

# Subject Descriptions and Subject Outlines Policy

## 1. Purpose

- 1.1 The Subject Descriptions and Subject Outlines Policy (the policy) details the minimum information that must be included in subject descriptions and subject outlines. It also outlines how subject information is approved and updated.

## 2. Scope

- 2.1 This policy applies to all staff responsible for developing, approving and distributing subject descriptions and subject outlines for all UTS subjects. It should be read in conjunction with the [Student Rules](#) and the [Coursework Assessments Policy and Procedures](#).

## 3. Principles

- 3.1 Good subject design leads to high-quality student learning. The development of subject descriptions and subject outlines contributes to the quality of students' learning.
- 3.2 Subject descriptions and subject outlines:
- show how subjects contribute to the course(s) of which they are a part
  - help students to achieve course intended learning outcomes (CILOs) and graduate attributes, and
  - support the university's [vision](#), [values](#), [model of learning](#) and [learning.futures strategy](#).
- 3.3 UTS's Curriculum and Student System (CASS) and Curriculum Information System (CIS) are the authoritative sources of UTS course and subject information.
- 3.4 Subject information provided to students (and prospective students) must be consistent with the information recorded in CASS and CIS and published in the UTS Handbook (refer [Rule 3.2.3](#)).

## 4. Policy statements

### Approval and change process

- 4.1 Faculty boards approve subject descriptions. Faculties are best placed to determine a subject's disciplinary and professional currency and quality and how it aligns with the faculty's courses.

- 4.2 Subject descriptions must contain enough information to allow assessment and approval by faculty boards. Faculties may specify additional minimum requirements or information for approval.
- 4.3 Subject descriptions must be reapproved at minimum once every five years, normally in line with the reaccreditation of the course(s) of which they are a part. Faculties may determine a shorter period of time for reapproval.
- 4.4 Subject outlines inform students about the expectations and requirements of subjects in which they are enrolled. They are based on, and must be consistent with, faculty-approved subject descriptions.
- 4.5 Faculties must have procedures to approve changes and updates to the subject information that is originally approved by the faculty board (see also [curriculum approval](#) on Staff Connect). These procedures must specify the levels and types of changes that require faculty board approval and the types of changes that may be approved at other levels.
- 4.6 The procedures must allow subject coordinators to update certain information in subject outlines to maintain currency and respond to feedback. While subject descriptions must be approved by faculty boards, faculty boards may delegate authority to approve certain changes to subjects.
- 4.7 Approved subject outlines must be made available through the learning management system (LMS) to all students enrolled in the subject by no later than the Monday prior to week one of the relevant teaching session.

### Minimum requirements for subject descriptions and subject outlines

4.8 The following table outlines:

- the minimum information that must be contained in subject descriptions for faculty board approval
- the minimum information that must be contained in subject outlines for students
- the approval details for subject information (in line with statements 4.5 and 4.6).

Information	Subject description	Subject outline	Changes require approval through the faculty's change procedures	Changes may be made by the subject coordinator
Subject name and number	✓	✓	✓	
Credit points	✓	✓	✓	
Prerequisite and co-requisite subject(s), if applicable	✓	✓	✓	
Other requisites (eg internships), if applicable	✓		✓	
Anti-requisite(s), if applicable	✓		✓	
Subject replacements, if applicable	✓		✓	

Information	Subject description	Subject outline	Changes require approval through the faculty's change procedures	Changes may be made by the subject coordinator
Teaching organisational unit	✓		✓	
Subject coordinator and subject assessor (at time of approval)	✓			✓
Contact details for the subject coordinator and other teaching staff		✓		✓
Subject level (undergraduate or postgraduate)	✓		✓	
Work-integrated learning classification for the subject overall	✓		✓	
Course name(s)	✓		✓	
Course structure(s) or substructure(s) that the subject will be added to (CASS study packages)	✓		✓	
Summary subject description for the UTS Handbook	✓	✓	✓	
Subject learning objectives	✓	✓	✓	
How the subject develops students' graduate attributes, achieves CILOs and is relevant to the UTS model of learning	✓	✓	✓	
Modes of offering and how the subject is delivered (eg weekly classes, block, online, distance)	✓	✓	✓	
Teaching and learning activities	✓	✓		✓
Subject content (content areas and indicative topics at time of approval)	✓	✓		✓
Details of each assessment task including:	✓	✓		
• a descriptive heading	✓	✓	✓	
• a clear description of the task that will inform students about the nature and scope of the task		✓	✓	
• clear links between the task and the subject learning objectives, graduate attributes and CILOs	✓	✓	✓	
• weighting	✓	✓	✓	
• due date		✓		✓
• word limits, if applicable		✓	✓	

Information	Subject description	Subject outline	Changes require approval through the faculty's change procedures	Changes may be made by the subject coordinator
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>the nature and extent of group work or collaboration</li> </ul>	✓	✓	✓	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>assessment criteria and their links to subject learning objectives, CILOs and GAs (if this is not included in the subject outline it must be included as part of the additional information (refer section 4.9) or in an online system that is used for marking)</li> </ul>		✓	✓	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>where relevant, work-integrated learning classification</li> </ul>	✓			✓
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>clear guidance regarding any minimum essential requirements</li> </ul>		✓	✓	
Minimum requirements for passing the subject (eg practicums and compulsory assessment tasks)	✓	✓	✓	
General assessment information for each task (or in a section on general assessment information that applies to all assessment tasks in the subject), including:		✓		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>assessment feedback processes, including normal maximum time for provision of feedback</li> </ul>		✓		✓
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>late submission penalties, if applicable, or a reference to any course/faculty guide where these are stated</li> </ul>		✓	✓	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>statement on the use of plagiarism detection software, if applicable</li> </ul>		✓	✓	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>statement on moderation of marks between markers, if applicable</li> </ul>		✓	✓	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>provisions for student negotiation of assessment tasks, if applicable</li> </ul>		✓	✓	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>material or equipment that is allowed to be brought into an examination room, if applicable. This must be</li> </ul>		✓		✓

Information	Subject description	Subject outline	Changes require approval through the faculty's change procedures	Changes may be made by the subject coordinator
specified in the subject outline and in the examination paper (refer Rule 9.3.3)				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>information about supplementary assessments, if applicable</li> </ul>		✓	✓	
Result type (refer <a href="#">Coursework Assessments Policy</a> )	✓	✓	✓	
Any prescribed attendance requirements and a statement on the consequences of not satisfying these requirements (refer <a href="#">Rule 3.8</a> )		✓	✓	
Indicative texts and other required readings, along with examples of other references used to develop the subject	✓			✓
Essential references, including any required textbooks and other required readings. All subject outlines must reference the <a href="#">Coursework Assessments Policy and Procedures</a> as required reading		✓		✓
Any additional resource requirements, eg software, lab coats, equipment, field trips		✓		✓
A statement about learning and assessment arrangements for students with disabilities or accessibility requirements (refer <a href="#">Rule 8.2</a> ) including a brief application process and/or contact details of the faculty Academic Liaison Officer(s)		✓	✓	
Additional information <sup>1</sup>				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>result types and grade descriptors</li> </ul>	✓	✓	✓	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>how to submit assessment tasks</li> </ul>		✓	✓	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>policy on late submission/extension availability</li> </ul>		✓		✓
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>special consideration</li> </ul>		✓		✓
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>processes for the collection and return of assessment tasks</li> </ul>		✓		✓
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>referencing requirements</li> </ul>		✓		✓

Information	Subject description	Subject outline	Changes require approval through the faculty's change procedures	Changes may be made by the subject coordinator
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>guidance on academic integrity including copyright, plagiarism and intellectual property issues pertinent to the subject.</li> </ul>		✓		✓

1. Must be included in either the subject outline or in a course or faculty student guide if the same information applies to all subjects in a course or faculty (and this must be referred to in the subject outline). This information must be provided to students, or available online, by the first teaching week of the subject, except with the permission of the relevant [responsible academic officer](#).

## Further requirements

- 4.9 Additional subject information may be provided to students in detailed assessment briefs, subject guides, tutorial guides, laboratory manuals and through the LMS. This additional information must be consistent with the information in the subject outline and must be referred to in the subject outline.

## 5. Policy ownership and support

### 5.1 Policy owners:

- The **Provost** is responsible for enforcement and compliance of this policy, ensuring that its principles and statements are observed. The Provost is also responsible for approval of any associated university-level procedures.
- The **Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Education and Students)** is responsible for the educational strategies that underpin this policy.

- 5.2 **Policy contact:** The **Manager, University Academic Programs Office (UAPO)** in the Institute for Interactive Media and Learning is responsible for providing advice on the implementation of this policy and for ensuring the integrity of subject data in CASS and CIS, and the efficiency of CIS.

### 5.3 Others:

**Deans** are responsible for ensuring that faculty boards approve subject descriptions and that students have access to subject outlines in accordance with [Rule 3.7.3](#).

**Faculty boards** are responsible for approving subject descriptions.

**Responsible Academic Officer** responsibilities are outlined in the [responsibilities of Responsible Academic Officers](#).

**Subject coordinators** are responsible for:

- ensuring that the subject outline is prepared using CIS

- making the subject outline available to all students enrolled in the subject in line with [Rule 3.7.3](#)
- preparing the subject outline in sufficient time for subject assessors to meet their responsibilities
- responding to reasonable requests from academic liaison officers, staff in the accessibility service and UTS Library (for alternative formats) for early provision of information (such as required texts and readings) to meet the needs of students with accessibility requirements
- ensuring that any additional assessment and other information is consistent with the subject outline
- ensuring that the subject outline is regularly updated to maintain currency and respond to feedback
- submitting changes to faculty-approved subject information, in line with faculty-approved processes
- ensuring that all staff teaching or assessing in the subject, including tutors, demonstrators and markers, are provided with the subject outline and any additional assessment and other information and briefed, where possible, on their contents and student requirements
- responding to reasonable requests for clarification of the subject outline from subject teaching staff and students.

**Subject teaching staff**, including tutors, demonstrators and markers, are responsible for ensuring that:

- they are familiar with the contents of the subject outline
- any advice they provide to students is consistent with the information provided in the subject outline and any additional assessment, subject, course or faculty-level information.

**Students are responsible for:**

- reading the subject outline and making sure they are familiar with all subject requirements
- complying with subject requirements as published in the subject outline and any additional assessment information and any UTS, faculty or course student guide or other information that is referred to in the subject outline.

## 6. Definitions

The following definitions apply for this policy and all associated procedures. These are in addition to the definitions outlined in [Schedule 1, Student Rules](#).

**Assessment tasks** is defined in the [Coursework Assessments Policy](#).

**Curriculum Information System (CIS)** is defined in the [Award Course Approval Procedures](#).

The **Curriculum and Student System (CASS)** is defined in the [Award Course Approval Procedures](#).

**Subject description** is the official description of a subject approved by the relevant faculty board. Subject descriptions must meet minimum requirements as outlined in this policy.

**Subject learning objectives** describe what students will be able to do or understand on the successful completion of a subject.

**Subject outline** is the official document provided to students as defined in [Schedule 1, Student Rules](#).

**Work-integrated learning** is defined at [Tertiary Education Quality and Standards Agency: Guidance note: work integrated learning](#). At UTS work-integrated learning is included in internships as defined in [Schedule 1, Student Rules](#).

## 7. Approval information

Policy contact	Manager, University Academic Programs Office
Approval authority	Academic Board
Review date	Three years post approval
File number	UR20/1279
Superseded documents	Subject Descriptions and Outlines Policy 2011 (UR11/1285)

### Version history

Version	Approved by	Approval date	Effective date	Sections modified
1.0	Academic Board (AB/20-3/51)	29/07/2020	01/09/2020	New policy.

### Web version

[Subject Descriptions and Subject Outlines Policy](#)

### References

[Award Course Approval Procedures](#)

[Coursework Assessment Policy and Procedures](#)

[learning.futures strategy](#)

[Responsible Academic Officers](#)

[Student Rules](#): Rules 3.2.3, 3.7.3, 3.8, 8.2 and 9.3.3

[Tertiary Education Quality and Standards Agency: Guidance note: work integrated learning](#)

[UTS 2027 strategy](#)

[UTS model of learning](#)