

## Teaching Periods, Patterns and Academic Calendars Policy

<b>Purpose:</b>	To govern the creation of academic calendars and the establishment, disestablishment and use of teaching periods at the University.		
<b>Audience:</b>	Staff		
<b>Supporting Procedures:</b>	<i>Academic Calendars Procedure</i> <i>Technical Teaching Periods Procedure</i> <i>Non-Standard Teaching Periods Procedure</i>		
<b>Contact Officer:</b>	Secretary to Academic Council	<b>Phone:</b>	See Campus Directory

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### Preamble:

The University's involvement in Transnational education and an increased emphasis on flexibility have resulted in a proliferation of teaching periods. This creates various direct and indirect costs for the University. It also adds to the complexity of implementing University policy and procedure. Rationalising teaching periods and simplifying their impact on administrative processes across the University is highly desirable.

Standard teaching patterns involve the regular scheduling of teaching activities across 12 teaching weeks in either a semester or trimester pattern. Variations to this pattern may include either intensification (or extension) of the teaching period or an irregular scheduling of teaching activities within a semester or trimester period.

The University must remain compliant with the Australian Qualifications Framework and this includes specifications about the "volume of learning" (duration) of various awards. For this reason there are restrictions on intensive and irregular teaching patterns.

The Summer and Winter teaching terms are intensive teaching periods and units taught within them are subject to this policy.

### Objectives:

1. To guide the development of academic calendars.
2. To define the types of teaching periods and the circumstances for their establishment, disestablishment and use.
3. To minimise the proliferation of teaching periods.

## **Policy:**

### **Academic Calendars**

1. Academic calendars are approved by Academic Council at least two years in advance.
2. Separate calendars are approved for the University and its external partnerships. Wherever possible maximum alignment should be achieved.
3. On rare occasions, Academic Council may approve a variation to the University academic calendar for a College and its offerings.
4. Academic calendars set standard teaching periods, together with any non-teaching, study and assessment weeks, in accordance with the *Academic Calendars Procedure*.
5. The principles governing the structure of Academic Calendars are as follows:
  - 5.1. Consideration will be given to the start date of Semester 1 in relation to other Western Australian universities.
  - 5.2. Each semester will consist of twelve teaching weeks.
  - 5.3. Each semester will normally have two non-teaching breaks of one week's duration. This pattern is to be maintained except where impossible to meet all other criteria of Section 5 of this Policy.
  - 5.4. Each semester will normally have a minimum of four teaching weeks before the first non-teaching break. The first non-teaching break in Semester 1 and Semester 2 will not occur prior to the HECS census date.
  - 5.5. Each semester will have a study break of one week's duration prior to two assessment weeks.
  - 5.6. Where possible, the impact of public holidays on teaching weeks (especially in relation to Easter and Anzac Day in Semester 1) will be minimised.
  - 5.7. At least one non-teaching break will align with one week of school holidays in each semester.
  - 5.8. There will be a minimum of two weeks and preferably three weeks between trimesters.

### **Teaching Periods**

6. Three types of teaching periods may be established:

Standard:	Those established through Academic Council's approval of Academic calendars.
Technical:	Those created by the Manager, Student Records for ease of administration.
Non-standard:	Those (discretionary) teaching periods established at the request of a College to meet a special teaching purpose (e.g. clinical placements or intensive teaching patterns) and approved through the academic planning process by the President of Academic Council.
7. The maximum teaching period will be 12 months; the minimum teaching period will be in accordance with the requirements of the *Units Policy* and Clause 17 of this policy.
8. All teaching periods will be compliant in regard to the setting of start, end and census dates.

9. All teaching periods, together with their start, end and census dates, are published on the University website.
10. With the exception of technical teaching periods, all teaching periods must have a unique combination of start date and end date.

### **Standard Teaching Periods**

11. The standard teaching periods approved by Academic Council are: Semesters, Trimesters, Winter and Summer Terms and the two, year-long teaching periods from the beginning of Semester 1 to the end of Semester 2, and the beginning of Semester 2 to the end of Semester 1 the following year. Standard teaching periods are established in accordance with the *Academic Calendars Procedure*.
12. Winter and Summer Terms are intensive teaching periods and are subject to the Non-Standard Teaching Periods and Patterns section of this policy (clauses 16-22).
13. Disestablishment of a standard teaching period is by resolution of Academic Council.

### **Technical Teaching Periods**

14. A technical teaching period can be established by the Manager, Student Records for ease of administration of different cohorts of students (e.g. HDR students and Research Teaching Periods; OUA units; transnational teaching periods etc.), in accordance with the *Technical Teaching Periods Procedure*. Thereafter they are available for wider use.
15. Technical teaching periods are rolled over from year to year.
16. Technical teaching periods can be disestablished by the Manager, Student Records when no longer required.

### **Non-Standard Teaching Periods and Patterns**

17. Units may be taught in non-standard teaching periods, and/or in non-standard teaching patterns (i.e. other than the regular scheduling of classes throughout a teaching period), providing the following criteria are met:
  - The unit complies with the *Units Policy*.
  - The academic content and assessment of units must be at least equivalent to that in units taught in standard teaching periods and patterns.
  - In particular, units taught in non-standard teaching periods and/or patterns must provide a learning environment that allows sufficient time for student reflection on the material taught and for feedback on progress as well as discussion with the lecturer.
18. Consistent with an average student workload of 50 hours/point (see *Units Policy*), the length of a non-standard teaching period for a three point unit shall not be less than four weeks from the commencement of the unit until the completion of assessment, and not less than five weeks for a four point unit.
19. The minimum length of teaching periods in Clause 17 above assume the student is studying one unit full-time with sufficient time for student reflection on the material taught and for feedback on progress as well as discussion with the lecturer.
20. Care must be taken when designing or using a non-standard teaching period, and when advising students on unit enrolment, that they are not inadvertently being forced to overload through the overlap of teaching periods.

21. The contact hours should be equivalent to those in similar units taught in standard teaching periods and assessment must comply with the *Assessment Policy*.
22. Contact hours may be delivered in a concentrated or distributed form within a standard or non-standard teaching period, but consideration must be given to the impact on other units in which the students may be enrolled. Units published in the University Handbook must include information on the pattern of contact hours.
23. Colleges with units or courses with non-standard teaching periods are responsible for the timetabling, organization and supervision of any examination unless a prior arrangement has been made with the Examinations Office.

### **Establishment of Non-Standard Teaching Periods**

24. The establishment of a non-standard teaching period requires the approval of the Academic Courses and Admissions Committee.
25. Colleges may request the establishment of a non-standard teaching period during the Curriculum Management Process in accordance with the *Non-Standard Teaching Periods Procedure*.
26. When requesting a new non-standard teaching period, a justification must be provided as to why an existing teaching period cannot be used.
27. Once established, non-standard teaching periods are rolled over from one year to the next.
28. A non-standard teaching period that has been rolled over from the previous year and remains unused by any unit offering at the end of the Curriculum Management Process may be deleted.
29. Teaching periods established for placement units will, in accordance with the *Work Integrated Learning Policy*:
  - 29.1. have their start and end dates set so as to encompass the beginning of the first student's placement and the end of the last student's placement;
  - 29.2. have their start date and census date established so that the census date falls as early in the teaching period as possible and within the period of the first student's placement.
30. All other non-standard teaching periods will set start and end dates to meet the requirements of Clause 17 of this policy and, in setting the census date, give consideration to its relationship to any intensive contact hours and assessment deadlines.
31. Information about the teaching period and pattern of contact hours will be provided to all students enrolled in units taught within a non-standard teaching period before commencement of the unit in accordance with the *Non-Standard Teaching Periods Procedure*.

### **Supporting Procedures:**

The procedures supporting this policy and the Title of Officer(s) authorised to approve them are indicated in the table below:

<b>Supporting Procedure</b>	<b>Approval Authority</b>
<i>Technical Teaching Periods Procedure</i>	Manager Student Records, Senior Application Support Analyst

<i>Non-Standard Teaching Periods Procedure</i>	Director Academic Quality, Curriculum Management and Policy
<i>Academic Calendars Procedure</i>	President of Academic Council

### **Supporting Guidelines:**

There are no supporting guidelines.

### **Supporting Standards:**

There are no supporting standards.

### **Definitions:**

**These definitions have been copied from the "Dictionary of Terms". Please refer to the "Dictionary of Terms" in Policy and Procedure Manager™ to ensure you are referring to the latest version.**

"Non-Standard Teaching Period"

"Standard Teaching Period"

"Teaching Period"

### **Related Documents:**

*Assessment Policy*

*Units Policy*

*Work Integrated Learning Policy*

### **References:**

There are no references.

### **Approval and Implementation:**

<b>Approval Authority:</b>	Academic Council
<b>Responsible Officer(s):</b>	Secretary to Academic Council

**Revision History:**

<b>Version</b>	<b>Date Approved</b>	<b>Effective Date (if later than 'Date Approved')</b>	<b>Next Review Date</b>	<b>Resolution No. (if applicable)</b>
Administrative amendments	11/08/2020			
Administrative amendments	25/07/2019			
Administrative amendments	08/03/2019			
Administrative amendments	31/05/2018			
Approved	13/09/2017			AC/107/2017(i)
Rescinded	13/09/2017			AC/107/2017(ii)
Approved	22/05/2013			AC/96/2013(ii)
Rescinded AC/149/2011(ii)	22/05/2013			AC/96/2013(iii)
Approved	21/09/2011			AC/149/2011(ii)