

## Policies and procedures

# Course design procedure

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## Intent

The Course design procedure sets out the requirements for design of courses, including:

1. key definitions
2. use of stakeholder feedback and quality assurance data in course design
3. standard course sizes and systems for defining volume of learning
4. course guides
5. assessment in course guides
6. requirement of early assessment with prompt feedback in introductory courses (coursework programs)
7. course requisites
8. different locations, delivery modes and courses involving travel
9. course and class configuration.

## Scope

- RMIT accredited coursework programs and courses
- Nationally recognised training package qualifications, skill sets and accredited courses

## Exclusions

- RMIT quality assured programs for enterprise clients
- Short courses and non-award courses
- The research component of higher degree by research programs
- VCE and VCAL programs

## Procedure steps and actions

### 1. Key definitions

1.1. Courses are defined on the University 's curriculum data systems by a course identifier.

1.2. Course offerings are an instance of a course, defined by a subject code and course catalogue number. The combination of subject code and course catalogue number is also known as the 'course code'.

See the [Program design procedure](#) for definitions of core course, optional course and elective.

## 2. Use of stakeholder feedback and quality assurance data in course design

Staff designing amendments to a course, or a new course, should take into account feedback on the course or related courses from students, staff who teach in the courses, the industry or profession and accrediting bodies (where relevant), and data from quality assurance systems.

## 3. Standard course sizes and systems for defining volume of learning

3.1. All courses in undergraduate and postgraduate programs must be 12 credit points or a multiple of 12 credit points. Zero credit point courses are not permitted.

3.1.1. The only exceptions to the rule in section 3.1 are

- courses in higher doctorates, and
- approved higher degree by research internships, and
- courses to mark a student's enrolment in approved external study, and
- courses to mark a visitor's enrolment in an internship at RMIT.

3.2. The student workload in each multiple of 12 credit points is 120 hours.

## 4. Course guides

4.1. The course guide is the approved statement of course requirements and as such forms part of the enrolment agreement with the student.

4.2. The course guide comprises the Part A course guide, and the Part B course guide if there is one.

4.2.1. A Part B course guide is not required for research courses in higher degree by research programs.

4.2.2. A vocational education program may be exempted from publishing Part B course guides by the Deputy Pro Vice-Chancellor, Learning and Teaching of the relevant College.

4.2.3. A part B course guide is required for higher education coursework course offerings.

4.3. The Course Coordinator is responsible for ensuring that the information in course guides is correct, up to date and published in good time. For courses in coursework programs, the Program Manager, or equivalent, and Deputy Dean/Head of School, Learning and Teaching oversee the provision of course guides. For courses in higher degree by research (HDR) programs, the HDR Coordinator and Deputy Dean/Head of School, Research and Innovation oversee the provision of course guides.

4.3.1. A Part A course guide is published for each course. The Part A course guide provides sufficient information about the course to guide students in their enrolment/re-enrolment, including:

- credit points or (in vocational education courses) student contact hours
- total learning hours for the course
- prerequisites and corequisites
- course learning outcomes
- assessment requirements (see section 5 below for what the assessment section must include).

4.3.2. A Part B course guide is published for each course offering in each term or session, where students need to be informed about additional information specific to the course offering, such as

- name and contact details of staff responsible for the course and their consultation time(s); also details of tutors and technicians where appropriate
- duration and mode of delivery – in particular, whether the course is (a) only available online or (b) can be taken either online or face-to-face, or (c) requires students to attend on campus – and if so, for what period
- Work Integrated Learning.

The information in the course guide may be supplemented by detailed information on course requirements provided via the RMIT University learning management system. The School publishes Part B course guides to students not later than the first day of the relevant teaching period.

## 5. Assessment in course guides

[This section applies to course offerings that commence on or after 1 February 2016.]

5.1. The assessment section of Part A course guides states:

- the assessment tasks
- the weighting allocated to each assessment task (except in competency-based courses, where assessment tasks are not weighted)
- any other requirements for satisfactory completion of the course or module, and
- how the assessment is related to the course learning outcomes.

Where further detailed requirements for assessment tasks are stated in the course materials held within the learning management system, the course guide must inform students that this is the case.

5.1.1. In courses for higher education coursework programs, no assessment task may be weighted at more than 50% of the total mark for the course, unless:

- the course is a research component of the program, or
- the higher weighting is approved as an exception by the Deputy Pro Vice-Chancellor, Learning and Teaching. Grounds for such exceptions may include pedagogical reasons or external accreditation requirements.

5.2. See section 1.1.11 of the [Assessment: conduct of assessment and appeals procedure](#) for the conditions that must be met to change the assessment published in the course guide once the course offering has commenced.

## 6. Requirement of early assessment task with prompt feedback in introductory courses (coursework programs)

6.1. Courses for the first year of coursework programs must offer an early assessment task (formative or summative):

- in the first four weeks of teaching (where the course is offered over a standard 12-16 week teaching period), or
- in the first third of the teaching period (where the course is delivered in intensive mode).

6.2. Feedback on early assessment tasks must be provided to students in time to enable improvements in learning:

- within two weeks of the submission date for the assessment (where the course is offered over a traditional 12-16 week teaching period), or
- within a proportionally shorter time (where the course is delivered in intensive mode).

## 7. Course requisites

7.1. Course requisites may be approved where a student's success in a course is dependent on prior knowledge that must be demonstrated by successful prior completion of a specified RMIT course (prerequisite) or concurrent enrolment in a specified RMIT course (corequisite).

7.2. All course requisites are stated in the Part A course guide and, where a specific previous course is required, must include the course ID. The course guide states the type of course requisite and whether, if a prerequisite or corequisite, it will be enforced by the system, is required prior study or merely assumed knowledge.

7.3. Three kinds of course requisite are used at RMIT, as follows.

7.3.1. Enforced prerequisites: students are not permitted to enrol in the courses until the prerequisite is satisfied by a pass grade in a specified RMIT course, or credit granted for the prerequisite course. See the [Program and course configuration rules instruction](#) for the wordings used for course guide statements of these prerequisites.

7.3.1.1. Enforced prerequisites apply to all students enrolling on all offerings of the course: that is, the prerequisite cannot be enforced for one offering or class and not for another.

7.3.1.2. Such prerequisites are system enforced at enrolment.

7.3.2. Required prior study: students are expected to have completed the specified study and may be directed to amend their enrolment if requirements are not met. See the [Program and course configuration rules instruction](#) for the wordings used for course guide statements of these prerequisites.

7.3.3. Assumed knowledge: the course assumes that students have the specified skills or knowledge.

7.3.3.1. Where an assumed knowledge requisite is stated, students are responsible for deciding whether they meet the requirements and are not entitled to additional assistance or consideration if they decide to undertake the course although they do not meet them.

7.4. Enforced requisite statements in course guides must be in one of the formats for this type of requisite in the [Program and course configuration rules instruction](#). They must be approved by the Deputy Pro Vice-Chancellor (Learning and Teaching) of the College that manages the course, before the enforced requisites are configured for enrolment.

Approval will only be granted where the enforced requisite is necessary:

- for reasons of or safety, or
- because it is required as a condition of external accreditation, or
- because it is required by legislation or regulation, or

- for another pressing educational reason accepted by the Deputy Pro Vice-Chancellor, Learning and Teaching.

7.5. The current requisite statement at the time of enrolment is the requisite that must be met, unless a waiver is given by the Dean/Head of School or nominee.

7.6. A prerequisite course must have been passed, or credit must have been granted for it, within the past 10 years to meet the requisite, unless a waiver is given by the Dean/Head of School or nominee.

7.7. A student who does not meet an enforced prerequisite may seek a waiver from the Dean/Head of School or nominee by demonstrating that they have met the requirements other than through completion of the specified RMIT course(s). The student is responsible for gaining such a waiver in time to meet enrolment closing dates.

7.8. Where waivers of an enforced prerequisite are approved for a significant proportion of students enrolling in a course, the Academic Registrar may remove the system enforcement of the requisite.

7.9. Course requisites for existing courses may be reviewed annually, in time for any changes to be made before re-enrolment for the next academic year.

## **8. Different locations, delivery modes and courses involving travel**

8.1. Courses must have equivalent assessment and the same learning outcomes across all locations and modes of delivery including face-to-face, intensive, distance, online and where the course involves travel.

8.2. Courses may involve travel away from the main location of study in the course, in order to complete assessment tasks. This travel may be a requirement of the course or course offering, or it may be an option available to some students in the course or course offering. Such travel is referred to as:

- a global intensive, where the travel is to another country, or
- a local intensive, where the travel is to a location within the same country, but away from the city or town in which the course is mainly located.

To minimise the risks of travel by groups of students for their studies, staff and students must follow the Courses involving travel instruction, which sets out the requirements for development, approval and delivery of global intensives and local intensives.

## **9. Course and class configuration**

The [Program and course configuration rules instruction](#) states the detailed requirements for configuration of courses, course offerings, course titles and classes.

[\[Next: Supporting documents and information\]](#)

Print version

URL: <http://www1.rmit.edu.au/browse;ID=2jef89y4butf>