

Course specification guide

Staff

The additional notes attached to each of the sections offer guidelines from a staff perspective, with links to relevant policies, procedures or other resources. These notes all appear in BLUE and links to further support can be seen in PURPLE.

You may also wish to refer to the guidelines for courses in the University Calendar, part 5: *Academic Regulations* (Section 5.6 Courses)/ section 5.1 *Definitions* for an explanation of key terminology used in course specifications and other USQ documentation found at: <http://www.usq.edu.au/corporateservices/calendar/part5.htm>

Title

Subject	Cat-nbr	Class	Term	Mode	Description	Units	Campus
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Academic group:
Academic org:
Student contribution band:
ASCED code:

Contents

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- Benchmarking
- Other requirements
- Production date

- PDF version
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Staffing

Examiner:

Moderator:

Rationale*

A statement of reasons; an outline of principles.

- Essentially, why is there a need for the course?
- How does it contribute to knowledge and skills development?
- Is it a requirement for professional accreditation?
- Does it represent a particular theory, strategy, or body of knowledge?
- Does it build on, or form a foundation for an earlier or later course?

The rationale should (succinctly, i.e. no more than 250 words) contextualise the course within the program/specialisation/wider contexts as appropriate, usually in one to two paragraphs.

Synopsis*

A brief or condensed statement giving a general overview; an outline of the main content and focus areas; an overview of primary aims of the course.

- What is the scope and purpose of the course?
 - What are the major themes or subject areas?
 - What are the intended learning outcomes?
 - Where is the course 'positioned' in relation to local, national or international settings?
 - Does it address key professional competencies, skills and knowledge areas?
 - If so, at novice or advanced levels? For example: 'This course provides an introduction to...', OR, 'This course builds upon knowledge and skills developed in course...'
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Objectives*

On completion of this course students will be able to:

Learning objectives are statements that describe what students should have learned when they have completed the course; learning objectives include statements about required disciplinary knowledge, theories and concepts, as well skill-based outcomes including USQ graduate and academic skills.

When writing learning objectives, consider whether:

- The necessary knowledge described by the objectives is covered in module topics.
- All objectives are assessed in the course
- All USQ graduate skills assessed in the course are expressed as learning objectives
- Knowledge and skills described in the objectives are appropriate for the year level and program position of the course
- Learning described in objectives accounts for students' learning experiences when they arrive in the course
- The language used in the learning objectives can be understood by students; avoid jargon
- Learning objectives are reflected in marking criteria for assessment tasks.

Link to flyer on Writing Learning Objectives

For help [contact your Faculty LTD/ALS](#)

Graduate qualities and skills*

The following Graduate Skills are associated with the successful completion of your assessment items to the level indicated in the Assessment details:

Graduate qualities

Graduate quality statements describe types of student learning and development that go beyond the comprehension of disciplinary knowledge. Graduate qualities occur at the program level only as broad vision statements.

Graduate skills

- Each of the nine USQ graduate skills must be assessed at least once within one program to ensure students are given the opportunity to graduate with the qualities described in USQ policy.
- Any graduate skills you assess in your course need to be included in the course learning objectives together with your knowledge-based outcomes
- Graduate skills are specific, assessable sub-sets of student learning related to the five Qualities of a USQ Graduate (see this site for links to policy)

(<http://www.usq.edu.au/resources/425.pdf>) .

Link to flyer on [Writing Graduate Qualities & Skills Objectives](#)

For help contact your [Faculty LTD/ALS](#)

Topics*

- Is the list of topics consistent with the broader themes identified in the synopsis?
- Is it consistent with the topics in the study modules/course content?
- Are the weightings for each topic consistent with the time allocation in the study schedule, and commensurate with the anticipated student workload?
- Are the topic names meaningful in terms of conveying the primary subject matter?

Description

Weighting (%)

1.

Assessment details

Description	Marks out of	Wtg(%)	Due date	Objectives assessed	Graduate skill Level assessed
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- Does the assessment take account of subject matter, teaching style and students' learning styles/preferences?
- Are types of assessments suitable for different modes of delivery?
- Are assessments inclusive of all different types of students?
- Do assessment tasks provide students with the opportunity to demonstrate stated learning objectives and graduate skills?

- Are the learning objectives assessed at a level that is appropriate for this course?
- Does the assessment scheme reflect the weightings of the stated learning objectives? For example, do more important objectives receive more weighting?
- Does the assessment allow students to consolidate knowledge and expertise?
- Is the number of assessment tasks (associated with students' perceptions of workload) appropriate (USQ guideline 165 hours total per course per semester)
- Is workload for staff realistic?

Link to [Assessment Booklet](#) or use the [Assessment Design Guide](#)

For help contact your [Faculty LTD/ALS](#)

Important assessment information

- Refer to USQ Academic Regulations (Part 5 of the USQ Calendar <http://www.usq.edu.au/corporateservices/calendar/part5.htm>)
- Advise students of any special attendance requirements.
- Stipulate requirements to pass the assessment, and how grades are calculated.
- State exam conditions (open book, closed, or restricted etc), and any resources students are allowed to bring to exams.
- Advise when deferred or supplementary exams will be held.
- Are there compulsory elements of assessment that relate to participation e.g. contributions via online discussions, attendance at sessions on or off campus?

Student workload requirement

ACTIVITY	HOURS
Directed Study	
Private Study	
Workshops	

Student workload

Workload is a useful proxy for measuring the amount of learning required to achieve the course learning objectives. At USQ, it is usually 165 hours per semester.

To ensure appropriate student workload, consider the following:

- The relationships between topics are explicit and coherent.
- Produce an assessment design that will optimise student work effort across a course by integrating the course assessment tasks into a coherent whole. For example assignment 1 is a literature review, assignment 2 aims to develop research questions, and final assignment is to write a report.
- The assessment tasks and associated workload are clear to students by including explicit:
 - instructions on what is required;
 - marking criteria and standards;
 - pointers about how one assessment feeds into subsequent assessments; and
 - pathways through which students can get assistance.
- All course information (emails, announcements, assessment instructions) provided to students is available and consistent across all study modes
- Ask for student feedback on the course design (learning objectives and assessment tasks) early in the course, e.g. in lectures and/or tutorials or via discussion forum. This does not need to be formal. This allows you to provide clarification on issues of concern and prepare for change in a later offering.
- The total student workload recommended by USQ is +/- 10 hours of 165 hours per course per semester.

For help link to flyer [Managing Student Workload](#) or contact your Faculty LTD/ALS

Text and materials required to be purchased or accessed*

ALL textbooks and materials are available for purchase from USQ BOOKSHOP (unless otherwise stated). Orders may be placed via secure internet, free fax 1800642453, phone 07 46312742 (within Australia), or mail. Overseas students should fax +61 7 46311743, or phone +61 7 46312742. For costs, further details, and internet ordering, use the 'Textbook Search' facility at <http://bookshop.usq.edu.au> click 'Semester', then enter your 'Course Code' (no spaces).

Instructional package

* Texts/materials to be purchased

- Textbooks can be an expensive purchase for students, so ensure that they provide value to the course, are reasonably priced, and offer up-to-date information. Try to ensure more expensive items are readily available in the library.
- Explain within the course materials how the textbook will be used (e.g. as part of directed study), whether or not there are associated online or other resources that are provided with the textbook, or that students must purchase separately.
- If a textbook is likely to form the basis of a developing professional library, or can be used for later courses, mention this to students also.
- Consult with publishers' representatives to negotiate specific packages, or to access advance/preview copies before finalising decisions.
- Liaise with your Faculty librarian to check availability of related resources in case of delayed availability of texts for the start of the semester of offer.

- List the titles of books and journals you expect the students to consult, not purchase, while studying this course. You use the Harvard AGPS 6 referencing style for these citations. Consider that the student must be able to access these by going through the USQ Library's home page title search. If this isn't the case, then directions for access should be written into the course modules.

For help contact your [Faculty Librarian](#) or see [Library Website Guidance](#)

Reference materials*

Reference materials are materials that, if accessed by students, may improve their knowledge and understanding of the material in the course and enrich their learning experience.

- Ensure the reference list includes resources available in a range of forms, and accessible for different campuses or modes of offer.
- Liaise with the Faculty librarian to compile a list which is up to date and can accommodate peak demand times (e.g. for assignment preparation).
- Review reference lists regularly to ensure out of date material is replaced with current material.
- Within study materials, clearly indicate to students which materials are for directed reading, or for further reference for those interested in a particular topic.
- Indicate also if chosen resources are included to provide particular perspectives (e.g. Australian education policies), or are listed as background material for students with advanced standing.
- Ensure reference details are accurate.
- Don't make the reference list too long, e.g. not longer than one page; depending on student levels, if it needs to be longer, categorise it according to specific topics.

For help contact your [Faculty Librarian](#)

Evaluation and benchmarking

In meeting the University's aims to establish quality learning and teaching for all programs, this course monitors and ensures quality assurance and improvements in at least two ways. This course:

1. conforms to the USQ Policy on Evaluation of Teaching, Courses and Programs to ensure ongoing monitoring and systematic improvement.
2. forms part of the XXXXXXXXXXXX (*inset name of Program e.g. Bachelor of Engineering or provide dropdown of program names*) and is benchmarked against the [choose one or all of the following]
 - internal USQ accreditation/reaccreditation processes which include (i) stringent standards in the independent accreditation of its academic programs, (ii) close integration between business and academic planning, and (iii) regular and rigorous review.

- professional accreditation standards of the XXXXXXXXXXXXX. [*insert professional accrediting bodies here e.g. Engineers Australia, Surveyors Board of Queensland, Australian Psychological Society Council, Australian Nursing & Midwifery Council, and Singapore Nursing Board, etc.*]
- comparative activities and performance of XXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX. [*nominate the name of the program and institution, or professional body, that has benchmarked with this program*]

[Link to flyer on Evaluation of Teaching & learning](#)

For help contact your [Faculty LTD/ALS](#)

Other requirements*

1. In view of the course objectives and their emphasis on the development of conceptual and applicable skills, students are strongly advised to attend all classes.
 2. Students will require access to email and have internet access to USQConnect for this course.
- [Identify any specific requirements \(e.g. access to particular resources, such as computer hardware or software; download quotas; attendance at residential schools or off-campus site visits; acquisition of a Blue Card or undergoing a security check if interacting with specific groups of learners or others\).](#)
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