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1 The present situation

1.1 Introduction
The current structure and framework of legislation applying to courses is the result of an extensive revision of the then Faculty and General Regulations applying to courses which took place in 2002 and 2003. The context was the Dickson review of degree regulations, rules and procedures, the impending introduction of the Callista Student Information Management System, a decision to move from individual faculty handbooks to a combined handbook and the Senate’s stated view that it wished to concentrate on the strategic decision-making aspects of the University’s business. The main aims of the revision were to achieve consistency of approach wherever possible within and across faculties and to reduce workload associated with writing, amending and approving legislation applying to courses. The principal changes that occurred as a result are described below.

1.2 Regulations to rules
In accordance with its stated desire to concentrate on the strategic decision-making aspects of the University’s business, Senate approved that all Faculty and General Regulations applying to courses, which could be amended only by the Senate, become rules, which could be amended by the Academic Board. A set of enabling regulations (the Course Regulations) was approved by Senate for the purpose.

1.3 Structure and organisation of Faculty and General Rules for Academic Courses
With the aim of achieving consistency wherever possible, the following changes were made to the structure and organisation of the rules applying to courses.

- All rules that were the same across faculties were included in the University General Rules for Academic Courses.
- Where a rule was common across all courses within a Faculty and therefore constituted Faculty policy applying to all courses administered by that Faculty, it became a Faculty General Rule.
- Where a rule was common across all courses of a particular type in a Faculty (eg all bachelor’s degrees) and therefore constituted Faculty policy applying to courses of that type, it became a Faculty General Provision applying to that type of course.
- Each Faculty’s set of Rules was re-organised into Parts and grouped according to type of rule, eg all Faculty general rules (Part 1), all bachelor’s degree rules (Part 2), all undergraduate diploma rules (Part 3), all graduate certificate rules (Part 4) etc.
- The Parts were numbered and named in a standard way irrespective of whether an individual Faculty had general rules or courses of a particular type. For example if a Faculty had no General Rules that applied across all courses in the Faculty a Part (Part 1) would still be set aside for Faculty General Rules and a statement included to the effect that there were no general rules. Similarly if a Faculty had no undergraduate diplomas, a Part of its rules would still be set aside for that type of course but would contain a statement to the effect that the Faculty currently had no courses of that type.
- Within Parts the rules were further split into Divisions so that there was a Division for general provisions applying to that course type within the Faculty followed by a Division for each individual course of that course type.
- Divisions were numbered in a standard way. Irrespective of whether an individual Faculty had general provisions relating to a course of a particular type, a Division was set aside for such provisions. If there were no such provisions a statement to that effect was included.
- At the beginning of each set of individual course rules statements were made about the applicability of the University General Rules, the Faculty General Rules, if any, and the Faculty
General Provisions applying to that type of course, if any. Electronic links were included so that, in the online environment, users of the rules could view all rules applying to a particular course.

- Where a Faculty had rules that represented exceptions or additions to the University General Rules these were indicated as such immediately underneath the Faculty rule concerned as follows:

  **Time limit**

  4.6.13.8(1) The time limit is three years from the beginning of the year in which the first unit is credited towards the course.
  
  [Approved exception to University General Rule¹ 1.2.1.33(1)]

  (2) In special circumstances, the Faculty may extend the time limit by one semester.
  
  [Approved exception to University General Rule¹ 1.2.1.33(2)]

- As shown above, electronic links were included so that, in an online environment, users of the rules could view the rule to which the Faculty rule represented an exception or addition.

1.4 Presentation of information about course requirements

In addition to the above changes a new approach was adopted to providing information about course requirements. The Dickson report had recommended that such information be presented in terms of total requirements rather than being set out by year of a course as previously. The intention was to prepare the course rules for “translation” into the Callista Student Information Management System to enable automated checking of course progression and completion.

It was recognised that the above approach would require provision of additional explanatory information and assistance for students in planning their courses. Pending the introduction of a course plan facility, faculties have catered for this in a variety of ways including by providing course booklets, handouts and online information.

1.5 Numbering

Given the decision to provide course information in a combined handbook, rather than in individual faculty handbooks as previously, for ease of reference and navigation some information users requested digitization of the numbering system for rules.

The following system was adopted:

1. “Chapter” of Rules
2. 1 Part of “Chapter”
3. 1.1 Division within Part of “Chapter”
4. 1.1.1 Individual Rule Number within Division within Part of “Chapter”
5. 1.1.1.1 Clause within Rule within Division within Part of “Chapter”
6. 1.1.1.1(1)(a) Paragraph
7. 1.1.1.1(1)(a)(i) sub-Paragraph etc

2 The Future

2.1 Introduction

The work described in 1 comprised Stage 1 of a Legislative Change Project. As stated earlier, one of the main aims of the project was to achieve consistency wherever possible. It was hoped that identifying and highlighting any areas of difference within and between faculties would enable progress to be made towards removing these. Significant progress was and has continued to be made towards this goal.

The intention was to revisit and further refine the rules in a proposed Stage 2 of the project. However, the major part of the work associated with Stage 2 was deferred pending the outcome of the Review of Course Structures.
Following the Review of Course Structures and endorsement by Academic Board and Senate of the recommendations arising from it, an implementation committee was established with responsibility to supervise the process of effecting the approved changes. This committee in turn established several working parties to assist it in its task. The Frameworks and Definition of Degrees Working Party (FDWP) was given responsibility for, among other things, writing rules and other instruments to apply in the new courses framework.

Given that two driving forces for the introduction of the new courses structure were efficiency and effectiveness, the FDWP sought to simplify the existing framework of rules and policies applying to courses and students.

2.2 University General Rules for Academic Courses
At one of its early meetings the FDWP recommended that administrative requirements for students currently contained in the University General Rules for Academic Courses should be separated from the policy contained in those rules and included in a set of rules written specifically for students. It proposed that the remaining University General Rules that would continue to be valid in the new courses framework be written as University policy and published on the University Policies website.

Accordingly, the attached set of Student Rules (which are subject to final approval by Academic Council) has been drafted (Attachment B). These rules expand upon administrative requirements currently contained in the University General Rules and include other requirements not presently expressed in rules. The rules are written primarily for a student audience. The remaining University General Rules are currently being written as policy, procedure or rules, as appropriate.

2.3 Layering of Rules
The University General Rules and Faculty Rules applying to courses are an integrated and inter-related suite of rules.

As explained in 1.3, a statement about the sets of general rules and provisions that apply to an individual course is provided the beginning of each set of individual course rules. Electronic links to those general rules and provisions are provided in the online environment as illustrated in the following example:

**Applicability of the University General Rules for Academic Courses**

X.4.2.1 The rules in 1.1 and 1.2 of the University General Rules for Academic Courses in this handbook apply to the course for the Graduate Certificate in …. except as set out in the rules which follow.

**Applicability of the Faculty General Rules**

X.4.2.2 The Faculty General Rules in 4.1 apply to the course.

**Applicability of the Faculty general provisions for graduate certificates**

X.4.2.3 The Faculty general provisions for graduate certificates in 4.4.1 apply to the course.

It has been proposed that this “layering” of rules be removed. This will have a number of implications for current conventions.

2.3.1 Statement on applicability of the University General Rules

2.2 explains that the content of the University General Rules for Academic Courses will be replaced by a set of Student Rules and a suite of policies and procedures. It is therefore proposed to replace the current statement concerning the applicability of the University General Rules at the beginning of each set of individual course rules with the following:

**Applicability of the Student Rules, Policies and Procedures**

(1) The student rules in Chapter X of this handbook apply to students in this course.
(2) The policy and procedures in Chapter X apply except as otherwise indicated in the rules for this course.

It is intended that this new statement be inserted in each set of individual course rules, including those for courses that will not form part of the new courses structure. An electronic link will be provided to the Student Rules and to information about the relevant policy and procedures.

2.3.2 Satisfactory Progress

Currently University General Rule 1.2.1.29 applies to satisfactory progress in coursework courses unless a faculty has an exception to this rule.

University General Rule 1.2.1.29 reads as follows:

**Satisfactory progress**

1.2.1.29(1) Subject to (2), to make satisfactory progress in a calendar year a student must—

(a) pass units to a value of at least half the total value of units in which they remain enrolled after the final date for withdrawal without academic penalty [see Rule 1.2.1.2(3)]; and

(b) satisfy any additional requirements which a faculty determines and states in its rules.

(2) For students in an honours course or in another course with a research component, the faculty will normally determine whether satisfactory progress has been made having regard to the report of the student’s supervisor.

A policy will be written on academic progress, however, in accordance with the intention that course rules stand alone, it is proposed that satisfactory progress be defined for each individual course in the set of rules that applies to that course. The following is an example:

**Satisfactory progress**

X(1) To make satisfactory progress in a calendar year a student must—

(a) pass units to a value of at least half the total value of units in which they remain enrolled after the final date for withdrawal without academic penalty; and

(b) pass any design unit(s) in which they remain enrolled.

2.3.3 Exceptions and additions to University General Rules

Currently Faculties have a number of rules that differ from the University General Rules for Academic Courses. These have been labelled as exceptions or additions to the University General Rules, as the case may be.

As previously stated, the University General Rules expressing policy will be rewritten as University Policy documents. In line with the ongoing aim of achieving consistency of approach within and among faculties, it is proposed that faculties be asked to review all rules applying to postgraduate courses that are currently labelled as exceptions or additions to University General Rules to explore whether it might be possible to align faculty rules with University-wide policy presently expressed in the University General Rules. A schedule of current exceptions and additions is being prepared to assist the process. If alignment is not possible, it will be necessary to review existing University-wide policy to determine whether it is appropriate to provide for the exceptions or additions that currently exist. Any Faculty-specific policy that remains valid after this process will be labelled as such. (Faculty-specific policy cannot be contrary to approved University-wide policy.)

2.3.4 Admission requirements for postgraduate courses

The admission rules for a postgraduate course commence with the statement below (followed by the specific admission requirements):

**Admission**

x.4.6.4 Subject to University General Rule 1.1.1.2(5), the admission requirements are—

University General Rule 1.1.1.2(5) states that:
“(5) Admission to all postgraduate courses is subject to—
(a) the availability of academic staff in the relevant area;
(b) the availability of resources and appropriate facilities;
(c) any quota restrictions in force; and
(d) the student satisfying the faculty or the Board of the Graduate Research School, as appropriate, that they have the ability to complete the course.”

As University General Rule 1.1.1.2(5) will be replaced by policy applying to postgraduate courses, it is proposed to replace the current opening statement with the statement below (which will be followed by the specific admission requirements):

**Admission**

To be considered for admission to this course an applicant must have—

(for example)

(a) a bachelor's degree of this University, or equivalent as recognised by the Faculty; and
(b) at least two years’ relevant professional experience.

2.3.5 Combined courses

At present the following statements about the applicability of University General Rules and Faculty General Rules and provisions are included in the General provisions for combined courses for two bachelor’s degrees in 11.1.1.

**Applicability of the University General Rules for Academic Courses**

11.1.1.1 The rules in 1.1 and 1.2 of the University General Rules for Academic Courses in this handbook apply to combined courses for two bachelor’s degrees except as set out in the rules for a specific combined course.

**Applicability of the Faculties’ general rules and general provisions**

11.1.1.2 The relevant Faculty general rules and general provisions for the corresponding single degree apply to the degree components except as set out in the rules for a specific combined course.

It is proposed that the above rules be replaced by the following:

**Applicability of the Student Rules, Policies and Procedures**

11.1.1.1(1) The student rules in Chapter X of this handbook apply to students in this course.

(2) The policy and procedures in Chapter X of this handbook apply except as otherwise indicated in the rules for a specific combined course.

**Applicability of the Faculties’ general rules and general provisions**

11.1.1.2 The relevant Faculty general rules and general provisions for the corresponding single degree apply to the degree components except as set out in the rules for a specific combined course.

It is also proposed that current University General Rules 1.2.2.5 to 1.2.2.18 (which apply to combined courses) be renumbered as appropriate and inserted after Rule 1.1.1.2.
2.3.6 Faculty General Rules and Provisions

The Faculty general rules and Faculty general provisions applying to a course type will be reinserted into individual sets of course rules. The aim is that each set of course rules in future stand alone. The rationale is that a reader should not be required to visit another section of the rules to find all rules applying to a particular course.

Prior to the reinsertion of Faculty general rules and general provisions, faculties have been asked to check them for currency. Those that are to be retained will be reviewed by Academic Policy Services in consultation with faculties to determine how they should best be dealt with in future. Those that are general across all faculties will be written as University policy. Those that apply to all postgraduate courses within a faculty or to all postgraduate courses of a type (for example, Graduate Diplomas) within that faculty will be reinserted into individual sets of course rules. In the case of rules for undergraduate degree courses that will be taught out, it is proposed that any faculty general rules to be retained as rules be inserted in the appropriate faculty’s General Provisions for Bachelor’s Degrees’ section and that there continue to be a link to these from the individual sets of course rules concerned.

So that work done previously to improve consistency of approach within and across faculties is not lost, it will be necessary to ensure that Faculty General Rules and Provisions cannot be inadvertently amended in an individual set of course rules in future. To prevent this occurring it is proposed that Faculty General Rules and Provisions be indicated as such under the rule concerned (for example, Faculty policy for graduate certificates or Faculty policy for postgraduate courses).

The divisions of rules that currently contain Faculty general Rules and Faculty general provisions for a particular course type will be deleted except in the case of Faculty General Provisions for Bachelor’s degrees.

2.3.7 Numbering, cross-referencing and navigating

The current numbering system was introduced to assist navigation through the combined handbook and to enable electronic linking to a specific rule number or table. As the rules applying to an individual course are intended to stand alone in future, it is proposed that they simply be numbered sequentially 1 to X. The existing system of numbering sub-clauses, paragraphs and sub-paragraphs would be retained, as follows:

1(1) Clause within Rule
   (a) Paragraph
   (i) sub-Paragraph

To assist navigation in a hard-copy environment it is proposed that sets of rules be ordered alphabetically by course name within course type¹, eg

GRADUATE CERTIFICATES
Graduate Certificate in Advanced Social Work
Graduate Certificate in Applied Anthropology
Graduate Certificate in Applied Maritime Archaeology

GRADUATE DIPLOMAS
Graduate Diploma in Advanced Social Work
Graduate Diploma in Applied Anthropology
Graduate Diploma in Applied Maritime Archaeology
Graduate Diploma in Arts

MASTER’S DEGREES
Master of Advanced Social Work
Master of Applied Anthropology
Master of Applied Maritime Archaeology
Master of Arts

¹Note: Additional course types may be required to accommodate elements of the new courses structure, eg the Doctor of Medicine, Doctor of Dental Medicine etc.
To enable linking in an online environment and to assist navigation in a hard-copy environment, it will be necessary to include the name of the course in any cross-references to rules and tables.

An example of an existing rule and hyperlink to table numbers is shown below.

x.5.8.4 The course consists of units to a total value of 24 points comprising—
(a) all units in Table x.5.8a (Graduate Certificate in Subject core units)—18 points
and
(b) one unit from Table x.5.8b (Graduate Certificate in Subject options)—6 points.

In future the three digits preceding the rule number and the table number, ie x.5.8 in the above example, will be deleted so that the rule will read:

4 The course consists of units to a total value of 24 points comprising—
(a) all units in Table a (Graduate Certificate in Subject core units)—18 points
and
(b) one unit from Table b (Graduate Certificate in Subject options)—6 points.

The electronic link to the table in future will be to the description of the table contents in brackets, ie (Graduate Certificate in Subject core units) in the above example, rather than to the table number.

Because the digitised rule number (which currently provides the unique identifier to which an electronic link can be made) will no longer exist, links to course rules in future will be created using the course name eg Graduate Certificate in Subject Rule 1.

2.4 New Bachelor’s Degree Rules
The uniform and simplified structure of the courses for the new undergraduate degrees: Bachelor of Arts, Bachelor of Commerce, Bachelor of Design and Bachelor of Science, permit one set of rules to apply to all.

The attached set of Undergraduate Degree Course Rules, which includes rules for the Bachelor of Philosophy Honours, has been drafted. The rules are subject to approval by Academic Council. (Attachment C).

2.5 Other matters
In the period 2008 to 2010 Academic Council passed a number of resolutions relating to postgraduate courses. These are included in the attached schedule and can also be found at the following address http://www.secretariat.uwa.edu.au/home/policies/pgcourses?f=286680 In developing new postgraduate courses and proposing amendments to existing courses, faculties must take due account of these decisions. (Attachment D)