

In 2010, standard course structures for undergraduate degrees will be introduced at the University of Tasmania. These will apply to associate, single and combined undergraduate degrees with one degree specification for each of these degree types.

This guide is intended as a useful reference for schools, institutes and faculties in preparing courses for submission to University Teaching and Learning Committee (UT&LC) in 2009 and should be used in conjunction with the UT&LC Quality Assurance manual and templates for course proposals.

1. COURSE STRUCTURE MODELS

In choosing a structure, the definitions below may be used as a guide. The approach to the course structures is to use the major(s), minor and degree electives as the modules into which the discipline units will be placed.

1.1 General degree model

Broadly, the General degree model would be used for a course of study with unit choices available from a range of study areas within a faculty, such as the Bachelor of Arts or the Bachelor of Science, where students would normally choose introductory pairs of units in different disciplines, which then form the basis for the major, minor, and degree electives. The student electives may be chosen from the faculty schedule or from discipline areas outside the faculty.

A General degree model may also be used as a model for degrees with a narrower focus but which allow students the choice to study up to 8 units outside the degree, including a full major. The degree may in this case be restricted to a smaller number of discipline choices within the major, minor and degree elective components.

1.2 Specialist degree model

A Specialist degree is a course of study with a strong focus of unit options in one discipline area, such as the Bachelor of Education, which allows fewer student electives as part of the degree. The degree may provide training for entry into particular employment areas or towards recognition or accreditation by professional bodies. As such, it is likely that the majority of the degrees in this model will be prescribed, with the exception of the student electives.

- Specialist model 1 allows for 2 standard majors in one or more related areas.

- Specialist model 2, with one reversed major (ie 4 introductory units, 2 intermediate and 2 advanced), caters for the common core first year approach, which may suit some courses.
- Specialist model 3 follows the model of Specialist model 1 but restricts the number of student electives to 2 units only, and includes 2 additional degree electives to cater for a common core introductory set of units.

2. MODULES WITHIN THE STRUCTURES

Each structure consists of 'modules' or groups of units and these modules fit within a standard 3 year or 24 unit degree, based on a standard unit weighting of 12.5%. Degrees of 4 or 5 years duration would have 8 units at advanced level each year in the fourth and fifth years of the course.

Model	Standard major	Reversed major	Minor	Degree elective units	Student elective units
General	1	-	1	4	8
Specialist 1	2	-	1	-	4
Specialist 2	1	1	1	-	4
Specialist 3	2	-	1	2	2

2.1 Majors and minors

- A major consists of 8 units: 2 introductory, 2 intermediate and 4 at advanced level and a minor consists of 4 units: 2 at introductory and 2 at intermediate level.
- Majors and minors would normally be in a single discipline, but may be multi-disciplinary if required, with a number of units focused on a theme area.
- Majors and minors may have core required units and/or a choice unit options within them. These would normally be offered from within the relevant school or discipline offering the major, since choice outside the area may be chosen through student electives.

- Using minors as the basis for a major can be used to attract students into a major and this minimises duplication and maximises the efficiency in the course design in regard to the numbers of units on offer and teaching loads.
- Minors may also be complementary to the discipline majors in the degree, ie they may be centred on a different but complementary area/discipline or may add to the discipline in the major, or a minor may be prescribed to be taken in conjunction with a major if required.
- A reversed major, consisting of 4 introductory, 2 intermediate and 2 advanced level units, is used only in Specialist model 2 to allow a common core first year set of units to be prescribed. A reversed major, for example, could be used as a core major which all students in the degree would be required to complete and the standard major would be used as a specialist major.
- It is anticipated that with the introduction of a new student information management system, the names of the majors are intended to appear on students' academic transcripts and testamurs. (This would not normally apply to 'core' majors for a specialist degree.)

Note: the unit levels in the majors and minors are standard, ie there must be 2 introductory, 2 intermediate and 4 advanced level units in a standard major or 4 introductory, 2 intermediate and 2 advanced level units in a reversed major. A minor consists of 2 introductory and 2 intermediate level units.

Students may have the choice of taking units at different levels, subject to the degree requirements below, but the choice of unit levels is within the degree and student elective units.

2.2 Degree Electives

Degree electives appear in the General and Specialist 3 model and are units chosen from a schedule offered by the relevant Faculty. There may be a wide choice of disciplines and units, such as in the Bachelor of Arts, or a more prescribed set of units.

- Degree electives may be taken at any level, subject to the number of units at the level which must be studied within the degree and the number of units available, but Faculties may also specify the level of the degree electives if required. Students need between 8-10 units at introductory level, so a student would normally be required to study an introductory pair of units as 2 degree electives.
- If a common core first year set of units is required in a General degree, then all 4 degree electives could be prescribed for study at introductory level, retaining the 8 student electives in the remaining years of study.

- The degree electives which are taken at intermediate and advanced level may be in the same discipline from the introductory pair, or they could be units which add to the discipline in the major or the minor.

2.3 Student Electives

- Student electives may be chosen from any available subject at any level for which the student is eligible to study, from any faculty, subject to degree unit level requirements, prerequisites and unit quotas.
- Students will not need to seek course approval to study student electives outside the owning faculty of the degree.
- Student electives may form a second major, if they are comprised of the units in a major schedule
- Specimen courses may suggest or recommend units, but it must be clearly noted with these sample courses that these are suggestions or recommendations which are not mandatory.
- It is anticipated that in the case of students undertaking courses as part of their employment, and where the employer has released them for this study, such as the current Associate Degree in Paramedic Studies, that employers may specify units to be taken as student electives within these courses.

3. REQUIRED UNIT LEVELS

ASSOCIATE DEGREES¹

Model	Unit numbers and levels		
	Foundation	Introductory	Intermediate
General	4	8	4
Specialist	-	8-10	6-8

SINGLE DEGREES

Course duration		Unit numbers and levels		
Units required	Notional degree length	Introductory	Intermediate	Advanced
24	3 year	8-10	6-10	6-10
28	3.5 year	8-10	6-10	10-14
32	4 year	8-10	6-10	14-18
40	5 year	8-10	6-10	18-22

¹ The Associate degree specification is currently under review (as at November 2008) and the information here is a guide to the Associate degree structure.

COMBINED DEGREES

Course duration			Unit numbers and levels in each component degree					
Total units	Notional degree length	Course type combinations	Introductory		Intermediate		Advanced	
32	4 years	General/General	4-6	4-6	4-8	4-8	4-8	4-8
		General/Specialist	4-6	4-6	4-8	4	4-8	6-8
		Specialist/Specialist	4-6	4-6	4	4	6-8	6-8
40	5 years	General/Specialist	4-6	4-6	4-8	4	4-8	12-16
		Specialist/Specialist	4-6	4-6	4	4	6-8	12-16

The unit numbers and levels in the combined degrees take into account the variations between the different models. A simple rule of thumb is that each half of a combined degree is based on the component single degrees, but without the student electives in that degree for General degrees and without the electives and the minor in Specialist degrees.

4. OTHER

4.1 Prerequisites and second majors

In some instances a pair of introductory units will comprise the prerequisites for one or more major. In these cases if the student wishes to complete a second major, they may count the 2 introductory units in their degree electives as counting towards the introductory unit requirements in the second major. They then complete 2 units at intermediate and 4 units at advanced level to comprise the second major.

4.2 Unit levels and nomenclature

Unit level nomenclature has been changed to reflect the fact that subjects of all levels may be studied in different years of a degree and to recognise and promote the learning outcomes and requirements of units at introductory, intermediate and advanced levels. As part of the course structure review process, schools, faculties and institutes will have to make a

determination on the level of any 200/300 level units and allocate units to either intermediate or advanced level.

QUICK POINTERS

- New course codes will be required for all degrees in order to identify the students studying under the new degree rules
- Submission of course proposals to UT&LC:
 - in many cases, revised courses will only need to be submitted as 'significant amendments' to a course;
 - where the course information does not change, it may be appropriate to note that there is 'no change to existing course', for example, in the course objectives or the course length;
 - The **maximum course length** should adhere to the maximum course length calculation of twice the course length plus 1 year, eg a 3 year degree should have a maximum course length of 7 years.
 - Course schedules: unit levels within majors and minors are fixed:
 - Major: 2 introductory, 2 intermediate , 4 advanced
 - Reversed major: 4 introductory, 2 intermediate, 2 advanced
 - Minor: 2 introductory, 2 intermediate
 - UT&LC course schedule templates have been revised and further changes are anticipated, pending the introduction of a new student information management system
 - If changing courses and units with pre-requisites, remember that year 10 students currently undertaking study within Tasmania need to be notified 2 years prior to pre-requisite changes – in order to choose the correct TCE subjects

It is highly recommended that all course proposals are discussed with the Course Structures Project Officer prior to submission to Faculty Teaching and Learning Committees. It is anticipated that UT&LC will require advice that courses submitted for approval adhere to the new course structures.

If you have any queries or questions about course structures or details within this guide, please contact the Course Structures Project Officer, Gail Reardon, ext 1097 or email Gail.Reardon@utas.edu.au.