NOTICE OF MEETING

Meeting 2/2018 of the Academic Standards and Policy Committee will be held from 2:00pm – 4:00pm on Tuesday 10 April 2018 in the Senate Room, Quadrangle. The Agenda for the meeting is below.

Dr Matthew Charet
Executive Officer to Academic Board

AGENDA

1 WELCOME AND APOLOGIES

The Committee is invited to welcome the following new members:
- Dr Bret Church from the Faculty of Pharmacy;
- Pranay Jha, undergraduate student member from the Academic Board;
- Associate Professor Alison Purcell from the Faculty of Health Sciences, replacing Debra Shirley;
- Pavithra Rajan, postgraduate student member from the Academic Board;
- Associate Professor Jennifer Rowley from the Sydney Conservatorium of Music, replacing Andrew Barnes; and
- Professor John Shields from the Business School.

Apologies have been received from Associate Professor Salvatore Babones, Professor Greg Murray and Associate Professor Maurice Peat.

2 PROCEDURAL MATTERS

2.1 Minutes of Previous Meeting Chair attached
2.2 Business Arising Chair verbal
2.3 Terms of Reference Chair attached

3 STANDING ITEMS

3.1 Report of the Chair Chair verbal
3.2 Report of Academic Board Tony Masters attached
3.3 Report of the Admissions Sub-Committee Tim Wilkinson attached

4 ITEMS FOR ACTION

4.1 Late Penalties – Common Submission Time Tony Masters attached

5 ITEMS FOR NOTING

Respect is a core value of the Academic Board
5.1 **Education Portfolio**: Update on Implementation of Strategic Initiatives Relating to Assessment

Peter McCallum attached

5.2 Streamlining Administration to Support Outbound Student Mobility

TBA separate circulation

6 **OTHER BUSINESS**

6.1 Any Other Business

**Next meeting:** 2:00pm – 4:00pm, **Tuesday 22 May 2018**

Senate Room, Quadrangle

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**Academic Standards and Policy Committee - Terms of Reference**

**PURPOSE**

The Academic Standards and Policy Committee assists and advises the Academic Board in ensuring the maintenance of the highest standards and quality in teaching, scholarship and research in the University of Sydney.

**TERMS OF REFERENCE**

1. To play an active role in assuring the quality of teaching, scholarship and research in the University by ensuring the body of academic policies and degree resolutions are internally consistent, incorporate the best ideas and are aligned with the strategic goals of the University.

2. To formulate, review and, as appropriate, recommend policies, guidelines and procedures relating to academic matters, particularly with respect to academic issues that have scope across the University, including equity and access initiatives.

3. To recommend to the Academic Board policy concerning the programs of study or examinations in any Faculty, University School or Board of Studies.

4. To advise the Academic Board and Vice-Chancellor on policies concerning the academic aspects of the conditions of appointment and employment of academic staff.

5. To provide academic oversight of admissions, credit and recognition of prior learning in relation to domains 5.1.1, 5.1.2, 5.2.1, 5.2.2, 5.2.4, 6.3.1 (a), (b), (d), 6.3.2 (a), (d), (e), of the *Higher Education Standards Framework (Threshold Standards) 2015*.

6. To provide academic oversight of research training in relation to domains 4.2.1 (a) – (e), and 6.3.1 (a), (b), (d), 6.3.2 (a), (d), (e), of the *Higher Education Standards Framework (Threshold Standards) 2015*.

7. To actively seek and evaluate opportunities to improve the University’s pursuit of high standards in all academic activities.

8. To ensure proper communication channels are established with other committees of the Academic Board and the University Executive to promote cross-referencing and discussion of matters relating to academic standards and policy.

9. To receive reports from, and provide advice to, the Deputy Vice Chancellors relating to the operation and effectiveness of policy in the areas of teaching, scholarship and research.

10. To exercise all reasonable means to provide and receive advice from the University Executive and its relevant subcommittees.

11. To provide regular reports on its activities under its terms of reference to the Academic Board.

12. To consider and report on any matter referred to it by the Academic Board, the Vice-Chancellor or the Deputy Vice-Chancellors.
RECOMMENDATION

That the Academic Standards and Policy Committee resolve that the minutes of meeting 1/2018, held on 13 February 2018, be confirmed as a true record.

MINUTES

ACADEMIC STANDARDS AND POLICY COMMITTEE

2:00pm – 4:00pm, Tuesday 13 February 2018
Senate Room, Quadrangle (A14)

Members Present: Professor Jane Hanrahan (Interim Chair); Associate Professor Salvatore Babones (Academic Board); Dr Vasiliki Betihavas (Nursing); Professor Alan Fekete (Academic Board); Associate Professor Vincent Gomes (Engineering & IT); Professor Manuel Graeber (co-opted, Medicine); Imogen Grant (President, SRC); Kerrie Henderson (co-opted, Office of General Counsel); Nanda Jorsz (nominee of the President, SUPRA); Patty Kamvounias (Academic Board); Dr Adrienne Keane (Architecture, Design & Planning); Dr Peter Knight (Medicine); Professor Greg Murray (Dentistry); Associate Professor John O’Byrne (Science, for Helen Agus); Associate Professor Rita Shackel (Law).

Attendees: Dr Matthew Charet (Secretary); Associate Professor McCallum (Director, Education Strategy) (for Items 4.1 and 5.1); Georgie Wheadon (Senior Project and Policy Officer, DVC (Education) (for Items 4.1 and 5.1)).

Apologies: Helen Agus (Science) (Associate Professor John O’Byrne attending instead); Associate Professor Tony Masters (Chair of the Academic Board); Associate Professor Mark Melatos (Arts & Social Sciences); Professor Pip Pattison (Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Education)); Associate Professor Maurice Peat (co-opted, Business); Dr Debra Shirley (Health Sciences).

UNCONFIRMED MINUTES

1 WELCOME AND APOLOGIES

The Chair welcomed members to the first meeting for 2018 and apologies were noted as recorded above.

2 PROCEDURAL MATTERS

2.1 Minutes of the Previous Meeting

The minutes of the previous meeting held on 14 November 2017 were approved as a true record.

Resolution ASPC18/1-1

That the Academic Standards and Policy Committee resolve that the minutes of meeting 8/2018, held on 14 November 2017, be confirmed as a true record.
2.2 Business Arising

The Chair advised that there was no business arising.

2.3 Revised Terms of Reference

The Chair advised that prior to the meeting, the Co-Presidents of SUPRA had made a written submission requesting to expand the membership of the committee to include a postgraduate student member of the Academic Board, and this was supported by the committee. Members were advised that the majority of the other amendments are to bring the terms of reference into alignment with the powers delegated to the Academic Board, as well as to ensure that the Academic Board fulfils its function in ensuring that the University adheres to the Higher Education Standards Framework (Threshold Standards) 2015.

In discussion, it was observed that reference to Standards 2.4.2 and 2.4.3 may be misplaced or misnumbered (these refer to student grievances), and that some of the activities currently included may be better allocated to the new Academic Quality Committee. The Chair and Secretary undertook to liaise with the Office of General Counsel to determine whether further amendments are necessary and if so, would advise the committee.

Subject to these actions, the draft terms of reference were endorsed for presentation to the Academic Board.

Resolution ASPC18/1-2
That the Academic Standards & Policy Studies Committee recommend that the Academic Board approve the revised Terms of Reference, as presented, with effect from 6 March 2018.

3 STANDING ITEMS

3.1 Report of the Chair

The Chair advised that she had nothing to report.

Resolution ASPC18/1-3
That the Academic Standards and Policy Committee note the report of the Chair.

3.2 Report of Academic Board

Members noted the written report circulate with the agenda.

Resolution ASPC18/1-4
That the Academic Standards and Policy Committee note the report of the Academic Board meeting held on 28 November 2017.

4 ITEMS FOR ACTION

4.1 Education Portfolio: Proposed Revisions to Course Resolution Templates

The Director, Education Strategy, advised members that the proposed amendments have been recommended to better reflect recent changes to curriculum and degree structures across the University, to enable greater consistency across award courses, and to facilitate transfer of resolutions into a new curriculum management tool that is currently under development. The University Policy Manager provided a number of amendments to ensure that the templates correctly reference policy, and strongly recommended that existing resolutions be reviewed by faculties to ensure that current inconsistencies and errors are not simply transferred into the new template. She offered to discuss this further with the Director, Education Strategy prior to implementation.

The proposal was endorsed for presentation to the Academic Board.

Resolution ASPC18/1-5
That the Academic Standards and Policy Committee recommend that the Academic Board adopt the revised undergraduate and postgraduate course resolutions templates, as presented, with immediate effect.
ITEMS FOR NOTING

5.1 Education Portfolio: Implementation of Anonymous Marking

The Director, Education Strategy, informed members that anonymous marking was approved by the Academic Board in late 2016 but due to implementation issues, it had subsequently been agreed to delay implementation until 2018. This has enabled Canvas to be configured to accommodate anonymous marking by enabling the submission of written assessments that are identified only by Student ID (SID).

In discussion, Professor Fekete expressed support for the idea but had concerns regarding the practical challenges of implementation (especially for exam marking). He observed that in his experience as an examiner, students will frequently mistranscribe their SID, making it challenging to correctly identify the student to whom the results are to be allocated. He strongly recommended that a trial be undertaken in the first instance – using several medium-sized units of study – to practically test the system before it is rolled out across the institution. The Chair advised that following conversation at the Committee when anonymous marking was first proposed, the Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Registrar) was asked to ensure that exam seat numbers would be allocated by SID; this would enable easier processing of results and eliminate difficulties in processing results currently presented by varying systems of alphabetisation used across the University. It was also suggested that the Examinations Office be asked to check that an SID is provided on each paper before it is forwarded to examiners.

The impact of anonymisation on assessment-related processes such as Special Consideration and students identifying as disabled, was also flagged for further consideration. It was observed in this regard that some faculties currently require the inclusion of supporting documentation to online submission of assessment by impacted students, which would impact on anonymity.

Members sought clarification as to who was responsible for communicating the implementation of anonymous marking to Unit of Study Coordinators, with several members (who are also Unit of Study Coordinators) observing that they had been ignorant of the requirement until seeing the paper circulated with the agenda. The Director, Education Strategy, undertook to follow up these concerns.

Resolution ASPC18/1-6

That the Academic Standards & Policy Committee note that anonymous marking of written assessments and formal examinations will commence at the beginning of Semester 1 2018.

6 OTHER BUSINESS

6.1 Any Other Business

Ms Henderson informed members that it is desirable for the University to return to an annual review of the Delegations of Authority and in aid of this, at the next meeting of the Academic Board the Chair will invite proposals for amendments to the Delegations for presentation to the 27 June meeting of Senate. As the Delegations have higher authority than policy, it is important to ensure that any amendments to the Delegations are appropriately reflected in amendments to policy and procedures where required.

There being no other business, the meeting concluded at 2:43pm.

Next meeting: 2:00pm – 4:00pm, Tuesday 10 April 2018
Venue to be advised.

A full copy of the Academic Standards and Policy Committee papers is available at:
RECOMMENDATION

That the Academic Standards & Policy Committee note the approval of Terms of Reference by the Academic Board at its meeting of 6 March 2018, as presented.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

At its meeting of 13 February 2018, the Committee discussed and endorsed draft Terms of Reference for presentation to the Academic Board for approval. At its meeting of 6 March 2018, the Academic Board approved the adoption of these Terms of Reference, with effect from 6 March 2018.

The final Terms of Reference and mapping to the relevant standards in the Higher Education Standards Framework 2017 are attached for noting by the committee.

ATTACHMENTS

Attachment 1 – Terms of Reference for the Academic Standards & Policy Committee
Purpose

The Academic Standards and Policy Committee assists and advises the Academic Board in ensuring the maintenance of the highest standards and quality in teaching, scholarship and research in the University of Sydney.

Terms of Reference

1. To play an active role in assuring the quality of teaching, scholarship and research in the University by ensuring the body of academic policies and degree resolutions are internally consistent, incorporate the best ideas and are aligned with the strategic goals of the University.

2. To formulate, review and, as appropriate, recommend policies, guidelines and procedures relating to academic matters, particularly with respect to academic issues that have scope across the University, including equity and access initiatives.

3. To recommend to the Academic Board policy concerning the programs of study or examinations in any Faculty, University School or Board of Studies.

4. To advise the Academic Board and Vice-Chancellor on policies concerning the academic aspects of the conditions of appointment and employment of academic staff.

5. To provide academic oversight of admissions, credit and recognition of prior learning in relation to domains 5.1.1, 5.1.2, 5.2.1, 5.2.2, 5.2.4, 6.3.1 (a), (b), (d), 6.3.2 (a), (d), (e), of the Higher Education Standards Framework (Threshold Standards) 2015.

6. To provide academic oversight of research training in relation to domains 4.2.1 (a) – (e), and 6.3.1 (a), (b), (d), 6.3.2 (a), (d), (e), of the Higher Education Standards Framework (Threshold Standards) 2015.

7. To actively seek and evaluate opportunities to improve the University’s pursuit of high standards in all academic activities.

8. To ensure proper communication channels are established with other committees of the Academic Board and the University Executive to promote cross-referencing and discussion of matters relating to academic standards and policy.

9. To receive reports from, and provide advice to, the Deputy Vice Chancellors relating to the operation and effectiveness of policy in the areas of teaching, scholarship and research.

10. To exercise all reasonable means to provide and receive advice from the University Executive and its relevant subcommittees.

11. To provide regular reports on its activities under its terms of reference to the Academic Board.

12. To consider and report on any matter referred to it by the Academic Board, the Vice-Chancellor or the Deputy Vice-Chancellors.

Constitution

Ex Officio Members

the Chair of the Committee
the Chair of the Academic Board, or nominee
the Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Education), or nominee
the Director, Educational Innovation, or nominee
the President of the Students’ Representative Council, or nominee

Approved by Academic Board Resolution AB2018/1-3 (6 March 2018)
the President of the Sydney University Postgraduate Representative Association, or nominee

Appointed members
The Academic Board shall, on nomination by members of the Academic Board, appoint:
- one member from each Faculty and University School; and
- at least one undergraduate student member.

The Academic Board shall, on the recommendation of the Chair of the Academic Board, appoint as its representatives three elected staff members of the Board. On the recommendation of any two of these members, an item before the Committee will be referred to the Academic Board as a starred item for consideration.

Deputy Chair
The Committee may, on the nomination of its Chair, appoint one member to act as Deputy Chair.

Co-opted members
On the recommendation of the Committee, the Academic Board may co-opt additional members. Co-opted members may be selected from the University community or be external to the University of Sydney and may express interest directly to the Chair of the Committee, but must have an interest and/or experience in issues considered by the Committee. The term of office of members co-opted by the Committee shall be specified at the time of co-option and such members shall have all rights and privileges of other members.

Assessors and Reviewers
The Committee may invite and appoint assessors and reviewers to assist it with its functions, including, as appropriate, from outside the University.

Observers
Students and staff of the University may attend meetings as observers, and may, with the permission of the Chair of the committee, address the meeting on issues being considered by it.

Frequency of Meetings
The Committee shall meet at least five times a year.

Voting Rights
Voting is restricted to *ex-officio* members, appointed members and co-opted members.

Quorum
A quorum for a meeting of the Committee shall be seven members.

Sub-Committees
- Admissions Sub-Committee
HESF Domains

The *Higher Education Standards Framework (Threshold Standards) 2015* domains relevant to this committee include:

4 Research and Research Training

4.2 Research Training

1. Research training is guided by an institutional research training policy framework that is designed to achieve:
   a. definition and recognition of the rights and responsibilities of research students and supervisors
   b. induction and orientation of research students and supervisors to their roles
   c. monitoring of the progress of research students
   d. assessment and examination of students’ work
   e. independence of examiners

5 Institutional Quality Assurance

5.1 Course Approval and Accreditation

1. There are processes for internal approval of the delivery of a course of study, or, where a provider has authority to self-accredit, internal accreditation, of all courses of study leading to a higher education qualification.

2. Course approval and self-accreditation processes are overseen by peak institutional academic governance processes and they are applied consistently to all courses of study, before the courses are first offered and during re-approval or re-accreditation of the courses.

5.2 Academic and Research Integrity

1. There are policies that promote and uphold the academic and research integrity of courses and units of study, research and research training activities, and institutional policies and procedures address misconduct and allegations of misconduct.

6 Governance and Accountability

6.3 Academic Governance

1. Processes and structures are established and responsibilities are assigned that collectively:
   a. achieve effective academic oversight of the quality of teaching, learning, research and research training
   b. set and monitor institutional benchmarks for academic quality and outcomes
   d. provide competent advice to the corporate governing body and management on academic matters, including advice on academic outcomes, policies and practices.

2. Academic oversight assures the quality of teaching, learning, research and research training effectively, including by:
   a. developing, monitoring and reviewing academic policies and their effectiveness
   d. maintaining oversight of academic and research integrity, including monitoring of potential risks

*Approved by Academic Board Resolution AB2018/1-3 (6 March 2018)*
e. monitoring and initiating action to improve performance against institutional benchmarks for academic quality and outcomes
RECOMMENDATION

That the Academic Standards and Policy Committee note the report of the Academic Board meeting held on 6 March 2018.

REPORT OF ACADEMIC BOARD MEETING

Items related to the Academic Standards and Policy Committee
The Academic Board noted the report from the meeting of the Academic Standards and Policy Committee held on 13 February 2018; and

- approved the Terms of Reference and Chair of the Academic Standards and Policy Committee;
- adopt the revised undergraduate and postgraduate course resolutions templates, as presented, with immediate effect; and
- noted the report on the implementation of anonymous marking, as presented.

Items related to the Academic Quality Committee
The Academic Board noted the report from the meeting of the Academic Quality Committee held by circulation on 20 February 2018; and

- approved the Terms of Reference and Chair of the Academic Quality Committee;
- approved the terms of reference, membership and processes for the review of Student Wellbeing and Safety, as the first theme in the Phase 5 Academic Board / University Executive reviews; and
- noted the Academic Board/University Executive Phase Four Faculty Review Report for Sydney Law School.

Items related to the Graduate Studies Committee
The Academic Board noted the report from meeting of the Graduate Studies Committee held on 13 February 2018 and:

- approved the Terms of Reference and Chair of the Graduate Studies Committee;
- rescinded the course resolutions for the Doctor of Medical Science, as presented, with immediate effect;
- approved the proposal from the Faculty of Science to change the name of the Master of Mathematics to the Master of Mathematical Sciences, and of the associated vertically integrated masters degrees (including the Bachelor of Science / Master of Mathematical Sciences); recommended that Senate approve the amendment of the Resolutions of Senate for the Faculty of Science; and approved the amendment of course resolutions arising from the proposal, with effect from 1 January 2019; and
- endorsed the recommendations of the plan “Increasing Engagement Opportunities for HDR Students”, as presented.

Items related to the Undergraduate Studies Committee
The Academic Board noted the report from the meeting of the Undergraduate Studies Committee held on 6 February 2018 and by circulation starting on 21 February 2018 and:

- approved the Terms of Reference and Chair of the Undergraduate Studies Committee;
Non-Confidential

- approved the proposal from the Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences to introduce the Bachelor of Education (School and Community Education) / Bachelor of Arts combined degree; recommended that Senate endorse the Academic Board’s approval of the proposal and approve amendments to the Resolutions of Senate related to the Degrees, Diplomas and Certificates in the Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences; and approved the introduction of course resolutions arising from this proposal, with effect from 1 January 2019;
- approved the proposal from the Faculty of Science to amend the Bachelor of Science / Bachelor of Advanced Studies to introduce a stream in Taronga Wildlife Conservation; recommended that Senate approve the amendment of the Resolutions of Senate related to the Degrees, Diplomas and Certificates in the Faculty of Science; requested that the Academic Model Team create the new stream in Sydney Student and make it available for enrolment in 2019 for both first and second-year students; and approved the amendment of course resolutions and unit of study tables arising from this proposal, with effect from 1 January 2019;
- approved the proposal from the Faculty of Engineering and Information Technologies to amend the Bachelor of Project Management and approved the amendment of the course resolutions and unit of study tables arising from the proposal, with effect from 1 January 2019.

Other matters

The Academic Board also:
- approved the appointment of chairs of the Standing Committees;
- appointed Professor Jane Hanrahan as Deputy Chair of the Academic Board;
- approved membership changes for the Academic Board and Standing Committees;
- endorsed proposed amendments to the University of Sydney (Governance of Faculties and University Schools) Rule 2016, with the amendments to be presented to Senate by the Vice-Chancellor;
- noted proposed amendments to the University of Sydney (Delegations of Authority – Academic Functions) Rule 2016;
- noted the Report of the Chair and the Report of the Vice-Chancellor and Principal;
- received an update on the implementation of recommendations set out in the 2017 report of the Assessment Working Group;
- noted a report on the implementation of anonymous marking;
- received an update on TEQSA re-registration;
- noted the reports of the student members of the Academic Board;
- approved amendments to the undergraduate and postgraduate course resolutions templates;
- noted the Academic Board/University Executive Phase Four Faculty Review Report for Sydney Law School;
- approved the 2018 Academic Calendar for the Faculty of Science; and
- received annual reports on the promotion of academic staff to Levels B, C, D and E in 2017.

The full agenda pack for the 6 March 2018 meeting of the Academic Board is available here.

Associate Professor Tony Masters
Chair, Academic Board
RECOMMENDATION

That the Academic Standards & Policy Committee note the report of the meeting of the Admissions Sub-Committee held on 19 March 2018 and

(1) endorse the Terms of Reference for the Admissions Sub-Committee, with immediate effect; and

(2) endorse:
   (1) the in-principle amendment of the Coursework Policy 2014 to clarify the role of the Academic Board in overseeing admissions prerequisites;
   (2) the update of mathematics admissions standards;
   (3) changing the policy framework for admissions, including the introduction of admissions procedures; and
   (4) the convening of an Admissions Sub-Committee Working Party to consider whether policy changes are required to address the differences between:
       • undergraduate and graduate English language requirements;
       • recent and non-recent school leaver admissions requirements; and domestic and international student entry requirements.

ITEMS FOR ACTION

3.3.1 Terms of Reference

The Sub-Committee endorsed its Terms of Reference, as amended from the draft version approved at the 28 November 2017 meeting of the Academic Board.

3.3.2 Admissions prerequisites

The Sub-Committee discussed and endorsed a paper prepared by the Office of the DVC (Education) regarding the proposed amendment of the Coursework Policy 2014, the creation of a Coursework Admissions Policy and Procedures, and establishing a working group to address inconsistencies in current admissions requirements.

OTHER BUSINESS

The Admissions Sub-Committee also:
• endorsed a proposal from the Faculty of Science to amend extend the E12 admissions scheme to students in the Bachelor of Science / Doctor of Dental Medicine and Bachelor of Science / Doctor of Medicine and amend Faculty and course resolutions arising from this proposal. This item was forwarded to the Undergraduate Studies Committee for endorsement to the Academic Board.

Full agenda papers are available from the Admissions Sub-Committee website, at sydney.edu.au/secretariat/pdfs/academic-board-committees/admissions/2017/20170530-Admissions-Agenda-Pack.pdf.
Admissions Sub-Committee – Draft Terms of Reference

Purpose

The Admissions Sub-Committee advises the Academic Standards and Policy Committee and the Undergraduate and Graduate Studies Committees of the Academic Board about resolutions, policy and procedures relating to admissions to award courses at the University of Sydney. The Sub-Committee receives and comments on reports that about:

- assessment of prior learning is undertaken for the purpose of granting credit for units within a course of study or toward the completion of a qualification;
- conduct of such assessment is conducted according to institutional policies;
- recording results and advising students of outcomes the result is recorded and students receive in a timely fashion; and
- consistency written advice of the outcome, and that such procedures are consistent with the:
  - Coursework Policy 2014,
  - Coursework Credit Procedures 2015,
  - University of Sydney (Higher Degrees by Research Rule) 2016
  - Go8 Credit Transfer Agreement,
  - individual Faculty/University School/school credit requirements procedures and the Higher Degree by Research Rule 2011.

Terms of Reference

1. To advise the Academic Standards and Policy Committee on:
   - 1.1. resolutions, policy and procedures relating to all student admissions to the University; and
   - 1.2. issues relating to admissions not based solely on the Australian Tertiary Admissions Rank (ATAR).

2. To make recommendations to the Academic Standards and Policy Committee, or, if deemed appropriate by the Admissions Subcommittee, to either or both of the Undergraduate Studies Committee and/or the Graduate Studies Committee, regarding about:
   - 2.1. English language requirements for admission to award courses;
   - 2.2. recognition of institutions, programs and courses for the purposes of admission;
   - 2.3. approval of admissions criteria in addition to the ATAR, including assumed knowledge;
   - 2.4. approval of preparatory programs of study in prior learning;
   - 2.5. approval of special admission schemes;
   - 2.6. confirmation of academic selection criteria for international students set by Deans or Heads of School and Deans of University Schools; and
   - 2.7. University-wide credit transfer policy for all coursework.

3. To provide academic oversight of admissions, credit and recognition of prior learning in relation to domains 1.1, 1.2 and 2.2 of the Higher Education Standards Framework (Threshold Standards) 2015.

4. To provide academic oversight in relation to the AQF Qualifications Pathways Policy AQF qualifications pathways.

5. To oversee and approve the publication of admissions advice.

6. To exercise all reasonable means to provide and receive advice from the University Executive and its relevant subcommittees.
7. To provide regular annual reports on its activities under its terms of reference to the Academic Standards and Policy Committee.

8. To consider and report on any matter referred to it by the Academic Board or its committees, the Vice-Chancellor, Academic Board committees or the Chair of the Academic Board.

Constitution

Ex Officio Members
the Chair of the Committee
the Chair of the Academic Board
the Chairs of the Undergraduate Studies and Graduate Studies Committees
the Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Education) or nominee
the Director, Student Recruitment, or nominee
the Director, Admissions, or nominee
the Head, Widening Participation, or nominee
the Director, Planning and Information Office, or nominee
the President of the Students' Representative Council, or nominee
the President of the Sydney University Postgraduate Representative Association, or nominee

Appointed Members
Where possible, the Academic Board shall, on the advice of the Chairman of the Academic Board, appoint the following annually:

- one undergraduate and one postgraduate student member of the Academic Board, appointed annually by the Academic Board on the advice of the Chair of the Academic Board; and
- three Deans, appointed annually by the Academic Board on the advice of the Chair of the Academic Board, or their nominees

Co-opted Members
The Sub-committee may co-opt up to four members. Co-opted members may be selected from the members of the Academic Board or the wider University community or may express interest directly to the Chair of the Sub-committee, but must have an interest and/or experience in issues considered by the Committee. The term of office of members co-opted by the Sub-committee shall be specified at the time of co-option and such members shall have all rights and privileges of other members.

Frequency of Meetings
The Sub-committee shall meet as required at least five (5) times a year.

Quorum
A quorum for a meeting of the Sub-committee shall be four (4) members.
Non-Confidential

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Author</th>
<th>Hugh O’Dwyer, Policy and Project Officer</th>
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<tr>
<td>Reviewer/Approver</td>
<td>Associate Professor Peter McCallum, Director Education Strategy</td>
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<tr>
<td>Paper title</td>
<td>Admissions prerequisites</td>
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<tr>
<td>Purpose</td>
<td>To facilitate discussion about the role of deans, faculty boards, and the Academic Board (and relevant committees) in specifying admissions prerequisites and other requirements. The paper also highlights existing discrepancies in admission requirements, which the Subcommittee is asked to consider.</td>
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**RECOMMENDATION**

That the Admissions Sub-Committee considers the existing policy architecture pertaining to admissions and the proposals below, including:

1. amending the Coursework Policy 2014 to clarify the role of the Academic Board in overseeing admissions prerequisites;
2. updating the mathematics admissions standards;
3. changing the policy framework for admissions, including the introduction of admissions procedures; and
4. considering whether policy changes are required to address the differences between:
   - undergraduate and graduate English language requirements;
   - recent and non-recent school leaver admissions requirements; and
   - domestic and international student entry requirements.

**EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

The admission and candidature section of the Coursework Policy 2014 does not provide the Academic Board and faculty boards with authority to oversee or approve changes to admissions prerequisites for enrolment at the University. Therefore, it is proposed that consideration is given by the Admissions Subcommittee to whether the policy is amended to include a section that addresses prerequisites for enrolment in award courses. Additionally, the current admissions standards on the Academic Board’s Governance Instruments webpage do not include admission pre-requisites for mathematics. There are also discrepancies and policy gaps between undergraduate and graduate English language requirements recent and non-recent school leavers, and domestic and international students that could be addressed concurrently with the above policy changes.

**CONTEXT**

From 2019, the University will introduce admission prerequisites for mathematics for courses in relevant discipline areas (including medicine, science, technology, engineering, mathematics, commerce, and economics). The current Governance Instruments on admissions standards need to be formalised to reflect this new arrangement. Additionally, amendments should be considered to provide the Academic Board, via the Admissions Sub-Committee with authority to approve admission pre-requisites on the advice of the relevant faculty. In establishing that policy and procedures, consideration should be given to the principles that should apply in setting pre-requisites and determining equivalence for students from other countries and educational jurisdictions. Concurrent to these changes being formalised in the existing Governance Instruments, there is an opportunity to update the policy architecture for admissions.

An amendment to the Coursework Policy 2014 is required to provide clarity around the role of faculties, deans and the Academic Board (via the Admissions Sub-Committee) in approving admissions prerequisites. This amendment would be made by introducing a new ‘Prerequisite for Award Courses’ section with a clause that states ‘on the recommendation of a faculty board, the Academic Board (via the Admissions Sub-Committee), may approve admissions prerequisites and other requirements.’ The policy and procedures should also include reference to a schedule of degrees with pre-requisites (similar to the Governance Instruments: Academic Board Admission Standards on the Secretariat Website).
Non-Confidential

Board could also be amended to include authority to approve minimum and pre-published ATARs on the recommendation of the relevant faculty and the Admissions Sub-Committee.

The English language requirements for undergraduate entry involve one of three methods: completion of secondary or tertiary studies in English, completion of a specific subject in a recognised secondary qualification, or completion of an English proficiency test. Postgraduate coursework and research students have the option to complete an English proficiency test or complete tertiary studies taught in English undertaken no more than five years before the date of application. Currently, there is no time limit applied for undergraduate admission through the completion of secondary or tertiary studies taught in English. It is proposed that English Language requirements for undergraduate and postgraduate courses be reviewed in light of the effectiveness of current standards and, if appropriate, brought into alignment.

Additionally, consideration should be given to whether section 11 of the Coursework Policy 2014 should be amended to address equivalence of admission standards for non-recent school leavers and for international students. Matters to be considered include: limiting the number of times that school leaver qualifications can be used in cases where there is also a tertiary record or setting a time limit beyond which they should not be used; the gap between recent school leaver and non-recent school leaver cut-offs; the relationship and possible better alignment between domestic and international admission standards and requirements.

Work will also be conducted to review various external prerequisites mandated by governmental or accreditation bodies, to ascertain whether policy, procedural, or governance instrument changes are required to manage these requirements. For instance, the Australian Institute for Teaching and School Leadership’s (AITSL) National Program Standard 3.2 requires ‘providers [to] apply selection criteria for all entrants, which incorporate both academic and non-academic components that are consistent with engagement with a rigorous higher education program, the requirements of the particular program and subsequent success in professional teaching practice.’ As such, non-academic criteria may need to be formally referenced in the policy to reflect this accreditation standard.

Additionally, consistent visibility of entry requirements should be explored by the Sub-Committee, including entry marks (e.g. ATAR), IELTS, and other prerequisites. Currently, these varying admissions criteria are published in the relevant year handbook (‘Undergraduate Guide’ or ‘International Guide’), but the governance instruments pertain only to admission prerequisites (not marks). It should be noted that these student guides are already located on the undergraduate and postgraduate coursework entry requirements webpages.

Consideration should also be given to the effectiveness of streamlining the admissions policy clauses by using the policy to articulate key principles of the University’s admission strategy and developing an admissions procedures, which would include a range of existing and new provisions. For instance, the aforementioned schedule of degrees with prerequisites could be included in a new admissions procedures along with other Governance Instruments relating to admission standards. Under this arrangement, the admissions-related sections of the Coursework Policy 2014 would specify only principles and essential requirements, with additional information located in a new procedures document.

Changes to the Admissions section of the Coursework Policy will be conducted so as to synchronise with other changes relating to assessment, and the curriculum framework for Vertically Integrated Bachelor/Master degrees following recent shifts in government policy.

CONSULTATION

The purpose of this paper is to facilitate discussion about the role of deans, faculty boards, and the Academic Board in specifying admissions prerequisites, and to highlight discrepancies in current entry requirements. A paper will be provided to the 30 April Admissions Subcommittee meeting that reflects the outcomes of the discussion at the 19 March Admissions Subcommittee and additional consultation with University stakeholders. This consultation will support the development of amendments to existing policies and governance instruments, and potentially the creation of a new admissions procedures document.

Draft policy amendments will be provided to the following committees:

- Admissions Sub-Committee (18 June 2018)
- University Executive Education Committee (18 June 2018)
- Academic Standards and Policy Committee (17 July 2018)
- Academic Board (7 August 2018)
RECOMMENDATION

That the Academic Standards & Policy Committee endorse the recommendation of the UE Education Committee that a common system of Late Penalties and a common submission time of 23:59 for written assessments be adopted, with effect from Semester 1 2019.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

At its meeting of 10 July 2017 the University Executive Education Committee agreed that consistency in the application of late penalties for the submission of written assessments across the university would be desirable. Following a report from a joint UE Education/Academic Board Working Party, at its meeting of 6 November 2017, the University Executive Education Committee recommended that

1. Faculties and University Schools adopt a common late penalty system of 5% per day for 10 calendar days, after which a mark of zero will be applied, recognising that some Faculties/University Schools may adopt a local provision for pedagogical or accreditation reasons;

2. a common submission time for assessments of 23:59, subject to further clarification and assurance on the capacity for the University to manage this load;

3. that calendar days be used in the common system of late penalties.

The Committee noted the following operational points:

- The penalty would apply from the next calendar day after the deadline.
- The penalty is a percentage of the available mark and is applied to the mark gained after the submitted work is marked (e.g., an assignment worth 100 marks is 1 day late. The content is given a mark of 75. With the 5% penalty, the final mark is 70).
- Written assignments submitted more than 2 weeks late are recorded as a fail and are not required to be marked, but, if not marked, the work should be retained in the event of an appeal.
- The Late Penalty Working Group noted if a submission is more than 10 calendar days late, then there is an expectation that the student was likely experiencing issues such that a student would normally be able to avail themselves of the special consideration and/or simple extension provisions.
- It was further noted that the availability of simple extensions means that, subject to the approval of a unit of study co-ordinator, a late penalty might not begin to operate until the third day after the due date.
- The Chair confirmed that Faculty Managers will be responsible for updating resolutions to reflect the changes.
- In response to a question, the Chair of the Academic Board undertook to establish with the Chief Information Officer the system’s capacity to manage the 11:59hr submission time. Subject to the response, he advised these changes will come into effect in Semester 1, 2019.
Feedback was received from Bridgette Dang and the Director ICT Infrastructure and Applications provided a report, which included an analysis of current submission patterns and advice from the Turnitin and Canvas vendors. The consistent advice is summarised in the conclusion of the report.

“With positive responses from both Turnitin and Canvas that their infrastructure should cope with any increased demand that a move to a common submission time might incur and demand on existing on-premise Blackboard Learn infrastructure decreasing, a move to a common submission time for written assessments should not have an adverse effect on system stability/performance.”

The University Executive Education Committee accordingly resolved that from Semester 1 2019 a common submission time for Late Penalties and a common submission time of 23:59 for written assessments be adopted. The University Executive Education Committee notes that some Faculties/University Schools may adopt a local provision for pedagogical or accreditation reasons and that pass/fail assessments were not considered.

BACKGROUND / CONTEXT

For information, the following references to the enabling policies for the imposition of late penalties are included:

(1) Policy requiring students be informed of submission dates for assessment tasks

Clause 11(1)(f) of the Learning and Teaching Procedures 2016 requires that an LMS website for a unit of study must contain “the assessment process, standards and criteria, including a detailed breakdown of each assessment task, its contribution to the final mark, deadlines and closing dates for submission of work;”.

(2) Policy allowing the imposition of penalties for late submission.

Clause 8 of the Learning and Teaching Procedures 2016 allows (but does not require) Faculty resolutions to include resolutions covering late submission of assessment tasks. Clause 11(1)(h) does require that “any penalties that apply for poor attendance or late submission” should be advertised on the LMS website of each unit of study. Clause 6(1) of the Assessment Procedures 2011 requires that the unit of study outline must be published no later than one week prior to the semester or teaching period (defined in the definitions and clause 18(12)) of the Learning and Teaching Policy 2015) and should contain (clause 6(1)(c)(ii)) “the due date for submission or testing” and (clause 6(1)(d)) any “the conditions for extensions of time”, as well as (clause 6(1)(e)) “the penalties for lateness or violation of assessment specifications (e.g. length)”.

(3) Additional policy considerations regarding late submission of assessment tasks

(i) Special consideration

Students are entitled to apply for special consideration as described in clause 14 of the Assessment Procedures 2011.

(ii) Simple extensions

The Coursework policy (clause 66A) allows for simple extensions of the deadlines for submission of a non-examinable task of up to two working days to be granted at the discretion of the unit of study co-ordinator. Clause 6(7) of the Assessment Procedures 2011 requires that the faculty should inform students of the process of applying for simple extension. Clause 14A of the Assessment Procedures 2011 specifies that the application for a simple extension be in writing and the minimum details that should be recorded. Faculty resolutions cannot prohibit simple extensions.

(iii) Working days

The Coursework Policy defines a working day as meaning “a day on which the University is usually open for business. This does not include any Saturday, Sunday, public holiday or any day designated as part of the University’s Christmas shutdown period.”. Note that there is an apparent contradiction here as examinations are routinely held on Saturdays, the semester dates define the end of semester as a Saturday and the university is open for business on Saturdays such as Open Day, Information day, etc…
CONSULTATION

The DVC Education circulated Faculties on 30 May 2017 as follows:

“Following discussion at the UE Education Committee meeting on 10 April 2017 around the subject of application of late penalties, I am writing to request confirmation from each of you that units of study outlines for each unit of study offered by your faculty explicitly state the scope and nature of assessment required by the unit of study (as required by clause 6.1 of the Assessment Procedures 2011).

For your convenience, the attached spreadsheet captures the late submission penalties as found in Faculty Resolutions and published in Faculty Handbooks.

Can you please confirm that the information recorded against your faculty is applied to your units of study and published in all unit of study outlines? If this is not the case, please identify any variations in use, in the ‘Comment’ column.

I would be grateful for your response before/by close of business Friday 2 June 2017 to the UE Education Committee Officer: susan.parker@sydney.edu.au. Please feel free to contact Susan on 8627 8521 should you need any further information about what is required.”

Following the deliberations of the Late Penalty Working Group, Faculties and University Schools were asked their preference between two possibilities for an institutional late penalty:

1. 10% per day (noting that after 10 calendar days, all credit has been consumed by the penalty).
2. 5% per day for 10 calendar days, after which a mark of zero is applied.

A (7/5) majority of Faculties and University Schools expressed a preference for option 2.

A written report, “Common submission time for written assessment analysis” was received from the Director ICT Infrastructure and Applications.
UPDATE ON IMPLEMENTATION OF STRATEGIC INITIATIVES RELATING TO ASSESSMENT

Purpose

To provide an update on work to implement strategic initiatives relating to assessment and to advise faculties of the processes for meeting their obligations as agreed by the Academic Board.

RECOMMENDATION

That the Academic Standards and Policy Committee:

(1) note the 2017 report of the Assessment Working Group whose recommendations were fully endorsed by the Academic Board on 28 November 2017;

(2) note that the Academic Board has agreed that for all undergraduate degrees, there should be a coordinator for each degree, stream, specialisation, program or major;

(3) note that the Academic Board has agreed faculties should review learning outcomes for all degrees, streams, programs and majors to give expression to the graduate qualities by July 2018;

(4) note that the Academic Board has agreed that assessment plans be developed for degrees, streams, programs and majors by December 2018;

(5) note the interim definitions for the graduate qualities developed by the Assessment Working Group (Attachment 2);

(6) note the timeline for faculties to meet obligations to the Academic Board to implement strategic initiatives relating to assessment in 2018 (Attachment 5); and

(7) note that undergraduate course and curriculum component coordinators will be invited to attend a series of Educational Innovation professional development workshops to assist with the completion of faculty tasks resulting from the Board’s recommendations (Attachment 6).

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

On 28 November the Academic Board endorsed the 2017 report of the Assessment Working Group including all five recommendations and the proposed implementation timeline. The Working Group will continue its role in overseeing implementation of the assessment initiatives of the Strategy in 2018. This includes establishment of common University definitions for the graduate qualities, overseeing development of the common rubrics for assessment of the graduate qualities, and trialling the rubrics from semester 2, 2018.

The Academic Board has resolved that faculties should ensure that coordinators are appointed for each undergraduate degree, stream, program or major by April 2018, learning outcomes for all degrees and relevant curriculum components give full expression to the graduate qualities by July 2018, and should develop assessment plans for all degree and relevant curriculum components (stream, program and major) by December 2018. The Assessment Working Group will guide development of disciplinary exemplars of assessment plans, for faculties to refer to in undertaking this work. The Education portfolio has provided support via compact funding to enable staff to participate in strategic education initiatives relating to assessment and will continue to provide funding to develop assessment in line with the Working Party Report during 2019 and 2020. Additionally, a targeted series of workshops will be delivered by the Educational Innovation team early in 2018, to offer guidance and support on writing learning outcomes and assessment plans, as well as participating in curriculum mapping. Deans have provided the names and contact details for a designated coordinator for each undergraduate degree and, as appropriate, each specialisation, stream, program and major.
BACKGROUND

The Assessment Working Group (AWG) was established by the Chair of the Academic Board and Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Education) during 2017 to develop and deliver the assessment initiatives in the University's 2016–20 Strategic Plan. During 2017, the AWG conducted a strategic review of assessment in consultation with University stakeholders. On 28 November 2017 the Academic Board reviewed their findings and endorsed recommendations made by the AWG in its final report for 2017 (Attachment 1). Implementation of five recommendations will be progressed during 2018:

Recommendation 1: Ensure that learning outcomes for degrees and each curriculum component give expression to the graduate qualities
Recommendation 2: Map and plan assessment across the curriculum
Recommendation 3: Coordinate curriculum components and degrees
Recommendation 4: Use a common approach to assess the graduate qualities
Recommendation 5: Explore the use of the project units and other experiential units to assess student achievement of the graduate qualities

The Academic Board agreed to the following implementation timeline as part of its endorsement of ‘Assessment; A University-wide approach’.

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Key milestones</th>
<th>Month Due</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2018</td>
<td>Coordinators designated for each degree and course component</td>
<td>April 2018</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Common University rubrics developed</td>
<td>May 2018</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Deliver professional development programs to support</td>
<td>August 2017–July 2018</td>
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<td></td>
<td>implementation</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Graduate qualities expressed in learning outcomes for all</td>
<td>July 2018</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>degrees and course components</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Complete assessment plans for all degrees and course</td>
<td>December 2018</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>components</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2019</td>
<td>Faculties to use assessment plans to develop innovative</td>
<td>TBC</td>
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<td></td>
<td>assessment approaches</td>
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<tr>
<td>2020</td>
<td>Measure attainment of graduate qualities using the common</td>
<td>December 2020</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>rubrics</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Validate common rubrics for assessing graduate qualities</td>
<td>TBC</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Begin internal reporting on student achievement of the</td>
<td>December 2020</td>
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<td>graduate qualities</td>
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This timeline has been developed on the basis that the University is committed to assessing the graduate qualities for students who graduate in 2020. Working backwards from that goal provides a critical timeline for the development and implementation of the above recommendations and includes roles for the Academic Board, Assessment Working Group, Education portfolio and faculties.

Funding provided via the 2018 Compacts process has made provisions for faculty staff to undertake curriculum revision work to embed graduate qualities in unit of study learning outcomes, rubrics and tasks. Teaching relief has been funded to enable staff time to participate in Education portfolio professional development workshops, and the planning and development of this work.

ISSUES

The AWG will continue its role in overseeing implementation of the assessment initiatives of the Strategy in 2018. This will include:

1. establishing common University definitions of the graduate qualities
2. development of the common rubrics for assessing the graduate qualities
3. establishing an agreed model for trialling the common rubrics, including in pilot 3000-level interdisciplinary project units in collaboration with the Associate Directors (Education – Enterprise and Engagement) and

4. developing assessment plan exemplars to guide the development of such plans by faculties for each degree and curriculum component.

The AWG met on 25 January 2018 and endorsed definitions of the graduate qualities (Attachment 2). The agreed graduate quality definitions and components are being used to generate explicit criteria against which descriptors for performance at different levels can be written, as part of the rubric development. The definitions are available on the Teaching Support page of the staff intranet. An initial workshop on rubric development, facilitated by the Director of the Educational Measurement and Assessment Hub, took place on 1 February 2018. The workshop was attended by members of nine working parties, each tasked with development of a rubric for one of the graduate qualities (Attachment 3). They are currently progressing drafting of the rubrics and will bring these back for discussion with the Assessment Working Group on 26 April 2018, as detailed in the schedule of work (Attachment 4). Feedback on the rubrics will be sought from the University Executive Education Committee, Undergraduate Studies Committee and Academic Standards and Policy committee in May 2018 and the committees will be asked to endorse them during June and July 2018.

The Academic Board has committed faculties to the responsibility of ensuring that learning outcomes for all degrees and relevant curriculum components give full expression to the graduate qualities and ensuring that assessment plans are developed for all degree and relevant curriculum components. A timeline for faculties to meet these obligations is at Attachment 5. The Education portfolio has provided support via compact funding to enable staff to participate in strategic education initiatives relating to assessment and meet their obligations to the Academic Board. A targeted series of workshops will be delivered by the Educational Innovation team early in 2018, to offer guidance and support on writing learning outcomes and assessment plans, as well as participating in curriculum mapping (Attachment 6). Deans have provided the names and contact details for a designated coordinator for each undergraduate degree and, as appropriate, each specialisation, stream, program and major. This has been brought forward from April, in recognition of the volume of work to be undertaken and to enable participation of the coordinators in the workshops.

ATTACHMENTS

Attachment 1 – ‘Assessment: A University-wide approach’, 2017 Assessment Working Group
Attachment 2 – Interim definitions of the Graduate Qualities
Attachment 3 – Membership of the graduate quality rubric development working parties
Attachment 4 – Schedule of work for the graduate quality rubric development working parties
Attachment 5 – Timeline for faculties to meet obligations to the Academic Board to implement strategic initiatives relating to assessment
Attachment 6 – Schedule of Educational Innovation curriculum renewal workshops
Assessment

A University-wide approach

2017 Assessment Working Group
Executive Summary

In February 2017 the Chair of the Academic Board and the Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Education) formed the Assessment Working Group to examine the University’s current approach to assessment and consider ways to achieve the vision for assessment that was outlined in the University of Sydney 2016-20 Strategic Plan (the Strategy).

That vision involves not only embedding the graduate qualities for undergraduate degrees, adopted in 2015, but assessing them, fostering authentic assessment, and improving feedback on learning through interactive and innovative learning design. This will be achieved through the creation of an assessment framework that supports learning and allows students and staff to share the excitement of discovery unencumbered, as far as is possible, by assessment drudgery. Such a framework would also mean that by 2020, the University would have much greater clarity over what students learn in each degree and its components.

To achieve this, the working group has made the following recommendations. The first (Recommendation 1) is to ensure that learning outcomes give full expression to the graduate qualities. This is a foundational step to create a clear statement at the level of each curriculum component (stream, specialisation, program and major) of what students will learn. By agreeing learning outcomes at levels between the degree and the unit of study, unit of study coordinators will be able to align their own area of responsibility with others and share the load of creating the learning outcomes of the component across multiple units. This should allow them to take action to improve learning and assessment in their own area, confident this is coordinated with other areas of students’ education.

Recommendation 2 is to provide a way to manage and monitor these learning outcomes through the development of assessment plans for majors and other curriculum components higher than the unit of study. By providing a clear statement on how outcomes will be achieved, how we will know they have been achieved, and how they are aligned across the curriculum, assessment plans will empower academics to re-think task design at the unit level, and make greater use of authentic assessment and new learning resources. In the context of the University’s rich curriculum with many pathways and opportunities for building interdisciplinary learning, a coordinated way of managing assessment across the curriculum is needed. It is also recommended that coordinators be appointed to manage this, for appropriate curriculum components (Recommendation 3).

By assessing student attainment of the graduate qualities, the University can provide important feedback to students on learning and to staff on teaching. This will also provide a measure of the success of the work to embed the graduate qualities and to achieve the learning outcomes of each degree or curriculum component. To provide such assessment it will be necessary to use a common suite of rubrics, one developed for each graduate quality (Recommendation 4). While it will be necessary to use the common rubrics as a baseline, where necessary specific rubrics may be developed that build on the common rubric as appropriate to a field of study.

Finally, the opportunity to use the final year project units within the liberal studies majors (and equivalent experiential units that occur in specialist and professional degrees) to provide the final assessment of a students’ attainment of the graduate qualities should be explored as these project units are trialed in 2018 (Recommendation 5). At the same time, the potential for the common rubrics to drive the design of an assessment framework and tasks for these units should be investigated.

These recommendations form the foundation required to achieve the strategic vision by establishing a coherent framework for assessment. This should better enable academics to: use feedback on learning to adjust activities to better achieve the learning outcomes for a unit, major, stream or degree; introduce authentic assessment; design tasks that are well aligned with learning outcomes; and apply innovative and technologically-assisted interactive experiences to learning.
# Contents

Executive Summary ................................................................................................................................. 1
Recommendations........................................................................................................................................ 3
1. Introduction ........................................................................................................................................ 6
2. Current assessment ............................................................................................................................ 8
   2.1 Policy .............................................................................................................................................. 8
   2.2 Types of assessment .................................................................................................................... 10
   2.3 The amount of assessment ......................................................................................................... 11
   2.4 The timing of assessment ............................................................................................................ 12
   2.5 Student feedback ........................................................................................................................ 18
   2.6 Assessment rubrics ...................................................................................................................... 19
3. Future assessment ............................................................................................................................. 20
   3.1 Planning assessment across the degree ...................................................................................... 20
   3.2 A common assessment of the graduate qualities ...................................................................... 22
   3.3 Using project-based units to assess the graduate qualities ....................................................... 23
4. Methods ............................................................................................................................................ 26
5. Conclusion ......................................................................................................................................... 27
6. References .......................................................................................................................................... 28
   Attachment 1 – The new undergraduate curriculum: a primer ......................................................... 29
   Attachment 2 – Special consideration and special arrangements: 2016 statistics ......................... 32
   Attachment 3 – Report of Student Support Services ......................................................................... 38
   Attachment 4 – Report of the Students' Representative Council ...................................................... 43
   Attachment 5 – Report of the Office of Educational Integrity .......................................................... 45
   Attachment 6 – Outcomes of student roundtable on assessment .................................................... 48
   Attachment 7 – Theoretical foundations of a common approach to assessment .............................. 51
   Attachment 8 - Industry and community project unit outline .......................................................... 63
Recommendations

There are five key recommendations of the Assessment Working Group as detailed below. With the agreement of Academic Board, these recommendations will be progressed during 2018 and plans made for work to continue in 2019 and 2020. A short section outlining the planned implementation schedule follows these recommendations.

Many of these recommendations are focused on first steps that will change some of the policy requirements and governance around assessment at the University. The environment thus created will enable teaching teams around each curriculum component to re-think the alignment of learning activities and assessment tasks with learning outcomes that give expression to the graduate qualities. This should present significant opportunities for innovation in the design of assessment, whether in relation to discrete assessment tasks in units of study or the design spanning multiple units of study. Such innovation has the potential to further consolidate assessment across curriculum components and reduce the volume of assessment where appropriate. Improved feedback to both staff and students, gained partly through the assessment of the graduate qualities, is also likely to prompt further review of teaching and learning strategies.

Recommendation 1: Ensure that learning outcomes for degrees and each curriculum component give expression to the graduate qualities

The University’s new graduate qualities were established in the Learning and Teaching Policy 2015. The University’s 2016-2020 Strategic Plan (the Strategy) subsequently undertook to ensure that the graduate qualities are embedded as learning outcomes in all undergraduate degrees, and faculties have been supported in this curriculum renewal work via the Education compact process during 2016 and 2017 with work expected to continue in 2018. In line with this work to embed the graduate qualities within all undergraduate award courses, the following steps are recommended.

- The Academic Board, as part of its course approval, assurance and review processes should ensure that every degree of the University has learning outcomes articulated in terms that give full expression to the graduate qualities. This can be done through amending the course management and review templates.
- To further ensure the development of the graduate qualities by all students, the learning outcomes for relevant curriculum components of each degree (stream, specialisation, program, and major) should also be expressed in terms of the graduate qualities. These should be prepared by faculties and submitted to the Academic Board for review by mid-2018.
- The DVC Education should ensure that professional development and support is available to assist faculties in undertaking this work, and work with the Academic Board to develop clear requirements.

Recommendation 2: Map and plan assessment across the curriculum

Understanding when and how each learning outcome (and hence graduate quality) is developed within each curriculum component is necessary to assure learning and allow assessment of the graduate qualities. Planning assessment in this way will also create a framework to manage assessment across the component more effectively. For these reasons, it is proposed that assessment plans should be developed for each curriculum component.

- As part of its role in monitoring the academic quality of the University, the Academic Board should ensure assessment plans are in place for each relevant curriculum component of a degree. This could be done by ensuring the course management and course review templates require an assessment plan for each curriculum component above the unit of study level (see section 3.1).
  - For liberal studies degrees, assessment plans should be developed at the level of the stream, program, and major, as appropriate.
  - For professional and specialist degrees, assessment plans should be developed at the level of the stream, specialisation or degree, as well as for any majors available in the degree.
- Assessment plans should: articulate the learning outcomes for the relevant course component; indicate where and how the learning outcomes are developed and assessed; and describe how
students’ achievement of the graduate qualities will be developed, the tasks typically used, and how they will be assessed on completion of the degree (section 3.1).

- The DVC Education should ensure that staff professional development and support is available, focusing on assessment alignment, assessment task design and assessment innovation, commencing no later than 2019. Further, the Education portfolio should provide funding for innovation in assessment and assessment task design through the 2019 and 2020 Education Compact and Strategic Education Grant process.

Recommendation 3: Coordinate curriculum components and degrees
The new curriculum’s emphasis on the coherence of each curriculum component (i.e., the stream, specialisation, program or major) means that it is necessary to ensure that mechanisms are in place to monitor the alignment and coordination of the curriculum at levels intermediate to units of study and the degree. It is recommended that uniform governance arrangements be established across all faculties and all curriculum components, down to the level of the major.

- Every faculty should ensure there is a degree, stream, specialisation, program or major coordinator appointed, as relevant, for the curriculum components of any undergraduate award course it offers.
- The coordinator will be responsible for maintaining oversight of the learning outcomes for the relevant curriculum component; developing and reviewing the assessment plan for the relevant component; and from 2020, reporting annually to the faculty on students’ achievement of the graduate qualities.

Recommendation 4: Use a common approach to assess the graduate qualities
In addition to its existing commitment to monitoring students’ educational experiences, the Strategy commits the University to systematically assessing students’ acquisition of the graduate qualities (initiative 4.4). To do so, it will be necessary that the University has a shared understanding of the graduate qualities and the potential levels of performance at which students may achieve these qualities.

- A suite of common rubrics will be used as the scale by which student attainment of the graduate qualities is measured. These rubrics are currently under development by the Educational Measurement and Assessment Hub and other experts across the University.
- Where considered necessary, the common University rubrics may be used as a foundation to develop more detailed rubrics suited to a specific field of study, to ensure that the emphasis of learning both across and within the graduate qualities is appropriate for the development of a student in that field. These field of study rubrics will build on the standards of the common rubrics and retain the same components.
- The suite of common University rubrics will be approved by the Academic Board and will be monitored, with the assistance of the Education portfolio, to ensure continued relevancy and effectiveness.

Recommendation 5: Explore the use of the project units and other experiential units to assess student achievement of the graduate qualities
The policy requirement for each major to include a final year project and for all undergraduate degrees to include project-based learning provides an opportunity to assess student achievement of the full suite of graduate qualities. These units are intended to allow students to demonstrate disciplinary expertise by applying their knowledge to an authentic problem. In doing so, the full suite of graduate qualities will often be evident. Trials of a model for multi-faculty projects at a medium scale are being conducted in 2018.

- As 2018 trials of project units proceed, work to consider the assessment model in these units and the potential to use the common suite of graduate quality rubrics to evaluate student performance should be undertaken.
- The utility of such assessment to provide the final statement of attainment of the graduate qualities for graduating students should also be tested.
**Implementation**

The University is committed to assessing the graduate qualities for students who graduate in 2020. An expected small cohort of students will commence in the second year of the new curriculum during 2018, which provides an opportunity to trial assessment of the graduate qualities for the portion of that cohort who choose to exit after their third year in 2019. Working backwards from that goal provides a critical timeline for the development and implementation of the above recommendations, illustrated in the milestones below. In addition to the work to implement these recommendations, further work will be required to achieve the full vision by 2020 and indicative milestones are given here for that work as well.

Support for the work to be undertaken within faculties and University schools during 2017 and 2018 will be provided by the Education portfolio via the Educational Innovation team. Workshops on writing learning outcomes and embedding graduate qualities, as well as the development of assessment plans and curriculum mapping will be made available to all curriculum component coordinators (see Recommendation 3) across the University and rolled out in faculty groupings. In the second part of the year, another series of workshops on the common rubrics developed for assessing the graduate qualities will be held, including progressing work on any necessary interpretation of these at the field of study level.

In line with the recommendations, the Education portfolio should continue to provide funding to the faculties for this work via the mechanisms of the Curriculum Development Fund: that is, the Education faculty compacts and Strategic Education Grants.

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<td></td>
<td>Graduate qualities expressed in learning outcomes for all degrees and course components</td>
<td>July 2018</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Complete assessment plans for all degrees and course components</td>
<td>December 2018</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2019</td>
<td>Faculties to use assessment plans to develop innovative assessment approaches</td>
<td>TBC</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Validate common rubrics for assessing graduate qualities</td>
<td>TBC</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2020</td>
<td>Measure attainment of graduate qualities using the common rubrics</td>
<td>December 2020</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Begin internal reporting on student achievement of the graduate qualities</td>
<td>December 2020</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In parallel with the development work outlined above, the University is in the midst of configuring and making available a curriculum mapping solution. An initial small-scale trial will be underway in early 2018, with the system progressively available to faculties on an opt-in, by-degree basis thereafter. The work progressed under these recommendations to develop learning outcomes and map the development of these and the graduate qualities across the degrees will serve a dual purpose as preparation for participation in the mapping system. At the same time, work will continue to identify a software solution, likely to interface with the University’s new Learning Management System, which can be used to support the assessment of the graduate qualities.
1. Introduction

The University’s 2016-20 Strategic Plan (the Strategy) identified the need to transform the undergraduate curriculum in order to produce graduates with the capacity to influence and contribute to dynamic, changing and globalised environments. The new curriculum framework balances depth of disciplinary expertise with broader capabilities and offers more authentic, ‘real-world’ educational experiences. To achieve this, there are new common requirements for all degrees, such as a sustained and coherent program of study in the major or discipline; collaborative learning activities and assessments; interdisciplinary and inter-professional learning experiences; experience working on authentic problems; and the culmination of each major or broader field of study in a final year project or practicum (for more information on the curriculum, see attachment 1).

Framing the transformed curriculum are the graduate qualities (table 1.1). Developed via University-wide survey and discussion in 2015, these graduate qualities are common to all bachelor degrees, whether liberal studies, professional or specialist degrees. To ensure students develop the graduate qualities regardless of their chosen field of study, appropriate learning experiences must be embedded in every course, work which has been underway since 2016. The new curriculum framework introduces elements specifically designed to develop each of the graduate qualities as illustrated in table 1.1, below. These elements include many already present in professional and specialist degrees, and some which have been introduced into the liberal studies degrees (Bachelor of Arts, Bachelor of Science, Bachelor of Commerce) as part of restructures to take effect in 2018.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Graduate qualities</th>
<th>Purpose</th>
<th>Curriculum component</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Depth of disciplinary expertise</td>
<td>To excel at applying and continuing to develop expertise in the graduate’s chosen discipline or disciplines</td>
<td>– A major or specialisation in at least one field of study</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Broader skills:</td>
<td>To increase the impact of expertise, and to learn and respond effectively and creatively to novel problems and opportunities</td>
<td>– A structured approach to the development of knowledge and skills</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>– critical thinking and problem solving</td>
<td></td>
<td>– Collaborative and group-based learning activities and assessments</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>– communication (oral and written)</td>
<td></td>
<td>– Interdisciplinary and inter-professional learning experiences</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>– information/digital literacy</td>
<td></td>
<td>– Authentic problems and assessments</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>– inventiveness</td>
<td></td>
<td>– An open learning environment for extension of knowledge and skills</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cultural competence</td>
<td>To work productively, collaboratively and openly in diverse groups and across cultural boundaries</td>
<td>– A structured approach to the development of knowledge and skills</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interdisciplinary effectiveness</td>
<td>To work effectively in interdisciplinary (including inter-professional) settings and to build broader perspective, innovative vision, and more contextualised and systemic forms of understanding</td>
<td>– Interdisciplinary and inter-professional learning experiences</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 1.1: Qualities of the Sydney graduate, their purpose and the corresponding curriculum component.
An integrated professional, ethical and personal identity

To build integrity, confidence and personal resilience, and the capacities to manage challenge and uncertainty

- A structured approach to the development of knowledge and skills
- Collaborative and group-based learning activities and assessments
- Authentic problems and assessments
- An open learning environment for extension of knowledge and skills
- Project-based learning

Influence

To be effective in exercising professional and social responsibility and making a positive contribution to society

- Collaborative and group-based learning activities and assessments
- Interdisciplinary and inter-professional learning experiences
- Authentic problems and assessments
- An open learning environment for extension of knowledge and skills
- Project-based learning

In addition to the transformed curriculum, the Strategy also sets out a number of initiatives to renew the University’s approach to assessment. These include an ambition to increase the integrity and effectiveness of assessment, while seeking to reduce volume; to use technology to improve feedback on learning to both staff and students; and an intention that the University measure the extent to which students have achieved the graduate qualities at graduation.

During 2017 the Chair of the Academic Board and the Deputy Vice-Chancellor Education jointly formed the Assessment Working Group to progress these initiatives. The working group investigated the current state of assessment at the University, worked with experts from the Educational Measurement and Assessment Hub, and produced discussion papers on which it consulted widely via an Academic Board forum and a large number of University-wide and faculty-specific fora. More detail on the work undertaken during 2017 is at section 4.

This report summarises the findings of the working group and sets out work to be undertaken during 2018 in some detail, as well as the key steps towards realising the Strategy in full by 2020. As the working group did, this report begins by giving an overview of policy and practice of assessment at the University. This includes considering the nature, volume and timing of assessment, and the current use of rubric-based approaches (section 2). In section 3, the report explores the ways in which the University’s vision for assessment may be achieved, detailing the steps necessary to draw together current good practices, take advantage of the new curriculum framework, integrate assessment more fully in the learning feedback loop and assure student achievement of the graduate qualities. Doing so will allow the University to in turn assure the efficacy of the University’s degrees in developing the graduate qualities.
2. Current assessment

Assessment practice underpins all of teaching and learning at the University, and while what are considered appropriate assessment tasks can vary widely by field of study, there are general principles of assessment which are common across the diverse fields represented at the University. Students and staff can tend to have similar concerns regarding assessment — for the most part, all can agree that assessments should be fit for purpose, that is, they accurately reflect the degree of student learning that has taken place; they should not be unduly burdensome in their volume or timing; and they should be as difficult to cheat as possible, ensuring that accuracy of assessment is maintained.

This section explores the current practice of assessment at the University, though it is limited to considering only those data which could be obtained on assessment from University-wide systems, or through the voluntary participation of those invited by the working group to share their data.

2.1 Policy

As the University is classified by the regulator as a self-accrediting higher education provider, the Academic Board (the Board) is delegated authority by the Senate to approve all degrees offered at the University. Faculty boards may propose to the Board new degrees or revisions to existing degrees, and govern the delivery of those degrees. Units of study within degrees are approved by faculty boards that are also responsible for maintaining the quality and integrity of these units and reporting to the Board.

This means that while faculties are responsible for developing degree resolutions and approving requirements for curricula, units of study and course components (i.e., streams, specialisations, programs, majors and minors), any such approvals are subject to final approval by the Board, usually on the basis of expert advice provided by its own standing and other University committees or boards of studies. The Board is also responsible for ensuring that all award courses are reviewed over a seven-year cycle. To manage these responsibilities, the Board currently uses a course management template for new degree proposals, for major amendments to existing degrees, or for the deletion of degrees, and has just approved a new course review template.

Under the Learning and Teaching Policy 2015, faculties are responsible for: the articulation of learning outcomes for degrees and curriculum components, including, as appropriate, for streams, programs, majors and units of study, among other things. The policy also outlines the responsibilities of faculties for ensuring the coherence of degrees and curriculum components above the level of the unit of study.

Heads of schools are required to assign unit of study coordinators who are responsible for each unit of study. Coordinators’ responsibilities include: developing and aligning learning outcomes; reviewing assessment tasks and standards in relation to policy; reviewing the academic integrity of each assessment task and the assessment framework for the unit; and reporting incidents of potential academic dishonesty or plagiarism in line with University policy. They must also administer surveys of the educational experience and provide reports to students and the faculty on the quality of the student experience and make recommendations about changes to learning outcomes, curriculum or assessment.

The University last reviewed its assessment policies in 2010, a process which resulted in the development of a new Assessment Policy 2011 and Assessment Procedures 2011. These were subsequently incorporated into the Coursework Policy 2014. Four principles for assessment and their associated requirements are articulated in policy, as set out in table 2.1.1 below.

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1 Here and throughout, ‘faculty’ is used by convenience but refers to both faculties and university schools, which have much the same governance responsibilities in regards to coursework degrees.
Table 2.1.1: The University of Sydney assessment principles.

Principle 1
Assessment practices must advance student learning

(1) Assessment practices align with goals, context, learning activities and learning outcomes.
(2) A variety of assessment tasks are used while ensuring that student and staff workloads are considered.
(3) Assessment tasks reflect increasing levels of complexity across a program and foster enquiry-based learning.
(4) Constructive, timely and respectful feedback develops student skills of self and peer evaluation and guides the development of future student work.

Principle 2
Assessment practices must be clearly communicated to students and staff

(1) Unit of study outlines are available in the first week of any offering of the unit and communicate the purposes, timing, weighting and extent of assessment in sufficient detail to allow students to plan their approach to assessment.
(2) Unit of study outlines explain the rationale for the selection of assessment tasks (e.g. group task) in relation to learning outcomes.
(3) Procedures exist to ensure that all staff involved in teaching of a unit share a common understanding of assessment practices.
(4) The process of marking and of combining individual task marks is explicitly explained in the unit outline.

Principle 3
Assessment practices must be valid and fair

(1) Assessment tasks are authentic and appropriate to disciplinary and/or professional context.
(2) Assessment incorporates rigorous academic standards related to the discipline(s) and is based on pre-determined, clearly articulated criteria that students actively engage with.
(3) Assessment will be evaluated solely on the basis of students’ achievement against criteria and standards specified to align with learning outcomes.
(4) Assessment practices address issues of equity and inclusiveness to accommodate and build upon the diversity of the student body so as not to disadvantage any student.

Principle 4
Assessment practices must be continuously improved and updated

(1) Assessment tasks and outcomes are moderated through academic peer review and used to inform subsequent practice.
(2) Assessment is regularly updated to ensure alignment with program learning outcomes or graduate attributes.
(3) Professional development opportunities that are related to design, implementation and moderation of assessment are provided to staff.

A number of these principles are worth noting in the context of this report. Principle 3(2) committed the University to single standards-based assessment regime in place of the previous policy which permitted either standards-based or norm-referenced assessment. The University benchmarks the disciplinary standards used to assess final year undergraduate students by participating in the Quality Verification System among the Group of Eight universities (Go8). In this system, reviewers from partner Go8 universities evaluate the standards expressed in learning outcomes and assessment tasks and comment on the standards of sample student responses. The disciplines to be benchmarked are rotated from year to year.

Principle 1(2) has been interpreted by some, notably the Sydney University Postgraduate Representative Association (SUPRA), as effectively proscribing, or at least sharply curtailing assessment tasks that constitute 100% of the final mark.

Principle 3(1) commits the University to ensuring that assessment tasks are authentic. In the context of assessment, the term ‘authentic’ is used to indicate that students have applied their knowledge to a ‘real world’ task, demonstrating their achievement of the learning outcomes. For example, medical
students might complete a clinical exam in which they measure a patient’s blood pressure, or other vital signs, or a dentistry student might be asked to diagnose and repair a simulated diseased tooth. The decision as to what is ‘authentic’ must be made by those with knowledge of the field of study and its application, but the intention is usually to get away from over-reliance on forms of assessment such as multiple choice exams that are seen as having little relevance to tasks students might eventually perform when working in their chosen field.

2.2 Types of assessment

To understand the degree to which the above principles have influenced practices across the University, the working group attempted to determine the current assessment types used. At present, it is not easy to obtain University-wide data on assessment, or to understand how various terms may be used or interpreted in the data that is available – though this may change if there is widespread uptake of the curriculum mapping system discussed below.

This difficulty was also encountered by the Student Administrative Services (SAS) Special Consideration and Special Arrangements team in 2016 when they attempted to collect data on assessments within units of study from unit of study coordinators. On review of the data, the team found that there were so many assessment types used that cleaning this data and maintaining it would have significant resourcing implications.

A similar problem was encountered by the working group, who accessed the data from the 2016 University Handbook. The assessment field within this data is a ‘free text’ field, which would require a significant data cleaning and coding exercise to make sense of the different assessment descriptors used. Even with that complete, there is no way to properly understand whether what one coordinator terms a ‘test’ could be considered the same thing as what another might term an ‘exam’, or whether an ‘assignment’ and an ‘essay’ might be considered the same task for certain purposes short of a discussion with each unit of study coordinator.

In an effort to determine the most common types of assessment, a simple key word count was done across the assessment field, resulting in the data presented in figure 1 below. The most commonly used term in this field is ‘exam’, which occurs 2,754 times across approximately 9,000 entries. This is nearly double the number of mentions of the next most common type of assessment, ‘assignment’ which is in turn closely followed by ‘presentation’. This accords with the Special Consideration and Special Arrangement team’s report that the assessment types for which arrangement requests are most commonly requested are exams, assignments and participation assessments – the first, second and fifth ranked categories here (attachment 2).

Without a nuanced understanding of the sort of tasks that are described here as ‘exams,’ ‘assignments’ or ‘presentation’ it is not possible to disentangle whether these assessment types are achieving the University’s aims with regard to authentic assessment. For example, the term ‘exam’ could easily be applied both to types of assessment that might be seen as ‘authentic’ and those that may not be, such as a ‘clinical exam’ and ‘multiple choice exam.’ However, the predominance of the exam category might imply that ambitions regarding the mix of assessment types are yet to be fully realised. In general, the table does appear to suggest an over-reliance on examinations and written assignments, and a lesser reliance on projects and other forms of authentic assessment.

The apparent preponderance of just a few types of assessment can make it difficult for different types of learners to fully engage with the curriculum. By ensuring that a variety of assessment tasks are used within a unit, and perhaps even offering students a choice of format for an assessment task, the numbers of students who may need adjustments can be reduced. These both are important principles of the ‘universal design for learning’ which attempts to ensure equity of assessment for diverse learning styles (attachment 3).
2.3 The amount of assessment

The Strategy notes that while there are ambitions to increase the types of certain kinds of assessment across the curriculum (notably authentic assessment and assessment used in project learning), there is also desire to reduce the overall volume of assessment, summative assessment in particular. The oft-reported perception of both students and staff is that the volume of assessment has increased over the years, with concomitant workload burdens on both parties. Student Support Services and the SRC casework service both submitted commentary to the working group indicating broad support for reducing assessment volume and improving the quality and timeliness of feedback (attachments 3 and 4).

To test the perception of an increased amount of assessment the working group sought data on the use of casual academic time as a proxy for total academic time. Casual academics must submit timesheets for remuneration purposes, and hours spent marking assignments are often coded separately to teaching and preparation time. These data are imperfect: coding is not always done rigorously, and some units use the ‘administration’ code in place of the ‘marking’ code, but they provide an indication of the amount of time the University’s staff have spent on marking in any given year and of trends over several years.

The data show that the number of hours claimed under the casual academic marking code, when looked at across the time series available, has increased at a higher rate than the increase in the number of students at the University across the same period (figure 2.3.1). There are a number of potential explanations for this increase, but one worth exploring in the context of this report is that it reflects an increase in assessment volume across this time.
One explanation for the apparent increase in assessment volume could be that the policy changes discussed in section 2.1 above, specifically principle 1(2), led to an increase in the volume of assessment, starting around 2010 when the changes occurred. This implies that the overall response to the policy requiring a mix of assessment styles was to add assessments to a unit, rather than to rethink the size or number of tasks holistically.

Too much assessment has been shown to have a negative impact on student learning. Hornby (2003) outlined a range of negative consequences of over-assessment that accord with the issues raised with the working group by both Student Support Services and the SRC. These are: slow feedback, little meaningful feedback, little formative feedback for students to learn from mistakes, repeated assessment of the same outcomes without rationale, lack of correlation between credit point weighting and student and staff workload, lack of alignment of assessment between units, and assessment ‘bunching’.

2.4 The timing of assessment

The timing of assessment is also often raised as an issue, with concerns that the independent approach to managing units of study leads to a convergence of assessment on specific weeks within each semester, increasing the pressure on students to complete multiple pieces of assessment concurrently. Reports to the working group by Student Support Services, the Office of Educational Integrity and the Students' Representative Council casework service all commented on the impact of coincident timing as well as the volume of assessment. The Office also provided data from its incident reporting and case management system that provides some indication of the pattern of assessment across the 2016 academic year. This is combined in figure 2.4.1 with data for 2016 on special consideration and special arrangements applications provided by Student Administration Services and casual academic marking hours provided by Human Resources to map the timing of assessment at the University level.

The data reported here by Student Administration Services relates to the annual volume and timing of applications for special consideration and special arrangements (attachment 2). Students may seek special consideration or special arrangements where their personal circumstances prevent them from completing an assessment task or otherwise impact on their achievement within that task. Starting in 2016, the University centralised special consideration and special arrangements. During that year, approximately 16% of the University's students sought these arrangements via the online system. The timing of these requests can be presumed to slightly precede the due dates of assessment tasks, as most arrangements must be in place ahead of deadline. The data show distinct peaks at the middle and end of semester (figure 2.4.1).

Student Support Services reports that peak periods for the University's Counselling and Psychological Services and Disability Services units coincide with what they identify as 'assessment log jams' in weeks 7, 11, and 13 of semester. Qualitative feedback received by the unit has indicated that students believe they are under a high degree of pressure during these periods from multiple assignments that they perceive as non-integral to their learning. For students with disabilities, these 'log jams' of assignments can often exacerbate disability and impact on student performance. Significant delays in
returning feedback to students on assessment tasks, a likely impact of the same ‘log jam’ on staff, then make it difficult for students to use this feedback to improve later tasks (attachment 3).

The data from the Office of Educational Integrity reflects the number of cases reported into the workflow system, used for the first time in 2016 for case management at the faculty level (attachment 5). In contrast to the special consideration and special arrangements data, the peaks of reporting of integrity-related incidents can be expected to lag slightly behind the due date of assessment tasks as marking takes place, similarity-detection software reports are checked, and so forth.

The Office reports that full-time students are more likely to be reported for suspected plagiarism or academic dishonesty when compared with part time students, and attributes this to the volume of assessment experienced by students with full-time loads, as well as the coincident timing of assessment. Qualitative feedback from educational integrity teams in faculties has also indicated that poor time management, stress, and anxiety are the most common reasons given by students for making the choices that result in their being reported for a potential breach of academic honesty. Further, the Office suggests that the higher rates of international students found to have engaged in plagiarism or academic dishonesty, when compared with domestic students, may be at least partially attributable to the requirement for international students to be engaged in full-time study.
Figure 2.4.1. Applications for special consideration and special arrangements; reports of suspected breaches of academic honesty; and volume of casual staff marking hours across the academic year (2016). As the scale across the data sets varies widely, the data has been represented as a percentage of the total load for the year.
While the data presented in figure 2.4.1 are proxies for the timing of assessment and appear to show clear peaks across the academic year, this pattern is less obvious at the degree level.

The working group reviewed the timing and volume of assessment in three sample degrees, the Bachelor of Science, Bachelor of Arts and a stream of the Bachelor of Engineering Honours to get a view of the assessment timing an individual student might experience. These are mapped across the weeks of semester with the weighting of the task used as an indicator of its potential size (figures 2.4.2, 2.4.3 and 2.4.4).

**Figure 2.4.2.** Assessment profile of the Bachelor of Arts (2017). Weeks of each semester are shown on the x-axis while the y axis represents the weighting of each assignment within the relevant unit of study.

**Arts I (Sem 1)**

**Arts I (Sem 2)**

**Arts II (Sem 1)**

**Arts II (Sem 2)**

**Arts III (Sem 1)**

**Arts III (Sem 2)**
Figure 2.4.3. Assessment profile of the Bachelor of Science (2017). Weeks of each semester are shown on the x-axis while the y axis represents the weighting of each assignment within the relevant unit of study.

Science I (Sem 1)

Science I (Sem 2)

Science II (Sem 1)

Science II (Sem 2)

Science III (Sem 1)

Science III (Sem 2)
Figure 2.4.4. Assessment profile of the Bachelor of Engineering Honours (2017). Weeks of each semester are shown on the x-axis while the y axis represents the weighting of each assignment within the relevant unit of study.

**Engineering I (Sem 1)**

**Engineering II (Sem 2)**

**Engineering II (Sem 1)**

**Engineering II (Sem 2)**

**Engineering III (Sem 1)**

**Engineering III (Sem 2)**

**Engineering IV (Sem 1)**

**Engineering IV (Sem 2)**
The most striking thing about these graphs is the strong similarity in assessment regimes across all units and all semesters in the Bachelor of Science, while more variation is seen in the other degrees. In the Bachelor of Engineering Honours degree, early semesters involve units of study taken from other faculties, potentially leading to some of the diversity seen here. Such diversity could be expected to increase as students in the new curriculum, particularly those in liberal studies degrees, but also some specialist and professional degrees, access units and majors from other faculties through the new shared pool of majors and minors.

2.5 Student feedback
As part of the consultation process, the working group hosted a student roundtable attended by student members of the Academic Board. Notably, when presented with the sample degree assessment patterns shown above (figures 2.4.2 – 2.4.4), students expressed mixed views regarding the desirability of any one pattern of assessment. Students tended to defend the assessment pattern they were used to and were acutely aware of the context-dependent nature of assessment and its relationship to the particular field of study. Nonetheless, they were also highly critical of assessment tasks that they viewed as non-authentic and unrelated to the learning outcomes of the unit (attachment 6).

The University has had a long standing commitment to collecting feedback from students on their overall experience and uses a range of survey instruments to do so. For coursework students, these include: the Unit of Study Survey (USS); Student Experience Survey (SES); Course Experience Questionnaire (CEQ); International Student Barometer (ISB); and Student Barometer (SB). The outcomes of these surveys indicate that there are many aspects of the student experience that the University does well when benchmarked against the Go8 and the sector in general. Feedback students have provided on assessment has, however, been mixed and tends to be more critical than other aspects of the student experience (table 2.5.1).

Table 2.5.1. Students’ perceptions of teacher approaches to assessment and feedback 2016. Note that the scale for all indicators reported below is 0 – 100 except the USS, which is a scale of 0 – 5. All data is reported in the 2016 Consolidated Summary of the Student Experience and Graduate Outcomes.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Indicator-Scale Item</th>
<th>Sydney</th>
<th>Australia</th>
<th>Go8</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Assessment</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SES-TQ: Teachers provided clear explanations on coursework and assessment</td>
<td>69</td>
<td>70</td>
<td>70</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SES-TQ: Teachers set assessment tasks that challenge you to learn</td>
<td>75</td>
<td>75</td>
<td>74</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>USS-5: The assessment tasks challenged me to learn</td>
<td>4.12</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>N/A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ISB/SB-Marking criteria</td>
<td>78/72</td>
<td>84/76</td>
<td>84/75</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ISB/SB-Assessment</td>
<td>85/84</td>
<td>88/87</td>
<td>88/86</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Feedback</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SES-TQ: Teachers commented on your work in ways that help you learn</td>
<td>61</td>
<td>63</td>
<td>61</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>USS-6: I have been guided by helpful feedback on my learning</td>
<td>3.83</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>N/A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CEQ-GTS: The staff put a lot of time into commenting on my work</td>
<td>57</td>
<td>TBA</td>
<td>TBA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CEQ-GTS: The teaching staff gave me helpful feedback on how I was going</td>
<td>65</td>
<td>TBA</td>
<td>TBA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ISB/SB-Performance feedback</td>
<td>78/72</td>
<td>83/77</td>
<td>84/76</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The survey data aligns with the student feedback reported to the working group by Student Support Services, the SRC, the Sydney University Postgraduate Representative Association (SUPRA), and by the students who participated in the roundtable. Students in general see assessment as beneficial to their learning; however, they are critical of the clarity with which assessment tasks and marking criteria are communicated, and report relatively high levels of dissatisfaction with the helpfulness of the feedback they receive on their learning. In an Academic Board focus topic presented by student representatives in response to the survey data, the President of the SRC cited three assessment-related areas of student concern: volume and timing of assessment, feedback, and group work (Academic Board 10 October 2017).
Student perceptions of the time staff put in to providing feedback are also of concern. This may reflect pressure on staff time resulting from both the timing and volume of assessment, which might prevent staff from being able to provide feedback that students feel would assist with improving their performance.

2.6 Assessment rubrics

The Strategy commits the University to developing a common rubric-based approach for assessing the graduate qualities. To investigate the extent to which rubric-based approaches are already in use across the University, the working group reviewed a small sample of rubrics from each faculty.

The use of rubrics for assessment is not currently required by any policy or principle of the University. Nevertheless, many staff across the University are working with rubrics, though the style and practice of these vary. Many of the features identified in the literature as best-practice feature in some of the rubrics currently used, including: a clear indication of the evaluative criteria to be used; an explanation of what each potential level of achievement means in relation to each criterion; and an explicit link between the task and the learning outcomes of the unit so that students may understand their progress towards achieving those outcomes (Popham, 1997). The rubrics that are currently used across the University provide a promising foundation upon which a common, rubric-based approach for assessing the graduate qualities can be developed.
3. Future assessment

Moving from the current state of assessment practices at the University to one with clearer learning and assessment goals, better feedback, more authentic tasks and less drudgery as set out at the start of this report will require several steps, which are outlined in this section.

Firstly, understanding where and how the graduate qualities are embedded within the learning outcomes of the curriculum will ensure that every student has the opportunity to develop the qualities no matter which degree, or pathway within that degree, they choose. Creating assessment plans is the next step toward developing this understanding (section 3.1). Agreement within the University to a common suite of rubrics to provide a scale by which the graduate qualities thus embedded may be assessed, is then necessary before further developing the plan to the level of the assessment tasks themselves (section 3.2).

The elements of the new curriculum framework that emphasise experiential and collaborative learning, interdisciplinary experiences and work on authentic problems are a key part of both ensuring the development of the graduate qualities and providing students with opportunities to demonstrate their achievement. Section 3.3, below, discusses the ways in which project units within the majors could be used to achieve these aims within the liberal studies degrees and, by adaption of the process, in specialist and professional degrees as well.

Finally all of these steps – establishing clarity over how graduate qualities are given expression in learning outcomes; improving coherence and coordination of assessment within curriculum components; and developing common rubrics for assessing the graduate qualities – will provide the foundation to explore further innovation in assessment task design, feedback and authentic assessment. Such work should be supported by the Education portfolio by providing faculties with additional resources through the Curriculum Development Fund, and offering staff development programs in 2018, 2019 and beyond.

3.1 Planning assessment across the degree

An important aim of shifting the focus of assessment planning from the unit of study to the curriculum level is to allow staff and students to focus on tasks that support learning outcomes of their unit with assurance that other outcomes will be appropriately covered elsewhere. If staff and students have a clear sense of where an individual unit or task fits into the broader learning outcomes, they will be able to optimise the learning effectiveness of those tasks and avoid unnecessary duplication. Knowing that the curriculum is well-planned frees unit of study coordinators from the responsibility of, for example, attempting to address every graduate quality in every unit.

An assessment plan would allow ‘top down’ consideration of the structure of assessment throughout the student journey to develop their disciplinary expertise and other graduate qualities, whether that is at the level of the entire degree (such as in a tightly structured professional degree like the Bachelor of Pharmacy) or within a major in a liberal studies degree. This planning should make it possible to ensure that the balance of assessment tasks gives appropriate priority to the learning outcomes most valued by students, staff and employers. For example, a well-structured sequence of low or zero-weighted formative assessment tasks could be used within units of study, and paired with an appropriately situated final measurement of learning outcomes for the relevant curriculum component or degree.

Such an approach has the potential to reduce the overall burden of assessment on students and staff and allow more emphasis to be placed on providing students and staff with feedback. This would also create more space in the curriculum for integrated, deep, and complex learning. Similarly, appointing a coordinator to oversee the learning outcomes and assessment of curriculum components would allow unit of study coordinators to focus on the responsibilities outlined in the Learning and Teaching Policy 2015 and in section 2.1.

Good planning at the curriculum level also meets the needs of good governance that the University requires in order to assure the overall quality of learning. The Higher Education Standards Framework...
Threshold Standards 2015 require that the University be able to demonstrate that methods of assessment are consistent with stated learning outcomes and that these outcomes have been demonstrated by students, with grades reflecting students' level of attainment. The University assures this standard via the Academic Board and its course approval and review processes (section 2.1).

In addition to this, a number of the University's degrees, particularly specialist and professional degrees, are accredited by professional bodies. For students, accreditation is often an enforced minimum entry standard to many professions. While accrediting bodies are not usually higher education bodies themselves, the most common route to obtaining accreditation is via higher education. The accrediting bodies accredit degrees offered by higher education providers, providing an endorsement that someone who has completed that degree should be able to meet the standards for accreditation in that profession (PhillipsKPA, 2016).

The extent to which the accreditation requirements for a particular profession dictate the structure of an accredited degree can vary widely among accrediting bodies. A common requirement for accreditation is the demonstration, throughout the breadth and duration of the degree curriculum, of the places in which specific learning outcomes are achieved. This is usually achieved via a 'mapping' of the curriculum, where the embedding of the relevant knowledges and skills, usually at the level of the unit of study is noted, along with any assessment or demonstration of learning outcomes.

Those faculties which manage accreditation requirements for their degrees have thus often already managed a similar planning process to that described here. For others, this may be the first time such planning has been undertaken, and there are some challenges in the less-structured liberal studies degrees in understanding the various student pathways possible. The structured curriculum components of these degrees, such as streams, programs and majors, will therefore logically be the focus of planning.

Once the graduate qualities have been given expression through the learning outcomes of every degree and curriculum component, it should be feasible to produce an assessment plan for each degree or curriculum component of the University that expresses how the graduate qualities are achieved. This work would assure the Academic Board that every student is given the opportunity to develop the graduate qualities through all of the University's degrees and will be able to be assessed on that development at the end of their degree. These plans should also be communicated to students, in order to describe how their degree will result in their achievement of the graduate qualities.

Production of assessment plans should be done as part of the course approval process and included in the course review process as it essentially ‘accredits’ degrees of the University as appropriately embedding the graduate qualities of a University of Sydney undergraduate degree. Updates to the Board's course management template to reflect the new graduate qualities are overdue, with the template still reflective of the University's old 'generic attributes for graduates' and using terms to describe the curriculum which are superseded by the new curriculum framework. The template currently asks faculties to describe the assessment procedures and the assurance of learning to be undertaken within any degree. A review of the course management template should be undertaken, with a view to inserting a requirement for assessment plans in place of the sections on assessment and assurance of learning.

The new curriculum mapping system will be integral to supporting such work, acting as a dynamic repository of information needed for assessment plans, and generating products such as unit of study outlines that communicate learning outcomes and assessment tasks to students. Configuration of the new mapping system is currently underway, with a small pilot group of degrees to trial the system in early 2018. By mid-2018, the system should be available on an opt-in basis to faculties. As part of readying for use of the system, those in the trial have already reported that work needs to be done to review the learning outcomes of the degrees, curriculum components and units of study. Beginning the work to produce the assessment plans, as outlined above, will dovetail with this work.

Essential requirements for an assessment plan would be that it details: the ways in which the learning outcomes are developed throughout the degree or curriculum component; the places in which the graduate qualities are assessed for the graduating student in order to come up with their final...
statement of achievement; and considers the assessment of units of study in light of the agreed common scale of achievement of the relevant graduate qualities as expressed in the rubrics, interpreted through the lens of the field of study. These three requirements are outlined below.

Assessment plans must:
1. articulate the learning outcomes in terms that give expression to the graduate qualities for the degree and relevant curriculum components;
2. indicate where and how in the curriculum the learning outcomes and graduate qualities are developed and where they are assessed; and
3. describe in narrative terms how students’ achievement of the graduate qualities will be developed, the tasks typically used and how they will be assessed on completion of the degree.

3.2 A common assessment of the graduate qualities

The development of a common, rubric-based approach for assessing the graduate qualities is foreshadowed in the Strategy and builds upon existing assessment practices and policy. Consistent with the University’s existing commitment to standards-based assessment, the approach developed here is predicated on a standards-referenced model of assessment in which evaluations of student achievements of explicit learning outcomes are mapped against a developmental continuum (attachment 7).

Assessing students’ attainment provides important feedback on the effectiveness of our efforts to ensure students’ development of the graduate qualities. It also assists staff understanding of student learning and measures the effectiveness of teaching. For students, it provides them, and potentially their subsequent employers, with evidence of their achievement.

It will be important that, having reached agreement as to the University’s graduate qualities, a common scale of achievement is also used for these qualities across the University. A number of methods of assessment could potentially be used, including that of standardised testing. Internationally, this has sometimes been used as a means of systematically measuring student attainment of higher level generic learning outcomes. These have, however, generally been judged as burdensome, expensive, and difficult to sustain.1 If applied here, such an approach would run contrary to ambitions to generally reduce the volume of assessment experienced by students, and would not allow for interpretation of the graduate qualities to reflect the specific needs of a field of study. The benefits such testing would provide to learning is also unclear – which should be the key aim of any assessment. Finally, this approach could encourage a view of the graduate qualities as additional to, rather than integrated within, the components of the curriculum that develop a students’ depth of knowledge.

A rubric-based approach, on the other hand, has been demonstrated to improve students’ understanding of assessment objectives and, in turn, their academic performance (Jonsson, 2014; Menéndez-Varela and Gregori-Giralt, 2016; Reddy and Andrade, 2010). This has been attributed to the ways in which rubrics communicate learning intentions to students; and the clarity with which they describe success and demonstrate the various levels at which students might achieve (Hattie, 2009). Rubrics have also been linked to improved consistency and reliability in marking, and can be used as a mechanism for identifying potential improvements in instruction, the design of curricula, and the comparability of assessment across courses and teaching sessions (Crotwell et al., 2011; Halonen et al., 2003; Reddy and Andrade, 2010; Tractenberg et al., 2010). Finally, rubrics can provide feedback to staff on student learning in a calibrated format.

Rubrics are already being used elsewhere to support the assessment of broad program-level outcomes for undergraduates, such as is in the Valid Assessment of Learning in Undergraduate Education (VALUE) project of the Association of American Colleges and Universities and the National Academies of

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1 Examples include: the OECD’s Assessment of Higher Education Learning Outcomes (AHELO) Project, which appears to have foundered; the OECD Program for the International Assessment of Adult Competencies (PIAAC), which, through an international survey, measures cognitive and workplace skills necessary for societal participation and economic prosperity; and the Collegiate Learning Assessment (CLA) for measurement of broad skills such as critical thinking and problem solving (eg. Arun and Roksa 2011; 2014).
Sciences (AACU, 2017). An early finding of this work has been that, when measured by the rubrics, some of the outcomes presumed to have been part of these programs were found to require much greater development within the curriculum. This demonstrates the power of the rubric approach to assessment to support the work to embed, develop and scaffold the graduate qualities throughout the curriculum (section 3.1).

A common rubric is necessary to establish a baseline understanding of the learning intentions across the University for the graduate qualities and of the developmental stages for each quality. Nevertheless, it is possible, and perhaps desirable, that each of the University’s diverse fields of study consider the meaning of these qualities within the context of their field and the levels of attainment of the qualities that are necessary for success within their field. This interpretation of the common rubric may lead to the development of a rubric specific to the field of study, with statements as to the interpretation of the quality within that field and the desirable levels, or nature of attainment, within that field. Where such interpretive work is undertaken, this could form a useful basis for communication with both students and staff as to the learning outcomes, developmental stages and performance standards within the field of study. Reporting to students on their achievement of the qualities could then build on the common rubric to give specific feedback on their achievement within the context of their expertise.

On graduation, the University would then provide to students a final statement of their attainments of the graduate qualities in a form that would be meaningful to them in planning their future educational development and also meaningful to employers. It is not envisaged that the descriptions of attainment, developed as part of the agreed common rubric, will be expressed in terms of grade bands, such as those used on the NSW Higher School Certificate or the common result grades used at the University (i.e., Pass, Credit, etc.). Instead, descriptions of student attainment will make positive statements about what each student can do, rather than what they have achieved relative to their peers and the wider student cohort. Deciding at what point the evidence for the final statement on attainment for a graduating student should be assembled and assessed is a crucial step in the development of assessment plans (section 3.1).

To support both students and staff to assemble the evidence of development and attainment of the graduate qualities, a technological solution is being sought that will integrate with the Learning Management System and can be used to assemble a final statement of attainment.

### 3.3 Using project-based units to assess the graduate qualities

As outlined in table 1.1, project-based learning and authentic problems and assessment are integral to developing the qualities the University has agreed are necessary for graduates to make a productive contribution to contemporary society. The curriculum framework embeds such experiences in undergraduate degrees and is structured such that each major or broader field of study includes a final year project or practicum. For liberal studies degrees, this requirement is focused on the major, where a 3000-level project unit (or higher for 192 credit point combined, professional or specialist degrees) should be embedded. The purpose of this is to provide students with the opportunity to apply the knowledge they have gained throughout their study of the major area to an authentic problem.

Each University major must also have a unit in which students have the opportunity to demonstrate their disciplinary knowledge in an interdisciplinary setting. Recognising that ‘real world’ problems rarely accede to disciplinary boundaries, in designing majors many disciplines have chosen to combine the interdisciplinary experience with the project unit. Indeed, the Education Enterprise and Engagement team within the Education portfolio has been established to assist faculties both with brokering relationships with the external industry and community organisations that can provide authentic problems as the basis for these project units, and to assist with the organisation of multi-faculty teams of students.

The University has, of course, run projects and project units in a number of settings for many years. For example, project units involving inter-professional learning have been successfully piloted by health faculties, who have aspirations to increase such learning opportunities as consolidation of the new campus health precinct proceeds. The new curriculum framework expands students’ access to project units and other similar experiences and facilitates interdisciplinary learning. In moving to this model, the
University has been motivated by the considerable body of research which has established the high impact of projects on learning and the development of broader skills such as critical thinking and problem solving (Brownell and Swaner 2010; Kuh et al., 2005; Pascarella and Terenzini, 2005; Thompson, 2014), but is also mindful of the well-documented problems with assessment in group work and project-based units, particularly as perceived by students.

Many staff who have successfully run project units across the University have expressed a preference for moving to pass/fail assessment at the unit level, albeit with significant formative feedback, often guided by rubrics, given to students within the unit. A critical driver of this preference is the perceived positive impact on student motivation, innovation and creativity, once the pressure of marked group work was removed. Arguably, this is an issue that could be addressed through better support for, and training for students in collaborative learning structures.

In most cases, where project units have been run across the University they have also been offered at a relatively local scale, within a single discipline, where competitive pressures are likely to be highest. They have also mostly been offered to high-achieving students via selective entry, and thus necessarily within an elective space within a degree. Offered at scale, and as a key part of students major, pass/fail assessment may provide an unsatisfactory degree of rigour with which to grade a student’s achievement of the major’s learning outcomes, but this is an issue that should be explored as trials of project units continue across the University. When asked, students often express a distaste for pass/fail assessment, feeling that their hard work would not be adequately reflected or rewarded in this mark.

During 2017 there have been several trials of the new model for project units which have tested: the model of partnership with industry and community organisations; the approach of having students work in multi-faculty teams and of having multiple teams work on the same problem; and tested an assessment approach built around the graduate qualities.

In 2018, the University will run several larger-scale trials. Some of these will be situated within faculties and trial a disciplinary project; some, an interdisciplinary project that draws on disciplines from within the one faculty; and some industry and community project units that will work with external partners in multi-faculty teams facilitated by the Education Enterprise and Engagement group. For this latter group of trial units a single common assessment regime will be tried that is built on that used in the smaller 2017 trials, and shaped both by the experiences from those trials and from other project units run successfully across the University (attachment 8). These larger scale trials will be occurring at the same time as the University progresses its work on the rubrics for the graduate qualities, including those that will be built at the disciplinary level.

The integrative nature of a project-based unit, particularly where the project requires group work across disciplinary boundaries on an authentic problem, provides students with opportunities to demonstrate not only their disciplinary expertise, but also the full range of graduate qualities. For this reason, once the common rubrics have been established, these could be used as the basis to create assessment tasks within project units that focus on the qualities. Specifically, assessment tasks need to be designed that allow students to demonstrate their achievement against the developmental standards given in the rubric. If this can be achieved, it may be possible to use the project units to provide the evidence of student attainment of the graduate qualities that can be used for the final assessment. Doing so would simplify the process of gathering evidence to provide the graduation statement to students on their achievement.

Challenges inherent in this approach are those associated with assessing the individual achievements of students in the context of group work. This may be particularly exacerbated where the group work is interdisciplinary in nature and the assessor may not be the disciplinary expert. These concerns were noted by the working group in their consultation with staff across the University. Student consultation also indicated concern regarding the current conduct of group-based assessment, particularly where the group project result formed the basis for assessment.

Nevertheless, as the trials of interdisciplinary industry and community project units proceed during 2018, the potential for the common suite of University rubrics to form the basis for the assessment in those units should be considered. This would include consideration of whether or not it would be
possible to use any specific field of study rubrics to assess students undertaking the project but whose
disciplinary knowledge was related to that field of study. The common rubrics could also be used to
review the design of assessment tasks for project units, to ensure the graduate qualities can be
demonstrated through that assessment structure.
4. Methods

The Assessment Working Group was established as a partnership between the Chair of the Academic Board and the Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Education) to review the University’s current approach to assessment and undertake the work required to give effect to the assessment initiatives of the education strategy. The working group’s Terms of Reference and membership are shown in table 4.1.

Table 4.1. Assessment Working Group Terms of Reference and membership.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Purpose</th>
<th>The Assessment Working Group will:</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1. develop a common approach for assessing graduate qualities.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2. develop a common approach for development of aligned assessment plans at the level of course component to ensure effective placing of authentic assessment experiences and achievement of learning outcomes at the appropriate level.</td>
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<td></td>
<td>3. recommend optimal processes for effective assessment practice in collaborative and project-based learning.</td>
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<td></td>
<td>4. recommend policy and course management options for integrative assessment across units of study and disciplines and in interdisciplinary units embedded in majors, projects and the Sydney Research Seminars.</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>5. recommend policy reforms in support of reducing summative assessment at unit of study level, making increased use of low or zero weighted formative assessment, and of learning analytics to provide feedback on learning to students and staff and on the learning process as a whole.</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Co-chairs</th>
<th>Associate Professor Peter McCallum, Director, Education Strategy, DVC Education</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Associate Professor Judy Anderson, Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences, Academic Board</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

| Members | Professor Philippa Pattison, Deputy-Vice Chancellor (Education) (ex-officio) |
|         | Associate Professor Anthony Masters, Chair, Academic Board (ex-officio) |
|         | Mrs Helen Agus, Faculty of Science |
|         | Professor Michael Anderson, Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences |
|         | Associate Professor Corrine Caillaud, Faculty of Health Sciences |
|         | Associate Professor Rae Cooper, University of Sydney Business School |
|         | Associate Professor Jamie Glister, University of Sydney Law School |
|         | Professor Inam Haq, University of Sydney Medical School |
|         | Dr Melissa Hardie, Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences |
|         | Professor David Lowe, Faculty of Engineering and Information Technologies |
|         | Associate Professor Stefan Meisiek, University of Sydney Business School |
|         | Dr Ann Rogerson, Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences |

| Attendees | Professor James Tognolini, Educational Measurement and Assessment Hub |
|           | Tristan Enright, Manager, Educational Integrity, DVC Education (secretariat) |
|           | Dr Leah Schwartz, Program Manager, Education Strategy, DVC Education |
|           | John Hardie, Coordinator, Professional Development for the Graduate Qualities, DVC Education |

The Assessment Working Group met 14 times between March and November 2017. Early and periodic feedback was sought in relation to key working and discussion papers from the University Executive Education Committee; the Academic Board and its Undergraduate Studies and Academic Standards and Policy Committees; the Degree Advisory Working Group; and the University Executive Heads of School Committee.

A dedicated Academic Board session on assessment was held on 13 June 2017 to discuss the development of a common rubric for assessing the graduate qualities. A town hall forum with the same focus was held for all staff on 14 June 2017. A discussion paper was also produced to support a series of dedicated faculty fora on assessment, held between July and September 2017 and made available to staff via the intranet. Finally, a student roundtable on assessment was held on 8 September 2017.
5. Conclusion

There is ample evidence of the conscientiousness, diligence and sustained effort applied by both staff and students to the important task of assessment across the University. To build on these efforts and achieve the vision outlined in the Strategy, the working group found that it will be necessary to adjust some aspects of current policy and governance arrangements, as well as to further support faculties to develop innovative approaches to assessment. The impact of these changes will be to benefit learning through greater clarity of curricular purpose, more pertinent feedback and improved efficiency. It is important that the recommendations in this report are implemented with a focus on freeing up time and resources for learning and research and with an emphasis on excellence rather than compliance. It is recognised that these recommendations are made at a time of transformational change within the University which is itself resource-intensive. However, the working group believes that effective implementation of these recommendations should increase the ease by which staff may create a learning community that is even more productive and rewarding.
6. References


Attachment 1 – The new undergraduate curriculum: a primer

The curriculum framework comprises core components which are essential for every student plus enrichment opportunities that are intended to be available but not required for every student. There are seven core components which vary in form and complexity and can be mapped to the graduate qualities, as outlined in table A1.1.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Core component</th>
<th>Graduate qualities</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A major or specialisation in at least one field of study</td>
<td>Depth of disciplinary expertise</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A structured approach to the development of knowledge and skills</td>
<td>Depth of disciplinary expertise</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Broader skills</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Cultural competence</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Integrated identity</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Collaborative and group-based learning activities and assessments</td>
<td>Broader skills</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Cultural competence</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Integrated identity</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Influence</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interdisciplinary and inter-professional learning experiences</td>
<td>Broader skills</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Interdisciplinary effectiveness</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Influence</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Authentic problems and assessments</td>
<td>Depth of disciplinary expertise</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Broader skills</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Interdisciplinary effectiveness</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Integrated identity</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Influence</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>An open learning environment for extension of knowledge and skills</td>
<td>Broader skills</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Interdisciplinary effectiveness</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Integrated identity</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Influence</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Project-based learning</td>
<td>Depth of disciplinary expertise</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Broader skills</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Integrated identity</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Influence</td>
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The core components are:

- **A major or specialisation in at least one field of study.** Disciplinary expertise requires a sustained and coherent program of study in the discipline or broader field. Such a structure is already well established in Sydney degrees, taking the form of a major, specialisation or professional field (for example, history, chemical engineering, or physiotherapy).

- **A structured approach to the development of knowledge and skills.** The curriculum will offer a coherent set of learning experiences. These structured experiences would typically begin in the first semester of the first year and culminate in a final year project that requires students to integrate knowledge and skills acquired over multiple units of study throughout their degree. In the intervening semesters, learning experiences would include opportunities for students to generate questions and analyse and address novel problems, building skills for the final year project. Ideally, the final project would allow the assessment of a number of course-level learning outcomes including broader skills. This would yield evidence often sought by prospective employers, increasingly required for professional accreditation, and now necessary to demonstrate attainment of Higher Education Standards.

- **Collaborative and group-based learning activities and assessments.** Collaborative learning activities and assessments provide vital opportunities for the development of skills to work with others. These activities take advantage of the diversity of the University student community and contribute to the development of cross-cultural understanding and effective inter-cultural communication. Carefully designed group-based learning activities and assessments build on smaller-scale, collaborative learning activities to ensure that students can fulfil the expectations of
others in team contexts, lead a designated part of a group project and, on occasion, lead the project itself and resolve difficulties that can arise in group contexts.

- **Interdisciplinary and inter-professional learning experiences.** Opportunities to engage in interdisciplinary and inter-professional learning build the capacity for interdisciplinary effectiveness and have the added benefit of further developing critical thinking skills.

- **Authentic problems and assessments.** Authentic problems are those that arise in external or research contexts, for example in organisational or broader commercial and community settings, and whose solutions are of genuine and potentially pressing interest. Authentic problems are important because they challenge students to integrate knowledge and skills in unfamiliar but realistic contexts and reflect circumstances that students are likely to encounter in the future. They are frequently multidisciplinary and novel in form and require that context be taken into account. They therefore require students to work through the uncertainties that these various forms of novelty present, encouraging more inventive, entrepreneurial and contextualised approaches to problem solving. If offered as a group-based activity – and where problems are multidisciplinary in form, this will often be most effective – authentic problems also draw on collaborative skills in order to develop novel approaches, further developing students' abilities to work across cultural, disciplinary or professional boundaries.

- **An open learning environment for extension of knowledge and skills.** The curriculum will provide students opportunities to build novel skill combinations and extend their knowledge by exploring other fields of study. This can be done by providing access to short, modular courses or resources that allow students to acquire, in flexible ways tailored to their specific learning needs, foundational concepts and methods of other disciplines, including basic skills in programming, data science, data analysis, research techniques, systems thinking, design thinking, team leadership, specialised communication skills, and project management, as well as understandings of cultural or broader contextual backgrounds.

- **Project-based learning.** Experiential learning activities have a demonstrably significant impact on course learning outcomes, particularly where they take the form of substantial projects. Projects provide challenge, novelty, and the opportunity to build and integrate knowledge and skills to solve authentic problems. Where group-based, they also build skills in collaboration and in working across cultural, disciplinary or professional boundaries.

**Common course components for liberal studies degrees**

Many of the University's specialist and professional degrees already use a structured approach to the development of knowledge and skills as students progress through their degree and build their specialisation. However, for liberal studies degrees such as the Bachelor of Arts, Bachelor of Science and Bachelor of Commerce, the breadth of choice available to students has historically made it more difficult both to build a structured program of study and to allow students to easily integrate fields of study offered by different faculties to their home degree.

To address this, common terminology and definitions for course components and common course rules in undergraduate liberal studies degrees were adopted by the University in 2015. The benefit of common course components and rules is predictable inter-changeability of components among degrees in the liberal studies as well in the liberal studies components of some undergraduate double degrees, and hence a more coherent and navigable set of pathways through our degrees. These common structures are summarised in table A1.2. Common course rules, including for degree requirements, requisite structures, and honours, and common approaches for constructing degree combinations, such as double undergraduate and vertical degrees and the combination of degrees and diplomas have also been introduced.

**Table A1.2 Definitions of course components.**

| Stream | A bracketed version of a degree that can be conceptualised as a separate degree for admission purposes but that is linked to a set of other streams of the degree through shared nomenclature (e.g. Bachelor of Engineering (Hons)), shared course components and/or shared rules. |
| Program | A combination of units of study that develops expertise in a multi-disciplinary domain or a professional or specialist field and includes a recognised major in a field of study. A program comprises up to $4 \times 1000$-level + $4 \times 2000$-level + $6 \times 3000$-level + $8 \times 4000$-level units (≤ |
Major
A sequence of units of study that develops depth of expertise in a field of study. A major comprises \(2 \times 1000\text{-level} + 2 \times 2000\text{-level} + 4 \times 3000\text{-level}\) units (12+12+24 = 48 credit points), and includes: 1 unit at 3000-level involves completion of a project requiring the integration and application of disciplinary knowledge and skills; and 1 unit at 3000-level requires the application of disciplinary skills and knowledge in an interdisciplinary context.

Minor
A sequence of units of study that develops coherent knowledge and skills in a field of study. A minor comprises \(2 \times 1000\text{-level} + 2 \times 2000\text{-level} + 2 \times 3000\text{-level}\) units (12+12+12 = 36 credit points).

Degree core
A set of units of study that develops required knowledge and skills for the degree. In degrees in the liberal arts and sciences, it comprises no more than 4 units of study at 1000-, 2000 or 3000-level (\(\leq 24\) credit points).

There are several noteworthy features of these new proposed definitions. First, a minor sequence of study (two units of study at each of 1000-, 2000- and 3000-level) has been introduced. A minor may be embedded in one or more majors in the same disciplinary domain or in a broader domain, but is not required to be embedded in, and therefore extendible to, a major.

A major has been conceptualised as two units of study at each of 1000- and 2000-level and four units of study at 3000-level or two units of study at 1000-level and three units of study at each of 2000- and 3000-level. This is a shift in balance of the major to later year units for some of our degrees (including for the Bachelor of Arts and Bachelor of Commerce) and means that up to half of the required units for the major are taken at a more intensive and senior (3000-) level and largely with a cohort of students who have chosen the same major. This pattern of study should support the development of coherent and challenging curricula in each major.

The concepts of program and stream have been introduced to recognise multidisciplinary, professional or specialist course components that are larger than a major. In several cases, the concept of program is necessary because accreditation requirements cannot be met within a major as just defined (e.g., this is the case for accounting and psychology); in other cases, it is helpful as a means of identifying a multidisciplinary constellation of units that includes a major as just defined but has been constructed to cover a broader program of study for a specified purpose (e.g., a broad program in politics and related social science disciplines).

The concept of a stream within a degree allows us to recognise separate admission pathways for the degree as well as domains of study with distinctive core degree requirements (e.g., Media and Communications within the Bachelor of Arts). At the same time, it recognises that a number of streams belong to a family of degrees with shared nomenclature, shared course components and/or shared course rules.

Finally, the definitions allow that some majors may share units, particularly in the first and second years where careful design of foundational units can prepare students for several different majors. In the sciences, for example, foundational units in biology and chemistry may lead to a number of distinct majors.

The new curriculum thus now provides opportunities within both the liberal studies degrees and the professional and specialist degrees to consider students’ educational experiences in a more holistic way across the duration of the degree. One corollary of this is that it should be possible for the timing and volume of assessment tasks to be reviewed, and to consider the learning outcomes of each unit of study and course component in the context of the unifying graduate qualities.
Attachment 2 – Special consideration and special arrangements: 2016 statistics

Requests at a glance
Throughout 2016:
- 9,715 students (approximately 16%) used the Special Consideration and Special Arrangements (SCandSA) online system.
- These students submitted 24,468 applications relating to 36,604 individual assessment requests (or attendance) relating to 2994 units of study.
- As there were 5,450 units of study (with enrolled students), these requests related to 55% of the total units of study available.
- Of the 9,715 students who submitted a SCandSA application, 65.5% (6,363 students) submitted multiple requests (which could have related to the same or different unit of study).
- In addition, there were 6,363 students (65.5%) who submitted 2 or more applications.

Volume by assessment type
The greatest volume of requests by assessment type in descending order were:
1. Assignment (30.7%)
2. Final exam (22.1%)
3. Attendance (18.8%)

The following table provides an overview of volumes across all assessment types.

Table A2.1. Volume of applications across all assessment types.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Assessment types</th>
<th>Total</th>
<th>Proportion</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Assignment</td>
<td>11241</td>
<td>31%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Final exam</td>
<td>8070</td>
<td>22%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Attendance</td>
<td>6618</td>
<td>18%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tutorial quiz or small test or small continuous assessment</td>
<td>3752</td>
<td>10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>In-semester exam</td>
<td>2932</td>
<td>8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Presentation</td>
<td>1095</td>
<td>3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Placement</td>
<td>1000</td>
<td>3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Skills based evaluation</td>
<td>776</td>
<td>2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Written assignment</td>
<td>368</td>
<td>1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Optional assignment or test</td>
<td>310</td>
<td>1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Creative assessments/demonstrations</td>
<td>192</td>
<td>1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Honours thesis</td>
<td>159</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dissertation</td>
<td>91</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Grand total</strong></td>
<td><strong>36604</strong></td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Most common forms of consideration
During 2016, the most common forms of consideration in descending order were:
1. Replacement exam (assessment type: exam)
2. Extension of time (assessment type: assignment)
3. Absence noted (assessment type: attendance)

The following table and figure provide the total number of each form of consideration granted and expressed as a percentage.

Table A2.2. Number and proportion of each form of consideration granted.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Consideration description</th>
<th>Total</th>
<th>Proportion</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Replacement exam</td>
<td>7098</td>
<td>32%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Extension of time</td>
<td>6378</td>
<td>29%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### Figure A2.1. Number and proportion of each form of consideration granted.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Consideration</th>
<th>Number</th>
<th>Proportion</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Absence noted</td>
<td>2766</td>
<td>13%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mark adjustment</td>
<td>1563</td>
<td>7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>New or varied assessment</td>
<td>1217</td>
<td>5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No action required</td>
<td>850</td>
<td>4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Alternative assessment</td>
<td>760</td>
<td>3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>New or varied placement</td>
<td>505</td>
<td>2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>New or varied presentation</td>
<td>347</td>
<td>2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>New or varied evaluation</td>
<td>304</td>
<td>1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Replacement session</td>
<td>184</td>
<td>1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Discontinue not to Count as failure (DC)</td>
<td>156</td>
<td>1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Grand total</strong></td>
<td><strong>22128</strong></td>
<td><strong>100%</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Volume by faculty or University school

The following table and figure provide an overview of special consideration and special arrangement assessment requests by faculty or University school in descending order as compared to student load.

Table A2.3. Number and proportion of each form of consideration granted in descending order. Agriculture and Veterinary Science are included in SCIE.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Faculty</th>
<th>Requests</th>
<th>Coursework enrolments</th>
<th>Requests per student (EFTSL)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>NURS</td>
<td>2025</td>
<td>1849</td>
<td>1.095</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SCIE</td>
<td>7836</td>
<td>8402</td>
<td>0.933</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MEDI</td>
<td>3173</td>
<td>3832</td>
<td>0.828</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ARTS</td>
<td>8698</td>
<td>11219</td>
<td>0.775</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PHAR</td>
<td>1009</td>
<td>1352</td>
<td>0.746</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CONS</td>
<td>609</td>
<td>864</td>
<td>0.705</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EDSW</td>
<td>1843</td>
<td>3156</td>
<td>0.584</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SCVA</td>
<td>246</td>
<td>473</td>
<td>0.520</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LAWS</td>
<td>1134</td>
<td>2489</td>
<td>0.456</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ARCH</td>
<td>672</td>
<td>1614</td>
<td>0.416</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BUSI</td>
<td>4776</td>
<td>11827</td>
<td>0.404</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HSCI</td>
<td>1626</td>
<td>4094</td>
<td>0.397</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ENGI</td>
<td>2811</td>
<td>7330</td>
<td>0.383</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DENT</td>
<td>138</td>
<td>521</td>
<td>0.265</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Figure A2.2. Special consideration and special arrangement requests per student (EFTSL).
Volume by academic week
The following figure provides an overview of the volume of special consideration and special arrangement applications throughout 2016 by academic week.

Figure A2.3. Volume of applications received during 2016 by academic week.
The following table provides an overview of the number of special consideration and special arrangement applications throughout 2016 by academic week.

**Table A2.4. Volume of applications received during 2016 by academic week.**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Week</th>
<th>Count</th>
<th>Week</th>
<th>Count</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>S1 Week 1</td>
<td>236</td>
<td>S2 Week 1</td>
<td>360</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>S1 Week 2</td>
<td>336</td>
<td>S2 Week 2</td>
<td>516</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>S1 Week 3</td>
<td>491</td>
<td>S2 Week 3</td>
<td>390</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>S1 Week 4</td>
<td>557</td>
<td>S2 Week 4</td>
<td>730</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>S1 MidSem</td>
<td>406</td>
<td>S2 Week 5</td>
<td>924</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>S1 Week 5</td>
<td>1056</td>
<td>S2 Week 6</td>
<td>1118</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>S1 Week 6</td>
<td>1286</td>
<td>S2 Week 7</td>
<td>1482</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>S1 Week 7</td>
<td>1356</td>
<td>S2 Week 8</td>
<td>1266</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>S1 Week 8</td>
<td>1151</td>
<td>S2 Week 9</td>
<td>1105</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>S1 Week 9</td>
<td>1180</td>
<td>S2 MidSem</td>
<td>477</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>S1 Week 10</td>
<td>1250</td>
<td>S2 Week 10</td>
<td>968</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>S1 Week 11</td>
<td>1317</td>
<td>S2 Week 11</td>
<td>1074</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>S1 Week 12</td>
<td>1382</td>
<td>S2 Week 12</td>
<td>1184</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>S1 Week 13</td>
<td>1315</td>
<td>S2 Week 13</td>
<td>1046</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>S1 Week 14</td>
<td>1093</td>
<td>S2 Week 14</td>
<td>837</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>S1 Week 15</td>
<td>1382</td>
<td>S2 Week 15</td>
<td>1494</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>S1 Week 16</td>
<td>1599</td>
<td>S2 Week 16</td>
<td>1484</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Winter 1</td>
<td>597</td>
<td>Break 1</td>
<td>461</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Winter 2</td>
<td>393</td>
<td>Break 2</td>
<td>384</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Winter 3</td>
<td>277</td>
<td>Break 3</td>
<td>169</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Winter 4</td>
<td>325</td>
<td>Break 4</td>
<td>119</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Break 5</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Break 6</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Grand total</strong></td>
<td><strong>36604</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Standard versus non-standard decisions**

Prior to the commencement of each semester, faculties are able to specify variations to the default forms of consideration provided in the special consideration and special arrangements Decisions Matrix.

Faculties are able to specify:

- Skills based assessments that are non-repeatable due to specialised resource requirements;
- In-class assessments where mark adjustments are not allowed; and
- Units of study that have a return date (for submitted work) that varies from the standard 14 calendar days.
In 2016:

- 234 units of study with a skills based assessment were recorded as “non-repeatable”. For these units of study, approved students were offered an alternative evaluation rather than the standard decision of a new or varied evaluation.
- 1,344 units of study with an in-class assessment (tutorial quiz, small test, online task or small continuous assessment) have one or more assessments noted as “Mark Adjustment Not Allowed”. For these units of study, approved students were offered a new or varied assessment.
- 1,043 units of study had an allowable extension duration that was different to the standard 14 calendar days.

At the conclusion of 2016:

- 26,906 (73.5%) of special consideration and special arrangement requests were standard decisions and able to be made without referral to a unit of study coordinator.
- 9,698 requests (26.5%) were non-standard decisions and required referral to a unit of study coordinator. As there are no standard rules for attendance, these requests are referred to unit of study coordinators automatically (unless declined by SAS due to insufficient documentation). Out of the 9,698 requests that were referred to a unit of study coordinator for a non-standard decision 41% (3,986 requests) related to attendance.

Table A2.5. Standard and non-standard decisions taken in 2016.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Assessment types</th>
<th>Standard (SAS)</th>
<th>Non-standard (UoS)</th>
<th>Total</th>
<th>Proportion</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Assignment</td>
<td>8230</td>
<td>3011</td>
<td>11241</td>
<td>73%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Attendance</td>
<td>2646</td>
<td>3972</td>
<td>6618</td>
<td>40%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Creative assessments/demonstrations</td>
<td>159</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>192</td>
<td>83%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dissertation</td>
<td>57</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>91</td>
<td>63%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Final exam</td>
<td>6802</td>
<td>1268</td>
<td>8070</td>
<td>84%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Honours thesis</td>
<td>103</td>
<td>56</td>
<td>159</td>
<td>65%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>In-semester exam</td>
<td>2581</td>
<td>351</td>
<td>2932</td>
<td>88%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Optional assignment or test</td>
<td>284</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>310</td>
<td>92%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Placement</td>
<td>932</td>
<td>68</td>
<td>1000</td>
<td>93%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Presentation</td>
<td>936</td>
<td>159</td>
<td>1095</td>
<td>85%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Skills based evaluation</td>
<td>646</td>
<td>130</td>
<td>776</td>
<td>83%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tutorial quiz, small test or small continuous assessment</td>
<td>3228</td>
<td>524</td>
<td>3752</td>
<td>86%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Written assignment</td>
<td>302</td>
<td>66</td>
<td>368</td>
<td>82%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>26906</td>
<td>9698</td>
<td>36604</td>
<td>74%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
**Attachment 3 – Report of Student Support Services**

Jordi Austin, Director, Student Support Services  
Dagmar Kminiak, Manager, Disability Support Services  
DVC Registrar Portfolio

**Recommendations**

1. That the Assessment Working Group Committee notes that Student Support Services strongly supports the aims and initiatives proposed to review the University’s approach to assessment.
2. Student Support Services recommends broader discussion of universal design principles in assessment development.
3. Student Support Services supports development of a cross unit assessment plan that enables deep disciplinary learning, without overloading staff or student workload.
4. Student Support Services is available to provide additional feedback or discussion surrounding universal design or student development trajectory.

**Background**

Student Support Services strongly support the aims and initiatives proposed by the Assessment Working Group to review the University’s approach to assessment. There are many benefits to be gained from reforming the current assessment practices to reduce the aggregated impact of inadequately planned learning and assessment methodology. We support reforms that will decrease the burdensome load that assessments can place on students, as well as efforts to improve timeliness of feedback to students on their mastery of learning outcomes. We also support the development of assessment planning through disciplinary majors and minors to enhance the student development trajectory.

Patterns of utilisation rates at Counselling and Psychological Services and Disability Services indicates peaks in service demand coinciding with assessment log-jams (notably week 7, 11 and 13 of semester). This is further exacerbated by the complex and bureaucratic process involved in application for special consideration, and the often guillotine application of Fail grades, frequently in professional and clinical programs, that will cause a student to fall out of step with a suitable course progression. This is particularly acute for international students where loss of one or two semesters in sequencing of their studies is highly stressful and detrimental to their overall ability to complete their course. The impact of not meeting a single assessment milestone is disproportionately punitive in these circumstances.

Qualitative feedback from the Academic Honesty report (2016) indicates that students are under time pressure to complete multiple assessments which are often perceived as trivial “jumping through hoops” or at best ancillary to their learning. This increases time and workload pressure without enabling deeper or intrinsically rewarding learning to occur. Students reported that this also increases the temptation to take “short cuts” in producing work to satisfy the assessment task hurdle. From the student feedback, modifications to assessment methodology will simultaneously increase the students desire to comply with academic learning and integrity.

Consideration of students’ desire for to be treated like a member of the learning community should also be taken into account when planning reforms. Data from the Academic Integrity Survey conducted in 2016 supports this with one student commenting:

> I think it’s important to help students feel that their work is valuable and contributes to the greater picture of academia, and that they are academics, from the moment they begin at university. This way they will come to see their work as not just a way to pass the course and leave, but as a valuable contribution to their field, and that their academic “peers” (even if they are far senior to them) are worthy of having their work respected, just as they themselves are. Combating academic dishonesty has to start with changing the culture and mindset of students about academic work.

Student Support Services are currently working with Carers NSW to understand the pressures experienced by students who have dual responsibilities of being a both student and a carer and their need for workload flexibility so as to manage both roles. The Chair, Academic Board, is actively supporting this project to enable equitable access to learning opportunities.

Significant external personal and social responsibilities, flexibility in managing workload, carers responsibility, distance from site of learning, requirements to work to support study (no significant increase in Centrelink entitlements etc).
Application of Universal Design principles
Some of the reforms the working group seeks to implement could be addressed through implementation of universal design (UD) principles (see section below). The Disability Services team currently advocate for the use of universal design principles wherein the delivery of education and teaching practices are adjusted to be more inclusive. UD creates an environment where learning is enabled for specific cohorts which may also benefit other members of the university community. In relation to universal design for assessment, learning outcomes can be evaluated by variety of assessment mechanisms that allow students to demonstrate their capability and content mastery. This method provides equivalence in learning via multiple means of demonstrating that learning.

Transitioning towards delivering education and assessment with universal design principles will require some upskilling of staff and additional resources in the establishment phase, but the benefits will be vast for student development, equitable opportunity to demonstrate mastery, and in providing students with increased control over how they manage their time.

Disability Services have provided the following commentary on how the current assessment approach impacts on students with disability.

Impact of the current assessment approach on students with disability
The current assessment regime frequently consists of summative assessments which are often high stakes. Specifically, these assessments cumulate to the end of the semester and prior to the formal exam period and as a result of this, some students may experience an exacerbation of their disability, further impacting on their performance in the formal exam period. This can also make the application of reasonable adjustments difficult, as extensions of time for written assessments often cannot be applied to all assessments towards the end of the semester, due to the impact on marking and feedback. This also places pressure on the faculty in terms of implementation of adjustments and accommodation of extraordinary requests for assessment. Units where there is an assessment structure consisting of two assessments which are both heavily weighted places significant pressure on students and can result in an exacerbation of their condition.

Assessment regimes where there is too much assessment with little real-time feedback on performance creates additional workload stress for students. We often find that if a student is struggling to understand core concepts from the beginning, and no feedback has been provided along the way, this increases the likelihood of the student failing the summative assessments.

Inclusive assessment
Inclusive assessment refers to the design and use of fair and effective assessment methods which enable all students to meet the required learning outcomes to their full potential.
An inclusive assessment regime offers students different assessment opportunities to demonstrate content mastery. That is, students would be able to select an assessment format which is accessible to them and which does not require modification or the application of a reasonable adjustment from the faculty, for example pre-filming a presentation, poster submissions, viva voce instead of written work/exam.

Inclusive assessment uses the same assessment outcome targets for all students, however provides benefits in workload flexibility and learning management tools for students, reduces staff workload through removing the need for in semester bespoke adjustments for disability conditions.

Track and Connect – student feedback on volume and timing of assessment
Track and Connect is an early intervention retention and student success initiative developed by Student Support Services. It has been running in participating subjects across multiple faculties since a successful pilot in Semester Two 2012. The program has proven effective in helping first year students to access key services and support available to them, resulting in increased student retention and success, and contributing to a valuable feedback loop between students and faculties. It provides students with key information about support services and resources, while also providing detailed de-identified feedback for unit coordinators.

The Track and Connect callers frequently speak to students who indicate that they have difficulty managing their assessment workload. The key piece of feedback received about assessment across all subjects is that students really struggle when their assessment due dates fall at the same time in semester and their difficulty in keeping up with the volume. Timeliness of feedback is also highlighted.
by students as supporting their learning - in units of study which have assessments (even if they are small ones) early in the semester have a better sense of their progress; when students have not had any assessments by mid-semester we often hear that they are uncertain as to how they are progressing or what actions they need to take to remain engaged and on top of their studies.

**Universal Design for Learning**

Universal Design for Learning (UDL) provides a blueprint for creating and implementing flexible learning environments, goals, pedagogies, materials, and assessments that accommodate learner differences. (cast.org)

There are three primary principles that guide universal design for learning and provide the framework (see Wakefield, 2011).

**Principle 1: Provide Multiple Means of Representation (the “what” of learning)**

Learners differ in the ways that they perceive and comprehend information that is presented to them. For example, those with sensory disabilities (e.g., visual impairment); learning disabilities (e.g., dyslexia); language or cultural differences, and so forth may all require different ways of approaching content. Others may simply grasp information quicker or more efficiently through visual or auditory means rather than printed text. Also, learning, and transfer of learning, occurs when multiple representations are used, because it allows students to make connections within, as well as between, concepts. In short, there is not one means of representation that will be optimal for all learners; providing options for representation is essential.

**Principle 2: Provide Multiple Means of Action and Expression (the “how” of learning)**

Learners differ in the ways that they can navigate a learning environment and express what they know. For example, individuals with significant movement impairments (e.g., cerebral palsy), those who struggle with strategic and organizational abilities (executive function disorders), those who have language barriers, and so forth approach learning tasks very differently. Some may be able to express themselves well in written text but not speech, and vice versa. It should also be recognized that action and expression require a great deal of strategy, practice, and organization, and this is another area in which learners can differ. In reality, there is not one means of action and expression that will be optimal for all learners; providing options for action and expression is essential. This is the principle that has greater relevance for the area of assessment, however all principles need to be in place to ensure universal design for learning.

**Principle 3: Provide Multiple Means of Engagement (the “why” of learning)**

Affect represents a crucial element to learning, and learners differ markedly in the ways in which they can be engaged or motivated to learn. There are a variety of sources that can influence individual variation in affect including neurology, culture, personal relevance, subjectivity, and background knowledge, along with a variety of other factors presented in these guidelines. Some learners are highly engaged by spontaneity and novelty while other are disengaged, even frightened, by those aspects, preferring strict routine. Some learners might like to work alone, while others prefer to work with their peers. In reality, there is not one means of engagement that will be optimal for all learners in all contexts; providing multiple options for engagement is essential.

In the UDL framework, assessment is described as the process of gathering information about a learner’s performance using a variety of methods and materials in order to determine learners’ knowledge, skills, and motivation for the purpose of making informed educational decisions. Within the UDL framework, the goal is to improve the accuracy and timeliness.

**Measurable Outcomes and Assessment Plan**

Prior to planning the instructional experience, establish how learning is going to be measured. Considerations should include:

- previously established lesson goals and learner needs
- embedding checkpoints to ensure all learners are successfully meeting their desired outcomes
- providing learners multiple ways and options to authentically engage in the process, take action, and demonstrate understanding, and
- supporting higher-order skills and encouraging a deeper connection with the content (Lawrence, 2011).
Considerations when planning assessments using a Universal Design for Learning approach  
(Burgstahler, 2015; Moore, 2013)

- Regular feedback is provided during the course. This could be in the form of formative assessments, peer feedback, students submitting sections of large projects for feedback before the final project is due, and the chance for resubmission.
- Clear expectations around assessments and learning outcomes are set at the beginning of the course. This includes providing a rubric for assessment tasks with clear marking criteria.
- Ask students to identify their preferred learning style early on in the course to assist them to identify which assessment type would best demonstrate their knowledge.
- Provide choice in assessment type to all students, this may reduce the need for adjustments for some students. (see examples below of assessment types).
- Provision of sample or previous tests and study guides.

Examples of alternate assessment types
- Poster board (that you can assemble, take a picture of and post)
- Video recording: video presentation, video portfolio, taped seminar report
- Audio recording
- Journals
- Peer critiques
- Design reports
- Viva with supporting portfolio
- Portfolios with supporting commentary
- Oral presentation of a research report
- Connect cards: student has compulsory readings and summarises content on a card and submits to academic

Matrix of assessment modes

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Analytical exercise</th>
<th>Examinations (unseen)</th>
<th>Placement or exchange reports</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Briefings</td>
<td>Exhibition and unseen displays</td>
<td>Portfolios and exchange reports</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Computer-based assessments and exercises</td>
<td>Extended investigations (e.g. statistical)</td>
<td>Practical reports</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Continuous assessment</td>
<td>Field-work reports</td>
<td>Problem based learning</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Coursework with discussion elements</td>
<td>Finding primary source material</td>
<td>Projects, independent or group</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Critical diaries, learning logs and journals</td>
<td>Geological mapping</td>
<td>Sandwich year reports</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Crits</td>
<td>“In class” and module tests</td>
<td>Simulation exercises</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Data interpretation exercises</td>
<td>Internship diaries</td>
<td>Slide and picture tests</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Design tasks</td>
<td>Laboratory examinations and practical tests</td>
<td>Student-led seminars, presentations and discussions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dissertation</td>
<td>Laboratory practical reports</td>
<td>Synoptic examinations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Documentation</td>
<td>Multiple choice testing</td>
<td>Treatment reports</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Electronic presentations: CD, web pages, etc.</td>
<td>On-line assessment</td>
<td>Video formats</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Essay assignments</td>
<td>Optical Mark Reader assessments</td>
<td>Viva voce examinations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Examinations (open book)</td>
<td>Oral examinations</td>
<td>Work books</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Examinations (seen)</td>
<td>Peer and self-evaluation</td>
<td>Work experience report</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Examinations (take away)</td>
<td>Personal research projects</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Using a Universal Design for Learning Approach to Assessment
Currently students with disability are provided with reasonable adjustments to enable them to be on a level playing field with their peers. The process of obtaining reasonable adjustments can be time consuming and complex for students and staff alike (Fossey et al., 2017).
If a universal design for learning approach is utilised and there is flexibility built into the assessment methods and schedules, then there would be reduced need for reasonable adjustments for some students with disability. If fewer students had reasonable adjustments for assessment tasks this would reduce the workload for academic and administrative staff within faculties.

Waterfield and West (2006) theorised that universal design could accommodate individual differences between learners without the need for routine categorisation and negative labelling. Flexibility in assessment could therefore also remove the need for disclosure of their disability for some students and protect their privacy.

Best-practice suggests that flexible assessment options should be offered for students as part of the unit of study assessment structure.

References
Attachment 4 – Report of the Students’ Representative Council

SRC Casework Service

Introduction
The Students’ Representative Council (SRC) makes this submission for consideration as part of the review into the current assessment regime at the University of Sydney. The SRC appreciates consideration of the issues raised with this submission, and in recent consultation with the Assessment Working Group. We seek to highlight some of the issues students face under the current regime, and recommend the review team take into account the concerns raised by this submission.

When a student utilises the SRC’s Casework Service, it is quite common to see multiple issues stemming from the presenting issue. The impact that the current assessment regime has on students can manifest in various ways and also heavily influence the student’s options and decisions. We see a very real impact of the current timing of assessments on students’ ability to manage deadlines and make informed decisions appropriately. This can impact multiple areas of the student experience including but not limited to discontinue deadlines, future academic integrity issues, and eligibility for financial assistance (e.g., Centrelink, scholarships, etc.).

Timing and volume
With the bulk of assessment due after the deadline for a Discontinue Not Fail (DC) grade, students cite time management and stress as the reason(s) they unintentionally or deliberately plagiarised. The majority of our academic honesty cases begin around week 10 with investigations extending beyond the examination period. During this time we experience an increased demand on our services, impacting on our other areas of work.

The timing of assessments tends to be unevenly skewed towards the second half of the teaching period, and reduces the use or effectiveness of formative learning and assessment. If 25-30% of a unit of study’s weighting had to be submitted before week 7, this would allow students to have access to quality feedback earlier in a course and have a realistic sense of how they are performing in a unit, with scope to build on skills, seek academic support and improve across semester.

We believe the University can afford to be more flexible in determining the nature and timing of adjustments for students. We understand that academics reasonably require enough time after an assessment has been submitted to provide sufficient feedback and accurately apply the marking rubric, but we concerned that students submitting an assessment with an extended deadline may have an excessive delay in feedback. Academics must be afforded sufficient portions of time to allow for high quality marking, even with extensions of submission deadlines, to provide students with the educative value reasonable for an assessment.

Many unit coordinators are not aware of the existence of, or their discretion to allow, simple extensions of up to two working days under the current policy. The SRC strongly supports flexibility for unit of study coordinators to give extensions on assessments, while still maintaining academic integrity. The SRC has received feedback from students that the simple extension and special consideration system seems opaque and in many circumstances adds to their distress.

Formative assessment, timing and feedback, OLEs
Formative assessment is necessary and while it can take time for academics to have the ability to return work to students, this timing can have a significant impact on students. We have seen subjects where a 60% assessment was due the day after the return of the previous 40% assessment. This practice does not allow students to receive feedback on their work in order to improve their learning. The SRC supports increased feedback to students through assessment tasks that align with the learning and teaching outcomes. We also acknowledge that many lecturers and tutors may have competing time demands and have limited support to deliver constructive feedback, which can result in a decline in quality education and teaching.

One hundred percent exams continue to be problematic as there is no room for cumulative feedback and learning across the semester. The benefit of only having one assessment task is then outweighed by the lack of prior feedback on progress in the unit of study. The SRC recommends a decrease in summative assessment, and acknowledges the need for a defined measure for determining credit points and a proportional study load. Many students have reported that first year mathematics subjects are
weighted with 3 credit points, but require the same workload as a 6 credit point subject. The SRC recommends that a benchmark is developed to determine the appropriate workload for 1 credit point, and that this model is applied to existing units as well as units being introduced through the new curriculum’s OLE’s.

**Group work**

Group work urgently needs to be reviewed as an assessment method, and only used for assessment purposes when it is educationally defensible. Too often we see group work used where it is a part of historical suite of assessment styles, or a time efficient measure, rather than holding genuine educative value. Group work is often treated as an assignment divided into small individual assignments, where there is no difference to providing students individual assessments. Clear and realistic objectives need to be developed, together with an understanding that group work needs to be used in a constructive way. We recommend that where group work is to be used for assessment, a template rubric developed to guide effective group work is utilised, unit of study coordinators present a demonstrated need, and the faculty grants approval.

The increased reliance and overuse of group work has also led to widespread stigmatising of certain demographics within the student population. Cultural differences, age gaps, language barriers, and real or perceived (dis)ability can lead to stress and tension amongst student groups, rather than fostering a sense of shared learning. While the intent of group work is often to learn collaborative skills and to work with others, the reality is this outcome is seldom achieved. The SRC has seen many group work assessments lead to bullying, harassment, and students leaving or failing the subject. The effectiveness of group work is further compromised by issues including distribution of work, limited or no class time dedicated to allowing groups to work together, group members with unavoidable commitments, e.g., employment, or caring for dependents, that make prioritising workload challenging. This can lead to academic honesty issues and lacks a truly collaborative approach.

**Administration processes and considerations**

As most disciplines schedule the bulk of assessment deadlines after the DC deadline, students may not have enough indicators to make an informed decision prior to the census date, to avoid academic and financial penalty, or the deadlines to discontinue without academic penalty. As with other special consideration processes, time spent seeking advice and gathering further documentation can have a compounding effect on subsequent deadlines throughout the semester. Many students may struggle to cope with their workload, but may feel the need to remain enrolled full time for the purposes of Centrelink payments; transport concessions; eligibility for student specific accommodation; and scholarships.

Key dates should be included in all unit of study outlines so students are aware of their options and can make informed decisions around managing their workload. A significant portion of the student population are not aware that Discontinue Fail (DF) and Discontinue not to Count as failure (DC) grades even exist. The fact that this information is difficult to access on the university website, and students are often not aware before issues reach crisis point, inhibits students from being proactive in managing study loads. Instead, problems often accumulate then exacerbate and these difficulties manifest in the form of academic integrity issues, fails and absent fails, damage to mental health, and in some cases attrition.

**International students managing study load**

We see a reluctance within some faculties to reduce international students’ study load to part time (below 18 credit points), even where ‘at risk’, or documented medical or compassionate circumstances exist, in compliance with the ESOS Act. This makes it more difficult for international students to manage their studies effectively.

**University’s approach to assessment**

An effective assessment regime will add to the quality of the degree, reinforce the integrity of the students’ candidature, and increase the value of the institution in the marketplace.
Attachment 5 – Report of the Office of Educational Integrity
Tristan Enright, Manager, Educational Integrity
DVC Education Portfolio

Background
A number of new or enhanced initiatives were introduced by the University of Sydney in 2016 to assure the integrity of its educational courses. These initiatives have served to enhance the University’s efforts to promote a strong culture of educational integrity, educate students to high ethical standards, and prevent, detect and report potential breaches of academic honesty.

In 2016, a total of 3,330 incidents involving 2,929 individual students were reported across the University for investigation to faculty Educational Integrity Coordinators and nominated academics. This represented a 220% increase on the average 1,500 incidents reported annually in each of the 6 preceding years. While this is a consequence of the increased use of similarity detection software, it is also a direct result of the more reliable, transparent and consistent reporting procedures made possible by the introduction of an online, University-wide reporting system. This system has enabled the University to capture detailed incident and demographic data to identify patterns in breaches of academic integrity more rapidly, accurately and extensively than was possible in the past.

Timing and volume of assessment
Figure A5.1 on the following page demonstrates overall patterns in incident reporting in 2016. As is evident, there was an initial spike in reporting in the middle third of semester 1, which was then eclipsed by the larger spike in reporting at or after the end of the teaching session. This overall pattern holds for semester 2, although a significantly higher number of incidents were reported in semester 1 following the final day of the session on 25 June 2016 than were reported at or after the end of semester 2.

The time series data presented in figure A5.1 also provides some indication of the timing and volume of assessment across the University in each semester insofar as it relates to peaks and troughs in reporting. As is indicated for each semester, the rate of incident reporting appears to rise around Week 9 of each semester (see 7 May for semester 1 and 1 October for semester 2). The rate of reporting continues to rise for a number of weeks, before dropping off slightly ahead of, and then increase again during, the formal examination period. As there were often problems with the timeliness of incident reporting in 2016 – with reporting typically following assessment deadlines by some 2 to 3 weeks – this indicates that the volume of assessment across the University appears to increase at about Week 6 or 7 in each semester and remains at a relatively high level until the end of the formal examination period.

Impact of the timing and volume of assessment on students
The 2,929 students reported for suspected plagiarism or academic dishonesty in 2016 represented approximately 5% of the University’s total coursework cohort. However, a much smaller proportion (~1.39%) were found to have engaged in either academic dishonesty or misconduct. Even so, there were a number of trends identified through the reporting data in 2016 that are relevant to the strategic review of assessment currently being undertaken by the Assessment Working Group.
Figure A5.1. Educational integrity incidents reported by week in 2016.
Students studying full time are more at risk

The reported incidents of suspected plagiarism or academic dishonesty overwhelmingly involved students undertaking full-time study. This trend continued through semester 2, such that 90% of all incidents reported involved students studying full-time.

One reason for this could be related to the volume of work students studying full-time complete relative to students enrolled part-time, which means the chances of being reported for suspected plagiarism or academic dishonesty are substantially higher. However, as demonstrated in the time series data presented in figure A6.1, the noticeable concentration of the incidents reported in each semester is more likely than not to be a result of a concentration of assessment deadlines across a high number of units.

This apparent concentration of assessment is corroborated by feedback the Office has received from faculty educational integrity teams. Many of the students they met with reported having difficulty managing their regular and assessment-related workloads, and expressed feelings of stress and anxiety as a result. The issues and experiences described by students shed some light on what may lead some to making regrettable choices or submitting work of a poorer standard than they may otherwise be able to produce. There is therefore a compelling case to be made for investigating ways to better manage the timing and volume of assessment at the unit of study, major and degree level.

International students are most at risk

Overall, international students were more likely than their domestic counterparts to be reported for suspected plagiarism or academic dishonesty, although this varied slightly among faculties. This trend also appears to have continued across the University throughout the second half of 2016, with the incidents involving international students constituting 54.1% of all reported incidents as compared to an overall enrolment ratio of 31.8%.

While international students were more likely to be reported overall, the relevant incidents overwhelmingly involved students in their first or second year of candidature (71% and 21%), which is somewhat higher than the relevant University-wide averages (61% and 23%). International students were also more likely to be enrolled full time than part time (94% and 6%), which is to be expected given that they are required to be engaged in a full course load under the Education Services for Overseas Students Act 2000. This means that the timing and volume of assessment may have contributed to the higher rate at which international students were reported.

In total, 327 domestic and 221 international students were found to have engaged in plagiarism, representing 0.08% of all domestic and 1.21% of all international coursework students, respectively. A further 288 domestic and 466 international students were also found to have engaged in academic dishonesty, representing 0.07% of all domestic and 2.56% of all international coursework students, respectively. Here, though, it is also worth noting that inappropriate cooperation and the reuse of work previously submitted for assessment are included in the University’s definition of academic dishonesty. While this is in itself concerning, it may also indicate that a culture of peer (albeit illegitimate) cooperation has developed within international cohorts as a strategic response to the challenges posed by studying in a foreign country as second language students.

In sum, the higher rate at which international students were reported indicates that more can be done to support them in their transition to the University and a foreign educational culture. Given that international students now constitute approximately a quarter to a third of the student population, there is also an argument to be made for modifying the current approach to assessment adopted across the University to ensure that international students are given adequate time and opportunities to become accustomed to (or more adequately included within) a new educational environment.
Executive summary
A total of 14 assessment-focussed fora were held across the University between June and September 2017, concluding with a roundtable discussion of assessment with student representatives to the Academic Board on Friday 8 September 2017. While the students present expressed broad support for the assessment-related initiatives of the University Strategy, they raised concerns about the intention to provide a statement of achievement on academic transcripts and whether assessment of the graduate qualities will add to the current volume of assessment. They also provided feedback on current approaches to assessment and the related issues. An overview of key issues and concerns expressed by the students is presented below for the working group’s reference.

Assessing the graduate qualities
The students present were supportive of the University’s intention to begin systematically assessing the graduate qualities as a means of enhancing teaching, learning and assessment across the institution. They were also supportive of the notion of being provided with a statement at graduation indicating their level of attainment of each of the graduate qualities. Despite broad support for these initiatives, a number of questions were raised about the proposed approach. These are summarised as follows.

1. Clarification was sought regarding whether the statement provided at graduation would reflect students’ achievement of the graduate qualities in each assessment and unit of study, or whether the statement would reflect an overall level of achievement. It was emphasised that the intention was to provide students with a description of their overall achievement, but that this description would be based on the highest level of achievement attained by each student.

2. Clarification was sought about who would be developing the descriptions to appear on the statement of achievement. Those present were provided with an overview of the work currently being undertaken to develop a suite of University-level rubrics that will define each of the graduate qualities in broad terms and describe different standards or levels of achievement along a continuum (or scale) of development. As achievement of the graduate qualities will necessarily be dependent on the context of the different fields of study in which students are engaged, these rubrics will be translated or interpreted within each field of study. While the University-level descriptions provide the necessary framework for this, the descriptions of the different levels of achievement for each of the graduate qualities will thus be written or developed by those with expertise in the relevant field or fields of study. It was also noted that these descriptions would not be presented in a manner similar to the bands used to report on achievement in the Higher School Certificate or in terms of the grades commonly used across the University (e.g., Pass, Credit, etc.). Instead, the descriptions will be positive statements about what each student can do individually.

3. Some concern was expressed about the manner in which the statement on the graduate qualities will be provided to students. In particular, concern was expressed about the statement being included on the transcript, with more support being expressed for the provision of a separate statement. Concern was also expressed about whether a generic statement on the standard attained by each graduate quality could adequately capture a student’s achievements, and whether it would be better for any such statement to be written by a trusted member of the academic staff. While the latter approach is not precluded by a provision of a statement on the graduate qualities, it was noted that such an approach is not scalable and would place potentially onerous demands on individual members of staff. It was emphasised that a statement on attainment will likely convey more about what students can do than the current practice of limiting statements of achievement solely through numerical marks and grades, although the statement is envisaged as complimentary to the latter. Despite this, there was still some apprehension about the nature of the statement of achievement, with an opt-in approach or student review of the statement prior to its finalisation being suggested.

4. Beyond reporting students’ achievement of the graduate qualities, a number of questions were asked about how the assessment of the graduate qualities would be undertaken in relation to current assessment in units of study. Questions were asked about whether assessment of the graduate qualities would replace existing unit of study assessment or whether it would be appropriate for assessment of the graduate qualities (and the related learning experiences) to be conducted as separate from units of study. It was emphasised that the graduate qualities should not be seen as separate from the learning outcomes expressed for units and fields of study, but
rather as integral to these. It was also emphasised that much unit of study assessment already includes assessment of the graduate qualities, even if only implicitly, so assessment of the graduate qualities does not necessarily represent a radical departure from existing assessment practices. However, some of the graduate qualities are relatively new (e.g., interdisciplinary effectiveness or influence), so academic staff across the University will need to give careful consideration to how the full suite of qualities can be meaningfully developed and assessed within each field of study. It was noted that this will likely be done within units of study, although there is some latitude to share development and assessment of the graduate qualities across units of study at the level of the relevant major, program or stream.

5. There was also some concern expressed about the potential for individual bias to affect assessment of any student’s achievement of the graduate qualities, particularly in the context of one-to-one teaching. This is an issue that will be given further consideration, although it was emphasised that the final statement on the graduate qualities will be developed on the basis of a composite picture of each student’s level of attainment, although the highest level of attainment will be that which is reported. As students will complete multiple units of study taught by multiple academic staff to complete their degrees, there is already an in-built mechanism for moderating any potential bias on the part of one member of staff incorporated within the proposed model.

General views on assessment

Broadly speaking, the students present did not express general dissatisfaction with current approaches to assessment, although there was a diversity of views expressed about what works in different contexts. The students present also recognised that there is unlikely to be an ideal future state or assessment profile that would apply to all students given the diversity of fields of study in which they are engaged. They demonstrated a particularly acute understanding of the context-dependent nature of assessment, which is necessarily related to the specific field of study. However, they also emphasised the importance of all assessment tasks being meaningful, or authentic, to the context and the learning outcomes being sought. Where any assessment appears as unrelated to the learning outcomes and context, and instead appears to be designed to meet other, potentially arbitrary criteria (e.g., word count equivalence), assessment was generally seen as contrary to the aims of a University education.

Specific issues with the way in which assessment is currently conducted are summarised below.

1. Mixed views were expressed the use of small continuous assessment, usually in the form of weekly tasks or quizzes of low value in the overall weighting of unit of study assessment. For those in the science-related disciplines, small continuous assessment was viewed as beneficial if it enables students to test their understanding of the material covered and to prepare for final exams of a substantially higher weighting. While other students indicated that small continuous assessment can be beneficial, they emphasised that the weight of such tasks was less important than the feedback they are intended to provide and their meaningfulness in relation to assisting students meet the specified learning outcomes. Where the relationship between small continuous assessment and the learning outcomes of units of study was not apparent or clear, there was little enthusiasm for this style of assessment. Some concern was also expressed regarding assumptions about the volume of work associated with low weighted assessment. Some students indicated that the low weighting does not always reflect the work required or the specific learning context in which the task has been set, particularly where students are required to engage with relevant bodies of literature and attend multiple lectures, tutorials and practical classes.

2. Mixed views were expressed about what was seen as an appropriate weight associated with individual items of assessment. There was some support expressed for summative assessment accorded high to very high weighting, usually final examinations, provided that this was appropriately and directly supported by continuous formative assessment. However, there was less support expressed for assessment tasks of high to very high weighting by students studying in non-scientific disciplines. Here, the suggestion was made that the maximum weight for any item of assessment should be capped at around 50% as anything higher potentially represents a significant barrier to progress should anything go wrong or any student not perform at their best level at the time. Higher weighted assessments were also linked to increasing use of special consideration, and were identified as problematic for students living with disability, many of whom do not report their circumstances, or seek assistance from, the University’s Disability Services.

3. There was some support for the idea of enabling students to engage with assessment requirements in a more flexible manner, such as moving away from an emphasis on strict deadlines to a
general period through which students would be encouraged to complete a specific task. However, it was noted that a more structured approach to assessment is beneficial in the first year of candidature in terms of facilitating students’ transition toward more independent modes of study and learning. It was also noted that a more flexible structure could be useful or beneficial in later years of candidature. Students were also asked about whether being able to negotiate the nature of the specific kinds of assessment they could undertake, or the weighting applied to assessment tasks, in units of study would be of interest or value, although there were no strong views expressed for or against this notion.

4. The current conduct of group-based assessment was also raised as an issue. An example of the effective facilitation and assessment of group work was described in relation to this. In this example, students were given time in class to work together on the project, with the product of the group work being afforded a lower weighting than items of assessment that individual students were required to complete, even where these were related to the group work. Support was expressed by other students for this approach. In particular, it was noted that the assumption that students are able, or should be required, to effectively coordinate their schedules outside of teaching contact hours was misplaced and often led to students delegating components of the overall piece of work and combining these immediately ahead of submission without time for adequate discussion and integration.
Attachment 7 – Theoretical foundations of a common approach to assessment

Prof Jim Tognolini, Director, Educational Measurement and Assessment Hub  
Sydney School of Education and Social Work, Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences

Introduction
The purpose of this paper is to outline some steps that should be taken to maximise the chances of producing comparable assessments across the University as it moves towards:

1. developing a University-wide approach (e.g. via shared rubrics) for assessment of graduate qualities to be used by staff and students with a focus on capstone and project units
2. developing aligned assessment plans at the level of course component to ensure effective placing of authentic assessment experiences, educational integrity and achievement of learning outcomes at the appropriate level
3. considering policy and course management options for integrative assessment across units of study and disciplines and in interdisciplinary units embedded in majors, projects and the Sydney Research Seminars
4. recommending optimal processes for effective assessment practice in collaborative and project learning settings, and
5. reviewing policy for streamlining and reducing summative assessment at the unit of study level, making increased use of low credit value and optional no-value formative assessment, and of learning analytics to provide feedback on learning to students and staff and on the learning process as a whole.

In introducing the reforms outlined above into an organisation as diverse as the University it is imperative that there be an overarching assessment theory that enables the various stakeholders (faculties and schools) to build their own assessments and measures while retaining the capacity to report against university wide standards.

Consequently, the first stage in the process involves articulating a theory of assessment predicated upon giving marks more common meaning by referencing them to standards and on a measurement model that will underpin the development of rubrics, interdisciplinary project assessment, the construction of “developmental curricula”, etc.

The basic elements of standards-referenced systems
A standards-referenced system is a model for giving meaning to achievement by referencing it to student learning or standards. This effectively shifts the focus in assessment from notions of rank ordering students (comparing their performance to each other) to those of monitoring growth or progress and measurement along a developmental continuum (Bennett, Tognolini and Pickering, 2012; Davidson and Tognolini, 2013; Tognolini and Stanley, 2007). It requires the articulation of what is meant by growth in a subject or construct. Rather than just a mark in an examination the system provides students with a description of the types of knowledge and skills that they have acquired in a subject at the end of a course.

When talking about assessment it is important to have a common understanding of some of the key terms: assessment, testing, evaluation and measurement. Inside and outside of education circles these terms are often used in overlapping and inconsistent ways (Tognolini and Stanley, 2007).

Assessment involves professional judgment about student performance with respect to a continuum of development and is based upon the image formed of the student by the collection of evidence.

Assessment is an inclusive term, which refers to all those processes used to collect information and make judgments about student achievement (Davidson and Tognolini, 2013; Tognolini and Stanley, 2007). Within each knowledge domain, teaching experience and subject expertise helps develop the image of achievement embodied in the standard. Testing is just one way of collecting information about students. As a formal process, it is a structured form of assessment collected according to specified procedures (question types, answer formats, etc.).

Evaluation is when performance data is summarised by assigning a grade, comment or a mark and a judgement is made regarding the value of the image (it is good or bad; it is worth an A; it is a high
distinction; etc.). Finally, measurement is the process of assigning a number to the performance to represent position with respect to the developmental continuum underlying the performance and indicates how much of the property (construct) being assessed is present (Davidson and Tognolini, 2013).

Standards-referenced systems generally comprise a curriculum (syllabus or framework) that describes through its statement of aims, objectives, learning outcomes and content, what is developed and to be understood in an area of learning (Bennett, Tognolini and Pickering, 2012). Teaching and learning is based on the curriculum. The most important sources of information for the design of assessments and judging attainment of curriculum standards are the learning outcomes and content.

Performance (achievement) standards are explicit statements of student performance that describe the levels of achievement along the developmental path within the learning area (Bennett, Tognolini and Pickering, 2012). The outcomes are developed to enable the students to achieve the performance standards and as such, show growth in relation to the construct being assessed. The performance of students as reflected through the assessment tasks (both formative and summative) is then referenced to these standards.

In the case of the University of Sydney, the graduate qualities (outcomes):
1. describe what characterises learning within the University and the generic curriculum offerings, and must be developed with these outcomes in mind, and
2. should be organised in a way that enables student achievement relative to the graduate qualities to be taught and measured.

When constructing assessment tasks, the marking rubrics (and options in the case of multiple choice items) should reflect the theory. In a standards-referenced system, tasks (items or questions) should be set in a way that provides evidence of where the students are located along the developmental continuum. If this is done then every response can be interpreted in terms of location (and hence ability, knowledge and skills) and should give an indication of what needs to be done to improve learning.

Some basic task development requirements would include making sure that:
• the items and tasks (e.g. tests, assignments, practical work, and projects) are aligned to the content standards (outcomes) articulated in the syllabus
• the items, and tasks that are developed enable students at different stages in their learning to demonstrate what they know and can do, and
• a range of different tasks is used to generate a reliable and valid estimate of the student’s location along the developmental continuum.

The contemporary interest in reporting against educational ‘benchmarks’ is based on standards referencing. Standards are defined in terms of more global descriptions of achievement and provide valuable information about the relative progress of student performance with respect to knowledge and skill development.

The developmental continuum
A developmental continuum attempts to capture in words what it means to make progress or to improve in an area of learning or domain of knowledge. The further to the right along a developmental continuum, the more knowledge and higher order levels of cognition and affectivity related to the construct are present (Bloom and Krathwohl, 1956).

Figure A7.1 below gives a schematic representation of a developmental continuum, where GQ1 to GQ6 represent the University of Sydney graduate qualities:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>GQ1 Depth of disciplinary expertise</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Broader skills</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(a) Critical thinking and problem solving</td>
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<tr>
<td>(b) Communication (oral and written)</td>
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<tr>
<td>(c) Information/digital literacy</td>
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<tr>
<td>(d) Inventiveness</td>
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Figure A7.1 below gives a schematic representation of a developmental continuum, where GQ1 to GQ6 represent the University of Sydney graduate qualities:
GQ3 Cultural competence
GQ4 Interdisciplinary effectiveness
GQ5 Integrated professional, ethical and professional identity
GQ6 Influence

Figure A7.1: Schematic representation of growth of the graduate qualities where increasing levels show increasing higher order of cognition and “affectivity.”

The levels (1, 2, 3, etc.) represent increasing quantities of the various graduate qualities, and are descriptions of what it is students must know, be able to do and “value” to achieve the level. The descriptions are cumulative in the sense that to achieve Level 3, students have Level 2 PLUS some MORE of the property, construct or graduate quality, etc. These descriptions are referred to as the performance standards (Bennett, Tognolini and Pickering, 2012). It is a requirement of the measurement theory that underpins this approach that the Levels are cumulative.

The number of levels can vary across Graduate Qualities and is determined by how many different categories (levels) can be explicitly described in a way that enables the assessors to be able to distinguish between levels of performance within the graduate quality. The aggregate of the performances across the Graduate Qualities comprises “university learning”.

One of the key challenges is to be able to write the performance standards clearly and meaningfully for the students, lecturers and community; each of whom will use them in different ways (Sadler, 2005).

The requirements of the performance standards
The performance standards for the Graduate Qualities should:
- describe performance expectations and proficiency levels in the context of a clear conceptual framework, and be built on sound models of student learning (developmental continuum) and affective domain development;
- be clear, detailed, and complete; reasonable in scope; and both rigorous and well-grounded in the knowledge and affective domains;
- be elaborated so that curriculum, teaching and assessment are all aligned; and
- facilitate the development of curriculum (and associated assessments) that include the Graduate Qualities within all programs across the university.
Figure A7.1 above is indicative of a university-level analytic marking rubric (Sadler, 2005) and the requirements of the performance standards are the same as those of marking rubrics used in assessment at the task level within a unit of study (Lasater, 2007).

Analytic marking rubrics

Analytic marking rubrics provide a guide to marking all types of performance based on how the students perform on the separate criteria (graduate qualities in this case) related to the task. In the case of the graduate qualities, the qualities themselves are the criteria for the analytic rubric.

The main advantage of analytic marking rubrics is that they convert performance into a score and in the case of a measurement model, a location on a scale. A second advantage is that they enable everyone (students, lecturers and community) to see what is required of them to achieve the various levels of performance on each of the criteria that comprise the task.

The main disadvantage is that they are more difficult to write because there are more criteria. A second disadvantage is that consistency among the different markers is generally quite low.

It must be stressed that in most, if not all programs, student tasks are already assessed using analytic or holistic rubrics. There is however some variation in the extent to which these rubrics are articulated and the extent to which they meet the developmental requirements of a measurement model that enables them to be effectively evaluated.

One of the first challenges, at the university level, is to develop in a consensus manner rubrics (standards) for each of the graduate qualities that meet the requirements outlined above (appendices A8.2 and A8.3 show the basic process to be used for building rubrics). These rubrics together will define the broader learning that characterises the University of Sydney curriculum. They will also be the basis for field of study level graduate quality rubrics that can be written to reflect the various disciplines within the program, but still enable the reliable reporting of performance against the University standards on each of the graduate qualities.

Within each program, capstone units and project units will also need to show how the content of the unit enables reporting of performance against the program and university wide rubrics.

Building the university level rubrics for the graduate qualities

In 2017, the intention is to start the process of building rubrics for the graduate qualities. While the process is relatively generic, establishing rubrics for each graduate quality may be tackled in a slightly different way.

For example, in the case of ‘critical thinking’ (where there has been a significant number of generic and discipline specific rubrics produced) the intention is to carry out a literature review to produce a range of possible rubrics at the university level; and, a similar review to generate examples of rubrics that meet the measurement quality criteria at several discipline-specific levels.

One of the key foci with this approach is to address the research issue associated with the extent to which it is possible to measure critical thinking within a discipline and still make an on-balanced judgement against the more generic critical thinking rubric for the purposes of reporting at a university level.

The intention is to develop, by the end of 2017, the critical thinking rubrics, conduct some initial work on equating the discipline-specific and generic rubrics, and design a strategy for validating the rubrics. In 2018, validation work on the rubrics will be carried out and then the critical thinking rubric will be trialled in 2019. The validation work may involve producing and trialling standardised

See also http://edglossary.org/rubric/.

Some useful examples of university level rubrics from Carnegie Mellon University can be found at https://www.cmu.edu/teaching/designateach/teach/rubrics.html.

See Appendix A8.1 as an example of a critical thinking rubric sourced from the University of Rhode Island.

See appendices A8.2 and A8.3 for indicative rubric models.
measures of critical thinking for validating the rubrics, building a scale and auditing the results across years.

A second example that uses a slightly different process is developing a rubric for ‘cultural competence.’ There are several groups currently building rubrics for cultural competence. The intention is to work with these groups to produce a combined rubric or set of rubrics that meet the needs of the various groups and at the same time meets the measurement requirements outlined above.

The plan is to develop the rubrics and design a strategy for validating them by the end of 2017. One of the focal points for this process is considering how, from a measurement perspective, various aspects (e.g. cultural competence associated with indigenous, SES, disability) of cultural competence can be brought together on a single scale. In 2018, further validation work will be conducted and the rubric trialed in 2019.

The third graduate quality for consideration in 2017 is ‘influence.’ The rubric to assess and measure influence is different to the other two. It requires a lot of conceptual work to define the construct and, once it is defined, it requires a significant amount of work to develop a measurement framework which takes the components of influence and defines growth or progression along the developmental scale. Once this is done, it requires a validation study to be carried out. This study would be carried out in 2018 and 2019.

Similar strategies are currently being developed for building all the graduate qualities at the university level.

**Measurement of student performance against rubrics**

Building the rubrics with the intention of measuring student performance is the first stage of the measurement process. However, once the rubrics are built and validated they must be used to measure student performance (Sadler, 2005; Webb, 2007).

Once again, this process can be carried out in different ways at different levels within the University. At the University level, it would be possible to add some statements related to those qualities that address “values” to the Course Experience Questionnaire and ask graduates to indicate the extent to which they agree or disagree with the statement. This would give some baseline data and would enable cross-temporal comparisons at a macro level. The self-report measure used here has the same limitations as most self-report measures and as such it would be just one piece of information that would be used to generate some evidence that the University is having an impact on the graduate quality being assessed. Cultural competence is one graduate quality that lends itself to such an assessment.

Scenarios have been used in higher education internationally to assess critical thinking. A similar assessment could be carried out at the university level on a sample of graduate students to provide some baseline data on performance on the graduate quality of critical thinking. Repetition of such an assessment with different samples across years would give some evidence as to the impact that the University is having on this graduate quality. The reliability and validity of such assessments would need to be determined. It is one approach in which the University can get an indication as to the impact of the efforts to incorporate the graduate qualities into the University programs.

In both these cases there would need to be standard setting exercises carried out to establish cut scores on the assessments that align to the performance standards of the University Graduate Quality rubrics and reporting would be done against the rubrics.

Perhaps the best way to ultimately measure performance of students against the University rubrics is to aggregate up the assessments against the discipline specific rubrics from the unit level to the program level and finally to the University level (see figure A7.2). This is the most direct method of assessing performance against the Graduate Qualities and is based on the informed professional judgement of the lecturers themselves.
Figure A7.2: Schematic representation of an articulated university framework.

It may take some time as apart from building the rubrics at the different levels, there is a need to provide professional development for the lecturers who will have to assess against the rubrics in a comparable and fair way. This will also involve supporting the lecturers in developing assessment tasks that enable the students to demonstrate performance on the rubrics across the length of the program.

It may be possible in the meantime to take a sample of Capstone Units and Project Units and support these in an intensive way to generate some measures that will give some baseline data for comparative purposes from 2019 onwards.

**Conclusion**

Many universities have identified graduate qualities in their strategic plans. Unlike the University of Sydney, few have committed to measuring performance against these qualities. The reality is that if there is no attempt to measure impact, then the chances of the graduate qualities being implanted into the learning environment of the students is doubtful.
In undertaking to measure student performance on these graduate qualities the University has committed itself to the bold task of not only making sure that the measures that are used to report performance against the graduate qualities are as valid and reliable as possible, but also that the graduate qualities themselves are incorporated into the curriculum and assessments of the units that are used to transition knowledge skills and behaviours to its students.

To be successful it requires the support of the academic staff. In addition, the process needs to be founded on a sound measurement model that will maximise the chances of students being assessed on qualities that are critical to success in the 21st century in a fair and consistent way. The same measurement principles can also be used to provide optimal processes for effective assessment practice in collaborative and project learning settings; and, streamline and reduce summative assessment at the unit of study level.

References
Appendix A7.1 – Example of a critical thinking rubric from the University of Rhode Island

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>1. Analysis and Evaluation</th>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Unclear on the goals of the analysis. Does not understand the purpose of the information provided. Limited consideration of sources to draw conclusions.</td>
<td>Analyses and assesses the situation with limited awareness of the goals of the analysis. Assumes information is valid. Considers only few perspectives drawn from the book, class discussion, and own experiences to draw conclusions.</td>
<td>Analyses and assesses the situation with awareness of the goals of the analysis. Seeks out information. Considers some diverse perspectives drawn from the book, class discussion, and own experiences to draw conclusions.</td>
<td>Analyses and assesses the situation with a clear awareness of what needs to be accomplished. Views information critically. Considers multiple diverse perspectives drawn from the book, class discussion, and own experiences to draw conclusions.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

| 2. Information | Relies on insufficient, irrelevant, or unreliable information. Fails to identify or hastily dismisses strong, relevant counter-arguments. Confuses information and inferences drawn from that information. | Gathers some credible information, but not enough; some information may be irrelevant. Omits significant information, including some strong counter-arguments. Sometimes confuses information and the inferences drawn from it. | Gathers sufficient credible, and relevant information. Includes some information from opposing views. Distinguishes between information and inferences drawn from it. | Gathers sufficient, credible, relevant information: observations, statements, logic, data, facts, questions, graphs, themes, assertions, descriptions, etc. Includes information that opposes as well as supports the argued position. Distinguishes between information and inferences drawn from that information. |

| 3. Problem/Opportunity Definition | Seems to be confused on the problem and fails to identify and summarize the problem/opportunity. Unsuccessful in justifying why the suggested technology is the ideal medium for solving the problem. | Problem/opportunity is identified but is not clear and summarization lacks focus. Partially successful in justifying why the suggested technology is the ideal medium for solving the problem. | Problem/opportunity is identified but is somewhat clear and summarization is basic. Mostly successful in justifying why the suggested technology is the ideal medium for solving the problem. | Clearly identifies and summarises the problem/opportunity. Explains why the suggested technology is the ideal medium for solving this problem. |

| 4. Objective Definition | Most business objectives do not address the problem/opportunity. | Develops business objectives that partially address the problem/opportunity. | Considers and evaluates ideas and incorporates them in developing business objectives that mostly address the problem/opportunity. | Considers and evaluates ideas and incorporates them in developing clear and measurable business objectives aligned with the problem/opportunity. |

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>5. Analyse problems using</strong></td>
<td>Does not identify most or any issues in a particular fact</td>
<td>Correctly identify and analyse some issues in a particular fact</td>
<td>Correctly identify and analyse many issues in a particular fact</td>
<td>Correctly analyse all or most issues in a particular fact situation using appropriate methodology and terminology.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>methodology and</strong></td>
<td>situation and fails to use appropriate methodology and</td>
<td>situation using appropriate methodology and terminology.</td>
<td>situation using appropriate methodology and terminology.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>terminology</strong></td>
<td>terminology.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>6. Implications,</strong></td>
<td>Ignores significant implications and</td>
<td>Has trouble identifying significant implications and</td>
<td>Identifies significant implications and</td>
<td>Identifies the most significant implications and consequences of the reasoning (whether positive and/or negative). Distinguishes probable from improbable implications.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Consequences</strong></td>
<td>consequences of reasoning.</td>
<td>consequences and distinguishes probable from improbable</td>
<td>consequences and distinguishes probable from improbable</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>7. Solution Design Choice</strong></td>
<td>Presented design lacks any original and innovative approaches.</td>
<td>Selects solution designs which demonstrate mostly traditional</td>
<td>Selects solution designs which demonstrates many original</td>
<td>Develops original and innovative approaches to solve the problem or capitalize on an opportunity aligning the design with the business objectives.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Few of the business objectives are addressed in the solution</td>
<td>solutions. Solution design addresses some of the business</td>
<td>and innovative concepts mixed with traditional solutions.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>design.</td>
<td>objectives</td>
<td>solution design addresses most of the business objectives.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Optional</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Purpose</strong></td>
<td>Does not clearly understand the purpose of the assignment</td>
<td>Is not completely clear about the purpose of the assignment</td>
<td>Demonstrates an understanding of the assignment's purpose</td>
<td>Demonstrates a clear understanding of the assignment's purpose</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Assumptions</strong></td>
<td>Fails to identify assumptions. Makes invalid assumptions.</td>
<td>Fails to identify assumptions, or fails to explain them, or the</td>
<td>Identifies assumptions. Makes valid Assumptions</td>
<td>Accurately identifies assumptions (things taken for granted). Makes assumptions that are consistent, reasonable, valid.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### Appendix A7.2 – Basic shell for building a critical thinking and problem solving rubric for the University of Sydney

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Components</th>
<th>Definitions</th>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Problematisation</td>
<td>Articulation of challenges involved in relation to ideas or topics investigated.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Inference</td>
<td>The processes to reach a conclusion on the basis of reasoning from evidence</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Analysis</td>
<td>The separating of any material or abstract ideas into its constituent elements. This process as a method of studying the nature of something or of determining its essential features and their relations.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Synthesis</td>
<td>The combining of the constituent elements of separate material or ideas into a single, unified, complex whole.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Evidence</td>
<td>Selecting and using information to support one’s views</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Evaluation</td>
<td>A systematic determination of the merit, worth and significance of the object or ideas being studied using criteria governed by a set of standards</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. Conclusion and Decision making</td>
<td>A judgment or decision reached by reasoning.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Appendix A7.3 – Basic shell for building a critical thinking and problem solving rubric for the University of Sydney with performance indicators for components

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Components</th>
<th>Definitions</th>
<th>Dimensions</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| **Problematisation** | Articulation of challenges involved in relation to ideas or topics investigated. | – Identifying issues.  
– Reflect on the nature of the issue.  
– Motivation to identify issues.  
– Questioning skills (reading and searching) for problematisation. |
| **Inference** | The processes to reach a conclusion on the basis of reasoning from evidence | – Use logic and association to link knowledge and understanding.  
– Reflect and self-monitoring on how knowledge and understanding can be linked.  
– Use personal and others’ experience to link knowledge and understanding.  
– Use visualization tools to analyse inference |
| **Analysis** | The separating of any material or abstract ideas into its constituent elements. A method of studying the nature of something or of determining its essential features and their relations. | – Systematically examine own and others’ assumptions, methodologies, and statements.  
– Reflect and self-monitoring on how own and others’ assumptions, methodologies, and statements are logically stated.  
– Attitudes towards examination of each component of argumentation or statements to make a sense.  
– Quantitative or/and qualitative skills. |
| **Synthesis** | The combining of the constituent elements of separate material or ideas into a single, unified, complex whole. | – Create and connect complex ideas using imagery, analogies and symbolism.  
– Reflect and self-monitoring on how well connect complex ideas.  
– Open-mindedness to seek alternative ideas and adapt better ones from other perspectives.  
– Use visualization tools to show how complex ideas are connected. |
| **Evidence** | Selecting and using information to support one’s views | – Give reasons to support own thinking or refute others’ statements.  
– Reflect and self-monitoring on balance rational and irrational components of a complex or ambiguous problems to evaluate evidence.  
– Enthusiasm toward scientific argumentation or inquiry, which are different from assertion.  
– Search, selection and source evaluation skills |
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Components</th>
<th>Definitions</th>
<th>Dimensions</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| Judging or Evaluation | A systematic determination of the merit, worth and significance of the object or ideas being studied using criteria governed by a set of standards | – Make judgments about the value of ideas or materials in terms of the effectiveness of ideas, products and performances and implement courses of action to achieve desired outcomes against criteria they have identified.  
– Consideration of social perspectives on feasibility, risk, cost and time  
– Skills to weigh one argument with another. |
| Conclusion or Decision| A judgment or decision reached by reasoning.                                  | – Use logical and abstract thinking to analyse and synthesise complex information to inform a course of action  
– Reflect and self-monitoring on the processes of selection of the best or feasible idea for a course of action.  
– Motivation to select the best ideas to give feasible solution to the issues or problems.  
– Leadership skills in critical thinking                                                                 |
Attachment 8 - Industry and community project unit outline

Overview
The aim of this unit is to allow undergraduate students to participate in an interdisciplinary group project, working with one of the University’s industry and community partners. Students will work in teams on a real-world problem provided by the partner, applying their disciplinary expertise and gaining valuable experience in working across disciplinary boundaries.

In working on authentic problems, students will encounter richly contextualized issues that will require input from people with a variety of disciplinary backgrounds and experiences. Developing solutions to complex problems requires students to work effectively in interdisciplinary groups.

The unit will provide the opportunity for students to integrate their developing knowledge and experience, and apply them in circumstances of the kind they can expect to encounter in professional life. Interdisciplinary group work will provide the opportunity to build the skills to work across disciplinary, cultural and/or professional boundaries.

Learning outcomes

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Graduate Qualities</th>
<th>Learning outcomes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Depth of disciplinary expertise</td>
<td>Students should be able to apply disciplinary knowledge and/or skills to real-world problems. These may occur in settings outside those for which their discipline has prepared them.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Broader skills (critical thinking and problem solving; communication (oral and written); information/digital literacy; inventiveness)</td>
<td>Students should be able to:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>a. Identify and respond to complexity and uncertainty in real-world problems;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>b. use and develop interpersonal communication skills, through participation in interdisciplinary group projects;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>c. develop written, oral and multi-media communication skills through the creation and presentation of reports for mixed audiences.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>d. Develop inventive and novel solutions to complex problems.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Cultural competence</td>
<td>Students should be able to:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>a. identify social, political and cultural factors in authentic problem settings; and</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>b. in developing solutions, take account of cultural and social difference that may impact the problem to hand; and</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>c. see broad societal implications of a problem and its solution.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Interdisciplinary effectiveness</td>
<td>Students should be able to:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>a. recognise the role of different forms of disciplinary or professional expertise in clients and in student groups</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>b. communicate across disciplinary or professional boundaries and</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>c. work productively in interdisciplinary or inter-professional teams.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

1 The first paragraph of the overview reflects the common language used in the unit of study outlines prepared in the Faculties of Arts and Social Sciences (INDP3000), Business (BUSS31100), and Science (SCPU3001). It also includes wording that describes the concept and goals of interdisciplinary learning, taking up the language from the DAWG discussion paper Project Units in Undergraduate Degrees.

5. **Integrated professional, ethical and personal identity**  
a. articulate and analyse dilemmas and difficult choices arising in real world settings  
b. share responsibility for quality, timeliness and thoroughness and  
c. see broad societal and ethical implications of a problem and its solution.

6. **Influence**  
*(To be effective in exercising professional and social responsibility and making a positive contribution to society.)*  
Students should be able to:  
a. provide leadership in discipline-relevant areas of a project.  
b. articulate professional and social values and their effect upon practical problem solving  
c. demonstrate a commitment to the role of a professional contributor to community and industry activities.

### Assessment

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Assessment</th>
<th>Type</th>
<th>Weighting</th>
<th>GQ/LO</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Group plan</td>
<td>Group</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>1*, 2, 4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Group presentation</td>
<td>Group</td>
<td>20%</td>
<td>2, 4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Evaluative/reflective task</td>
<td>Individual</td>
<td>20%</td>
<td>1, 3, 4*, 5, 6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Group project report</td>
<td>Group</td>
<td>50%</td>
<td>1*, 2, 4, 6*</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Graduate qualities that may or may not be specifically assessed in this item of work. Decision pending on completion of rubrics.

---

3 The assessment regime for the 2018 pilot envisages graded assessment for ICP Units. Looking forward to 2020, further discussion would be welcomed on the possibilities for non-graded assessment. This approach is widely thought to be well suited to experiential learning projects, where careful formative assessment frameworks are in place, although some concerns about this approach also persist.
# Attachment 2 – Interim definitions of the Graduate Qualities

## Depth of Disciplinary Expertise

**Definition**  
Deep disciplinary expertise is the ability to integrate and rigorously apply knowledge, understanding and skills of a recognised discipline defined by scholarly activity, as well as familiarity with evolving practice of the discipline.

**Components**  
- Understanding of conceptual space of recognised discipline  
- Integration and rigorous application of disciplinary knowledge  
- Awareness of the norms, culture and practice of the discipline  
- Capabilities to participate in the evolving practice in the discipline

## Critical Thinking and Problem Solving

**Definition**  
Critical thinking and problem solving are the questioning of ideas, evidence and assumptions in order to propose and evaluate hypotheses or alternative arguments before formulating a conclusion or a solution to an identified problem.

**Components**  
- Definition of problem or issue in context  
- Critical questioning of ideas, evidence and assumptions  
- Creation and evaluation of hypotheses or alternative arguments  
- Formulation of defensible conclusions and best possible solutions

## Communication (oral and written)

**Definition**  
Effective communication, in both oral and written form, is the clear exchange of meaning in a manner that is appropriate to audience and context.

**Components**  
- Clear conveyance of meanings in terms original to the student  
- Adjustment according to audience and context  
- Use of media and modes appropriate to each communication  
- Clarity of structure and organization of ideas

## Information and digital Literacy

**Definition**  
Information and digital literacy is the ability to locate, interpret, evaluate, manage, adapt, integrate, create and convey information using appropriate resources, tools and strategies.

**Components**  
- Location, interpretation and evaluation of data and information  
- Management of data and information  
- Adaptation, integration and conveyance of data and information  
- Creation of data and information  
- Effective use of digital resources, tools and strategies

## Inventiveness

**Definition**  
Inventiveness is generating novel ideas and solutions.

**Components**  
- Reimagines and reframes disparate ideas, observations or resources  
- Creates novel, ideas, solutions or actions

## Cultural Competence

**Definition**  
Cultural competence is the ability to engage ethically, respectfully and successfully in intercultural settings.
## Components

- Awareness of one’s own cultural values and worldview
- Actively seeking to understand norms and values of other cultures

### Interdisciplinary effectiveness

**Definition**

Interdisciplinary effectiveness is the integration and synthesis of multiple viewpoints and practices, working effectively across disciplinary boundaries.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Components</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Understanding of multiple viewpoints and practices</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Working effectively across discipline and professional boundaries</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Integrating and synthesising different ways of thinking</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Production of distinctive outcomes</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### An integrated professional, ethical and personal identity

**Definition**

An integrated professional, ethical and personal identity is understanding the interaction between one’s personal and professional selves in an ethical context.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Components</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Articulates a coherent ethical framework</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reflects on the self in personal and professional contexts</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Influence

**Definition**

Influence is engaging others in a process, idea or vision.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Components</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Responsibility for improvement through involvement and leadership</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Confidence, self-awareness and a willingness to learn from others</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Persuasiveness</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
## Attachment 3 – Membership of the graduate quality rubric development working parties

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Graduate quality</th>
<th>Working Party</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Depth of disciplinary expertise</td>
<td>Manjula Sharma (Lead)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Leo Davies</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Ross Anderson</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Tina Hinton</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Critical thinking and problem solving</td>
<td>Luke Russell (Lead)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Kym Sheehan</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Kane Race</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Lisa Conlon</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Siegbert Schmid</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Communication</td>
<td>Frances Di Lauro (Lead)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Bronwyn James</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Anthony Dracopolous</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Jennifer Green</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Jane Bleasel</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Digital literacy</td>
<td>Michelle Harrison (Lead)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Judy Kay</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Stephen Whelan</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Mark Freeman</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Inventiveness</td>
<td>Martin Tomitsch (Lead)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Lian Loke</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Andrew Lavery</td>
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<td>Nial Wheate</td>
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<td>Karen Lansdown</td>
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<tr>
<td>Cultural competence</td>
<td>Dimitria Groutsis (Lead)</td>
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<td>Belinda Chambers</td>
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<td>Salim Farrar</td>
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<td>Michelle Dickson</td>
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<td>Michael Tawa</td>
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<td>Sheelagh Daniels-Mayes</td>
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<td>Peter Ampt</td>
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<td>Interdisciplinary effectiveness</td>
<td>Chris Roberts (Lead)</td>
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<td>Ying Zhang</td>
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<td>Adrienne Keane</td>
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<td>David Smith</td>
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<td>Beth Rorhlach</td>
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<td>Kim Bell-Anderson</td>
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<td>Joanne Arciuli</td>
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<tr>
<td>Integrated identity</td>
<td>Rita Shackel (Lead)</td>
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<td>Angus Dawson</td>
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<td>Simon Weir</td>
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<td>Nathan Fenning</td>
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<td>Milena Simic</td>
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<tr>
<td>Influence</td>
<td>Jennifer Smith-Merry (Lead)</td>
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<td>Kevin Lowe</td>
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<td>Stephen Carter</td>
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<td>Erin Matthieu</td>
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<td>Elisa Bone</td>
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<td>Philip Poronnik</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
### Attachment 4 – Schedule of work for the graduate quality rubric development working parties

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Activity</th>
<th>Output</th>
<th>Attendees</th>
<th>Due</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Educational Measurement and Assessment Hub half-day workshop</td>
<td>• Top-level descriptors of performance commenced.</td>
<td>members of all working parties and AWG</td>
<td>1 Feb 2018</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Group meetings/correspondence</td>
<td>• Draft descriptors for ‘top’ and ‘bottom’ levels of performance for the relevant graduate quality rubric.</td>
<td>working party members</td>
<td>16 Feb 2018 (agenda deadline for AWG is 21 Feb)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Assessment Working Group meeting</td>
<td>• Feedback on draft descriptors for ‘top’ and ‘bottom’ levels of performance of the 9 rubrics.</td>
<td>Lead Developer from 9 working parties</td>
<td>28 Feb 2018</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Group meetings/correspondence</td>
<td>• Revised descriptors for ‘top’ and ‘bottom’ levels of performance.</td>
<td>working party members</td>
<td>16 Mar 2018 (agenda deadline for AWG is 21 Mar)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Assessment Working Group meeting</td>
<td>• Draft descriptors for remaining intermedia levels of performance.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Group meetings/correspondence</td>
<td>• Feedback on the full draft 9 rubrics.</td>
<td>Lead Developer from 9 working parties</td>
<td>28 Mar 2018</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Assessment Working Group meeting</td>
<td>• Revision of full draft rubrics completed.</td>
<td>working party members</td>
<td>13 Apr 2018 (agenda deadline for AWG is 19 Apr)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Assessment Working Group meeting</td>
<td>• Endorsement of 9 graduate quality rubrics.</td>
<td>Lead Developer from 9 working parties</td>
<td>26 Apr 2018</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### Attachment 5 – Timeline for faculties to meet obligations to the Academic Board to implement strategic initiatives relating to assessment.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Schedule of work for faculties in 2018</th>
<th>Deadline</th>
<th>Responsible</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Appoint coordinators for all undergraduate courses and curriculum components (course, stream, program, major)</td>
<td>Complete</td>
<td>Dean</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Review learning outcomes for all undergraduate degrees and course components (degree/stream/program/major) to ensure that the University Graduate Qualities are expressed in learning outcomes</td>
<td>April - June</td>
<td>Course and curriculum component coordinators</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Participate, as relevant, in Educational Innovation curriculum renewal workshops and forums Series I: Developing Leadership in undergraduate course and curriculum component learning design.</td>
<td>April - May</td>
<td>Course and curriculum component coordinators</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Faculty Board to approve learning outcomes for undergraduate course or curriculum component (degree/stream/program/major)</td>
<td>Faculty Board meeting</td>
<td>Faculty</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Collate approved learning outcomes for all undergraduate degrees and course components in the faculty for submission to the Education portfolio</td>
<td>June</td>
<td>Faculty</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Submit learning outcomes for all undergraduate degrees and course components in your faculty to the Education Strategy team in the Education Portfolio to submit to committees.</td>
<td>20 June</td>
<td>Faculty</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Committees of the Academic Board to provide feedback and endorsement for Learning Outcomes</td>
<td>10 – 17 July</td>
<td>Education portfolio</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Assessment Working Group to agree model for faculties to trial graduate quality rubrics in 2019</td>
<td>1 August</td>
<td>Academic Board/Education portfolio</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Revise learning outcomes (degree/stream/program/major) according to committee feedback (as required) and resubmit to the Education portfolio for submission to the Academic Board for approval before the agenda deadline.</td>
<td>17 – 20 July</td>
<td>Course and curriculum component coordinators</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Academic Board to approve revised Learning Outcomes</td>
<td>7 August</td>
<td>Education portfolio</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Academic Board to approve graduate quality rubrics for use by faculties in the development of assessment plans</td>
<td>7 August</td>
<td>Education portfolio</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Participate in Educational Innovation curriculum renewal workshops and forums, Series III</td>
<td>July – November</td>
<td>Course and curriculum component coordinators</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Assessment plans developed for all undergraduate degrees and relevant curriculum components and disciplinary interpretations, to ensure that the developmental expression of University Graduate Qualities is assessed.</td>
<td>7 August – December</td>
<td>Course and curriculum component coordinators</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interpret common University rubrics for measuring attainment of the graduate qualities to a disciplinary rubric, if necessary*, and faculties to submit these to Academic Board for approval by the final meeting of 2018.</td>
<td>7 August – 13 November</td>
<td>Faculties</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>*Development of disciplinary rubrics based on common University rubrics is optional but any disciplinary rubrics must be approved by the Academic Board prior to use.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Academic Board to approve disciplinary interpretations of common University rubrics</td>
<td>23 November (or prior meetings in 2018)</td>
<td>Faculties</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Academic Board to approve refreshed course management template</td>
<td>23 November</td>
<td>Education portfolio</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Faculty Board to approve assessment plans for all undergraduate degrees and relevant curriculum components and disciplinary interpretations (through course management and approval processes)</td>
<td>2019</td>
<td>Faculties</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Trial and verify common University rubrics to ensure they provide valid, reliable and consistent measurement of student attainment of the graduate qualities</td>
<td>2019</td>
<td>Faculties</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
## Educational Innovation Professional Development for Leadership in Curriculum Design

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Series</th>
<th>Structure</th>
<th>Audience</th>
<th>Repeats</th>
<th>Timeframe</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Topics</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Series I: Developing leadership in curriculum design</td>
<td>Workshop (2hrs)</td>
<td>Approx 200 undergraduate course and curriculum component coordinators</td>
<td>5 repeats of all in the series</td>
<td>Workshop 10 April, 12 April, 16 April, 18 April, 27 April, Review Forum 10 May, 14 May, 17 May, 22 May, 23 May</td>
<td>Series I is designed to support all coordinators of undergraduate courses and curriculum components in working on curriculum design in line with the University of Sydney 2016-2020 Strategic Plan. Workshop This workshop will assist you to be the leader in defining your discipline through reworking your major, program or course and providing leadership to support your unit coordinators in the review and design of their units. The workshop aims to support development of coherent curriculum design that embeds the newly defined graduate qualities in learning outcomes at all levels. Preparatory resources and material will be provided in advance.</td>
<td>Workshop 1. Your leadership role in curriculum planning and the definition and design of your discipline 2. Design principles 3. Understanding mapping and the mapping process 4. Preparing to take the learning back to your team 5. Helping unit coordinators engage with your curriculum</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Review Forum – developing leadership in curriculum design: (1 hr)</td>
<td>Attendance highly recommended</td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td>Review Forum – developing leadership in curriculum design 1. Peer and expert review of course learning outcomes 2. Share successful approaches 3. Identify strategies that work</td>
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</table>
### Review Forum – Developing leadership in curriculum design

This session is an opportunity for peer review and finalisation of outcomes with common language across related degrees. You will need to attend the ‘Developing Leadership in Curriculum Design’ workshop and bring your refined course learning outcomes.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Series</th>
<th>Structure</th>
<th>Audience</th>
<th>Repeats</th>
<th>Timeframe</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Topics</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Series II</td>
<td>Workshop (2 hrs)</td>
<td>All UoS Coordinators</td>
<td>Optional but highly recommended attendance</td>
<td>On demand</td>
<td>Workshops Throughout the year</td>
<td>Series II is designed to support all unit of study coordinators in leading curriculum design in line with the University of Sydney 2016-2020 Strategic Plan. <strong>Workshop</strong> 1. How to write effective learning outcomes for the new curriculum 2. Constructive alignment for graduate qualities 3. Applying outcomes based design principles</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Series III</td>
<td>Structure</td>
<td>Audience</td>
<td>Repeats</td>
<td>Timeframe</td>
<td>Description</td>
<td>Topics</td>
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<tr>
<td>Developing assessment plans</td>
<td>Workshop (1-2 hr)</td>
<td>Approx 200 undergraduate course and curriculum component coordinators</td>
<td>4-5 repeats of all in the series</td>
<td>Semester 2 Dates TBA</td>
<td>Series III is designed to support all course and component coordinators in developing assessment plans in line with the University of Sydney 2016-2020 Strategic Plan.</td>
<td>To come</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
|                    | Review Forum (1 hr)     | Attendance highly recommended                 |                       |                   | **Workshop**  
This workshop will assist you in developing an assessment plan to demonstrate where in the curriculum graduate qualities are developed and assessed. Mention will be made of the ways in which the new Sydney Curriculum system will help this task. |                 |
|                    |                         |                                               |                       |                   | **Review Forum**  
This session is an opportunity to share how you have gone since the workshop. You will need to attend the 'Developing |                 |
| Assessment Plans' workshop before attending this session and bring your refined assessment plan. |