



Subject Substitution

Guidance notes

Subject Substitution at Charles Sturt

The [Enrolment and Fees Procedure](#) was updated in 2022 to provide clarity on who can approve subject substitutions. Below is an excerpt from the updated procedure:

- (36) Subject substitutions occur where a change to a student's course structure, as stated in the University Handbook, is approved by the following:
1. Course Director, when the level of the subject remains the same
 2. Associate Dean, Academic of the faculty, when the substituted subject is at a different level to the original subject
 3. Associate Dean, Academic of the faculty, when the number of subject substitutions by point value exceeds 25% of the total number of points in the course.

See additional information under the section below: [University Policy and Legislative requirements](#)

Matters to consider when determining what subjects can be substituted

When a staff member is deciding whether to grant a subject substitution, they should take into account a number of matters. These include:

1. AQF subject level requirements in the Enrolment and Fees Procedure

- *Approved by the Course Director when the level of the subject remains the same*

The Course Director must compare the subjects to ensure that both are at the same AQF level. Only if they are, then under the Enrolment and Fees Procedure, a Course Director is authorised to approve that substitution.

- *Approved by the Associate Dean, Academic of the faculty, when the substituted subject is at a different level to the original subject.*

When a subject is substituted at a different level, this must be approved by the Associate Dean, Academic (ADA). The ADA may take advice from Course Directors and Course Administration Officers about the soundness of the proposed substitution.

For further details, please refer to the information and table in the section '[What are subject levels](#)'

2. Course point value requirements in the Enrolment and Fees Procedure

- *Approved by the Associate Dean, Academic of the faculty, when the number of subject substitutions by point value exceeds 25% of the total number of points in the course.*

Where a subject substitution, on its own or combined with previously approved subject substitutions in this student's course, is worth more than 25% of the total course points value, this must be approved by the ADA.

For further details, please refer to the information and table in the section '[Course points](#)'

3. Professional accreditation requirements

In a professionally accredited course, there may be specific requirements as to the AQF level, subject point value and topic area of the subjects that must be studied. The staff member (the Course Director or ADA, as relevant) must therefore consider whether the substituted subject is within professional accreditation requirements for that student's course. If it is not, it will delay or negate a student's ability to graduate and/or practise in their chosen field.

4. Commonwealth Supported Place requirements for units of study to fit within a defined course

The *Higher Education Support Act 2003* (Cth) notes that, in order for a student to hold a Commonwealth Supported Place (CSP) (Commonwealth-funded student), they must only study subjects that are part of the course in which they are enrolled. For any CSP student, the staff member (the Course Director or ADA, as relevant) must therefore consider whether the substituted subject is within that student's course. If it is not, the student may lose their funding, and the University may be responsible for the payment of full tuition fees.

After considering the above matters, the staff member may decide that a subject substitution is appropriate. In that case, and prior to granting the approval, the staff member should advise the student in writing that a number of consequences might arise from an approved subject substitution. These might include that:

- in order to obtain their qualification, the student may need to choose a replacement AQF level/credit point/topic subject later, for the subject they may substitute this session
- there may be limited (or no) opportunity for the student to undertake the replacement AQF level/credit point/topic subject, if they do not undertake it now, due to the subject choices available in future teaching sessions
- their graduation may be delayed if they do not undertake the original subject now

In cases where a staff member has considered that approval of subject substitution is appropriate and the matter involves a CSP student and/or a professionally accredited course, they should seek the advice of their Head of School, prior to granting the approval.

What are the Subject Levels?

In reference to Item One, each subject code comprises a three-letter prefix and three digits. The first digit indicates the level of a subject in the subject code, which indicates how advanced the subject is in alignment with the AQF. Please find the table below, an excerpt from the [Curriculum Architecture Principles – Principle 4](#).

Level	Details	Course Level
Level 100	Introductory (AQF Level 5).	Undergraduate (UG)
Level 200	Building on level 100 (AQF Level 6).	UG
Level 300	Building on level 200 up to the outcome level of a 3-year UG degree (AQF Level 7).	UG
Level 400	The outcome level of a four-year undergraduate degree, an integrated four-year bachelor (honours) degree, and a one-year bachelor (honours) degree (AQF Level 8).	UG
Level 400	The outcome level of a postgraduate course of study that goes beyond undergraduate outcomes (AQF Level 8)	Postgraduate (PG)
Level 500	A component of a master's course other than a research component of a master by research course (AQF Level 9).	PG
Level 600	A research component of a master's course (AQF Level 9).	PG
Level 700	A coursework subject contributing to a professional doctoral course (AQF Level 10).	Research Higher Degree
Level 800	A subject contributing to a research doctoral course (AQF Level 10)	Research Higher Degree

Course points

The table below is based on [Curriculum Architecture Principles for Course Structures](#) (Principles 14, 15)

Per item 2, a summary is included of the course type, total course points value and 25% of the total course estimate.

Course Level	Course Type	Total Course Points Value	25% of the total course value (if substituted points exceed)
UG	Certificate courses	Certificate: 32 points	8 points
		Diploma: 48 points	12 points
		Associate Degree: 64 points	16 points
UG	3-year Bachelor	Essential set: at least 128 points	32 points
		Elective set: no more than 64 points	16 points
UG	4-year Bachelor	Essential set: at least 192 points	48 points
		Elective set: no more than 64 points	16 points
PG	Graduate Certificate	Essential set: 32 points	8 points
PG	Graduate Diploma	The essential set is at least 32 points	8 points
		The remaining elective set total may be variable	25% of total
PG	Masters (Coursework)	The essential set is at least 64 points	16 points
		The remaining elective set total may be variable	25% of total

IMPORTANT NOTE: Please see further information on Undergraduate and Postgraduate course structures and subject level requirements can be found on the Division of Learning and Teaching webpage: [Curriculum Architecture Principles](#)

Reporting subject substitutions

Clause (37) of the [Enrolment and Fees Procedure](#) states: 'Subject substitution decisions will be reported to Faculty Board.' As required, the Associate Dean Academic (ADA) should submit a report of any Subject Substitution decisions to the next available Faculty Board under item 1.4.5 Low impact changes. This report should include all approvals of subject substitutions by the Course Director(s) and the ADA(s).

University Policy and Legislative requirements

The [Enrolment and Fees Procedure](#) supports the [Enrolment and Fees Policy](#).

Clause 38 of the Enrolment and Fees Procedure notes that:

- Students seeking subject substitution must not enrol in the substituted subject(s) until this has been approved and their course structure has been updated in the graduation planning system (GPS).

Under the [Higher Education Standards Framework 2021](#) course learning outcomes for the relevant qualification must be applied and met (Standard 1.4).

Under the Higher Education Support Act 2003 (Cth), a provider must not advise a student that they are a Commonwealth-supported student for a unit of study unless the unit of study contributes to the requirements for a course of study in which the student is enrolled (s 36-10(1)(b)).