

EQUIVALENCE POLICY

Section	Academic
Contact	Academic Strategy Manager
Last Review	May 2012
Next Review	May 2015
Approval	AB12/74-July: 3.1

Purpose

To ensure that all offerings of the same paper in a given semester are equivalent in that the expected learning outcomes are the same, and there is equity and parity of the student learning experience whereby students have similar opportunities to engage with the curriculum, assessment, and academic support toward achievement of the learning outcomes, and the coherence of the papers that contribute to qualifications is maintained.

Scope

The Equivalence Policy applies to all undergraduate and taught postgraduate papers.

Policy

Each offering of the same paper in a single semester, regardless of the mode and location for the delivery of that paper, will have equivalent teaching, learning and assessment activities. For undergraduate paper offerings, equivalence will be made explicit through:

- identical paper prescriptions and expected learning outcomes
- identical assessment weightings using assessments that have similar workload requirements
- equivalent assessments linked to the same learning outcomes
- identical course texts¹ unless an exception is approved by the PVC or their nominee

Lecturers teaching the same paper may introduce variations with respect to experiences, examples, and emphases as a function of their own expertise, and the background and interests of the students. However, such variations are subject to any overarching requirements of the qualifications the paper is associated with including professional accreditation requirements.

Colleges may elect to establish additional authorization requirements relating to Equivalence.

Definitions

Equivalence is defined as the means by which equity and parity of the student learning experience and outcomes is achieved.

A paper is defined as a module of work in a particular subject that is identified by means of a unique code number. Each paper carries its own credit value.

¹ Course texts include any textbook, whether available in hard copy or digital form, that is prescribed via IPP.

A paper offering is paper at a particular campus location in a given semester and delivered either internally, distance or by block course.

Learning Outcomes are statements of the knowledge, skills and attitudes that students are expected to demonstrate as a result of successfully completing a course of learning. Learning outcomes are usually stated in terms of observable and/or measurable behaviour.

Responsibilities

Collegial communication and cooperation amongst the teams teaching each offering of a paper and across paper offerings provides the basis for equivalence and in many cases the established processes for communication within departments must be extended to include colleagues in other disciplines and Colleges.

Programme leaders (or equivalent) and/or Paper Coordinators are responsible for ensuring the equivalence of papers taught at different times, in different modes, or at different locations. These staff are expected to work collaboratively with all teaching staff during the planning and delivery phases of each paper offering to ensure that:

- the curriculum meets the requirements of the paper prescription and learning outcomes which are informed by the aims of the qualifications that the paper is associated with;
- the assessment design is equivalent and that any variations in the assessment are agreed by all the teaching staff;
- relevant Heads of Department, Institutes or Schools or programme leaders (as appropriate) are informed by the paper coordinator at the earliest opportunity of any risks to the equivalence of papers and offerings.

Staff who contribute to the teaching of paper offerings are expected to engage constructively with Paper Coordinators and/or programme leaders (or equivalent) in the assurance of equivalence including keeping them informed of any developments which threaten the equivalence of the offering.

Heads of Departments, Institutes or Schools (or programme leaders as appropriate) are responsible for mediating any disputes arising from the equivalence requirements. In the event of irreconcilable differences of opinion that threaten equivalence, the final option must be to offer the papers under separate titles and numbers, subject to the University's processes for paper approvals and any requirements for viability set by the College.

Pro Vice-Chancellors have overall responsibility for ensuring the effective and efficient implementation of the University's Equivalence Policy.

Records

The information requirements for Paper Outlines and Paper Guides can be used to verify that the University's Equivalence Policy is being given effect.

Audience

All staff and students

Relevant Legislation

None

Legal Compliance

None

Related Procedures/Documents

[Assessment Strategy, Principles and Guidelines](#)
[Massey University Qualifications Policy](#)
[Massey University Qualifications Framework](#)
[Teaching and Learning Policy](#)
Policy on Student Modes and Study Resources

Document Management Control

Prepared by: Academic Strategy Manager
Authorised by: Assistant Vice-Chancellor (Academic & International)
Approved by: AB12/74-July: 3.1
Date issued: 20 June 2012
Last review: May 2012
Next review: May 2015