CROSS-INSTITUTIONAL ENROLMENTS

As set out in the Student Procedures, Rules and Policies section of the Handbook - “students may be permitted to undertake studies on a cross-institutional basis at another post-secondary institution for credit to their degree course at this University”.

The procedure set out is that “approval should be obtained from the appropriate sub-dean, associate dean or academic adviser and then from the institution at which students seek to enrol. Students should refer to http://www.studentadmin.uwa.edu.au/page/17933, and download a Cross-institutional Approval form or obtain a hard copy from Student Administration (Hackett Hall).”

Students are advised that “the closing date for applications is specified on the application form. Students should allow ample time for the administrative processes of both UWA and the host institution to be completed.”

And to be aware that normally, applications for cross-institutional enrolment at other universities in Western Australia are only approved in cases where an equivalent unit is not available at this University.

At the February meeting of the FAO/Subdeans’ Group it was suggested that the lack of standardisation in the faculties’ approach to the approval of a cross-institutional enrolment for UWA students wishing to study at another institution might be causing concerns. Faculties were requested to forward a short outline of their current thinking or written policy in relation to cross-institutional enrolments (for UWA students) for discussion by the Group with a view to ascertaining if there was in fact a problem and whether a more standardised policy across the University should be implemented.

The following submissions have been received:

1. **Faculty of Architecture, Landscape and Visual Arts:**

ALVA does not have a written policy regarding the approval of cross-institutional enrolment, and requests from students to be allowed to enrol on a cross-institutional basis are considered on their merits on a case by case basis. However, the Faculty attempts to be as flexible as possible in allowing students to undertake study at alternative institutions. In particular, the large degree of parity regarding the way that architecture is taught across most Australian Universities means that cross-institutional enrolment for architecture students is fairly straightforward and does not compromise the students’ learning experience.

The Faculty makes its best effort to enable students who wish to study interstate for a period of time to be able to do this, and indeed, in some cases it is seen as a positive step for the student to experience an alternative university / learning environment. Students are normally limited to a maximum 1 year of cross-institutional enrolment, after which they are encouraged to transfer their studies to the appropriate University. Students who wish to come in to ALVA from elsewhere are also welcomed, however this may start to change given the growth that is occurring at the moment – in the future we may wish to limit the number of students that we accept in to the Faculty on a cross-institutional basis if they wish to do units that are over subscribed. At the moment however we have no restrictions on students coming in so long as they have approval from their home institution and have the pre-requisites for their chosen units.

The vast majority of cross-institutional enrolments (both in and out) that occur in ALVA are to and from interstate universities. This is because the only other University in WA that teaches architecture is Curtin, and no others teach landscape architecture. Visual Arts students have not traditionally requested cross-institutional enrolments very often. Occasionally cross-institutional enrolments occur between ALVA and Curtin, however these are usually single units in particular circumstances – again these would be approved on a case by case basis, and would normally result from special consideration being applied. (i.e. if a student fails a core unit in Architecture at UWA that is not offered again at UWA until the following year, they
may be allowed to undertake the equivalent unit at Curtin University that is taught in the alternative semester.

2. Faculty of Arts, Humanities and Social Sciences:

- AHSS receives approximately five (this is a guestimate) cross-institutional applications each week from UWA students wishing to study unit/s at another university.
- The reasons students give for wishing to study unit/s elsewhere include:
  1. Wanting to study a unit externally or wanting evening classes usually for employment/childcare reasons
  2. Wanting to study a unit not available at UWA (either in a discipline area available at UWEA or, more commonly, in a discipline not available at UWA)
  3. Moving interstate
- AHSS has taken the direction of approving cross-institutional enrolments for students with logistical reasons to study elsewhere.
- AHSS has not been approving cross-institutional enrolments applications for students wishing to study in a discipline outside of those offered at UWA.
- The rules and policies relating to cross-institutional enrolments do not specify when cross-institutional enrolments should be approved, only that it ‘may’ be approved (See AHSS General Rule 3.1.1.2(1) and (2)).
- There is a rule about ‘Special Units’ (AHSS General Rule 3.1.1.1) which relates to the issue of being able to study in a topic not normally available at UWA.
- Is there any reason a student should not be able to study in an area not taught at UWA?
- The Dean says that we should be as flexible as possible and that students should be allowed to study units in areas not normally available at UWA in the interest of broadening the student experience.

I think each faculty has a unique stance, and we should probably try for some consistency for the sake of the students. From what I hear anecdotally other universities are often more flexible with approving cross-institutional enrolments outside of their offerings.

3. Faculty of Economics and Commerce:

To date, the Faculty has chosen not to publish guidelines on cross-institutional study approval, preferring all those students pursuing this option to discuss their situation with the Sub-Dean. This approach has proven worthwhile as there are often alternative strategies that the students can be made aware of even where their initially proposed cross-institutional study cannot be approved.

The following table summarises the reasons for which cross-institutional study is generally proposed and the extent to which approval will be forthcoming from the faculty.

In all cases the cross-institutional study proposed must allow the student sufficient points to complete all other course requirements within their course structure. The main purpose of cross-institutional study is seen as facilitating the study of material not offered by this University, rather than to afford the student additional flexibility in course planning or the opportunity to speed their course completion. This is reflected in the approach set out below.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>REASON UNDERLYING PROPOSED STUDY</th>
<th>EXTENT TO WHICH APPROVAL IS GRANTED</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>To study Economics and Commerce related material not offered at the University.</td>
<td>Always approved, provided the faculty is satisfied with the level of the material to be studied.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>To study non-Economics and Commerce related material not offered at the University.</td>
<td>Approved where the faculty is satisfied with the level of the material to be studied and where the student can clearly demonstrate that the study will facilitate their future career opportunities.</td>
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<tr>
<td>To study material which is otherwise offered at this University outside Western Australia in order to facilitate the student’s involvement in internships or other relatively short term career enhancing opportunities.</td>
<td>Generally only approved where the student proposes study at an institution we would regard as of similar standing to UWA-for instance, within Australia, a Group of eight University and where we are satisfied with the level of the material to be studied.</td>
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For logistic reasons—where a student’s planned completion will be delayed by the semester availability of our Units and/or prior failed units.

Only approved in very narrow situations. Specifically, this type of study will only be approved, subject to the level of the study proposed, where:

- The student has an out-of-state career opportunity that they will be prevented from taking up by the need to undertake a further semester’s study at UWA in order to complete a single unit.
- The student intends to (or is required by immigration requirements to) become resident offshore on completion of their study and this intention will be delayed for a semester by the need to undertake a single unit.

It has not been found necessary to approve cross-institutional study for any reasons outside the above.

General Remarks: Cross-institutional study is one area where there seems both to be legitimate reason for the approach taken by faculties to differ, in accordance with the objectives and priorities of their courses, and unusually is a situation where no significant administrative overhead arising from such a difference in approach.

4. Faculty of Engineering, Computing and Mathematics:

Cross-institutional enrolments are allowed in this faculty in some circumstances. Such enrolments may be divided into two categories and a description of each of these follows.

(a) Some units at other institutions are included in the rules for some programmes within the faculty. For example, a transportation engineering unit at Curtin is listed as an option in the Civil Engineering programme. These units have an ENRL code listed in the UWA handbook and students enrol in them in the usual way; they do not require permission from the faculty to do so.

(b) Cross-institutional enrolment in units not included in the rules for programmes or majors is sometimes permitted but requires the approval of the Associate Dean (Students) who may seek advice on the suitability of the units from the Head of the appropriate School. Circumstances in which such enrolments are permitted are:

(i) The student has had to move to another state and is at such a stage in a course that transfer to a course at another university would be disadvantageous or the interstate residence is to be for a short time and the student wishes to return to UWA to complete the course.

(ii) The student wishes to take a unit which is not available at UWA and which is especially relevant to the student’s interests or intended employment.

(iii) The student wishes to take units taught during the UWA summer vacation in order to avoid having to enrol in an additional semester after failing some units. This is particularly common with international students who may encounter difficulties with their student visas if they need to extend the length of their stay in Australia. Similarly, a student may wish to take a unit in one semester at another institution in order to complete a course before the equivalent unit is offered at UWA in the following semester.

General Remarks: Approval is more readily given for cross-institutional enrolment for optional than for core units. Students sometimes request cross-institutional enrolment in order to avoid UWA units which they find particularly difficult. Such requests are almost always refused. Grades for cross-institutional units are either UP or UF.

5. Faculty of Law:

The Faculty of Law by advertising its graduate entry LLB as a 3-year degree (3.75 years FTE), its undergraduate LLB degree as a 4-year degree (4.125 years FTE) and its combined courses as 5-year degrees (most are about 6 years FTE with the exception of Health Science, Law and Engineering, Law) encourages its students to overload and, in some cases, significantly and continually. Due to the fact that we also do not have any summer session offerings we have a huge number of students who attempt to ease the pressure on their
studies by taking units on a cross-institutional basis through institutions that offer more flexible
teaching or who teach outside of the Law School’s standard teaching periods.

The policy adopted by a previous Associate Dean was one whereby a student could study any unit they wished provided that it was not a core unit (although this was occasionally arranged) and was part of a degree course that was recognised for the purpose of admission to legal practice in the relevant State. This policy was not continued by the Associate Dean who acted in the role for the latter part of 2006 although measures were put in place to ensure that no students were disadvantaged compared with their peers. At that time I drafted a policy for the approval of outbound cross-institutional students but this has not yet been adopted. The matter will be under consideration by the Faculty.

6. Faculty of Life and Physical Sciences:
   (Science Faculties’ policy re BSc)

There was some discussion last year in the two science faculties of a formal policy on cross-institutional enrolment, in respect of the 5xxxx undergraduate science courses. The latest draft was as follows:-

CROSS-INSTITUTIONAL ENROLMENT

Students are encouraged to apply for cross-institutional enrolment at another Australian university where there are strong academic grounds for doing so, for instance in the case of subject-matter not offered at this University but relevant to the student’s course. Units taken under cross-institutional enrolment will be permitted to count towards a student’s major only with the special approval of the Faculty, and up to a maximum of twelve points.

7. Faculty of Medicine, Dentistry and Health Sciences:

UWA students can undertake cross-institutional enrolment elsewhere, but again comprise mainly Health Science and Public Health postgraduate students.

The Faculty accepts incoming students for cross-institutional enrolments, but only in certain circumstances. Health Science students can be accommodated, but there are not many. The majority of such students are postgraduate Public Health students (course 9000P). There has also been an opening up to a new group of students doing the Rural Clinical School at UWA from Notre Dame University (under course code 9000N). There are no Dentistry students.

Compiled on 10 April 2007