
Academic Year Dates Policy

Academic Policy

1 Purpose

The academic year at the Victoria University of Wellington ('the University') is divided into three trimesters. This policy ensures there is sufficient time for enrolment, teaching, examinations and vacation periods and that these activities are spaced appropriately throughout the year. It also ensures that dates are expressed consistently across all University publications. Dates are approved well in advance to enable planning.

2 Organisational Scope

This is a University-wide policy.

3 Definitions

For purposes of this policy, unless otherwise stated, the following definitions shall apply:

- Trimester: One of three teaching periods that make up the academic year.
Summer School: A defined six-week period of teaching that occurs in January and February.

4 Policy Content and Guidelines

- (a) Weeks in all University timetables start on Monday and end on Sunday.
- (b) Except as provided in s4(o), undergraduate summer teaching takes place in a defined six-week period from January to February known as 'Summer School'.
- (c) Summer School shall start on the first full week after the New Year's holiday where 'full week' means the week starting on a Monday or Tuesday. The range of possible start dates is 5th to 10th January.
- (d) Summer School is followed by one week of examinations.
- (e) Summer School examinations are followed by a one-week period for enrolment completion and orientation.
- (f) Trimester One starts on a Monday eight weeks after the start of Summer School. The range of possible start dates is 29 February to 6th March.
- (g) Trimester One contains 12 teaching weeks except where this would result in fewer than 57 teaching days in which case Trimester One will extend to 13 weeks.
- (h) Trimester One has a two-week mid-trimester break except if there are fewer than five weeks of teaching before Easter, in which case the mid-trimester break is reduced to one week with the following provisions:

- (i) The Easter break is extended by adding to it the Thursday before Good Friday and the Wednesday after Easter Monday inclusive*.
- (ii) The one-week break should be scheduled so that there are at least two full weeks of teaching after Easter and that the break should be aligned with one week of the school holidays and/or include Anzac Day.

* Note: The Tuesday after Easter Monday is a University Holiday; no teaching takes place on this day.

- (i) The length of time between the end of the Trimester One standard teaching period and the beginning of Trimester Two standard teaching period is five weeks.
- (j) Trimester Two contains 12 teaching weeks.
- (k) Trimester Two has a two-week mid-trimester break which should normally start six weeks after the start of the Trimester.
- (l) As far as practicable, the academic year is arranged so as to maximise the overlap between school and University holidays.
- (m) As far as practicable, the timetable for Trimesters One and Two should provide for one clear study week between the end of teaching and the commencement of examinations; this period is recorded as 'Study Period' in the Calendar.
- (n) The examination periods will consist of up to three weeks at the end of Trimester One, three weeks at the end of the Trimester Two, and one week at the end of Summer School as noted in s4(d). Examinations may begin on the Friday of the study period and continue up to the Wednesday of the week following the final examination week if this is deemed necessary in order to achieve a workable examination timetable.
- (o) Any request for a variation to the standard teaching dates for an individual course or programme requires an academic justification and consultation with Student Academic Services regarding timetabling and room allocation issues and implications for student loans and allowances.
 - (i) Proposals for undergraduate teaching outside the defined period of Summer School shall be approved by the Provost, in consultation with the relevant Associate Dean.
 - (ii) Proposals for postgraduate or post-experience teaching outside the defined period of Summer School shall be approved by the relevant Associate Dean and shall be notified to the Academic Office.
- (p) Academic Year Dates for any given year will be approved by the Provost, who will ensure conformity with this policy. The approved dates will be provided to Academic Board for information at least two years before the academic year is due to start.
- (q) Where it is necessary to refer to the academic year in terms of 'Week X' the convention is that Week 1 is the first week of the year that contains a Thursday.

5 Legislative Compliance

The University is required to manage its policy documentation within a legislative framework. The legislation directing this policy is the:

[Holidays Act, 2003](#)

6 References

Previous version: [Academic Year Dates Policy](#)

ISO 8601 'Date and Time', retrievable at www.iso.org

7 Appendices

[Victoria University of Wellington Academic Year Dates 2011](#)

[Victoria University of Wellington Academic Year Dates 2012](#)

[Victoria University of Wellington Academic Year Dates 2013](#)

[Victoria University of Wellington Academic Year Dates 2014](#)

[Victoria University of Wellington Academic Year Dates 2015](#)

[Victoria University of Wellington Academic Year Dates 2016](#)

8 Approval Agency

Academic Board

9 Approval Dates

This policy was originally approved on: 1 June 1997

This version was approved on: 10 March 2011

This version takes effect from: 1 October 2014

10 Policy Sponsor

Provost

11 Contact Person

The following person may be approached on a routine basis in relation to this policy:

Senior Academic Quality Advisor

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