

RMIT Course Guide Editing System: A Quick Overview

What is it?

A web based application that allows data entry into the specified fields for RMIT official course guides for both Higher Education and TAFE sectors. Official course guides are published to the RMIT website.

How does it work?

There are two parts to the system:

- The editing and approval system: academics enter the information and have it approved
- The publishing system: takes approved course guides and publishes them to the RMIT website. At the moment this takes place overnight. In the revised system due for implementation in August 2007, publishing will happen as soon as a guide is approved.

How are course guides set up?

In the editing system, the academic sees two parts:

- Part A or Course Overview: this is general information for prospective students. There is only one version of the Part A available at any time. The course overview information applies to all offerings of a course (i.e. for all locations and careers). It is identified by the 6 digit course ID number for HE courses, and by the combination of 6 digit ID number and Program Code for TAFE courses.
- Part B or Course Detail: a new document is generated for each course offering in every teaching period. They contain specific information such as assessment details and teaching schedule relevant to the particular instance of the course.

On the website, a student sees

- Course overview: general information plus links to specific semester offerings
- Course guide: a single document which combines the overview with the specific offering information. Note that Higher Education course guides require login for access.

What are the different status labels about?

In the editing system, documents have one of 5 different status labels

- **New:** blank document created automatically from PeopleSoft for each possible semester and offering
- **Draft:** someone has started to edit it and made at least one save.
- **Pending:** the editor has sent it on to be approved
- **Approved:** authorised and published to the web overnight
- **Suspended:** At the end of the first week of any semester all guides that are not approved will be suspended. Most of these will be for courses that are not actually being taught.

Who has what rights?

Rights are allocated on a School basis, so if you have a particular right you can use it for any course owned by your school. The system does track e number, date and time of all edits, so nobody could change your course information without you knowing. Academics and teachers need to know about rights for Part A and/or Part B, edit and/or approve.

- **Part B edit and approve rights:** most academics and teachers will have these. The person teaching the course will usually edit the Part B information, and the course coordinator (often the same person) can approve it.

Note that you cannot edit a part B unless it has an approved Part A.

- **Part A edit rights:** usually course coordinators will develop the information in the Part A.

- **Part A approval rights:** often schools limit this to program leaders or teaching and learning coordinators.

Most schools have a person who is the designated course guide contact (either an administrative person, or the teaching & learning coordinator). This person will also have the right to generate reports so they can determine what guides still need to be approved before the start of each semester. Often they also have full edit and approval rights so they can help out in times of crisis.

The school course guide contact person will update the list of those with edit and approval rights on a regular basis. It is up to the school to determine their own business processes regarding rights.

The **Special Editor** is someone, usually at portfolio level, who is allowed to break the rules. Contact your special editor if you need to move an approved guide back to draft to effect further changes.

Important tips for editors:

- **Save often!!!** The system does not do regular automatic saves as does Word. It is up to you to guard against accidental disasters.
- Navigate through the application using the buttons in the system. **Never use the browser back button!**
- Make sure you **exit via the Logout button**, or the guide will be locked to all other users, including the person meant to approve it!
- **Use the edit bar within the system for all formatting**, including bullet points. If you cut and paste the editing from within a Word document, you can introduce control characters that may do very strange things when your guide appears on the web.
- References must be entered one at a time, so the library can extract a report of the information to ensure their collection matches the student needs. The system will talk to Endnote if you use it. See the specific '[How To](#)' guide from the Course Guides website.
- Tables can be used in some fields. The table function is not as flexible as the one in Word because it is designed to convert to html for the web. See the '[How To](#)' guide for tips on tables.
- The [Copy Part B](#) function is a great help. When you have to enter data for a new semester, simply copy all the values from a previous guide and make any necessary changes.

Refer to the [Quick Guides](#) on the web for specific details on how to use the editing application. There is online help about content available by clicking the '?' icon next to each field. Also check out the [guidelines](#) to writing course guides prepared by the Learning & Teaching group.