

## COMMON POINTS STRUCTURE FOR UNDERGRADUATE DEGREE COURSES

### 1. RECOMMENDATIONS

The Committee proposes that a standard university-wide points system be introduced to ensure an equitable workload for students, to facilitate combined degrees and inter changeability between courses within the University and across institutions, to enable greater transparency of course structures to prospective students, to provide students with greater flexibility in the selection of their academic program, to reduce duplication of similar teaching programs and simplify administrative procedures.

The Committee has developed this proposal, after extensive consultations throughout the University and consideration of submissions from Faculties and student groups. In general, there has been widespread and strong support for the introduction of a Common Points structure. However, some student concerns remain over the transition arrangements, particularly relating to part-time students, combined degree students and other students whose studies are delayed/staggered for various reasons. Other student concerns are that (i) adjustments to subject points might lead to increased workload and disproportionate adjustments to assessment; (ii) some students may be disadvantaged with respect to Austudy/Abstudy during the transition period; (iii) the changes might restrict student choices, particularly where current course structures include optional subject programs such as in the LLB course. While acknowledging these concerns, The Committee formed the view that the concerns applied mainly to the transition phase and that it should be possible for Faculties to address the issues raised and ensure that students are not disadvantaged.

In relation to the concern over Austudy/Abstudy, The Committee noted that currently students are required to complete a minimum of 0.375 points each semester before being eligible to receive Austudy/Abstudy. The Committee concluded that the proposed point structure was compatible with this requirements and, therefore, would not disadvantage students.

In developing the proposal, the Committee was also mindful of the need to introduce a points structure that eliminates the confusion and unsatisfactory arrangements that are current in a number of combined degree programs. It was resolved that the Committee will address this issue after agreement had been reached on a Common Points structure.

Finally, in considering the points structure for postgraduate degrees by coursework, The Committee recognised that many existing programs which are completely self-contained could reasonably seek exemption from the proposed common points structure. However, the Committee believes that in developing new postgraduate course proposals, Faculties should be encouraged to adopt the proposed new points structure for any course work components.

The Committee **recommends:**

- 1.1 A common points structure based on single semester subjects of 12.5 points (ie weighting of 0.125) or multiples thereof should be adopted across the University.
- 1.2 The 12.5 point rule should also apply to full year subject offerings in the few cases where such units have been approved by faculties.

- 1.3 Normally the proposed common points structure should apply to all undergraduate and postgraduate courses, with a provision for 6.25 point subjects to apply only where a compelling case can be made.
- 1.4 The new common points structure should be introduced in 1999, but that special provisions be made to accommodate the needs of currently enrolled students, particularly part-time students, whose courses will extend beyond 1998.
- 1.5 Exemptions from the new common points structure should only be considered for courses which are totally self-contained and where there are no prospects for cross course participation (eg combined degrees).
- 1.6 No discounting of subject points across Faculties should be permitted following the introduction of the new common points system.
- 1.7 The Committee resolved that if the same subject forms part of both an undergraduate and a postgraduate course, it should have the same value for both courses.
- 1.8 An assessment of the impact of the proposed common points system on EFTSU distribution between Faculties, particularly where combined degree programs exist, should be undertaken by the central administration to assist with forward planning.