

## EQUIVALENCE POLICY

<b>Section</b>	Teaching and Learning
<b>Contact</b>	Office of Academic Quality, Reporting and Assurance
<b>Last Review</b>	June 2022
<b>Next Review</b>	June 2025
<b>Approval</b>	Council 22/64

### Purpose

To ensure that all students, regardless of their discipline, mode of study, location or semester are afforded an equivalent opportunity to achieve the required learning outcomes for their course, and therefore, the graduate profile for their qualification.

### Scope

The Equivalence Policy applies to all undergraduate and postgraduate courses, qualifications, and specialisations.

### Policy

Each offering of the same course in a single semester, regardless of the mode and location for the delivery of that course, will have equivalent teaching, learning and assessment activities. Regardless of mode of delivery or campus of location, all students have an equivalent opportunity to meet the graduate profile for their qualification, and where relevant, their specialisation. Equivalence will be made explicit through:

1. All offerings of a course within a single semester, regardless of mode and location of delivery, will have:
  - a. identical course prescriptions and expected learning outcomes
  - b. An equivalent assessment structure, such that the same learning outcomes, student workload, and weightings are maintained when there is variation to the method of assessment
  - c. identical course texts (including any textbook, whether available in hard copy or digital form) unless an exception is approved by the PVC or their nominee
2. All students will have:

- a. Equivalent opportunities to access appropriate academic advice, relevant to the student's study mode, discipline, and level of study

UNIVERSITY OF NEW ZEALAND

- b. Equivalent access to study and learning resources appropriate to a student's study mode, level of study and discipline
3. Course details in STREAM such as learning outcomes, assessments and prescription details are the same as those which have been officially approved and listed in the Curriculum Management System.
4. In addition to the above, Massey University will make all reasonable efforts to ensure that students are not unduly disadvantaged by widespread disruption that is beyond their control. This will be achieved by ensuring there are emergency plans in place that address issues of access, whether to systems or physical spaces. These emergencies would include but are not limited to natural disasters such as earthquakes, floods and volcanoes, pandemics, widespread disruption caused through cyber-attacks or terrorism and wide-spread power outages.

In relation to courses, equivalence does not mean identical in every way, lecturers teaching the same course 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 course is associated with including professional accreditation requirements.

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

## Guiding Principles

Decisions regarding equivalence at Massey University will be guided by the following principles:

**Equity:** The Equivalence Policy aims to ensure that all students, regardless of their mode of study, and location, have the same opportunities to meet the Learning Outcomes of their courses and the graduate profile of their specialisations and qualifications. The Policy also aims to take account of disruptive events beyond any student's control that would cause them undue disadvantage.

**Consistency:** by promoting equivalence the Policy assures students that consistent approaches will be taken across the University when it comes to the composition of courses, specialisations, and qualifications, and the accessing of academic advice and University systems.

**Efficiency:** to achieve equity and a consistent approach, the University needs efficient systems to facilitate equitable access to academic advice and Information Technology resources.

**Facilitative:** by promoting equivalence the University takes a facilitative approach to assuring student success.

## Definitions

Equivalence is defined as how equity and parity of the student learning experience and outcomes is achieved.

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

A course offering is defined as a course at a particular campus location in each semester and delivered in a specific mode.

Learning Outcomes are statements of the knowledge, skills, and attitudes that students are expected to demonstrate because 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 course and across course 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 Course Coordinators are responsible for ensuring the equivalence of courses 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 course offering to ensure that:

- the curriculum meets the requirements of the course prescription and learning outcomes which are informed by the aims of the qualifications that the course 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 Institutes or Schools or programme leaders (as appropriate) are informed by the course coordinator at the earliest opportunity of any risks to the equivalence of courses and offerings.

Staff who contribute to the teaching of course offerings are expected to engage constructively with Course 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 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 courses under separate titles and numbers, subject to the University's processes for course approvals and any requirements for viability set by the University and/or 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 Course Outlines and Course Guides can be used to verify that the University's Equivalence Policy is being given effect.

## **Audience**

All staff and students

## **Relevant Legislation**

**Consumer Guarantees Act 1993**

Section 29 of the Consumer Guarantees Act 1993 requires that services provided are fit for purpose.

**Fair Trading Act 1986**

Section 13 of the Fair-Trading Act 1986 requires that the University does not make false or misleading representations regarding any aspects of its programmes.

**Education and Training Act 2020**

Section 4 of the Education and Training Act 2020 states that its purpose is to provide an education system that:

- ensures those studying in New Zealand are provided with the skills, knowledge, and capabilities to fully participate in the labour market, society, and their communities,
- supports student well-being
- assures the quality of education and the providers of that education and honours Te Tiriti o Waitangi

**Legal Compliance**

None

**Related Procedures/Documents**

Paerangi Learning and Teaching Strategy  
[Assessment Strategy, Principles and Guidelines](#)  
[Massey University Qualifications Policy](#)  
[Massey University Qualifications Framework](#)

**Document Management Control**

Prepared by: Office of Academic Quality, Reporting and Assurance  
Authorised by: Provost  
Approved by: C22/64  
Date issued: 20 June 2012  
Last review: June 2022  
Next review: June 2025