Protocols: Graduate Capabilities

Protocols to accompany the policy for graduate capabilities

(Manual of Policy and Procedures C/4.4)

August 2011
Content

1. Principles ...................................................................................................................................... 3
2. Graduate capabilities .................................................................................................................. 3
3. Postgraduate capabilities ........................................................................................................ 4
4. Implementation and Monitoring .............................................................................................. 5
5. Electronic portfolio ................................................................................................................... 6
6. Resources .................................................................................................................................... 6

Versions

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Versions</th>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Updates</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Version 1</td>
<td>July 2010</td>
<td>Original version to accompany revised policy. Approved by Head, Office of Teaching Quality (endorsed by OTQ Advisory Group 1 July 2010).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Version 2</td>
<td>August 2011</td>
<td>Changed references to OTQ to LTU</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
1. Principles

QUT is committed to developing graduates who can contribute effectively as citizens, leaders in the wider community, and competent professionals within their chosen discipline. Employers of QUT graduates need to be confident that graduates will demonstrate employment-related skills as well as disciplinary expertise and be capable of dealing effectively with new situations. Graduates, in turn, need to be confident in their understanding and articulation of their capability development, and their preparedness for a challenging and dynamic future.

QUT is therefore committed to the following principles for graduate capabilities:

- Each graduate from an undergraduate or postgraduate degree is expected to have developed graduate capabilities of a kind and level appropriate to their award.
- Graduates from an undergraduate degree will demonstrate the graduate capabilities listed in MOPP C/4.3.3 (and Section 2 below).
- All postgraduate courses will enable students to extend their graduate capability development beyond the level expected for an undergraduate degree as outlined in MOPP C/4.3.4 below (and Section 3 below).

Graduate capabilities

Every QUT course aims to develop graduates who are able to demonstrate:

- **knowledge and skills pertinent to a particular discipline or professional area** encompassing:
  - coherent theoretical and practical knowledge in at least one discipline area at the level of entry to a profession
  - technological skills appropriate to the discipline

- **critical, creative and analytical thinking, and effective problem-solving** including:
  - the ability to critique current paradigms and contribute to intellectual inquiry
  - the capacity to exhibit creative as well as analytical ways of thinking about questions in at least one discipline
  - the ability to identify, define and solve problems in at least one discipline area

- **effective communication in a variety of contexts and modes** including:
  - effective written and oral communication with discipline specialists and non-specialists and in cross-cultural contexts

- **the capacity for life-long learning** including:
  - searching and critically evaluating information from a variety of sources using effective strategies and appropriate technologies

- **the ability to work independently and collaboratively** including:
2. Postgraduate capabilities

It is recognised that postgraduate awards range from graduate certificate to doctorate levels (C/3.2) and that students in postgraduate courses are likely to have varied backgrounds in terms of prior capability development. Consequently postgraduate courses may be designed to place emphasis on selected graduate capabilities according to the level and purpose of the award, or may require the development of capabilities other than those specifically described in this policy.

**Postgraduate coursework programs**

In postgraduate coursework programs graduate capabilities will most likely be framed with the context of advanced knowledge and understanding in a specialist field of study, professional knowledge and skills in a specialist area of practice and/or engagement within a new field of study, and the award level.

**Postgraduate research programs**

QUT’s research training objective is to graduate high quality postgraduate research students who meet the needs of industry, government, the professions and the community and who are equipped to undertake leadership roles in those contexts. In addition to the graduate capabilities expected of all QUT graduates (see C/4.3.3 above), capabilities that are regarded as desirable in research graduates include:

* advanced theoretical knowledge and analytical skills, as well as methodological, research design and problem-solving skills in a particular research area
* advanced information processing skills and knowledge of advanced information technologies and other research technologies
* independence in research planning and execution, consistent with the level of the research degree
* competence in the execution of protocols for research health and safety, ethical conduct and intellectual property
skills in project management, teamwork, academic writing and oral communication.

awareness of the mechanisms for research results transfer to end-users, scholarly dissemination through publications and presentations, research policy, and research career planning.

3. Implementation and Monitoring

The University recognises that graduate capabilities are ideally articulated and assessed within a discipline context. Appropriate curriculum design, in the context of discipline knowledge, provides the foundation for the development of graduate capabilities at QUT (C/4.2) as part of the learning outcomes of QUT courses.

Requirements for implementation and monitoring, and responsibilities of faculties. Faculties are expected to ensure that every course at QUT meets the following requirements.

Course learning outcomes

- Every course at QUT has a set of clear and coherent learning outcomes which articulate the knowledge, skills, and dispositions required to fulfil the responsibilities of the profession or master the discipline (MOPP C/4.2).
- The course learning outcomes encompass any external professional accreditation requirements and relate directly to QUT's graduate capabilities. Faculties may also choose to identify additional graduate capabilities for particular disciplines which expand and enhance the University's list.
- Course design should help students to understand the relevance of their coursework to the graduate capabilities and to assess their overall progress towards attaining the learning outcomes of the course.

Curriculum map

- The curriculum design for each course incorporates a Curriculum Map which
  - maps QUT's graduate capabilities against the learning outcomes to demonstrate the integration of the graduate capabilities in the course
  - shows the contribution of the learning activities and assessment in every unit in a course towards the students' overall achievement of course learning outcomes.
- The development of a Curriculum Map is considered to be integral to the curriculum design, and ensures that
  - every unit in a course contributes in some way to students' overall achievement of course learning outcomes
  - every unit has assessment tasks which demonstrate the stated learning outcomes
  - relevance and progression is transparent to the student in the course curriculum;
  - learning activities and resources are designed to engage students in real world learning
  - the curriculum respects and plans for the needs of students transitioning into the University, transforming through the university and transitioning out to the workplace.
- The development of learning outcomes, together with the Curriculum Map provide the graduate capabilities development strategy for each course.
Any changes to course structures or units within a course should consider the impact on the overall course, and an updated Curriculum Map should be included with approval documentation if any changes are required.

**Unit learning outcomes**

- Students are advised of the learning outcomes being specifically addressed in each unit through the unit outline. Faculties can choose whether or not to also indicate the QUT graduate capabilities at the unit level.
- At a unit level, the assessment is clearly linked to the relevant learning outcomes and this link is made explicit to students through the unit outline.
- Where possible, courses include the explicit assessment of course level capabilities (e.g. through capstone units).

**Postgraduate research programs**

The University recognises that the embedding of graduate capabilities for postgraduate research programs requires additional processes to those for coursework programs and that the development of generic capabilities in postgraduate research students is a shared responsibility between a supervisor and student.

The Research Students Centre and the Faculty Research Training Coordinators Group is responsible for developing processes for the implementation of graduate capabilities within postgraduate research programs and providing supervisor support and staff development. Faculties are responsible for ensuring that supervisors undertake the role of facilitating the development of student capabilities through promotion of opportunities for self-development.

4. **Electronic portfolio**

The University promotes the use by students of electronic portfolio tools to assist in learning and teaching, in preparation for employment, and to emphasise the development of graduate capabilities. The electronic portfolio is intended to be available to students throughout their period of enrolment and on graduation a student may choose to file their portfolio data on centrally provided storage. Conditions for the retention of such data and provision of storage are available at F/1.6 and on the TILS website.

5. **Resources**

The recommended curriculum mapping tool is available at the Curriculum@wiki site.

Additional resources around curriculum design, specifically curriculum mapping, is available through the Learning and Teaching Unit website http://www.ltu.qut.edu.au

Resources for postgraduate level graduate capabilities are available at http://www.rsc.qut.edu.au/studentsstaff/resources/#capability

ATN Generic Capabilities Project Report