Award Courses Policy

Section 1 - Purpose

(1) The [Queensland University of Technology Act 1998](#) establishes QUT's power to confer higher education awards (award courses). QUT is registered by TEQSA to self-accredit and offer award courses as prescribed by the [Australian Qualifications Framework](#) (AQF). To comply with all relevant national regulatory requirements and standards, this Policy describes:

    a. the classification, titles and post-nominal of award courses;
    b. the minimum entry requirements;
    c. the essential characteristics of award courses and associated components.

(2) This Policy promotes coherent course structures and clear completion rules.

Section 2 - Application

(3) This Policy applies to all award courses at QUT.

(4) Additional procedures and requirements for research degree courses and for awarding a higher doctorate are provided in the [Higher Degree Research Candidates Policy](#).

(5) The [Non-award Study Policy](#) provides the requirements for non-award study offered by QUT.

Section 3 - Roles and Responsibilities

Position	Responsibility
University Academic Board	Accredits and re-accredits new and significant changes to existing. courses. Approves variation to standard credit point load for coursework courses. Awards higher doctorates on the recommendation of the Research Degrees Committee. Confers and revokes awards.
Curriculum Standards Committee	Approves changes to course requirements, on the delegated authority of University Academic Board, in accordance with the [Curriculum Design, Approval and Accreditation Policy](#).
Deputy Vice-Chancellor and Vice-President (Academic)	Approves designated course status for QUT You. Approves protocols supporting award courses.
Faculty Academic Boards and other entities delegated by University Academic Board	Approves new and revised study area abbreviations in accordance with the [Curriculum Design, Approval and Accreditation Policy](#). Approve changes to course requirements in accordance with the [Curriculum Design, Approval and Accreditation Policy](#).
University Learning and Teaching Committee	Approves University-wide curriculum.

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Page 1 of 7

Section 4 - Qualification Types

(6) QUT award courses are designed to meet the relevant AQF qualification type specification, including the learning outcomes (knowledge, skills and application of knowledge and skills) and volume of learning. Full characteristics of each qualification type are provided by the [AQF](#) and should be read in association with this Policy.

(7) QUT courses are purposely designed to support student learning and enable graduates to demonstrate achieving the learning outcomes for the qualification (course learning outcomes). Course learning outcomes, including transferable, non-discipline specific skills, are explicitly identified and align with the level of the qualification.

(8) The [Award courses protocol](#) (QUT staff access only) provides the details of the qualifications most likely to be offered by QUT, which are:

    a. University Certificate;
    b. Undergraduate Certificate;
    c. Diploma;
    d. Associate Degree;
    e. Bachelor Degree;
    f. Bachelor Honours Degree;
    g. Graduate Certificate;
    h. Graduate Diploma;
    i. Masters Degree;
    j. Doctoral Degree; and
    k. Higher Doctorate.

Section 5 - Award Course Titles and Post-nominals

(9) The titles of QUT courses unambiguously identify the qualification type, level and field of study or discipline as required by the [AQF Qualifications Issuance Policy](#).

(10) The course title and post-nominal are approved by the University Academic Board.

(11) Additional procedures and course requirements for research degree courses and for awarding a higher doctorate are provided in the [Higher Degree Research Candidates Policy](#).

Section 6 - Entry Requirements

(12) QUT sets minimum entry requirements for each level of award course. Minimum award level entry requirements as approved by UAB are recorded in the [Award courses protocol](#) (QUT staff access only).

(13) Specific course entry requirements, which may include additional discipline-specific requirements, are approved at University Academic Board during course accreditation. The faculty academic board having responsibility for a course may revise entry requirements for an existing course, within the minimum standards established for each level of award course.

Pathways

(14) QUT supports various pathways into courses and therefore recognised prior learning may satisfy course entry requirements. Decisions that recognise prior learning for entry to an award course must be consistent with [AQF](#)

Qualifications Pathways Policy and the Recognition of Prior Learning Policy.

(15) Student admission (Admission of Students Policy) is determined on the basis of merit and perceived probability of success, with provision for alternative entry and entry for underrepresented community groups.

Section 7 - Entry and Exit Pathways

(16) QUT supports students by designing courses that provide a pathway to a higher AQF level qualification which may allow for advanced standing, and courses that allow an early exit pathway where appropriate. Design principles and examples of entry and exit pathways are provided in the Award courses protocol (QUT staff access only).

Section 8 - Award Course Information

(17) Course information is a set of data elements that are approved as part of course accreditation. Course information includes specific requirements for admission to, and completion of, an award course. Students are eligible to graduate as soon as they have completed all the requirements for the course (Conferral, Graduation and Academic Dress Policy).

(18) Course requirements are made available to students at the time of enrolment (Enrolment Policy). Course requirements of past offerings are recorded in the QUT Handbook each year.

Section 9 - Award Course Categories

(19) QUT courses may be a single degree or a double degree and may involve collaboration with other institutions.

Single Degree

(20) A single degree is a course of study that provides students upon graduation with a single qualification that may include Study Areas.

Double Degree

(21) A double degree is constructed as a program of study that allows a student to complete two awards within a shorter timeframe than if completed separately. On graduation students receive an award for each course completed (Academic Award Documents Policy).

(22) A double degree may be:

  a. two undergraduate courses;
  b. an undergraduate course and a postgraduate course (vertical double); or
  c. two postgraduate degrees of the same AQF level.

(23) The combination of two postgraduate courses at different levels is normally managed as a nested suite rather than a double degree.

Collaborative Double Degree

(24) A double degree that combines a QUT award course with an award course from another university is a collaborative double degree. A collaborative double degree may involve one AQF level or two sequential AQF levels. On graduation students receive an award for each course completed from the respective institutions.

Joint Degree

(25) A joint degree is a single degree offered in collaboration between QUT and one or more other institutions. A joint degree is typically conferred by QUT and the other institutions. A joint degree is not an articulation agreement between QUT and other institutions as it is not recognition of prior learning. It is a close cooperation between QUT and the other institution in the design of the course, the curriculum development, course delivery and assessment of learning outcomes.

Section 10 - Award Course Structural Elements

(26) Courses are comprised of structural elements, as defined below, and must be designed such that they are consistent with principles for curriculum design (Curriculum Design, Approval and Accreditation Policy).

(27) The Award courses protocol (QUT staff access only) provides detail of the course structural model.

Unit

(28) A unit (Unit and Module Information Policy) may be core, requiring students to complete, or be an elective unit, providing students with a choice of study from within or outside their discipline.

Designated Unit

(29) Courses that have learning outcomes identified as critical requiring students to meet a satisfactory level of competence may include designated units. Designated units may include professional experience, particular skill development or the demonstration of certain personal qualities. A student who fails a designated unit more than once cannot continue in the course and may be excluded from enrolment or placed on academic probation (Academic Progress Policy).

Study Area

(30) A study area is a set of units within a course which together form a coherent body of knowledge and skills that provide the main focus of a course. Courses may include:

    a. Study area A (major); and
    b. Study area B (second major or minor or study area A Extension)

(31) Study areas may have learning outcomes that align to, but are subordinate to, course learning outcomes.

(32) The Award courses protocol (QUT staff access only) sets out the minimum requirements for study areas.

Section 11 - QUT You

(33) QUT is committed to developing graduates who will thrive in changing and volatile environments and contribute effectively to diverse communities as global citizens. To contribute to this commitment, all QUT award courses are designed to align with the Real World Learning Vision, and undergraduate award courses include a compulsory component, QUT You.

(34) QUT You is a core structural element of undergraduate award courses unless the course has been approved by the Deputy Vice-Chancellor and Vice-President (Academic) as a designated course (Award courses protocol (QUT staff access only)).

(35) Further information is provided in the Award courses protocol (QUT staff access only).

Section 12 - Credit Point System

(36) QUT uses a credit point system for all coursework courses for the purposes of calculating student load (Equivalent Full Time Student Load - EFTSL) for internal and external reporting. The credit point value is a measure of the proportion of the volume of learning:

a. One year of full-time study is approximately 1,200 hours which includes all teaching, learning and assessment activities.
b. A standard unit at QUT is 12 credit points, representing approximately 150 hours.
c. A full-time year of a course is 96 credit points.

(37) Any variation to the credit points per full-time year of a course is regarded as overload or underload and is approved by University Academic Board.

(38) QUT allows exceptions to the standard unit credit points in certain circumstances as outlined in Award courses protocol (QUT staff access only).

Section 13 - Time-based Study

(39) Higher Degree Research (HDR) courses are offered as time-based study consistent with the requirements of the relevant AQF level. These degrees are characterised by the enrolment of a student in a thesis unit, which culminates in a major research output.

Section 14 - Definitions

Term	Definition
Award course	Is a higher education award as defined in section 5 of the Tertiary Education Quality and Standards Agency Act 2011 (Cth), meaning a qualification covered by level 5, 6, 7, 8, 9 or 10 of the Australian Qualifications Framework (AQF) or an award of a similar kind, represented as being of a similar kind. The qualifications most likely to be used at QUT are outlined in the Award courses protocol (QUT staff access only). In this policy 'course' means an award course.
Complementary studies	A group of units that may be required in addition to core units and a Study Area A in order to fulfil course requirements.
Course	Is a structured and coherent set of units or thesis components purposely designed to support students to learn and achieve the course learning outcomes of the qualification. In this policy 'course' means an award course.
Course Learning Outcomes	Are a set of attributes (knowledge, skills and application of knowledge and skills) that graduates will be able to demonstrate upon the completion of the course. They are future-focussed and explicitly identify and align with the Australian Qualifications Framework (AQF) level of the qualification, reflecting the standards of the discipline and the profession and the QUT Real World Learning Vision. They include transferable, non-discipline specific skills.
Course Requirements	Are the specific requirements for admission to and completion of an award course.
Coursework Course	Is a course in which the methods of learning and teaching that lead to the acquisition of skills and knowledge does not include a major research component. As defined in Australian Qualifications Framework (AQF).
Credit Points	Indicates an estimation of the volume of learning associated with an award course, study area and unit (Section 12, Credit Point System).
Elective Units	Are units that are not core units in a course but may be undertaken to contribute to the required credit points of a course for completion as part of the complementary studies of the course.

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Page 5 of 7

Term	Definition
Equivalent Full Time Student Load (EFTSL)	Is a measure used by the Commonwealth Government and QUT to measure total load consumed by a student. At QUT one year of full-time study is 96 credit points which is equal to 1 EFTSL.
Major Research Output	Examples of major research outputs include theses, dissertations, exegeses, creative works or other major works submitted for the award of a higher degree. Major research outputs are assigned a code and an Equivalent Full Time Student Load (EFTSL) value and are approved by faculty academic boards. All major research outputs are coded using the same schema as for units.
Nested Suite	Courses are two or more postgraduate courses at different Australian Qualifications Framework (AQF) levels that allow students to easily articulate between courses at different levels and provides multiple entry and exit points. All units of the lower level course are included in all of the higher level courses in the suite.
Non-award Study	Refer to the Non-award Study Policy.
Post-nominal	Is the abbreviated form of an Australian Qualifications Framework (AQF) qualification type and field of study or discipline used by a graduate to identify their qualification.
QUT Handbook	Is the official record of course and unit offerings from past years, available on the Digital Workplace.
QUT You	Is a core/compulsory component of an undergraduate course, including double degrees.
Structural Elements	Are the components of the course structure. (Refer to Section 10, Award Course Structural Elements)
Study Area	The Study Area A (a major) is included on academic transcripts (Academic Award Documents Policy). A Study Area B (a minor) may be a second major that is linked to a Study Area A, a Study Area A extension or may be specific faculty units or a set of specific university-wide units.
Unit	Refer to Section 10, Award Course Structural Elements and the definition of unit in the Unit and Module Information Policy.
Volume of Learning	Is a dimension of the complexity of a qualification. It identifies the notional duration of all activities required for the achievement of the learning outcomes specified for a particular Australian Qualifications Framework (AQF) qualification type. As defined in AQF. For award courses it is expressed in equivalent full-time years, for a full-time year or unit it is expressed in hours.

Section 15 - Delegations

(40) Refer to Register of Authorities and Delegations (C101, C102, C103, C104) (QUT staff access only).

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Page 6 of 7

Status and Details

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