Defining ‘Program’ and ‘Course’ Guides

When you begin teaching at RMIT, you will need to familiarise yourself with the Program Guide and various Course Guides. Program Guides will assist you to gain a sense of the principles underpinning the design and structure of a program. Course Guides provide you with a learning framework for each course, which also form contracts between the university and students.

At RMIT the term ‘program’ refers to the qualification in which a student is enrolled. The term ‘course’ refers to the individual components of study that comprise a program.

Program guides

Program Guides provide structured information about RMIT programs and comprises the following components or elements:

- External Accreditation and Industry Links
- Purpose of the Program
- Program Learning Outcomes Statement and Program Learning Outcomes Matrix
- Work Integrated Learning statement
- Approach to Learning and Assessment
- Program Structure
- Articulation and Pathways
- Entrance Requirements
- Resources

The program guide is written primarily for current and prospective students and is accessible to other interested parties via the web http://www.rmit.edu.au/programs (enter the Program title in the Program Search text box). Please note the program guide published for students does not include the Program Learning Outcomes Matrix.

Course guides

Each Course Guide also provides summary explanations of relevant RMIT policies and procedures, such as those relating to plagiarism, student feedback, student progress, and special consideration.

A Course Guide helps to ensure that:

- You design, develop and deliver a course that achieves the course objectives or learning outcomes.
• Students are provided with a clear overview of the course and the learning outcomes so they can appreciate how learning activities and assessment tasks helps to achieve the learning outcomes of the course.

• Students are able to plan their work and organise their workload over the duration of the course.

• Students understand the expectations you have of them.

The Course Guide is useful in academic planning for Course Coordinators, lecturers and tutors. It is the first point of reference for structuring and delivering your instruction. It informs what you teach, the way you teach and the way in which you will assess students.

You should be familiar with the content of the Course Guide. Variations to content or assessment methods identified in the endorsed Course Guide must be avoided as such changes are very likely to create uncertainty and confusion. Students are entitled to complain about variances between the Course Guide and actual classroom activities and assessments. You must check with the Course Coordinator if you are unsure.

Students should receive a copy of the Course Guide no later than the first class of the semester.

Course Guide Part A

Part A is written by the Course Coordinator and provides an overview of the course’s features. Part A is designed for infrequent updating. It comprises the following components or elements:

**Pre-requisite courses and assumed knowledge and capabilities**

Programs are designed to build increasing levels of knowledge and skills through units of study or courses. Pre-requisite courses ensure that students have the required and assumed capabilities to progress through programs successfully.

**Course Description**

The course description provides you with the overall purpose of the course within a particular program or discipline.

**Objectives/Learning Outcomes/Capability Development**

A learning outcome is a clear statement about what students will know and be able to do at the completion of the course. Learning outcomes also guide you in the design, development and implementation of learning activities and assessments. They are instructional and learning goals for you and your students.

**Overview of Learning Activities**

Learning activities relate to the learning experiences provided in the classroom or online. Course Guide Part A identifies the type and purpose of the various activities rather than providing specific descriptions of each activity. Details about learning activities will be provided to students in the related Part B.
Overview of Learning Resources

The learning resources component lists the types of resources available to assist student learning in all course offerings, for example, textbook, notes, reference lists, library resources, laboratories and relevant software.

Overview of Assessment

The assessment strategy is described broadly in this section, identifying the types of assessments for measuring student learning, such as written reports, research papers, and problem solving tasks.

Course Guide Part B

Part B includes all elements of Part A with additional and more specific details relating to a course offering or student cohort. Each course offering will have one Part B written by a Course Coordinator or Associate Course Coordinator.

Part B comprises the following additional elements:

Details of Learning Activities

Learning activities describe the specific activities that will be undertaken in lectures, tutorials, and laboratories or online. This section also highlights any special learning experiences (such as field trips, work placements, intensives) students may be exposed to in the course.

Teaching Schedule

The teaching schedule identifies the weekly topics, learning activities and readings during the teaching period in which the course is offered.

Learning Resources

Learning resources identifies the specific resources students must access, such as prescribed textbooks and other selected readings.

Assessment tasks

Assessment tasks provide students with the specific details about how they will demonstrate their learning in the course. It outlines the assessment tasks or activities, their weighting and due dates, and provides the assessment or marking criteria for each task.

Other relevant information

Other course-specific information that is relevant to a particular location or mode of delivery. For example, student feedback, special consideration, and appeals.
Useful resources

Support is available from your Deputy Head of School (Learning & Teaching) or equivalent. Your College Academic Development Group or learning & teaching specialist can also provide advice, support and professional development.

RMIT University’s practical guide to teaching will help you to plan and improve your teaching practice: http://www.rmit.edu.au/teaching/practical

Program Guide Guidelines

Guidelines for course guides, course delivery, assessment, and penalties

Step-by-step Guide to the Course Guide System
http://www.rmit.edu.au/browse;ID=a5aorf1t48foz

Using Your Course Guide
http://www.rmit.edu.au/browse;ID=jz512vdoec

Guidelines for Writing Higher Education Part A Course Guides
http://www.rmit.edu.au/browse;ID=u8cdul6w5dk11

Guidelines for Writing Vocational Education Part A Course Guides
http://www.rmit.edu.au/browse;ID=m2jlny1153im

Part B Guidelines for Course Guide - for HE and VE
http://www.rmit.edu.au/browse;ID=z66ehgn9rlo7