

Courses and units approvals process

The terms of reference of the School Academic Committees require them to consider proposals for new units, and major and minor unit changes, and either to ask the proposers to make adjustments to the proposals, or to **recommend** them for approval by the College Education, Assessment and Progression Committee (CEAPC). The Committees are also required **to consider** proposals for new courses and make any comments to the CEAPC regarding the proposals they consider appropriate.

Academic staff developing a unit or course are encouraged to contact the **Course Data Management Team** at an early stage in the process for advice on completing documentation, and course and unit rule implications, as well as registration of documents in TRIM. [email address courses@uws.edu.au]. An on-line Courses and Publications System (CAPS) will be implemented in 2010 under which academic staff will be able to access previous versions of templates and submit new proposals and amendments electronically.

Examples of unit and course issues that will be considered at meetings

Units

Check that all answers to all questions in the unit template are correct. For example, is the rationale clear, is the unit level correct, are the assessment requirements clear and unambiguous, is the handbook entry correct and succinct? The Course Data Management team can check documentation for staff and provide advice to ensure that details are correctly recorded.

- o **Assessment details in unit proposals**

These should comply with the Assessment Policy – Criteria and Standards-based assessment, and the Unit Outline and Learning Guides Policy. UWS uses a criteria and standards-based approach to student assessment. This requires that the criteria for assessing students are identified and performance standards are described so that students know the level of performance required for each assessment task.

The content of the Unit Outline, which is given to students, is drawn from the unit template approved by the College Education, Assessment and Progression Committee. To fulfil its quality assurance role on behalf of the School, the Committee might consider the following issues:

- Are the pre-requisites and co-requisites realistic and necessary?
- Are the Learning outcomes achievable and measurable?
- Is the unit content realistic for the time available?
- Do the assessment items and percentages for each component match in the related question numbers?
- Are the word limits excessive when other assessments for the course are taken into consideration?

- **Library resources in unit proposals**

- Has the Unit Coordinator given the Library the opportunity to update the reading lists
- Are there sufficient electronic resources, especially for units delivered by distance mode, or offshore?

Courses

- Consider integration of assessment across the course
- Consult with other Schools about any multi-disciplinary aspects
- Consider whether the location of units in the course structure is appropriate
- Consider whether there are any major gaps in content coverage in the course (in light of likely student demand).

Units and courses

Transition arrangements should be clear for students currently enrolled in units or courses that are being replaced by new versions, or being retired.

Professional accreditation issues

- Consider whether the course will meet professional accreditation requirements.
- Maintain up to date records about professional accreditation granted for units and courses. If a new version of a course is approved, or is waiting for approval, ensure that no statements are published claiming that professional accreditation exists until confirmation in writing is received from the accrediting body. Copies of letters or certificates confirming external accreditation should be sent to courses@uws.edu.au for recording on the Master Course files.

Sample recommendations for course and unit proposals submitted to the SAC

When unit and course proposals are submitted to the SAC the agenda should contain an appropriate recommendation. The recommendations submitted to the College Education, Assessment and Progression Committees, and the Academic Planning and Courses Approvals Committee, are prepared by the Course Data Management team. SACs are encouraged to use the same format, shown below. Further examples of recommendations for use with the various kinds of proposals that will be submitted to the SAC are contained in the [document attached](#).

Major Unit Variation (New Code & Unit Name replacing old unit) (approved by CEAPC)

It is recommended:

That the School Academic Committee endorses the unit [unit code and name], which replaces [unit code and name] and consists of change to [add variation], to commence in [session and year] and recommends the proposal to the College Education, Assessment and Progression Committee for approval. TRIM reference:

Minor Unit Variation (approved by HOS and noted at EAPC)

It is recommended:

That the School Academic Committee notes the minor variation to [unit code and name] consisting of [variation], to commence in [year] and recommends the proposal to the College Education, Assessment and Progression Committee for noting. TRIM reference:

Major Unit Set Variation (Senate approval required)

It is recommended:

That the School Academic Committee endorses the major unit set variation to [unit set code and name] consisting of [variation] to commence in [year] and recommends the proposal to the College Education, Assessment and Progression Committee. TRIM reference:

Major Course Variation (Senate approval required)

It is recommended:

That the School Academic Committee endorses the major course variation to [course code and name] consisting of [variation] to commence in [year] and recommends the proposal to the College Education, Assessment and Progression Committee. TRIM reference:

Timeline for approval of new and amended courses and units

COURSE Deadlines

New Courses

- UG – November CEAPC to make February APCAC & Academic Senate of **preceding** year
- PG – April CEAPC to make May APCAC & Academic Senate of **preceding** year

Major variations to Courses

- April CEAPC to make May APCAC & Academic Senate of preceding year (includes variations as a result of new units/major variations to units)

UNIT SET (Key Programs, Majors, sub-majors etc) Deadlines

New Unit Sets

- UG – November CEAPC to make February APCAC & Academic Senate of **preceding** year
- PG – April CEAPC to make May APCAC & Academic Senate of **preceding** year

Major variations to Unit Sets

- April CEAPC to make May APCAC & Academic Senate of **preceding** year (includes variations as a result of new units/major variations to units)

UNIT Deadlines

New units

- April CEAPC of **preceding** year

Major variations to units

- July CEAPC of **preceding** year

Minor variations to units

- Any time prior to publication/distribution to students of Unit Outlines.