



BFA209
**Corporate Reporting
and Disclosure**
Semester Two 2006

School of Accounting and Corporate Governance

Faculty of Business

Unit Outline

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1. Unit Description

In this unit we look at the major ways in which Australian companies report and disclose information to external stakeholders. We identify the sources of mandatory disclosure requirements and overview the various reporting obligations that are imposed on companies by the Corporations Act and the Australian Stock Exchange's Listing Rules. We also consider the incentive that firms have to make voluntary disclosures of information and look at the nature of information that is disclosed voluntarily. We consider how firms might manage their disclosure decisions to create certain impressions through the information voluntarily included in annual reports.

The prerequisite for this unit is *BFA103 Accounting and Financial Decision Making*. This unit is delivered flexibly, via a unit CD and WebCT Vista. It is available to students on all campuses and off-shore.

2. Learning Outcomes

On completion of this unit, you should be able to:

1. compare and contrast the content in annual reports from different periods and different companies, and propose reasons why the content varies in these reports
2. differentiate between mandatory reporting requirements for Australian companies and the voluntary reporting decisions these companies make
3. identify the various sources of mandatory reporting requirements and locate examples of these in the reporting documents produced by companies
4. calculate readability scores for narrative passages included in annual reports
5. identify a range of linguistic devices that narrators use in annual reports
6. appraise levels of bias that might be associated with the use of graphs in annual reports
7. demonstrate written and graphical communication skills through the cogent discussion of ideas in a group context and the presentation of project work covering aspects of annual reporting.

3. Generic graduate attributes

By undertaking this unit you will progress in the development of the University of Tasmania's Generic Graduate Attributes in the following ways:

- **Knowledge** - you should acquire and apply technical knowledge about corporate reporting in Australia.

- **Communication skills** - your development of communication skills is multi-faceted in this unit. Through the completion of three major projects and the capstone assignment, you should demonstrate competent written and graphical communication skills. In the assessable discussion, you will develop the ability to present lucid arguments in an electronic discussion board situation as well as demonstrating “listening” and evaluation skills as you respond to the comments of others.
- **Social responsibility** - you will acquire the ability to identify how annual report material can be manipulated to create particular impressions and be able to assess the degree with which such material is distorted and comment on the acceptability of this.

4. Learning resources required

There is no prescribed or recommended text for this unit. Extensive unit materials will be provided to you through interactive CD, WebCT Vista and printed media. These materials include narrated PowerPoint presentations, PowerPoint Slides in PDF format; some online activities; and notes to accompany each topic.

Technical and Software Requirements

To run the Unit CD there are certain technical and software requirements. These are detailed in your folder and on the Unit CD under – “Preparing you Computer”. You should read this information carefully to ensure that you will be able to make full use of the Unit CD.

E- (Electronic) Resources

WebCT Vista

WebCT Vista (commonly referred to interchangeably as Vista or WebCT) is an internet service that has been adopted by the University and will be used in this unit. WebCT Vista may be accessed on computers in computing laboratories at the University or on your computer at home or at work. Information about accessing and using this service, about required computer specifications and frequently asked questions, and about how to get help if you experience difficulties, is available at the following University website:

<http://www.utas.edu.au/coursesonline/>

Access to Vista

You can access your Vista course from the Student Page on the University’s web site: **Current Students** ↯ **LOGIN WebCT Vista@UTAS** or go directly to the web address noted above:

Enter your email POP account “Username” (for example, bsmith) and your “Password”. These are identical to the pop account/email username and password that you are given with your enrolment confirmation form. If you forget your pop account username, contact the Service Desk.

WebCT Vista Facilities used for this Unit:

1. Announcements – Announcements will be visible when you first open WebCT Vista. This facility will be used from time to time by the unit Coordinator to make announcements to the entire group.

2. Discussion - WebCT Vista will be used for on-line discussion between the Unit Coordinator and you and between you and other students. Discussion is arranged under a list of ‘Topics’, which are as follows:

Assessable Discussion – Assessable discussions are a part of this unit (see Section 7 of this outline). Topics have been created for each assessable discussion question.

General Discussion – There are topics for each module in which you can make postings in relation to particular aspects of a module’s content for non-assessable discussion. For example, you may have comments to make to other group members or questions to ask of them in terms of generating discussion that will help them or may be of interest to them.

Major Projects (1, 2 & 3) – There are three topics in which you can make postings in relation to the three major projects. You may have queries that you wish to raise and can use these topics for that purpose.

“Café” – This topic is opened so that we can communicate with each other with a view to getting to know everyone in the unit. You should provide some information about yourself and what you are doing, what your interests are, etc. We are trying to create an interesting and active on-line community.

“Feedback” – This topic has been opened so that you can make comments, suggestions and criticisms, which are anonymous. There may be issues that need to be addressed and a ‘Feedback’ Topic allows these matters to be identified so that we can respond appropriately and take action where necessary. Don’t hesitate to use the facility.

WebCT Vista Mail

If you wish to communicate with the unit coordinator privately, you should use the WebCT Vista Mail facility to do this OR you can send emails to the unit coordinator at: Belinda.Williams@utas.edu.au.

WARNING: Your WebCT Vista mail is NOT automatically connected to your university email address, which means you will need to check it separately. So that you don't miss anything it is a good idea to forward your Vista emails to your university email address or the one you use most often. To do this –

- After accessing the unit's WebCT Vista site, open "Mail"
- Click on the small envelope icon (Located on the toolbar just to the left of "Search this tool")
- Enter the forwarding address ("External email address")

Getting assistance with WebCT Vista

If you have difficulty in gaining access to or using WebCT Vista you can contact the Service Desk Tel: (03) 62 26 1818 (1300 304 903 Freecall – Tasmanian Land Lines only) or send an e-mail message detailing your problem to: servicedesk@utas.edu.au .

5. Details of teaching arrangements

Self-paced learning

There are NO face-to-face classes in this unit. Extensive course materials will be provided through interactive CD, WebCT Vista and printed media. Although no formal face-to-face meetings are scheduled, you should maintain regular contact with the unit coordinator and with other students through WebCT Vista. Students who are geographically close are encouraged to form local work groups, and, on request, the unit coordinator will be happy to attend workshops with any such groups.

As this unit is offered on a flexible basis, communication is of utmost importance. It is important, too, to work consistently through the materials. If there is any area of work that you do not understand, please contact the unit coordinator immediately, and make sure that you do not progress to the next stage without a thorough understanding of the previous one. Each part of the unit develops themes from, and assumes an understanding of, the previous parts, so it is important that areas not be skipped.

Encouraging you to study and learn independently is an important goal of university study. It is a feature of a reflective approach to learning in which you reflect on what it is you are learning and how you plan your learning strategy. It is not the aim of flexible delivery that students feel they must work through problems alone. Throughout the unit, topics are provided for discussion with other students via the discussion facility of WebCT Vista, and the exchange of information and ideas is a very important part of your learning development. You will gain most benefit by staying in close contact with other students and with your unit coordinator.

All aspects of your work are expected to be of a high standard, both in academic content and quality of presentation. It is important to contact your unit coordinator immediately should you experience any difficulties. Do not be reluctant to ask questions or contribute ideas, even if only partly formed, as these can often form a basis for very constructive interaction. Remember that the WebCT Vista discussions will be as interesting and useful as **you** make them.

There are ten modules for you to study in this unit, most of which have a number of topics within them. For each topic there is a series of narrated PowerPoint slides, which introduce the key concepts for that topic. There are notes to accompany the slides. For most topics there are also questions for you to consider and to discuss electronically with other students. There are also other on-line activities for you to complete at the end of each module.

6. Learning expectations and strategies

Expectations

The University's Code of Conduct for Teaching and Learning states:

*Students are expected to **participate actively** and positively in the teaching/learning environment. They must strive to maintain steady progress within the subject or unit framework, comply with workload expectations, and submit required work on time.*

The University is committed to high standards of professional conduct in all activities, and holds its commitment and responsibilities to its students as being of paramount importance. Likewise, it holds expectations about the responsibilities students have as they pursue their studies within the special environment the University offers.

Learning strategies

In general, you should do well in this unit if you:

- have a strong interest in corporate reporting, stewardship and governance issues;
- keep up-to-date with your coursework, and with daily newspapers and relevant magazines and reports;
- consolidate your understanding by making appropriate short notes and summaries;
- give yourself plenty of time to complete your projects;
- prepare for and actively participate in the discussion group. This is especially important as a medium for students from many disciplines to share their particular expertise.

If you need assistance in preparing for study, please refer to the Unit Coordinator. For additional information refer to the Learning Development website:
<http://www.utas.edu.au/learndev/>

7. Assessment

There are three types of assessment in this unit:

- Participation in discussion (15%)
- Three major projects (each worth 15%, giving a total of 45%)
- Capstone assignment (40%)

The assessment schedule is as follows:

| Assessment task | Weight | Final dates: |
|--|--------|---|
| <i>Assessment task 1:</i> Discussion on WebCT | 15% | Wednesday of Week 13 |
| <i>Assessment task 2:</i> Project 1 | 15% | Wednesday of Week 4 |
| <i>Assessment task 3:</i> Project 2 | 15% | Wednesday of Week 9 if you wish to receive feedback otherwise Wednesday of Week13 |
| <i>Assessment task 4:</i> Project 3 | 15% | Wednesday of Week 13 |
| <i>Assessment task 5:</i> Capstone assignment | 40% | Monday of the second week of the examination period |

All tasks are due by midnight (Australian Eastern Standard or Summer time as applicable) on the due dates.

Assessment details:

Participation in discussion (15%):

For most modules in this unit, questions for discussion are posed. You are expected to engage in the discussion on each question but there is no specified word length or particular number of postings required. You may move the discussion in any broad direction that is related to the issues raised. The unit coordinator will monitor the discussion regularly, but will not interfere, except to correct misconceptions, errors and so on. It is *your* discussion to explore in whatever directions and dimensions that you wish provided they are at least tangentially related to the module content. The discussion is relevant to achieving all of the learning outcomes in this unit and to developing your generic communication skills.

Your participation in discussion will be assessed on the following basis:

HD Outstanding Contributor: This person's contributions reflect exceptional preparation and reflection. The ideas offered are always substantive and provide major insights and direction for the discussion. If this person were not a member of the group, the quality of the discussions would diminish significantly. An outstanding contributor will often play the role of “devil’s advocate” in response to the suggestions of others.

CR – DN Good Contributor: Contributions in discussion reflect thorough preparation. Ideas offered are usually substantive, provide good insights and sometimes lead the direction of the discussion. Points and arguments are generally well thought out and are often persuasive. If this person were not a member of the group, the quality of discussions would diminish considerably.

PP – CR Adequate Contributor: Contributions reflect satisfactory preparation. Ideas offered are sometimes substantive and provide useful insights, but seldom offer a major new direction for the discussion. Contributions tend to be more piecemeal than integrative. Arguments are sometimes presented and are fairly well substantiated and sometimes persuasive. If the person were not a member of the group, the quality of the discussions would diminish somewhat.

NN Non-participant: This person has offered very little or nothing to the discussion to date. Hence, there is an inadequate basis for evaluation. If this person were not a member of the group, the quality of the discussion would not be changed.

NN Unsatisfactory Contributor: Contributions reflect inadequate preparation. Ideas offered are seldom substantive; they provide few, if any, insights and rarely or never a constructive direction for the group. Integrative comments and effective arguments are absent. Class comments are either obvious, restate the contributions of others, are isolated from the main discussion, or are confusing to the group. If this person were not a member of the group, valuable air time would be saved.

Your discussion is likely to be more constructive and effective if you participate when others are also discussing the topic. You cannot expect to stimulate or direct the discussion if you leave your contributions until late in the semester. Therefore, you should monitor the discussion board regularly to see what discussion is taking place throughout the semester. Indicative feedback on your discussion will be provided through WebCT Vista mail at the end of weeks 3, 7 and 11 for those who are actively engaging in the discussion. Assessable discussion can continue until Wednesday of Week 13. Your mark for discussion will be advised as soon as is practicable after that date.

The major projects (3 @ 15%)

The major projects require you to explore specific aspects of corporate reporting and disclosure.

Project One: The evolution of corporate annual reports

In your folder of unit materials you will find the annual reports for Beach Petroleum Ltd for 1983, 1992 and 2004, the 2005 report for Coles Myer Ltd and the 2004 report for Orica. We are going to use these reports to consolidate our understanding of Section One of this unit. We are looking at how report content and style vary over time and between companies. This assignment specifically addresses learning outcomes 1 and 7 and develops the generic attributes of knowledge and communication skills.

Required:

Prepare a report in which you:

- For Beach Petroleum, describe how the nature of content of the annual report has changed over the three reporting periods (focus on as many things as you can, including what is presented/discussed, where it is presented, how it is presented, how much is presented, whether pictures are used, what sort, and so on);
- Speculate, with examples to support your reasoning, why you might have observed the specific changes that you did for the company;
- Compare and contrast the content of the annual reports of Coles Myer and Orica, identifying similarities and differences between the reports, (focus on as many things as you can, including differences in what is presented/discussed, where it is presented, how it is presented, how much is presented, how pictures are used and so on)
- Speculate, with examples to support your reasoning, why you might have observed the similarities and differences that you did between the two company reports.

[Note: when analysing the notes to the accounts, there is no need to comment on notes individually – a focus on length / number of notes included in total is sufficient]

Length:

Your completed report should not exceed 2,500 words. Tables are judged to be equivalent to the approximate number of words that would fit into the space occupied by tables.

Due date:

The final date for submission is midnight (Australian Eastern Summer Time) on Wednesday of Week 4.

Assessment criteria:

The following criteria will be used in assessing this assignment:

- Comprehensiveness of the comparative analysis of the reports over time, looking for evidence of a systematic and thorough analysis of all non-trivial changes in the reports from one time period to another

(35 % of project assessment)
- Soundness of the reasoning used to speculate why the differences might be observed over time, together with appropriate use of examples to support your suggestions

(10 % of project assessment)
- Comprehensiveness of the comparative analysis of the Coles Myer and Orica annual reports, looking for evidence of a systematic and thorough analysis of all non-trivial similarities and differences in the reports of each company

(30% of project assessment)
- Soundness of the reasoning used to speculate why the similarities and differences might exist between the two companies, together with appropriate use of examples to support your suggestions

(15 % of project assessment)
- Excellent presentation standards, with work submitted in a style and format appropriate to the task

(10 % of project assessment)

Project Two: Mandatory reporting requirements – Directors’ reports and half year reports

In your folder of unit materials you will find the annual report for Beach Petroleum for 2004, its December 2004 half-year report, Coles Myer’s annual report for 2005 and a copy of the G100’s *Guide to Review of Operations and Financial Condition*. We are going to use these documents to consolidate our understanding of parts of Section Two of this unit. We are looking at the content of the directors’ report and half year reports. This assignment specifically addresses learning outcomes 2, 3 and 7 and develops the generic attributes of knowledge and communication skills.

Required:

Prepare a report in which you:

- List the types of information included in Coles Myer’s annual directors’ report and indicate, where possible, for each piece of information, the section of the Corporations Act or the listing rule which requires its inclusion. Where some items that the Act or listing rules suggest should be included in a directors’ report appear to be absent, indicate where else in the annual report, if at all, Coles Myer has provided the required information;
- Evaluate the extent to which the information about activities and operations included in Coles Myer’s annual directors’ report and elsewhere in the annual report, if relevant, conforms with the G100’s recommendations in its *Guide to Review of Operations and Financial Condition*;
- Provide a comparison of Beach Petroleum’s annual report and its half year report, identifying where the content of the two reports differs – be clear in indicating what sections are omitted from the half-year report, differences in use of graphics and presentation, how sections common to both reports differ in content and so on;
- Where differences exist between the full and half year reports, explain whether this is an area of difference in a mandatory reporting requirement that is specifically contemplated and allowed for by the law or listing rules or whether it is a difference that results from the discretion of management in deciding what material to include in the full year versus the half year report.

[Note: when comparing the notes to the accounts, there is no need to comment on notes individually – a focus on length / number of notes included in total is sufficient]

Length:

Your completed report should not exceed 2,500 words. Tables are judged to be equivalent to the approximate number of words that would fit into the space occupied by tables.

Due date:

If you wish to receive timely feedback on this project, it should be submitted by **Wednesday of Week 9. The final date for submission is midnight (Australian Eastern Summer Time) on Wednesday of Week 13.** However submissions received then might not be returned to you before the capstone assignment is due.

Assessment criteria:

The following criteria will be used in assessing this assignment:

- Comprehensiveness of the list of report items included in Coles Myer directors' report and other relevant disclosures identified, and accuracy in attributing them to the source of regulation that requires their inclusion
(30 % of project assessment)
- Evidence of a good understanding of the G100 Guide's recommendations and a demonstrated ability to align report items with those recommendations, including the ability to identify deficiencies in style and content
(30 % of project assessment)
- Comprehensiveness of the comparative analysis of Beach Petroleum's 2004 annual report with its half year report, looking for evidence of a systematic and thorough analysis of all non-trivial differences in the full and half year reports of the company in 2004
(20% of project assessment)
- Demonstrated understanding of the regulations in relation to half year reports evidenced by the ability to identify what differences in the annual versus half year reports are consistent with those specified as allowable by the law or listing rules and those that relate to discretionary disclosure decisions
(10 % of project assessment)
- Excellent presentation standards, with work submitted in a style and format appropriate to the task
(10 % of project assessment)

Project Three: Voluntary disclosure decisions, narratives, and use of graphs

In your folder of unit materials you will find the annual reports for Beach Petroleum Ltd, Coles Myer and Orica. We are going to use these documents to consolidate our understanding of Section Three of this unit. This assignment specifically addresses learning outcomes 2, 4, 5, 6 and 7 and develops the generic attributes of knowledge, communication skills and social responsibility.

Required:

Prepare a report in which you:

- Estimate the relative amount of Coles Myer's annual report, excluding the financial report component (as defined by the Corporations Act), that consists of voluntary disclosures, explaining the basis that you have used (eg number of words, sentences, paragraphs, number of pages, or relative page area etc) to make this assessment and why you chose that basis. Present a table in which you list those components that you consider to be voluntary disclosures and those that you consider to be mandatory, with page or paragraph references, as appropriate. Outline any difficulties that you encountered, if any, in categorising the content as voluntary or mandatory, explaining how you overcame them.

[Note: in some report components, there may be a mix of both voluntary and mandatory material so you may find that you have to make this assessment on a paragraph by paragraph basis in some places.]

- Using the first four paragraphs of the Chairman's Report presented by Beach Petroleum, on page three of its 2004 annual report, and the first two columns of the Q&A Section with the Chairman and CEO presented by Coles Myer (page six) of its 2005 annual report, calculate a readability score for each report. Describe how you determined these scores and any difficulties that you encountered in calculating the score for each report and explain how you overcame them.
- Discuss the implications of the readability scores that you have calculated and consider whether you feel that they are a fair reflection of the reading difficulty that readers would feel they are faced with when reading these narratives. Explain whether you feel that the readability of either or both of the narratives needs to be improved, and, if so, in what way, and if not, why not.
- Describe and evaluate the way in which graphs have been used by Beach Petroleum and Orica in their 2004 annual reports, indicating which company you feel has behaved more ethically in its use of graphs. Justify this choice.

Length:

Your completed report should not exceed 2,500 words. Tables are judged to be equivalent to the approximate number of words that would fit into the space occupied by tables.

Due date:

The final date for submission is midnight (Australian Eastern Summer Time) on Wednesday of Week 13.

Assessment criteria:

The following criteria will be used in assessing this assignment:

- Appropriateness of the measurement basis used, soundness of the classification judgements made, and the reasonableness of the estimate made of the relative extent of voluntary disclosures in the Coles Myer report.
(30 % of project assessment)
- Accuracy of the readability score calculated and clarity of the discussion of approach and resolution of difficulties.
(15% of project assessment)
- Demonstrated ability to interpret readability scores and make appropriate recommendations.
(15% of project assessment)
- Demonstrated understanding of principles of graphical construction and of how graphs can be misused in annual reports.
(30 % of project assessment)
- Excellent presentation standards, with work submitted in a style and format appropriate to the task.
(10 % of project assessment)

Capstone Assignment

| | |
|---|--|
| <i>Task description</i> | The capstone assignment draws together many elements of the unit. When you have worked completely through the unit materials, participated in the required assessable discussions, submitted the three major projects and are ready to start this final assignment, send an e-mail request to your unit coordinator requesting that the assignment detail be sent to you. |
| <i>Task length</i> | 3000 words maximum |
| <i>Links to unit's learning outcomes</i> | Learning outcomes 2, 3, 5 and 7 |
| <i>Assessment criteria</i> | <p>Ability to clearly explain the reporting requirements associated with different corporate forms</p> <p>Demonstrated insight into the use of various linguistic devices to create particular impressions in report narratives</p> <p>Demonstrated understanding of how graphs can be used to facilitate impression management in annual reports</p> <p>Excellent presentation standards, including the ability to communicate clearly and economically</p> |
| <i>Date due</i> | Midnight on the Monday of the second week of the examination period (Australian Eastern Summer Time). Examination period dates can be obtained from the University's web site. |

If you have not requested the capstone assignment by Monday of the examination study week (immediately after Week 13) for Semester Two, it will be sent to you on that day, provided you have submitted all other pieces of required assessment by the due dates and participated in the required discussion.

8. Assessment/Learning Outcomes/Generic Graduate Attributes Matrix

| | | Assessment items | | | | |
|-----------------------------|-----------------------|-------------------------------|------------------------------|------------------------------|------------------------------|-----------------|
| | | <i>Task 1: Discussion</i> | <i>Task 2: Project 1</i> | <i>Task 3: Project 2</i> | <i>Task 4: Project 3</i> | <i>Capstone</i> |
| Learning Outcomes | LO1 | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | | |
| | LO2 | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | | ✓ |
| | LO3 | ✓ | | ✓ | | ✓ |
| | LO4 | ✓ | | | ✓ | |
| | LO5 | ✓ | | | ✓ | ✓ |
| | LO6 | ✓ | | | ✓ | |
| | LO7 | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ |
| Generic Graduate Attributes | Knowledge | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ |
| | Communication | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ |
| | Social responsibility | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ |

9. How your final result is determined

Your final grade is determined by aggregating your score on the assessable discussion activities, the three projects and the final examination. To be eligible for assessment in this unit, you must participate in the assessable discussion activities and submit EACH of the three projects AND submit the capstone assignment by the due dates. You need to achieve an overall mark of at least 50% to pass the unit. Awards are made on the following basis:

- 80% or more High distinction (HD)
- 70 – 79% Distinction (DN)
- 60 – 69% Credit (CR)
- 50 – 59% Pass (PP)
- < 50% Fail (NN).

Standardisation

In order to maintain the high reputation of the School of Accounting and Corporate Governance in the wider community – educationally, academically and by business - the School does not standardise student results. Rather, the School expects high standards of its students, and insists that students devote sufficient time and effort to their studies throughout the semester to achieve grades of pass or higher on merit.

10. Submission of assessable work

Your projects and capstone assignment should be emailed to the Unit Coordinator (Belinda.Williams@utas.edu.au) by the submission deadline. Alternatively they can be posted to the unit coordinator to arrive on or before the due date at the following address:

Belinda Williams
School of Accounting and Corporate Governance
University of Tasmania
Locked Bag 1214
Launceston
Tasmania Australia 7250

All assignments must be accompanied by the School's coversheet. Receipt of your assignments in a readable form will be acknowledged by e-mail.

Requirements for Submitted work

Your submitted work is to be presented in accordance with the *Guide for Students - Presentation and Submission of Assignments* issued by the Faculty of Business. You can find a copy of this on the Unit CD.

Your attention is particularly drawn to the University's rules on **plagiarism** (see section 12 of this outline). Whilst students are encouraged to work together and exchange information in this unit, submitted assignments must be the student's own work. Assignments containing any plagiarised information will be subject to the disciplinary processes of the University.

11. Penalties and consequences of late submission

Consequences of submitting over-length work

Any assignment exceeding the word limit will not be assessed. Over-length assignments will be returned to students for resubmission and must be resubmitted within 48 hours of being returned. Resubmitted assignments will not be awarded more than a credit grade (i.e., a maximum mark of 6/10).

Please note that the word limits given are the maximum. Some students believe that a 10 per cent overrun is acceptable. This is NOT the case in this unit. The word limits given should be interpreted strictly as the absolute maximum limit allowed.

Consequences of late submission

Assignments that are not handed in by the due date will have marks deducted, unless a signed and approved late submission form is attached. The penalty for late submission of assignments in this unit is 10% of the available mark for each day the assignment is late.

12. Academic referencing and plagiarism

In your written work you may need to support your ideas by referring to the work of others. It is important that you understand how to correctly refer to the work of others and maintain academic integrity. Failure to appropriately acknowledge the ideas of others constitutes academic dishonesty (plagiarism), a matter considered by the University of Tasmania as a serious offence.

The appropriate referencing style for this unit is explained in the *Guide for Students* available via WebCT Vista or from the school's website - <http://www.utas.edu.au/accg/studentres.htm>.

You can find additional information on presentation of assignments: <http://www.utas.edu.au/library/assist/gpoa/gpoa.html>

Please read the statement on plagiarism that has been reproduced below.

Plagiarism is a form of cheating. It is taking and using someone else's thoughts, writings or inventions and representing them as your own; for example, using an author's words without putting them in quotation marks and citing the source, using an author's ideas without proper acknowledgment and citation, copying another student's work.

If you have any doubts about how to refer to the work of others in your assignments, please consult your lecturer or tutor for relevant referencing guidelines, and the academic integrity resources on the web at <http://www.utas.edu.au/tl/supporting/academicintegrity/index.html>.

The intentional copying of someone else's work as one's own is a serious offence punishable by penalties that may range from a fine or deduction/cancellation of marks and, in the most serious of cases, to exclusion from a unit, a course or the University. Details of penalties that can be imposed are available in the Ordinance of Student Discipline – Part 3 Academic Misconduct, see <http://www.utas.edu.au/universitycouncil/legislation/>

The University reserves the right to submit assignments to plagiarism detection software, and might then retain a copy of the assignment on its database for the purpose of future plagiarism checking.

For further information on this statement and general referencing guidelines, see <http://www.utas.edu.au/plagiarism/>. Should you require clarification please discuss this with your unit coordinator.

13. Further information and assistance

If you are experiencing difficulties with your studies or assignments, have personal or life planning issues, disability or illness which may affect your course of study, you are advised to raise these with your unit coordinator in the first instance.

There is a range of University-wide support services available to you including Student Services, International Services and Learning Development. Please refer to the *Current Students* homepage at: <http://www.utas.edu.au/students/>

Should you require assistance in accessing the Library visit its website for more information at <http://www.utas.edu.au/library/>

Getting help

Student Services

In Hobart and Launceston, Student Services staff are available to assist you if you are experiencing difficulties with your study program, or if you have personal or life planning issues, disability or illness which may affect your course of study. You can discuss these issues with the Learning Skills Adviser, the Student Counsellor, the Careers Adviser and/or the Disability Adviser.

School Ombudspeople

If you have any concerns about this unit then in the first instance you should discuss the matter with your unit coordinator. However, if you do not feel comfortable approaching your unit coordinator, or if you have a discussion with your unit coordinator and are not satisfied with the outcome, then you are encouraged to contact one of the Ombudspeople, who also teach in the School of Accounting & Corporate Governance.

Ms Simone Bingham

Room: 421, Commerce Building, Hobart

Ph: (+61 3) 6226 2314

E-mail: Simone.Bingham@utas.edu.au

Mr David Moore

Room: A259, Launceston

Ph: (+61 3) 6324 3558

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Discussions with Simone or David will be kept in the strictest confidence. If you wish to pursue the matter further, they will provide advice as to how this can be done. The University also has formal policies, which can be accessed at: http://www.admin.utas.edu.au/ac_serv/complaints_info.html

Students with Disabilities - University and Faculty Equity Plans

Goal 1 of the University of Tasmania Equity Plan provides for: “An inclusive teaching and learning environment that values diversity, supports the pursuit of academic excellence and produces high quality education and employment results for all students and staff”. The Faculty of Business Equity Plan facilitates the University Plan at an operational level and has developed an ‘Action Plan’. The Action Plan for Goal 1 lays down procedures to ensure that students have equal access to lecture and course materials. The School of Accounting & Corporate Governance complies with these procedures.

14. Unit schedule

The schedule on the following pages sets out the modules and topics that make up this unit. A suggested target time schedule is set out for you to complete the course progressively throughout the semester.

| Suggested schedule | Module | Topics |
|--|--------------------|---|
| Section One: Introduction | | |
| Week One to end of Week Two | 1 | Introduction to Corporate Reporting and Disclosure in Australia |
| | 2 | The Nature and Use of Corporate Reports <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Annual reports: definition and reporting circa 1950 • Evolution of annual reports and the contemporary annual report • The role and purpose of annual reports • The usefulness of annual reports |
| | 3 | Regulatory and Institutional Arrangements <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reporting requirements of the Corporations Act • Stock Exchange Listing Rules • The FRC, the AASB and accounting standards |
| Week Three | Project One | |
| Section Two: Mandatory Reporting Requirements | | |
| Week Four To Mid-Week Seven | 4 | Mandatory Elements in Financial Reports <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The balance sheet • The income statement and statement of changes in equity • The cash flow statement • Notes to the accounts and the Directors' Declaration |
| | 5 | Other Mandatory Elements in Annual Reports <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The directors' report • Additional disclosures required by ASX listing rules • AASB 1046: Executive and director disclosures • Concise financial reports |
| | 6 | Other Mandatory Reporting Requirements <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Half yearly reports • Continuous disclosure requirements • General governance disclosures |

| | | |
|---|----------------------|--|
| Mid-Week Seven To Mid-Week Eight | Project Two | |
| Suggested schedule | Module | Topics |
| Section Three: Voluntary Aspects of Disclosure | | |
| Mid-Week Eight To Start of Week Twelve | 7 | The nature of voluntary disclosures <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Types of voluntary disclosures • Incentives for voluntary disclosure • Social and environmental disclosures |
| | 8 | The use of narrative in annual reports <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Content choices in narratives • Linguistic styles and devices used • Readability of narratives |
| | 9 | The use of imagery in annual reports <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Creating the overall report “package” • Graphs – benefits and design principles • The use and misuse of graphs in corporate reports |
| Mid-Week Twelve to Mid-Week 13 | Project Three | |
| Section Four: Concluding Overview | | |
| Mid Week 13 | 10 | An Overview <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mandatory reporting requirements • Voluntary reporting decisions |
| Capstone assignment | | |