

Class size

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Cross reference/related documents:		1.0 Policies and procedures manual 4.0 Staff handbook 5.0 Student handbook

1.0 Rationale and principles which this policy seeks to uphold

- 1.1 The University will ensure that degree programmes are delivered in a timely and sequential manner.
- 1.2 The University wishes to enable students to complete their degree requirements as quickly as is effective to their learning.
- 1.3 The University wishes to use its resources in an efficient manner

2.0 Scope

- 2.1 This policy applies to all modules offered by the University

3.0 Definitions

Relevance of class size (extracted from Oxford Brookes Centre for Learning and Teaching)

- 3.1 Two opposite tendencies exist with regard to the number of people in a group. The larger the group, the greater is the pool of talent and experience available for solving problems or sharing the effort. On the other hand, as the size increases, fewer members have the chance to participate, and indeed the differences in relative participation increase to the point where one or two members begin to dominate. It thus becomes more likely that reticent members will fail to contribute, though they may well enjoy the relative anonymity a large group affords them.

3.2 The smaller the group, the greater is the likelihood of close relationships, full participation, and consonance of aims. Larger groups are an advantage when it requires the combining of individual efforts as in brainstorming. They are of less value when everyone must accomplish the task, which is the general situation in most discussion groups. If the group is small (i.e., two or three in number), the tutor is likely to be dominant from the start. With a large group (eight or more) the divergence of aims and the need for role differentiation may push the tutor into a dominant position.

3.3 Questions to ask about larger group sizes:

3.3.1 What size of group is appropriate to the aims?

3.3.2 How many people can be fitted into the room and still have good eye contact?

3.3.3 Will the tutor take a leadership role or will students take responsibility for the process?

3.3.4 Does the tutor intend to split the group into subgroups?

3.3.5 Is the group large enough to avoid total dominance by the tutor?

3.3.6 Will the group still be large enough if one or two members are absent?"

4.0 Policy

Minimum class size

4.1 Minimum class sizes are established to ensure that use of staff time and other resources is cost effective, and/or that student learning is optimized.

4.2 The following minimums have been established for each of the following categories:

4.2.1 Bachelor's degree modules: 8

4.2.2 Master's degree modules: 4

4.2.3 There is no restriction in place for Doctoral degree modules

4.3 If the number of students falls below the minimum, the module will be cancelled. Cancellation will normally rely on registration figures prior to the start of term.

4.4 The Dean will receive petitions that a module should be continued, and may approve the module to be taught if:

4.4.1 The module is required for graduation

4.4.2 The module is a pre-requisite for other compulsory/core modules

4.4.3 Cancellation would impede a student's normal progress towards graduation.

4.4.4 The module is required to meet the teach-out plan.

Maximum class size

4.5 Classes may be taught under the maximum size.

4.6 Maximum size refers to a number beyond which a high level of student learning is less likely.

4.7 Maximum class size will relate to:

4.7.1 The level of the module

- 4.7.2 The module learning outcomes,
- 4.7.3 The extent to which out-of-class support is required
- 4.7.4 Instructional method used.

4.8 The following maximums have been established for each of the following categories:

- 4.8.1 Maximum class size for Bachelor's degree module: 60
- 4.8.2 Maximum class size for Master's degree module: 40
- 4.8.3 Maximum class size for Doctoral degree modules: 40

4.9 The maximum class size for design studios is capped at 20. The maximum class size for individual programmes may be reduced based on pedagogical requirements and recommendations of the CAA.

5.0 Responsibilities

- 5.1 The module coordinator is responsible for managing registrations on modules such that minimum and maximum size limits are observed.
- 5.2 The Learning and Teaching Committee reports to the Academic Board on compliance with, and recommended change to this policy.