

Faculty of Arts

The University of Sydney

2010

GUIDELINES FOR UNIT OF STUDY OUTLINES

There are no required formats or wordings for UoS outlines in the Faculty of Arts, with the exception of excerpts from Faculty or Academic Board policy documents that appear in these guidelines. Those excerpts appear *in italics and underlined*. Suggested wordings for other parts of outlines appear *in italics only*.

UoS coordinators in the Faculty must, however, ensure that all UG UoS outlines contain the following (not necessarily in the following order). **NB a checklist is provided at the end of this document.**

Foreign language UoS outlines may provide some of this information in the target language as appropriate, subject to the discretion of the coordinator and subject to information concerning assessment tasks and student responsibilities being clear to all students taking that UoS.

I CONTENT : PAGE ONE

1. **UoS code and name, and UoS description** as these appear in the handbook. Some additional description may be added elsewhere in the outline (e.g. with objectives and outcomes) if you wish (for example, overview of individual modules in team-taught UoS, or content description in a foreign language).
2. **Contact details** for coordinator and tutor(s) and times of drop-in office hours.
3. **Learning situation and outline of assessment tasks**
 - Type of learning situation should be described (lecture, tutorial, seminar, online etc).
 - NB All UG UoS in the Faculty of Arts are **either** 3-4 hpw plus 4,000-4,500 words of assessment **or** 2hpw plus 6,000 words of assessment
 - A list of assessment tasks with due date, word count value and percentage weighting, e.g. *Oral presentation choice of tutorials 2-12 equivalent 1500 words 30%*
Essay due 17 June 2500 words 60%
Participation (thorough preparation and active contribution in class) 10%
 - If a participation mark is awarded, then include it in the list with a percentage weighting
 - NB All compulsory tasks, including formative ones, must be included in the total assessment word count
 - Participation is not included in word count and assessable tasks must **not** be included in the participation mark.
4. **Details of required readings** and where they are available:
 - In reader to be purchased from Copy Centre and/or
 - To be purchased from Co-Op Bookshop and/or
 - Available in Library Reserve or on e-learning site (e.g. key background readings for preparation or assessment tasks)
5. **Expectations of students.** This section should include a broad statement of student responsibility with regard to submission of assignments, attendance, the provision of documentation to cover absence, and other requirements of being enrolled in the unit. If a participation mark is awarded, then describe the criteria for that mark here. More detail on

policy is provided below but the first page of your outline should contain a statement of principle. Here is an example of possible wording:

Students are personally responsible for attendance at classes, [active participation – PROVIDE SUCCINCT DEFINITION OF WHAT THAT MEANS] and for submission of work, in compliance with requirements and guidelines set out in this outline and in Faculty and University policy. If you find yourself in difficulty for whatever reason during the semester, and unable to meet the requirements set out below, you should contact [NAME OF UOS COORDINATOR] as soon as possible.

II CONTENT: FOLLOWING PAGES

6. **UoS objectives and learning outcomes** (as per UoS descriptions approved by Faculty or equivalent and appearing in official University publications, e.g. Faculty handbooks).
7. **Details of any online components**, assessable or not, including:
 - what resources are available & how to use them for maximum learning outcomes
 - how to access the site
 - mention of any assessable tasks that must be completed via e-learning.
8. **Attendance**
 - A Faculty policy on Attendance was endorsed on 16 March 2009 (available at http://www.arts.sydney.edu.au/current_students/policies.shtml). The following are some suggested wordings to summarise the policy:
 - *Satisfactory attendance at classes is a minimum condition of completion of a Unit of Study. Students who knowingly will be absent from all classes for more than one week should seek leave of absence, with supporting documentation.*
 - *Absences without written evidence of illness or misadventure* may be penalised with loss of marks; absence from more than 50% of tutorials/seminars, regardless of the reasons for the absences, may result in the student being deemed not to have fulfilled requirements for the unit of study. The case of any enrolled student who is absent from 50% or more of classes will automatically be referred to the department's end of semester examiners' meeting for a determination as to whether the student should pass or fail the unit.*
 - **Examples of misadventure may include but are not limited to accident, sudden bereavement, transport strikes, natural disasters and so on.*
9. **Details of assessment tasks:** under each assessment task subhead (with due date, word count equivalent and percentage weighting repeated), describe
 - The actual question or questions
 - Type of task (if not the actual question) e.g. *an essay on material covered in weeks X-Y of this unit; you will have a choice of 3 topics*. If assessment task questions are not included in the outline, the date they are to be communicated must be stated here, and students must be provided in sufficient time to enable the students to complete them by the due date.
 - No assessment tasks must fall due during Stuvac week. **This is currently not consistently observed across the Faculty, so please double-check your due dates.**
 - Any continuing assessment tasks due during the formal examinations period are to be referred to as “take-home exams”.
 - NB The inclusion of a participation mark is at the discretion of UoS coordinators, but under no circumstances is a participation mark to be awarded for attendance only, it must be awarded for preparation and tutorial participation (criteria to be made clear in [5] above).

- As far as possible, try to consult with other members of your department to avoid deadline clusters; while they are partly a fact of life, for pedagogical, administrative and staff workload reasons, they are a consistent source of student dissatisfaction.

10. **Assessment criteria** including:

- Any guidelines that will help students understand and meet the assessment criteria
- Reference to your School or Dept's grade descriptors (either reproduced in UoS outline or provide URL for Dept or School grade descriptor webpage), including any task-specific customising; these should always be published in English.
- Reference to the Faculty of Arts' *Memo re the Distribution of Grades*:

Please note that marks for assignments are raw marks only. Marks may be scaled at the end of semester to correspond to Faculty and University guidelines for grade the distribution of grades. These are:

Junior units of study

HD 5% D 15% CR 35% Total of Credit & above 55%

Senior units of study

HD 7% D 18% CR 40% Total of Credit & above 65%

FYI:

- A proposed move away from norm-referencing (with grade quotas) back to standards-referencing (without grade quotas) is currently under discussion. Arts T&LC & UGC are part of this conversation.
- The Faculty of Arts' *Memo re the Distribution of Grades* will almost certainly still apply throughout 2010, but UoS Coordinators should pay careful attention to grade descriptors and other assessment standards in designing and marking tasks.
- Faculty policy may be modified in function of the above proposed shift in Academic Board policy.
- The Arts Assessment Working Party report and recommendations as approved by Faculty at its November 2007 meeting is available on the Artserver in Faculty papers for that meeting.

11. **Submission of written work and Academic Honesty**

- *Written work must be submitted in typewritten hard copy at [YOUR SCHOOL OFFICE] by [TIME] on the due date.*
- *Online tasks must be completed by [TIME] on the due date.*
- *You must complete, sign and attach a cover sheet to any written work handed in for assessment. This is in compliance with University Policy on Academic Dishonesty and Plagiarism:*

All students are required to submit a signed statement of compliance with all Work submitted to the University for assessment, presentation or publication. A statement of compliance must be in the form of:

a. a University assignment cover sheet;

b. a University electronic form; or

c. a University written statement;

certifying that no part of the Work constitutes a breach of this Policy.

The University of Sydney takes alleged cases of plagiarism very seriously. Every student has the responsibility to submit appropriately referenced assignments that are in line with the current policy. Information about the policy can be found at:

http://www.sydney.edu.au/ab/policies/Academic_Honesty_Cwk.pdf

- NB Your School may enable completion of the form online: refer to your School policy/administration manager on this. NB if online tasks are required then online submission of the form should be enabled.

12. **Late Work:** A Faculty policy was endorsed on 15 March 2010. This is available at: http://www.arts.sydney.edu.au/current_students/policies.shtml

Students must respect deadlines for assignments and should be familiar with Faculty policy re late work.

Late penalties apply from the day after the published due date. The penalty applied is two marks (out of 100) per day, where 'day' refers only to working days (ie week days). For the purpose of this policy, 'two marks' means two full points off the awarded mark, not two percent of the awarded mark. So, an assignment due on Thursday 4 September and handed in on Tuesday 9 September, and awarded a before-penalty mark of 68%, will be awarded a final, penalised mark of 62%. For assignments marked out of a maximum total other than 100, the penalty will apply pro rata. For example, for assignments marked out of 40, the penalty will be 0.8 marks per day

We understand that students encounter difficulties of various kinds during their study and we are able to refer you to appropriate counselling services where necessary, but it is your responsibility to contact the Unit of Study Coordinator if you do have problems that affect your attendance or prevent you meeting assignment deadlines.

Extensions may be granted in the case of illness or misadventure; these must be applied for via the Faculty of Arts online system for Extensions, Special Consideration and Special Arrangements (see below).

13. **Special Consideration**

Special Consideration should be sought in cases of difficulty, affecting your ability to complete attendance and assessment requirements, where a request for a Simple Extension (up to five days) is not an adequate remedy.

See Academic Board policy on Assessment of Coursework (including Illness and Misadventure) at http://www.sydney.edu.au/ab/policies/Assess_Exam_Coursework.pdf. All applications for Special Consideration will be made via the Faculty of Arts online system.

To access this system please go to www.arts.sydney.edu.au/student_applications. If students miss an exam because of illness or misadventure they should FIRST notify the department concerned to make alternative arrangements and then apply for Special Consideration using the online system.

NB

- Students are allowed to request extensions on or after the due date (within reason) in case of sudden illness, accident or misadventure happening on or close to the due date.
- We must comply with NSW Medical Board guidelines that permit acceptance of post-dated professional practitioners' certificates.

14. **Appeals**

Faculty policy reflects Academic Board policy on Appeals which can be found at: <http://www.sydney.edu.au/secretariat/students/AcAppealsStudents.shtml>.

All care is taken to ensure that marking is consistent and fair and that markers adhere to the assessment criteria as advertised. In some rare cases, however, a student may feel that the mark awarded does not reflect the quality of the work done. If you wish to lodge an appeal against the grade awarded, the first step is to contact the Unit of Study Coordinator to arrange for a time to discuss the assessment task. This should happen within twenty working days of marks being made available to students.

If you are not satisfied with the outcome of this discussion, then you may appeal formally against the grade awarded. The student should first read the Academic Board Resolution on 'Student Appeals Against Academic Decisions'. This appeal should be lodged within fifteen working days, of the outcome of discussions at local level as outlined above. The appeal must be lodged through the Faculty Office (attention Dean of the Faculty of Arts) and include the following:

- *Appeal for Reassessment Form (PDF) (available online & from the School Office)*
- *Written statement outlining the reasons for appeal and any additional supporting documentation. The written statement should draw attention to such matters as perceived injustice in terms of bias or inconsistent application of the grade descriptors published by the Department.*

The Dean will follow up on your appeal within the time limits. All information concerning your appeal will be confidential and you will not suffer disadvantage as a result of your appeal (e.g. your mark will not be lowered).

15. **Week to week outline** with description of preparation required.

SEE FOLLOWING PAGE FOR CHECKLIST

UoS OUTLINE CHECKLIST

Page one

	UoS code and name, and UoS description as it appears in the handbook
	Staff contact details
	Learning situation & assessment overview
	Details of required readings
	Expectations of student preparation

Following pages

	UoS objectives and learning outcomes
	Details of online components
	Statement on Attendance and Penalties for non-Attendance
	Outline of assessment (tasks, due dates, weightings)
	Details of assessment tasks and task completion guidelines
	Details of assessment criteria incl. grade descriptors
	Statement on submission of work and academic honesty
	Late work Policy
	Statement on Simple Extensions and Special Consideration
	Details of Appeals Process
	Week to week outline with description of preparation required