

School of Government

EGOV 503
MANAGING ICT-ENABLED FORMS
OF PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT
(15 Points)

Trimester 3 / 2015

COURSE OUTLINE

Names and Contact Details

Course Coordinator: **Professor Miriam Lips**
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School Office Hours: 8.30am – 5.00pm, Monday to Friday

Online Course Office Hours: 8.00am – 9.00pm, Monday to Friday

IMPORTANT: Victoria University is closed from Tuesday 22 December 2015 to Monday 4 January 2016 for the Christmas/New Year break, so online staff support will NOT be available during this period.

Trimester Dates

Monday 16 November 2015 – Monday 15 February 2016

Withdrawal from Course

Formal notice of withdrawal must be in writing on a Course Add/Drop form (available from either of the Faculty's Student Customer Service Desks or from the course administrator). Not paying your fees, ceasing to attend lectures or verbally advising a member of staff will NOT be accepted as a formal notice of withdrawal.

1. Your fees will be refunded if you withdraw from this course on or before **Friday 27 November 2015**.
2. The standard last date for withdrawal from this course is **Friday 29 January 2016**.

After the last date stated in #2, students forced to withdraw by circumstances beyond their control must apply for permission on an '*Application for Associate Dean's Permission to Withdraw Late*', including supporting documentation. The application form is available from either of the Faculty's Student Customer Service Desks.

Class Times

Befitting a course on online public engagement, this course will be fully delivered online throughout the trimester.

The course interactive sessions will start in week 1 (week beginning 16 November 2015), with an expectation of students to have downloaded and tested the technology tools before the first live online class session (Wednesday 18 November 2015, see below). The course interactive sessions will end in week 11 (week beginning 8 February 2016).

The course will have FOUR live online class sessions, each session of 1 hour maximum duration and scheduled outside of office hours on the following Wednesday evenings, starting at 7.30pm:

- | | | |
|-------------------------------|-----------------|---------|
| 1. Wednesday 18 November 2015 | 7.30pm – 8.30pm | Week 1 |
| 2. Wednesday 16 December 2015 | 7.30pm – 8.30pm | Week 5 |
| 3. Wednesday 20 January 2016 | 7.30pm – 8.30pm | Week 8 |
| 4. Wednesday 10 February 2016 | 7.30pm – 8.30pm | Week 11 |

All four live online class sessions will take place using Zoom as the online platform.

Students are expected to log into the meetings on time for a start at 7.30pm.

The course will have more intensive periods for interactive group sessions from week 1 (week beginning 16 November 2015) to week 5 (week beginning 14 December 2015) and from week 8 (week beginning 18 January 2016) to week 11 (week beginning 8 February 2016).

Between the weeks 5 and 8 (weeks beginning 21 December 2015 to 11 January 2016), students are expected to work on assignments and undertake further self-study on the basis of online course materials.

Active participation is required in all group and individual online interactive sessions and will be one of the assessment items for this course.

Teaching Format

This course is one of the first courses offered at Victoria University of Wellington that will be delivered fully online. The course format will be task-driven and involve asynchronous and synchronous class or group sessions, as well as individual learning assignments.

Using an online education environment for the whole course requires new experimental, and often unfamiliar, ways of learning and teaching for course participants, which may raise all sorts of questions. The course facilitators would like to emphasize that there are no stupid questions under such experimental conditions and are available during online office hours for any course-related questions students may have, either via online channels, telephone or face-to-face.

Online course office hours are: 8.00am – 9.00pm, Monday to Friday

IMPORTANT: Victoria University is closed from Tuesday 22 December 2015 to Monday 4 January 2016 for the Christmas/New Year break, so online staff support will NOT be available during this period.

Group Work

The course requires active participation from each student (i.e. several times each week) in online interactive group sessions scheduled from weeks 1 – 5 and weeks 8 – 11, in order to maximise the learning experience of each course participant. Active course participation can be flexibly scheduled by individual course participants within these periods, with the exception of the four live online class sessions scheduled on Wednesday evenings at 7.30pm (see Class Times above).

Active participation is required in all group online interactive sessions and will be one of the assessment items for this course.

Expected Workload

The learning objectives set for each course are demanding and to achieve them, candidates must make a significant commitment in time and effort to participating, studying, reading, thinking, and completion of tasks and assessment items. Courses vary in design but all require preparation and learning before the start of the course and regular learning is also necessary (students who leave everything to the last moment rarely achieve at a high level).

Expressed in input terms, on average, the time commitment required usually translates to approximately 150 hours for a 15-point course.

Prescription

This course examines the challenges, conditions and requirements for managing the use of social media and other ICTs to achieve effective public engagement, drawing on New Zealand and international experience.

Course Learning Objectives

Students who pass this course will be able to:

1. Critically analyse ICT-enabled public engagement initiatives and their social, institutional and organisational impact
2. Apply theories, concepts, models, frameworks and strategies in the area of e-engagement and e-democracy
3. Understand and critically evaluate e-engagement initiatives and outcomes in New Zealand and internationally
4. Understand the conditions and requirements for managing effective forms of ICT-enabled public engagement and communicate these conditions and requirements to a variety of internal and external stakeholders
5. Identify a suitable implementation strategy for achieving effective e-engagement and present this strategy to multiple stakeholders
6. Identify the challenges of achieving effective e-engagement and strategies for overcoming these challenges.

Course Online Environment: Access to the Internet and Blackboard

This course requires access to the Internet on a regular basis throughout the trimester. Besides word processing, presentation, and communication tools, course participants will need to be able to use online video and audio facilities throughout the course. The three main online teaching and learning platforms used in this course are **Blackboard**, **Zoom** and **Yammer**.

1. **Blackboard** is Victoria University's primary online teaching and learning environment and can be accessed through the myVictoria student web portal. Ensure that you can access Blackboard before the course begins. To access the Blackboard site for this course:
 - a) Open a web browser and go to www.myvictoria.ac.nz .
 - b) Log into myVictoria using your ITS Username (on your Confirmation of Study) and password (if you've never used the Victoria University computer facilities before, your initial password is your student ID number, on your Confirmation of Study, Fees Assessment or student ID card – you may be asked to change it when you log in for the first time).
 - c) Once you've logged into myVictoria, select Blackboard (from the options along the top of the page) to go to your Blackboard homepage.
 - d) The "My Courses" section displays the courses you have access to – select the appropriate link to access the course-specific Blackboard site. Please note that only courses that are actually using Blackboard and have been made available to students by their respective course coordinator will be displayed.

Blackboard tools used in this course include the Blog Tool and the Discussion Board. Under 'Tools', students will be able to find '**Blackboard Help for Students**', which provides detailed information about the operation of each Blackboard tool, including standard tasks and uploading assignments.

NOTE: In order to receive information via Blackboard, it is essential that you activate your @myvuw.ac.nz email account (the free email account created for you when you enrol and accessed via the myVictoria student web portal) before the start of the course. Once you have activated your @myvuw.ac.nz email account, if you want to receive these emails at your

preferred email address (e.g. your home or work email address), you must modify the settings so all emails sent to it are automatically forwarded to your preferred email address. For more information, please go to

www.victoria.ac.nz/its/student-services/FAQs.aspx#Email_Forward .

2. **Zoom** is a cloud-based video-conferencing and web-conferencing platform, which operates outside Blackboard. Students will receive further instructions via Blackboard on how to install and use Zoom for live online group sessions.
3. **Yammer** is a collaborative discussion tool which resembles Facebook. Students will receive further instructions via Blackboard on how to log in to the course network on Yammer.

If you have any problems gaining access to Victoria University's computer facilities (myVictoria and Blackboard), you should contact the ITS Service Desk on (04) 463 5050 or its-service@vuw.ac.nz . See www.victoria.ac.nz/its/student-services/ for more information.

Readings and Other Course Resources

There is no textbook for this course. All required readings and other course materials will be available via either Blackboard or the Victoria University of Wellington library.

Required readings and other course materials indicated below with an asterisk are available from the Victoria University of Wellington library databases. As a VUW student, you have complete and free access to these materials. University copyright licenses allow you to download and print reading materials from the VUW library, so long as you use them for educational purposes only. Please ask the course coordinator or a VUW librarian if you require help to access material, or if you run into any other problems.

If the library does not have database or e-book access to required readings (those with no asterisk in this course outline), the readings will be available on Blackboard (e.g. a URL to the relevant document(s) or a copy of the document will be provided).

In some cases, you may need to go to the library to consult books or journal articles, or to check them out. Please note that some additional readings may be added as the course progresses.

Course Content

This online course will be offered in a task- and assignment-driven format, clustered around two major parallel streams of course content. The first stream will be focusing on learning about '*managing effective online engagement*'; this stream will mostly be run during the intensive course weeks. The second stream will be focusing on learning about '*theories, concepts, knowledge and critical analysis of e-engagement and e-democracy*'; this stream will largely involve self-study and individual tasks and assignments, which could be done more flexibly including outside the intensive course weeks.

Both course content streams will start with the first live online class session on Wednesday 18 November, 7.30pm.

A detailed course planner with tasks and assignments will be accessible to course participants via Blackboard shortly before the start of the course.

Mandatory preparation before the first live online class session on Wednesday 18 November 2015, 7.30pm

In preparation for the start of this online course, students will need to complete the following six tasks:

1. Log into Blackboard and check you have access to the resources and online tools listed in this course outline (e.g. readings, tasks, Blog tool, Discussion Board, Zoom, Yammer etc.).
2. Test Zoom on the device you are going to use for the live sessions.
3. Watch the course introduction video available in Blackboard (available in the first week of November).
4. Read the required course readings in preparation of the first live online class session (please see below).
5. Create and write an introductory personal blog post, accessible via 'Tools' in Blackboard. In this blog, introduce yourself to other class participants: describe who you are, what attracted you to this course, what you think the impact of social media has been on your personal and professional life, and what particular aspects of online engagement interest you at the moment and why? Use the course readings and your personal and professional experience to write this blog.
6. Browse the other students' introductory blog posts and get to know who your online classmates are.
7. Prepare a 1 minute introduction about yourself and your personal experience with online engagement to be presented to all course participants in the first live online class session on Wednesday 18 November 2015.

Required readings:

* A. Chadwick (2006) 'Community, Deliberation, and Participation. E-Democracy', in: *Internet Politics. States, Citizens, and New Communication Technologies*, Chapter 5, Oxford University Press

International Association of Public Participation (2007) *IAP2 Spectrum of Public Participation*. Available online at http://c.ymcdn.com/sites/www.iap2.org/resource/resmgr/imported/IAP2%20Spectrum_vertical.pdf

International Association of Public Participation (2007) *IAP2 Core Values of Public Participation*. Available online at <http://c.ymcdn.com/sites/www.iap2.org/resource/resmgr/imported/CoreValues.pdf>

* I. Mergel (2013) Drivers for the use of social media in the public sector, in I. Mergel, *Social Media in the Public Sector: A Guide to Participation, Collaboration, and Transparency in the Networked World*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, pp. 37-53
http://tewaharoa.victoria.ac.nz/VUW:64VUW_ALL:64VUW_INST51180657130002386

Executive summary of the OECD working paper ‘Social Media Use by Governments’ (Mickoleit 2014), available at (as part of the main report): www.oecd-ilibrary.org/docserver/download/5jxrcmghmk0s.pdf?expires=1444864086&id=id&accname=guest&checksum=A0AE958181111389CCD2EF3ED4C790CD

W.P. Pearce (2007) Dialogue and deliberation, virtuosity as a practitioner, and taking a communications perspective, working paper. Available online at www.pearceassociates.com/essays/essays_menu.htm

E. Andersson (2012). Talking for a change: a distributed dialogue approach to complex issues. Involve Foundation, chapters 1 and 2. Available online at www.coe.int/t/dgap/forum-democracy/Activities/Forum%20sessions/2010/Other_Documents/Involve2010TalkingforaChange2.pdf

F. Peavey (1994) Strategic questioning: An approach to creating personal and social change, available at: www.jobsletter.org.nz/pdf/stratq97.pdf

Further readings (optional):

OECD working paper ‘Social Media Use by Governments’ (Mickoleit 2014) available at: www.oecd-ilibrary.org/docserver/download/5jxrcmghmk0s.pdf?expires=1444864086&id=id&accname=guest&checksum=A0AE958181111389CCD2EF3ED4C790CD

* I. Mergel (2013) *Social Media in the Public Sector: A Guide to Participation, Collaboration, and Transparency in the Networked World*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.
http://tewaharoa.hosted.exlibrisgroup.com/VUW:64VUW_ALL:64VUW_INST21152704340002386

* I. Mergel and B. Greeves (2013) *Social Media in the Public Sector Field Guide: Designing and Implementing Strategies and Policies*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.
http://tewaharoa.victoria.ac.nz/VUW:64VUW_ALL:TN_dawson9781118423721

Stream 1: ‘Managing Effective Online Engagement’

Required readings:

L. Carson (2007). E-moderation in Public Discussion Forums. Facilitation tasks, techniques and online issues, available at: www.irma-international.org/viewtitle/11577/

Department of Internal Affairs (2015) Guidance for Online Engagement, available at: <https://webtoolkit.govt.nz/guidance/online-engagement/>

G. Rowe, L. Frewer and R. Marsh (2004). Evaluation of a Deliberative Conference.

Further readings (optional):

Office of the Auditor General (2013) *Learning from public entities’ use of social media*, report available at: www.oag.govt.nz/2013/social-media/docs/social-media.pdf/view

Stream 2: ‘Theories, concepts, knowledge and critical analysis of e-engagement and e-democracy’

Required readings:

* Y. Benkler (2006) Introduction. A Moment of Opportunity and Challenge: in: *The Wealth of Networks. How Social Production Transforms Markets and Freedoms*, New Haven and London: Yale University Press, pp. 1-34
http://tewaharoa.victoria.ac.nz/VUW:64VUW_ALL:64VUW_INST21144932790002386

* B. Bimber, C. Stohl and A.J. Flanagin (2010). Technological change and the shifting nature of political organization, in: A. Chadwick and P.N. Howard (eds.) *The Routledge Handbook of Internet Politics*, Abingdon: Routledge, paperback version, pp. 72-85
http://tewaharoa.victoria.ac.nz/VUW:64VUW_ALL:64VUW_INST51189591150002386

* Danah Boyd (2013). Literacy are today’s youth digital natives? In: *It’s complicated. The social lives of networked teens*, New Haven and London: Yale University Press, chapter 7, pp. 176-198.
http://tewaharoa.victoria.ac.nz/VUW:64VUW_ALL:TN_springer_jour10.1007/s10964-014-0223-7

* J. Brundidge and R.E. Rice (2010) Political engagement online: do the information rich get richer and the like-minded more similar? in A. Chadwick and P.N. Howard (eds.) *The Routledge Handbook of Internet Politics*, Abingdon: Routledge, paperback version, pp. 144-156
http://tewaharoa.victoria.ac.nz/VUW:64VUW_ALL:64VUW_INST51189591150002386

M. Castells (2004). An Introduction to the Information Age, in: F. Webster (ed.) *The Information Society Reader*, London and New York: Routledge, pp. 138-149

S. Coleman and J.G. Blumler (2014) ‘The Wisdom of Which Crowd? On the Pathology of a Digital Democracy Initiative for a Listening Government’, in: M. Graham & W.H. Dutton (eds.) *Society & the Internet*, Oxford University Press, pp. 195-208

* A. Davis (2010) New Media and fat democracy: the paradox of online participation, *New Media & Society*, 12(5), 745-761
http://tewaharoa.victoria.ac.nz/VUW:64VUW_ALL:TN_sagej10.1177_1461444809341435

Farrell, H. (2012) The Consequences of the Internet for Politics, in: *Annual Review of Political Science*, 15: 35-52

S. Gonzalez-Bailon (2014) Online Social Networks and Bottom-up Politics, in: M. Graham & W.H. Dutton (eds.) *Society & the Internet*, Oxford University Press, pp. 209-222

* R. Medaglia (2012) eParticipation research: Moving characterization forward (2006-2011), *Government Information Quarterly* 29 (2012) 346-360.

* K. Mossberger (2010). Toward digital citizenship: addressing inequality in the information age, in: A. Chadwick and P.N. Howard (eds.) *The Routledge Handbook of Internet Politics*, Abingdon: Routledge, paperback version, pp. 173-185
http://tewaharoa.victoria.ac.nz/VUW:64VUW_ALL:64VUW_INST51189591150002386

* Z. Papacharissi (2010). The virtual sphere 2.0. The Internet, the public sphere, and beyond, in: A. Chadwick and P.N. Howard (eds.) *The Routledge Handbook of Internet Politics*, Abingdon: Routledge, paperback version, pp. 230-245
http://tewaharoa.victoria.ac.nz/VUW:64VUW_ALL:64VUW_INST51189591150002386

* L. Rainie & B. Wellman (2012) *Networked. The new social operating system*, Cambridge, MA: The MIT Press, chapters 1, 2, 3 and 4
http://tewaharoa.victoria.ac.nz/VUW:64VUW_ALL:TN_jstor_booksj.ctt5vjq62

* J. Reedy and C. Wells (2010). Information, the internet, and direct democracy, in: A. Chadwick and P.N. Howard (eds.) *The Routledge Handbook of Internet Politics*, Abingdon: Routledge, paperback version, pp. 157-172
http://tewaharoa.victoria.ac.nz/VUW:64VUW_ALL:64VUW_INST51189591150002386

O. Saebo, A.M. Braccini & T. Federici (2007), From the Blogosphere into Real Politics: The use of ICT by the Five Star Movement in L. Mola, F. Pennarola & S. Za (Eds.), *From Information to Smart Society: Environment, Politics and Economics* (Vol. 5, pp. 11). Switzerland: Springer.

Further readings (optional):

* Y. Benkler (2006). *The Wealth of Networks. How Social Production Transforms Markets and Freedoms*, New Haven and London: Yale University Press
http://tewaharoa.victoria.ac.nz/VUW:64VUW_ALL:64VUW_INST21144932790002386

* Danah Boyd (2013). *It's complicated. The social lives of networked teens*, New Haven and London: Yale University Press
http://tewaharoa.victoria.ac.nz/VUW:64VUW_ALL:TN_springer_jour10.1007/s10964-014-0223-7

S. Coleman and Jay G. Blumler (2009). *The Internet and Democratic Citizenship. Theory, Practice and Policy*, New York: Cambridge University Press (eBook on order)

S. Coleman & J. Gotze (200?) *Bowling together: Online Public Engagement in Policy Deliberation*. Hansard Society, UK. Available at
www.acteurspublics.com/files/epublic/pdf/scoleman-jgotze-bowling-together.pdf

* B. S. Noveck (2005) *Wiki Government. How Technology can make government better, democracy stronger, and citizens more powerful*, Washington DC: Brookings Institution Press
http://tewaharoa.victoria.ac.nz/VUW:64VUW_ALL:TN_proquest212198862

* L. Rainie & B. Wellman (2012) *Networked. The new social operating system*, Cambridge, MA: The MIT Press
http://tewaharoa.victoria.ac.nz/VUW:64VUW_ALL:TN_jstor_booksj.ctt5vjq62

Assessment

The achievement of course objectives will be tested in the assessment items described below. All assignments will contribute to the course mark of each student, according to the following assessment ratio:

1. Bi-weekly individual blog on the student's online engagement experience (course learning objectives 1, 2, 3, 4, 6)	10%
2. Active online participation throughout the course (course learning objectives 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6)	10%
3. Essay (course learning objectives 1, 2)	40%
4. Strategy and implementation plan for an e-engagement activity (course learning objectives 1, 2, 4, 5, 6)	40%
Total	100%

All detailed instructions for assignments will be available via Blackboard.

Submission date for the essay assignment and the final version of the strategy and implementation plan for an e-engagement activity is **5.00pm, Monday 15 February 2016**.

All assignments should be submitted via Blackboard.

Students should keep a copy of all submitted work.

Note to Students

Your assessed work may also be used for quality assurance purposes, such as to assess the level of achievement of learning objectives as required for accreditation and academic audit. The findings may be used to inform changes aimed at improving the quality of VBS programmes. All material used for such processes will be treated as confidential, and the outcome will not affect your grade for the course.

Penalties

The ability to plan for and meet deadlines is a core competency of both advanced study and public management. Failure to meet deadlines disrupts course planning and is unfair on students who do submit their work on time. It is expected therefore that you will complete and hand in assignments by the due date. Marks will be deducted at the rate of five per cent for every day by which the assignment is late and no assignments will be accepted after five working days beyond the date they are due. For example, if you get 65% for an assignment, but you handed it in on Monday when it was due the previous Friday, you will get a mark of 50%.

If ill-health, family bereavement or other personal circumstances beyond your control prevent you from meeting the deadline for submitting a piece of written work or from attending class to make a presentation, you can apply for and may be granted an extension to the due date. You should let your course coordinator know as soon as possible in advance of the deadline (if circumstances permit) if you are seeking an extension. Where an extension is sought, evidence, by way of a medical certificate or similar, may be required by the course coordinator.

Computation of Grades

The translation from numerical marks to letter grades is set by the following grade ranges.

<i>Pass/Fail</i>	<i>Grade</i>	<i>Normal range</i>	<i>Indicative characterisation</i>
Pass	A+	90% - 100%	Outstanding performance
	A	85% - 89%	Excellent performance
	A-	80% - 84%	Excellent performance in most respects
	B+	75% - 79%	Very good performance
	B	70% - 74%	Good performance
	B-	65% - 69%	Good performance overall, but some weaknesses
	C+	60% - 64%	Satisfactory to good performance
	C	55% - 59%	Satisfactory performance
Fail	C-	50% - 54%	Adequate evidence of learning
	D	40% - 49%	Poor performance overall; some evidence of learning
	E	0 - 39%	Well below the standard required
Fail	K	Fail due to not satisfying mandatory course requirements, even though the student's numerical course mark reached the level specified for a pass, usually 50%. A student whose course mark is below 50 should be given a D (40-49) or E (0-39), regardless of whether they met the mandatory course requirements	
	P	Overall Pass (for a course classified as Pass/Fail)	
Fail	F	Fail (for a Pass/Fail course)	

Academic Integrity, Plagiarism, and the Use of Turnitin

Plagiarism is presenting someone else's work as if it were your own, whether you mean to or not. 'Someone else's work' means anything that is not your own idea. Even if it is presented in your own style, you must still acknowledge your sources fully and appropriately. This includes:

- material from books, journals or any other printed source
- the work of other students or staff
- information from the Internet
- software programs and other electronic material
- designs and ideas
- the organisation or structuring of any such material.

Acknowledgement is required for *all* material in any work submitted for assessment unless it is a 'fact' that is well-known in the context (such as "Wellington is the capital of New Zealand") or your own ideas in your own words. Everything else that derives from one of the sources above and ends up in your work – whether it is directly quoted, paraphrased, or put into a table or figure, needs to be acknowledged with a reference that is sufficient for your reader to locate the original source.

Plagiarism undermines academic integrity simply because it is a form of lying, stealing and mistreating others. Plagiarism involves stealing other people's intellectual property and lying about whose work it is. This is why plagiarism is prohibited at Victoria.

If you are found guilty of plagiarism, you may be penalised under the Statute on Student Conduct. You should be aware of your obligations under the Statute, which can be downloaded from the policy website (www.victoria.ac.nz/home/about/policy/students.aspx). You could fail your course or even

be suspended from the University. Plagiarism is easy to detect. The University has systems in place to identify it.

Student work provided for assessment in this course may be checked for academic integrity by the electronic search engine www.turnitin.com. Turnitin is an on-line plagiarism prevention tool which compares submitted work with a very large database of existing material. At the discretion of the Head of School, handwritten work may be copy-typed by the School and subject to checking by Turnitin. Turnitin will retain a copy of submitted materials on behalf of the University for detection of future plagiarism, but access to the full text of submissions will not be made available to any other party.

There is guidance available to students on how to avoid plagiarism by way of sound study skills and the proper and consistent use of a recognised referencing system. This guidance may be found at the following website www.victoria.ac.nz/home/study/plagiarism.aspx. If in doubt, seek the advice of your course coordinator.

Plagiarism is simply not worth the risk.

School of Government Service Standards

Good learning and teaching outcomes for students in School of Government courses depend on many factors, including open, transparent and accountable relationships between teaching and support staff, and students in their various activities. The following service standards indicate some of the key expectations that teaching staff and students can have of each other. In all cases, they represent what the School believes should be ‘normal’ practice; exceptional circumstances can and will be negotiated as required.

Please note that there are University-wide policies relating to assessment – including rights of review and appeal. Details may be found in the Assessment Handbook (which is reviewed and updated from time to time – www.victoria.ac.nz/about/governance/dvc-academic/publications).

In general terms, any concerns that a student or students may have should be raised with the course coordinator in the first instance. If that course of action is not appropriate, the School’s programme support staff will direct you to the relevant Programme Director/Coordinator.

Standards relating to staff timeliness of responses to email and phone queries:

- Email or phone queries from students will be responded to in 48 hours

Standards relating to availability of course materials:

- Students on modular or intensive courses will usually have course materials at least 4 weeks before the course starts
- Students on weekly courses will usually have course materials available on the first day of the course

Standards relating to attendance:

- It is expected that students will attend all contact teaching and group discussion sessions for a course. If a student is aware that they will be unable to attend part of a course prior to it commencing, they are required to advise the course coordinator. In such a situation, the student may be declined entry into the course.
- Where a course coordinator approves some non-attendance before the class commences, the course coordinator may set additional item(s) of assessment of learning and teaching

objectives for the course for students unable to attend. Advice relating to the submission and assessment of any such additional assessment will be provided by the course coordinator.

Variations to the assessment details provided in the course outline:

- Any variation to the assessment details in the course outline will be formally agreed between the course coordinator and students at the earliest possible time, preferably at the beginning of the course.

Standards relating to assignments – turnaround and feedback:

- Unless otherwise agreed between students and the course coordinator, items of assessment will be marked within 15 working days of submission.
- Comments on pieces of assessment will allow students to understand the reasons for the mark awarded, relative to the teaching and learning objectives specified in the course outline, and will usually include advice on how the student can improve their grades in future assignments.

Mandatory Course Requirements

In addition to achieving an overall pass mark of at least 50%, students must:

1. actively participate in online group and class sessions
2. submit or participate in all pieces of assessment required for this course.

If you believe that exceptional circumstances may prevent you from meeting the mandatory course requirements, contact the Course Coordinator for advice as soon as possible.

If you cannot complete an assignment or sit a test or examination, refer to www.victoria.ac.nz/home/study/exams-and-assessments/aegrotat .

Communication of Additional Information

Additional information may be provided by email or via Blackboard.

Student Feedback

Student feedback on University courses may be found at www.cad.vuw.ac.nz/feedback/feedback_display.php .

Link to General Information

For general information about course-related matters, go to www.victoria.ac.nz/vbs/studenthelp/general-course-information .
