



PROGRAM LEVEL LEARNING OUTCOMES FOR HONOURS AND POSTGRADUATE COURSEWORK PROGRAMS - GUIDELINE

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1. Introduction and Scope

Program level learning outcomes can guide the development of courses to align with the desired skills, knowledge and/or attributes across an entire program. These guidelines are designed to aid Faculties in designing the learning outcomes of Honours and postgraduate coursework degrees. They are intended to ensure that all programs have clearly stated learning outcomes which can then be used to inform course level curriculum design. These program level outcomes can be adapted to suit the specific curriculum context, to ensure that learning outcomes for Honours and postgraduate coursework programs are aligned with the relevant qualification type.

2. Definitions

Learning outcomes (sometimes called learning goals), at program level are expressed in relation to UNSW's graduate capabilities, including knowledge and skills acquired during the program of study.

3. Honours and postgraduate coursework program level learning outcomes

3.1 Principles

Principles guiding the development of UNSW Honours and postgraduate coursework program level learning outcomes are:

1. Each program should have a stated set of learning outcomes;
2. The learning outcomes should incorporate levels appropriate to the relevant AFQ qualification type;
3. Program learning outcomes should include UNSW graduate capabilities, expressed as appropriate to the discipline context;

4. Course level learning outcomes should be linked explicitly to program level outcomes;
5. Course assessments should be designed to ensure that students demonstrate developing expertise in the program level outcomes;
6. Program and course level learning outcomes should include the integration of theory, research and practice
7. Where research is included as a program outcome, course outcomes should include the development of research skills

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3.2 Learning outcomes table



Program Level	Learning Outcome 1	Learning Outcome 2	Learning Outcome 3	Learning Outcome 4	Learning Outcome 5
Bachelor Honours <i>Qualifies individuals who apply a body of knowledge in a specific context to undertake professional work and as a pathway for research and further learning.</i>	Specialised disciplinary knowledge and practices Graduates will have acquired coherent knowledge of the underlying principles and concepts of one or more disciplines. Students should be able to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Demonstrate an understanding of specialised knowledge within a systematic and coherent body of knowledge, including established theories relevant to the discipline, professional field or highly-skilled work context. 	Research-based learning Graduates will have developed an understanding of research-based learning and demonstrate analytical skills. Students should be able to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • plan and execute a piece of research or a professional project with some independence 	Cognitive skills and critical thinking Graduates will have developed critical thinking and problem solving skills. Students should be able to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • reflect critically on existing theoretical knowledge, ideas and practice within the relevant field to address the research topic 	Communication, adaptive and interactional skills Graduates will be able to communicate effectively to a range of audiences, and be capable of independent and collaborative enquiry and working effectively with others within broad parameters. Students should be able to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Communicate their research ideas in a variety of formats to diverse audiences. • Demonstrate personal autonomy and accountability in the acquisition or application of knowledge or skills. • Demonstrate the ability to apply, the principles of teamwork and collaboration. 	Global outlook Graduates will have an awareness of international issues within their field of study. Students should be able to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Demonstrate an understanding of international perspectives relevant to the discipline or professional field.
Graduate Certificate	Disciplinary knowledge and practices	Enquiry-based learning	Cognitive skills and critical thinking	Communication, adaptive and interactional skills	Global outlook

Program Level	Learning Outcome 1	Learning Outcome 2	Learning Outcome 3	Learning Outcome 4	Learning Outcome 5
<p><i>Qualifies individuals who apply a body of specialised knowledge and foundation discipline practices in a range of contexts to undertake professional/highly-skilled work and as a pathway for further learning. For nested or articulated programs the certificate may be focused more on foundational disciplinary knowledge and skills than the grad diploma. For graduate certificates that are stand alone programs, the focus may be on specialised knowledge in preparation for professional work.</i></p>	<p>Graduates will have acquired disciplinary knowledge and skills, and an ability to apply these in a range of professional or highly-skilled work contexts.</p> <p>Students should be able to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Demonstrate an understanding of specialised knowledge within a systematic and coherent body of knowledge, including established theories relevant to the discipline, professional field or highly-skilled work context • Apply foundation disciplinary principles and practices to new or existing professional or highly-skilled environments. 	<p>Graduates will have developed an understanding of enquiry-based learning and demonstrate analytical skills.</p> <p>Students should be able to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Apply enquiry-based learning and ways of thinking to professional and/or highly-skilled work contexts. 	<p>Graduates will have developed critical thinking and problem solving skills.</p> <p>Students should be able to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review, consolidate and synthesise complex ideas and concepts at an abstract and/or applied level • Critically evaluate contemporary debates and literatures in their field of study • Analyse problems or issues, articulate appropriate solutions and justify propositions and/or professional decisions. 	<p>Graduates will be able to communicate effectively to a range of audiences, and be capable of independent and collaborative enquiry and working effectively with others within broad parameters.</p> <p>Students should be able to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Communicate ideas in a variety of formats to diverse audiences • Demonstrate personal autonomy and accountability in the acquisition or application of knowledge or skills • Demonstrate the ability to apply, the principles of teamwork and collaboration. 	<p>Graduates will have an awareness of international issues within their field of study.</p> <p>Students should be able to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Demonstrate an understanding of international perspectives relevant to the discipline or professional field.
<p>Graduate Diploma</p> <p><i>Qualifies individuals</i></p>	<p>Disciplinary knowledge and practices</p>	<p>Enquiry-based learning</p>	<p>Cognitive skills and critical thinking</p>	<p>Communication, adaptive and interactional skills</p>	<p>Global outlook</p>

Program Level	Learning Outcome 1	Learning Outcome 2	Learning Outcome 3	Learning Outcome 4	Learning Outcome 5
<p><i>who apply a body of specialised knowledge and foundation discipline practices in a range of contexts to undertake professional/highly-skilled work and as a pathway for further learning. For nested or articulated programs the graduate diploma may build on the foundational disciplinary knowledge and skills gained in the grad certificate</i></p>	<p>Graduates will have acquired disciplinary knowledge and skills, and an ability to apply these in a range of professional or highly-skilled work contexts.</p> <p>Students should be able to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Demonstrate an understanding of specialised knowledge within a systematic and coherent body of knowledge, including established theories relevant to the discipline, professional field or highly-skilled work context • Apply disciplinary principles and practices to new or existing professional or highly-skilled environments. 	<p>Graduates will have developed an understanding of enquiry-based learning and demonstrate analytical skills.</p> <p>Students should be able to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Apply enquiry-based learning and ways of thinking to professional and/or highly-skilled work contexts. 	<p>Graduates will have developed critical thinking and problem solving skills.</p> <p>Students should be able to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review, consolidate and synthesise complex ideas and concepts at an abstract and/or applied level • Critically evaluate contemporary debates and literatures in their field of study • Analyse problems or issues, articulate appropriate solutions and justify propositions and/or professional decisions. 	<p>Graduates will be able to communicate effectively to a range of audiences, and be capable of independent and collaborative enquiry and working effectively with others within broad parameters.</p> <p>Students should be able to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Communicate ideas in a variety of formats to diverse audiences • Demonstrate personal autonomy and accountability in the acquisition or application of knowledge or skills • Demonstrate the ability to apply, the principles of teamwork and collaboration. 	<p>Graduates will have an awareness of international issues within their field of study.</p> <p>Students should be able to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Demonstrate an understanding of international perspectives relevant to the discipline or professional field.
<p>Masters by Coursework</p> <p><i>Qualifies individuals</i></p>	<p>Advanced disciplinary knowledge and practices</p>	<p>Enquiry-based learning</p> <p>Graduates will have</p>	<p>Cognitive skills and critical thinking</p>	<p>Communication, adaptive and interactional skills</p>	<p>Global outlook</p>

Program Level	Learning Outcome 1	Learning Outcome 2	Learning Outcome 3	Learning Outcome 4	Learning Outcome 5
<p><i>who apply an advanced body of knowledge in a range of contexts for professional practice or scholarship and as a pathway for further learning.</i></p>	<p>Graduates will have acquired advanced disciplinary knowledge and skills, and an ability to apply these in a range of contexts.</p> <p>Students should be able to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Demonstrate an advanced understanding of the disciplinary body of knowledge, including established theories and recent developments relevant to the discipline or professional field • Apply disciplinary principles and practices to new or complex environments. 	<p>developed an understanding of enquiry-based learning and demonstrate analytical skills.</p> <p>Students should be able to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Plan and execute a research-based or professional project, undertake a capstone experience or complete a piece of work that involves substantial scholarship • Apply enquiry-based learning and ways of thinking to new disciplinary and/or professional contexts. 	<p>Graduates will have developed advanced critical thinking and problem solving skills.</p> <p>Students should be able to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Investigate, generate, synthesise and evaluate complex ideas and concepts at an abstract and/or applied level • Critically evaluate contemporary debates and literatures in their field of study • Analyse problems or issues, articulate appropriate solutions and justify propositions and/or professional decisions. 	<p>Graduates will be able to communicate effectively to a range of audiences, and be capable of independent and collaborative enquiry and working effectively with others.</p> <p>Students should be able to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Communicate complex ideas in a variety of formats to diverse audiences • Demonstrate a high level of personal autonomy and accountability in the acquisition or application of knowledge or skills • Demonstrate and understanding of, and the ability to apply, the principles of teamwork and collaboration. 	<p>Graduates will have an awareness of international issues within their field of study.</p> <p>Students should be able to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Demonstrate an understanding of international perspectives relevant to the discipline or professional field.

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Program Level	Learning Outcome 1	Learning Outcome 2	Learning Outcome 3	Learning Outcome 4	Learning Outcome 5
<p>Masters Extended</p> <p><i>Qualifies individuals who apply an advanced body of knowledge in a range of contexts for professional or academic practice and as a pathway for further learning.</i></p>	<p>Advanced disciplinary knowledge and practices</p> <p>Graduates will have acquired extended advanced disciplinary knowledge and skills, and an ability to apply these in a range of contexts for professional practice.</p> <p>Students should be able to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Demonstrate an extended advanced understanding of the disciplinary body of knowledge, including established theories and recent developments relevant to the discipline and its professional field • Apply disciplinary principles and practices to new or complex environments. 	<p>Enquiry-based learning</p> <p>Graduates will have developed an understanding of enquiry-based learning and demonstrate analytical skills.</p> <p>Students should be able to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Plan and execute a research-based or professionally-focused project or undertake a capstone experience • Apply enquiry-based learning and ways of thinking to new disciplinary and/or professional contexts. 	<p>Cognitive skills and critical thinking</p> <p>Graduates will have developed advanced critical thinking and problem solving skills.</p> <p>Students should be able to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Demonstrate mastery of theoretical knowledge and to reflect critically on theory and professional practice • Investigate, generate and synthesise and evaluate complex ideas and concepts at an abstract and/or applied level • Apply established theories to different bodies of knowledge • Critically evaluate contemporary debates and literatures in their field of study • Analyse problems or issues, articulate appropriate solutions and justify propositions and/or professional decisions. 	<p>Communication, adaptive and interactional skills</p> <p>Graduates will be able to communicate effectively to a range of audiences, and be capable of independent and collaborative enquiry and working effectively with others.</p> <p>Students should be able to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Communicate complex ideas in a variety of formats to diverse audiences • Justify and interpret theoretical propositions, methodologies and conclusions and professional decisions to diverse audiences • Demonstrate a high level of personal autonomy and accountability in the acquisition or application of knowledge or skills. • Apply the principles of teamwork and collaboration. 	<p>Global outlook</p> <p>Graduates will have an awareness of international issues within their field of study.</p> <p>Students should be able to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Analyse the implications of international perspectives relevant to the discipline and its or professional field.



3.3 Exemplars

As an example of how one of the learning outcomes may be expressed in relation to a specific program:

Graduate capability

UNSW graduates should be able to demonstrate that they have developed cognitive skills and critical thinking capability.

At a **program level**, this capability may be expressed as:

A UNSW graduate integrates theoretical and practical knowledge to identify, analyse and develop processes to resolve discipline-related problems.

At a **course level**, a learning outcome may be expressed as:

On successful completion of the course students will be able to demonstrate critical thinking and problem solving skills through an analysis of key issues in a specific discipline-related context.

A specific **assessment task** could be designed as:

For this assessment task, read through the following list of case studies. Choose one and prepare a submission to a specific body arguing the case for or against the proposed action, making reference to the relevant theories/ concepts/ procedures.

For examples of how this has been done in the Business School, refer to:

<https://www.business.unsw.edu.au/students/student-experience/studying-at-university/program-learning-goals-and-outcomes>

Appendix A: History

Version	Authorised by	Approval Date	Effective Date	Sections modified
1.0	Vice-President and Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Academic)	11 October 2013	11 October 2013	This is a new guideline
1.1	Administrative update by Head of Governance	18 February 2016	29 February 2016	Administrative updates to senior team roles.

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