

Course Participation Requirements Procedure

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Purpose

This procedure describes how student participation requirements for University courses are developed, approved, published and communicated, and how applications for reasonable adjustments are made and considered.

Applicable governance instruments

Instrument	Section	Principles
Higher Education Standards Framework (Threshold Standards), 2021	7.2.1 Information for Prospective and Current Students	N/A
Disability Discrimination Act 1992 Cth	11 – Unjustifiable hardship	N/A
Disability Standards for Education 2005 Cth	Part 3 – Making reasonable adjustments Part 5 – Standards for participation	N/A
Assessment and Results Policy	1 Assessment and results	1.2
Course Design and Delivery Policy	1 Course design and delivery	1.13
Professional Experience Placement Policy	1 Professional experience placement	1.5

Procedure

1. Background

The University embraces diversity and welcomes and supports all students in their pursuit of higher education. The University is committed to:

- a) enabling students to access and to participate in education; and
- b) clearly and proactively communicating any course participation requirements to prospective and current students.

Course participation requirements are the essential tasks and capabilities required to participate in an educational offering, such as a course, at the University. They encapsulate the necessary skills and abilities needed to complete the academic requirements of a course.

Course participation requirements are specific to a particular course and are not course entry requirements.

The University sets course participation requirements primarily to assist students to make an informed decision about whether a particular course is suitable for them before undertaking a course or component of a course.

In addition to course participation requirements, there may be other general requirements of a course, such as compliance with the University's policies and procedures, and mandatory requirements associated with the course of study (e.g., completion of assignments/demonstrating attainment of intended learning outcomes).

All students are expected to adhere to the requirements of the University [Behaviour Policy](#). For this reason, behavioural expectations are not repeated in the form of course participation requirements.

Wherever possible, the University will endeavour to make reasonable adjustments to learning and teaching, assessment, professional experiences, course-related work experience and other course activities to enable participation by students with disability, carer/assistant responsibilities, and religious or cultural obligations.

Prospective and current students who are concerned about their capacities in relation to course participation requirements are strongly encouraged to contact a [Student Adviser](#) to discuss potential adjustments or alternative courses.

2. Guiding principles

Course participation requirements must be:

- a) accessible: information on requirements for all courses should be easily discoverable online, particularly in course pages provided to prospective students, and requirements should be expressed in plain English;
- b) equitable: requirements should be constructed in such a way that gives those students with disability, injury, mental health or medical condition confidence to enrol in courses, knowing they will be supported to participate and given the opportunity to demonstrate they have achieved learning outcomes;
- c) comprehensive: information should be inclusive of all requirements identified for all students, rather than singling out a specific student cohort;
- d) justifiable: a direct link must exist between any requirement and the learning outcomes of a course, the safety of students, staff and others, a legal obligation, or a requirement of a professional body;
- e) evaluable: the meeting of requirements must be capable of being objectively assessed;

- f) current: requirements must be up-to-date, in terms of academic, professional, legal, regulatory and other relevant requirements, including disability standards; and
- g) reasonable: staff should carefully consider alternative approaches to achieving learning outcomes and seek expert advice. The number of course participation requirements listed should also be reasonable, and not be a disincentive for students to apply for a course.

3. Development

Course participation requirements are developed by Colleges as part of the course design process and are reviewed annually the Course Coordinator. All course participation requirements must meet the guiding principles in Section 2 above.

Colleges are responsible for:

- a) defining, establishing and reviewing course participation requirements for specific courses or units;
- b) determining, implementing, and documenting reasonable adjustments to those requirements for individual students, where possible; and
- c) communicating course participation requirements to prospective and current students.

Not all courses need participation requirements. Course participation requirements are necessary where:

- a) there are essential tasks or capabilities, that are not entry requirements, that are required to successfully participate in the learning activities in order to meet the learning outcomes of the course; and/or
- b) the course or unit involves compulsory professional experience placements or field work.

To identify which of the learning activities in a unit or course (e.g. participation in online tasks, particular forms of assessment, attendance requirements and so forth) are essential, or may be adjusted for specific students' needs, the following may be considered:

- a) whether the learning outcomes would be substantially changed if a particular learning activity were removed or substituted.
- b) whether the pedagogical purpose behind the particular learning activity can be achieved in other ways.
- c) if a learning activity involves a particular skill, whether it is the actual skill that is required, or is it the application of knowledge to the task.
- d) whether there are alternative ways that students could demonstrate that they meet the learning outcomes.
- e) in the case of review of existing course participation requirements, whether circumstances, practices or technologies have changed making a previous learning activity or course participation requirements redundant.

An attribute or ability must not be prescribed as a participation requirement if the student might be able to achieve the desired learning outcome in another way. For example, visual acuity should not be prescribed as a requirement if the learning outcome, including clinical, professional or work integrated learning placements, can be successfully completed with the use of spoken text and other aids to access information.

Requirements imposed by external agencies (e.g., professional bodies, registration bodies, external fieldwork agencies) can only be considered to be core/essential requirements if they are also considered by the University as essential to the attainment of the learning outcomes for the course itself.

Further advice and information is available from the [Digital Futures](#) and [Professional Learning](#) teams.

4. Approval and amendment

Course participation requirements or amendments to existing requirements are approved by the relevant College Learning and Teaching Committee. Once approved, the requirements are then reported by the College to the University Course and Unit Proposals Committee.

5. Publication and communication

Course participation requirements apply to students in the relevant course from the date they are published in the Course and Unit Handbook.

Course participation requirements for a specific course may not apply to students who are admitted to that course prior to the publication of the requirements for that course.

Course participation requirements must be clear and transparent to prospective and current students. Clearly identifying, articulating and communicating any course participation requirements helps prospective and current students make informed decisions about the demands of a course or unit of study. This also minimises disappointment, improves retention and success, and can help to avoid complaints of discrimination.

Colleges are responsible for ensuring that approved course participation requirements are published under the relevant course page in the Course and Unit Handbook, together with the following further information:

- a) a statement advising students that reasonable adjustments can be made to a course to meet the needs of students with disability, injury or health condition provided academic standards are maintained.
- b) information on the available support services and inviting students to make early contact to discuss their support needs.

6. Making reasonable adjustments for individual students

6.1. Reasonable adjustments

A reasonable adjustment is any variation made by the University modifying the learning environment to accommodate the needs of students with disability, injury or health condition taking into account the course participation requirements.

Universities work with students in determining whether an adjustment is reasonable. Universities are empowered under the [Disability Standards for Education 2005](#) to deem an adjustment *unreasonable* if it compromises the integrity of the course and/or the achievement of learning outcomes.

Prospective and current students who are able to meet a course participation requirement with the application of a reasonable adjustment are considered to be able to meet the requirement.

Reasonable adjustments can be made to any aspect of a student's educational experience, including but not limited to: how curricula are delivered; the conduct of clinical, professional or work integrated learning placements; and the way in which learning outcomes are achieved, demonstrated or assessed. Reasonable adjustments must:

- a) not fundamentally change the nature of the course and its learning outcomes;
- b) be consistent with any restrictions imposed by a relevant professional accreditation body;
- c) be consistent with legislative and regulatory requirements, and not compromise workplace health and safety, or any relevant codes, guidelines and policies;
- d) not enable unethical or unprofessional behaviour;
- e) address the need to perform the full range of tasks involved in the course, including undertaking learning activities in mixed gender environments, which reflect the Australian context; and

- f) ensure that performance is consistent and sustained over a given period.

Examples of adjustments include, but are not limited, to provision of the following:

- a) flexibility in teaching materials and learning activities;
- b) changed exam conditions;
- c) provision of adaptive equipment and technologies;
- d) participation support; and
- e) note taking services.

Reasonable adjustments may be included in Learning Access Plans (LAPs).

Students with disability may negotiate reasonable adjustments which do not compromise the core/essential requirements of a unit or course.

Determining what is a course participation requirement is often difficult. However, understanding these requirements assists in ensuring that any reasonable adjustments made do not affect academic standards.

6.2. Applications for reasonable adjustment

Students are encouraged to negotiate reasonable adjustments in a timely manner. [Accessibility Services](#) can assist students and staff in this process. Students should be encouraged early to make contact with an Accessibility Adviser and with academic staff to discuss their learning support needs and any adjustments and/or services they require. This will provide the opportunity to make preparations in advance, if necessary.

All students with a disability and/or health condition are encouraged to register with [Accessibility Services](#) by providing a completed Health Practitioner's Report or relevant medical documentation, and making an appointment with an Accessibility Adviser who can:

- a) meet with the student to assess their needs;
- b) work with the student and the College to determine the reasonable adjustments to assist the student to meet the requirements; and
- c) provide guidance regarding other study options in the case where it is determined that requirements cannot be met with reasonable adjustments.

Students should contact Accessibility Services at Accessibility.Services@utas.edu.au if they have any questions relating to the assessment and implementation of disability supports, reasonable adjustments or course participation requirements.

It is important for students to meet all compulsory course requirements. If the student is unable to demonstrate the course participation requirements, with reasonable adjustments applied, this may impact on the student's course completion. Courses where this situation might arise may include those with compulsory professional experience placement and/or fieldwork activities.

The University will work with students as far as possible to ensure that adjustments do not unduly impact course duration and will advise students of the need to remain compliant with maximum course duration rules as established by the University.

6.3. Clinical, professional experience and work integrated learning placements

Course participation requirements are primarily intended to provide information, clarity and support to prospective and current students, not to act as barriers to progression. It is appropriate for the University, however, to assess if a prospective or current student is able to meet the participation requirements of

particular aspects of a course, including clinical, professional experience and work integrated learning placement.

If an adjustment is requested to a participation requirement relating to clinical, professional experience and work integrated learning placements, the capacity of the placement organisation to support the adjustment must be considered. If the adjustment cannot be safely implemented in the context of the placement, the adjustment will not be held to be a reasonable adjustment in that particular context.

6.4. Temporary circumstances

Students who experience temporary circumstances which impede their ability to meet any course participation requirements for a limited period of time may be eligible to obtain temporary adjustments under the University's special consideration arrangements (see *Assessment and Results Procedure*).

7. Where reasonable adjustment cannot be made or maintained

In some circumstances, reasonable adjustments cannot be made and a student will be ineligible to participate in a particular course. Examples of such circumstances include, but are not limited to:

- a) an inability to secure a current Working with Vulnerable People Check precluding a student from being able to undertake compulsory placements in an education or health program; or
- b) an inability to make reasonable adjustments in the education, healthcare or workplace environment in relation to physical, psychological, or sensory disabilities precluding students from being able to undertake compulsory placements in a health-related program; or
- c) disclosures on police checks that may preclude students from being able to undertake compulsory placements.

After reasonable adjustments have been negotiated, a student or teaching staff/Accessibility Advisers may believe that a student will be unable to participate successfully in a course due to the impact of their disability or health condition. In this situation, teaching staff should consult with Accessibility Advisers so that the student can be advised of these concerns and may decide not to enrol in the course as a result.

If the student decides to continue with their enrolment in this context, they may fail the course as a result of being unable to meet the requirements of the course, despite the provision of reasonable adjustments.

If the student's enrolment raises legitimate safety concerns, the University's policies and procedures, such as the *Safety and Wellbeing Procedure for Our Community Members*, may prevent the student from enrolling on that basis. In such cases, there must be demonstrable evidence that there has been consultation with the student, all possible adjustments have been considered, and expert assistance has been sought.

Students who become permanently unable to meet the participation requirements of their course, even with the application of reasonable adjustments, must be advised of alternative options for study. Where relevant, professional accreditation bodies with mandatory reporting requirements must be advised if a student is, or becomes, permanently unable to meet one or more course participation requirements.

Related procedures

Assessment and Results Procedure

Professional Experience Placement Procedure

Safety and Wellbeing Procedure for Our Community Members

Versions

Version	Action	Approved By	Responsible Officer/s	Approval Date
1	Approved	Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Education)	Pro Vice-Chancellor (Student Equity and Success) Director Curriculum	21 June 2023

Schedule A: Common categories of course participation requirements

Note: Course participation requirements may be specified under any of the following categories. It is not mandatory for all courses to list requirements in all categories. Only requirements that are relevant to the course should be specified. The list of examples provided below is not intended to be either prescriptive or exhaustive. The particular requirements that apply within each category should be defined with reference to the particular needs and restrictions that apply to the course.

Legal requirements:

- This relates to the understanding and ability to comply with Australian and Tasmanian law and professional accreditation regulations. Any relevant regulations may be included.
- Examples include: child protection and safety legislation (including ability to pass a working with children check); criminal history/ police checks; occupational health and safety; anti-discrimination legislation.

Ethical and professional behaviour:

- This relates to the student's ability to understand and adhere to standards, codes, guidelines and policies that facilitate safe, competent interactions and relationships for students and the people they engage with.
- Examples include: complying with academic and non-academic conduct codes and policies, including academic integrity policies; understanding and complying with professional standards, codes of practice and guidelines.

Safe practice:

- Where relevant, this relates to considerations of current scope of practice, workplace health and safety, and any other matter related to safety.
- Examples include: ability to understand and comply with all relevant workplace health and safety policies and practices; ability to identify and respond to alarm systems; ability to understand and demonstrate compliance with current scope of practice; ability to manage one's own health in a manner that promotes the ability to fulfill the requirements of study; placements; and the role/s for which the study typically equips the graduate.

Cognition:

- This relates to the student's capacity for knowledge acquisition, utilisation and retention. It also includes metacognitive capacity such as awareness of one's own thinking, and the ability to reflect, evaluate, adapt and implement new cognitive strategies.
- Examples include: focus, memory, attention to detail, theoretical deliberation, and practical functioning sufficient to meet the course objectives; ability to reflect and take personal responsibility; ability to apply knowledge in practical and theoretical assessment settings.

Literacy:

- This includes both writing and reading and is also linked to English language proficiency (literacy requirements are always established in terms of English). NB: For VET courses, literacy requirements are based on the Australian Core Skills Framework (ACSF).
- Examples include: capacity to comprehend, summarise and reference a range of literature in accordance with appropriate academic conventions in written assignments; producing clear, accurate documentation relating to practical tasks.

Numeracy:

- This includes any form of numeracy required to complete the course successfully. For many courses, this will be basic functional numeracy. NB: For VET courses, numeracy requirements are based on the Australian Core Skills Framework (ACSF).

- Examples include: competent reasoning and reliable accuracy with numerical concepts; ability to perform basic mathematical tasks.

Communication:

- This includes verbal, non-verbal and written communication.
- Examples include: verbal communication in English to a standard that allows fluid, clear, and comprehensible two-way discussions; ability to recognise, interpret and respond to non-verbal cues, to communicate with congruent and respectful non-verbal behaviour, and to be sensitive to individual and/or cultural variations in non-verbal communication; ability to produce English text to the expected standard (NB: This is a skill that may be developed throughout a course, and should be identified as such in any requirements statement).

Sensory ability:

- This includes visual, auditory and tactile capacity. NB: Care must be taken to not prescribe any sensory ability as a participation requirement if the student might be able to achieve the desired outcome with the use of one or more adjustments.
- Examples include: ability to interact with visual inputs sufficiently to manage learning environments; ability to interact with auditory inputs sufficiently to manage learning environments; ability to respond to tactile input and provide appropriate tactile interaction

Motor ability:

- This includes both gross and fine motor ability. NB: Care must be taken to not prescribe any motor ability as a participation requirement if the student might be able to achieve the desired outcome with the use of one or more adjustments.
- Examples include: strength, range of motion, coordination and mobility sufficient to meet the requirements of the study, including placements included in the course; manual dexterity and fine motor skills sufficient to meet the requirements of the study, including placements included in the course.

Sustained performance:

- This includes a person's ability to sustain their performance in a given activity or series of activities over time. Care must be taken to not prescribe sustained performance in a way that allows no room for temporary changes to performance levels due to a health condition or other factors.
- Examples include: ability to sustain a working posture, associated manual tasks, cognitive engagement, performance level and emotional control for the full duration of any task required as part of the course or any placement.

Behavioural adaptability:

- This includes the personal flexibility and resilience required to adapt behaviour to different situations, even when they are stressful or difficult. NB: Care must be taken to allow room in the participation requirement for the individual to demonstrate behavioural adaptability through withdrawing from activities for a time to undertake medical interventions and self-care measures.
- Examples include: ability to adjust ways of working to work within teams of varied personal and professional backgrounds; being receptive and responding appropriately to constructive feedback; maintaining respectful communication practices in times of increased stressors or workloads; adjusting to changing circumstances in a way that allows self-care.

Training packages/accredited curriculum requirements (for VET only):

- This relates to a VET student's ability to meet the performance skills and knowledge evidence requirements specified in the relevant training product.