



COMMUNIQUE

ARD NEWSLETTER

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LETTER FROM THE ACADEMIC REGISTRAR

The July Graduation Ceremonies mark the beginning of Spring Session for 2007. 6 ceremonies were carried out from 18th – 20th July, the success of which is attributable to the hard work of many individuals across the University. Without their efforts, Graduation would not be possible and I send my appreciation and thanks to all involved.

The National Code 2007 came into effect on 1 July 2007. The National Code 2007 significantly impacts on the University of Wollongong's current and commencing international students. In addition many policies and the processes behind them have changed to accommodate the more consumer focused Code.

Through September and October 2007 elections will be held for a number of positions on the University Council. There will be Undergraduate, Postgraduate and Graduate positions as well as an Academic Staff member position and a General Staff member position. Further details regarding elections appear below.

Enterprise Content Management is a relatively new team with responsibility for both Web Content and Records Management. In recent months, they have been working with the Web Project Management team to finalise the implementation of the content management system, and to assist with the rollout of other web projects, such as multilingual sites and the online Handbook workflow facility. It is expected that further enhancements to the web site will take place with a focus on more customised websites for our online community.

In regard to records management, assistance is being provided to various staff members with access to, and training in, our electronic records management system, Image REAL. Over coming months, we hope to extend this service further across campus and to introduce communications and support tools to all of our users.

COUNCIL ELECTIONS

Elections in 2007

Elections will be held in September-October 2007 for the following positions on the University Council:

- 1 Academic Staff member
- 1 Non-Academic Staff member
- 1 Postgraduate Student member
- 1 Undergraduate Student member
- 2 Graduate Members

Nominations open on Tuesday 4 September 2007 and close on Tuesday 18 September 2007. Nomination forms will be available towards the end of August.

Voting will open on Tuesday 2 October and close on Tuesday 16 October.

For further information visit the Council Elections webpage:

www.uow.edu.au/about/governance/UOW027049

If you have an urgent elections enquiry, please contact Catriona Taylor, Deputy Returning Officer, at taylor@uow.edu.au or on (02) 4221 3079.

COURSE PROGRESS POLICY

National Code 2007

The Education Services for Overseas Students (ESOS) Act 2000 and associated legislation is the legal framework governing the responsibility of education institutions towards overseas students. As a result of a review of this legislation, the National Code was revised and comes into effect on 1 July 2007. A key component of the National Code is the responsibility of the University to monitor the course progress of students and assist those identified as at risk.

The revised National Code is much more consumer focused than before and includes additional protections for international students. The University has, in principal, applied the same process to domestic students as that required for international students and the Course Progress Policy is consistent with this principle.

Course Progress Policy

The Course Progress Policy requires that students pass more than 50% of all credit points attempted in order to meet course progress requirements. Students who do not receive passing grades in more than 50% of credit points attempted will not meet course progress requirements. This includes students who have withheld grades, or a combined total of failing and withheld grades, in more than 50% of credit points attempted. Students with withheld grades are included because they are defined by the National Code 2007 as being deemed not yet competent. The National Code 2007 stipulates that students who have failed or have been deemed not yet competent in 50% of credit points attempted are at risk and require intervention strategies to assist those students meet course progress requirements.

Minimum Rate of Progress

All students begin their enrolment on an active course status. Students who meet course progress requirements remain on an active course status.

Undergraduate students who do not meet course progress requirements in the first instance will be placed on a course status of referral. Undergraduate students who do not meet course progress requirements in the second

instance will be placed on a course status of probation. Undergraduate students who do not meet course progress requirements in the third instance will be excluded.

Postgraduate students who do not meet course progress requirements in the first instance will be placed on probation. Postgraduate student who do not meet course progress requirements in the second instance will be excluded.

Intervention

The intervention strategies required by the National Code 2007 are aligned with these differentiations of course status. Undergraduate students on referral will be directed to their course progress advisor (or delegated authority) for advice and assistance. Students on probation will be directed to their course prog (or delegated authority) and have an intervention strategy constructed from the following components:

- Learning Development
- Counselling Service
- PASS Program
- Disability Services
- Student Equity and Diversity Liaison Officer and
- Other services as deemed appropriate by the academic advisor.

Students who are not yet deemed competent will be placed on a pending course status and they will have intervention strategies made available to them by the academic advisor (or delegated authority) though their course status will be reassessed when withheld grades are declared.

At each stage of intervention and in each course status a student can return to active course status by meeting course progress requirements.

Appeal

Undergraduate and postgraduate students who are to be excluded may appeal. Previously students appealing exclusion appealed to the Dean of Students. The Course Progress Policy (codifies this function and students will be able to appeal to the Coursework Exclusion Appeal Committee, which will enable students to state their case against exclusion in person.

What you need to know

The National Code was revised and came into effect on 1 July 2007.

The Course Progress Policy is currently progressing through the committee approval pathway.

The Course Progress Policy outlines the minimum rate of progress for students, that is the requirement for pass grades in more than 50% of credit points attempted.

Undergraduates can have course status of active, referral, probation or excluded.

Postgraduate students can have course status of active, probation or excluded.

Students on probation will have an intervention strategy constructed for them from various support services.

Students can return to active course status by meeting course progress requirements.

Students can appeal an excluded status to the Coursework Exclusion Appeal Committee.

For more information on Minimum Rate of Progress and assistance for students visit:

<http://www.uow.edu.au/student/mrp/index>

For more information regarding the National Code visit:

<https://intranet.uow.edu.au/content/projects/ncp/index>

STUDENT CONDUCT RULES

Student Conduct Rules

During 2006 - 2007 the existing Rules for Student Conduct and Discipline were reviewed as part of the Academic Integrity Project. The aim of the review was to make application of the Rules and management of student misconduct simpler and more consistently applied across the University. Following an assessment of good practice in the industry, broad consultation took place via questionnaires, focus groups, academic committees, targeted workshops, the University website and individual stakeholder consultation sessions.

The following documents, informed by the review, have been developed to replace the existing Rules for Student Conduct and Discipline:

- **Student Conduct Rules**
- **Procedure for Managing Alleged Academic Misconduct by a Student Undertaking Coursework**
- **Procedure for Managing Alleged General Misconduct by a Student**
- **Templates for Notice Letters and Referral of Investigation**

Significant changes that resulted from the review

Structural changes: The Student Conduct Rules sit as an overarching document directing readers to other Rules, codes, policies and procedures where acceptable and unacceptable conduct by a student is detailed. Separate procedures specify the process for management of each category of misconduct to allow for easy reference and understanding of the process.

Procedural changes: timeframes, record-keeping, communications and sample letters have been made clearer and/or simplified

Clarification of misconduct and plagiarism: forms of misconduct and plagiarism have been more clearly defined than in the existing Rules, as well as possible responses to misconduct, thus enabling consistent management of misconduct across the University

Informal management: the procedures allow for informal management of student's conduct where it is not deemed misconduct but where an educative response is required

Low-Level management: the procedures allow for low-level management of misconduct by the Subject Coordinator & Primary Investigation Officer (PIO) (for academic misconduct by a student undertaking coursework) or the PIO (for general misconduct)

What you need to know

The Student Conduct Rules and accompanying procedures were approved at Council on 17 August 2007 and will become effective 1st January 2008.

Following Council approval, a communication and implementation strategy will be undertaken to ensure relevant stakeholders are aware of the changes and are suitably equipped to carry out their responsibilities in relation to management of student misconduct.

For further information, please contact Tori Funnell, Academic Integrity Project Officer, on ext. 5408 or via email to tori_funnell@uow.edu.au

DISABILITY POLICY - STUDENTS

Disability Policy – Students

The UOW Disability Policy – Students sets out the University of Wollongong's commitment to the promotion of and adherence to the principles of the Disability Discrimination Act (DDA) 1992. This requires ensuring that students with disabilities are able to access and participate in education without experiencing discrimination.

Disability Standards for Education 2005

The University of Wollongong has a responsibility to eliminate, as far as possible, discrimination against people with disabilities. The Disability Standards for Education 2005 are the subordinate legislation to the DDA and elaborate on education providers' responsibilities to students with disabilities.

The Disability Standards for Education 2005 clarify legal obligations in relation to enrolment, participation, curriculum development, accreditation and deliver, student support services and elimination of harassment and victimisation.

What you need to know

The Disability Policy - Students is drafted and currently progressing through consultation with various stakeholders.

The Disability Policy - Students covers enrolled and prospective UOW;

- Students with disabilities; and
- Students who have and associate with a disability.

Students with disabilities may be entitled to adjustments but UOW will not compromise the academic requirements of a course.

Roles and responsibilities of Staff and Students are outlined in the Policy.

For more information on the Disability Standards for Education visit:

http://www.humanrights.gov.au/disability_rights/education/education

STUDENT ACADEMIC CONSIDERATION POLICY

Student Academic Consideration Policy

The Student Academic Consideration Policy is the result of the scheduled review of the Special Consideration Policy which was conducted in 2006. The purpose of the review was to investigate, review, report on and redevelop the Special Consideration Policy to make it more consistent, transparent, and easier to interpret for students and easier for academic staff to implement.

The research stage of the review processes included: identifying issues with the current policy and procedures including broad consultation with various stakeholders through the use of questionnaires to UOW staff; assessing good practice in the higher education sector; and analysis of special consideration applications by faculty.

What you need to know

The Student Academic Consideration Policy will go to Council on 12 October 2007 for approval and will become effective Autumn Session 2009.

For further information regarding the Student Academic Consideration Policy or the communication and implementation strategy, please contact Paola Ciccarelli, Policy Analyst, on ext. 5014 or via email to paolacic@uow.edu.au.

Significant changes that resulted from the review

Policy Changes

New title: Student Academic Consideration Policy.

Policy emphasises that students need to be proactive in applying for academic consideration *before* an assessment is due.

Promotion of consistency and transparency in the process of applying for consideration and in the handling of all applications. There is no longer a differentiation between the weighting of assessment tasks.

Detailed responsibilities of the University, Students, Subject Coordinators, Heads of Academic Units, Sub Deans/Associate Deans and staff verifying supporting documentation.

Subject Coordinators are given more responsibility in the decision making process.

Differentiation between students with ongoing conditions (disability) requiring reasonable adjustment and those experiencing short-term disruptions to studies.

Procedural Changes

Stronger criteria defining grounds for application, supporting documentation, the granting of academic consideration, supplementary assessments and outcomes.

Closure on in-session tests and end-of session exams to ensure that student's results can be processed in an effective and efficient manner.

Tighter timelines for making an application, submitting supporting documentation, and academic staff response times.

All applications require supporting documentation. In cases where it is not possible to obtain supporting documentation, a Statutory Declaration for Academic Consideration must be used.

Academic consideration applications are only forwarded to Subject Coordinators once supporting documentation has been verified.

Students are required to retain supporting documentation for twelve months from the date of the verification of their application.

SUBJECT PROPOSALS AND APPROVALS

In February 2006 the AUQA Audit Report noted that the "Subject Approval Kit may not, on its own, be providing adequate support to academics working with subject approval templates." Arising from this the UOW Quality Improvement Plan requires strategies to improve the subject approval process to be identified and implemented. The Subject Proposal Working Party has been formed for this purpose. Chaired by Associate Professor Rodney Vickers, the Subject Proposals Working Party will review the processes by which subject proposals not part of a course approval process are approved by the relevant Faculty's Faculty Education Committee (FEC). The instruments for proposing new subjects are the New/Revised Subject Proposal Form and the Subject Approval Kit. The Subject Proposals Working Party will meet over the course of Spring Session 2007 to update and improve these instruments. In combination with the efforts of the Course Approval Management Group the work of the Subject Proposals Working Party is an opportunity to begin shaping the subject proposal and approval processes toward a unified course and subjects approval policy.

Subject Database Rollover

All Faculties are reminded that the Rollover of the Subject Database for 2008 (including Faculty Approval) needs to be completed by

Friday 14th September 2007.

This is the last date for subjects to be included in our publication of 2008 subject and course information to DEST

Code of Practice Teaching and Assessment

The Code of Practice Teaching and Assessment (the Code) sets out the responsibilities of Faculties, Heads of Academic Units, Subject Coordinators and teaching staff in relation to learning and teaching. Schedule 1 of this Code (the Subject Outline Checklist) prescribes the specific information that is required in the Subject Outline for each undergraduate and postgraduate coursework subject.

A scheduled review of the Code of Practice Teaching and Assessment (the Code) has been conducted by the Education Policy Review Subcommittee (EPRS). The revised policy is a more user-friendly policy document that focuses on the approval and review processes and record keeping procedures in relation to learning, teaching and assessment. Changes have been made to the Subject Outline Checklist.

Significant changes that resulted from the review

Responsibilities relating to the Faculty, Head of Academic Unit, Subject Coordinator and Teaching Staff have been reviewed to indicate a level of responsibility commensurate with the positions.

Requirements for faculties to establish procedures for reviewing, conducting and supervising faculty examinations and tests

Subject Outlines face a more rigorous approach to the requirements for the approval, review and distribution.

Schedule 1 - Subject Outline Checklist reorganised to be more user-friendly with the inclusion of additional points consistent with the changes to the Code

Assessment practice requirements face a rigorous approach and these requirements are reflected in Subject Outline Checklist

Casual teaching employees and fractional teaching staff coordinating subjects have had a section on responsibilities added

Consequential amendments have been included in the Code resulting from the following policy reviews:

- Graduate Qualities Policy
- Student Academic Consideration Policy
- Student Conduct Rules
- Assessment Committee Standards
- Course Progress Policy

What you need to know

The Code of Practice Teaching and Assessment will be presented to Academic Senate on the 19 September for endorsement and the University Council in November for approval.

The Code is to be effective commencement Autumn Session 2008. Schedule 1 of the Code (Subject Outline Checklist) is to be effective in November 2007 for use with subjects on offer in the 2008 Spring Session.

A communication and implementation strategy will be undertaken to ensure staff and students are aware of their changes and responsibilities.

POLICY LAUNCH

Professor Rob Castle, Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Academic & International), will be hosting a Policy Launch. The launch incorporates new and revised rules and policies and will be greatly beneficial to Academic and Teaching Staff.

Date: Thursday 1st November

Time: 4:00pm start

Where: Unicentre function rooms

Content:

- Student Conduct Rules & Associated Procedures
- Code of Practice: Teaching & Assessment
- General Course Rules: Grades and Performance
- Course Progress Policy

Drinks and nibbles will be provided and the Launch is open to all staff. For further details or expressions of interest please contact Paola Ciccarelli, Academic Registrar's Division, on ext. 5014 or via email to paolacic@uow.edu.au.

COMING UP

Meetings

Wednesday 5th September, 9:30am: UEC Meeting

Wednesday 19th September, 9:30am: Academic Senate Meeting

Wednesday 26th September 9:30am: URC Meeting

Friday 12th October, 2pm: Council Meeting

Wednesday 17th October, 9:30am: Academic Senate Standing Committee Meeting

Thursday 18th October, 9:30am: UIC Meeting

Wednesday 24th October, 12:30pm: FEC Chairs Meeting

For a complete list of committee meetings, visit the Schedule of Dates and Meetings 2007 at

www.uow.edu.au/content/groups/public/@web/@gov/documents/doc/uow004748.pdf.

Next Edition of Communiqué

The next edition of Communiqué is due out in November 2007.

Links to past issues

www.uow.edu.au/about/teaching/communique

Contact Communiqué

Feedback for this issue and submissions for our November issue should be forwarded to:

Officer: Shane Cooke

Phone: 4221 5309

Email: governance@uow.edu.au

Post: ARD, Policy and Governance, Building 36

Your View is Important

Please send feedback to governance@uow.edu.au

Alternatively fill in the below form and mail it to the Policy & Governance Unit, Building 36

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