

GRADUATE ATTRIBUTES POLICY

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1. Purpose

This policy supports the University of New England's goal to be 'at the forefront of creating and delivering relevant research, education and knowledge services for key market places'.

In the context of the learning experiences at UNE, graduates will be expected to have developed a range of graduate attributes. The graduate attributes represent broad statements that will be interpreted in each disciplinary domain or course in the form of a hierarchy of increasingly complex outcomes (Barrie 2004) ranging from foundation tertiary literacies to contextualized disciplinary and professional capabilities and personal qualities (Muldoon 2006).

Indicative interpretations illustrate the kinds of skills a graduate should acquire but the list is not intended to be prescriptive or exhaustive.

2. Principles

- 2.1 This policy applies to all graduates of all awards of the University.
- 2.2 Each discipline* will address the eight UNE attributes, but will have the ability to emphasise different skills, to introduce additional specialist skills and align UNE's attributes with professional accreditation requirements.
- 2.3 Students are presented with appropriate learning, teaching and assessment experiences to enable them to develop and demonstrate the UNE Graduate Attributes at increasing levels of complexity, across the period of their study.
- 2.4 The UNE graduate attributes are explicitly defined at course and unit level through course and unit objectives and assessment to provide a coherent incremental development pathway. The UNE graduate attributes are explicitly communicated to staff and students in all course and unit documentation.
- 2.5 Teaching, learning and assessment of UNE's graduate attributes is assured through the UNE Quality Management System via normal course approval and course review processes, and the monitoring of student learning experiences through student evaluation mechanisms.
- 2.6 This policy is supported by guidelines and an implementation plan to assist in the process of interpretation, curriculum mapping, alignment with accreditation standards and documentation.

*Note: The terms discipline, course and major are interchangeable in the context of this policy.

3. UNE graduate attributes

Attribute	Indicative interpretation
1. Knowledge of a discipline	<p>Graduates will be able to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • demonstrate a command of a significant body of knowledge based on the highest standards of academic scholarship • apply knowledge at an advanced level in professional contexts or to solve problems • demonstrate awareness of the historical development of the discipline and its methods • recognise the relationship between the practice of the discipline in Australia and its practice in other countries. <p>Graduates of research degrees will extend the boundaries of knowledge through research and publication.</p>
2. Communication skills	<p>Graduates will be able to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • communicate effectively and confidently orally and in written forms • use numerical, graphical, visual and statistical forms of communication competently where applicable • appreciate the diversity of communication styles employed by individuals from different national and cultural backgrounds • use the medium and form of communication (including electronic) appropriate for a given situation • present well reasoned arguments. <p>Research graduates will 'challenge existing theories and defend new ideas and theories in various modes for a variety of audiences, especially professional audiences, using the scholarly conventions of the discipline' (Graduate Attributes Project 2004: Postgraduate Attributes for Master of Education and Master of Education (Honours), p 2).</p>
3. Global perspective	<p>Graduates will be able to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • demonstrate an awareness of the global context of their discipline and professional area • function in a multicultural or global context. <p>Research graduates will 'show a broad understanding of the context, at the national and international level, in which research takes place' (B-1).</p>
4. Information literacy	<p>Graduates will be able to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • recognise the need for information and the nature and extent of information needed • find information effectively and efficiently • critically evaluate information and the search process • manage information collected or generated • use information to construct new concepts or create new understandings • use information with understanding and acknowledge cultural, ethical, economic, legal and social issues surrounding its use • acquire, organise and present information using technology. <p>Research graduates will 'demonstrate an understanding of relevant research methodologies and techniques and their appropriate application within their</p>

Attribute	Indicative interpretation
	research field nationally and globally' (A-4).
5. Lifelong learning	<p>Graduates will be able to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • reflect on limitations of, and have the capacity to evaluate their current knowledge • identify, evaluate and implement personal learning strategies for lifelong personal and professional development • practice intellectual curiosity, creativity and critical thinking • learn both independently and co-operatively • learn new skills and apply learning to new and unexpected situations • recognise opportunities for further learning in both familiar and unfamiliar national or cultural settings. <p>Research graduates will 'demonstrate an insight into the transferable nature of research skills to other work environments' (G-3).</p>
6. Problem-solving	<p>Graduates will be able to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • apply logical, critical and creative thinking to a range of problems • identify critical issues in the discipline or professional area • conceptualise problems and formulate a range of solutions that are appropriate to the national or cultural context of the problem • collect, collate and analyse relevant information to assist problem-solving. <p>Research graduates will apply effective project management through the setting of research goals, milestones and prioritisation of activities' (C-1).</p>

Attribute	Indicative interpretation
7. Social responsibility	<p>Graduates will be able to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • demonstrate ethical action and social responsibility in their personal, professional and community lives • demonstrate respect for, and acknowledgement of, ideas and knowledge of others • acknowledge the social and ethical implications of their actions • appreciate the impact of social change • recognise social justice issues relevant to their discipline and professional area • understand the international implications of local decisions and the local implications of international decisions • appreciate the importance of sustainable development • appreciate Indigenous culture and history • identify occupational risk and apply duty of care principles. <p>Research graduates will demonstrate awareness of issues relating to rights of other researchers, of research subjects, and others who may be affected by the research' (B-2).</p>
8. Teamwork	<p>Graduates will be able to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • work collaboratively and network effectively to achieve common goals and to solve problems • appreciate the different approaches that different cultures have to collaborative work • take responsibility and carry out agreed tasks. • take initiative and lead others • operate in a range of supportive roles within teams • negotiate, assert their own values and respect the values and contributions of others • evaluate team performance. <p>Research graduates will develop and maintain co-operative networks and working relationships with supervisors, colleagues and peers, within the institution and the wider research community' (F-1).</p>

4. References

Australian/New Zealand Information Literacy Framework: Principles, Standards & Practice, 2004, Council of Australian University Librarians, Canberra.

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