

GUIDE TO HANDBOOK DESCRIPTIONS

SUBJECT TITLE

Because of the limitations of the Student System, titles cannot be more than forty characters including spaces. This is now enforced rigorously, not out of any desire to exercise bureaucratic power, but so that students' transcripts are meaningful. Abbreviations and uncommon acronyms should be avoided as far as possible, so that anyone, such as an employer or another institution where the student has applied to undertake further study, has no doubt as to the focus of the subject.

TIME COMMITMENT

Contact Hours

This should be as explicit as possible (i.e. "one 1-hour lecture and one 2-hour workshop a week" rather than "36 hours"). Specific dates should *not* be included (e.g. for intensives), since this necessitates changing the subject description every year.

Total Time Commitment

This includes the contact hours, not just the work outside class. It should be expressed as a total number of hours for the subject (i.e. "120 hours", not "10 hours per week"). The normal total time commitment for a 12.5 point subject is 120 hours. The permissible variation is ± 24 hours, i.e. 96-144 hours).

PREREQUISITES AND COREQUISITES

Should be "hard" (i.e. not to be waived except in the most exceptional circumstances). If they are quite often waived in practice, then they should be given as "recommended background knowledge". (This will be particularly important for students managing their own enrolment when the new Student System comes online.)

SUBJECT OVERVIEW

It is recommended that this be no more than 200 words.

OBJECTIVES/GENERIC SKILLS

Both are necessary, and should be clearly distinguished from each other, the Objectives relating to the content knowledge and specific skills being taught in the subject, the Generic Skills being non-specific to the subject.

ASSESSMENT

Assessment statements must be detailed and specific. Each instrument of assessment must be itemised, and for each one, there must be given:

- **Length** Normally expressed in terms of number of words (for written assignments) or time (for oral presentations and exams). The length should not be qualified by phrases like "up to" or "approximately", but should be stated exactly. (This is important because of the penalties within the Assessment Policy for overly long assignments in NG degrees.) With some modes of assessment, the length may need to be expressed by number of pages, the amount of time to be given to the task, the number of pieces in a portfolio, or some other way of quantifying what is required.
- **Time due** This is given in relation to the teaching period (e.g. Week 5, mid-semester, during the examination period, between the two intensive delivery periods, three weeks after the intensive delivery period)
- **Percentage** i.e. the percentage weighting of the item relative to the total assessment. The total of the weightings needs to add up to 100%

HURDLE REQUIREMENTS

For all new subjects any special requirements (eg that students must pass all items of assessment to pass the subject) should also appear in the Assessment section of the subject description.

Further detailed advice on assessment statements is given in the *paper Assessment Statements in Subject Descriptions: Advice to Faculties/Graduate Schools*, available at <http://www.unimelb.edu.au/abp/camp/index.html> (click on "Assessment Statements" on the side menu, under "CAMP Resources".)

PRESCRIBED TEXTS

Only those texts all students are expected to purchase should be listed here. This is not a reading list for the subject.