

## School of Government

# GOVT 513

## MANAGING PEOPLE IN THE PUBLIC SECTOR

(15 Points)

**Trimester 2 / 2016**  
(CRN 27111)

## COURSE OUTLINE

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### **Prescription**

An examination of organisational behaviour and the management of people working in large and small organisations (public and community) involved in public governance. The course highlights recruitment, employment, development and performance, including strategic human resource management.

### **Course Learning Objectives**

This paper provides an overview of strategies and policies for the management of people in public sector workplaces. The areas of knowledge which assist with the development of people strategies are organisational behaviour, employment relations, recruitment and selection, remuneration, performance management, human resource development and work design. This is an overview of the system of policies and practices which can enable an organisation to make a credible claim that “people are our greatest asset.”

Students completing this course will be able to demonstrate they can:

1. Think strategically about ways in which human resource management policies can most effectively support the attainment of goals with organisations within a public sector context.
2. Apply theory and research from a strategic approach to organisation behaviour, recruitment and selection, performance management, rewards, learning and development, employee relations and the design of work.
3. Prepare for people-related challenges likely to result from public sector change during a period of globalisation and rapid technology change.

### **Trimester Dates**

From Monday 11 July to Thursday 20 October 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 22 July 2016**.
2. The standard last date for withdrawal from this course is **Friday 30 September 2016**. After this date, 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.

## **Names and Contact Details**

**Course Coordinator:**           **Dr Richard Norman**  
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Email: [richard.norman@vuw.ac.nz](mailto:richard.norman@vuw.ac.nz)

**Administrator:**               **Darren Morgan**  
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**School Office Hours:**       8.30am to 5.00pm, Monday to Friday

## **Class Times and Room Numbers**

<b>Module One:</b>	Thursday 14 July 2016	9.00am – 5.00pm
<b>Module Two:</b>	Thursday 1 September 2016	9.00am – 5.00pm
<b>Module Three:</b>	Thursday 20 October 2016	9.00am – 5.00pm

**Breaks:**           Morning = 10.30am – 11.00am; Lunch = 12.30pm – 1.30pm; Afternoon = 3.00pm – 3.30pm

**Locations:**   Classes will be held on the Pipitea Campus of Victoria University in Wellington and you will be advised of your classroom one week prior to each module by email. The timetable is also available to view on the Victoria University website ([www.victoria.ac.nz/timetables/](http://www.victoria.ac.nz/timetables/)).

**Attendance is expected at all three modular teaching days.**

## **Course Delivery**

This course is delivered in a modular format over three days with 6 hours of contact time each day (18 hours total), supplemented by 6 hours (online or face-to-face small group discussions and oral report backs) between module meetings, as detailed in the course outline below. **Attendance is expected at all teaching days.**

The course and assignments follow an action-reflection model, described by one writer about public sector leadership, Ronald Heifitz, as moving from the dance floor to the balcony. You will start in Module one with a description of strategic challenge which is, where possible, about action on a 'dance floor' with which you are familiar. For modules two and three, you will be encouraged to diagnose the challenge – taking a 'balcony' perspective of the shape of the dance, stepping aside from the action and drawing on theory and research to interpret the action. The aim is that by the end of module three, you will have insights and perspectives for future action – the return to the 'dance floor'.

An insight from research into people and workplaces is that tasks that get rewarded and noticed are more likely to be carried out than those that don't. In keeping with this principle, there are marks for contributing to blackboard discussions as well as the three stage major assignment.

## **Course Content**

The course is divided into three modules:

- Module 1: Strategic management of people in a public sector context
- Module 2: Managing performance, rewards, human resource development and employment relations
- Module 3: Organisation behaviour, managing change and the role of Human Resources specialists.

Readings for each of the topics are divided into 'required' and 'further'. Required readings will be the base for questions on blackboard and debate at each module. Further readings are included to assist with detailed work on the assignments.

## **MODULE ONE: Strategic management of people in a public sector context**

### **Session One: An overview of policy choices and outcomes.**

#### **A map of the human resource management territory (Beer et al)**

Policy choices

- employee influence
- HR flow (recruiting, selecting, developing)
- Reward systems
- Work systems

HRM outcomes

- Commitment
- Competence
- Congruence
- Cost effectiveness

**Seven practices of successful organisations (Jeffrey Pfeffer)**

- Employment security
- Selective hiring
- Self-managed teams and decentralised decision making
- Comparatively high compensation contingent on performance
- Training
- Reduced status barriers
- Extensive sharing of performance information.

The ‘what, how and who’ doctrines of public sector organising (Hood and Jackson).

Insights from the Team Management Profile – relevance for team work in your workplace.

**Session Two: The impact of globalisation and technology change and the role of human resource management. (Topic themes from Truss et al)**

**1. Global context:**

- Globalisation
- Free market capitalism and neo-liberalism
- Technology change
- United States based work design and challenges from China, India and Europe

**2. Changing context for strategic HRM:**

- Global labour market trends
- New Zealand public sector labour market trends
- Changes in the nature of work and the workforce
- Workplace flexibility
- Emotional labour
- Aesthetic labour.

**3. Strategic management and the role of people:**

- Resource based view of strategy
- Organisational capabilities and core competence
- Human capital
- Organisational culture
- National cultures

**4. The strategic role of the HR function**

- Potential conflicts in the multiple roles of HR specialists
- Structuring HR functions
- Outsourcing HR

## **5. The foundations of strategic HRM**

- Change of term from personnel management
- Hard and soft approaches to HRM
- Best practice / universalist principles of HRM, e.g. Pfeffer and critiques
- Contingency (fit) approaches to HRM
  - o Bureaucratic, market, clan, network (computing values)
  - o Defender, prospector, analyser.
- Vertical and horizontal fit

## **6. Resource based and institutional perspectives of SHRM**

- Advocacy and critiques for 'resource based' theory
- New Institutionalism and 'isomorphism'.

## **7. HR Strategy**

- Content – how people should be managed, and the purpose of policies
- Process – how strategy is developed
- Implementation – devolution.

# **MODULE TWO: Managing performance, rewards, human resource development and employment relations**

This module will focus on policies and practices involved in recruiting, selecting, rewarding and training, and ways in which work and performance is organised. This module will draw on class assignments, with draft reports due just before the module used to create an agenda for discussion and student presentations.

## **Required readings from Truss et al.**

### **8. Performance.**

- High performance work practices
- Theory based linkages between high performance and HR
  - o Resource based view
  - o Social exchange
  - o Ability, motivation, opportunity
  - o Job performance
  - o Human capital
  - o Attribution
- Measuring HR outcomes

### **9. Human Resource Development**

- Training and development – the differences
- Informal, experiential learning
- Organisation development
- Career development

**10. SHRM and talent management**

- Human capital
- Employer brand
- Talent development
- Internal employment markets

**11. SHRM and employment relations**

- Choices in relationships
  - o Collective / individual
  - o Unitary / pluralistic
  - o Level of formalisation
- Trade Union strategies
  - o Co-operative / adversarial
  - o Proactive / reactive
- Employee voice

**12. Employee engagement**

- Financial analysis of the impact of engagement
- Intellectual, affective and social engagement
- Comparisons with job satisfaction, commitment, 'flow' and 'organisational citizenship'.

**MODULE THREE: Organisation behaviour, managing change and the role of Human Resources specialists.**

**Required readings from Truss et al.**

**13. Knowledge management and SHRM**

- Tacit and explicit knowledge
- Knowledge management
- Intellectual capital (including human and social capital)
- Knowledge work
- Communities of practice
- Social networks

**14. SHRM and corporate social responsibility**

- Business ethics
- Corporate social responsibility
- Shareholder theory
- Stakeholder theory

**15. SHRM and the management of change**

- Organisational change
- Transformation change
- Incremental change
- Punctuated equilibrium
- Planned change
- Coping cycle.

## Readings

### Before Module One

**There are three pieces of work to complete a week ahead of Module one.**

1. Read the first 7 chapters of the textbook and the readings by Beer et al and Pfeffer so you can respond to at least five of the questions posed on blackboard by **Friday 8 July 2016**, so all class members can read all comments before we meet at the module day.
2. Complete the one page overview of the subject you envisage tackling for the three stage report during the course. Please email to me at [richard.norman@vuw.ac.nz](mailto:richard.norman@vuw.ac.nz) by **4.00pm on Friday 8 July 2016**.
3. Please complete the team management questionnaire, (TMI), which is a self-assessment tool that is designed to indicate your preferred way of working. It asks you to express a preference between a range of different work options and behaviours. Please note that there are no right and wrong answers in the assessment. It is critical that you are very honest in your answers, otherwise the results will not reflect your preferences, so please answer according to the way you prefer to work, not the way you feel you should work, or have to work, or ought to work, or you think your organisation would want you to work. Go to this website: [www.tms.co.nz/tmi](http://www.tms.co.nz/tmi) and when prompted use this information:

- Your **Accredited Consultant** is **Richard Norman**
- Your **Order Number** is **vuwmpm16**

*The questionnaire will take approximately 15 minutes to complete*

It is **essential** that the questionnaire is completed by **Wednesday 6 July 2016 to enable processing in time for our first module**. If you anticipate a problem with this deadline, or wish to discuss any aspect of this process, please contact Paul Morgan at TMS, [paulmo@tms.co.nz](mailto:paulmo@tms.co.nz).

### Textbook

The course textbook is *Strategic Human Resource Management* by Catherine Truss, David Mankin and Clare Kelliher, Oxford University Press, 2012, available through VicBooks ([www.vicbooks.co.nz](http://www.vicbooks.co.nz)).

This text is a readable and thorough review of thinking about people and organisations. While the text mostly focuses on multi-national organisations rather than the public sector, the themes are directly relevant to a New Zealand public sector which is similar in scale to a multi-national corporation and is seeking to work more collectively across divisional boundaries. Additional readings are provided via Blackboard.

### Module One, Session One

#### **Required readings:**

*Managing Human Assets*, by Michael Beer, Bert Spector, Paul Lawrence, D Quinn Mills and Richard Walton, The Free Press, 1984. Pages 1-38, on Blackboard. This book is one of the founding texts which helped establish the term 'Human Resource Management' as a replacement for 'personnel'. It

was written for a major revision of the Harvard Business School's MBA. The two chapters provide a classification of the core elements of the subject, summarised in the 'map of the HRM territory' on page 16.

Pfeffer, Jeffrey. Seven Practices of Successful Organisations. Chapter 3 from 'The Human Equation – Building Profits by Putting People First.' Harvard Business School Press, Boston, Mass. 1998.

**Recommended readings:**

State Services Commission, February 2014, From Good to Great.

[www.ssc.govt.nz/sites/all/files/getting-great-full-report.pdf](http://www.ssc.govt.nz/sites/all/files/getting-great-full-report.pdf)

An analysis by experienced directors who have been part of the New Zealand State Services Commission Performance Improvement Framework reviews, contained strong critiques of New Zealand public sector people practices.

Hood, C and Jackson, M. Administrative Argument, Dartmouth Publishing Co, 1991. A book available through Victoria University library, which has '99 doctrines' of the 'what, how and who' of delivering public services, written to interpret the changes of the 1980s. A table of doctrines is available on Blackboard.

**Module One, Session Two**

**Required readings:**

Truss et al:

Chapter 1: The global context of strategic human resource management

Chapter 2: The changing context for SHRM

Chapter 3: Strategic Management

Chapter 4: The strategic role of the HR function

Chapter 5: The foundations of SHRM

Chapter 6: Resource based and institutional perspective of HRM

Chapter 7: HR strategy

Ulrich, Dave. The Changing nature of human resources: A model for multiple roles. Chapter 2 from 'Human Resource Champions', Harvard Business School Press, Boston, Mass., 1997.

**Recommended readings:**

These will be made available through Blackboard.

**Module Two**

**Required readings:**

Truss et al:

Chapter 8: SHRM and performance

Chapter 9: SHRM and human resource development

Chapter 10: SHRM and talent management

Chapter 11: SHRM and employment relations

Chapter 12: Employee engagement



Gratton, Lynda. Introduction to 'Living Strategy – Putting people at the heart of corporate purpose. Financial Times / Prentice Hall, London, 2000.

**Recommended readings:**

These will be made available through Blackboard

**Module Three**

**Required readings:**

Truss et al:

Chapter 13: Knowledge management and SHRM

Chapter 14: SHRM and corporate social responsibility

Chapter 15: SHRM and the management of change

**Recommended readings:**

These will be made available through Blackboard.

**Expected Workload**

Our philosophy is that the best quality learning is self-generated by individuals within groups. Lectures and taught content cannot convey every relevant piece of information so that readings which will enable you to build a knowledge base are specified in this outline.

The learning objectives set for each course are demanding and, to achieve them, candidates must make a significant commitment in time and effort to reading, studying, thinking, and completion of assessment items outside of contact time. Courses vary in design but all require preparation and learning before the first day 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. This involves weekly study of approximately 8-10 hours.

**Assessment**

The Assessment Handbook will apply to all VUW courses: see

[www.victoria.ac.nz/documents/policy/staff-policy/assessment-handbook.pdf](http://www.victoria.ac.nz/documents/policy/staff-policy/assessment-handbook.pdf) .

The purpose of assessment is to ensure that you have met the standard of work required by the course; to give you feedback on your performance to assist you with your future study; and to provide the teaching staff with feedback on the progress of the class. Meeting assignment deadlines is particularly important for an interactive course like this.

There are three types of assessment, detailed below:

1. A three stage preparation of a report about a strategic people issue, which starts with a one page overview for Module One, is in draft form for Module Two, and completed for Module Three.

2. Comments on blackboard before each module in response to questions about the readings. Marks will be for originality of contributions and the extent to which comments enlarge and reinforce understanding of the readings.
3. Comments via blackboard after both module two and three which can help class members with their major reports. The aim is to continue face-to-face discussions at the modules and provide different perspectives. Marks will be provided for the quality of the insights and the extent to which they contribute to learning for the whole class.

<b>Assessment</b>	<b>Due date</b>	<b>Length</b>	<b>%</b>	<b>Course Learning Objectives</b>
<b>MODULE ONE</b>				
Assignment one: Overview of proposed topic for report	8 July	400 words	5	1, 2, 3
Concepts: Comment on five of ten of the questions about readings for Module one	12 July	100 words approx. per question	10	2
<b>MODULE TWO</b>				
Assignment 2: Complete second stage of report	24 August	2,500 words	30	1, 2, 3
Blogs on reports: Contribute via blackboard to the development of others' reports.	24 August	Comment on at least five other reports	10	1, 2, 3
Concepts: Comment on five of ten of the questions about readings for Module two	24 August	100 words approx. per question	10	2
<b>MODULE THREE</b>				
Assignment 3: Revise and complete report	13 October	4,000 Words	20	1, 2, 3
Blogs on reports: Contribute via blackboard to the development of others' reports.	13 October	Comment on at least five other reports	10	1, 2, 3
Concepts: Comment on five of ten of the questions about readings for Module three.	13 October	100 words approx. per question	5	2

**Assignment one: Pre Module One**  
**Selecting a significant 'strategic people issue'**

Choose an organisation which you are familiar with, or would like to study in some depth, and identify a significant people issue.

You might wish to choose an organisation you don't directly work for, but please be sure you have sufficient access to knowledge relevant for the assignment.

A strategic issue, virtually by definition, will involve some form of conflict. The conflict may involve ends (what); means (how or how much); philosophy (why); location (where); timing (when); and who might be advantaged or disadvantaged by different ways of resolving the issue (who).<sup>1</sup> The following questions are effective prompts for identifying the HR elements of a strategic issue.<sup>2</sup>

<i><b>Business</b></i>	<i><b>Human resources</b></i>
What business are we in?	What sort of people do we need in the business?
Where are we going, and how are we going to get there?	What sort of organization do we need?
What are our business strengths and weaknesses?	To what extent are those strengths and weaknesses related to our human resource capability? How do we remedy them?
What opportunities and threats do we face?	What opportunities do these create for developing and motivating employees? What are the threats to growth through skill shortages and the retention of key staff? What are the threats from decline in holding the skill base of the organization together?
What are the main strategic issues facing the business?	To what extent do these issues involve organizational and HR considerations? Do managers recognise the HR implications?
What are the critical success factors which determine how well we achieve our mission?	How far is business success helped or hindered by the quality, motivation, commitment, and attitudes of our employees? How can high performance be encouraged?

<sup>1</sup>Bryson, J. (2011) Strategic Planning for Public and Nonprofit Organizations, Jossey Bass, San Francisco p57.

<sup>2</sup>From: Human Resource Management - a strategic approach to employment, By Chris Hendry, Butterworth Heinemann, London, 1995

## Assignment 1 assessment

	Marks Allocation	Excellent	Very Good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory
How clearly stated is the strategic issue? How well does the overview provide context about the stakeholders involved, and conflicts that make this a challenging issue?	2					
How effectively does the overview identify HR issues which need to be analysed to understand the issue in depth?	2					
Provide a one paragraph project plan for advancing the analysis for modules two and three. What documents can you use? Who might you be able to interview for background?	1					

### Assignment two *Before Module Two*

Analyse in more depth the strategic issue identified for Module one, or revise the issue based on feedback.

Write about the strategic issue in the following sections, totalling 2,500 words excluding appendices. The word count for each section will vary depending on whether you have more information about the strategic issue or relevant research and theory.

- a) More in-depth analysis of the strategic issue, within the context of public sector change.
- b) More in depth analysis of the HR issues which are important to understand in order to tackle the strategic issue.
- c) Research and theory which you identify as relevant for analysing the issues in more depth for Module three.

	Marks Allocation	Excellent	Very Good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory
How well is the strategic issue identified and analysed in the context of the organisation and government system?	10					
How effectively are frameworks from the text and readings used to analyse the HR issues affecting the strategic issue? How well are systems issues identified with the help of the 'Harvard Map'? (P85 of Truss et al, and in the readings).	10					
Theory and research relevant for creating recommendations for Module three. How effectively are these identified, giving confidence that Assignment Three will see additional analysis of the 'what is' and well argued 'what should be' recommendations?	10					

**Assignment three**  
***Before Module Three***

Prepare a revised and final report that brings together new research with the assignment from Module Two. Present your findings about the strategic issue/s and the HR issues with recommendations for action. This is an opportunity to revise Module Two material if needed, with more marks given for the additional sections of the report. Maximum length: 4,000 words plus appendices.

	Marks Allocation	Excellent	Very Good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory
Reflection on learning: One page which analyses stages of development of this report. How has your understanding of the issue changed since you identified the strategic issue in February? What ideas have helped most in shaping your thinking? How much has the final report changed from the draft prepared for module 2?	5					
Summary of the report – a see at a glance executive summary of no more than two pages, which you would feel confident in providing to a decision maker (please name that person) who could act on your recommendations.	5					
How well are the strategic people issues identified and analysed in the context of the organisation and government system? This is an opportunity to revise the Module Two information to include insights from your reading.	5					
How strongly is relevant literature used to analyse the issues in sufficient depth to assist with arguments for action.	5					
Recommended actions. How clearly do recommendations flow from the diagnosis of the issues and theory and research? Are these realistic and innovative recommendations?	5					

### **Reflecting on reading before each module**

For each module, choose five of the ten questions posed on the discussion board feature of Blackboard. You are asked to contribute your own examples and other references and write about these in approximately 100 words. Highest marks will go to contributions which are original, which don't just repeat what is already in the reading and which help the whole class (and your lecturer) understand the concept being discussed. The aim is to build a class-specific commentary on the readings.

### **Blogs between Modules One and Two, and between Modules Two and Three**

At module one, this process will be explained and topics set up for contributions. The aim is to continue in-class discussion about the topics being tackled for the major assignment and you will be asked to assist others in the class as they develop this project by making entries in the blog and

commenting on the contributions of others. Marks will be based on both quality and quantity, particularly for ideas that can help raise the overall quality of the three stage assignment.

### **Submitting assignments**

Please submit assignments via Blackboard using the assignments section.

Students should keep a copy of all submitted work.

### **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.

### **Group Work**

Group work is not required for assessment on this course. However, students are expected to engage and participate fully in class discussion and make individual contributions towards group learning through the blogs after module one.

### **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](http://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](http://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](http://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.**

## **Student Feedback**

Student feedback on University courses may be found at [www.cad.vuw.ac.nz/feedback/feedback\\_display.php](http://www.cad.vuw.ac.nz/feedback/feedback_display.php) .

## **Access to Blackboard**

Blackboard is Victoria University’s online environment that supports teaching and learning by making course information, materials and other learning activities available via the internet through the myVictoria student web portal. Ensure that you can access Blackboard before the course begins.

To access the Blackboard site for this course:

1. Open a web browser and go to [www.myvictoria.ac.nz](http://www.myvictoria.ac.nz) .
2. 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).



3. Once you've logged into myVictoria, select Blackboard (from the options along the top of the page) to go to your Blackboard homepage.
4. 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.

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

Power-point slides and other lecture materials that are posted on Blackboard may differ from the presentations used in class, as the copyright rules for archived presentations differ somewhat from those for live presentation.

### **Communication of Additional Information**

Additional information may be provided in class, by post, by email, via Blackboard or via the internet-based blog.

Information will be communicated via Blackboard. It is **essential**, therefore, 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](http://www.victoria.ac.nz/its/student-services/FAQs.aspx#Email_Forward) .

### **Link to General Information**

For general information about course-related matters, go to [www.victoria.ac.nz/vbs/studenthelp/general-course-information](http://www.victoria.ac.nz/vbs/studenthelp/general-course-information) .

### **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.

## **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](http://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 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.

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