1. University Policy on Hurdle Requirements

1.1 The University Coursework Assessment Design and Methods Procedure (MPF1200) [Definitions] defines a Hurdle Requirement as:

‘[an] assessment requirement that must be satisfactorily completed in order for the student to pass a subject, irrespective of the marks achieved by completion of other components of assessment in that subject.’

1.2 The University Coursework Assessment Design and Methods Procedure (MPF1200) section 4 states:

“4. Hurdle Requirements

4.1 Where an Examination Board wishes to include a hurdle requirement as part of the assessment for a subject, the particular nature of the requirement, and the consequences for failing to meet them, must be communicated to students with the details of assessment.

4.2 Students who do not satisfy the hurdle requirements in any subject will fail that subject, even if they have obtained more than 50% of the marks available by the completion of other components of assessment.

4.3 Examples of hurdle requirements include:

• class attendance requirements;
• successful completion of all components of assessment is required to achieve an overall pass in the subject;
• successful completion of particular components of assessment required to achieve an overall pass in the subject;
• attainment of a specified minimum level of performance in components of assessment;
• successful completion of both practical and theoretical elements of the subject required to achieve an overall pass in the subject.

4.4 Examination Boards may set pass/fail hurdle requirements where a task (such as practical work) is not able to be graded, and where the final result in the subject is dependent on performance in theoretical work marked to the full range of results.”

1.3 The following guidelines apply to the application of this policy to attendance hurdle requirements in the BA.

2. Communication of Hurdle Requirements to Students

2.1 It is the responsibility of each subject coordinator to ensure that attendance hurdle requirements are clearly stated on each subject LMS site and in any outline of assessment requirements distributed to students.

2.2 Any attendance hurdle requirement applied to a subject must be consistent with the assessment information for that subject published in the University Handbook.

2.3 The hurdle requirement should be explained clearly to students and, wherever possible, state the minimum required attendance in terms of the number of classes (or class hours) required as well as the overall in percentage terms (as a percentage of the total number of classes).

2.4 Subject coordinators who desire to modify a hurdle requirement after the details of their subject has been published in the University Handbook must follow the procedures for submitting late changes to assessment requirements and should consult the Faculty of Arts Academic Programs Officer for advice before proceeding.

3. Recording Attendance

3.1 In subjects with attendance hurdle requirements, attendance at relevant classes should be carefully recorded, and these records retained for at least six months following the release of results for the subject (in line with the requirements for preservation of all records relating to student assessment: see the Records Management and Policy Procedures Manual, 9.6 [http://www.unimelb.edu.au/records/unimelb-only/manual/chapter9.html]).

3.2 The method of recording attendance, and any requirements of the students in this regard (e.g. signing in, presenting student cards, etc.) should be communicated clearly in the first class and stated on the LMS site for the subject.

3.2.1 If attendance will not be recorded for late-comers, this should also be clearly communicated to all students with details of when the cut-off for timely attendance will be. As a general guide, arrival at class later than fifteen minutes after the advertised starting time should not be considered
a timely attendance. However, when the cut-off is set is at the discretion of the subject coordinator and must be consistent for all class groups in the subject, and consistently applied.

3.2.2 Late-comers to class should not be excluded from class unless their inclusion is deemed disruptive to the work being undertaken by that class, even if this inclusion does not qualify as a timely attendance for purposes of the hurdle requirement.

4. Attendance Waivers and Alternative Assessment

4.1 Subject coordinators have the discretion to provide reasonable adjustments for students who have failed to attend up to two weeks’ of required classes (i.e. beyond the number of classes students are able to miss without penalty) and have valid reason(s) for doing so.

4.1.1 For example, in subjects that have weekly tutorials over twelve weeks (12 total) and a 75% attendance hurdle requirement (requiring attendance at a minimum of 9), students may fail to attend 3 classes without penalty. Should any students miss more than 3 classes, and have valid reason for doing so, they may apply to the subject coordinator for reasonable adjustments for up to 2 further classes missed.

4.1.2 This guideline is based on the discretion afforded to subject coordinators under the Extension Procedure (MPF1029) and is subject to the same expectations of documentary support:

‘1. Eligibility for extensions
   1.1 The subject coordinator, or a faculty/graduate school committee established to decide on applications, may grant an extension due to unforeseen circumstances that impact on a student during the time allocated for the preparation of an item of assessment, in accordance with Schedule A – Assessing Extension Applications.
   1.2 The subject coordinator or committee may grant an extension of up to two weeks (ten working days).’

4.1.3 In the case of applications for adjustment to an attendance hurdle due to unforeseen circumstances, it is recommended that subject coordinators only consider student requests that are submitted no later than three working days after the class that was missed.

4.2 It is recommended that departments and schools modify existing extension application forms to accommodate requests for adjustment to the attendance hurdle, or make dedicated forms available to students for the purpose.

4.2.1 The procedure for applying for such adjustments should be clearly communicated to all students at the same time, and in the same manner, as extension expectations and procedures.

4.3 As the attendance hurdle is an assessment requirement that applies equally to all students in the subject, any adjustment applied by the subject coordinator should ensure that the student completes the requirement in an appropriate alternative form if at all possible.

4.3.1 An appropriate alternative form of assessment may involve attending a class at a different time, or a make-up class at a later date where these are available. It may also involve submission of alternative assessment (see section 5 of the Assessment Procedure [MPF1026]) that might take the form, for example, of a short written answer to the tutorial question, a précis of the tutorial reading, or similar. Such work is to be submitted as fulfillment of the attendance requirement and is not to receive a grade.

4.3.2 Alternative assessment for attendance hurdles must be consistently applied to all students in the subject who have reasonable grounds for failing to attend and have followed correct procedures for requesting an adjustment. Concern should also be given to equity with all students in the subject who have met the attendance expectations.

5. Attendance Requirements and Special Consideration

5.1 In cases where any student has missed more than two weeks’ of classes (beyond the number of classes they are able to miss without penalty), and may have valid grounds for adjustment, that student should be directed to the Special Consideration application process.

5.2 In no circumstances should a subject coordinator authorize an adjustment for more than two weeks’ of missed classes.

6. Entering Results for Students who Fail to Meet the Attendance Hurdle

6.1 The result 49 NH should be entered for any student who would have otherwise passed the subject but for failure to meet an attendance hurdle.
6.1.1 For example, if a student receives a result of 0-49 and fails to meet the hurdle requirement, the result should be entered as an N with the numerical mark achieved. However, if a student receives a pass grade or higher (50-100) but fails to meet the attendance hurdle, this result should be entered as 49 NH.