for which the University grants the award of *Masters of X.* • 3 – 4 years	 360 - 480
10	Doctoral Degree	Usually equivalent to three to four years of full-time study, which requires the student to make a substantial original contribution to knowledge through research and/or advanced critical reflection on professional theory and practice for which the University grants the award of *Doctor of X.* • 3 – 4 years	 0

3.15. **Credit Points**

a) The normal annual full-time load is 120 credit points - 1.0 Equivalent Full-Time Student Load (EFTSL).

b) Units will have credit points with preferred values of 15, 20 and 30. Any other value requires the approval of the Pro-Vice- Chancellor (Education).

c) The most prevalent unit size in undergraduate courses will be 15 credit points.

d) A unit has a fixed credit point value which cannot be changed.

e) A course has a fixed credit point value which cannot be changed.

f) The credit points allocated to each unit are based on the required volume of learning and denote the relative proportion of one EFTSL (Equivalent Full Time Student Load).

g) The expected volume of learning (undergraduate and postgraduate) is 10 hours per credit point, which will include class time, independent study and assessments. For example, the volume of learning for a 15 credit point unit will typically be 150 hours.

h) The volume of learning in a unit should enable a student with limited prior experience and knowledge to achieve the learning outcomes with a high degree of mastery. ECU units will only be considered equivalent if they have the same credit point value and at least 70% of the content and outcomes are the same.

3.16. **Zero Credit Point Units**

Allocation of Zero credit points to a unit will affect fee income and course structures. The only units that can be allocated zero credit points are:

- Thesis units within Higher Degree by Research Doctoral and Masters Courses; and

- Work experience in industry practicum units.

Course Coordinators and Schools should be aware that the inclusion of work integrated learning units with 0 credit points will impact on fee income and course structures. Refer to the Work Integrated Learning Policy (PL262) for further information.

3.17. **Unit Sets**

Only the unit sets listed below may be used in ECU courses.

Undergraduate	
Major *Recorded on the Testamur and the Statement of Academic Record*	A major is a set of related units with a total value of not less than 120 credit points that pursue learning in depth and provide a coherent and rigorous enquiry in a single discipline or interdisciplinary area of study.

Double Major *Recorded on the Testamur and the Statement of Academic Record*	The units required to complete two Majors in a single course, and in order to do so must complete all required units for each Major, which may require the student to complete units with a combined credit point value exceeding that required for completion of the Bachelor degree.
Minor *Recorded on the Statement of Academic Record only.*	A minor is a set of related units with a total credit point value of not less than 60 and not more than 90 credit points that provide a coherent and rigorous enquiry in a single discipline or interdisciplinary area of study.
Postgraduate	
Specialisation *(Completion of one or more Specialisations)* *Recorded on the Testamur and the Statement of Academic Record*	A specialisation is a set of units that provide a coherent and rigorous enquiry in a single discipline or interdisciplinary area of study. For use only in postgraduate coursework qualifications – may not be used in Higher Degree by Research courses.

3.18. **Unit, Unit set and Course Codes**

a) Vocational Education and Training (VET) units and course codes are allocated nationally.

b) Higher Education (HE) Unit Codes are allocated by Strategic and Governance Service Centre, in accordance with this procedure.

Unit Level	Description
1000	Typically used for introductory units in an undergraduate degree
2000	Typically used for units taken in the second year of an undergraduate degree
3000	Typically used for units taken in the third year of an undergraduate degree
4000	Typically used for units taken in the fourth year of an undergraduate degree
5000	Typically used for units taken in an honours degree
6000	Typically used for units taken in a postgraduate degree
7000	Typically used for doctoral degrees

c) Unit set codes are allocated by staff in Strategic Information Services (SIS) following approval by the delegated authority.

Code	Unit set Type
MA	Major
DM	Double Major

MI	Minor
SP	Specialisation

3.19. Double Degrees

a) Double degree courses will be designed on the following assumptions and premises:

- Degree combinations provide students with enhanced employability.

- The number of units to be studied in a double degree must be less than the number studied had the two degrees been studied separately.

- Once a double degree has been completed, a student would be able to enrol in Honours in either of the single degrees if their results qualify them for entry to Honours.

b) Award structure for double degrees:

- A rationale must be provided that demonstrates the opportunities and advantages of the double degree combination.

- The proposal for a double degree does not require contextual information about the separate degrees to be duplicated. The proposal needs to show only that information that pertains to the combination proposed e.g. the rationale, the proposed structure etc.

- The double degree is given a separate course code. The School owning the double degree will be the School whose course is likely to draw the most students. If there is no clear differentiation, the PVC (E) will guide the selection of the School to own the double degree.

- The course structure must include the required components of both degrees.

- In a double degree students must complete no less than 480 credit points (4 years full time load or equivalent), comprising no less than 240 credit points from each degree.

- The maximum number of credit points in an ECU double degree will be 840 credit points (7 years full time load or equivalent).

- In developing the course structure for a double degree, the units should be organised so that students can make even progress in both degrees.

- The double degree must retain its relationship with the two single degrees. The Course Coordinator of the double degree must ensure that, when there are unit changes to either of the single qualifications, those changes are reflected in the double degree structure.

3.20. Nested Qualifications

a) Nested courses of study can lead to awards at different AQF levels, offered and awarded by the University, sequentially. Courses at the lower levels are 'nested' within courses leading to awards at the higher levels enabling multiple entry and exit points for students.

b) Each course of study within a nested set, leading to each award, must meet the specifications for of the appropriate level of the Australian Qualifications Framework (AQF).

4. Contact Information

For queries relating to this document please contact:

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