

# Teaching and Learning Quality Assurance Manual



Office of Pro Vice-Chancellor Teaching and Learning

Title:	Significant Amendments to Existing Courses
Last Revised:	August 2006
Antecedents:	<p><i>Section BIV Significant Amendments to Existing Courses: 2000 Quality Assurance Manual</i></p> <p><i>Appendix B3.1 Flowchart and Minimum Timeframe of the Approval of New Courses, 2000 Quality Assurance Manual</i></p> <p><i>Appendix B4.1 Levels of Approval for Changes to Courses, Specifications and Schedules: 2000 Quality Assurance Manual</i></p> <p><i>Appendix B4.2 Format for Proposed Significant Amendments to Courses: 2000 Quality Assurance Manual</i></p> <p><i>Appendix B4.3 Changes to Award Titles Approval and Implementation: 2000 Quality Assurance Manual, Academic Senate 21 Feb 1997</i></p> <p><i>Appendix B4.4/4.4E Guidelines for Implementing Discontinuation and Teach-out of Courses and Majors: 2000 Quality Assurance Manual, Academic Senate, 25 Feb 2000</i></p>
Date Approved:	Revision approved: University Teaching and Learning Committee, August 2006
ADDITION:	Course Profile Review Taskforce Academic Senate 2/2006

## Significant Amendments To Existing Courses

### Definition

Significant amendments to existing courses include:

- the introduction of units involving new discipline areas or new majors, strands or streams in an existing course;
- changes in current course structures (including electives, sub-majors, and re-weighting of core units);
- changes in the duration of or mode of offering of the course;
- deletion of an award or a major;
- conflation of two or more existing degrees
- changes of award title;
- changes to campus offering; and
- changes that affect other Faculties (eg. in service teaching arrangements).

### Timeline for Approval of Significant Amendments to Existing Courses

Significant amendments to existing courses to be introduced in the following academic year should be submitted to the May meeting of the UT&LC and thence to Academic Senate at its June meeting. (Refer to Figure 4. Please refer to Figure 3 in New Course proposals chapter for timelines for submission).

The June deadline for approval allows for significant amendments to be included in handbook entries for the following year's edition; for adequate promotion prior to the admission cycle beginning in October; and for Schools to plan for the implementation of the relevant amendment.

Significant amendments may be submitted earlier than the May meeting of the UT&LC. Academic Senate has made provision for the submission of proposals later than this deadline in exceptional circumstances and upon the approval of the Chair (notable examples have included changes as a result of course reviews).

Table 1, Levels of Approval for Changes to Course, Specifications and Schedules, indicates the level of approval required for common amendments to courses and units.

## Figure 4: Significant Amendments to Existing Courses Approval Process

Please refer to Figure 3 in New Course Proposals chapter for timelines for submission

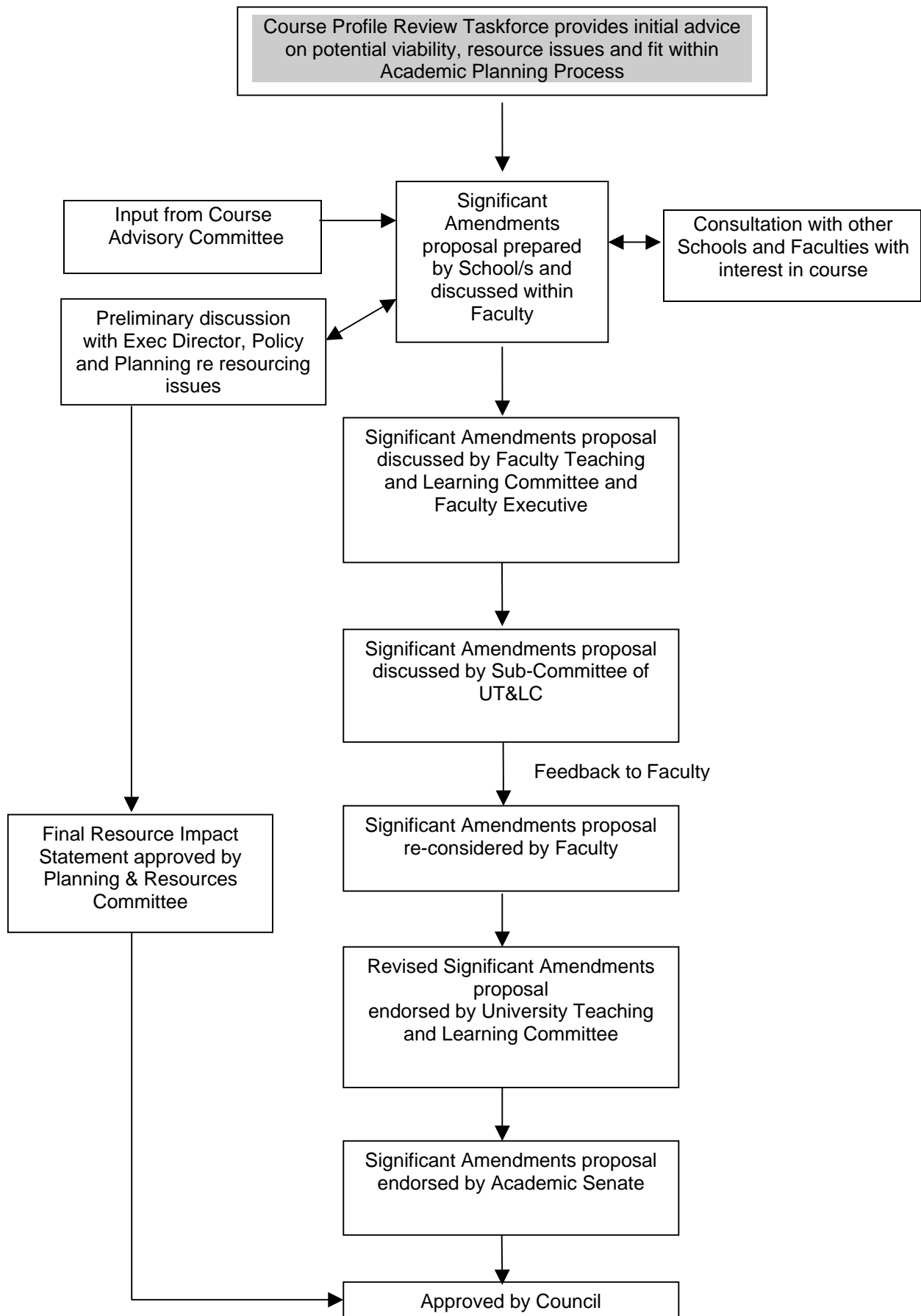


Table 1: Levels of Approval for Changes to Courses, Specifications and Schedules

✓	= Approval required
---	---------------------

	School	Faculty Teaching & Learning Committee	Faculty Executive	UT&LC	Academic Senate
<b>New Course Proposal</b>	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
<b>Significant Amendments to Existing Courses</b>					
Change in award nomenclature or title abbreviation	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Deletion of award	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
<b>Changes in the structure of a course including:</b>					
Change in course duration	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Deletion of a major	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
New major/stream	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Changes to max/min time for completion	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
New minor/units in a discipline area new to the Faculty	✓	✓	✓	✓	reported
Implementation of standard unit weights	✓	✓	✓	✓	reported
Application to use non-standard unit weight	✓	✓	✓	✓	reported
Change of admission requirements	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Change to specifications	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Changes to credit transfer provisions	✓	✓	✓	✓	reported
Change to delivery / teaching pattern	✓	✓	✓	✓	reported
Change to Campus offering	✓	✓	✓	✓	reported
<b>Amendment to Schedule affecting another Faculty, including:</b>	✓	✓	✓	✓	reported
Deletion of compulsory/core units	✓	✓	✓	✓	reported
Varying elective requirements	✓	✓	✓	✓	reported
<b>Amendments to Schedule not affecting another Faculty, including:</b>					
Deleting/replacing a unit reported	✓	✓	✓	reported	
Changing co- or pre-requisites	✓	✓	✓	reported	
Reweighting of units+^	✓	✓	✓	reported	
Varying elective requirements^	✓	✓	✓	reported	
Varying availability by campus^	✓	✓	✓	reported	
Significant (+ or - 20%) amendment to contact hours entailed in a unit^	✓	✓	✓	reported	
Changing duration of a unit^	✓	✓	✓	reported	
<b>Minor amendment to a unit including^:</b>					
Change in assessment practice/criteria	✓	✓	reported		
Change in contact hours (less than + or - 20%)	✓	✓	reported		
Change to delivery / teaching pattern	✓	✓	reported		
Change in syllabus	✓	✓	reported		
Change of unit code or title	✓	✓	reported		

Note cross-reference to Planning and Resources Committee required for all new courses, change in course duration and campus offering.

\* In the case of combined degrees approval of both Faculties/Faculty Teaching and Learning Committees required in all instances.

+ Reweightings of units to adhere to the new unit weights will be monitored by Academic Senate.

^ Reported to Faculty - other Schools affected must be consulted.

The general principle is that decisions made in substance at one level are subject to review by one higher body but not more. Decisions range from minor curriculum amendments (made by the School concerned), changes to the schedule (approved by the Faculty Teaching and Learning Committee and Dean), changes to the course structure (approved by the University Teaching and Learning Committee) and substantial changes, eg length or title (approved by Academic Senate).

The format for proposed significant amendments to existing courses is contained below. Additional comments and examples have been provided.

The UT&LC will use the New Course Proposal Checklist for consideration of significant amendments to existing courses as well as for new course proposals. The checklist serves as a useful guide to Faculties to ensure that the proposal adequately covers all areas.

Note that unit outline and course specifications and schedules should accompany proposals for significant amendments to existing courses in the formats indicated in the New Course Proposals section.

Prior to detailed development of a proposal for a new major/specialisation within an existing course, the Head of School is encouraged to discuss it with their Dean or Associate Dean (Teaching and Learning) who will in turn flag it to the Pro Vice-Chancellor (T&L). The proposal, in summary format (one to one and a half pages) will be considered by the Course Profile Review Taskforce, which will provide initial advice on the potential viability, resource issues and fit within the Academic Planning Process.

Significant amendments submitted to the University Teaching and Learning Committee will be discussed by the Sub-Committee on Course Proposals comprising Associate Deans, Director of the Graduate School and the Academic Registrar, chaired by the Pro Vice-Chancellor (T&L). Feedback on the proposal from this group will then be considered by the Faculty and revisions made to the course proposal before it is submitted to the University Teaching and Learning Committee. If feedback from the Sub-Committee has been addressed in the revised proposal, it will appear as an unstarred item on the University Teaching and Learning Committee agenda.

Approval by UT&LC and Academic Senate will be subject to approval by Planning and Resources Committee of a Resource Impact Statement. Faculties are responsible for submitting the Resource Impact Statement to the Planning and Resources Committee.

Faculties are advised to submit a preliminary analysis of resource impact to the Executive Director, Planning and Development well in advance of developing a course proposal to gain initial approval to plan the course fully. At this stage, advice will be provided about the level of detail required for the final Resource Impact Statement.

- To assist Faculties, an electronic template for significant amendments to existing courses is provided at: <http://www.utas.edu.au/tlqam>
- Proposals for delivery of an existing program at a TNE approved site – refer to the TNE Checklist for Program Approval. Template at: <http://www.utas.edu.au/tlqam>

# Significant Amendments to Courses Template

Note: Significant amendments to combined courses require the approval of both Faculties.

## 1. Name of course to which amendments are proposed

In February 1997, Academic Senate endorsed procedures requiring Faculties to specify details of the timing resulting from a proposed change in title to an existing award and guidelines for implementation including enabling students, as appropriate, to be either taught out under the old title or to seek approval to graduate with the new title. For the relevant procedures and guidelines, see Changes to Award Titles – that follow in this chapter.

## 2. Description of the proposed amendments

## 3. Reason(s) for seeking to introduce the proposed amendments

Identify the nature of the problem which the amendments seek to address or alternatively the opportunity which the amendments seek to exploit. Detail the process of evaluation or impetus which led to the proposed amendments. For example, indicate whether such amendments arose from a review of the course undertaken in conjunction with students, employers, professional bodies. The impact on demand should be detailed and projected intakes and enrolments indicated and justified.

## 4. Proposed year and semester of introduction

## 5. School(s) which will teach the amended course

## 6. Campus(s) on which the amended course will be taught

## 7. Course Advisory Committee

A course advisory committee must be involved in any major redevelopment of a course and in the on-going monitoring of the course. Details of membership must be provided, including names and roles of external representatives from business, industry, the community, professional associations or other universities.

## 8. Educational objectives of the amended course

These may be general, for instance - to develop in students a commitment to lifetime study and self-development...; be indicative of a vocational orientation, for instance - to equip students with the fundamental knowledge, skills, capabilities and awareness which are necessary for a graduate to practice, architecture...; be curriculum specific, for instance - to develop an understanding of the basic concepts involved in the creation, storage and maintenance of data ...; or relate to opportunities to further develop the range of courses in a discipline, for instance - to provide an opportunity for students to undertake research in the discipline and upon successful completion to undertake research higher degree study.

## 9. Length of Course and maximum time for completion

Clarify if different from existing course

## 10. Teaching Mode (eg internal or by distance education/part-time of full time, flexible delivery, etc)

Clarify if different from existing course

## 11. Course Structure

Course structures must be described in terms of unit weights expressed as percentages of annual course requirements. All undergraduate units will be one semester in length and based on standard 12.5% - or a multiple of 12.5% - weighting unless a particular case is made for an exemption that clearly demonstrates that students would not be disadvantaged. For example, a full-time load of 8x12.5% units.

## 11. Generic attributes

Provide details of how the amended course meets the requirements of the [Policy on the Generic Attributes of Graduates of the University of Tasmania](#). Outline how each of the attributes will be developed, taught and assessed within the course.

- knowledge
- communication skills
- problem-solving skills
- global perspective
- social responsibility

## 12. Admission Requirements

Clarify if different from existing course.

Provide details of admission requirements which are different from the standard minimum University entrance requirements for undergraduate courses ((available on the web at: <http://www.prospective.utas.edu.au/howqualify.php?section=2>. Identify any required subject prerequisites. Give a full description of admission requirements for postgraduate coursework courses. In the case of international students, please refer to English Language requirements (available on the web at <http://www.international.utas.edu.au/static/admissionRequirements.php>

## 13. Articulation with other courses

Indicate whether the amendments will create opportunities for articulation with other courses, and in particular relevant TAFE courses, or alter existing articulation arrangements.

## 14. Other related courses offered by this University

Provide details of existing units which could be used in effecting the proposed amendments and, if relevant, of the consultation which has occurred with the School(s) offering these units.

## 15. Anticipated professional recognition (if relevant)

## 16. Specific ways in which the amendments will be monitored and their success evaluated.

Provide details of the procedures to be used, including any performance indicators against which the success of the amendments will be evaluated, and a timetable for reporting the progress and outcome of evaluation to UT&LC.

## 17. Attachments

The proposal must contain the following attachments:

### a. Unit descriptions

Provide a unit description of each new unit in the format required for inclusion in the Course and Unit database. Requests for new unit or alteration to existing unit forms are available at <http://www.utas.edu.au/cu/> together with instructions on how to complete them.

**b. Course specifications and schedules**

Provide course specifications and schedules, amended to reflect the proposed changes, in the format for inclusion in the Course and Unit database. . See generic example in the New Course Proposal section. Templates are available at <http://www.utas.edu.au/tlqam>.

**c. Staff qualifications and teaching/supervision responsibilities**

List all staff who will be involved in teaching the course, detailing their qualifications and the unit(s) which they will teach or the role they will play in supervision of research students.

**d. Statement of Resource Impact (to be forwarded to Planning and Resources Committee for approval)**

Provide written confirmation from the Dean of the Faculty that the proposal is consistent with School, Faculty and [University Plans](#) and has been supported for expenditure within the Faculty which has indicated that the resources are available to support its offering. Note important resource considerations include: staff, library materials, computing facilities and teaching infrastructure.

Note: In the case of combined degrees involving more than one Faculty, the approval of both Deans is required to attest to the fact that there has been joint agreement on:

- the structure of the combined degree and the contribution of each program;
- cross-crediting arrangements ;
- implications for professional accreditation;
- resourcing and staffing of the course;
- timetabling implications;
- arrangements for administering the course.

A detailed Resource Impact Statement must be submitted to the Planning and Resources Committee. Guidelines on completing the Resource Impact Statement are contained in the chapter on New Course Proposals.

## Changes to Award Titles - Approval and Implementation

In February, 1997 Academic Senate endorsed procedures requiring Faculties to specify details of the timing resulting from a proposed change in title to an existing award and guidelines for implementation including enabling students, as appropriate, to be either taught out under the old title or to seek approval to graduate with the new title.

### Procedures and Guidelines

1. Proposals to UT&LC/Senate to change course titles must include full details of the Faculty's intentions for timing and other implementation arrangements for the new award title.
2. Where the proposed change in title is part of a major change to course structure/content, the expectation would be that continuing students would be "taught out" and graduate under the specifications for the old course, including the old course title, unless arrangements and conditions for students to elect to transfer to the new course/title are provided and approved by Senate.
3. Where the proposal involves a change in title only, continuing students should be given the opportunity to elect to transfer enrolment in the following year to the new course title. Students completing the requirements for an award and eligible to graduate in the year in which the new title is introduced should be given the opportunity to elect to graduate with the new award title.
4. The normal effective date for implementation of a new title will be from 1 January in the year following the year in which the proposal was approved by Senate. Students commencing the course will enrol under the new title, with continuing students enrolling under the old title, unless arrangements for transfer to the new course have been approved as noted in 2 above.
5. Changes to a course title approved by the Academic Senate will result in an amendment of the Schedule accompanying the [Rules of Awards](#). The Schedule is the "official" and authoritative register of award titles - award titles on testamurs will reflect the title in the Schedule. (See <http://acserv.admin.utas.edu.au/rules/rule1.pdf>)

### Discontinuation and Teach-out of Courses and Majors

At its meeting on 25 February 2000 Academic Senate approved guidelines for implementing discontinuation and teach-out of courses and majors. The emphasis in the guidelines is on ensuring that students are properly consulted on their options for completion of an award or a replacement course and that changes to and the teach-out of a course/major are undertaken within the framework of maintaining the University's approved quality assurance procedures. A copy of the guidelines and some examples are contained below.

## Guidelines for Implementing Discontinuation and Teach-out of Courses and Majors

The following guidelines for implementing discontinuation and teach-out of courses and majors have been developed to assist Faculties in preparing their submissions to Academic Senate which will ensure University-wide consistency, establish clearly the University's need to make amendments to its courses (including discontinuation of awards), identify the key procedures to be followed by Faculties including consultation with affected students and minimise confusion amongst students. Academic Senate will require that changes to and the teach-out of a course or major be undertaken within the framework of maintaining the University's approved quality assurance procedures.

In proposing significant amendments to an existing course<sup>1</sup>, including the discontinuation of a complete award course<sup>2</sup> or major<sup>3</sup> and any consequent teach-out, the following principles will apply:

1. That the reasons for the amendments to the course (and the consequent rationalisation of any majors) be clearly outlined in writing to all students affected by the changes. Such advice would include assurance that the changes would not result in a student<sup>4</sup> being required to undertake a greater workload or to take a longer time to complete the program than had been anticipated when they first enrolled for the course. In particular:
  - that in the case of an amended or replacement course: students be provided with clear, unambiguous advice on their eligibility to transfer to the amended course (including specific details of all units completed and those required to be completed), receiving maximum advanced standing or equivalent credit; or any option for a teach-out;
  - that in the case of deletion of a major: students be provided with clear, unambiguous advice on their options to transfer to other majors, alternative methods of delivery of their major (including study at the other campus, distance education or cross- institutional study) without loss of standing in the course; or any option for a teach-out;
  - that in the event of discontinuation of a complete award: students be provided with clear, unambiguous advice on their options to transfer to other courses, (including study at the other campus); or any option for a teach-out<sup>5</sup>;
2. That any proposal to teach-out an award or a major be fully justified and outlined to the Academic Senate in terms of the steps that will be taken to counsel all students enrolled in the course/major (and the required level of consultation with other Schools/Faculties), the number of students involved, arrangements that are proposed for the teach-out and the timeframe;
3. That normally, in any consideration for a teach-out, special consideration be given to students in their second or later years of study, having regard to the likelihood of more restricted options for such students;

---

<sup>1</sup> Significant amendments to an existing course as defined Table 1 (Levels of approval for new awards and courses and changes to courses, specifications and schedules); ie including deletion of award/major, change in course duration, change to campus offering.

<sup>2</sup> Award course/course = a course of study prescribed in the specifications of a particular degree, diploma or certificate listed in the schedule to the Rules of Awards.

<sup>3</sup> Major = an area of specialisation continued for the duration of a course at a deeper level of content with knowledge developed to a high level providing the basis for postgraduate study.

<sup>4</sup> In all cases "students" should include any student on approved Leave of Absence at the time that the decision to discontinue is made.

<sup>5</sup> In such an instance the University may make arrangements for students to complete the course at another tertiary institution.

4. That normally the date of effect of the implementation of the teach-out be determined by the normal full-time completion date of the majority of the students and that the period of teach-out be as follows:
  - in the case of an award course: two years beyond the date of effect
  - in the case of a major: normally one year, depending on the availability of alternative options and the number of students involved.

Note: the above Guidelines are not intended to cover deletion of minors or units, such changes being within the jurisdiction of the Faculty concerned, provided students and other Schools/Faculties have been informed of the intent.

## Discontinuation and Teach-out of Courses and Majors – Examples

Examples to illustrate the effect of the following guidelines:

1. that any proposal to teach-out an award or a major be fully justified and outlined to the Academic Senate in terms of the steps that will be taken to counsel all students enrolled in the course/major (and the required level of consultation with other Schools/Faculties), the number of students involved, arrangements that are proposed for the teach-out and the timeframe;
2. That normally, in any consideration for a teach-out, special consideration be given to students in their second or later years of study, having regard to the likelihood of more restricted options for such students;
3. That normally the date of effect of the implementation of the teach-out be determined by the normal full-time completion date of the majority of the students and that the period of teach-out be as follows:
  - in the case of an award course: two years beyond the date of effect
  - in the case of a major: normally one year, depending on the availability of alternative options and the number of students involved.

### Example 1: Significant amendment to/discontinuation of Bachelor of X (typical 3 year course):

Academic Senate approves decision in 2000; no new intake into course in 2001:

Year of study at time of decision		Implementation of teach-out	
2000	2001	2002 teach-out	2003 teach-out
Year 2	Year 3 (normal completion)		
Year 3 (normal completion)			

Notes: Options for Year 1 students in 2000 would include transfer to the amended course or an alternative course at the University, or the Faculty may negotiate a teach-out involving cross institutional study or other arrangements.

The Faculty concerned would be required to advise Academic Senate of arrangements for all students including any option for a teach-out which would extend beyond 2003 (eg to 2004).

### Example 2: Significant amendment to/discontinuation of Major Y (typical 3 year course):

Academic Senate approves decision in 2000; no new intake into major in 2001:

Year of study at time of decision		Implementation of teach-out
2000	2001	2002 teach-out
Year 2	Year 3 (normal completion)	
Year 3 (normal completion)		

Notes: Options for Year 1 students in 2000 would include transfer to the amended course and/or to an alternative major, or the Faculty may negotiate a teach-out involving cross institutional study or other arrangements.

The Faculty concerned would be required to advise Academic Senate of arrangements for all students including any option for a teach-out which would extend beyond 2002 (eg to 2003).

**Example 3: Significant amendment to/discontinuation of Bachelor of X (typical 4 year or longer course):**

Academic Senate approves decision in 2000; no new intake into course in 2001:

Year of study at time of decision		Implementation of teach-out		
2000	2001	2002 teach-out	2003 teach-out	2004 teach-out
Year 2/3/4	Penultimate year (3-5)			
Penultimate year (3-5)	Final year (4-6: normal completion)			
Final year (4-6: normal completion)				

Notes: Options for Year 1 students in 2000 would include transfer to the amended course or an alternative course at the University, or the Faculty may negotiate a teach-out involving cross institutional study or other arrangements.

The Faculty concerned would be required to advise Academic Senate of arrangements for all students including any option for a teach-out which would extend beyond 2004 (eg to 2005).