

STRUCTURE OF UNDERGRADUATE PROGRAMS – PROCEDURE

Policy Hierarchy link	Structure of Undergraduate Programs - Policy		
Responsible Officer	Deputy Vice-Chancellor Education & Vice-President		
Contact Officer	Pro-Vice-Chancellor (Education)		
Superseded Documents	The Structure of Undergraduate Programs Procedure version 1.1		
File Number	2015/37691		
Associated Documents	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - AB10 /109 Discussion Paper: Simplification of the UNSW Undergraduate Model - Academic Board, 2 November 2010, Item 5.7AB 11/ 19 Simplification of UNSW Undergraduate Model – Additional Guidelines - Academic Board, 3 May 2011, Item 6.2.2 - General Education objectives approved by Council in December 1994 and amended in 2005. - AB 11/69 General Education Requirements in Concurrent Degree Programs – Academic Board, 2 August 2011, Item 11.1 - Admission to Coursework Programs Procedure - UNSW Handbook 		
Version	Authorised by	Approval Date	Effective Date
1.2	Administrative update by the Head of Governance	18 May 2016	18 May 2016

1. Purpose and Scope

These procedures relate to the structure of UNSW undergraduate programs. They cover the development and approval of new degree and diploma programs, the revision of existing programs and the creation of new dual award programs.

All new programs and program revisions must conform to The Structure of Undergraduate Programs Policy.

2. Definitions

A glossary of relevant UNSW academic terminology is provided in Appendix C.

3. The design principles of UNSW undergraduate programs

[See Illustrations of the Undergraduate Program Model – Appendix B]

3.1 Single undergraduate degree programs

All single undergraduate degree programs consist of

- the discipline-specific core [the depth component]
- the breadth and maturity component which complements the disciplinary core and consists of electives [usually free electives] and the General Education requirement.

Each undergraduate program must specify, in Units of Credit [UOC], the disciplinary core and the breadth and maturity components.

Faculties have flexibility in determining the relative size of each component and may specify that the degree may only be undertaken concurrently with another program [examples include the Bachelor of Laws and Bachelor of Education programs which are not available as single standalone degrees] or specify that the degree may not be undertaken with other degree or diploma programs.

i. **Determining the UOC of the disciplinary core of the degree program**

The disciplinary core should be specified in increments of 24 UOC [the normal fulltime load in a standard teaching semester] with an absolute minimum of 96 UOC overall. The size of the disciplinary core specified by a Faculty must take into account the streams available in the program [majors, minors and associated disciplinary studies] and may be partly determined by professional accreditation requirements.

ii **Determining the UOC of the breadth and maturity component**

The breadth and maturity requirement must include the UNSW requirement of 12 UOC of General Education courses plus electives [normally free electives] needed to bring the absolute minimum length of all single degrees to 144 UOC.

3.1.1 Majors and minors

A **major** is a set of courses comprising a coherent specialisation within a discipline or sub-discipline. A **minor** is a coherent specialisation within a discipline or sub-discipline, smaller in size and scope than a major. *The following design principles are expressed in relation to majors but apply equally to minors.*

The design, structure and length of majors is determined by the home Faculty [ie the owner of the major], in consultation with other Faculties, as appropriate. The size of majors is not fixed and differences may exist between the lengths of majors within a single degree program. A named major, however, must have the same structure in all the programs in which it is available. The entire requirements of the major must be explicit [including all core courses and prescribed elective courses].

To ensure academic standards are maintained the following principles apply:

- i. Majors are to be designed and established by a home faculty, including their size, composition, structure and name.
- ii. All majors of the same name [whether offered externally or within the home faculty] are to have an identical structure, course requirements [number of UOC] and the same course composition [core and prescribed elective choices].
- iii. The structure of the major must be explicit and include all discipline requirements. For example, if the completion of a Marketing major in the BCom requires completion of a particular Quantitative Methods course, then this course

- will be part of the Marketing major, irrespective of the program in which it is offered.
- iv. The major may be separate from program core requirements. For example, all students enrolled in the BCom are required to complete a standard core of 'foundation/breadth courses' in Accounting, Economics and Quantitative Methods. This standard core is a separate requirement to that of the disciplinary major.
 - v. Offering a major in a program outside the home Faculty is permissible. This is known as an external major. This is dependent on agreement between the home Faculty and the other Faculty or Faculties. The Academic Board has the authority to approve the offer of external majors, through a program revision.
 - vi. External majors need not be the same as the major offered within the home Faculty. External majors that are not identical to the home Faculty major must be identified and named differently.
 - vii. The introduction of external majors of different length and structure should be viewed as an exception rather than the rule. An academic case needs to be clearly made for different external majors within the same discipline.
 - viii. All majors should be the subject of regular review. The timing of such review is governed by the program review cycle determined by the Academic Board.
 - ix. Completion of a second major within a single degree program may require completion of more than the minimum UOC [eg more than 144 UOC in a 3 year degree]. In cases where the second major is external to the students' home faculty it may be preferable for students to enrol in a dual award program if they meet the relevant entry requirements.

These requirements enable students to undertake multidisciplinary study through cross-faculty majors and minors in their program, while also ensuring that majors and minors have academic consistency.

3.1.2 General Education [GE] requirements

General Education is a UNSW requirement for all students enrolled in a single Bachelor degree program. Full details of the objectives and requirements can be found in the Online Handbook:

<http://www.handbook.unsw.edu.au/generaleducation/2016/generaleducation2.html#GeneralEducationRequirements>

As with all courses at UNSW, if there is significant overlap between the content of two or more courses delivered by the same or different faculties, exclusions may be applied.

- i. All single degree programs have a GE requirement of 12 UOC consisting of courses that must be taken from outside the home Faculty. [NB: This does not apply to students enrolled in programs offered by UNSW Canberra where special GE requirements are in place.] The GE requirement cannot be fulfilled through the core course requirement associated with the program or streams within the program.
- ii. All dual award programs that include the Bachelor of Education are deemed to have met the University's GE requirements.
- iii. All dual award programs that consist of two Bachelor degrees drawn from two Faculties are deemed to have met the University's GE requirements.
- iv. All dual award programs that consist of two Bachelor degrees drawn from one Faculty have a GE requirement of 12 UOC. In exceptional circumstances the

Academic Board may agree to reduce the size of the disciplinary core in one or both programs in order to accommodate GE within a standard semester timeframe. This cannot lead to a variation to the requirements of a student's major or minor.

- v. Any Faculty seeking a reduction in General Education requirements for either a single or a dual award program must obtain the approval of the Academic Board.
- vi. Faculties retain the authority to direct students against taking certain courses from outside the home Faculty as GE if it is the Faculties' view that these courses substantially overlap with courses in the primary single or dual award degree program.

3.1.3 Elective courses undertaken to meet breadth and maturity requirements

Other than the required 12 UOC of GE, Faculties may choose to prescribe some of the elective courses that fulfil the breadth and maturity component of the program. This is particularly relevant for programs designed to meet the accreditation requirements of an external body. No more than 12 UOC of electives [that fulfil the breadth and maturity requirement] can be prescribed by the faculty.

Faculties also retain the right to have no prescribed electives, so that all electives are 'free' and chosen by the student.

3.2 Undergraduate diploma programs

Undergraduate diploma programs require completion of 48 UOC and may be undertaken concurrently or sequentially with another single or dual award program. Enrolment in an undergraduate Diploma may have implications for international students in relation to the length of their student visa. This does not mean that undergraduate Diplomas cannot be offered to international students but it does require student advisors to be aware of the possible implications of such enrolment on visa requirements.

A maximum 12 UOC may be double counted towards both the Diploma and the other program [see Section 4 below].

3.3 Dual award undergraduate programs

- i. In principle any single undergraduate program may be undertaken concurrently with another. In practice this is not always possible because of academic admission requirements, timetable restrictions, disciplinary overlap between some programs and other restrictions. Single degree programs should be designed with regard to potentially supporting combinations with other programs in a dual award offering.
- ii. When two single award programs offered by different Faculties are available as a dual award program the requirement to complete the breadth and maturity component of both single programs is removed.
- iii. When two single degrees offered by the one Faculty are available as a dual award program the requirement to complete the 'breadth and maturity component of both single programs will be largely removed except for the requirement to undertake 12 UOC of General Education courses [refer also to 3.1.2 iv and vi].

- iv. In some cases the Academic Board may approve a full or partial exemption from General Education requirements for specific 'one faculty' dual award degree programs (see 3.1.2 v).
- v. Subject to the approval of the Academic Board, other dual award programs that include an undergraduate degree may be created, including combinations with: an undergraduate Diploma or an undergraduate Advanced Diploma; a Postgraduate Diploma; a Master by Coursework; a Master by Research.

3.4 Pass with Distinction

The award of Pass with Distinction provides formal recognition on the testamur and academic transcript of excellence in overall academic performance in undergraduate Pass degree programs where an award with Honours is not available:

- Award with Distinction is awarded when a weighted average mark (WAM) of at least 75 has been achieved in all courses completed since enrolment at UNSW which are credited to the relevant award;
- Courses that have been failed will be included in the calculation of WAM;
- Courses completed on exchange or cross-institutionally will not be included in the calculation of WAM;
- The recognition of other specified levels of academic performance on the testamur for Pass degree programs is not permitted, specifically any award based on levels other than Distinction;
- WAM is not rounded up or down for the purposes of awarding distinction;
- To be eligible a student must have completed at least 50% of the requirements of their award through UNSW. Students who undertake courses under exchange or other overseas study arrangements will not be disadvantaged in determination of eligibility;
- Eligible students are identified by the Program Authority when checking students for graduation. Students do not need to apply for this award;
- It is expected that all eligible programs will award Pass with Distinction except in special circumstances where a program authority has the approval of Academic Board for a particular program to opt out.

4. Administrative arrangements for programs

The creation of new programs and major revisions to existing programs both single and dual award, require endorsement by the Faculty Board (or relevant Faculty Committee) and approval by the Academic Board. Proposals are to be created and managed using AIMS the online Academic Information Management System

<https://aims.unsw.edu.au>

Guidance on how to use AIMS is available from Academic Administration [AIMS@unsw.edu.au] or online: <https://confluence.unsw.edu.au/display/PVCS/AIMS++User+Guide>

Refer to Section 5 [below] on the Submission of Academic Program Proposals

4.1 Creation of new dual award programs

Creation of a new dual award program, based on existing single award programs, requires the Deans of the relevant faculties [or a Dean in cases where the two programs are drawn from the one faculty] to seek approval from the Academic Board by way of Faculty Boards (or relevant Faculty Committees) and the University Academic Programs Committee. A dual award program proposal template is available in AIMS.

In exceptional circumstances, generally from December to February, approvals may be managed by the Out of Rounds Enrolment process. In this case the approval template only needs to be completed by the collaborating Deans, for approval by the Out of Rounds Enrolment Committee which comprises the Deputy Vice-Chancellor Education & Vice-President, President of the Academic Board, and Pro-Vice-Chancellor (Education).

In proposing a new dual award program, the proponent needs to address a range of matters. Timetabling and resource impacts need to be analysed and assessed as viable. This may require adjustments to course offerings, such as scheduling delivery in additional semesters and/or repeat lectures, to alleviate pressure on the timetable. The proposal should also make clear how a student will be able to complete the requirements for both awards in minimum time.

At the time of proposing the new dual award program the Dean/s will nominate the agreed program authority. [refer Appendix C – Glossary for a statement of the role and responsibilities of the program authority]

UNSW student system requirements and Commonwealth regulations require all dual award programs to be allocated a unique identifier code.

4.2 Admission and transfers – dual awards

Admission or internal transfer to a dual award program is via the same procedures as admission or internal transfer to a single award program. Details of admission procedures, including internal program transfer and credit transfer limits, are located at:

<https://www.gs.unsw.edu.au/policy/documents/admissiontocourseworkprocedure.pdf>

4.3 Admission to a second undergraduate single degree program after completion of a first degree

A student admitted to a single undergraduate degree program following completion of a first degree at UNSW, or equivalent completed elsewhere, will be required to complete the disciplinary core of the program – that is, credit is granted for the maturity and breadth requirement.

Students may also apply to receive additional credit for specific courses completed in the first degree.

Total credit cannot exceed the University's maximums. Refer to the [Recognition of Prior Learning \(Coursework Programs\) Procedure](#).

4.4 Reversion from dual award enrolment to enrolment in a single program

At any stage in a dual award program, a student may transfer to the single program version of either of the programs, unless the program specifically prohibits single

program enrolments. Students enrolled in a cross-career dual award program which combines undergraduate and postgraduate awards will normally only be permitted to transfer to the undergraduate single program. Students who revert to a single program will be subject to the specific single degree rules and depending on the number of UOC completed to date may not receive full credit for courses already completed..

4.5 Admission to Separate Year Honours – Dual Award Programs

For a student enrolled in a dual award program, admission to a separate year honours program in one discipline requires that:

- i. the student must have completed the disciplinary core of the program that is required for admission to the separate year honours program;
- ii. the conditions for entry into the specific honours program have been met and the student is accepted into the program;
- ii. a minimum total of at least 144 UOC overall must have been completed.

Students do not have to complete all dual award program requirements before undertaking Honours related to one of the component programs.

4.6 Graduation – dual awards

Students who satisfactorily complete a dual award program will receive two testamurs. Students may graduate in one of the component degree programs of a dual award program after the requirements of the component degree have been met [ie the student has completed the minimum UOC, the disciplinary core, and met requirements for majors and/or minors, as specified for that program] or jointly after completion of both component programs.

Students may not graduate with an undergraduate diploma or any postgraduate award component of a dual award program prior to completing the undergraduate degree.

4.7 Courses, course sharing and double counting

Courses completed by a student can, in principle, satisfy more than one academic requirement [*course sharing*]. Academic rules are used to define the constraints on course sharing. For example, a course that satisfies a major requirement cannot also satisfy another rule for the same major, or satisfy a free elective rule associated with the corresponding program. It may, however, satisfy a core course or prescribed elective program requirement. Course sharing between majors in the same program, or between majors and minors can be either allowed or disallowed, but shared courses only ever count to the UOC of a program once. This is a complex area, and advice must be sought from the Director, Student Services & Systems, as to the best way to achieve the intended academic outcomes.

Unlike constraints within a program, course sharing between dual award programs is generally unrestricted. In addition, up to defined limits shared courses count towards the UOC requirement for both programs. Such *double counting* is subject to an absolute maximum of 24UOC, provided the sum of the disciplinary core UOC of the two programs is at least 240UOC. Academic Board may approve an exception to this limit in exceptional circumstances on the basis of a compelling justification from the program authority. For undergraduate diplomas the limit is 12UOC, since the discount is reckoned against the full undergraduate program. In all other cases double counting is not permitted.

Once the double-counting limit is reached in a dual award program, courses may still be shared but the course UOC is usually counted towards the award component with the larger UOC still to be completed. As a consequence, additional electives will need to be completed to meet the minimum UOC requirement for the other award.

5. Submission of Academic Proposals

New undergraduate programs and major program revisions are approved by the Academic Board on the recommendation of the Faculty Board (or relevant Faculty Committee) and the University Academic Programs Committee. Program revisions should address changes to the whole program at the same time – revisions to each stage of a program should not be put forward on separate occasions. Proposals for new programs must include complete proposals for all new courses [including core and prescribed electives].

The approval process can take several months and this should be taken into account when preparing a submission. Proposals usually require Academic Board approval by mid-year of the year prior to introduction of the new or revised program to meet planning and other administrative deadlines.

6. Review & History

The Structure of Undergraduate Programs – Procedure will be reviewed by Academic Board every two years.

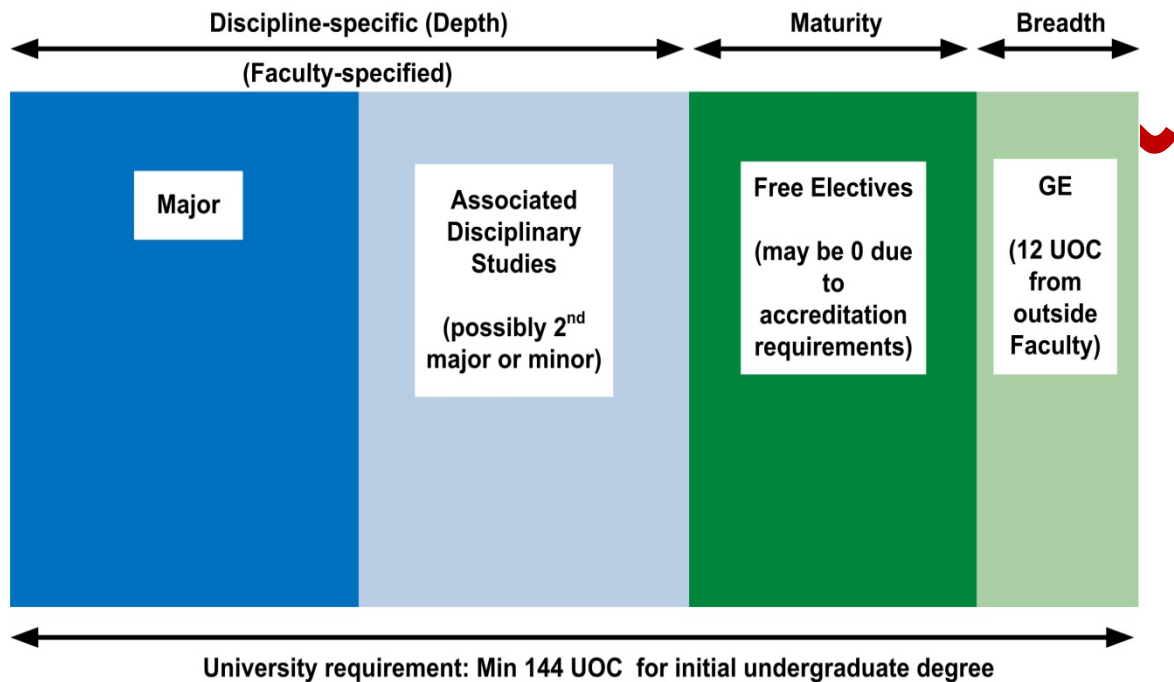
Appendix A: History

Version	Authorised by	Approval Date	Effective Date	Sections modified
1.0	Acting Vice-President and Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Academic)	23 July 2012	23 July 2012	New procedure
1.1	Vice-President and Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Academic)	15 January 2016	1 February 2016	Addition of Section 3.4. Revisions to Sections 4.5 and 4.7
1.2	Administrative update by the Head of Governance	18 May 2016	18 May 2016	Administrative update to senior roles; Section 3.4 typographical error; Section 4, 4.1 and 5 - update.name of committees.

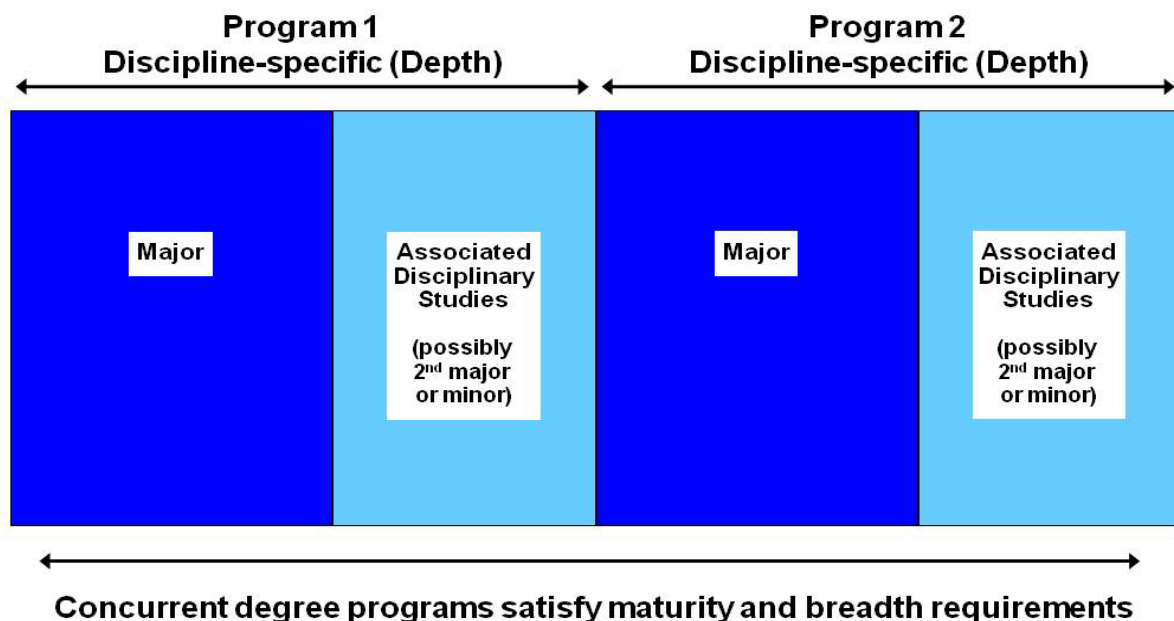
Appendix B:

The Undergraduate Degree Program Model – Illustrations

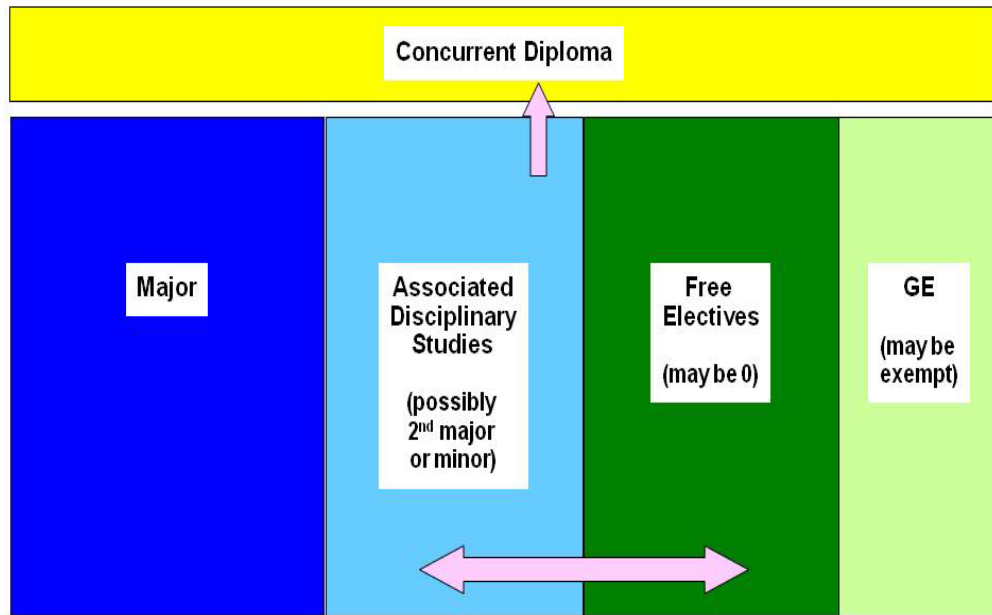
Initial single degree program



Concurrent degrees



Concurrent Diploma



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Appendix C: Glossary of relevant UNSW Academic Terminology

The complete UNSW glossary can be found at:

<http://www.handbook.unsw.edu.au/general/2016/SSAPO/glossary1.html#Award>

Award	A degree, diploma or certificate obtained on graduation from a program.
Breadth / Breadth and Maturity learning outcomes	An institutional requirement of an undergraduate academic program. In single degree programs the breadth and maturity learning outcomes are generally attained through the general education and free elective components which complement discipline specific, or depth, learning requirements. Dual award degree program students meet breadth and maturity outcomes for one award through completion of their concurrent award.
Core course	A compulsory course within a program that must be satisfactorily completed to meet the requirements of the program. Foundation and Capstone courses are examples of core courses.
Course	<p>Otherwise known as a subject, a course is an individual study unit offered within a program with a specific unit of credit weighting (for example, MATH1131 - Mathematics 1A , 6UOC). Components of a course may include lectures, tutorials, laboratory classes, performance, studios and field trips. Students enrol in many courses to make up their program of study, some of which may be core courses (compulsory) or elective courses (where students are given a choice of courses).</p> <p>UNSW courses codes are made up of a four-character alphabetic prefix, identifying the School or academic unit administering the course, and a four-digit numeric suffix e.g. ECON1101 - Microeconomics 1. In many cases the first digit of the four-digit numeric suffix indicates the level of the course e.g. ECON1101 is a Level 1 course whereas MARK3054 is a Level 3 course, usually undertaken in stage 3.</p>
Course sharing	<p>In principle a course may satisfy more than one of the rules associated with a single program, including its related streams. If a course is shared between rules it can count only once toward overall UOC requirements (in contrast to double-counting between dual award programs). Not all rules may share courses; for example, a required course in a major cannot also fulfil free elective requirements for the program.</p> <p><i>See also Double Counting.</i></p>
Depth	<p>Discipline-specific learning, or depth, requirements are generally embedded in core courses, majors, associated disciplinary or contextual studies, and other essential learning experiences such as industrial training. These requirements complement breadth and maturity learning requirements.</p> <p><i>See also Breadth, Disciplinary Core</i></p>
Disciplinary core / discipline-specific	Specified courses in a specialised area of study that must be satisfactorily completed to meet the depth requirements of the program.

core	
Double counting	<p>A course that forms part of the disciplinary core requirements for two separate programs and can be counted towards both sets of rules and contribute fully to the overall UOC requirements of both programs. There is a limit to the number of UOC that may be double-counted, which is either zero (if both programs have 96 UOC of disciplinary core), or 24 UOC (otherwise). Once the double-counting limit is reached further courses from the elective part of the disciplinary core of either program will need to be undertaken to make up the minimum UOC required to complete the dual award.</p> <p><i>See also Course Sharing.</i></p>
Dual Awards	<p>The concurrent or sequential study of two award programs as one integrated and coherent program leading to two awards and two testamurs (one for each program). Dual Award programs can be within a career or cross-career. Examples include BA LLB, BSc Dip Languages; BE ME; BE MBiomedE.</p>
Elective course	<p>Coursework degree programs have three main categories of elective: General Education elective courses that are taken to satisfy the University's General Education requirement; Free Electives are courses that can be selected from a large range of offerings, often any non-General Education course, but possibly limited to courses offered by specified faculties, or in specified subject areas and; Prescribed Elective courses where the program specifies that a student must select electives from a specified list of courses.</p> <p>General Education and Free electives in part satisfy the breadth requirement of programs. Prescribed electives typically form part of, or complement the depth requirement.</p> <p>Prescribed electives are typically specified as lists of courses that students select from to complete the requirement. All categories of elective may be specified in terms of general rules (eg 24UOC; 12UOC at Level 2) rather than individual courses.</p> <p>Note that any individual course may be specified as a core course in one program and as an elective in another.</p> <p><i>See Core Course, Course, Program.</i></p>
General Education (course requirements)	<p>Undergraduate students in single degree programs are required to complete some courses outside their study area from any Faculty other than the one in which their program is based. This contributes to the breadth of learning requirement in programs. The Handbook indicates which courses are available as General Education. In some cases, availability of some related courses outside of the home Faculty is restricted.</p> <p><i>See also Breadth</i></p>
Honours	<p>The highest level of learning in an undergraduate program within the Australian tertiary education system. In some programs it is an optional fourth year of intensive study after three years of basic undergraduate study and often has a research training focus. In some programs Honours is awarded on the basis of a student's entire program of study rather than on the results of a separate</p>

	Honours year. Honours is awarded at: Class 1, Division 2 Class 1, Division 2 Class 2, and in some programs at Class 3.
Level (courses)	Undergraduate courses are usually classified by Level e.g. Level 1 courses are usually undertaken in the first stage of a program, Level 2 in the second stage etc. In many cases the first digit of the four-digit numeric suffix of the course code indicates the level of the course e.g. ECON1101 is a Level 1 course whereas MARK3054 is a Level 3 course, usually undertaken in stage 3.
Major	A specified stream or sequence of study in an area of discipline or sub-discipline based specialisation within a program. Majors require students to take an approved set of courses at different levels (see <i>Core</i> and <i>Elective</i>) and units of credit. The term is generally synonymous with “plan” or “specialisation”. More than one major may be completed in a program. <i>See Minor, Plan Stream</i>
Minor	A specified sequence of study within a discipline or sub-discipline, smaller in size and scope than a major. <i>See Major, Plan, Stream</i>
Plan	Refers to the identification of a sequence of study (Stream) within a program in University’s student administration system.. Plans include majors, minors, and some postgraduate coursework ‘specialisations’. Plans are identified by a five-digit alphabetical prefix and a five-digit numeric suffix eg SENG A 13648 refers to the full-time Software Engineering plan <i>See Major, Minor, Stream</i>
Pre-requisite	A requirement which must be completed before enrolling in a course or the next stage within a program, and typically relating to specific courses.
Program	A structured program of study leading to the award of a degree, diploma or certificate. Programs are structured as sequenced combinations of core and elective courses. Many programs also require students to major in one or more areas of specialisation. <i>See Major, Minor</i>
Program authority	The program authority is responsible for the planning, resourcing and delivery of a program, including teaching resources and arrangements, and administrative arrangements including publication of program information, marketing and recruitment, teaching delivery, including technology enabled learning and teaching, assessment and quality. The program authority is responsible for all matters that affect students in an award program – including admission, enrolment, progression, and graduation. For dual award programs one of the contributing Faculties is identified as the Program Authority (when the program is proposed). For these programs the Program Authority has responsibility for matters such as enrolment and leave from the program, although both Faculties are separately responsible for certifying that students have satisfied requirements for their particular degree.
Stream	A sequence of study. This is the umbrella term for majors, minors and postgraduate coursework program specialisations.

	<i>See Major, Minor, Plan</i>
Unit of Credit (UOC)	A measurement of the workload associated with a course. The majority of courses are 6 UOC. A unit of credit corresponds to a normative 25 hours of work including classes, assignments, reading and preparation for exams. A full-time load is 24 UOC in the two main teaching semesters. Coursework programs require the successful completion of a specified number of UOC and fees are charged on the basis of UOC enrolment.

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