

Quality Assurance Manual

SIGNIFICANT AMENDMENTS TO EXISTING COURSES

Definition

Significant amendments to existing courses include:

- the introduction of units involving new discipline areas or new majors, strands or streams in an existing course;
- changes in current course structures (including electives, sub-majors, and reweighting of core units);
- changes in the duration of or mode of offering of the course;
- deletion of an award or a major;
- conflation of two or more existing degrees
- changes of award title;
- change to campus offering;
- changes that affect other faculties (eg. in-service teaching arrangements)

Schedule for approval of significant amendments to existing courses

The schedule for the approval of significant amendments to existing courses mirrors that for new course proposals in that it is defined by its endpoint.

Significant amendments to existing courses to be introduced in the following academic year should be submitted to the May meeting of the T&LC and thence to Academic Senate at its June meeting. (Refer to [Appendix B3.1](#) below).

The June deadline for approval allows for significant amendments to be included in handbook entries for the following year's edition; for adequate promotion prior to the admission cycle beginning in October; and for schools to plan for the implementation of the relevant amendment.

Significant amendments may be submitted earlier than the May meeting of the T&LC. Academic Senate has made provision for the submission of proposals later than this deadline in exceptional circumstances and upon the approval of the Chair (notable examples have included changes as a result of course reviews).

A chart, "**Levels of Approval for Changes to Course, Specifications and Schedules**", indicates the level of approval required for common amendments to courses and units and is contained in [Appendix B4.1](#) below. The general principle is that decisions made in substance at one level are subject to review by one higher body but not more. Decisions range from minor curriculum amendments (made by the school concerned) -> changes to the schedule (approved by the degree board and dean) -> changes to the course structure (approved by the Academic Senate) -> substantial changes, eg length or title (approved by Council).

The format for proposed significant amendments to existing courses (contained in [Appendix B4.2](#) below) was accepted by ASCQA and subsequently endorsed by the T&LC. Additional comments and examples

have been provided.

The T&LC will use the checklist contained in Appendix B3.2 for consideration of significant amendments to existing courses as well as new course proposals. The checklist serves as a useful guide to faculties to ensure that the proposal adequately covers all areas.

Note that where necessary unit outline and course specifications and schedules should accompany proposals for significant amendments to existing courses in the formats indicated in Appendices [B3.6](#) and [B3.7](#) found below.

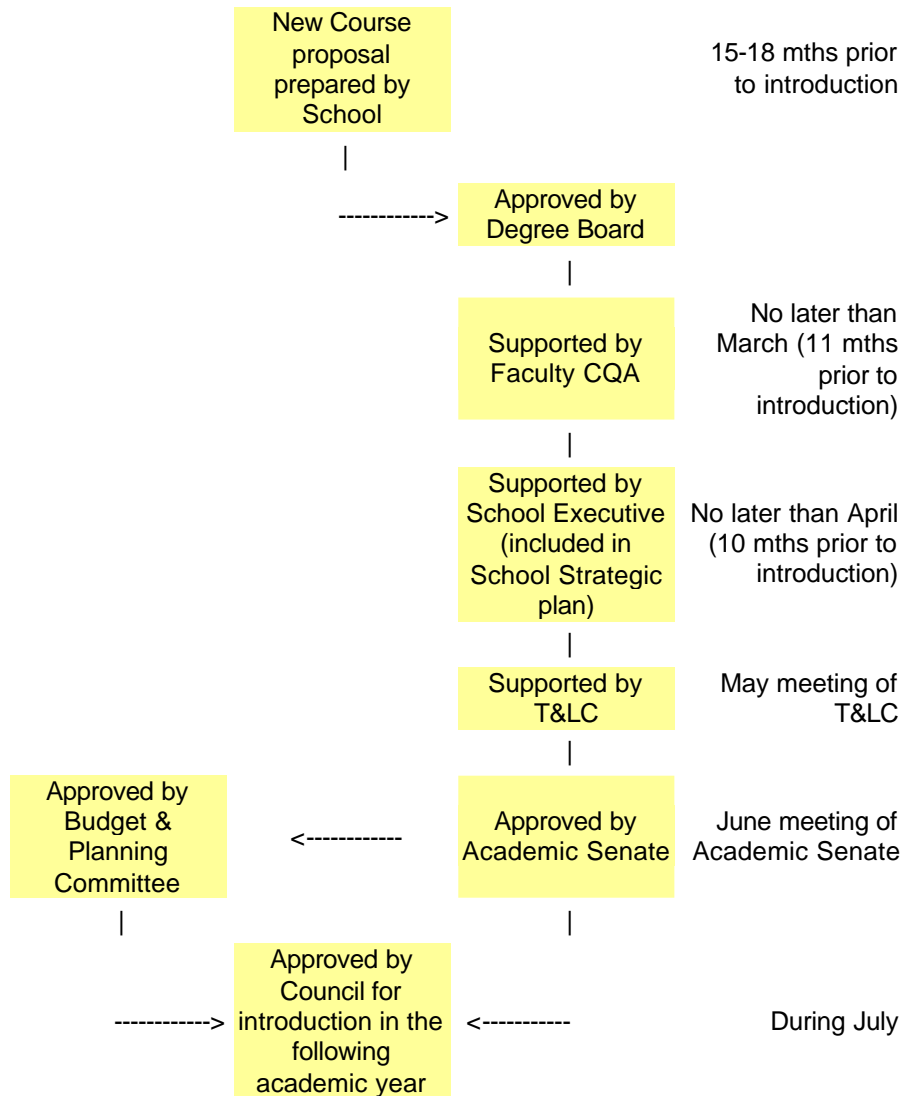
The process for consideration of significant amendments to existing courses will mirror that for new course proposals. The T&LC has identified to deans its representative to be involved in the relevant faculty committee's consideration of proposals prior to submission of documentation to the Secretary of T&LC. The aim of this arrangement is to streamline the approval process by ensuring that any problems are resolved prior to consideration by the T&LC. Proposals submitted to the Secretary of the T&LC by the May deadline will be reviewed by the Academic Secretariat in terms of the ASCQA criteria/checklist. Where necessary the advice of the Chair of the T&LC will be sought and advice will be provided to deans prior to the T&LC meeting on aspects of proposals which are deficient in terms of T&LC requirements. Proposals meeting submission requirements and addressing any issues identified by the T&LC representative and secretariat staff will generally be submitted as unstarred items to the T&LC and the June meeting of the Academic Senate for approval.

Discontinuation and teach-out of courses and majors

At its meeting on 25 February 2000 Academic Senate approved guidelines for implementing discontinuation and teach-out of courses and majors. The emphasis in the guidelines is on ensuring that students are properly consulted on their options for completion of an award or a replacement course and that changes to and the teach-out of a course/major are undertaken within the framework of maintaining the University's approved quality assurance procedures. A copy of the guidelines and some [examples](#) are contained in [Appendix B4.4](#) below.

Appendix B3.1

Flowchart and Minimum Timeframe for the Approval of New Courses



Appendix B4.1.

LEVELS OF APPROVAL FOR CHANGES TO COURSES, SPECIFICATIONS AND SCHEDULES

| | |
|--|-----------------------------|
| | Shading = approval required |
|--|-----------------------------|

| | School | FCQA (or *equivalent) | Degree Board* | RHDC | T&LC | Academic Senate | Council |
|---|--------|--------------------------|------------------|----------------|--------------------------|-------------------------------------|----------|
| NEW COURSE PROPOSALS | | | | if by research | | | |
| | | | | | | | |
| SIGNIFICANT AMENDMENTS TO EXISTING COURSES: | | | | | | | |
| | | | | | | | |
| Change in award nomenclature or title abbreviation | | | | if by research | | | |
| Deletion of award | | | | if by research | | | |
| | | | | | | | |
| Changes in the structure of a course including: | | | | | | | |
| Change in course duration | | | | | | | |
| Deletion of a major | | | | | | | reported |
| New major/stream | | | | | | | reported |
| Changes to max/min time for completion | | | | | | | reported |
| New minor/units in a discipline area new to the faculty | | | | | | reported | |
| Implementation of standard unit weights | | | | | | reported | |
| Application to use non-standard unit weight | | | | | | reported | |
| Change of admission requirements | | | | | | | reported |

| | | | | | | | |
|---|--|--|----------|--|--|----------|--|
| Changes to credit transfer provisions | | | | | | reported | |
| Change to delivery / teaching pattern | | | | | | reported | |
| Change to Campus offering | | | | | | reported | |
| | | | | | | | |
| Amendment to Schedule affecting another Faculty, including: | | | | | | reported | |
| Deletion of compulsory/core units | | | | | | reported | |
| Varying elective requirements | | | | | | reported | |
| | | | | | | | |
| Amendments to Schedule not affecting another Faculty, including: | | | | | | | |
| Deleting/replacing a unit | | | | | | reported | |
| Changing co- or pre-requisites | | | | | | reported | |
| Reweightings of units+^ | | | | | | reported | |
| Varying elective requirements^ | | | | | | reported | |
| Varying availability by campus^ | | | | | | reported | |
| Significant (+ or - 20%) amendment to contact hours entailed in a unit^ | | | | | | reported | |
| Changing duration of a unit^ | | | | | | reported | |
| | | | | | | | |
| Minor amendment to a unit including^: | | | | | | | |
| Change in assessment practice/criteria | | | reported | | | | |
| Change in contact hours (less than + or - 20%) | | | reported | | | | |

| | | | | | | | |
|---------------------------------------|--|--|----------|--|--|--|--|
| Change to delivery / teaching pattern | | | reported | | | | |
| Change in syllabus | | | reported | | | | |
| Change of unit code or title | | | reported | | | | |

Note cross-reference to Budget and Planning Committee required for all new courses, change in course duration and campus offering.

* In the case of combined degrees approval of both faculties/degree boards required in all instances.

+ Reweighting of units to adhere to the new unit weights will be monitored by Academic Senate.

^ Reported to Faculty - other Schools affected **must** be consulted.

Appendix B4.2

FORMAT FOR PROPOSED SIGNIFICANT AMENDMENTS TO COURSES

Note: Significant amendments to combined courses require the approval of both faculties.

1. Name of course to which amendments are proposed

Item 1 Title: In February 1997 Academic Senate endorsed procedures requiring faculties to specify details of the timing resulting from a proposed change in title to an existing award and guidelines for implementation including enabling students, as appropriate, to be either taught out under the old title or to seek approval to graduate with the new title. For the relevant procedures and guidelines see B4.3

2. Description of the proposed amendments

3. Reason(s) for seeing to introduce the proposed amendments

Identify the nature of the problem which the amendments seek to address or alternatively the opportunity which the amendments seek to exploit detail the process of evaluation or impetus which led to the proposed amendments. For example whether such amendments arose from a review of the course undertaken in conjunction with students, employers, professional bodies. The impact on demand should be detailed and projected intakes and enrolments indicated.

4. Proposed year and semester of introduction

5. School(s) which will teach the amended course

6. Campus(s) on which the amended course will be taught

7. Education objectives of the amended course

These may be general, for instance - to develop in students a commitment to lifetime study and self-development...; be indicative of a vocational orientation, for instance - to equip students with the fundamental knowledge, skills, capabilities and awareness which are necessary for a graduate to practice, architecture...; be curriculum specific, for instance - to develop an understanding of the basic concepts involved in the creation, storage and maintenance of data ...; or relate to opportunities to further develop the range of courses in a discipline, for instance - to provide an opportunity for students to undertake research in the discipline and upon successful completion to undertake research higher degree study.

8. Length of Course and maximum time for completion

Clarify if different from existing course

9. Teaching Mode (eg internal or by distance education/part-time of full time,

flexible delivery, etc)
Clarify if different from existing course

10. Course Structure

Where appropriate the course structure should reflect the educational objectives of the course.

Refer to para 11 of B3.2 for information on unit weights

11. Admission Requirements

Clarify if different from existing course.

Refer to para 12 of B3.2 for information.

12. Articulation with other courses

Indicate whether the amendments will create opportunities for articulation with other courses or alter existing articulation arrangements.

13. Other related courses offered by this University

Provide details of existing units which could be used in effecting the proposed amendments and, if relevant, of the consultation which has occurred with the School(s) offering these units.

14. Anticipated professional recognition (if relevant)

15. Specific ways in which the amendments will be monitored and their success evaluated.

Provide details of the procedures to be used, including any performance indicators against which the success of the amendments will be evaluated, and a timetable for reporting the progress and outcome of evaluation to T&LC.

16. Unit outlines

Provide an outline of each new unit in the format required for inclusion in the relevant Course and Unit Handbook. See generic example in Appendix B3.6

17. Course specifications and schedules

Provide course specifications and schedules, amended to reflect the proposed changes, in the format for inclusion in the Calendar. See generic example in Appendix B3.7

18. Staff qualifications and teaching/supervision responsibilities

List all staff who will be involved in teaching the course, detailing their qualifications and the unit(s) which they will teach or the role they will play in supervision of research students.

19. Resource issues

Provide written confirmation from the Dean of the Faculty that the proposal is consistent with School, Faculty and University Strategic Plans and has been supported for expenditure within the Faculty which has indicated that the resources are available to support its offering. Note important resource considerations include: staff. library materials. computing facilities and

teaching infrastructure.

Note: In the case of combined degrees involving more than one faculty, the approval of both Deans is required. to attest to the fact that there has been joint agreement on:

- * the structure of the combined degree and the contribution of each program;*
- * cross-crediting arrangements ;*
- * mplications for professional accreditation;*
- * resourcing and staffing of the course;*
- * timetabling implications;*
- * arrangements for administering the course.*

Appendix [B3.6](#)

GENERIC UNIT DESCRIPTION: Unit Details

The following fictional example details the information which is required.

| | |
|---------------------|---|
| Unit enrolment code | e.g. LIT234 |
| Unit title | e.g. John Gower and His Contemporaries [note use of lower case] |
| Unit description | e.g. Is for students who intend to pursue medieval studies at honours level and beyond, the study of John Gower and his contemporaries provides a solid foundation for the study of late fourteenth and early fifteenth century English literature. The unit includes a study of Gower's English, French and Latin works and their audiences; a comparative study of the ways in which Gower and his contemporary Geoffrey Chaucer use their sources, and a detailed study of grammatical, metrical and lexicographical conventions of the period. Students would find the study of HIS223, English History 1305-1450, very useful. |
| | [Note include purposes and goals of unit, summary of curriculum to be covered and relationship to other programs/units if appropriate. Maximum of 125 words. Avoid mere 'shopping lists' of topics covered .] |
| Special notes | e.g. restricted to BA students. [avoid using the word 'only'] Not offered in 1998 |
| Teaching staff | e.g. Give names of all lecturers responsible for teaching the unit. If the staff member is also the unit or course coordinator, the word '(Coordinator)' should appear after the lecturer's name. e.g. Mr AB Citizen (Coordinator); Dr GJW Smith [no full stops after and no spaces between initials please] |
| Campus and mode | e.g. Hobart, internal |
| Unit weight | e.g. 12.5% |
| Teaching pattern | including semester taught and mode of teaching, e.g. full year - 2x1 - hr lectures, 1-hr tutorial weekly (28 weeks) |
| | [Note: if the unit is taught over two semesters, use the phrase 'full year '; if a one semester unit is taught in both semesters with the student having to study the unit in either the first or second semester, use the phrase 'sem 1/2 '; in other cases use the phrase 'sem 1 ' or ' sem 2 ' as appropriate. For a unit taught in the summer vacation or at a summer school, use 'sem 3 '] PLEASE NOTE: the forward slash (/) is used in the handbooks to mean ' OR ', not ' and '. |
| Prerequisites | e.g. LIT100 [generally speaking, the unit code alone is listed, but where it is needed to avoid ambiguity, give also the unit title.] If there is no prerequisite, write 'nil' |
| Corequisites | [as for prerequisites above] |
| Mutual exclusions | [as for prerequisites above] |
| Assessment | e.g. tutorials (10%), 2,500-word essay (30%), 2-hr exam (60%) |
| Required texts, etc | e.g. [p/b] Nathan XY, <i>Gower at Home and Abroad</i> , 2nd edn, Garner Press, Hobart, 1998 |

| | |
|----------------------------|--|
| | Note: <i>The format to be followed is that which is laid down in the 'Procedures of higher degrees by research', namely: author(s), title, editor(s) (if any), number of volumes (if more than one), edition (if other than the first), publisher, place of publication, year of publication. Each item should be separated by a comma.</i> |
| Recommended reading | e.g. Yates JG and Williams KA (eds), <i>Chaucer, Friend of Gower</i> , Wiltshire Press, Warminster, 1992. |
| Courses | e.g. BA, BSc, LLB, MBBS [all courses in which the unit is given as part of the course schedule of units should be listed] |

Appendix B4.4.

In proposing significant amendments to an existing course¹, including the discontinuation of a complete award course² or major³ and any consequent teach-out, the following principles will apply:

- That the reasons for the amendments to the course (and the consequent rationalisation of any majors) be clearly outlined in writing to all students⁴ affected by the changes. Such advice would include assurance that the changes would not result in a student being required to undertake a greater workload or to take a longer time to complete the program than had been anticipated when they first enrolled for the course.

In particular:

- that in the case of an **amended or replacement course**: students be provided with clear, unambiguous advice on their eligibility to transfer to the amended course (including specific details of all units completed and those required to be completed), receiving maximum advanced standing or equivalent credit; **or** any option for a teach-out;
- that in the case of **deletion of a major**: students be provided with clear, unambiguous advice on their options to transfer to other majors, alternative methods of delivery of their major (including study at the other campus, distance education or cross- institutional study) without loss of standing in the course; **or** any option for a teach-out;
- that in the event of **discontinuation of a complete award**: students be provided with clear, unambiguous advice on their options to transfer to other courses, (including study at the other campus); **or** any option for a teach-out;⁵
- That any proposal to teach-out an award or a major be fully justified and outlined to the Academic Senate in terms of the steps that will be taken to counsel all students enrolled in the course/major (and the required level of consultation with other schools/faculties), the number of students involved, arrangements that are proposed for the teach-out and the timeframe;
- That *normally*, in any consideration for a teach-out, special consideration be given to students in their second or later years of study, having regard to the likelihood of more restricted options for such students;
- That *normally* the date of effect of the implementation of the teach-out be determined by the normal full-time completion date of the majority of the students and that the period of teach-out be as follows:

- in the case of an award course: two years beyond the date of effect
- in the case of a major: *normally* one year, depending on the availability of alternative options and the number of students involved.

Note: the above Guidelines are not intended to cover deletion of minors or units, such changes being within the jurisdiction of the faculty concerned, provided students and other schools/faculties have been informed of the intent.

- 1 Significant amendments to an existing course as defined in the Level of Approval chart (Levels of approval for new awards and courses and changes to courses, specifications and schedules, as updated in 1999); ie including deletion of award/major, change in course duration, change to campus offering.
- 2 ²Award course/course = a course of study prescribed in the specifications of a particular degree, diploma or certificate listed in the schedule to the Rules of Awards.
- 3 Major = an area of specialisation continued for the duration of a course at a deeper level of content with knowledge developed to a high level providing the basis for postgraduate study.
- 4 In all cases "students" should include any student on approved Leave of Absence at the time that the decision to discontinue is made.
- 5 In such an instance the University may make arrangements for students to complete the course at another tertiary institution.