

COURSE APPLICATION FORM

- ① This form must be completed for each Masters by coursework programme for which approval is sought. Application forms should accompany the application coversheet completed by the Vice-Chancellor or other authorised delegate.

Course and contact details

Institution name:	The University of Queensland		
Course name:	Master of Environmental Management		
Course Code:	5174 (#24)		
Faculty / School:	Faculty of Science / School of Geography, Planning & Environmental Management		
Contact name:	Professor Marc Hockings		
Position:	Director, Environmental Management		
Phone:	s 22	Email:	s 22 @uq.edu.au

- ① Please nominate a contact person who will be available during the assessment period to provide further information about the course content and about similar courses offered by the institution.

Course description

Length of course:	Semesters x 3	Years x 1.5
Mode of study:	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Full-time	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Part-time

What are the educational prerequisites for students to gain entry to the course?

Bachelor degree in environmental studies; geography; natural resources; biology; ecology; conservation; sustainable development; environmental engineering; marine science; or an approved discipline. UQ or equivalent GPA of 4.5 or above on a 7 point scale.

https://www.uq.edu.au/study/program.html?acad_prog=5174

- ① Please provide a copy of the course outline (from the institution's website or course handbook) to verify educational prerequisites.

Description of the course:

Environmental Management is the planning and implementation of actions geared to improve the quality of the human environment. The Master of Environmental Management at the University of Queensland is a multidisciplinary program designed to develop the skills and technical expertise of graduates from non-cognate areas to allow them to contribute to all facets of the environmental arena. The program aims to produce managers able to address the many issues in the highly complex and changing area of environmental management. At Masters level the degree may be taken in a range of fields. During the program students examine the multidisciplinary nature of environmental issues and their management. International and national case studies of environmental issues relating to conservation biology, sustainable development, conservation and natural resource management and resource and environmental economics. The contribution of biophysical science, social science, economics and law to addressing environmental issues.

Please refer to https://www.uq.edu.au/study/program.html?acad_prog=5174 for Program Rules and Requirements, and course list.

- ① Please summarise the basic aims of the course and the broad areas the student must gain competency in to complete the course, including the compulsory units and electives.

Evidence to support this application

For what profession is this course a requirement?

Environmental management, conservation biology, sustainable development

Which of the following criteria does the course meet?

- The course is **required for entry** to a profession (must attach two job advertisements which specify the qualification as a requirement)
- The course is the **fastest pathway** to professional entry (entry level employment)
- The course is the **only pathway** to professional entry provided by the Institution

i The course must meet at least one of the three criteria for approval, as stipulated in the Guidelines.

How does the course meet the criteria for approval?

The Master of Environmental Management #24 is the fastest pathway (1.5 years) at UQ for bachelor graduates from cognate areas to gain degree qualifications to meet industry needs for fully qualified environmental managers.

Whilst the university offers a Graduate Certificate (0.5 years) and a Graduate Diploma (1 year) in Environmental Management, these programs do not offer sufficient breadth for graduates to gain a full range of skills across the interdisciplinary topics required in environmental management job roles. These interdisciplinary topics include regulatory frameworks and management topics often not covered in pure science or engineering related programs.

i Please provide details and/or example(s) to support your claims.

What other pathways does the higher education provider offer for entry to this profession?

The University also offers the Master of Environmental Management (#32) in 2 years (code 5609), for which the entry requirement is a bachelor degree in any field or Graduate Certificate or Graduate Diploma in Environmental Management, with UQ or equivalent GPA of 4.5 or above on a 7 point scale.

Graduate Certificate (0.5 years) and Graduate Diploma (1 year) in Environmental Management (see above).

i Are there other courses that a student could undertake at your institution that would provide a similar qualification? For example, a Graduate Certificate or a Graduate Diploma course in the same subject that has separate enrolment to the Masters level course. Please provide course names and durations.

Has the course been accredited for professional practice by a professional body?

Yes

Details of the organisation / agency that has accredited this course:

Duration of the accreditation:

No accreditation

Not applicable

i If the course is accredited, please provide supporting information such as a letter from the accrediting organisation detailing accreditation or information from the accrediting organisation's website.

Additional information about the course to support this application:

COURSE APPLICATION FORM

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Course and contact details

Institution name:	The University of Queensland		
Course name:	Master of Environmental Management		
Course Code:	5609 (#32)		
Faculty / School:	Faculty of Science / School of Geography, Planning & Environmental Management		
Contact name:	Professor Marc Hockings		
Position:	Director, Environmental Management		
Phone:	s 22	Email:	s 22 @uq.edu.au

- ① *Please nominate a contact person who will be available during the assessment period to provide further information about the course content and about similar courses offered by the institution.*

Course description

Length of course:	Semesters x 4	Years x 2
Mode of study:	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Full-time	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Part-time

What are the educational prerequisites for students to gain entry to the course?

Bachelor degree in any field or Graduate Certificate or Graduate Diploma in Environmental Management, with UQ or equivalent GPA of 4.5 or above on a 7 point scale. See

https://www.uq.edu.au/study/program.html?acad_prog=5609

- ① *Please provide a copy of the course outline (from the institution's website or course handbook) to verify educational prerequisites.*

Description of the course:

Environmental Management is the planning and implementation of actions geared to improve the quality of the human environment. The Master of Environmental Management at the University of Queensland is a multidisciplinary program designed to develop the skills and technical expertise of graduates from non-cognate areas to allow them to contribute to all facets of the environmental arena. The program aims to produce managers able to address the many issues in the highly complex and changing area of environmental management. At Masters level the degree may be taken in a range of fields. During the program students examine the multidisciplinary nature of environmental issues and their management. International and national case studies of environmental issues relating to conservation biology, sustainable development, conservation and natural resource management and resource and environmental economics. The contribution of biophysical science, social science, economics and law to addressing environmental issues.

Please refer to http://www.uq.edu.au/study/program.html?acad_prog=5609 for Program Rules and Requirements, and course list.

- ① *Please summarise the basic aims of the course and the broad areas the student must gain competency in to complete the course, including the compulsory units and electives.*

Evidence to support this application

For what profession is this course a requirement?

Environmental management, conservation biology, sustainable development

Which of the following criteria does the course meet?

- The course is **required for entry** to a profession (must attach two job advertisements which specify the qualification as a requirement)
- The course is the **fastest pathway** to professional entry (entry level employment)
- The course is the **only pathway** to professional entry provided by the institution

i The course must meet at least one of the three criteria for approval, as stipulated in the Guidelines.

How does the course meet the criteria for approval?

The Master of Environmental Management is the fastest pathway (2 years) at UQ for bachelor graduates from non-cognate areas to gain degree qualifications to meet industry needs for fully qualified environmental managers. Whilst the university offers a Graduate Certificate (0.5 year) and a Graduate Diploma (1 year) in Environmental Management, these programs do not offer sufficient breadth and depth for graduates to gain a full range of skills across the interdisciplinary topics required in environmental management job roles. These interdisciplinary topics include regulatory frameworks and management studies often not covered in pure science or engineering related programs.

Under AQF guidelines, applicants with no previous studies in conservation science, environment or other approved disciplines are not eligible for entry into the university's 1.5 year (#24) Master of Environmental Management program. Hence the #32 program is the only option for applicants seeking to enter the environmental management profession from a different field of study.

i Please provide details and/or example(s) to support your claims.

What other pathways does the higher education provider offer for entry to this profession?

The University also offers the Master of Environmental Management (#24) in 1.5 years (code 5174), for which the entry requirement is a bachelor degree in environmental studies; geography, natural resources; biology; ecology; conservation; sustainable development; environmental engineering; marine science; or an approved discipline. UQ or equivalent GPA of 4.5 or above on a 7 point scale.

Graduate Certificate (0.5 years) and Graduate Diploma (1 year) in Environmental Management (see above).

i Are there other courses that a student could undertake at your institution that would provide a similar qualification? For example, a Graduate Certificate or a Graduate Diploma course in the same subject that has separate enrolment to the Masters level course. Please provide course names and durations.

Has the course been accredited for professional practice by a professional body?

Yes

Details of the organisation / agency that has accredited this course:

Duration of the accreditation:

No accreditation

Not applicable

i If the course is accredited, please provide supporting information such as a letter from the accrediting organisation detailing accreditation or information from the accrediting organisation's website.

Additional Information about the course to support this application:

Masters Application Assessment 2015

Higher Education Provider:	University of Queensland	Assessment ref:	133
Course:	Master of Environmental Management (24)	Course Code:	5174 (#24)
Assessor:	s 22	Assessment Date:	11/09/2015
Reviewer:	s 22	Review Date:	20/10/2015

1. Is the course awarded at the Masters level? [If the course is not titled 'Master of', check that the course is identified as 'Masters course' or an 'AQF level 9 Masters degree' on the HEP's website.]

No **The course does not satisfy the requirements for assessment and cannot be approved.**

Save evidence that the course is not a Masters level course to file.

Yes Go to [Question 2](#).

2. Is the course a Masters by coursework program? [Research degrees are not eligible]

No **The course does not satisfy the requirements for assessment and cannot be approved.**

Save evidence that the course is not a 'Masters by coursework' program to file.

Yes Go to [Question 3](#).

3. For what profession is the course required? [check the course application]

- managerial and policy positions in government, consulting firms and research, and in the private sector as environmental management system managers, auditors and policy analysts

4. Is there evidence that a specialist University level qualification is required for entry to this profession? [check [JobGuide](#) or the [ANZSCO database](#), or check recruitment advertisements or industry organisations]

No **The course does not satisfy the requirements for assessment and cannot be approved.**

Save evidence that a specialist qualification is not required to file.

Yes Save the web page as a PDF and Go to [Question 5](#).

5. What is the duration of the course?

1.5 years full-time

6. What are the entry requirements for the course?

- Bachelor degree in environmental studies; geography; natural resources; biology; ecology; conservation; sustainable development; environmental engineering; marine science; or an approved discipline. UQ or equivalent GPA of 4.5 or above on a 7 point scale

7. Does the HEP offer a bachelor level course or a graduate certificate/diploma in the same subject that is sufficient for professional entry and has separate enrolment procedures?

No **The course satisfies the 'only pathway to professional entry' criterion.** Note this in the

[Recommendation](#) at the end of this form then go to [Question 9](#).

Yes **The course does not satisfy 'only pathway to professional entry' criterion.**

Alternative pathways:

Course name	Course Duration (years)	Prerequisites (other than generalist bachelor degree)	Prerequisite Duration (years)
Graduate Diploma in Environmental Management	1 Year full-time	Bachelor degree in any field or Graduate Certificate in Environmental Management, with UQ or equivalent GPA of 4 or above on a 7 point scale	
Bachelor of Environmental Management	4 years full-time	(being replaced by Honours degree)	
Bachelor of Environmental Management (Honours)	4 years full-time		

Save evidence of the alternative pathways to file if not provided with the original application.

Go to [Question 8](#).

8. Taking into account the course prerequisites, are any of the alternative pathways shorter in duration (for a student with a generalist undergraduate degree) than the Masters course? [Note: If the masters course is ONLY open to holders of an undergraduate degree in the same field, the course does not meet the 'fastest pathway to professional entry' criterion].

No *Course satisfies the 'fastest pathway to professional entry' criterion.* Note this in the [Recommendation](#) at the end of this form then go to [Question 9](#).

Yes *Course does not satisfy the 'fastest pathway to professional entry'.* Go to [Question 9](#).

9. Is the qualification legally required for professional entry registration/practice? (e.g Juris Doctor – Lawyer, Master of Physiotherapy - Physiotherapist)

No Go to [Question 10](#).

Yes *Where there is no faster pathway that enables professional registration, the course satisfies the 'required for professional entry' criterion.* Document all supporting evidence and list the relevant professional associations below, then go to the [Recommendation](#) at the end of this form. (Please **do not contact professional associations directly**. Research the internet or request that the educational institution provide this information.)

Supporting evidence:

10. Is the Masters course (or equivalent, where the Masters is open to students with a bachelor degree in an unrelated field) the minimum educational requirement for employment at the entry level in this field? [Check details provided on application form. If no evidence supplied with application, search the internet to confirm]

No Go to [Question 11](#).

Yes *If supporting evidence (for example, job advertisements) substantiates this claim, then the course satisfies the 'required for professional entry' criterion.* Document all supporting evidence then go to the [Recommendation](#) at the end of this form.

Supporting evidence:

11. Are there similar courses from other institutions that have been assessed in previous rounds?

Round	Higher Education Provider	Course	Criteria	Outcome
s 22				

Recommendation

Assessor Recommendation

- Approved against the *{Select from List}* criterion. Reason:
- Not approved. Reason:

The University of Queensland has not provided evidence (e.g. recruitment advertisements) that a Masters level qualification is required for employment in environmental management. The Assessment team has been unable to locate any job advertisements indicating that a Masters qualification is required for employment in this field.

The Master of Environmental Management (24) cannot be approved against the 'fastest pathway to professional entry' or the 'only pathway to professional entry' criteria as the University of Queensland also offers a 1 year Graduate Diploma in Environmental Management and a 4 year Bachelor of Environmental Management (Honours).

Assessment completed: 11/09/2015

Reviewer Recommendation

- Approved against the *{select from list}* criterion. Reason:
- Not approved. Reason: UQ also offers a Graduate Diploma in Environmental Management which would be sufficient for professional entry given graduate already have a bachelor degree in a related field. Job advertisements indicate a tertiary qualification in environmental management is required for employment – there is no indication that a masters level qualification is the minimum requirement.

Review completed: 20/10/2015

Masters Application Assessment 2015

Higher Education Provider:	University of Queensland	Assessment ref:	134
Course:	Master of Environmental Management (32)	Course Code:	5609 (#32)
Assessor:	s 22	Assessment Date:	11/09/2015
Reviewer:	s 22	Review Date:	

1. Is the course awarded at the Masters level? [If the course is not titled 'Master of', check that the course is identified as 'Masters course' or an 'AQF level 9 Masters degree' on the HEP's website.]

No *The course does not satisfy the requirements for assessment and cannot be approved.*

Save evidence that the course is not a Masters level course to file.

Yes Go to [Question 2](#).

2. Is the course a Masters by coursework program? [Research degrees are not eligible]

No *The course does not satisfy the requirements for assessment and cannot be approved.*

Save evidence that the course is not a 'Masters by coursework' program to file.

Yes Go to [Question 3](#).

3. For what profession is the course required? [check the course application]

- managerial and policy positions in government, consulting firms and research, and in the private sector as environmental management system managers, auditors and policy analysts

4. Is there evidence that a specialist University level qualification is required for entry to this profession? [check [JobGuide](#) or the [ANZSCO database](#), or check recruitment advertisements or industry organisations]

No *The course does not satisfy the requirements for assessment and cannot be approved.*

Save evidence that a specialist qualification is not required to file.

Yes Save the web page as a PDF and Go to [Question 5](#).

5. What is the duration of the course?

2 Years full-time

6. What are the entry requirements for the course?

- Bachelor degree in any field or Graduate Certificate or Graduate Diploma in Environmental Management, with UQ or equivalent GPA of 4.5 or above on a 7 point scale.

7. Does the HEP offer a bachelor level course or a graduate certificate/diploma in the same subject that is sufficient for professional entry and has separate enrolment procedures?

No *The course satisfies the 'only pathway to professional entry' criterion.* Note this in the [Recommendation](#) at the end of this form then go to [Question 9](#).

Yes *The course does not satisfy 'only pathway to professional entry' criterion.*

Alternative pathways:

Course name	Course Duration (years)	Prerequisites (other than generalist bachelor degree)	Prerequisite Duration (years)
Graduate Diploma in Environmental Management	1 Year full-time	Bachelor degree in any field or Graduate Certificate in Environmental Management, with UQ or equivalent GPA of 4 or above on a 7 point scale	
Bachelor of Environmental Management	4 years full-time	(being replaced by Honours degree)	
Bachelor of Environmental Management (Honours)	4 years full-time		

Save evidence of the alternative pathways to file if not provided with the original application.

Go to [Question 8](#).

8. Taking into account the course prerequisites, are any of the alternative pathways shorter in duration (for a student with a generalist undergraduate degree) than the Masters course? **[Note: If the masters course is ONLY open to holders of an undergraduate degree in the same field, the course does not meet the 'fastest pathway to professional entry' criterion].**

No **Course satisfies the 'fastest pathway to professional entry' criterion.** Note this in the [Recommendation](#) at the end of this form then go to [Question 9](#).

Yes **Course does not satisfy the 'fastest pathway to professional entry'.** Go to [Question 9](#).

9. Is the qualification legally required for professional entry registration/practice? (e.g Juris Doctor – Lawyer, Master of Physiotherapy - Physiotherapist)

No Go to [Question 10](#).

Yes **Where there is no faster pathway that enables professional registration, the course satisfies the 'required for professional entry' criterion.** Document all supporting evidence and list the relevant professional associations below, then go to the [Recommendation](#) at the end of this form. (Please **do not contact professional associations directly**. Research the internet or request that the educational institution provide this information.)

Supporting evidence:

10. Is the Masters course (or equivalent, where the Masters is open to students with a bachelor degree in an unrelated field) the minimum educational requirement for employment at the entry level in this field? **[Check details provided on application form. If no evidence supplied with application, search the internet to confirm]**

No Go to [Question 11](#).

Yes **If supporting evidence (for example, job advertisements) substantiates this claim, then the course satisfies the 'required for professional entry' criterion.** Document all supporting evidence then go to the [Recommendation](#) at the end of this form.

Supporting evidence:

11. Are there similar courses from other institutions that have been assessed in previous rounds?

Round	Higher Education Provider	Course	Criteria	Outcome
s 22				

Recommendation

Assessor Recommendation

- Approved against the *{Select from List}* criterion. Reason:
- Not approved. Reason:

The University of Queensland has not provided evidence (e.g. recruitment advertisements) that a Masters level qualification is required for employment in environmental management. The Assessment team has been unable to locate any job advertisements indicating that a Masters qualification is required for employment in this field.

The Master of Environmental Management (32) cannot be approved against the 'fastest pathway to professional entry' or the 'only pathway to professional entry' criteria as the University of Queensland also offers a 1 year Graduate Diploma in Environmental Management and a 4 year Bachelor of Environmental Management (Honours).

Assessment completed: 11/09/2015

Reviewer Recommendation

- Approved against the *{select from list}* criterion. Reason:
- Not approved. Reason: 1 year Graduate Diploma is the fastest pathway and masters level qualification is not the minimum requirement for professional entry.

Review completed: 21/10/2015

Summary and Recommendation

Ref: 133

Section 1 – Application details

Course Name:	Master of Environmental Management (24)		
Higher Education Provider:	University of Queensland		
Course code:	5174 (#24)	Course duration:	1.5 years
Assessment Officer:	s 22	Date:	11/09/2015

Section 2 – Assessment Summary

The Master of Environmental Management (24) at University of Queensland is **not recommended for approval** for student payment purposes. The application has been assessed according to the *Guidelines for the approval of Masters courses for student payments* (the Guidelines) and does not satisfy any of the criteria.

The Guidelines set out that a Masters course may be approved for student payments where the course is the minimum requirement, the fastest pathway or the only pathway for entry to a profession. For this purpose, a profession is defined as an occupation requiring specialised theoretical and practical knowledge gained through an academic tertiary qualification.

The Master of Environmental Management (24) course duration is 1.5 years full-time study and enrolment is restricted to students with a Bachelor degree in a related discipline (environmental studies, geography, natural resources, biology, ecology, conservation, sustainable development, environmental engineering, marine science, or an approved discipline). The application states that the course enables entry to the profession of environmental management.

The Master of Environmental Management (24) cannot be approved against the 'fastest pathway to professional entry' or the 'only pathway to professional entry' criteria as the University of Queensland also offers a 1 year Graduate Diploma in Environmental Management and a 4 year Bachelor of Environmental Management (Honours), both of which are sufficient for professional entry.

The University of Queensland has not provided evidence (e.g. recruitment advertisements) that a Masters level qualification is required for employment in environmental management. The Assessment team located job advertisements indicating a specialist tertiary qualification in environmental management is required for employment in this profession. However, no evidence was found that a Masters level qualification is the minimum requirement for employment in this field. The Graduate Diploma in Environmental Management would be sufficient for professional entry.

Review Officer: s 22

Date: 20/10/2015

Section 3 – Recommendation

It is recommended that the Master of Environmental Management (24) at University of Queensland **not be approved** for student payment purposes.

Recommendation: Agreed Not Agreed

Approved: _____

Ty Emerson
Branch Manager
Family and Student Payments Policy
Department of Social Services

Date:

30/10/15

Summary and Recommendation

Ref: 134

Section 1 – Application details

Course Name:	Master of Environmental Management (32)		
Higher Education Provider:	University of Queensland		
Course code:	5609 (#32)	Course duration:	2 years
Assessment Officer:	s 22	Date:	11/09/2015

Section 2 – Assessment Summary

The Master of Environmental Management (32) at University of Queensland is **not recommended for approval** for student payment purposes. The application has been assessed according to the *Guidelines for the approval of Masters courses for student payments* (the Guidelines) and does not satisfy any of the criteria.

The Guidelines set out that a Masters course may be approved for student payments where the course is the minimum requirement, the fastest pathway or the only pathway for entry to a profession. For this purpose, a profession is defined as an occupation requiring specialised theoretical and practical knowledge gained through an academic tertiary qualification.

The Master of Environmental Management (32) course duration is 2 years full-time study and enrolment is open to students with a Bachelor degree in any field. The application states that the course enables entry to the profession of environmental management.

The Master of Environmental Management (32) cannot be approved against the 'fastest pathway to professional entry' or the 'only pathway to professional entry' criteria as the University of Queensland also offers a 1-year Graduate Diploma in Environmental Management and a 4-year Bachelor of Environmental Management (Honours).

The University of Queensland has not provided evidence (e.g. recruitment advertisements) that a Masters level qualification is required for employment in environmental management. The Assessment team located job advertisements indicating a specialist tertiary qualification in environmental management is required for employment in this profession. However, no evidence was found that a Masters level qualification is the minimum requirement for employment in this field. The Graduate Diploma in Environmental Management would be sufficient for professional entry.

Review Officer: s 22

Date: 21/10/2015

Section 3 – Recommendation

It is recommended that the Master of Environmental Management (32) at University of Queensland **not be approved** for student payment purposes.

Recommendation: Agreed Not Agreed

Approved: _____

Ty Emerson
Branch Manager
Family and Student Payments Policy
Department of Social Services

Date:

30/10/15

From: [MastersApps](#)
To: vc@uq.edu.au
Cc: [MastersApps](#)
Subject: Outcome of application for Masters by coursework [SEC=UNCLASSIFIED]
Date: Tuesday, 12 January 2016 2:05:53 PM
Attachments: [University of Queensland - signed outcome letter.PDF](#)

Dear Professor Høj

Thank you for your recent application for Masters by coursework approval for student payment purposes. A letter regarding the outcome of your application is attached. If you have any questions, please email mastersapps@dss.gov.au.

Yours sincerely

Masters Assessment team



Australian Government
Department of Social Services

Professor Peter Høj
 Vice-Chancellor
 The University of Queensland
 BRISBANE QLD 4072

Via email: vc@uq.edu.au

Dear Professor Høj

Outcome of Masters by coursework application for student payments.

Thank you for your application for the approval of Masters by coursework programmes for student payment purposes.

s 22

The following courses have not been approved as they did not meet the criteria in the 'Guidelines for the Approval of Masters Courses for Student Payments':

- s 22
- [REDACTED]
- [REDACTED]
- [REDACTED]
- [REDACTED]
- Master of Environmental Management (#24)
- Master of Environmental Management (#32).

The Guidelines can be found online at: www.dss.gov.au/our-responsibilities/families-and-children/benefits-payments/student-payments/guidelines-for-the-approval-of-masters-courses-for-student-payments.

s 22

The Master of Environmental Management (#24) cannot be approved against the 'only pathway' or 'fastest pathway' criteria as the University of Queensland also offers a Graduate Diploma in the same subject that is shorter in duration and is sufficient for professional entry.

The Master of Environmental Management (#32) cannot be approved against the 'required for professional entry' criterion as the qualification exceeds the minimum requirement for entry-level employment.

s 22



You may not be aware that the Australian Government decided not to proceed with the proposal to extend student payments to all Masters by coursework programmes, which was to commence in 2017. This means the Department will continue to undertake an annual assessment process to ensure that only Masters courses that meet the Guidelines are approved for student payments.

Details of the application and assessment process to be conducted in 2016 for the 2017 academic year will be available on the Department's website in the coming months.

Once again, thank you for submitting your application. If you have any questions about your application, please email: mastersapps@dss.gov.au.

Yours sincerely

s 22



Emma Kate McGuirk
Branch Manager
Labour Market and Student Payments Policy
January 2016

GUIDELINES

*for the approval of Masters courses
for student payments*

OVERVIEW

Prior to 1 January 2008, students could not qualify for Youth Allowance or Austudy for courses above a Graduate Diploma level qualification. However, to increase higher level skills amongst the population to meet the changing demands of the economy, qualifying study for these student payments was extended to Masters by coursework programmes from 1 January 2008.

The qualification criteria for student payments under the *Social Security Act 1991* include the requirement that a student must be enrolled in an approved course of study at an approved institution.

To qualify as an approved course for student payments purposes, a Masters course must be approved by the Minister for Social Services and listed in the *Student Assistance (Education Institutions and Courses) Determination 2009* (the Determination) under subsections 3(1) and 5D(1) of the *Student Assistance Act 1973*.

Each year, the Department of Social Services (DSS) invites higher education providers to submit applications for Masters by coursework programmes to be considered for approval for student payment purposes. DSS coordinates the approval process, assesses the applications and provides a consolidated list of recommended Masters courses to the Minister for consideration and approval.

These Guidelines provide advice to higher education providers on the process for seeking approval for Masters by coursework programmes for student payment purposes.

The list of currently approved courses is available at:
www.comlaw.gov.au/series/F2009L04345.

Contact us

For more information regarding the Masters by coursework approval process, please email DSS at: mastersapps@dss.gov.au.

Criteria for the approval of Masters courses

Masters courses may be approved for student payment purposes where the course is the minimum requirement, the fastest pathway or the only pathway for entry level to a profession.

For this purpose, a profession is defined as an occupation requiring specialised theoretical and practical knowledge gained through an academic tertiary qualification. This qualification is essential for employment in a profession where the following is required:

- accreditation by a recognised professional body; and/or
- admission to a profession; and/or
- registration with a state/territory governing body.

Minimum requirement for entry to a profession

A Masters course may be approved where the course is the minimum qualification legally required for practice in a profession, or where professional organisations have set a Masters qualification as the entry requirement for professional accreditation. The course must be accredited by the relevant accreditation/registration authority for that profession.

Fastest pathway

A Masters course may be approved where it is the fastest pathway offered by a higher education provider for a student to gain an entry level qualification for professional practice.

If a higher education provider offers a Masters degree and a Graduate Diploma of the same duration and for entry to the same profession, the Masters course may be approved as the fastest pathway to professional entry.

Where professional entry level qualifications are offered at both the Graduate Diploma and Masters level, and the Graduate Diploma course is shorter in duration, only the Graduate Diploma level course will be approved for student payments. Accredited Graduate Diplomas are approved for student payment purposes and do not need to be submitted to the Minister for approval.

A course considered desirable for professional development, but not required for an entry level position will not meet the 'fastest pathway' criterion.

Only pathway

A Masters course may be approved where it is the only pathway to professional entry offered by the higher education provider.

Courses that will not qualify

Masters courses cannot be approved for student payment purposes where a shorter pathway is available for entry level qualification to professional practice. For example, where an entry level qualification can be achieved both through a one-year Graduate Diploma or a two-year Masters, the Masters course would not be approved.

Research degrees and Doctorate courses are not considered “tertiary courses” for student payment purposes and cannot be approved.

Application process

An application for the approval of a Masters course must be submitted by completing the application form in the invitation pack, or available online at: www.dss.gov.au/masters.

An application form must be completed for each Masters course submitted for approval; however, there is no limit to the number of course applications a higher education provider may submit.

The application must provide evidence that the submitted Masters course meets the criteria set out in the Guidelines. Where relevant, evidence of professional accreditation must be included.

Higher education providers requiring advice or clarification in preparing their applications, such as the supporting documentation they should provide, should contact DSS at mastersapps@dss.gov.au.

The Vice-Chancellor or a person duly authorised by the higher education provider must verify that the information submitted in the course application form meets the criteria set out in these Guidelines.

Where a higher education provider has campuses in different states or territories, approval may be granted on application on a state or territory basis, in particular where requirements for professional entry vary across states and territories.

Electronic copies of applications should be emailed to mastersapps@dss.gov.au.

Late applications will **NOT** be accepted and will be returned to the higher education provider.

DSS will send an acknowledgement email to the higher education provider, confirming receipt of the application/s.

If the higher education provider is unable to email their application/s, the application/s should be posted to:

Masters by Coursework Applications
Work and Study Payments Branch
Department of Social Services
GPO Box 9820
Canberra ACT 2601

It is important that higher education providers submit new Masters courses or those requiring reassessment as part of the assessment round conducted prior to the academic year that the new or revised course will commence. This should be done even where the higher education provider is awaiting academic and/or professional accreditation for the course.

If an approved Masters course substantially changes or its accreditation expires, the course must be re-submitted to ensure it meets the criteria for approval for student payments.

Any name change of a previously approved Masters course must be submitted for inclusion in the Determination (see page 8).

Assessment process

DSS will assess the applications and prepare recommendations of Masters courses for the Minister's consideration and approval.

Late applications will **NOT** be accepted and will be returned to the higher education provider.

If an application appears to be incomplete, DSS will seek further information from the higher education provider. The higher education provider will have a **maximum of five working days** to respond to a request from DSS for further information.

The Minister will determine which Masters courses are eligible for student payments and amend the Determination made under subsection 3(1) and 5D(1) of the *Student Assistance Act 1973*.

DSS will then formally advise higher education providers of the outcome of their Masters course application/s.

Where a Masters course is not approved, the higher education provider may write to the Minister to seek reconsideration of the decision.

The amended Determination will be registered on the Federal Register of Legislative Instruments and subsequently will be available at:

www.comlaw.gov.au/Series/F2009L04345.

DSS will inform the Department of Human Services (Centrelink) of the release of the amended Determination.

Approved courses

Previously approved courses

Ongoing Masters courses previously approved by the Minister do not require annual re-approval. Once a course is approved for student payments, it remains on the Determination until the higher education provider formally advises DSS that the course has been discontinued or that it no longer meets the eligibility criteria as the course content has substantially changed or its accreditation has expired.

Course name/code changes

Higher education providers **must** notify DSS of any name or code change for a previously approved Masters course by completing and submitting the **Masters by Coursework Change of Course Name/Course Code** form available at www.dss.gov.au/masters. This is particularly important as approval is granted for the course and provider name listed in the Determination. If the institution or course name does not match that listed in the Determination, students will be unable to receive student payments for that course.

Course name changes require amendment to the Determination approved by the Minister, therefore these changes are only made as part of an assessment process.

Course codes are used by the Department of Human Services (Centrelink) when assessing a student's application for student payments. Incorrect course codes can delay approval of a student's application for student payments.

As course codes are not listed on the Determination, changes can be processed at any time throughout the year.

Removing obsolete courses from the Determination

If a Masters course is no longer offered and has no students enrolled, the higher education provider must notify DSS that the course should be removed from the approved list in the Determination by completing and submitting the **Request for Masters Course Removal** form available at www.dss.gov.au/masters. It is important that any courses being phased out remain on the approved list in the Determination until existing students have completed the course.

Obsolete courses will be removed from the Determination during the annual assessment process.

Attachment D: Masters courses *not* recommended for approval

Higher Education Provider	Course Title	Reason
s 22		

Attachment D: Masters courses *not* recommended for approval

s 22



University of Queensland	s 22
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Master of Environmental Management (24)	The course cannot be approved against the 'only pathway' or 'fastest pathway' criteria as the University of Queensland also offers a Graduate Diploma in the same subject that is shorter in duration and is sufficient for professional entry. The course cannot be approved against the 'required for professional entry' criterion as the qualification exceeds the minimum requirement for entry-level employment.
Master of Environmental Management (32)	The course cannot be approved against the 'only pathway' or 'fastest pathway' criteria as the University of Queensland also offers a Graduate Diploma in the same subject that is shorter in duration and is sufficient for professional entry. The course cannot be approved against the

Attachment D: Masters courses *not* recommended for approval

		'required for professional entry' criterion as the qualification exceeds the minimum requirement for entry-level employment.
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s 22

