

# DUAL AND JOINT DEGREE POLICY 2019

The Academic Board, as delegate of the Senate of the University of Sydney, adopts the following policy.

Dated:	5 November 2019
Last amended:	9 April 2020 (administrative amendments)
	2 March 2021 (commencing 3 March 2021)
	1 March 2022 (commencing 8 March 2022)
	1 November 2022 (administrative amendments)
	5 May 2023 (administrative amendments)
	5 April 2024 (administrative amendments)
Name:	Professor Jane Hanrahan
Position:	Chair, Academic Board

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## PART 1 – PRELIMINARY AND DEFINITIONS

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### 1 Name of policy

This is the Dual and Joint Degree Policy 2019.

### 2 Commencement

This policy commences on 1 January 2020.

### 3 Policy is binding

Except to the extent that a contrary intention is expressed, this policy binds the University, staff, students and affiliates.

### 4 Statement of intent

This policy:

- (a) specifies the principles for establishing dual and joint degree programs;
- (b) establishes a framework to align dual and joint degree programs with the University's educational and research strategies and standards; and
- (c) supports the University's values of openness and engagement, inclusion and diversity, courage and creativity.

### 5 Application

- (1) This policy applies to:
  - (a) the University, staff, students and affiliates; and
  - (b) all dual and joint degree arrangements undertaken in partnership with another higher education institution.
- (2) This policy does not apply to inter-institutional agreements that do not:
  - (a) have an educational or research training component;
  - (b) establish dual or joint award programs; or
  - (c) contain credit sharing arrangements for coursework degrees.
- (3) This policy does not apply to double degree or combined degree courses offered by the University as defined in the [Coursework Policy](#).

## 6 Definitions

(1) In this policy:

<b>Academic Quality Committee</b>	means the Academic Quality Committee of the Academic Board.
<b>agreement</b>	means a written agreement between the University and a partner institution that is approved by the relevant delegate.
<b>agreement sponsor</b>	means the person with overall responsibility for an agreement.
<b>course resolutions</b>	has the meaning given in the <a href="#">University of Sydney (Coursework) Rule</a> . As at the date of this policy this is: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>means the requirements for an award course set out in the faculty resolutions for the course, in accordance with clause 2.3</li> </ul>
<b>credit recognition agreement</b>	means an agreement between the University and a partner institution which establishes a framework for: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• formally recognising the previous academic attainment of students from the partner institution; and</li> <li>• allowing students to receive credit towards, or reduced volume of learning in, a specified degree at the University.</li> </ul>
<b>Dean</b>	means, as appropriate: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Executive Dean of the Faculty of Medicine and Health;</li> <li>• Dean of a faculty; or</li> <li>• Head of School and Dean of a University school.</li> </ul>
<b>dual degree</b>	means two combined coursework degree programs, one offered at the University and the other at a partner institution, which: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• enable students to count a specified number of credit points towards the requirements for both award courses; and</li> <li>• result in a lower volume of learning than if the two degrees were taken separately.</li> </ul>
<b>dual degree agreement</b>	means an agreement between the University and a partner institution that establishes the framework for a dual degree.
<b>Dual Degree Coordinator</b>	means the Dual Degree Coordinator in the Sydney Future Students Team.
<b>faculty</b>	means, as appropriate, any of: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• a relevant faculty;</li> <li>• a University school; or</li> <li>• a Board of Studies.</li> </ul>



<b>Graduate Studies Committee</b>	means the Graduate Studies Committee of the Academic Board.
<b>Graduations Office</b>	means the team responsible for graduations in Student Administration Services.
<b>joint PhD</b>	means a Doctor of Philosophy degree program that: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• shares candidature between the University and one or more partner institutions;</li><li>• produces a single thesis;</li><li>• has one examination process; and</li><li>• is jointly awarded by the University and the partner institutions.</li></ul>
<b>principal agreement</b>	means an agreement between the University and another higher education institution which establishes the terms upon which the two institutions will offer joint higher degree by research programs, for which each individual candidature will be governed by a separate, subordinate student agreement.
<b>SCPC</b>	means the University Executive Strategic Course Portfolio Committee.
<b>Undergraduate Studies Committee</b>	means the Undergraduate Studies Committee of the Academic Board.

## 7 Purpose and principles

- (1) In establishing dual and joint degree programs, the University aims to:
  - (a) provide students with a unique learning experience through tailored study programs;
  - (b) support research collaboration and academic excellence through engagement with other leading higher education institutions; and
  - (c) increase the University's international presence in accordance with its global engagement and student recruitment strategies.
- (2) Dual degree and joint degree programs:
  - (a) must be governed by University Rules, policies and procedures;
  - (b) may also be governed by the policies of the partner institution if the relevant delegate is satisfied it has similar outcomes and intentions to those of the University, particularly in relation to research integrity and academic honesty; and
    - Note:** All University Rules, policies and procedures are available from the [Policy Register](#)
  - (c) must be consistent with standards established in the [Higher Education Standards Framework \(Threshold Standards\)](#).

- (3) All inter-institutional agreements must have an agreement sponsor.
- (a) The agreement sponsor must arrange for each inter-institutional agreement to be:
- (i) reviewed and endorsed by the relevant committees and sub-committees of the University;
  - (ii) approved by the relevant delegate;
  - (iii) documented in a form approved by the Office of General Counsel;
  - (iv) executed by or on behalf of each party;
  - (v) consistent with all applicable University policies; and
- Note:** See in particular: [Charter of Freedom of Speech and Academic Freedom](#); [Intellectual Property Policy](#); [Research Agreements Policy](#); [Student Placement and Projects Policy](#); [Research Code of Conduct](#); [Guidelines Concerning Commercial Activities](#); [Risk Management Policy](#);
- (vi) registered in the [University contracts register](#) maintained by Archives and Records Management.
- (4) Where an agreement allows for the education or research to be governed wholly or in part by the policies of another institution, the agreement must clearly specify the responsibilities of each participating institution.

## PART 2 – COURSEWORK DEGREES

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### 8 Dual degrees

- (1) Subject to this clause, the University may establish a dual degree program with another higher education institution.
- (2) The University may offer two types of dual degree programs:
- (a) a program that links an existing University course with a partner institution's course through a reciprocal credit sharing arrangement, by means of one-way or two-way credit agreements mapped to an existing University of Sydney degree; or
  - (b) a program that offers a new combined course program with separate University course resolutions.
- (3) Dual degree programs may be offered as:
- (a) a combination of two undergraduate awards;
  - (b) a combination of two postgraduate awards; or
  - (c) a combination of an undergraduate and a postgraduate award.
- (4) All dual degree programs:
- (a) must be established by way of an inter-institutional agreement in accordance with this policy and the [Educational Services Agreements Policy](#); and
  - (b) where possible, should provide an exit pathway for applicants who are unable to complete both degrees.

- (5) Dual degree programs under subclause 8(2)(a) that link an existing University course with a partner institution's course must:
  - (a) meet the University's academic quality requirements; and
  - (b) be assessed and approved in accordance with the approval requirements established in clause 10 of this policy.
- (6) Dual degree programs offered as a new combined course under subclause 8(2)(b) must:
  - (a) meet the University's academic quality requirements;
  - (b) be assessed and approved in accordance with the approval requirements established in clause 10 of this policy;
  - (c) be accredited by the University;
  - (d) have separate course resolutions; and
  - (e) for students studying under an international student visa, be registered on the [Commonwealth Register of Institutions and Courses for Overseas Students \(CRICOS\)](#).
- (7) Dual degree programs may be:
  - (a) inbound, where the student commences study at the partner institution before completing a second degree at the University of Sydney;
  - (b) outbound, where the student commences study at the University of Sydney before completing a second degree at the partner institution; or
  - (c) both inbound and outbound, where the student has the option of commencing study at either the University of Sydney or partner institution before completing a second degree at the other.
- (8) The credit recognition provisions in the dual degree agreement must meet the recognition of prior learning requirements established in Part 11 of the [Coursework Policy](#).

**Note:** Dual degree agreements differ from credit recognition agreements in that the framework established in the former expressly addresses the award of both the relevant University degree and the partner institution degree, whereas the latter only addresses the award of the University degree.
- (9) The University and the partner institution may jointly determine the requirements for student admission to a dual degree program.
- (10) Each institution will determine the fees for their course component of the dual degree program.
- (11) Students are responsible for:
  - (a) submitting admission applications and any additional information to each institution;
  - (b) paying any fees directly to the institution they are enrolled in;
  - (c) meeting all expenses of the dual degree program, including travel, living, and any other associated expenses; and
  - (d) complying with the rules, policies and other requirements of each institution.
- (12) A student who has satisfied the applicable degree requirements will be separately awarded a degree from each institution.

## 9 Rescinded

## 10 Quality assurance and responsibilities

- (1) Agreements must be documented in a form approved by the Office of General Counsel.
- (2) Dual degree programs must meet the educational excellence requirements for award courses specified in clause 8 of the [Learning and Teaching Policy](#).
- (3) Student experience in a dual degree must be:
  - (a) measured through surveys and other appropriate instruments each time a course is offered;
  - (b) reviewed by the course convenor or agreement sponsor; and
  - (c) reported as directed by the Dean.
- (4) The **SCPC** must:
  - (a) review all new combined dual degree course proposals under subclause 8(2)(b); and
  - (b) recommend to the University Executive whether or not it should endorse new combined dual degree course proposals under subclause 8(2)(b).
- (5) The **University Executive** must:
  - (a) review all new dual degree program proposals;
  - (b) recommend to the agreement sponsor whether or not to obtain further information about the dual degree program, including whether a full course proposal should be developed;
  - (c) in relation to proposed dual degree programs, consider relevant strategic initiatives and viability considerations.
  - (d) for new combined course program proposals under subclause 8(2)(b), consult with the:
    - (i) Undergraduate Studies Committee; or
    - (ii) Graduate Studies Committee,about whether or not the credit sharing arrangement, dual degree agreement and full course proposal should be approved.
  - (e) recommend to the Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Education) whether or not to endorse the dual degree program and agreement under subclause 8(2)(b).
  - (f) recommend to the Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Education) whether or not to approve dual degree agreements under subclause 8(2)(a).
- (6) Strategic initiatives to be taken into account include:
  - (a) the [University 2032 Strategy](#);
  - (b) faculty strategic plans;
  - (c) country or region-specific engagement strategies of the University;
  - (d) whether the institutional partner has an existing [strategic research partnership](#) with the University;
  - (e) the University's student recruitment strategies; or

- (f) other strategic considerations as determined by the University Executive.
- (7) Viability considerations to be taken into account include:
  - (a) the educational and financial viability of the program;
  - (b) projected enrolment numbers of the program; and
  - (c) consideration of other degree offerings within the relevant discipline.
- (8) The **Undergraduate Studies Committee**, in relation to undergraduate combined courses under subclause 8(2)(b), must:
  - (a) review the academic quality of new undergraduate dual degree program course proposals;
  - (b) make recommendations to the Academic Board about the quality of new dual degree course proposals;
  - (c) review amendments to existing undergraduate dual degree programs to establish and maintain high standards in teaching, learning, and the student experience;
  - (d) make recommendations to the Academic Board about proposals to amend existing dual degree coursework programs; and
  - (e) consider reports provided to the committee and, where appropriate, make recommendations to the Academic Board.
- (9) The **Graduate Studies Committee**, in relation to postgraduate combined courses under subclause 8(2)(b), must:
  - (a) review the academic quality of new postgraduate dual degree program course proposals;
  - (b) make recommendations to the Academic Board about the quality of new dual degree program course proposals;
  - (c) review amendments to existing postgraduate coursework dual degree programs to ensure the maintenance of high standards in teaching and learning and the student experience;
  - (d) make recommendations to the Academic Board regarding proposals to amend existing postgraduate dual degree programs; and
  - (e) consider reports provided to the committee and make recommendations to the Academic Board.
- (10) The **Undergraduate Studies Committee** and the **Graduate Studies Committee** must consider, and, if appropriate, endorse new dual degree programs under subclause 8(2)(b) that offer a combined undergraduate and postgraduate program.
- (11) The **agreement sponsor** must report to the relevant Deans in February each year on the activities undertaken during the previous year in the programs they sponsor.
- (12) **Deans** must report to their faculty leadership groups and faculty boards in March each year on activities carried out under dual degree agreements in the previous year.
- (13) **Faculty boards** must consider the Dean's report and forward it, with appropriate comments, to the Dual Degree Coordinator.
- (14) The **Dual Degree Coordinator** must collate faculty annual reports and provide a single report to the Deputy-Vice Chancellor (Education) that includes University-wide information on dual degree activities.

- (15) The **Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Education)** must consider the report and forward it to the Undergraduate Studies Committee, Graduate Studies Committee, or Academic Quality Committee, as appropriate, for review.
- (16) The **Dual Degree Coordinator** must submit an agreement renewal proposal to the Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Education) six months before the expiration of a dual degree agreement. The proposal must:
- (a) specify the number of past:
    - (i) course enrolments;
    - (ii) course completions;
    - (iii) inbound students; and
    - (iv) outbound students;
  - (b) include a projection of the number of prospective:
    - (i) course enrolments;
    - (ii) inbound students; and
    - (iii) outbound students.
- (17) The **Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Education)** is responsible for determining whether or not to endorse coursework programs governed by this policy.

## **PART 3 – HIGHER DEGREES BY RESEARCH**

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### **11 Joint Doctor of Philosophy degrees**

- (1) The University may establish a joint Doctor of Philosophy (PhD) program with another higher education institution if:
- (a) the proposal to establish a joint PhD program specifies:
    - (i) strategies for ensuring reciprocity of inbound and outbound students (where the arrangement is established on an exchange basis);
    - (ii) the rationale for establishing the joint program;
    - (iii) strategic objectives of the partnership;
    - (iv) proposed benchmarks or tangible benefits to the University of the arrangement;
    - (v) an estimate of the resources required to establish and maintain the joint program;
    - (vi) the scope of the arrangement, including whether the proposed agreement is University-wide or faculty-specific;
    - (vii) a requirement that at least thirty percent of the candidature must be completed at the University; and
    - (viii) an analysis of how the University's PhD program aligns structurally with the partner institution's PhD program; and
  - (b) the principal agreement meets the requirements specified in clause 13.
- (2) The University may offer a joint PhD with more than one partner institution, with the approval of the Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Research).

- (3) Candidates for a joint PhD must only be required to produce a single thesis and submit to one examination.

## 12 Principal agreements

- (1) The University and the relevant partner institution must enter into a formal principal agreement for the provision of joint PhDs before any students are permitted to participate in the relevant program.
- (2) Principal agreements document the framework for the joint degree program, and
  - (a) must specify requirements for:
    - (i) reciprocity of students;
    - (ii) minimum time periods to be spent at each institution;
    - (iii) content and form of testamurs;
    - (iv) managing intellectual property;
    - (v) tuition fee structure and basis for calculation;
    - (vi) admission requirements of each institution; and
    - (vii) any regulatory requirements applicable under the law governing either institution; and

**Note:** This includes requirements of the [Education Services for Overseas Students Act 2000](#) and the [Higher Education Support Act 2003](#) and [Commonwealth Scholarships Guidelines \(Research\) 2017](#).

- (3) Principal agreements must also specify whether candidates, upon completion, will be issued with:
  - (a) two testamurs that are separately provided by each institution; or
  - (b) a single testamur that contains both institutions' logos.
- (4) If a single testamur is to be issued:
  - (a) the principal agreement must record which institution will issue the testamur; and
  - (b) the Dual Degree Coordinator must notify the Graduations Office of the agreement as soon as possible after it is executed.

## 13 Student agreements

- (1) The University and the partner institution must enter into a separate student agreement, subordinate to and consistent with the relevant principal agreement, for each candidate undertaking the program.
- (2) The Pro Vice-Chancellor (Researcher Training) must approve each student agreement before candidature commences.
- (3) Each student agreement must specify:
  - (a) student obligations;
  - (b) tuition fees and other financial arrangements;
  - (c) the student's intellectual property rights;
  - (d) the student's attendance pattern and indicative dates of travel;



- (e) joint supervision arrangements;
  - (f) the language of the thesis and examination;
  - (g) the earliest and latest permissible thesis submission date;
  - (h) the institution that will conduct the examination;
  - (i) the examination procedures which will apply;
  - (j) location of the examination;
  - (k) type of examination; and
  - (l) graduation procedures.
- (4) Student agreements must be registered in the [University contracts register](#) maintained by Archives and Records Management.
- (5) If the examination is to be conducted by a partner institution the process must be approved before the student agreement is executed, by one of:
- (a) the Chair of the University Executive Research Committee; or
  - (b) the HDR Examinations Sub-Committee of the University Executive Research Committee.

**Note:** See the [Thesis and Examination of Higher Degrees by Research Policy](#) and the [Thesis and Examination of Higher Degrees by Research Procedures](#).

#### 14 Quality assurance and responsibilities

- (1) Principal and student agreements must be documented in a form approved by the Office of General Counsel.
- (2) Joint PhD programs must meet the thesis requirements of the [Thesis and Examination of Higher Degrees by Research Policy](#).
- (3) The **University Executive** must:
  - (a) review the strategic alignment and viability of new joint PhD principal agreements; and
  - (b) provide a recommendation to the Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Research) as to whether or not the Joint PhD principal agreement should be approved.
- (4) Consideration of strategic alignment includes taking into account:
  - (a) the [University 2032 Strategy](#);
  - (b) faculty strategic plans;
  - (c) country or region-specific engagement strategies of the University;
  - (d) whether the institutional partner has an existing [strategic research partnership](#) with the University;
  - (e) the University's Student Recruitment strategies; or
  - (f) other areas of strategic fit as determined by the University Executive.
- (5) The **Dual Degree Coordinator** must prepare an annual report and provide it to the Deputy-Vice Chancellor (Research) that includes University-wide information on joint PhD activities.
- (6) The **Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Research)** must consider the report and forward it to the University Executive Research Committee, and Graduate Studies Committee for review.

- (7) The **Dual Degree Coordinator** must submit an agreement renewal proposal to the Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Research) six months before the expiration of a principal agreement. The proposal must:
- (a) specify the number of:
    - (i) course enrolments;
    - (ii) course completions;
    - (iii) inbound students; and
    - (iv) outbound students.
  - (b) include a projection of the number of prospective:
    - (i) course enrolments;
    - (ii) inbound students; and
    - (iii) outbound students.

## **PART 4 – MISCELLANEOUS**

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### **15 Rescissions and replacements**

This document replaces the *Cotutelle Scheme Policy*, which commenced on 13 October 1999, and which is rescinded as from the date of commencement of this document.

## **NOTES**

### **Dual and Joint Degree Policy 2019**

Date adopted:	5 November 2019
Date commenced:	1 January 2020
Date amended:	9 April 2020 (administrative amendments)
	2 March 2021 (commencing 3 March 2021)
	1 March 2022 (commencing 8 March 2022)
	1 November 2022 (administrative amendments)
	5 May 2023 (administrative amendments)
	5 April 2024 (administrative amendments)
Policy owner:	Chair, Academic Board
Review date:	1 January 2025
Rescinded documents:	<i>Cotutelle Scheme Policy</i>
Related documents:	<i>Higher Education Support Act 2003 (Cth)</i>

*Education Services for Overseas Students Act 2000 (Cth)*

*University of Sydney (Delegations of Authority) Rule*

*University of Sydney (Higher Degree by Research) Rule*

*University of Sydney (Coursework) Rule*

*Charter of Freedom of Speech and Academic Freedom*

*Coursework Policy*

*Educational Services Agreements Policy*

*Learning and Teaching Policy*

*Thesis and Examination of Higher Degree by Research Policy*

*Thesis and Examination of Higher Degree by Research  
Procedures*

## **AMENDMENT HISTORY**

<b>Provision</b>	<b>Amendment</b>	<b>Commencing</b>
6(1); 9(9); 9(10); 10(4); 10(5)(a); 10(15); 14(3); 14(6)	Reference to University Executive Course Curriculum Planning Committee (CCPC) replaced by University Executive Strategic Course and Student Profile Committee (SCSPC)	9 April 2020
5(2)(b)	Replaced 'and' with 'or'.	3 March 2021
9(9); 10(15); 10(16); 14(5)	Added 'Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Education)'.	3 March 2021
9(9)(b)	New subclause.	3 March 2021
10(4)(a)	Added SCSPC review requirements for courses under 8(2)(b).	3 March 2021
10(4)(b) - 10(4)(e)	Subclauses removed.	3 March 2021
10(4)(g)	Subclause removed.	3 March 2021
10(5)(a)	Added 'new'.	3 March 2021
10(5)(b)	New subclause.	3 March 2021

<b>Provision</b>	<b>Amendment</b>	<b>Commencing</b>
10(5)(f)	New subclause.	3 March 2021
10(11) and 10(12)	Subclause ordering swapped for consequential consistency.	3 March 2021
10(13)	Added 'Dual Degree Coordinator'.	3 March 2021
10(14)	New subclause.	3 March 2021
10(16)(b)	New subclause.	3 March 2021
11(a)(viii)	Added 'and'.	3 March 2021
11(5)	Added 'subclause' and 'will be'.	3 March 2021
14(3)(b)	Subclause removed.	3 March 2021
14(5)(b)	New subclause.	3 March 2021
Throughout	References to Coursework Policy 2014 updated to Coursework Policy 2021.	8 March 2022
6	Definition of Graduations Office added.	8 March 2022
6	Definition of pathway agreement removed.	8 March 2022
7(1)(a)	'pathways' replaced by 'programs'.	8 March 2022
7(3)(a) note	Research Code of Conduct 2013 updated to Research Code of Conduct 2019.	8 March 2022
8(2); 8(3); 8(5); 8(7)	New subclauses amended and added at 8(7). Sub-clauses subsequently renumbered.	8 March 2022
8(8) Note:	'and pathway agreements' removed.	8 March 2022
9	Rescinded	8 March 2022
10(5)(d); 10(5)(e); 10(5)(f); 10(8); 10(9); 10(10)	'subclause' added. "and pathway agreements under clause 9" removed.	8 March 2022
10(6)(iii)	'region specific' replaced by 'region-specific'.	8 March 2022
10(6)(iv)	'strategy research partnership' added.	8 March 2022
10(15)	"Academic Quality Committee" added	8 March 2022
11(3)-11(7)	Removed. Old sub-clause 8 now 8(3)	8 March 2022
12(2)	New subclause 12(2) inserted	8 March 2022
12(3) and 12(4)	New sub-clauses inserted.	8 March 2022



<b>Provision</b>	<b>Amendment</b>	<b>Commencing</b>
14(5); 14(6)	New sub-clauses inserted.	8 March 2022
6	Replace Strategic Course and Student Profile Committee with Strategic Course Portfolio Committee	1 November 2022
6; 10(4);	Replace SCSPC with SCPC	1 November 2022
13(5) note	Replace Thesis and Examination of Higher Degrees by Research Procedures 2015 with Thesis and Examination of Higher Degrees by Research Procedures 2020	1 November 2022
13(2)	Replace Director, Graduate Research with Pro Vice-Chancellor (Research Training)	5 May 2023
11(2); 14(3)(b); 14(5); 14(6); 14(7)	Replace Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Education) with Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Research)	5 May 2023
14(6)	Replace University Executive Research Education Committee with University Executive Research Committee	5 May 2023
13(5)(a)	replace 'Academic Quality Committee' with 'University Executive Research Committee'	5 May 2023
14(6)	delete 'Academic Quality Committee'	5 May 2023
10(6)(i) – (vi)	renumbered (a) – (f) (replacing formatting error)	5 April 2024
10(7)(i) – (iii)	renumbered (a) – (c) (replacing formatting error)	5 April 2024
10(6)(a); 14(4)(a)	'University Strategic Plan' replaced with 'University 2032 Strategy'; hyperlink updated	5 April 2024
Throughout	Administrative amendments to remove the year in policy references.	5 April 2024