

PROCEDURES FOR DEFINING QUALIFICATION AVAILABILITY

Section	Academic
Contact	Academic Policy and Regulations Unit
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1. Introduction:

Massey University is a multi-campus University which teaches a variety of Qualifications and Specialisations comprised of papers delivered in a variety of modes to a variety of student cohorts at various intakes. This creates a matrix of factors which must be taken into account in order to apply a definition of availability.

2. Purpose:

The Procedures enable the University to accurately identify and promote which Qualifications and Specialisations are available in which location and mode and for College units to confidently plan their qualification portfolio needs so that students can be assured that they will be able to complete their chosen programme.

3. Background:

The University adopted the Qualification Availability Definition and Descriptor (see definitions below) in March 2015 to provide an accurate and useful assessment of availability to assist and enhance the academic planning cycle and provide students with a clearer picture of the location and mode within which they are able to complete their programme of study. A Qualification Availability test should be applied that consists of seven specific questions, each requiring individual assessment of a qualification or a qualification and specialisation to determine if all core/compulsory/fixed papers and sufficient other papers are available at a selected location/mode to complete a course of study.

4. Definitions:

Academic Delivery Plan: The strategic plan Heads of Institute/School/Programme complete in an annual cycle to consider their qualification portfolio needs in relation to teaching and resourcing papers and paper offerings.

Committee on University Academic Programmes (CUAP): This committee considers all new and major amendments to qualifications and specialisations.

Intake: An agreed commencement date for various cohorts, which ensures the availability and alignment of papers so that they can be taken in an order which complies with progression regulations and paper requirements. The primary intake is traditionally Semester One, but may now also be Semester Two, Southern Spring, or Summer School. Intakes may also be defined by student participation as part-time or full-time.

Integrated Paper Planning Database (IPP): IPP is where paper and offering information is held within the Student Management System (SMS) and is used as part of the enrolment and timetabling systems.

Location: The campus or other designation for the site of a paper offering.

Mixed Delivery Mode Student: A student who is enrolled in a course of study which includes papers which are delivered by different modes.

Note: Mixed mode refers to a student's enrolment not how a qualification is offered, it can be included as part of the descriptor for how students can complete a qualification.

Mode: Communicates the method of delivery that students are expected to engage with which may be internal, distance (extramural) or block.

Offering: The combination of mode and location to indicate where and how a paper will be taught.

Paper: A module of work in a particular discipline that is identified by means of a unique code number and delivered by means of lectures, tutorials, seminars, practica, studios or via other learning experiences. If in distance mode delivery may be by correspondence or electronic means. The length of a paper is generally one or two semesters or as otherwise specified by the start and end dates. In appropriate combinations papers fulfil programme of study requirements and thus contribute to qualifications. Each paper carries its own credit value.

Qualification: An official award given in recognition of the successful completion of a programme of study.

Qualification Availability Definition: A *[Qualification or Qualification and Specialisation, or specified Part of a Parts-based Qualification]* may be defined as available in a specified location/mode when sufficient core, specialisation and elective papers permit a student to complete the *qualification as described* in the stated mode at the stated location, in the manner described by the regulations within the expected timeframe defined by the student intake.

Qualification Availability Descriptor: An example for the descriptor is:

The *[Qualification or Qualification and Specialisation, or specified Part of a Parts-based Qualification]* is available on a *[Full time/part time]* basis in a combination of *[Identify Modes]* delivered from/via *[Identify locations]* and can be completed by *[Identify Cohort]* students commencing in *[identify start time]* over *[specify years]* duration at a rate of *[specify credits]* per year.

Qualification Availability Test: See Appendix A

Qualification Availability Tool: This tool enables staff to assess qualifications against the Qualification Availability Test and determine the descriptor to be used.

Qualification Regulation Manager (QRM): QRM is a tool within SMS that uses rules to build the qualification regulations in a format that students can use to assist them in enrolling.

Student cohorts may be subject to conditions which constrain their mode of engagement with the University, including visa conditions for International students, conditions set by funding agencies and sponsors, personal commitments, physical limitations, and access to resources and leave.

5. Procedure Overview:

a) New Qualifications and Specialisations, and major amendments:

When proposing a new Qualification or Specialisation, or proposing major amendments approved by CUAP availability must be planned and assessed following the process outlined in Figure 1. This information will then be made available to other appropriate university stakeholders for a number of purposes (qualification availability, marketing, updating University webpages).

Figure 1: Decision Pathway for new Qualification or Specialisation Availability

Person or Group	Responsibilities	Timeline
Qualification or specialisation proposer	- Indicate which location and modes the qualification or specialisation will be taught. - Assess whether Qualification definition is met, and if not apply a descriptor and include this information in qualification proposal in Section C of the template. - Discuss the staffing and resource requirements for the proposed offer with Head of Institute/School/Programme. - Create new papers proposals as appropriate with agreed offerings. - Amend existing papers with agreed offerings.	Ongoing throughout the year
Head of Institute/School/Programme or agreed College delegate.	- Review proposal and confirm staffing and resourcing. - Confirm proposal meets College Strategic Plan with College Executive and Board. - Finalise teaching timetables and compare actual paper offerings against the availability agreed by the Colleges in their annual plans to ensure accuracy.	- By January for CUAP Round 1 - By May for CUAP Round 2 - Teaching Timetable finalised in September
College Board	Review proposal and confirm it is consistent with the College academic direction and goals.	- By February for CUAP Round 1 - By June for CUAP Round 2
Student Administration Portfolio Leads	Access Academic Committee minutes for decision around new Qualification and Specialisations. Discuss qualification availability with College contacts.	By June of each year for website updating

b) Existing Qualifications and Specialisations:

As part of the Academic Delivery Plan Colleges consider their entire qualification portfolio, this process is summarised in Figure 2. Once outputs from this College planning cycle have been made staffing and resource requirements need to be taken into account to guarantee the offer. Annual timing and dates, and staff roles need to be incorporated at this point.

On an annual planning cycle, Colleges will use the Test of Qualification Availability to confirm whether the current offer matches the offer in the College Academic Delivery Plan with the availability recorded in the Programme Guide. Where offerings are misaligned with the planned mix of offer, take steps to amend the paper offerings to match the plan and update the Programme Guides accordingly.

Figure 2: Decision Pathway for existing Qualification or Specialisation Availability

Person or Group	Responsibilities	Timeline
Head of Institute/School/Programme or agreed College delegate.	- Consider portfolio of Qualifications against College Strategic Plan. - Apply Qualification definition or a descriptor to existing Qualifications and Specialisations by utilising the Qualification Availability Tool. - Discuss offerings with teaching staff, taking into account location and modes of offerings. - Confirm the staffing and resource requirements for proposed offer. - Advise College Executive/Board of planned offer. - Amend existing papers with agreed offerings. - Finalise teaching timetables and compare actual paper offerings against the availability agreed by the Colleges in their annual plans to ensure it is still correct.	- By January for CUAP Round 1 - By May for CUAP Round 2 - Teaching Timetable finalised in September
College Executive	- Review proposal and confirm staffing and resourcing. - Confirm offer meets College Strategic Plan and Academic Delivery Plan.	- January for CUAP Round 1 - May for CUAP Round 2

c) Publication of Availability Definitions and Descriptors:

Once Availability definitions and descriptors have been assigned to qualifications and specialisations Student Administration are able to update Massey University publications as per Figure 3 for use by the Massey University webpages, External Relations and the International Office, as designated, for recruitment purposes.

Figure 3: Publication Stage

Person or Group	Responsibilities	Timeline
Portfolio Leads Student Administration	- Update Programme Guides with new Qualifications and Specialisations and amendments to existing using Availability definition or descriptor. - Update Courses documents to reflect Programme Guides.	Courses documents updated and completed by June for following year's enrolment.
College Account Managers	Update marketing information in Programme Guides and notify External Relations of changes.	Courses documents updated and completed by June for following year's enrolment.
Student Information Unit	- Update Courses webpages with amended Courses documents. - Access updated availability reports from QRM to update Publications.	Your Guide Books published in March for following year's enrolment.

- Qualifications without specialisations or with simple availability - the Qualification Definition or descriptor can be included in the key facts on the info page.
- Specialisations have their own pages and should have the availability information displayed on their key facts section.
- International Office staff responsible for Admissions and publications such as the 'International Prospectus' should liaise with Student Administration to confirm availability of qualification information.

6. Communication:

If there is a change to the advertised availability due to unexpected or exceptional events the web information must be updated as soon as possible, any affected students and stakeholders must be notified of the change and advice should be given to students about alternate options for their study.

7. Audience:

All staff and students

Related procedures / documents:

Massey University Qualification Policy and Framework
Teaching and Learning Policy and Framework

Document Management Control:

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APPENDIX A: Qualification Availability Test

