

DUAL-LEVEL PAPERS: GUIDELINES

At the outset it should be stated that BUGS and BoGS consider dual-level (previously called multi-level) papers to be generally less desirable than single-level papers. Nonetheless some departments and programmes have found it necessary to teach papers simultaneously at two levels – for example, the same paper at both 200- and 300-level or the same paper at both 300- and 400-level. It should be noted that BUGS and BoGS do not permit papers to be shared at 100- and 200-level or between 200- and 400-level. Furthermore dual-level papers shared between 300- and 400-level exclude those 400-level postgraduate papers that are a research project or dissertation or Master's thesis preparation. Dual-level papers at NZQF Levels 8 and 9 are not addressed within these guidelines.

Where a proposal for a dual-level level paper (200-/300-level or 300-/400-level) comes forward for approval, it is important that there is a clear distinction between what is offered to, and expected of, the two streams of students. In particular, it is important to show that students at each level are learning and being assessed in a way that is (a) equivalent to single-level study and (b) does not disadvantage learners.

The higher-level paper differs from the lower-level paper in several respects. Proposals are expected to demonstrate ALL FOUR of the following:

Requirements of prior study and related restrictions: students must be adequately prepared by prior achievement to take the paper. Prerequisites and restrictions will be different for each paper, in particular to ensure that students taking the paper are adequately prepared and appropriately challenged.

Learning outcomes: the statements for the two streams should be quite different. Notably a student completing a higher-level paper should have achieved more of the attributes identified in the programme's graduate profile, or achieved these to a higher standard. For example, they might be required to analyse and generate solutions to more complex and unpredictable problems.

Learning and teaching activities, and workload expectations: In line with different expectations of learning outcomes, teaching will support learning at the different levels resulting in workload expectations being different. Higher-level students will, for example, undertake more self-directed study, or tackle more demanding topics. They may demonstrate a wider range of research techniques or display a more knowledgeable and mature critical understanding of the subject studied, and there may also be differences in forms of communication between peers and with teachers.

Assessment procedures: given the different learning outcomes for the two streams, the assessment requirements will be different. Higher-level students may have more:

- ❑ assessment based upon research activity
- ❑ demanding questions in a written examination
- ❑ opportunity to demonstrate attainment of a range of skills

In addition, where the 400-level paper is a postgraduate paper (NZQF Level 8) external moderation is required (clause 9.6 of Guidelines for the Assessment of Student Performance). It is expected that external moderators would also comment on any issues arising in a 400-level (NZQF Level 8) paper that is dual-levelled with a 300-level (NZQF Level 7) paper.

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