

Principal Dates Policy

Section 1 - Overview

(1) This Policy provides assistance for University Representatives in the development of the University's [Principal Dates](#).

Section 2 - Scope

(2) This Policy applies to the University's Principal Dates and University Representatives when developing and applying the University's [Principal Dates](#).

Section 3 - Guidelines

Primary parameters for principal dates

(3) The University's academic calendar consists of three trimesters, which comprise:

- a. Trimester 1 and 2 which are 15 weeks in length inclusive of:
 - i. an 11-week teaching session;
 - ii. a 2-week intensive school session; and
 - iii. a 2-week end-of-session assessment period.
- b. Trimester 3 which is 14 weeks in length inclusive of:
 - i. an 11-week teaching session (including an intensive school session);
 - ii. the University Christmas break; and
 - iii. a 2-week end-of-session assessment period.
- c. Some courses adopt a different structure within the trimester for teaching and learning activities than that noted in 3(a) and 3(b).

(4) The preference is (where possible) that:

- a. Trimester 1 consist of two teaching sessions of 7 and 4 weeks in length, depending on the timing of Easter.
- b. Trimester 2 consist of two teaching sessions of 7 and 4 weeks in length.
- c. Trimester 3 consist of two teaching sessions of 8 and 3 weeks in length, depending on the timing of the University Christmas break.

(5) In accordance with the [Higher Education Support Act 2003](#), the Higher Education Contribution Scheme (HECS) census date must be no earlier than 20% of the way through the period during which the unit is undertaken.

(6) Open Day shall normally be the first Friday in May.

(7) Autumn graduation ceremonies shall normally be held in late March/early April timed to avoid Easter and the intensive school period. Spring graduation shall normally be the Friday and Saturday of the final weekend in October.

- (8) Graduation ceremonies will be scheduled on alternate days from one year to the next, such that:
- the Autumn graduation ceremony for the four combinations of awards will take place on a Friday one year and a Saturday in the subsequent year; and
 - the Spring graduation ceremony for the two combinations of awards will take place on a Friday one year and a Saturday in the subsequent year.
- (9) Normally no teaching takes place on NSW Public Holidays.
- (10) Enrolment variation deadlines must allow for what is considered academically reasonable for a late start to teaching and for organisational stability.
- (11) The last date for withdrawal without academic penalty (award of grade WN) shall be set as follows:
- Trimester 1 and 2 units: Monday of week 10 of the trimester
 - Trimester 3 units: Monday of week 7 of the trimester
 - Year Long units: same day as the deadline for units in the second consecutive trimester
 - Full-time Honours units: Monday of week 32 of candidature
 - Part-time Honours units: Monday of week 32 in the second year-long Honours teaching period.
- (12) [Principal Dates](#) shall include the following:
- Year start
 - Year end
 - Teaching Period start
 - Teaching Period end
 - Designated Intensive schools period start
 - Designated Intensive schools period end
 - Last date for withdrawal without academic penalty
 - Lectures start in on-campus units
 - Lectures end in on-campus units
 - Examinations start
 - Examinations end
 - Final date for release of examination results
 - Enrolment variation deadlines
 - Graduation ceremonies
 - Orientation programs
 - Open Day
 - Gazetted NSW public holidays
- (13) Parallel academic years (e.g. the Joint Medical Program) will be declared as part of the University Principal Dates but negotiated separately in accordance with the applicable agreement.
- (14) Other business dates (e.g. Council and Academic Board meetings) shall be inserted by negotiated agreement with appropriate business managers and communicated to the Executive Principal Education Futures.

Approval

(15) Draft Principal Dates for a specific year/s shall:

- a. be circulated for comment for twenty (20) working days and specifically distributed to:
 - i. Deputy Vice-Chancellor;
 - ii. Executive Principals;
 - iii. Dean of Faculties;
 - iv. Heads of Schools;
 - v. Heads of Colleges;
 - vi. Directors: UNE International, Research Services, Residential System, UNE Life;
 - vii. Director Library Services and University Librarian; and
 - viii. Secretary to Council.
- b. The final draft is submitted to Academic Board for endorsement and Council for approval.

(16) Approval of the [Principal Dates](#) should ideally occur no later than 20 months before their implementation (i.e. by April year 1 for year 3).

(17) Under exceptional circumstances, the University reserves the right to change a [Principal Date](#) (but not a statutory date) after it has been published, but no later than the first day enrolments open for the relevant trimester.

Responsibilities

(18) The Education Futures Directorate is responsible for:

- a. developing and circulating for comment the draft Principal Dates;
- b. submission of final draft to Executive Principal Education Futures; and
- c. publication of approved [Principal Dates](#) on the University website.

(19) The Executive Principal Education Futures is responsible for submission of the final draft of the Principal Dates to Academic Board.

(20) The Secretary to Council will advise the Executive Principal Education Futures of Council's approval of the Principal Dates.

Section 4 - Authority and Compliance

(21) The Executive Principal Education Futures makes this Policy.

(22) University Representatives must observe this Policy in relation to University matters.

(23) This Policy operate as and from the Effective Date.

(24) Previous Policy on Principal Dates and related documents are replaced and have no further operation from the Effective Date of this new Policy.

Status and Details

Status	Historic
Effective Date	16th December 2021
Review Date	16th December 2022
Approval Authority	Vice-Chancellor and Chief Executive Officer
Approval Date	16th December 2021
Expiry Date	4th January 2023
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Glossary Terms and Definitions

"Intensive School" - Is a mode of teaching and learning that brings students together at a particular physical or virtual location for a period of intensive interactive learning experiences. This term encompasses all types of Intensive School, whether held on or off campus or online.

"Course" - Course means a syllabus, a curriculum, a training package, units of study, or structured workplace learning, the successful completion of which leads to the conferral of an award on the student by the University (including but not limited to a regulated qualification under the Australian Qualifications Framework).

"Census Date" - Means a date within each trimester specified in the Principal Dates on which a student's enrolment in a unit is officially recorded and reported and the final date by which tuition fees or the student contribution is incurred or any other fee or charge that is applicable.

"Principal Dates" - The official list of dates for University activities approved by the UNE Council and published annually on the University website. The list includes the official dates of teaching periods, examination periods, graduation days and the deadlines for enrolment in, and withdrawal from, unit and courses.

"Trimester" - the period over which a unit is usually taught. The majority of coursework units are one trimester in length.

"Effective Date" - means the Rule/Policy takes effect on the day on which it is published, or such later day as may be specified in the policy document.

"University Representative" - University Representative means a University employee (casual, fixed term and permanent) contractor, agent, appointee, UNE Council member, adjunct, visiting academic and any other person engaged by the University to undertake some activity for or on behalf of the University. It includes corporations and other bodies falling into one or more of these categories.