Guidelines for Part B course guides

College of Business “Guidelines for Course Guides, Course Delivery, Assessment, and Penalties”
(Approved Business Board 16 February 2011)

These guidelines have been prepared to help you prepare your Part B Course Detail and should be read in conjunction with the Part B Course Details exemplar. There are separate guidelines and exemplars for preparing Part A Course Overview.

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**Overall**

The combination of the Course Overview (Part A) and Course Detail (Part B) for an offering describes the learning objectives, learning activities and assessments to be experienced by students in your offering. It is a formal brief or specification of the whole course representing RMIT’s and your course team’s undertaking to your students. It is backed by RMIT policies on the [RMIT Corporate Governance website](https://www.rmit.edu.au/corporate/governance). It serves several additional important purposes:

- Your students will use it to get an overview of the course, appreciate how the different activities and tasks fit together into a coherent learning experience which they can see helping them achieve the learning outcomes.
- It helps your students understand the expectations you have of them.
- It assists your students plan their work and organise their workload for the duration of the course.
- It helps you design and develop the course to give it the best chance of delivering the outcomes you intend for your students.

When you are preparing your Part B Course Detail make sure you have a copy of the Part A Course Overview.
A key guiding principle is that the Part A Course Overview provides the overarching framework for all offerings for the course, including yours. The learning activities and assessments in your offering of the course are to be designed and implemented to ensure your students have every chance of developing the capabilities and achieving the learning outcomes described in the Part A Course Overview.

A second key principle is to write the Part B Course Detail directly to your students. You would use the ‘second person’: for example, instead of “In this course the first assessment task for students is…” we suggest you write “Your first assessment task is….”

Aim to be clear and concise including the key details for your students – without making the document too long.

Courses must use more than one form of assessment and there should never be a single mode of assessment (e.g. examination only). 1

Where the assessment includes an examination at the end of the course it must be of no more than two hours duration (for a 12 credit point course or any TAFE course) and weighted at no more than 60% of the assessment.

There must be no more than three assessable tasks during the semester which may or may not include an exam. Note that regular (e.g. weekly) laboratory reports or online quizzes may be categorised as a single task.

There must be at least one assessable task completed (issued, assessed and returned) in the first two thirds of the course.

Written pieces of assessment must require the use of Turnitin.

There may be no hurdle requirements in any course.

Remember that a statement at the beginning of each Part B Course Details will include:

"The list of RMIT Policies, section B Students on the RMIT Corporate Governance Website provides important information on the following topics that relate to all courses:

- Student feedback at RMIT
- Student progress
- Special consideration, appeals, and discipline
- Academic integrity
- Student Progress Committee (SPC)
- Assessment grades
- Classification of award"

A note about the relationship of the two parts of the Course Guide

Students enrolled in your course will be given a single Course Guide comprising the two parts – Part A Course Overview and Part B Course Detail. The Part A Course Overview is common to all offerings of the course while the Part B Course Detail is specific to your offering. For example, students enrolled in the city campus offering of Accounting Theory will be provided with the combination of the Course Overview (Part A) and detailed information about their schedule of learning activities and assessments (Part B). The students of the same course in Singapore will be given the same Course Overview (Part A) but a different Course Detail (Part B). The Course Overview (Part A) plays a critical role helping ensure the quality of RMIT’s courses wherever and however they are delivered.
Course title and code

When the online system is available this item will be automatically completed for you drawing the information from the PeopleSoft.

For your information, an offering is defined by campus (e.g. City, OUA, Vietnam) or career.

The course code is different from the course identification and identifies the course offering. There is one course identification number contained in Part A, but each offering will have a different code. The course (offering) code comprises a subject code established by discipline area e.g. COSC and a catalogue number set by the system e.g. 2387). Refer to the examples of Part B Course Details.

Campus

When the online system is available this item will be automatically completed for you drawing the information from the PeopleSoft.

Learning mode

When the online system is available this item will be automatically completed for you. This is all the learning modes used in this course as listed in the PeopleSoft: one or more of face to face, internet, distance or workplace.

Primary learning mode

You can describe in a sentence or two the primary learning mode used in your offering of the course. For example, if your offering uses a mix of face to face and online you may state "primarily you will be learning face to face with an online course site used to disseminate materials, to provide you access to self assessment quizzes and for you to participate in online discussion forums. Another example: “Your learning experiences in this course are predominantly online, however, you will be expected to attend two face to face workshops.”

Name and contact details of offering coordinator

The offering coordinator is the person responsible for the management of the course at a particular location or mode of delivery.

Name and contact details of all other relevant staff

Other relevant staff may include lecturers, tutors, and technicians – staff who students may want to contact during course.

Teacher guided hours

When the online system is available this item will be automatically completed for you drawing the information from the PeopleSoft.

Learner directed hours

The main reason for including the Teacher guided and Learner directed hours in the course guide is to give students an appreciation of the upper limit of the workload for satisfactorily completing the course. Both the teacher guided and learner directed hours are established at the time the course is first approved.

Students are expected to spend at least 1-2 hours of self-directed learning for every 1 hour of teacher guided contact or equivalent. We suggest you place here the total learner directed hours as initially approved or subsequently based on experience with students learning the course. You can insert a qualifying statement, e.g. “Up to 78 hours (6 hours per week).”
**Learning activities**

You use this section to describe the opportunities the course provides for your students to learn. Courses must provide a variety of learning activities and should never be e.g. lectures only.

All the main learning activities should be noted here (assessment has its own section below). For example, you would distinguish between lectures, tutorials, laboratories, online quizzes, online discussions. This section would highlight any special learning experiences (such as field trips, work placements, intensives).

The learning activities should be designed and developed to help your students achieve the learning outcomes and capabilities described in the Part A Course overview.

You may like to consider briefly noting the role of each activity (for example, “Our lectures will introduce you to the key concepts and theories and will explain the topics previous students have had most difficulty learning. Tutorials are used to build your critical thinking by examining a series of case studies.”

**Teaching schedule**

The schedule tells your students when they will be expected to undertake the key activities during the teaching period in which the course is offered.

We have a clear preference for including specific dates – though this may not be possible in some situations. The dates help students plan their time both for this course and for other activities.

Many course coordinators prefer to use a table format for this section pointing out that students find it easier to read. You will be able to use tables in the new RMIT online course guide system.

Before you finalise the schedule we suggest you be in touch with the coordinators of other relevant courses to make sure the combined workload of all assessments is not overbearing for your students. One way is to have a brief meeting – another is to share your draft schedules via email.

**Learning resources**

This section tells your students in detail what resources that they will need to access for this course. It will include prescribed texts, reference books and other resources such as articles, websites or information services. You could refer to relevant Library databases and/or guides. Please use a recommended reference style to list these resources.
Assessment tasks

This section provides your students with specific details about how they will be required to demonstrate their learning in this course. It may also describe the evidence they could build up to include, for example, in a CV or portfolio to show the capabilities they are acquiring.

Similar to the learning activities, the assessments should be designed and developed to help your students achieve the learning outcomes and capabilities described in the Part A Course Overview.

Each assessment task should:

• be described in some detail (that is more than simply naming the type as essay or examination for example);
• be linked to the learning outcomes so that it is clear to your student how all learning outcomes are assessed;
• provide students with an overview of the assessment criteria that you will be using (that is, describe what you will be looking for when you are marking their work, including examinations);
• state the assessment timeline (e.g. beginning, middle or end of the course);
• show the date when you will be distributing more detailed information about the assessment task and criteria;
• show the weighting of each assessment task as a percentage of the total assessment;
• show the submission time and dates, dates when students’ work will normally be returned and feedback mechanisms;
• show the grading available or competency to be achieved and provide students with an overview of the assessment criteria that will be used (that is, describe what will be looked for when work is marked, including examinations). This should be for the particular pieces of work/assessment activities;
• include an instruction to the student that all assignments must be accompanied by an Assignment Cover Sheet. This includes a statement about plagiarism;
• require that all assignments are submitted electronically with a Turnitin report attached (Hard copies may also be required).
• if appropriate, include any specific requirements to pass the course or obtain other grades.

Management of Assessment Results

• All borderline fail scripts, whether assignments or examination papers, should be marked by a second examiner.
• Students who are dissatisfied with their assessment outcomes have the right to clarification from the School of how their assessment was determined.
• The results of progressive assessment of students during the conduct of a course will be retained within Schools for consideration in determining a final assessment result for the course.
• A student will be entitled to receive the result of any assessment prior to the commencement of the next scheduled period of study in a course or program, where knowledge of that assessment is necessary in order to proceed either within the course or to another course.
• Schools responsible for course assessment will enter final results onto the Electronic Results System by the date prescribed.

Submission Dates and Extensions

• The Course Guide should state the date and time for submission of all assignments.
• Academic staff are authorised to permit extensions of time of up to 7 days on application from the student. All such extensions of time and the reason these have been granted will be reported in writing to the Course Coordinator within 5 working days of being granted.
• Extensions to submission deadlines beyond 7 days are allowed only as a result of a successful application for Special Consideration.
Procedures for submission of assessable work

- All student assignments must be submitted through Grade Centre in Blackboard. This will provide schools with evidence of the time and date of submission.
- Assignments must be accompanied by an electronic assignment coversheet.
- Hard copies of assignments may also be required.

Procedure for making variations to assessment tasks described.

This should state that assessment tasks may be varied with the documented consent of 70% of students enrolled in the course (see Regulation 5.4.1).

Penalties for late submission

- All assignments will be marked as if submitted on time then the mark awarded will be reduced by 10% for each day (or part of a day) it is late.
- Assignments that are late by 7 days or more will not be marked and will be awarded zero marks.

Exemptions to guidelines above

Exemptions must have been granted at least 2 weeks before each course commences.

The process to consider exemptions to the College of Business course delivery and assessment guidelines will be based on submission to the Academic Development Committee. Each submission will be considered on a case by case basis. The submissions must provide the course codes and titles, a list of the codes and titles of all affected programs, the background to the submission, the justification for the exemption and supporting documentation as attachments.

The justification for exemptions should be one of the following:

1. Documented educational reasons
2. The course load or assessment is specifically required by an external professional accreditation. The requirement must be based on a current accreditation of the program that is mandatory for graduates to enter professional practice.
3. International mobility.
4. The course is a workplace or an equivalent Work Integrated Learning course held on campus provided as an alternative for students.
5. Laboratory, practical, workshop or field work (only) courses, on condition that other requirements are fulfilled.
6. Fee for service or non-award courses provided to an external body based on specified requirements.

Other relevant information

Use this section to provide your students with any other course specific information that is relevant to a particular location or mode of delivery. For example, if Program guides for the programs incorporating this course, have yet to be developed, this section may include location specific information about, for example, student feedback or special considerations, appeals and discipline.