

DIGITAL PLUS POLICY

Section	Academic
Contact	Provost
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Purpose:

Digital Plus is our agreed strategic approach to the consolidation of our qualification portfolio (academic profile), removal of unnecessary curriculum duplication, and ongoing acceleration of the University's development of our online learning and teaching. The objective of Digital Plus is for each discipline to consolidate teaching on one physical campus (in-person and face-to-face), 'plus' a digitally excellent offer.

Introduction:

The University Strategy 2022-2027 sets a clear direction for teaching and learning at Massey University Te Kunenga ki Pūrehuroa noting that,

Our point of difference is our flexible and wide-reaching learning and teaching opportunities, informed by world-leading research, and conducted in partnership with community, other universities, research partners, entities, and industry. By strategically investing in boosting digital capability, added-value face to face educational opportunities, and disciplinary research excellence, we will strengthen the relationship between research and teaching for national and international impact. (Massey University Strategy 2022-2027, p.6)

Furthermore, the Strategy commits us to 'high-quality teaching' which is 'digitally enabled and accessible to all students and which is an 'excellent, contemporary and equitable learning experience, regardless of their location in Aotearoa New Zealand or globally, or their study mode, face to face or online (p.11).' This commitment to digitally enabled excellence, irrespective of location or mode, sets an imperative for continuing to embrace flexibility in a COVID-19 informed operating environment.

Digital Plus is a strategic concept designed to help Massey consolidate its academic profile and remove unnecessary duplication, while focusing on accelerating the University's development of our online learning and teaching, noting the work achieved to date. It is also designed to ensure that our academic profile remains high-quality, well-planned, and academically robust. This strategic approach is necessary to 'future proof' our academic profile and ensure that we remain competitive and sustainable in a rapidly changing context.

While the notion of Digital Plus was agreed by Council and SLT, and socialised prior to the disruption of COVID-19, the 'new normal' of the post-COVID era and its impact on universities provides clear evidence of the urgency of determining how we can maintain our competitive edge in distance education. This must be by leveraging our online capability to deliver high-quality teaching and learning across a broad range of disciplines in a sustainable manner which anticipates future economic shocks.

Implementing Digital Plus will lead to better utilization of our publicly funded resources and existing infrastructure, an increased concentration and clustering of academic teams to better concentrate groups of researchers and align the University's teaching-research nexus, and an enhanced, more consistent and coordinated student learning experience.

The Digital Plus strategic approach includes Five Principles of Transformation:

- i. Planned and purposeful curriculum consolidation.
- ii. Coordinated and accelerated rationalisation of our academic profile.
- iii. Rationalisation of academic infrastructure and research facilities and reducing unnecessary duplication of infrastructure across campuses.
- iv. Enhanced digitisation of all our programmes.
- v. Development of online distance and on-campus (in-person and face-to-face) delivery models.

The objective of this approach is to improve our use of existing infrastructure and to consolidate academic teams as well as teaching delivery. This approach includes consolidating programmes onto one campus wherever possible to limit duplication of teaching and research facilities and resources (including teaching teams); limiting internal delivery of courses to one campus (with online delivery alongside this); and/or opting for online distance delivery where one delivery mode can serve our students (or where only one delivery option is feasible).

In the context of our Te Tiriti o Waitangi commitments, programmes of significance for Māori will be carefully considered regarding the application of this policy.

Policy:

1. On-campus delivery of disciplines is consolidated to one campus and may be extended by a high-quality 'designed for distance' online delivery.

Specifically, this means that:

- i. For each discipline, where on-campus delivery is undertaken, there is one 'physical' campus for on-campus delivery, curriculum and course leadership, and research, 'plus' or supported by excellent online delivery and support.
- ii. For each discipline, there is no duplication of the on-campus academic offerings across more than one campus unless:
 - a) Colleges can financially justify delivery to more than one physical location, plus a digitally supported online offer; and/or
 - b) Delivery of an on-campus offering must comply on one or more campuses with the requirements and thresholds set out in the No and Low Enrolments Policy. That is, student enrolments must justify a continued on-campus delivery unless an approved exception is granted based on the criteria for exceptions set out in the No and Low Enrolment Policy.

2. A single online delivery approach will be utilised where delivery must support more than one campus/site/student cohort and student numbers in individual offerings do not justify an on-campus plus an online delivery.

Implementation:

Implementation of this policy will be guided by the Office of the Provost working in partnership with colleges and guided by the specific commitments of the *University Strategy 2022-2027*.

Audience:

Massey University Te Kunenga ki Pūrehuroa Council, staff, students, external stakeholders including mana whenua, iwi, hapū and whānau associated with the University.

Relevant legislation:

Education and Training Act 2020
Treaty of Waitangi Act 1975

Related procedures / documents:

[Massey University Strategy 2022 – 2027](#)
[No and Low Enrolments Policy](#)
[No and Low Enrolments Procedures](#)

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