

# **The MQ Model:**

## **Undergraduate Curriculum Architecture Principles**

### **(Working Paper)**

<b>Principle</b>	<b>Annotation (Workings and Justifications)</b>	<b>Alignment and/or notes (Context)</b>
<b>Principle 1: Nomenclature</b>		
1.1 <i>Programs</i> will henceforth be known as “ <i>Courses</i> ”	<p>Where possible the working party recommends MQ align with TEQSA nomenclature. This helps simplify our government reporting and makes cross-institutional comparisons for potential students easier. In August the Commonwealth will release a new national website for students to compare the 17, 000 courses on offer across Australia.</p> <p>The change will also allow us to clean up the inconsistencies in our public documents, which are a source of confusion for our students (check the current interchangeable use of the terms “program” and “course” on our website). The term “program” will now be available for non-award related University activities</p>	A new MQ Glossary will be produced to accompany the new architecture

## **Principle 2: Quality Assurance**

- 2.1 Majors and Specialisations will henceforth not be considered “courses” from a TEQSA compliance/reporting point of view.
- 2.2 Majors and Specialisations will still be subject to internal MQ quality assurance review.

Because we have previously considered majors and specialisations as “programs” this left us susceptible to TEQSA compliance and reporting requirements. By adopting the term “Courses” and the TEQSA definition “Course of study leading to an Award” majors and specialisations are freed from this external requirement allowing us to focus our efforts on the course which they form a part (which is sometimes as little as 30%). This said, we will continue to assure the quality of our majors and specialisations.

## **Principle 3: Stewardship of Courses**

- 3.1 All courses are “owned” by Academic Senate on behalf of the University. Individual faculties, however, act as stewards for individual courses on behalf of Academic Senate. They are responsible for the design, delivery, review and innovation of courses in compliance with University policies and procedures.

For the first 15 years of MQ’s existence we had one undergraduate degree. This was the BA (Mansfield & Hutchinson, *Liberality of Opportunity*, 1992: 35). After increasing pressure from students we expanded to a BSc. Both degrees were “owned” by the University. As undergraduate degrees proliferated in the 1980s this form of ownership ended and Faculties assumed ownership. The BA and BSc, however, remained owned by the University. This principle ends this anomaly and empowers the respective Faculties to innovate these courses as they see fit.

#### **Principle 4: Unit Credit Point System and Unit Identification Coding**

- 4.1 Undergraduate courses will utilise a 10 credit point (cp) system or multiples thereof for all units.
- 4.2 A 10cp unit must meet the Commonwealth's expectation that a unit of study will consist of 150 hours of activity for a student so enrolled.
- 4.3 Co-curricular requirements may be assigned as zero credit point units (see Principle 33).
- 4.4 From 2020 MQ will move to a four alpha/four numeric (eg MATH1002) coding system to make room for new unit codes and reduce rule complexity.

When Senate approved the Vertical Double course type earlier this year it was noted that the University would need to consider our unit credit point system and the anomaly that sees undergraduate units set at 3cp and postgraduate units set at 4cp despite the fact both sets meet the Commonwealth's requirement of 150 hours of student activity. After consultation with our new Registrar we examined a number of universities and their approach. The working party recommends that from a systems and ease of navigation/advising perspective a 10 credit point system (such as is used by WSU, Newcastle and ACU). Further the creation of a 10cp system provides new opportunities as we consider micro-credentials and short courses in the postgraduate space.

After 50 years we are finally running out of unit codes. Because they are required by past students for their records, they can never be re-cycled. A four alpha/four numeric system allows us to start again and also allows us to create better systems-driven rule simplification. The approach is favoured by Academic Services.

Such a change will provoke a change in how we speak to different year levels. The working party recommends 1000, 2000, 3000 level etc.

## **Principle 5: Weighted Average Mark (WAM)**

- 5.1 MQ will utilise a Weighted Average Mark (WAM) system from 2020. This will replace the current 7-point-scale Grade Point Average system (GPA).

WAM is a mark out of 100 representing the average of a student's percentage scores across their completed units. The weighting generally comes from the credit point value of each of the units being calculated. Put simply, and in this era of standardised credit points for each unit of study, the WAM system as practised at the likes of Sydney or UNSW is simply the average of the student's unit marks across their program of study. It is widely accepted that WAM provides a more nuanced and more precise indicator of student achievement than GPA. GPA, especially the currently configured 7 points scale holds a number of structural problems that can disadvantage students. At the upper end, the main reason a number of GPA institutions have created a separate WAM calculation for Honours is that it permits greater differentiation at high achievement levels. A student with a 7 GPA may have just achieved a HD WAM average of 86 but is treated the same as the student who secured a WAM equivalent of 96. Perhaps the most controversial structural limitation of GPA relates to fail grades. Under our seven point system a student who secures an overall mark of 13% for a unit is treated the same as a student who achieved 45% in the unit — both receive a GPA score of 0. At its meeting in May 2018 the Senate Learning and Teaching Committee (SLTC) endorsed a paper that examined the replacing of the GPA system with a WAM system and recommended the practicalities of the approach to be explored. Melbourne, Newcastle and RMIT were the most recent universities to convert to WAM from GPA.

## Principle 6: Undergraduate Course Types

6.1 MQ offers two undergraduate degree types

a. Generalist Degree Courses  
(AQF Level 7 and 240 credit points of study)

b. Specialist Degree Courses  
(AQF Level 7 or 8 and 240 or 320 credit points of study)

6.2 These degrees can be undertaken in one of two modes:

- a. Single Degree
- b. Double Degree

Within the Higher Education sector we often speak about these two undergraduate degree types. The working party recommends that our new architecture will formally recognise these two degree types and set out some basic principles on what distinguishes them from each other.

The working party recommends that we should continue to maintain single and double degree opportunities for our students and that we consider a new approach to double degree combinations (see Principle 27).

## Learning for the future

LEARNING AND TEACHING  
STRATEGIC FRAMEWORK: 2015–2020

*“Getting the student experience right is the biggest challenge that faces any university. The biggest part of this challenge is offering a learning and teaching program that is engaging and interesting, challenging, meaningful in the context of individual aspirations, and well matched to expectations.”*  
*Learning for the Future, p3.*

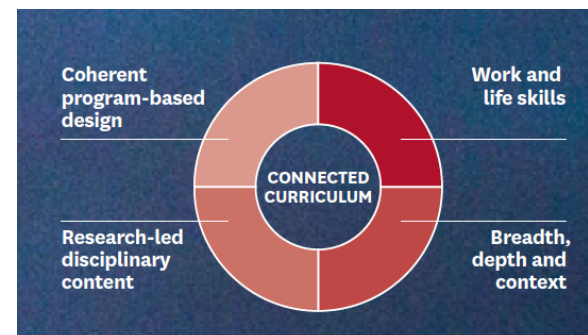
## Principle 7: Single Degree Course Structure (Depth and Breadth/Maturity Requirements)

- 7.1 All single undergraduate degree courses will have the following study zone structure:
- A depth component (**Red Zone**)
  - A breadth/maturity component (**Purple Zone**)

## Principle 8: **Red Zone**

- 8.1 The **red zone** consists of the course's specific depth requirements for the disciplinary, trans-disciplinary or professional area of study.
- 8.2 The **red zone** includes all compulsory requirements for the course.
- 8.3 Outside any breadth/maturity outcomes, the **red zone** delivers the course's learning outcomes (CLO)

Most of our current degree courses contain a mixture of depth and breadth maturity requirements. This principle formalises this organising principle for MQ degrees.



*Learning for the Future. p4.*

## Principle 9: Purple Zone

- 9.1 The purple zone consists of “free electives”
- 9.2 A Student can use their purple zone to enrol in any unit within the University for which they meet the pre-requisites.

The working party recommends the purple zone as a new approach to our degree structure. It would replace our current “People and Planet” requirement.

The basic principle is if we genuinely believe in the principle of students as partners and co-creators in their education we should demonstrate this commitment in a number of ways. Rather than compelling students to engage with a vision of “breadth” that considers some form of “general education” as the solution, the purple zone is conceived as a way to empower students to make their own decisions about this aspect of their degree. The purple zone enshrines student choice in our courses. See Principles 23-26 for the composition of the zone.

The University tells students what is in their red zone. Students will decide what they will do with their purple zone.

A free elective is a unit that is available to any student who meets the pre-requisite. A unit may have course restrictions that prevent its availability to students outside the course of study.

The number of 1000 level units students available in a course’s purple zone will be set. See 10.3.

*Learning for the Future* constructed a vision for students where a “connected learning experience” saw them as “partners and co-creators” (p4).

*Learning for the Future* found that the People and Planet system was no longer fit for purpose and planned to replace it with a Big Ideas approach to “general education”. The Big Idea approach, however, was not finalised.

## Principle 10: Course Structure — 1000 level unit restriction

- 10.1 Students may only complete a maximum of 100cp at 1000 level in a 240 cp undergraduate degree course of study
- 10.2 Students may only complete a maximum of 120 cp at 1000 level in a 320cp undergraduate degree course of study.
- 10.3 Course authorities will decide how the restriction might be applied to their red and purple zones.

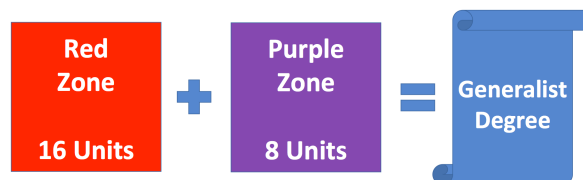
## Principle 11: Single Generalist Degree Course Structure

- 11.1 For single undergraduate generalist degree courses the red and purple zone requirements are as follows:
  - a. red zone is 160 credit points
  - b. purple zone is 80 credit points

This is an existing MQ rule that is consistent across the HE sector. The working party did consider a simple division of 80cp at 1000, 2000, and 3000 levels for 240cp courses but resolved that for a range of reasons (for example a student sampling a new area of study only in their second semester of year 1) we should maintain the current rule.

Depending on the structure of the red zone a course will set the maximum number of 1000 level units that will be available for their students' purple zone.

To create a standard generalist degree structure the working party recommends setting red and purple zones for all courses of this type.



## Course Authorities

Until course nomenclature is finalised the term “course authorities” refers to those involved in the design and operation of a course. This could be individuals within or across departments and faculties. “Course Director” may emerge as the term for the lead individual responsible for the operation of a course.



## Principle 12: Single Specialist Degree Course Structure

- 12.1 For single undergraduate specialist degree courses the **red** and **purple zone** requirements are as follows:
- red zone** is at least 160 credit points
  - purple zone** is no more than 80 credit points
- 12.2 Both zones must be specified in units of 40cp (representing the equivalent of one semester of full-time student load).
- 12.3 A **red zone** in a specialist degree should only be as large as required to meet the course's pedagogical needs. It should not be deployed as a load capturing technique.
- 12.4 It is possible that due to external accreditation requirements that a specialist course of study may have insufficient space to set a **purple zone**.

The working party was of the view that we should not set standard **red/purple zone** requirements for specialist degrees because of the diversity in course requirements in this space. Here the central issue is how many units the **red zone** needs to allow the student to meet the course's learning outcomes.



The 40cp multiples ensures a course is offered in whole semester multiples.

### **Example 1:**

The Bachelor of Astro-Cartooning is a specialist degree. To provide the necessary depth of study and meet its learning outcomes it requires a 200 cp **red zone**. This reduces its **purple zone** to 40 cp.

### **Example 2:**

Due to strict accreditation requirements and an all core structure, the Bachelor of Cosmic Sports Studies has a **red zone** that is 240 cp. It has no **purple zone**.

## Principle 13: Composition of Red Zones

13.1 A **red zone** can consist of the following elements:

- a. Course Core
- b. Course Electives

*For generalist degrees*

- a. Majors
- b. Sub-Majors

*For specialist degrees*

- a. Specialisations
- b. Concentrations

## Principle 14: Course Core — Generalist Degrees

- 14.1 Generalist degrees can have a maximum course core of 80cp of the 160cp in the **red zone**.
- 14.2 Core units can be prerequisites for units within a major.

The “course core” consists of the compulsory units which all students must complete to meet the course’s requirements and learning outcomes.

A “course elective” gives students the choice to choose an elective unit from a designated option set. It would be expected that in a specialist degree the option set would be targeted and would provide students with a small and select group of choices.

The difference between majors and specialisations, and a justification for the different nomenclature is discussed below.

The nature of a generalist degree is to provide a broad general education. Too much core in a generalist degree would challenge this design principle. Currently the largest core in a generalist degree at MQ is six units. Note that this does not include any core requirements within a major because they are specific to that sequence of study and would change across different majors.

### **Principle 15: Course Core — Specialist Degrees**

- 15.1 Specialist degrees can have a maximum core of 100 per cent of their **red zone**.
- 15.2 Core units can be prerequisites for units within a specialisation.

### **Principle 16: Course Electives**

- 16.1 Course authorities will set the required rules and option sets. The rules and option sets are approved by the University.

Course authorities in specialist degrees require this flexibility to meet their specific design principles and ensure student success in meeting the course's learning outcomes.

Principles 14.2 and 15.2 acknowledge that cores can introduce students to major or specialisation options within the course. If a unit is part of the Course Core it need not count towards the unit requirement for the major or specialisation and can simply act as a pre-requisite.

### A quick note about approvals:

The Principles use the term “approved by the University”. Which entity actually exercises that approval on behalf of the University is currently being finalised by Senate through the “Shared Governance” project which commenced in 2017.

## Principle 17: Capstone Requirement

- 17.1 All courses will provide students with a capstone experience.

Capstone Units have become one important way institutions seek to assure quality in a course of study. Since 2010 MQ has required programs to deliver a “capstone unit”. The MQ glossary of terms holds a brief and somewhat vague definition of a “capstone unit” as: “A final year unit of study in an undergraduate degree program which integrates the material presented across a major or program of study.” Since that time, however, the capstone requirement has been extended into the postgraduate coursework space. At ANU the term is defined as “A course that provides an opportunity for students to demonstrate that they can integrate the knowledge and skills they have acquired throughout the major or program. The learning outcomes of the capstone will normally map into the learning outcomes for the major or program.”

Institutions approach the capstone requirement in different ways. At the University of Sydney for example it is not identified as a unit of study but a “substantial, compulsory project that consolidates your learning and demonstrates that you have acquired the necessary skills and knowledge during your studies. You usually complete it during the final year of your course.”

TEQSA’s position on capstones is not as prescriptive as that which MQ set for itself. While we, and a number of other institutions, positioned the Capstone at the major or specialisation in those programs that held such sequences of study, TEQSA’s prism of reference, however, remains the “course of study leading to an award”.

The TEQSA “Guidance Note on Course Design” (Version 1.3, 11 October 2017) offers: “*TEQSA will expect some clear information demonstrating where course learning outcomes are taught, practised and assessed, whether at unit level or at course level (e.g. via a ‘capstone’ assessment and/or an assessment against a set of occupational or professional standards) or a combination of these (Standard 1.4.4). TEQSA may require an appropriate demonstration that the learning outcomes that are assessed at individual unit level (and/or within a capstone unit) **reasonably demonstrate achievement of overall course learning outcomes on graduation.***”

17.2 A course's capstone experience will reside in the red zone. Course authorities will determine whether the capstone resides in the course core or is a component of the majors or specialisations where these sequence of study types are offered.

OR

17.2 A course's capstone experience will reside in the course core.

17.3 Majors and specialisations do not require a capstone.

The working party was unable to reach consensus on this issue and subsequent consultations with a variety of other stakeholders have left this issue unresolved. The arguments in favour of the first option are:

1. The capstone unit has only ever been a part of the way a course is warranted
2. Current practice sees capstones at the major for generalist degrees and some specialist degrees and that practice should continue
3. Having a course capstone removes a 3000 level unit from a student's schedule in a 240cp course. This would prevent a student be able to complete a double major if the 4 x 3000 level unit requirement for majors advocated at Principle see 19.5 was adopted.

The arguments in favour of the second option are:

1. Warranting the learning outcomes in a major which is only 30 per cent of a course leaves us exposed. What about the rest of the course or at least the other 50 per cent of the red zone?
2. We have no choice. TEQSA is quite clear. The capstone experience must **"reasonably demonstrate achievement of overall course learning outcomes on graduation"**
3. The more flexible option suggested for major structure would remove the problem of fitting in double majors (see 19.5)
4. This will allow majors to exist in two different courses. The first option would mean a major in one program may be different to the major in the second program if they adopted a different approach to the capstone.

We invite you to engage with the Qualtrics survey and share your opinion on your favoured approach.

We have also used the term "experience" to broaden the conversation on this affirmation of student learning. Currently a number of Faculties are examining ways to deliver a capstone experience which is integrated across the course of study and not simply in a single unit. Should we have one uniform capstone experience for all our courses which makes quality assurance easier to undertake and makes government reporting more simple or should we allow course authorities to design their own capstone experiences? Again please use the survey to share your opinions.

## Principle 18: PACE Requirement

- 18.1 All undergraduate courses have a PACE requirement.
- 18.2 A course's compulsory PACE requirement resides in the **red zone**. Course authorities will determine whether the PACE requirement resides in the course core or in all the course's majors/specialisations.
- 18.3 If PACE resides at the course level it is a core course requirement.
- 18.4 If PACE is taught at the major/specialisation level it can become a major/specialisation requirement if required or it could be an option set for designated course electives at the course level.
- 18.5 Course Authorities can continue the existing practice of delivering a major/specialisation capstone experience combined with the PACE requirement.

Since 2010 MQ has pioneered an approach to work integrated learning and community engagement through the PACE. While many institutions are now following our example PACE continues to be a distinctive feature of MQ. The working party was unanimous in its continuing support of PACE as a central feature of the MQ student experience.

For many courses PACE has often been delivered at the major or specialisation and in many cases it has formed an integrated unit with the capstone requirement. Many departments are very happy with this existing unit and the feedback from students.

Because PACE is our requirement we can be more flexible on where it might reside in the **red zone**. A course may see advantage in setting the unit as a course requirement either as a single course core unit or as a designated course elective from an option set. The later approach would allow the unit to be connected to a major or specialisation but not take away a content unit. Alternatively, if we resolve that the capstone resides at the course level, a course might decide that it wishes to continue to offer the combined PACE/capstone for a major or specialisation. The only stipulation recommended by the working party is that to avoid complexity the course's approach should be uniform.



## Our University: A Framing of Futures



"Internships, work experience and entrepreneurial guidance will help them apply their skills and understanding to real problems, and encourage them to grow."  
*Framing of Futures*, p2.

## **Principle 19: Majors**

- 19.1 Majors are a sequence of study within a generalist degree.
- 19.2 They are approved by the University and are included in the course's "major schedule".
- 19.3 The length of a major is 80 cps.

The working party was of the opinion that generalist degrees require some rationalisation of their major offerings. This concern was most noted with regard to the Bachelor of Arts which has a wide array of majors from across the University. From the BA's long list of majors there are a number for which no student has completed a major in over a decade or more. The working party recommends that course authorities should decide what majors sit within their program and place these in a "major schedule" — not dissimilar to our current "qualifying major list". This said we were not supportive of a blunt "home-based major rule." Such a rule might stifle transdisciplinary majors or majors from another Faculty which sometimes by simple history or administrative convenience reside outside the Faculty in question but which remain a popular choice for students enrolled in the course.

19.4 If a major is to appear on the major schedule of a course outside the Faculty from which it resides it will have a different name to that which appears on the “major schedule” of the first course(s) of the Faculty in which it resides

OR

19.4 A major will also have the same name regardless of what course it is offered in.

The working party could not reach consensus on whether a major should have the same name if it appeared in another Faculty’s course. Some institutions insert the word “studies” to note the difference (eg Astro-Cartooning in Course A is Astro-Cartooning Studies in Course B).

Arguments in favour of a name change:

1. A major is not simply the eight units which a student completes in the area of study. It is shaped by the broader disciplinary context of the **red zone** in which it sits. A student who completes Marketing in the BCom is not the same graduate who completes Marketing in the BA. The different name provides a clear signal to students and employers.
2. The actual structure of the major could be different. In Course A students do a core course which is a pre-requisite for the major in Astro-Cartooning. The core course does not count to the major giving the student another unit to choose. In Course B the student does the first unit as part of the major so has actually completed one unit less. In essence it is a different major.
3. This is standard practice at some other institutions and we already embrace this principle at MQ. A student in the BA, for example, completes a major in Psychological Sciences not Psychology.

We invite you to engage with the Qualtrics survey and share your opinion on your favoured approach.



Arguments in support of a single name are:

1. A major is no more than the eight units a student completes. It is not shaped by the **red zone** in which it sits.
2. Two names produces unnecessary systems duplication/complexity
3. Two different names may leave a student feeling they have a second rate major to that in the other program.
3. The name of the degree is a sufficient signal to an employer that the major produces a different student to another degree
4. Having the same major in different programs promotes student choice.

19.5 The structure of a major will be as follows:

- i. 2 x units at 1000 level
- ii. 2 x units at 2000 level
- iii. 4 x units at 3000 level

OR

19.5 The structure of a major can be:

- i. 1 or 2 units at 1000 level
- ii. 2 or 3 units at 2000 level
- iii. 3 or 4 units at 3000 level

19.6 The structure of a major will be determined by the course authority and will be consistently applied to the “major schedule”

19.7 Majors are recorded on a student’s testamur and academic transcript.

The working party saw advantages with both approaches. Arguments in favour of a 2+2+4 approach:

1. Reduces complexity for students, staff and systems and is consistent across all generalist courses

Arguments in favour of a 1 or 2 + 2 or 3 + 3 or 4 approach:

1. Majors should have some flexibility at first year. A student might not engage with a potential major until S2.
2. This approach to the 8 unit major requirement would remove the issue around course capstones and room for double majors

We invite you to engage with the Qualtrics survey and share your opinion on your favoured approach.

## Principle 20: Sub-Majors

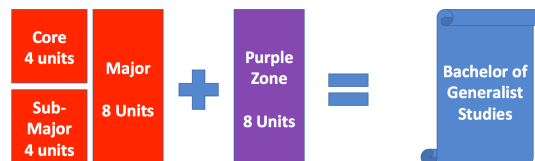
- 20.1 A sub-major is a sequence of undergraduate units drawn from a University approved major but with a smaller volume of learning requirement.
- 20.2 The length of a sub-major is 40cps (4 units).
- 20.3 A sub-major can be structured (ie 2 x 1000 + 2 x 2000 level units) or unstructured (ie 4 units at no particular level of study) but the approach must be consistent within the course of study
- 20.4 A sub-major can form part of the depth component of a generalist degree.
- 20.5 Sub-majors are recorded on a student's academic transcript.

The working party recommends use of the term “sub-major” rather than “minor” for this type of sequence of study in a generalist degrees. At MQ we do not, like some institutions, have a “dedicated minor” system. Instead this sequence of study has been drawn from an approved major. UTS and WSU also use the sub-major nomenclature.

This approach frees the term “minor” for use in the **purple zone** across both generalist and specialist degrees. See Principle 26.

### ***Example of a generalist degree structure***

Tom enrolls in the Bachelor of Generalist Studies. To complete his Red Zone requirements for this generalist degree he completes four core units and must choose a major and sub-major. He chooses Spatial History as his major and Temporal Literature as his minor.



## Principle 21: Specialisations

- 21.1 Specialisations are sequences of study within a specialist degree course.
- 21.2 They are approved by the University and are included in the course's "specialisation schedule".
- 21.3 Specialisations are at least 120 cp (12 units).
- 21.4 A specialisation must contain 4 x 3000 level or above units.
- 21.5 A specialisation may have the same name as a major in a generalist degree
- 21.6 A specialisation cannot appear in more than one course's specialisation schedule.
- OR
- 21.6 A specialisation can appear in more than one course's specialisation schedule.

### Why have different labels for majors and specialisations?

The different labels for these study sequences across the two degree types will aid student navigation, rule simplification and management, and academic advising. A major is always 8 units and is in a generalist degree. It is a clear point of distinction from a specialist degree. A student completing 8 units in a major does not have the depth of study of a student who completed at least 12 units in an specialisation. The difference in title is also clear indication to employers etc about the nature of the student's studies and why 21.5 is an acceptable approach to naming conventions. Discussions with student representatives indicated they liked the distinction.

The working party did not reach consensus on 21.6. The major argument in support of the first proposition was that if a specialisation resides in a specialist degree it is by definition exclusive to that specialist degree. The major argument in support of the second proposition was that their may be reasons why a specialisation could serve more than one specialist degree.

[We invite you to engage with the Qualtrics survey and share your opinion on your favoured approach.](#)

AND

- 21.7 If an area of study is to be expressed as a specialisation in two different courses of study the specialisation as it appears in the schedule of the second degree course will have a different name to that which appears on the “specialisation schedule” of the first course.

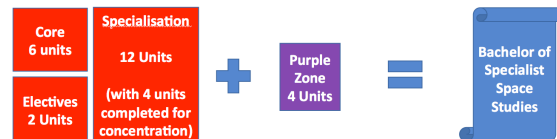
OR

- 21.7 Specialisations in different courses can have the same name.
- 21.8 Specialisations can be recorded in brackets in the name of the degree course.
- 21.9 A specialisation appears on a student’s testamur and academic transcript.

If the second option for 21.6 is accepted the working party was unable to reach consensus on whether the name should remain the same.

***Example of specialist degree structure:***

Megan enrolls in the Bachelor of Specialist Space Studies. To complete her **red zone** requirements for this 24 unit specialist degree she must complete 6 units in the compulsory core, 2 units from “course elective” options sets and a 12 unit specialization. Megan chooses Deep Space Time Travel as her specialization and a four unit concentration in TARDIS mechanics.



Again, we invite you to engage with the Qualtrics survey and share your opinion on your favoured approach.

## **Principle 22: Concentration**

- 22.1 A Concentration is a structured sequence of units within a specialisation and is approved by the University.
- 22.2 All concentrations within a course are of the same length
- 22.3 Concentrations are structured and will either be a compulsory set of units or a number of units from an option set within the specialisation
- 22.4 A concentration appears on the student's academic transcript.

A concentration is not the same as a sub-major. Unlike a sub-major which is another area of study drawn from another approved major a concentration provides the opportunity for a student to undertake further depth within the specialisation they are completing.

## Principle 23: Composition of Purple Zone

23.1 Students may choose to build their purple zone with “free elective” units from any area of study from across the University and for which they meet the entry pre-requisite.

23.2 A purple zone can also hold the following sequences of study:

### *For generalist degrees*

- a. Majors
- b. Sub-Majors
- c. Minors

### *For specialist degrees*

- a. Concentrations
- b. Minors

23.3 A course may need to set a limitation on 1000 level units in its purple zone to ensure its students do not exceed the 10 x 1000 unit cap (see 10.1 & 10.2).

### **Example:**

Xia has an 8 unit purple zone in her generalist degree. She uses her purple zone to explore the rest of the University taking units from a wide range of offerings.

Some students may not desire the flexibility of choice inherent in the purple zone and want prescription. While Faculties and courses are not permitted to prescribe they will be able to make suggestions to students (their own and others) about different ways they can explore their purple zone.

The purple zone can assist a student change courses

In discussion with student representatives it was noted that the purple zone requirement might lessen the burden on students who change their course during their enrolment at MQ. As one student representative rightly pointed out, units they completed for Course A before they decided to change to Course B may now be able to be counted as purple zone free electives.

In any given year we have up to a thousand students changing courses at MQ.

### **Principle 24: Major in the Purple Zone**

- 24.1 Students can use their purple zone to complete a second major from their course's "major schedule".
- 24.2 A student may extend a sub-major requirement in their red zone to a major through use of the purple zone. The award of the second major will meet any course red zone sub-major requirement.

### **Principle 25: Sub-Major in the Purple Zone**

- 25.1 Students can use their purple zone to complete a sub-major(s) from their course's "Major Schedule".

Students are not permitted to complete a second major that is outside their course schedule. If they wish to pursue such studies they will be encouraged to pursue a double degree and complete study of the second major scaffolded by its own red zone.

#### ***Example:***

Barry has an 8 unit purple zone in his generalist degree. He uses four units to convert his course's sub-major requirement into a second major. With the remaining units he explores units from other faculties.

#### ***Example:***

Thalia's generalist degree does not require the completion of a sub-major in her red zone. She uses her purple zone, however, to complete a sub-major from her course's major schedule.



## Principle 26: Minor in the Purple Zone

- 26.1 A minor is a group of at least four units approved by the University as building knowledge or understanding in an identified area of interest approved by the University.
- 26.2 Minors are available to all courses with a purple zone.
- 26.3 There are two types of purple zone minors:
- i. A sequence of study drawn from another course's majors or specialisations (aligned).
  - ii. A sequence of study not related to a major or specialisation (unaligned).
- 26.4 An unaligned minor is approved by the University through an online registration process held in the Curriculum Management System.

Any scheduled major or specialisation from outside a student's course of study can be available as a minor if students from outside the course can meet the pre-requisites for unit enrolment.

### **Example:**

Nofoto is completing the Bachelor of Astro-Cartooning. In undertaking her purple zone she decides to pursue her interest in marketing. She pursues four units from the BCom's marketing major.

Why can't Nofoto's purple zone studies be recognised with a sub-major?

Nofoto has not engaged with these units through the red zone of the BCom. The title minor provides clear indication that she has explored an area of interest but it sits outside the main focus of her studies.

The approval of minors sits outside individual course approvals because they are available to the purple zone of all students qualified to enrol in the requisite units

26.5 The nomination of a new unaligned minor can be lodged by either staff or students or a combination of both. In the case of a student nomination, an “academic sponsor” is required.

**Example:**

A group of students are interested in using their **purple zone** to pursue sport-related units. They find there are four sport related units in different faculties and all are available in the **purple zone**. With the support of an academic sponsor three of the students complete the registration process to ask Academic Senate to consider “Sports Studies” as a minor. ASQC approves on behalf of the Senate and the minor is put on the **purple zone** minor schedule and now available to all students. The students who nominated the minor undertake the units and when they complete their various courses their Academic Transcript records they have a minor in “Sports Studies”

26.6 ASQC will approve or reject the nomination on behalf of the Senate.

Nominations will be accepted twice a year. The nominators must identify at least four units of study and explain what unites them as an area of interest.

26.7 Given their nature, minors (notably unaligned) are fluid. No guarantees are made to students that a minor will be available during their candidature. Minors are only finalised for a student upon them completing their award.

When a student has met the requirements for the award of their course the CMS will simply run a report noting the students completed units and if any collection of those units equate to a minor(s).

The **purple zone** as institutional sand-pit

The **purple zone** minors also provide the University with evidence of where new areas of study may be emerging. If the sports studies example was delivering hundreds of minors the relevant Faculties might wish to explore the possibilities of further consolidation of such interest in the University’s course offerings.

*Learning for the Future* constructed a vision for students where a “connected learning experience” saw them as “partners and co-creators” (p4). The **purple zone** again speaks to our commitment in this space.

26.8 If a combination of units within a student's **red zone** helps meets the requirements of a minor the student will have the minor acknowledged.

26.9 Minors will appear on the academic transcript.

***Example:***

The various employability units offered by PACE are available in the **purple zone**. Claudia completes three PACE related units in this space. With her course PACE requirement in her **red zone** she has met the criteria for recognition of a minor in "Employability Studies".

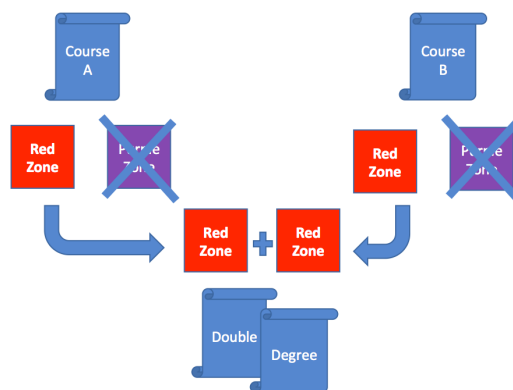
*"Today's students have their eyes on tomorrow – their possible futures, opportunities for further study and careers. The needs of their future employers greatly influence their choices about what and where to study. Employability matters: Their degree is the door to a better career, their university key to the realisation of their ambitions."*  
*Framing Of Futures, p2*

## Principle 27: Double Degrees

27.1 In double degrees the breadth requirement (**purple zone**) of both courses is foregone and the student completes the depth requirement (**red zone**) of the two single degrees.

27.2 Outside stated University exclusions students may choose any combination of undergraduate degrees for which they are qualified to enroll.

In essence the depth requirement of Course A becomes the breadth requirement of Course B and vice-a-versa.



Nomination of exclusions will be made by either the DVC(A) and/or Faculties and be endorsed by the University. They will sit in an exclusions register. Criteria for excluding two courses from a double combination will need to be finalized by Senate and the DVC(A). Similarity of unit offerings and the existence of excessive unit sharing (see Principle 28) could be included in such criteria. Accreditation requirements for one of the courses could be another.

### The case for double degrees.

Between 1999 and 2017 the number of students enrolled in double degrees in Australia remained relatively constant at around 10%. MQ however has had a larger percentage of our students exploring double degrees. In 2012 this figure was 15%. By 2017 it had grown to twice the national average at 21%. In that time our double degree offerings increased from 32 combinations to 64. Little research has been undertaken into the student experience of the combined degree (Wimshurst and Manning, 2017). Evidence from isolated studies suggest that, to date, the option of double degrees has tended to be attractive to students from higher socio-economic backgrounds and those who are not first-in-family (Hickey and Harrison, 2013).

Two main arguments have been asserted for the attractiveness of double degrees:

1. *Employment Outcomes*
2. Data from Graduate Careers Australia from 2012 to 2015 (for reasons that are unclear they have since stopped collecting this data for the 2016 and 2017 reports) suggests that, while somewhat modest, double degree graduates do secure better employment outcomes. Further, it has been suggested that growing credentialism has fuelled “qualification inflation” that has made double degrees a more attractive enrollment option for some students. A 2016 *Sydney Morning Herald* article alleged: “As single degrees have less worth, students do combined degrees or postgraduate studies to stand out in the

- 27.3 Students enrolled in double degrees may complete no more than 120cp at 1000 level for a 360cp course
- 27.4 For every volume of learning increase of 80 cp above 360 cp students enrolled in a double degree course may complete another 20 cp of 1000 level units

### **Example:**

Ai is interested in cartooning and deep space time travel. She engages with our web page and learns she can choose the double degree combination that interests her. She expresses her interest in cartooning and is shown the generalist and specialist degree programs that explore cartooning. She selects Bachelor of Astro-Cartooning. She is now invited to consider another course. She expresses her interest in deep space time travel and is shown the generalist and specialist degree programs available. She decides she would like to complete a double degree with a Bachelor of Astro-Cartooning and a Bachelor of Science with a major in Deep Space Time Travel. Our web site takes Ai to the UAC portal where she can select her double degree combination. She will be offered a place in the double degree if she meets the entry pathway requirements for both courses. Alternatively, Ai can simply seek admission to the Bachelor of Astro-Cartooning and upon enrolment select the second course if she is entitled to enrol

recruitment market.” Finally, Hickey and Harrison (2013) have asserted that double degrees improve student career choices and personal career satisfaction.

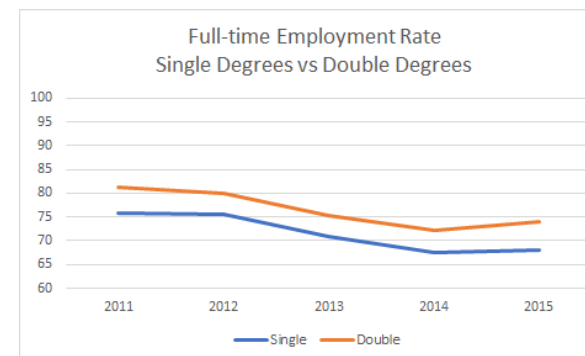


Table: Graduate employment rates, 2011-2015 drawn from GDR

A 2012 Grattan Institute report suggested that “[i]n some cases, combined or double degrees help students pursue interests without risking future employability”. In a world where there are competing arguments around the career prospects of the generalist vs the specialist many double degree graduates arrive in the work force with skill sets drawn from both sides of the argument (see Judd et al, 2015; Kiniasg and Crane, 2015).

### **2. Student Choice**

Beside the data demonstrating the employability advantages of Double Degrees there are a range of reasons advocated for why students choose them. These include:

27.5 Some double degree combinations can lead to professional recognition. In some double degrees, for example when a course with an accreditation requirement is combined with another course that helps to fulfil the requirements for accreditation, the double degree combination may influence student choice in the second course's red zone

The approach advocated in 27.5 has been discussed with working party members, Red Hat team members, Executive Deans and Faculty General Managers with the general consensus that this is the favoured approach. The alternative would be to say that because the accreditation requirements of the first course require specific student choices from the red zone of the second course it is not a double degree as conceived by this model and a single course with an extended volume of learning should be designed.

An obvious practical example in this space is the Bachelor of Education / Bachelor of Science. The Bachelor of Science augments the teaching method(s) of the Bachelor of Education requirements. A student needs to complete units that count towards their required teaching method(s). When the two red zones are combined in this combination the student will see the major, sub-major, unit selections required to complete their teaching method. Borrowing an example from another institution that follows a similar structure a student doing a BSc alone sees 26 different major opportunities. When the BSc is doubled with a BEd that choice drops to 16 to reflect the majors that meet teaching method needs for future teachers.

1. The attractiveness of the volume of discount learning (which can be as much as two years)
2. Their popularity with those students who wish to explore a range of disciplines in a depth not provided for by a single stand-alone degree
3. Their popularity with high achieving students “who know what they want to do and understand the benefits of combining degrees” (*SMH*, 2016).

One assertion relating to the popularity of double degrees are that they have “potential innovation benefits for students who combine learnings from different fields, particularly in unusual combinations.” (*SMH*, 2016). This assertion is only true to a point; the institution has to have decided and approved the “unusual combination” before the student has come up with the combination themselves.

That students do find such innovative combinations before we do is evidenced by the small but not insignificant number of students (~45 in 2017) who complete two degrees concurrently because we do not offer the double degree combination. These students complete these two degrees part-time and because they are classified part-time (despite having a full-time work load) they are have a number of Commonwealth support opportunities denied them. One student for example saw the advantages of studying the environment and economics. We do not allow her to do a double degree with this combination so she enrolled part-time concurrently in the Bachelor of

It is envisaged that a new Curriculum Management System/Student Management System will have the rule setting and scheduling sophistication that when the red zones from these two courses are placed beside each other for a double degree students will see the choices they must make to complete their requirements for accreditation.

*“Our systems, processes and approach to communication are not sufficiently modern, responsive, coordinated and efficient to support the realisation of our fundamental academic potential and purpose.”*

*Framing of Futures, p5*

Economics and the Bachelor of Environment.

In 2014 ANU took on the challenge of empowering students to make the choices around double degree combinations. It introduced its Flexible Double Degree suite of undergraduate programs. They bragged students could now choose from 750 program combinations. See <http://www.anu.edu.au/study/study-options/flexible-double-degrees>.

*Learning for the Future* constructed a vision for students where a “connected learning experience” saw them as “partners and co-creators” (p4). The flexibility of this new approach to double degree combinations again speaks to our commitment in this space.

## Principle 28: Unit Sharing

- 28.1 Units completed in a double degree can meet the requirements of both courses of study.
- 28.2 This form of “unit sharing”, however, is limited and may be the trigger for why a combination is not permitted.
- 28.3 Unit sharing will not produce a discount in the overall volume of learning required by the student to meet the requirements of both degrees.
- 28.4 Any reduction in red zone units through a unit sharing will be met by the student completing designated course elective(s).

The working party did some initial work from institutional benchmarking on what such limits might be but resolved further work would need to be undertaken to ensure a viable and consistent approach.

### **Example:**

Course A and Course B both require *ASTR1003: Astro-Cartoons and Manga*. For one it is a course core unit and for the other a compulsory unit in a specialisation. The completion of the unit meets red zone requirements for both programs. To make up for the discounted unit the student will complete a designated course elective from the course for which they have completed the least number of red zone units to that date.



## **Principle 29: Timely completion**

- 29.1 All students must be advised that due to timetable clashes, clinical placements or other possible course restrictions (beyond their individual unit performance) they may be unable to complete their chosen connected double combination within the minimum time assigned for on-time completion by a full-time student.

We currently provide this type of advice to students. The specific wording to students will be revisited in the wake of the new architecture

## **Principle 30: Double Degree Governance**

- 30.1 With each course's **red zone** previously approved by Senate and the student simply completing the **red zone** requirement of two University approved courses, double degree combinations do not require further Senate approval.

This approach to double degree governance permits the agility required to allow students to make their own combination choices.

The Registrar will provide the Chair of Academic Senate and the DVC(A) with a list of all double degree combinations being attempted by students after each semester's census date.

This approach will need to be tested for accredited degrees and may mean either they will require formal senate approval or they appear on the exclusions list.

### **Principle 31: Reversion to Single Degree**

- 31.1 At any stage of their candidature a student may choose to cease their enrolment in a double degree course and transfer to the stand-alone version of either constituent course (if a single degree version exists).
- 31.2 Students who transfer will have the units hitherto completed in the discarded course counted towards the breadth requirement of the stand-alone program up to the credit point requirement
- 31.3 Depending on the maturity of their enrolment, a student therefore may not receive the full credit for all units previously undertaken.

#### ***Example:***

Tim is completing a Bachelor of Astro-Cartooning and a Bachelor of Border Security. At the start of his third year he decides he no longer wishes to pursue studies in Border Security. He has completed 80cp of units in Border Security. These units will now be counted to meet the purple zone requirement for Astro-Cartooning.

**Principle 32: Admission to a second degree after completion of first award**

32.1 A student seeking admission to a second stand-alone program who has completed a first degree award within the previous 10 years will not be required to meet the course's purple zone requirement. Existing advanced standing/formal RPL rules will apply in the red zone.

Given the discount relates to the purple zone rather than the red zone we can be more generous with regard to the time elapsed since the first award.

### **Principle 33: Embedding Institutional Values in MQ Courses**

- 33.1 Macquarie will deliver its institutional values through a series of compulsory co-curricular modules (refer back to 4.3).

*“We aspire to be a destination of choice for students and staff who share our values ... .” Framing of Futures, p7.*

As a university community, we affirm that our students and staff share a set of institutional values. These are *Scholarship, Integrity and Empowerment*:

*“Through our actions, as staff and students, we live these values and it is against them that we hold ourselves accountable.” Framing of Futures, p7*

In recent years Australian universities have sought to address a range of issues around institutional values. These have included issues relating to academic integrity, indigenous awareness and, most recently, Respect Now Always (RNA). Imparting these values through learning moments have been seen as a better approach to “Codes of Conduct” and been widely adopted through the sector.

The working party considered two possible approaches to this issue. The first option was to gather our values and the issues that speak to them in modules that would comprise a dedicated for-credit MQ unit offering which would be compulsory for all MQ students. The second option was to look at a compulsory co-curricular, not-for-credit,

module approach where students complete individual modules.

At a meeting of DVC(A)’s hosted by Universities Australia in late May 2018 a number of institutions reported on their efforts in this space. No institution had adopted the for-credit approach. The main discussion issue was how to manage the compulsory nature of the activity. TEQSA’s interest in academic integrity modules was noted.

In consultations with MQ student representatives the issue of conscientious objection to such co-curricular activities was raised.

“We are Macquarie”

MQ could design a series of short co-curricular modules that address its institutional values. They would be compulsory for both students (and appear on AHEGGS) and staff (as part of PDR). Work on a number of these modules has already commenced/been completed under other initiatives. Uniting this work around similar design and structure principles would aid their delivery and unite these values. There promotion as a set of modules that appears on AHEGGS would also be attractive for in speaking to preparedness for employment.

### **Principle 34: Graduation**

- 34.1 Students will normally have their awards conferred upon meeting the requirements of both degree courses.
- 34.2 Students who successfully complete a double degree program will receive two testamurs.

### **Principle 35: Award Nomenclature**

- |      |  |   |
|------|--|---|
| 35.1 | Generalist degree courses are simply named after the general field of study. There are no further additions to the title of generalist degree courses is permitted | Eg Bachelor of Science or Bachelor of Commerce. “BA (Astro-Cartooning)” or “BSc in Astro-Cartooning” will not be permitted. The major, however, as noted in 19.7 will appear on the Testamur. |
| 35.2 | Specialist degree courses are named after the specialist/professional area of study and will meet AQF level 8 naming practices                                     | Eg Bachelor of Astro-Cartooning or Bachelor of Deep Space Time Travel (Hons)  |
| 35.3 | Specialisations can be recorded in brackets in the name of the degree course   | Eg Bachelor of Astro-Cartooning (Space Anime)   |