Courses Lifecycle - Inherent Requirements of Study Procedure

Section 1 - Summary

(1) The purpose of this Procedure is to provide direction on the development, phrasing and content of inherent requirements of award study program at Victoria University (VU) and for non-award study where required.

Section 2 - Scope

(2) This Procedure applies to all:

a. Higher Education (HE) Award coursework courses offered by, or on behalf of, VU in all domestic and off-shore locations.
b. HE ELICOS, Foundations and Bridging courses.
c. Higher Degrees by Research Award courses
d. Vocational Education and Training Award courses
e. Vocational Education and Training Non-Award courses where inherent requirements are specified

(3) This Procedure does not apply to:

a. HE Non Award courses

Section 3 - Policy Statement

(4) Courses Lifecycle Policy

Section 4 - Procedures

Part A - Summary of Roles and Responsibilities

Roles	Responsibilities
Student Services (Accessibility Services)	Assist students to identify and request any reasonable adjustments they may require to complete their studies
Course proponents / Course review teams	Identify and clearly define any inherent requirements of the course of study, in accordance with this Procedure and the processes established in the Courses Lifecycle Policy and its Procedures Liaise with any relevant professional accreditation bodies to ensure that inherent requirements statements are aligned with the requirements for courses leading to regulated professions

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Roles	Responsibilities
Executive Deans, Courses Committee and Academic Board	Scrutinise and endorse any inherent requirements as part of standard course development and review processes

Part B - Overview: Inherent Requirements in Study

(5) Current and prospective students must be able to demonstrate that they have acquired or have the ability to acquire the inherent requirements for their course.

(6) In many cases, having a health condition or disability will not impact studies. Many students with disabilities or other circumstances that impact on their studies have successfully completed their studies with or without reasonable adjustments to their learning conditions.

(7) VU will, where possible, adopt a universal design for learning (UDL) approach to course and assessment delivery, aiming to provide the least restrictive and prescriptive ways to achieve the required attainment that are appropriate to the learning outcomes of the course.

(8) Reasonable adjustments are implemented to assist students to manage additional circumstances which impact their studies, provided these do not fundamentally change the academic or vocational integrity of the course.

(9) Students who become permanently unable to meet the inherent requirements of study during the course of their studies, even with the application of reasonable adjustments, will need to be advised of alternative options for study. Where relevant, professional accreditation bodies with mandatory reporting requirements must be advised if a student becomes permanently unable to meet one or more inherent requirements.

Part C - Defining Inherent Requirements

(10) Inherent requirements of study are the skills, attributes and behaviours that are essential to a person being able to meet the requirements of the course of study. In some cases, these also relate to accreditation requirements to practice in the profession that the course of study typically qualifies a person to enter.

(11) Defining the inherent requirements of a course assists prospective and current students to understand the University's expectations and to make informed decisions about the best study pathway for themselves.

(12) Inherent requirements are primarily intended therefore to provide information, clarity and support to prospective and current students, not to act as barriers to admission or progression. It is appropriate for the University, however, to assess if a prospective or current student is unable to meet the inherent requirements of particular aspects of a course, including clinical, professional and Work Integrated Learning placements.

(13) Inherent requirements of study as they relate to clinical, professional and Work Integrated Learning placements must consider the capacity of placement organisations to support any reasonable adjustments required by the student. If an adjustment is not able to be safely implemented in the context of the placement, the adjustment will not be held to be a reasonable adjustment.

(14) The inherent requirements for any course of study must:

a. be developed as part of course design or review processes;
b. relate specifically, directly and justifiably to the content and learning outcomes of the course
c. take into account any relevant placement organisation restrictions and professional accreditation requirements
d. reflect the performance, skills and knowledge requirements specified in VET national training packages and accredited curricula, where applicable

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e. be approved by as part of the standard Course Design, Approval and Amendment processes established in the Courses Lifecycle Policy and associated procedures

(15) Care must be taken to not prescribe any attribute or ability as an inherent requirement if the student might be able to achieve the desired learning result in another way. For example, visual acuity should not be prescribed as an inherent requirement if the study, including any clinical, professional or Work Integrated Learning placements, can be successfully completed with the use of spoken text and other aids to access information.

Part D - Categories of Inherent Requirements

(16) Inherent Requirements can be defined under any of the following categories. It is not mandatory for all courses to list inherent requirements in all categories. Only inherent requirements that are relevant to a course should be used.

(17) While inherent requirements should be developed within the categories listed at clauses 23 - 34 below, the examples provided are not intended to be either prescriptive or exclusive. The particular requirements that apply within each category should be defined with reference to the particular needs and restrictions that apply to each course.

(18) Legal requirements: This relates to the understanding and ability to comply with Australian and Victorian law and professional accreditation regulations. Any relevant regulations may be included. Examples include:

a. Child protection and safety legislation (including the ability to pass a Working with Children Check)
b. Criminal History / Police Checks
c. Occupational health and safety
d. Anti-discrimination legislation

(19) Ethical and professional behaviour: This relates to the student's ability to understand and adhere to standards, codes, guidelines and policies that facilitates safe, competent interactions and relationships for students and the people they engage with. Examples include:

a. Complying with academic and non-academic conduct codes and policies, including academic integrity policies
b. Understanding and complying with professional standards, codes of practice, and guidelines

(20) Safe practice: Where relevant, this relates to considerations of current scope of practice, workplace health and safety, and any other matter related to safety. Examples include:

a. Ability to understand and comply with all relevant workplace health and safety policies and practices
b. Ability to identify and respond to alarm systems
c. Ability to understand and demonstrate compliance with current scope of practice
d. Ability to manage one's own health in a manner that promotes the ability to fulfill the requirements of study, placements, and the role/s for which the study typically equips the graduate

(21) Cognition: This relates to the student's capacity for knowledge acquisition, utilisation and retention. It also includes metacognitive capacity such as awareness of one's own thinking, and the ability to reflect, evaluate, adapt and implement new cognitive strategies. Examples include:

a. Focus, memory, attention to detail, theoretical deliberation, and practical functioning sufficient to meet the course objectives
b. Ability to reflect and take personal responsibility
c. Ability to apply knowledge in practical and theoretical assessment settings

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(22) Literacy: This includes both writing and reading, and is also linked to English language proficiency (literacy requirements are always established in terms of English). NB: For VE, literacy requirements are based on the Australian Core Skills Framework (ACSF). Examples include:

a. Capacity to comprehend, summarise and reference a range of literature in accordance with appropriate academic conventions in written assignments
b. Producing clear, accurate documentation relating to practical tasks

(23) Numeracy: This includes any form of numeracy required to complete the course successfully. For many courses, this will be basic functional numeracy. NB: For VE, numeracy requirements are based on the Australian Core Skills Framework (ACSF). Examples include:

a. Competent reasoning and reliable accuracy with numerical concepts
b. Ability to perform basic mathematical tasks

(24) Communication: This includes verbal, non-verbal and written communication. Examples include:

a. Verbal communication in English to a standard that allows fluid, clear, and comprehensible two-way discussions
b. Ability to recognise, interpret and respond to non-verbal cues, to communicate with congruent and respectful non-verbal behaviour, and to be sensitive to individual and/or cultural variations in non-verbal communication
c. Ability to produce English text to the expected standard (NB: This is a skill that may be developed throughout a course, and should be identified as such in any inherent requirements statement)

(25) Sensory ability: This includes visual, auditory and tactile capacity. NB: Care must be taken to not prescribe any sensory ability as an inherent requirement if the student might be able to achieve the desired result with the use of one or more adjustments. Examples include:

a. Ability to interact with visual inputs sufficiently to manage learning environments
b. Ability to interact with auditory inputs sufficiently to manage learning environments
c. Ability to respond to tactile input and provide appropriate tactile interaction

(26) Motor ability: This includes both gross and fine motor ability. NB: Care must be taken to not prescribe any motor ability as an inherent requirement if the student might be able to achieve the desired result with the use of one or more adjustments. Examples include:

a. Strength, range of motion, coordination and mobility sufficient to meet the requirements of the study, including placements included in the course
b. Manual dexterity and fine motor skills sufficient to meet the requirements of the study, including placements included in the course

(27) Sustained performance: This includes a person's ability to sustain their performance in a given activity or series of activities over time. Care must be taken to not prescribe sustained performance in a way that allows no room for temporary changes to performance levels due to illness or other factors. Examples include:

a. Ability to sustain a working posture, associated manual tasks, cognitive engagement, performance level and emotional control for the full duration of any task required as part of the course or any placement

(28) Behavioural adaptability: This includes the personal flexibility and resilience required to adapt behaviour to different situations, even when they are stressful or difficult. NB: Care must be taken to allow room in the inherent requirements for the individual to demonstrate behavioural adaptability through withdrawing from activities for a time

to undertake medical interventions and self-care measures. Examples include:

a. Ability to adjust ways of working to work within teams of varied personal and professional backgrounds
b. Being receptive and responding appropriately to constructive feedback
c. Maintaining respectful communication practices in times of increased stressors or workloads
d. Adjusting to changing circumstances in a way that allows self-care

(29) For VE / FE only - Training Packages/Accredited Curriculum requirements: This relates to a VE/FE student's ability to meet the performance skills and knowledge evidence requirements specified in the relevant training product.

Part E - Reasonable Adjustments (Permanent conditions)

(30) Prospective or current students who are able to meet an inherent requirement with the application of a reasonable adjustment are considered to be able to meet the inherent requirement.

(31) Reasonable adjustments can be made to any aspect of a student's educational experience, including but not limited to:

a. how curricula are delivered
b. the conduct of clinical, professional or Work Integrated Learning placements
c. the way in which learning outcomes are achieved, demonstrated or assessed

(32) Reasonable adjustments must:

a. not fundamentally change the nature of the inherent requirement;
b. be consistent with any restrictions imposed by a relevant professional accreditation body;
c. be consistent with legislative and regulatory requirements, and not compromise workplace health and safety, or any relevant codes, guidelines and policies;
d. not enable unethical or unprofessional behaviour;
e. address the need to perform the full range of tasks involved in the course program, including undertaking learning activities in mixed gender environments, which reflect the Australian context; and
f. ensure that performance is consistent and sustained over a given period.

(33) Prospective or current students who require reasonable adjustments are encouraged to contact Accessibility Services. Accessibility Liaison Officers are available to assist with developing an Access Plan tailored to the individual's needs, in consultation with the College and unit co-ordinating staff. Matters covered in the Plan may include:

a. recommendations for teaching adjustments
b. assessment and examination adjustments
c. placement support (if required)
d. the impacts of the health condition or disability on learning
e. responsibilities of the student
f. referrals for learning support and other factors for independent learning.

Part F - Adjustments for temporary conditions

(34) Students who experience temporary circumstances which impede their ability to meet the inherent requirements for a limited period of time may be eligible to obtain temporary adjustments under the University's Special Consideration system (see Assessment for Learning - Adjustments to Assessment Procedure (HE)).

(35) The University will work with students as far as possible to ensure that adjustments do not unduly impact on course duration, and will advise students of the need to remain compliant with maximum course duration rules as established by the University.

Section 5 - HESF/ASQA/ESOS Alignment

(36) HESF: 1.1.1 Admission; 2.1 Facilities and Infrastructure; 7.2.1 Information for Prospective and Current Students.

(37) Outcome Standards for NVR Registered Training Organisations 2025: Standards 1.2 Training; 1.4 Assessment; 1.8 Facilities, Resources and Equipment; 2.3-2.4 Training Support; 2.5 Diversity and Inclusion; 2.6 Wellbeing.

(38) National Code of Practice for Providers of Education and Training to Overseas Students 2018 (Cth): 2 Recruitment of an Overseas Student; 3 Formalisation of enrolment and written agreements.

Section 6 - Definitions

(39) Inherent Requirements

(40) Reasonable adjustments: Any adjustment to be made by the University modifying the learning or assessment environment to accommodate the needs of students with disability, injury or illness taking into account the inherent requirements of study. An adjustment is a reasonable adjustment unless making the adjustment would impose an unjustifiable hardship on the organisation.

(41) Unjustifiable hardship

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Status and Details

Status	Current
Effective Date	19th August 2020
Review Date	19th August 2027
Approval Authority	Pro Vice-Chancellor (Students)
Approval Date	18th August 2020
Expiry Date	Not Applicable
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Glossary Terms and Definitions

"Unjustifiable hardship" - In determining whether a hardship is an unjustifiable hardship, all relevant circumstances must be taken into account, including the following: a.the nature of the benefit or detriment likely to accrue to, or to be suffered by, any person concerned, including any wider community benefit; b.the effect of the disability of any person concerned; and c.the financial circumstances, and the estimated amount of expenditure required to be made. The burden of proving that something would impose unjustifiable hardship lies on the person or organisation claiming unjustifiable hardship.

"Inherent Requirements" - Inherent requirements are the fundamental abilities, attributes, skills and behaviours necessary to achieve the learning outcomes of a course while preserving the academic and vocational integrity of the University's learning, assessment and accreditation processes.

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