

Electronics - Foundation

LEVEL 2	15 TCE CREDIT POINTS
COURSE CODE	ELT215114
COURSE SPAN	2014 — 2023
READING AND WRITING STANDARD	NO
MATHEMATICS STANDARD	NO
COMPUTERS AND INTERNET STANDARD	NO

This course was delivered in 2018. Use [A-Z Courses](#) to find the current version (if available).

Electronics - Foundation Level 2 introduces learners to the basic concepts of electricity and circuits and the skills needed to construct small projects

Learners are encouraged to experiment with circuits and components in a structured manner, building up a library of knowledge about electronic circuits that perform different functions. Learners use a range of testing and prototyping techniques to build and test circuits, culminating in building small circuits from existing designs. This course serves as a pathway to Electronics Level 3 (ELT315114).

Course Description

Electronics – Foundation is designed for learners who have an interest in understanding the basics of electrical and electronics circuits and building projects that can be used in daily applications. It is the study of how different electronic components can be connected to perform a task. It looks at how information can be entered into, passed between, processed, and interpreted from electronic circuits. Transistor circuits are extensively investigated, showing how they can be used for switching, control and as an amplifier. Combinations of practical and theoretical activities are provided to assist in learning.

The emphasis of this course is on practical skills. Learners will build circuits and projects from existing designs and understand the basic function of their components. The course aims to provide learners with some basic knowledge and skills in electronics design and construction.

Rationale

Electronics – Foundation Level 2 introduces learners to the basic concepts of electricity and circuits and the skills needed to construct small projects. Learners are encouraged to experiment with circuits and components in a structured manner, building up a library of knowledge about electronic circuits that perform different functions.

Learners use a range of testing and prototyping techniques to build and test circuits, culminating in building small circuits from existing designs.

Learning Outcomes

On successful completion of this course, learners will be able to:

1. recall basic information about electronics
2. select appropriate equipment, and plan and organise to complete set experiments and projects
3. identify and name basic electronics circuit components from diagrams and their physical components
4. experiment with a range of components including transistors and capacitors
5. understand the operation of simple circuits and their components through theory and experiments
6. model circuits using mathematical and analytical skills and techniques
7. create circuits and electronic projects from existing designs using a range of workshop skills
8. research and report on electronics concepts and ideas, and communicate this through a range of media
9. identify hazards related to the use of electronics, and comply with health and safety procedures, including using appropriate personal protective equipment
10. identify faults in circuits using a range of skills and circuit testing equipment.

Pathways

VET Certificate II in Electro-technology provides some related foundation knowledge and skills. The course will also provide a pathway for secondary learners who have studied the Australian Curriculum - Technologies context of engineering principles and systems up to Year 8, or those who have continued their studies as an elective in this context in Years 9 and 10.

Electronics - Foundation Level 2 may lead to further studies such as Electronics Level 3 at pre-tertiary level, or Bachelor of Engineering, Bachelor of Science, or related technical trades at tertiary level.

Resource Requirements

Access to equipment such as multimeters, oscilloscopes, breadboards, DC power supplies, and equipment for circuit board manufacturing is necessary for this course. Access to signal generators and computers with circuit design software is desirable.

Course Size And Complexity

This course has a complexity level of 2.

At Level 2, the learner is expected to carry out tasks and activities that involve a range of knowledge and skills, including some basic theoretical and/or technical knowledge and skills. Limited judgement is required, such as making an appropriate selection from a range of given rules, guidelines or procedures. VET competencies at this level are often those characteristic of an AQF Certificate II.

This course has a size value of 15.

Course Structure

The course consists of three (3) **compulsory** core areas of skills and knowledge in:

- safety
- simple circuit construction skills
- essential electronics knowledge.

These core areas of skills and knowledge are applied to four (4) **compulsory** content modules:

- Basic Electricity and Circuits
- Transistors as Switches
- Transistors for Timing and Control
- Transistors as Amplifiers

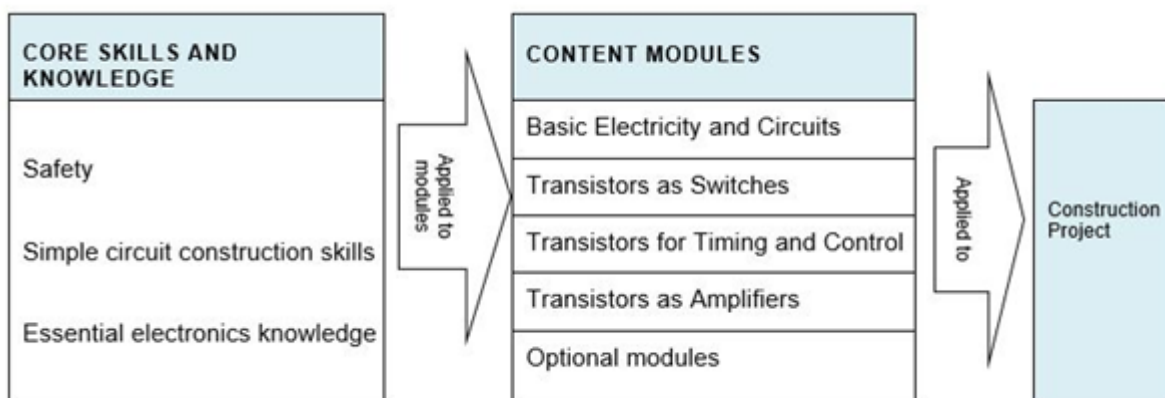
AND to a Construction Project.

Learners will study ALL four modules and one (1) construction project, applying skills and knowledge from core areas.

In addition, learners will complete *either* an:

- additional construction project, *or*
- optional unit of study on a circuit type of their choice or from a select range given by the teacher.

DIAGRAMMATICAL OVERVIEW OF COURSE STRUCTURE



Course Delivery

It is recommended that the course content is presented in a primarily practical format with supporting theoretical studies to develop knowledge. There will be an emphasis on experimentation and analysis of circuits that are presented to learners. Breadboarding interesting or useful circuits for each module is recommended, with at least one compulsory construction project, as specified in the Course Structure and Course Content. Additional work can be chosen by the learner; either in the form of another construction project, or additional worksheets on material not already covered.

Construction projects will be manufactured by the learner, using appropriate technology, e.g. chemically etched Printed Circuit Boards (PCB) and housed appropriately.

A report detailing the design, construction and operation of a project will be included for assessment.

SAFETY

Providers will ensure that there is appropriate management of the risks of the hazards associated with learning and assessment activities used in this course consistent with their responsibilities under government and statutory regulations and guidelines, including occupational health and safety requirements.

Course Content

CORE SKILLS AND KNOWLEDGE

SAFETY

Using equipment that is potentially hazardous is a requirement of this course. Learners will be instructed in the safe use of equipment, including:

- power tools, such as drills, saws, soldering irons, etc...
- chemical etching equipment
- appropriate storage and handling of chemicals including spill management
- toxic substances likely to be encountered including procedures to minimise risk of poisoning
- electrical safety including sources of dangerous voltage or current levels, and what to do in an emergency, e.g. when someone is receiving an electric shock
- workshop safety including safe practices for using equipment, basic first aid and what to do in an emergency
- safety equipment including Residual Current Devices (RCD's, or safety switches), fuses, circuit breakers, Personal Protective Equipment (PPE).

SIMPLE CIRCUIT CONSTRUCTION SKILLS

Selecting, testing, measuring and calculating is to be incorporated into each module and, at the end of the course, learners will have encompassed:

- continuity testing
- breadboarding
- PCB manufacturing
- measurement and calculation of current, voltage, resistance, power, voltage gain
- uses of cathode ray oscilloscopes for displaying and measuring waveforms
- uses of signal generators, injectors and other waveform sources (e.g. microphones, antennas).

ESSENTIAL ELECTRONICS KNOWLEDGE

The following are relevant and basic to most aspects of the course. They must be encountered and applied frequently:

- safe working practices
- standard symbols, SI units and prefixes
- communication in a range of forms
- uses of block diagrams
- identification, and orientation of components
- measuring, recording, discussing, researching and reviewing
- electronic systems in homes and industries: what they are, who designs, uses, operates, services and sells them
- uses of computer applications for simulation and drawing circuits and design of printed circuit boards.

In addition, the following are to be revised, demonstrated or introduced within the modules where appropriate:

- AC and DC sources
- voltage or current control in power supplies
- series, parallel and series/parallel resistive networks
- power dissipation, effects of voltage or current changes, $P = IV$, $P = I^2R$, $P = \frac{V^2}{R}$, power ratings
- difference between analogue and digital signals
- uses of Integrated Circuits in circuit design
- magnets, magnetic materials, attraction, repulsion
- fields around loops and coils carrying a current
- uses of electromagnets in relevant technology.

CONTENT MODULES

Circuits that cover each dot point in each module must be built and tested.

Note: some individual circuits may apply to more than one dot point.

Module 1: Basic electricity and circuits (SUGGESTED 15% OF DELIVERY TIME)

This module introduces learners to the fundamentals of electricity and circuits, including the following:

- voltage, current, resistance and power
- Ohm's law
- series and parallel circuits
- resistors, capacitors
- resistor colour code
- continuity
- switches
- semiconductors – LEDs, transistors.

Suggested Circuits and Activities:

- destructive testing of resistors (overheating)
- switch an LED on/off
- compare current to voltage in a resistor using graphs
- measure and compare how resistors in series and parallel affect voltage and current.

Module 2: Transistors as switches (SUGGESTED 15% OF DELIVERY TIME)

This module introduces learners to transistors as an active component capable of switching between conductive and non-conductive states. Concepts covered include the following:

- uses of transistors to switch current in a circuit
- voltage/potential dividers
- concept of transistor as a switch controlled by a voltage.

Suggested Circuits and Activities:

- compare collector current to base voltage and resistance
- switch an LED using light or heat sensors
- touch switch using a Darlington pair.

Module 3: Transistors for Timing and Control (SUGGESTED 15% OF DELIVERY TIME)

This module introduces learners to using a range of components to control a transistor, including the following concepts:

- capacitor voltage and current, leakage
- capacitor charging, time constant
- RC (Resistor Capacitor) delay circuits using transistors
- light or temperature sensing circuits using transistors.

Suggested Circuits and Activities:

- delay to turn an LED on/off
- give numerical indication of light level or temperature
- transistor astable circuit.

Module 4: Transistors as amplifiers (SUGGESTED 15% OF DELIVERY TIME)

This module introduces learners to simple amplifier circuits. The following concepts are covered:

- voltage gain, current gain, inverting of signals
- transistor linear region
- waves, amplitude, frequency
- bias voltage, coupling capacitors
- clipping, distortion of output signal
- multi-stage amplifiers.

Suggested Circuits and Activities:

- single transistor amplifier, measure voltage gain
- two-stage transistor amplifier
- use CRO to show clipping/distortion.

CONSTRUCTION PROJECT (SUGGESTED 15% OF DELIVERY TIME)

The learner is to complete at least one construction project. The project may be from an existing design, or one they have modified. A report detailing how the circuit was made, identifying hazards and listing injury prevention measures, and a basic description of how the circuit works is to be included for assessment. The project is to have a PCB manufactured and components soldered on by the learner, and it is to be housed and labelled appropriately.

Skills and knowledge applicable to projects:

- use of computer software for designing, testing and building circuits
- use of block diagrams to design, and describe operation of circuits
- use of PCB manufacturing technology to produce a circuit
- safe use of workshop equipment.

Suggested Projects:

- coin flipper (randomly selects between 2 LED's)
- continuity tester
- audio amplifier
- crossover network for speakers
- tachometer for car
- alcohol breath tester.

OPTIONAL MODULES (SUGGESTED 25% OF DELIVERY TIME)

Upon completion of the compulsory modules outlined above, the learner must choose to undertake either an additional project, or study an appropriate circuit type of their choosing, or one of the following topics.

- **Power supplies**

Example practical projects: Set or variable voltage power supply, Overload protection circuit.

Derived from or related to these projects are topics including:

- AC and DC, rectifiers, transformers
- voltage ripple, smoothing
- voltage regulator IC's
- circuit protection, Zener clamping, active overload protection, reverse bias protection
- alternative/renewable energy voltage sources, i.e. solar panel arrays, wind/water turbine generation.

- **Digital logic circuits**

Example practical projects: A logic probe, simple counter circuit with 7 segment display.

Derived from or related to these projects are topics including:

- difference between digital and analogue signals
- logic gates
- flip-flops: SR, D, JK type, and how to configure to a T type

- o counters and shift registers
- o 7-segment display, 5 x 9 display
- o simple timing diagrams
- o special function IC's, such as BCD to 7 segment decoder.

- **555 timer circuits**

Example practical projects: switch debouncer, egg timer, police/air raid siren.

Derived from or related to these projects are topics including:

- o the three modes of operation (monostable, bistable and astable)
- o frequency and duty cycle
- o pulse width modulation (PWM)
- o sourcing and sinking of current
- o delays and debouncing.

- **Communication systems**

Example practical projects: simple transistor FM transmitter, AM receiver (crystal radio), TV remote control (PICAXE).

Derived from or related to these projects are topics including:

- o resonance, tuneable resonant circuits
- o frequency selective networks, passive filters
- o modulation techniques, including amplitude modulation (AM) and frequency modulation (FM)
- o waves, calculation of wavelength of radio frequencies.

- **Microcontrollers**

It is recommended that PICAXE microcontrollers be used:

- o they are developed with electronics novices in mind
- o they have comprehensive documentation, in language that learners can access
- o the programming language is BASIC, and is accessible to learners.

Example practical projects: temperature controlled fan speed controller, LED flashing game, TV remote control.

Derived from or related to these projects are topics including:

- o analogue and digital inputs and outputs, voltage and current limitations
- o programming a basic microcontroller
- o sensors, transducers, and other input/output components
- o mechanical switch bouncing, and methods of debouncing
- o types and range of sizes of microcontrollers. Manufacturers, performance of different microcontrollers.

Work Requirements

It is recommended that the practical work will account for approximately 75% of the time allocated, with the remaining 25% dedicated to theory, researching, recording and reporting.

Practical work may include:

- experiments
- building circuits on breadboard or PCB
- projects.

Written work *must* include:

- construction project report.

Construction projects must have a report detailing the construction and operation of the circuit built, including a research element.

It is recommended that the first construction project not be attempted until module 1 is completed, and that the modules are delivered in the sequence listed in the diagram above.

Written work *may* also include:

- assignments
- analysis of experiments
- assessment questions
- tests.

Assessment

Criterion-based assessment is a form of outcomes assessment that identifies the extent of learner achievement at an appropriate end-point of study. Although assessment – as part of the learning program – is continuous, much of it is formative, and is done to help learners identify what they need to do to attain the maximum benefit from their study of the course. Therefore, assessment for summative reporting to TASC will focus on what both teacher and learner understand to reflect end-point achievement.

The standard of achievement each learner attains on each criterion is recorded as a rating 'A', 'B', or 'C', according to the outcomes specified in the standards section of the course.

A 't' notation must be used where a learner demonstrates any achievement against a criterion less than the standard specified for the 'C' rating.

A 'z' notation is to be used where a learner provides no evidence of achievement at all.

Providers offering this course must participate in quality assurance processes specified by TASC to ensure provider validity and comparability of standards across all awards. To learn more, see TASC's [quality assurance](#) processes and [assessment](#) information.

Internal assessment of all criteria will be made by the provider. Providers will report the learner's rating for each criterion to TASC.

Quality Assurance Process

The following processes will be facilitated by TASC to ensure there is:

- a match between the standards for achievement specified in the course and the skills and knowledge demonstrated by learners
- community confidence in the integrity and meaning of the qualification.

Process – TASC will verify that the provider's course delivery and assessment standards meet the course requirements and community expectations for fairness, integrity and validity of qualifications TASC issues. This will involve checking:

- learner attendance records; and
- course delivery plans (the sequence of course delivery/tasks and when assessments take place):
 - assessment instruments and rubrics (the 'rules' or marking guide used to judge achievement)
 - class records of assessment
 - examples of learner work that demonstrate the use of the marking guide
 - samples of current learner's work, including that related to any work requirements articulated in the course document.

This process may also include interviews with past and present learners. It will be scheduled by TASC using a risk-based approach.

Criteria

The assessment for Electronics – Foundation will be based on the degree to which the learner can:

1. apply skills for safely using equipment, experimenting and building circuits
2. communicate information in a variety of forms
3. plan and organise to complete activities
4. recognise, identify and apply knowledge about electronic components and circuits
5. explain the function and operation of components and circuits
6. gather data and research information
7. apply knowledge of basic mathematical concepts in electronics

Standards

Criterion 1: apply skills for safely using equipment, experimenting and building circuits

The learner:

Rating A	Rating B	Rating C
selects and uses appropriate equipment and technologies to measure, test, and build identified circuits and perform appropriate experiments on these circuits	selects and uses appropriate equipment and technologies to measure, test, and build identified circuits with limited experimentation	identifies and uses equipment and technologies to measure, test, experiment with, and build basic circuits in a given context
identifies hazards, and acts with a level of awareness of the safety of self and others to apply health and safety procedures, including using appropriate personal protective equipment (PPE)	identifies hazards, and determines and applies health and safety procedures, including using appropriate personal protective equipment (PPE)	identifies hazards, and complies with health and safety procedures including using appropriate personal protective equipment (PPE)
identifies the presence of faults and undertakes some test procedures to locate them. The test procedures applied may, or may not, locate the fault.	identifies the presence of faults and undertakes a given procedure to locate them. The procedure applied may, or may not, locate the fault.	recognises faults in basic circuits.

Criterion 2: communicate information in a variety of forms

The learner:

Rating A	Rating B	Rating C
selects and uses a range of appropriate methods, styles and devices to communicate ideas and information appropriately in graphical, symbolic and textual formats	uses a variety of methods, styles and devices to communicate ideas and information appropriately in graphical, symbolic and textual formats	uses given methods, styles and devices to communicate ideas and information appropriately with some use of graphical, symbolic and textual formats
applies literacy skills to clearly communicate ideas and information	applies literacy skills to communicate ideas and information	applies literacy skills to communicate basic ideas and information
presents a broad range of appropriate data or information in appropriate formats (e.g. tables, graphs, short paragraphs of text)	presents appropriate data or information in appropriate formats (e.g. tables, graphs, short paragraphs of text)	presents data or information in appropriate formats (e.g. tables, graphs, short paragraphs of text)
adjusts communication to suit specific context and changing conditions	adjusts communication to specific contexts and changing conditions	adjusts communication to different conditions
uses a wide range of appropriate technologies to communicate ideas and information	uses a range of appropriate technologies to communicate ideas and information	uses a limited range of technologies to communicate ideas and information
consistently uses appropriate referencing/citation methods.	uses some appropriate referencing/citation methods.	uses basic referencing/citation methods as directed.

Criterion 3: plan and organise to complete activities

The learner:

Rating A	Rating B	Rating C

identifies time, materials and equipment needed to complete a task, and devises a plan for completion	identifies time materials and equipment needed to complete a task, and devises a basic plan for completion	identifies time, materials and equipment needed for a task
sets personal targets and deadlines to achieve goals and completing tasks	sets deadlines to complete tasks	
maintains task focus	maintains task focus for agreed periods of time	maintains task focus for limited periods of time
sets short-, medium- and long-term goals which are measurable, achievable and realistic, and plans effective actions	sets short- and medium-term goals spanning one to several lessons which are measurable, achievable and realistic, and plans accordingly	sets short-term goals which are generally measurable, achievable and realistic, and follows given plans/directions
reflects – orally and/or in writing – on progress towards meeting goals, evaluates progress and plans future actions	reflects – orally and/or in writing – on progress towards meeting goals and articulates ways in which goals can be met in the future	reflects – orally and/or in writing – on progress towards meeting goals in a constructive manner
considers, selects and uses strategies to manage and complete activities within established timelines.	selects and uses strategies to perform tasks within established timelines.	uses strategies as directed to perform tasks within established timelines.

Criterion 4: recognise, identify and apply knowledge about electronic components and circuits

The learner:

Rating A	Rating B	Rating C
explains the principles of electricity and electrical systems	describes the principles of electricity and electrical systems	identifies the basic features of electricity and electrical systems
accurately and reliably recalls and identifies information about a range of introductory of circuits studied and their functional parts	recalls and identifies information about the range of introductory of circuits studied and their functional parts	recalls the name and function of basic circuits and their functional parts in a given context
recalls and uses names and symbols of key components, and states their likely uses	identifies components by name and – where applicable – their type from circuit diagrams, symbols and packages and likely uses of key components	identifies common components by name and – where applicable – their type from circuit diagrams, symbols and packages
accurately recalls and applies information relating to the range of circuits and principles studied, including measurements and units, codes and formulae	recalls and correctly applies most information relating to the range of circuits and principles studied, including measurements and units, codes and formulae	correctly applies information relating to measurements and formulae in a given context
makes changes to circuits, and accurately describes the effects of changes made by observing experiments.	makes changes to circuits, and describes the effects of changes made by observing experiments.	follows instructions to make changes to circuits and reports on observations made.

Criterion 5: explain the function and operation of components and circuits

The learner:

Rating A	Rating B	Rating C
explains the function and properties of transistors, resistive networks, and capacitors	describes the function and properties of transistors, resistive networks, and capacitors	identifies the operation of circuits containing transistors, resistive networks and capacitors

models and predicts the physical properties or the state of circuits	predicts the physical properties or the state of circuits	identifies the physical properties or the state of circuits
creates new circuits to perform a function similar to known circuits, and applies simple modifications where appropriate.	creates new circuits to perform a function similar to known circuits.	identifies circuits with similar functions to known circuits.

Criterion 6: gather data and research information

The learner:

Rating A	Rating B	Rating C
accurately identifies the types of data required to test a circuit and performs experiments using selected techniques in collecting and recording data	identifies the types of data required to test a circuit and performs experiments using specified techniques in collecting and recording data	collects data to test circuits and performs experiments using specified techniques in collecting and recording data
describes and explains principles of the design process in electronics	describes basic principles of the design process in electronics	outlines basic stages of the design process in electronics
plans, constructs and conducts basic inquiry/research tasks.	constructs and conducts basic inquiry/research tasks.	carries out basic inquiry/research tasks as directed.

Criterion 7: apply knowledge of basic mathematical concepts in electronics

The learner:

Rating A	Rating B	Rating C
selects, uses and applies appropriate mathematical concepts and techniques to model or predict the behaviour of a circuit	uses appropriate mathematical concepts and techniques to model or predict the behaviour of a circuit	follows instructions to use mathematical formulae to model or predict the behaviour of a circuit in a given context
reliably calculates component values or physical quantities using appropriate mathematical formulae and correct units	reliably calculates component values or physical quantities using identified mathematical formulae	performs accurate calculations to evaluate formulae
accurately reads, uses and creates a range of graphs, tables and other mathematical tools to gather or display information	accurately reads, uses and creates identified mathematical tools to gather or display information	reads and uses information from simple graphs and tables

Qualifications Available

Electronics - Foundation Level 2 (with the award of):

EXCEPTIONAL ACHIEVEMENT

HIGH ACHIEVEMENT

COMMENDABLE ACHIEVEMENT

SATISFACTORY ACHIEVEMENT

PRELIMINARY ACHIEVEMENT

Award Requirements

The final award will be determined by the Office of Tasmanian Assessment, Standards and Certification from the 7 ratings.

The minimum requirements for an award in Electronics – Foundation Level 2 are as follows:

EXCEPTIONAL ACHIEVEMENT (EA)

5 'A' ratings, 2 'B' rating

HIGH ACHIEVEMENT (HA)

3 'A' ratings, 3 'B' ratings, 1 'C' rating

COMMENDABLE ACHIEVEMENT (CA)

4 'B' ratings, 2 'C' ratings

SATISFACTORY ACHIEVEMENT (SA)

6 'C' ratings

PRELIMINARY ACHIEVEMENT (PA)

3 'C' ratings

A learner who otherwise achieves the ratings for a CA (Commendable Achievement) or SA (Satisfactory Achievement) award but who fails to show any evidence of achievement in one or more criteria ('z' notation) will be issued with a PA (Preliminary Achievement) award.

Course Evaluation

The Department of Education's Curriculum Services will develop and regularly revise the curriculum. This evaluation will be informed by the experience of the course's implementation, delivery and assessment.

In addition, stakeholders may request Curriculum Services to review a particular aspect of an accredited course.

Requests for amendments to an accredited course will be forwarded by Curriculum Services to the Office of TASC for formal consideration.

Such requests for amendment will be considered in terms of the likely improvements to the outcomes for learners, possible consequences for delivery and assessment of the course, and alignment with Australian Curriculum materials.

A course is formally analysed prior to the expiry of its accreditation as part of the process to develop specifications to guide the development of any replacement course.

Course Developer

The Department of Education acknowledges the significant leadership of Charles Prevost in the development of this course.

Expectations Defined By National Standards

There are no statements of national standards relevant to this course.

Accreditation

The accreditation period for this course was renewed on 20 July 2021 for the period from 1 January 2022 until 31 December 2023. During the accreditation period the relevance and demand of this course within the broader Years 11/12 curriculum context can be considered via established processes.

Should outcomes of the Years 9-12 Review process find this course unsuitable for inclusion in the Tasmanian senior secondary curriculum, its accreditation may be cancelled. Any such cancellation would not occur during an academic year.

Version History

Version 1 – Accredited on 19 November 2013. This course replaces Electronics 2 (ELT210109) that expired on 31 December 2013.

Version 1.a - Accreditation renewed on 14 December 2018 for use in the period 1 January 2019 until 31 December 2020.

Version 1.b - Accreditation renewed on 13 July 2020 for the period 1 January 2021 to 31 December 2021 (no amendments made).

Version 1.c - Renewal of Accreditation on 14 July 2021 for the period 31 December 2021 until 31 December 2023, without amendments.

Supporting documents including external assessment material

-  [ELT215114CourseAccreditation.pdf](#) (2017-07-21 01:05pm AEST)



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