



POLICY

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| Name: | COURSE RULES |
| Policy No: | PP3110 |
| Approved by: | ACER Academic Board |
| Last reviewed: | May 2019 |
| Responsible Division/Department | Professional Resources Division/ ACER Institute |

1. Purpose

To set out the rules that govern Students' admission, enrolment, and progression through ACER's Higher Education Courses. Course Rules are to be read in conjunction with other rules, codes of practice, schedules, policies and procedures.

2. Scope

This policy applies to Staff Members and Students.

3. Definitions

See: [Glossary of Terms](#)

4. Legislation and Related Documents

[ACER Electronic Communication and Information Systems \(ECIS\) Policy \(internal\)](#)

[ACER Records Management Policy \(internal\)](#)

[Affirmative Action \(Equal Employment Opportunity for Women\) Act 1986 \(Cwlth\)](#)

[Australian Qualifications Framework \(AQF\) 2nd edn. \(Jan 2013\)](#)

[AQF Qualifications Pathway Policy](#)

[Disability Discrimination Act 1992 \(Cwlth\)](#)

[Disability Standards for Education 2005](#)

[Equal Opportunity Act 1995 \(Vic\)](#)

[Higher Education Standards Framework \(Threshold Standards\) 2015](#)

[Racial Discrimination Act 1975 \(Cwlth\)](#)

[ACER Student policies](#)

5. Selection and Admission

Eligibility requirements for selection and admission will be clearly expressed and publicly available; refer to ACER PP3120 Selection and Admissions Policy.

Applicants will normally be considered for admission to a postgraduate Course or Unit on the basis of a completed three or four-year undergraduate degree in a relevant discipline.

6. Academic Credit and Recognition of Prior Learning

Students who may be eligible to apply for credit should refer to ACER PP3112 Academic Credit and RPL Policy.

7. General Enrolment Rules

7.1 Enrolment in a Course or Unit

A Student may enrol in a Course or Unit provided that:

- i. The conditions for enrolment specified for that Course or Unit are satisfied.
- ii. The Course or Unit is not already fully subscribed.
- iii. The Course or Unit attracts sufficient Students to enable its delivery.
- iv. The Student is not suspended, excluded or expelled from the ACER Institute as the result of a previous action, see section 10;
- v. There are appropriate and sufficient personnel and resources to enable the delivery of the Course or Unit.

7.2 Withdrawal from a Course or Unit

This section should be read in conjunction with ACER PP3120 Selection and Admissions Policy.

- i. A Student enrolled in a Course or Unit in contravention of the conditions for enrolment shall be withdrawn from the Course or Unit unless permitted by The Director to remain enrolled.
- ii. A Student may voluntarily withdraw from a Course or Unit; refer to ACER PP3120 Selection and Admissions Policy.

7.3 Deferment from a Course or Unit

- i. A Student may apply to defer a place in a Course or Unit without penalty provided such a deferral is made before the Course or Unit commencement date. This is done by applying by email to the Course Coordinator for a Leave of Absence, see section 9.
- ii. A Student who wishes to defer a Unit after the Census Date, but without obtaining an Approved Leave of Absence, will have their enrolment lapsed. In addition, a grade of Fail

will be recorded for the Units not completed on the official academic transcript. Once enrolment has lapsed, the Student will need to re-apply for enrolment.

- iii. A Student may apply to defer from a Unit late without academic penalty through application to the Course Coordinator providing the reasons for deferral and proposal for a resumption of studies at a later date. Also see PP3109, Student Fees Policy.
- iv. If an application for late deferral from a Unit without academic or financial penalty is approved, the Student will be deemed to have deferred from the Unit without penalty and the Unit shall be recorded as “Approved deferral” on the enrolment record and the Unit will not appear on the academic transcript. Also see PP3109, Student Fees Policy.
- v. If an application for late deferral from a Unit without academic or financial penalty is not Approved, the enrolment will stand, and a grade will be declared for that Unit. Also see PP3109, Student Fees Policy. The Student may appeal the grade; refer to ACER PP3118 Academic Appeals Policy.

8. Time Limits for Completion

- i. The minimum and maximum time limits for completion of Courses and Units apply, other than when Approval for an extension is given in exceptional circumstances.
- ii. Normally a Student completing a Graduate Certificate (four Units of study) would be expected to complete the Course in no more than three years (part-time), unless the Student has an Approved Leave of Absence.
- iii. Normally a Student completing a Graduate Diploma (eight Units of study) would be expected to complete the Course in no more than five years (part-time), unless the Student has an Approved Leave of Absence.
- iv. Normally a Student completing a Masters qualification (12-16 Units of study) would be expected to complete the Course in no more than 10 years (part-time), unless the Student has an Approved Leave of Absence.
- v. Approved Leave of Absence is not included as part of the maximum total Course duration.

9. Leave of Absence

- i. A Student becomes eligible for a Leave of Absence at the beginning of the second Unit in a four Unit Course if they feel that their Study Period will extend beyond the maximum completion time for the Course.
- ii. Students should note that leave can only be taken for entire Units. It is not possible for Students to take leave for only a part of a Unit.
- iii. Students who take Leave of Absence from their whole Course for more than one year should note that the Course Rules and conditions under which they originally enrolled may change during their period on leave, and that they may be subject to the rules and conditions as they apply at the time that they return to their Course.

iv. A request for Leave of Absence should be made in writing by email to The Director.

10. Refusal of Enrolment

- i. A Student may be refused enrolment in a Course or Unit due to Misconduct, suspension, exclusion or expulsion from the ACER Institute, as a consequence of failing to comply with one or more ACER policies, including with ACER PP3102 Code of Conduct.
- ii. The period of suspension will comprise one or more Units. At the end of the period of suspension, the Student may be re-admitted to the Course.

10.1 Notification of exclusion and right of appeal

A Student who meets the criteria for exclusion will receive a Notice of Exclusion with an explanation of the reason for the Notice. The Notice will also state that the Student has the right to appeal if she/he believes extenuating circumstances led to exclusion. Students should refer to ACER PP3118 Academic Appeals Policy.

10.2 Appeals against exclusion

- i. Appeals against exclusion should be made in writing and set out the reasons for the appeal. Emails should be addressed to The Director, and lodged within 14 days of receipt of the Notice.
- ii. Where practicable, The Director should, within 14 days, convene the ACER Academic Appeals Committee to consider whether the exclusion should be upheld or overturned. In addition, the Committee may specify the duration of the exclusion and the conditions which must be met before re-enrolment will be considered.
- iii. A decision by the ACER Academic Appeals Committee is final; refer to ACER PP3118 Academic Appeals Policy.

11. Graduation

Students must complete all Course requirements before they are eligible to graduate. The ACER PP3115 Student Awards and Graduation Policy outlines eligibility for graduation, and the requirements for Graduands to receive the certification documentation to which they are entitled.

The Director is responsible for determining whether a Student has completed all Course requirements.

12. Assessment Rules

Methods of Assessment, grades, and procedures for managing the submission and return of Assessment Tasks are found in PP3130 Learning, Teaching and Assessment Policy and Procedures.

The following Assessment rules also should be read in conjunction with:

- ACER PP3102 Code of Conduct Policy;
- ACER PP3101 Academic Honesty and Integrity Policy;
- ACER PP3103 Intellectual Property Policy;
- ACER PP3104 Plagiarism Policy;
- ACER 3117 Special Consideration Policy.

13. Assessment Responsibilities of Students

13.1 Assessment Task requirements

- i. Unless permission is first obtained from the relevant Staff Member, Students must submit the prescribed Assessment Task in accordance with the requirements set out, or referred to, in the relevant Course or Unit Guide, which is distributed to Students at the commencement of their study. Failure to meet the requirements for an Assessment Task as set out in the Course or Unit Guide may result in a reduction in marks or a fail grade for that Assessment Task.
- ii. Students should keep a copy of all work submitted for assessment and should be prepared to submit a copy if requested.
- iii. Students sitting an Examination must comply with the ACER Examination requirements.

13.2 Special consideration

Students may apply for academic consideration under the ACER PP3117 Special Consideration Policy if they believe that their academic performance in one or more Assessment Tasks has been, or is likely to be, adversely affected by illness or other circumstances beyond their control.

13.3 Request for extension of the due date of an Assessment Task

- i. An application for an extension of the due date of an assignment should be made by email to the online facilitator in the Unit, who will consider the request with the Course Coordinator. Extension requests must be made at least three (3) working days prior to the advertised submission date. Normally a Staff Member will respond within 48 hours of receipt of the extension request, and notify the applicant (by email) of the outcome. If the application is denied, reasons for that decision will be stated.
- ii. Detailed information around the late submission of an Assessment Task is found in PP3130 Learning, Teaching and Assessment Policy and Procedures.

13.4 Application to undertake a supplementary Assessment Task or Examination:

- i. A Student may apply for a supplementary Examination if circumstances arise that prevent the Student from attending or completing an Examination, or affect their performance in that Examination.
- ii. A Student may also be offered the opportunity of a supplementary Examination if she/he failed the original Examination, but the Course Coordinator is of the view that the Student's capacity to pass the Examination was unduly affected due to factors beyond the Student's control, for example examination nerves.
- iii. A supplementary Assessment Task may be granted by The Director if a Student has completed all Tasks, and has a final Unit grade of between 45 to 49%. Students may be offered the opportunity to demonstrate competence through an alternative assessment mechanism. For supplementary assessment, only a Pass grade may be awarded.

13.5 Conduct during Examinations

Students sitting an Examination must NOT:

- i. Have in their possession any material that is not authorised by the Examination Invigilator for the subject concerned;
- ii. Communicate with any other Student, unless expressly Approved by the Examination Invigilator;
- iii. Bring a mobile phone or other electronic device into a physical exam room. A non-programmable calculator is acceptable.
- iv. Give or endeavour to give assistance to any other Student, unless expressly approved by the Examination Invigilator;
- v. Accept or endeavour to accept assistance from any Student or other person, unless such assistance has been expressly approved by the Examination Invigilator;
- vi. Permit any other Student to read, copy from or use their Examination question or answer paper/online paper, unless expressly Approved by the Examination Invigilator;
- vii. Use any other material belonging to, or written by, another Student or other person unless expressly Approved by the Examination Invigilator;
- viii. Remove from the Examination Room any question or answer paper, other paper provided for use by the Student during the course of the examination or test, or other material which is the property of ACER, unless authorised by the Examination Invigilator;
- ix. Cause a disturbance or behave in a manner likely to disturb any other Student.

Students sitting an Examination MUST:

- i. Obey any instruction given by an Examination Invigilator for the proper conduct of an

Examination or test;

- ii. Provide evidence to confirm their identity and eligibility to be in the examination room/online room;
- iii. Arrive 10 minutes before an Examination. Candidates who arrive within the first 30 minutes after Examination start time will be permitted to undertake the Examination but will not be allowed additional time. Candidates who arrive more than 30 minutes after the Examination start time will not be permitted to undertake the Examination.
- iv. Stay seated in the Examination Room until the time allocated for the Examination is complete, unless otherwise directed by the Examination Invigilator.

A Student who does not comply with the Examination rules:

May be guilty of Misconduct under the ACER PP3102 Code of Conduct Policy and disciplinary action may be taken by an authorised person. The Student will normally be allowed to complete the Examination but may be required to leave the Examination Room immediately in circumstances considered inappropriate by the Director.

14. Declaration and Release of Final Results

- i. A mark and an Approved grade of performance is determined and declared for each Unit in which a Student is enrolled, in accordance with ACER PP3130 Learning, Teaching and Assessment Policy and Procedures.
- ii. After final results are declared, the results are released in a format, and at a time, determined by The Director.

15. Withheld results

When a result is withheld, the initials WH will appear on the result notice/on the Student Management System. Withheld results may occur for a variety of reasons:

- i. On medical or compassionate grounds – supported by an approved request under the ACER PP3117 Special Consideration Policy;
- ii. For investigative grounds - any formal investigation carried out by a person or committee authorised to conduct the investigation;
- iii. For an Approved extension of the submission date.
- iv. When a WH is given, it is the Student’s responsibility to contact the Staff Member as soon as practical. Failure to do so will result in an automatic fail grade being determined after 10 weeks from the release of results.
- v. A grade must be declared by a Staff Member 10 weeks after the release of the WH results date. If an extension after that 10-week period is required, the Staff Member must submit a request for an additional four-week extension for the non-declaration of results, and a

reason must be provided.

- vi. The extension must be submitted within 10 weeks from the release of results date. Failure to request an extension will result in an automatic fail grade being given after the 10-week period. If an extension has been granted failure to declare a result within four weeks from the extension date will result in an automatic fail grade being given.

16. Grades of Performance

The Approved grades of performance and associated ranges of marks are as follows:

| Satisfactory completion | |
|----------------------------------|-------------|
| High Distinction | 85% to 100% |
| Distinction | 75% to 84% |
| Credit | 65% to 74% |
| Pass | 50% to 64% |
| Unsatisfactory completion | |
| Fail | 0% to 49% |

17. Dispute Resolution

Should a dispute arise in relation to the interpretation or application of this policy or its procedures a Grievance may be notified and managed in accordance with the ACER PP3111 Student Grievance Resolution Policy.

The ACER PP3111 Student Grievance Resolution Policy cannot be invoked to overturn a decision made by the ACER Academic Appeals Committee or other Unit-based decisions in relation to academic matters.

18. Awareness of Policy

The Director will take reasonable steps to disseminate and explain this policy to Staff Members and Students who may be affected by it. The policy will be available online at: <https://www.acer.org/professional-learning/postgraduate/students/policies>.

19. Version Control

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| Authorised by | ACER Academic Board |
| Maintained by: | Director, ACER Institute |
| Written: | January 2013 |
| Next Review: | December 2020 |
| Version: | 6 |

| Version | Date effective | Approved by | Amendment |
|---------|----------------|-------------------|--|
| 1. | 29/1/2013 | E. Hartnell-Young | Logo, Page Numbers. |
| 2. | 13/03/2013 | C. Kemp | Last review date updated, Version Control details included, formatting. |
| 3. | 12/11/2015 | G. Appleby | Definitions, Purpose, Scope,7.2,7.3,7.4,8,12.1,13.3,13.4, 13.6, Awareness of Policy, Version Control details, formatting. |
| 4. | 17/8/2016 | P. Taylor-Guy | Aligned this Policy with recent changes to policy and new policies Deleted unnecessary duplicate information Aligned information with Course Handbook Added supplementary assessment Added to 13.8 examinations section Clarified 14.3.1 procedure Remove table of Definitions and add link. Update Legislation and Related Documents. Update Version Control |
| 5. | 1/8/2018 | P. Taylor-Guy | Aligned information in Section 7 with the July 2018 Tuition Fees Policy. Updated URLs Version Control |
| 6. | 30/5/2019 | P. Taylor-Guy | Edits to fix in-text incorrect policy nomenclature 13.2 Minimum attendance requirements removed Removed all duplicated information (such as that in PP3110, and withdrawing from a Unit, credit/RPL; added policy numbers) Added: Applicants will normally be considered for admission to a postgraduate Course or Unit on the basis of a completed three or four-year undergraduate degree in a relevant discipline Added: Time limit for Masters Students will receive their results in the mail. No information concerning results will be given by telephone, replaced with: After final results are declared, the results are released in a format, and at a time, determined by The Director. Quality check. Formatting. Updated version control to v.6. |