

## NO AND LOW ENROLMENTS PROCEDURES

<b>Section</b>	Academic
<b>Contact</b>	Office of Academic Assurance
<b>Last Review</b>	February 2020
<b>Next Review</b>	February 2022
<b>Approval</b>	SLT 20/02/11

### Purpose:

These Procedures are designed to assist in the management of the Massey University qualification portfolio (the 'academic offer') by providing a mechanism to actively manage qualifications, specialisations and courses that receive no enrolments or low enrolments. While the focus of these procedures is to consider those qualifications, specialisations and courses that do not meet a viable enrolment threshold, consideration should also be given to the strategic and academic rationale, particularly in cases where enrolments may be modest but the strategic value and academic cogency merits continuation. They are also intended to ensure that Massey University meets the Committee on University Academic Programmes' (CUAP) requirement that qualifications/specialisations with no enrolments *within a five year period* must have their approval re-evaluated by CUAP. For qualifications, specialisations and courses with low enrolments, the Procedures are intended to support decisions to: revitalise where enrolments are declining; confirm the strategic or academic importance of those that only attract low enrolments; or to close and delete.

### Background/Context:

These procedures apply to new and existing qualifications, specialisations and courses and are designed to monitor enrolment numbers in order to provide the opportunity for action to be taken to:

- attract enrolments;
- where appropriate, revitalise qualifications/specialisations/courses that have no or low enrolments;
- confirm that some qualifications/specialisations/courses will only attract low enrolment numbers, but are of sufficient strategic importance to support their continuation;
- identify those qualifications, specialisations and courses that have reached the end of their lifecycle and should be closed to new enrolments and deleted.

The lifecycle of a qualification, specialisation or course consists of initial approval, followed by monitoring, review, assessment and on-going development and, where necessary, revitalisation. In this way, qualifications, specialisations and courses are afforded the opportunity to be responsive to the changing needs of students, stakeholders and the communities the University serves. As the needs and interests of our learners and our communities changes, so too must our academic offer. This means that some qualifications, specialisations and courses may no longer be appropriate or possible to adapt to new contexts and therefore they may enter a period of decline and, for some, come to the end of their lifecycle. Other qualifications, specialisations or courses may naturally attract low numbers, and it may be appropriate in the University's considered view, for them to do so.

Under Section 250B(2) of the Education Act, Universities New Zealand has determined the circumstances in which universities require an extension of the period specified in sub-sections 250B(1) (a) and (b). Approved proposals remain approved for a period of five years following their introduction, or following the most recent enrolments. If a qualification/specialisation has not been offered, or has attracted no enrolments in any five-year period, and a

university wishes to continue to offer it, the qualification/specialisation must be submitted to CUAP for re-evaluation. (Source: *CUAP Handbook 2019*) This does not apply to courses.

While the re-evaluation of qualifications/specialisations with no enrolments is a CUAP requirement, it is up to individual universities to determine their own processes for monitoring and managing their academic offer. Actively monitoring qualifications, specialisations and courses with either no enrolments or low enrolments allows the opportunity for strategies and action to be put in place to attract enrolments and increase them where appropriate.

### Definitions:

**No Enrolments:** A qualification/specialisation/course in which no student has enrolled in any one academic year.

**Low Enrolments:** Undergraduate qualifications - low is deemed to be 50 EFTS or less per year for a Bachelor's degree (overall University EFTS not College-based) and 20 EFTS or less per year for standalone sub-degree qualifications.

Undergraduate specialisations – low is deemed to be 30 EFTS or less per year. This includes all specialisations in the one subject across all undergraduate qualifications.

Undergraduate courses – low is deemed to be: 7.5 EFTS per offering for 100-level, 5 EFTS per offering for 200-level and 2.5EFTS per offering for 300-level

Graduate qualifications - for a standalone Postgraduate Diploma or a standalone Master's degree low is deemed to be 15 EFTS or less per year. Overall University EFTS.

For a nested Postgraduate Diploma and Master's degree, low is deemed to be 20 EFTS or less per year assuming a combination of the EFTS from both qualifications.

Graduate specialisations - low is deemed to be 5 EFTS or less per year.

Graduate courses – low is deemed to be 2.5 EFTS in each offering.

*Note: These numbers do not mean qualifications, specialisations or courses with less are under threat of automatic disestablishment; but this establishes a threshold for monitoring. Thresholds will be reviewed as appropriate.*

**Qualification** A coherent programme of study.

**Specialisation:** For the purposes of these Procedures, the collective term specialisation covers majors, subjects and endorsements in a specific discipline for a qualification, but excludes minors.

### Procedures:

#### 1. Tracking and Monitoring No Enrolments and Low Enrolments:

Colleges, as hosts of qualifications, specialisations and courses have primary responsibility for tracking and monitoring their enrolment numbers in conjunction with the Office of Academic Assurance. This data will be generated twice yearly; once after the withdrawal date has passed for Semester One and again after the withdrawal date for

Semester Two. Notification to the host College of qualifications/specialisations/courses that have no and low enrolments will then be made.

Colleges should however take action as soon as they are aware of issues preventing or restricting enrolments and do not have to wait until they are notified through these Procedures.

## **2. Data Reports:**

### *2.1 Semester One Reports*

These are timed to provide the opportunity for additional action to be taken to attract enrolments into offerings in Semester Two and/or Summer School. Colleges may take any action they deem appropriate including action external to the College, but no formal follow up or report external to the College is required in response to this first report.

### *2.2 Semester Two Reports*

These are timed to allow additional action to be taken prior to the opening of the following year's enrolments. Colleges will report to the October meeting of the Senior Leadership Team (SLT) on the action that is planned or underway to address the enrolment situation. The report requirements escalate each year through the three year matrix. (see sections 4. and 5. Management of Qualifications, Specialisations and Courses for further details.)

## **3. Monitoring Lists:**

### *3.1 Removal from Monitoring Lists*

Qualifications/specialisations/courses that have previously been on the no enrolments monitoring list that subsequently receive enrolments will be moved off the no enrolment list and, depending on the number of enrolments, either transferred to the low enrolments list for further monitoring or, if the enrolments are sufficient, removed from both lists. Qualifications/specialisations/courses on the low enrolment monitoring list that receive sufficient enrolments to cross the monitoring threshold will be removed from the low enrolment list.

### *3.2 End of Lifecycle Action*

If a qualification/specialisation/course has reached the end of its lifecycle, and re-development is not appropriate, the College will follow the CUAP deletion process for qualifications/specialisations and the University deletion process for courses at any point in the three year matrix and do not have to wait until year three to take this action.

## **4. No Enrolments – Management of Qualifications, Specialisations and Courses**

### *4.1 No Enrolments Year One*

If there have been no enrolments in the first year, Colleges must take affirmative action to attract students. Reasons for the no enrolments should be considered and taken into account when planning action to take. The College will submit a report to the October meeting of SLT containing an analysis of why no enrolments have been received and outlining action planned or underway.

If a qualification/specialisation/course has not yet been offered the College should take the reasons for not offering it into consideration and determine if circumstances will allow it to be offered the following year.

### *4.2 No Enrolments Year Two*

After two years of no enrolments the University considers the qualification/specialisation/course to be at risk.

If the College wishes to continue to offer the qualification/specialisation/course the following are required in the October report to SLT:

- a convincing justification for continuing to offer;
- the previous action plan must be revised and details of the updated plan included;
- for a qualification/specialisation that is not new but has gone two years without enrolments, it may be appropriate at this time to undergo a review which may result in a revitalisation of the qualification/specialisation or a decision to close and delete. The Office of Academic Assurance is available to administer/assist with this review.
- for new and existing qualifications/specialisations/courses, the College must demonstrate that it has actively sought to attract students;
- if the circumstances for no enrolments are deemed to be out of the College's control the College should anticipate whether or not these circumstances are likely to change and determine whether or not to continue to offer the qualification/specialisation/course.

SLT may decline the application for continuation.

If a decision is made to not continue with the qualification/specialisation/course the CUAP or University deletion process will be initiated as appropriate for the entity.

#### 4.3 No Enrolments Year Three

If there have still been no enrolments by the end of year three, the University considers the qualification/specialisation/course is no longer viable and deletion is required through the CUAP or University deletion process as appropriate for the entity.

### 5. Low Enrolments – Management of Qualifications, Specialisations and Courses

Colleges need to be aware of qualifications, specialisations and courses with low enrolments in order to take action where appropriate. Numbers alone do not determine the sustainability of qualifications, specialisations or courses, other factors need to be taken into consideration. In some qualifications/specialisations/courses, enrolment numbers may be low where they meet a special need, are contributing to society, a community or field, or have strategic or academic importance.

When enrolments drop below the low enrolments threshold, or for new qualifications/specialisations/courses do not reach the threshold, the College needs to be aware of this in order to identify and evaluate any reasons for the low numbers and take appropriate action to remedy the situation. This may include reviewing the qualification/specialisation/course in order to establish if it can be revitalised through redevelopment. Alternatively, if it has reached the natural end of its lifecycle, then it should be closed to new enrolments and subsequently deleted.

All qualifications/specialisations/courses that sit below the low enrolment threshold, including those where a decision has been made to accept low enrolments based on criteria other than numbers, will be included in the monitoring list and data reports generated (see Section 2. above) and provided to the College each year.

#### 5.1 Low Enrolments Year One

The first year a qualification/specialisation/course is identified as being below the low enrolment threshold will see it added to the low enrolment monitoring register held by the Office of Academic Assurance and the College will be notified. The College will submit a report to the October meeting of SLT that provides an analysis of the low enrolments which will include but not be limited to the following:

- whether enrolments have always been low and if this is appropriate or not;
- whether there has been a drop in numbers and possible reasons for this;
- detailed actions to be undertaken to increase enrolment numbers.

### 5.2 *Low Enrolments Year Two*

After two years of low enrolments, the University considers the qualification/specialisation/course to be at risk and closure to new enrolments is recommended with a view to teaching out current students and deleting the qualification/specialisation/course.

If the College wishes to continue to offer the qualification/specialisation/course the following are required in the October report to SLT:

- an analysis of the low enrolments and possible reasons;
- a convincing justification for continuing to offer;
- the previous action plan must be revised and details of the updated plan included;
- for a qualification/specialisation that is not new, it may be appropriate at this time to undergo a review which may result in a revitalisation of the qualification/specialisation or a decision to close and delete. The Office of Academic Assurance is available to administer/assist with this review.
- for all qualifications/specialisations/courses, the College must demonstrate that it has actively sought to attract students;
- if the circumstances for the low enrolments are deemed to be out of the College's control the College should anticipate whether or not these circumstances are likely to change and determine whether or not to continue to offer the qualification/specialisation/course.

If the College wishes to continue offering the entity, it should engage with students, employers and other stakeholders to explore reasons behind the low enrolment numbers. Consideration should be given to demographics, changing markets, future needs, acceptability to stakeholders and communities of interest, academic rationale for continuation and relevance and currency of the curriculum with a view to considering redevelopment if necessary.

SLT may decline the application for continuation.

Where the University has accepted a qualification /specialisation may continue with enrolments below the threshold, this will be noted at SLT and does not need a detailed report or application for continuation. SLT will review the entity being accepted for enrolments below the threshold.

### 5.3 *Low Enrolments Year Three*

After three years if a qualification/specialisation/course is still below the low enrolment threshold, the University considers the qualification/specialisation/course is no longer viable and closure to new enrolments is required with a view to teaching out current students and deleting the qualification/specialisation/course.

If the qualification/specialisation/course is not to continue, the CUAP or University deletion process will be initiated as appropriate for the entity. This begins with closing the entity to new enrolments which should be done as soon as possible. Consideration must also be given to implications on other qualifications/specialisations/courses that the closure may have such as courses that may contribute to other qualifications/specialisations or courses that are linked as prerequisites or corequisites for other courses.

Where the University has accepted a qualification/specialisation/course may continue with enrolments below the threshold, this will be noted at SLT and does not need to a detailed report or application for continuation. SLT will review the entity being accepted for enrolments below the threshold.

## 6. Quick Guides

### 6.1 No Enrolments

Date	College Action
Year One, Semester One	Raise internal awareness. The College may take action as it sees fit to attract enrolments.
Year One, Semester Two	Report to SLT: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• evaluate reasons for no enrolments;</li> <li>• detailed action plan to attract enrolments.</li> </ul>
Year Two, Semester One	Report for information only. College should continue with actions to increase enrolments as deemed appropriate.
Year Two, Semester Two	Report to SLT: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• justification for continuation</li> <li>• analysis of reasons for no enrolments;</li> <li>• consideration of whether to offer the following year</li> <li>• updated action plan to attract enrolments if continuing.</li> </ul> Review of qualification/specialisation may be appropriate.
Year Three, Semester One	Report for information only. College must continue with actions to increase enrolments as deemed appropriate.
Year Three, Semester Two	The University considers the qualification/specialisation/course not viable and deletion through the CUAP or University process is required.

### 6.2 Low Enrolments

Date	College Action
Year One, Semester One	Raise internal awareness. The College may take action as it sees fit to attract enrolments.
Year One, Semester Two	Report to SLT: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• evaluate reasons for low enrolments;</li> <li>• detailed action plan to attract enrolments.</li> </ul>
Year Two, Semester One	Report for information only. College should continue with actions to increase enrolments as deemed appropriate.
Year Two, Semester Two	Report to SLT: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• justification for continuation;</li> <li>• analysis for reasons for low enrolments;</li> <li>• consideration of whether to offer the following year;</li> <li>• updated action plan to increase enrolments.</li> </ul> Review of qualification/specialisation may be appropriate.
Year Three, Semester One	Report for information only. College must continue with actions to increase enrolments as deemed appropriate.
Year Three, Semester Two	The University considers the qualification/specialisation/course not viable and deletion through the CUAP or University process is required.



**Audience:**

All Staff

**Related procedures / documents:**

No and Low Enrolments Policy  
Massey University Qualifications Framework  
Massey University Qualifications Policy  
Qualification Review Policy  
Qualification Review Procedures  
Transition Procedures

**Legislation:**

Education Act 1989 Section 250B(2)

**Document Management Control:**

Prepared by: Office of Academic Assurance  
Authorised by: Provost  
Approved by: SLT 20/02/11  
Date issued: November 2015  
Last review: February 2020  
Next review: February 2022