



THE UNIVERSITY OF  
**NOTRE DAME**  
A U S T R A L I A

# Procedure:

## Program and Course Quality

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Policy sub-category: programs and courses

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## 1 PURPOSE

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- 1.1** This procedure supports the *Policy: Programs and Courses* by stating requirements for assuring the quality of higher education programs and courses.
- 1.2** The Interpretation and definitions section at the end of this procedure:
  - 1.2.1 states requirements for interpreting this procedure and
  - 1.2.2 explains its hierarchical relationship with other policy documents in the University's *Policy Framework*.
- 1.3 Scope**
- 1.4** This procedure applies to:
  - 1.4.1 all coursework programs and coursework courses of the University of Notre Dame (Australia) (the University), including microcredentials, short courses, English language preparatory courses and courses in pathway programs and
    - 1.4.1.1 staff who deliver and manage programs or who oversee program and course quality.
  - 1.4.2 It does not, however, apply to vocational education (see 2.2) and training programs or units of competency.

## 2 RELATED POLICIES AND REGULATIONS

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- 2.1** This procedure should be read alongside the *Policy: Programs and Courses*, which it supports.
- 2.2** The *Procedure: Continuous Improvement in VET* states requirements for aspects of quality assurance of vocational education and training programs.
- 2.3** The *Procedure: Assessment and Examinations* states requirements for moderation of marking to ensure consistency.
- 2.4** The *Procedure: Program and Course Life Cycle* states requirements for approval of changes to programs and courses, which typically result from quality assurance activities.
- 2.5** The *Policy: Benchmarking* states requirements for benchmarking both of academic activities and of non-academic processes.

## 3 OVERVIEW OF PROGRAM AND COURSE QUALITY

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- 3.1** This procedure sets out requirements for a range of related activities to maintain the academic quality of the University's programs and courses.
- 3.2** Program and course quality activities comprise:
  - 3.2.1 program-level quality activities:
    - 3.2.1.1 program-level benchmarking
    - 3.2.1.2 regular program monitoring
    - 3.2.1.3 monitoring and review of a third-party arrangement to deliver a program or part of a program
    - 3.2.1.4 comprehensive program reviews by the University.
    - 3.2.1.5 accreditation by an external body where applicable
  - 3.2.2 course-level quality activities:
    - 3.2.2.1 peer review of teaching
    - 3.2.2.2 student experience of course and student experience of teaching surveys
    - 3.2.2.3 course-specific benchmarking
    - 3.2.2.4 review of assessment by course teaching teams and boards of examiners and
- 3.3** Together, these activities enable the University to:
  - 3.3.1 improve programs and courses continuously to ensure they:

- 3.3.1.1 are of a high academic quality, relevant, attractive to students, financially viable and are aligned with the University's Objects and strategies; and
    - 3.3.1.2 provide a good student experience and lead to good educational outcomes; and
  - 3.3.2 demonstrate to:
    - 3.3.2.1 the Tertiary Education Quality and Standards Agency that the University meets the standards of the Higher Education Standards Framework (*Threshold Standards*) 2011 for program design, delivery, assessment and program accreditation, and
    - 3.3.2.2 external bodies that accredit professional programs, that these programs meet the relevant professional accreditation standards.
- 3.4 Staff who teach in courses, course coordinators, program coordinators, heads of school and staff in other academic leadership roles in schools and faculties are expected to collect and synthesise evidence from these various activities to inform, as relevant:
  - 3.4.1 their own teaching and assessment practice
  - 3.4.2 continuous improvement of courses and programs
  - 3.4.3 program monitoring and review, and
  - 3.4.4 oversight of academic quality by school, faculty and university academic governance committees.
- 3.5 If a school or faculty identifies a significant risk to the quality, relevance or viability of a program outside of annual program monitoring, the head of the school that manages the program will, in consultation with their executive dean and associate dean, learning and teaching:
  - 3.5.1 promptly inform Curriculum and Quality and the Deputy Vice-Chancellor, Learning and Teaching of the risk, and keep them informed of the further actions below
  - 3.5.2 document the risk
  - 3.5.3 take actions to mitigate or eliminate it, and
  - 3.5.4 report the risk and the actions to the relevant faculty board and to Academic Standards and Policy Committee.
- 3.6 The Deputy Vice-Chancellor, Learning and Teaching monitors the quality, relevance and viability of programs, on the advice of executive deans and the Academic Registrar.
  - 3.6.1 The Deputy Vice-Chancellor, Learning and Teaching may instruct a faculty or school to take action to mitigate or eliminate a risk to program quality, viability or relevance where this is identified outside of the program monitoring and review process.
- 3.7 To ensure program quality processes are efficient, each program will as far as possible be monitored and reviewed along with the group of closely-related programs to which the program is assigned at the time it is first approved.

## 4 EXTERNAL ADVISORY COMMITTEES

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- 4.1 Each Faculty or School will have external advisory committees to ensure that program quality activities are based on information about the needs of the industry or profession, and communities, that the program serves.
  - 4.1.1 An external advisory committee may advise on a group of programs in the same discipline or a group of closely-related disciplines.
  - 4.1.2 An external advisory committee will:
    - 4.1.2.1 Normally comprise a majority of external members, including
      - leading members of the industry or profession, and communities, that the

- committee serves, and
  - at least two recent graduates of the program or programs on which the committee advises
- 4.1.2.2 include in its membership relevant faculty/school staff
- 4.1.2.3 meet:
  - at least once every year, and
  - as part of the process for comprehensive review of a program on which the committee advises.
- 4.1.3 An external advisory committee may be chaired by an executive dean or head of school, or by an external member of the committee.
- 4.1.4 The Chair will be appointed by the Executive Dean.
- 4.1.5 The executive dean and/or associate dean, learning and teaching of each faculty will report annually to the faculty board on external advisory committees for programs managed by the faculty and the committees' activities.

## 5 BENCHMARKING

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- 5.1** Schools should regularly benchmark their programs to ensure their academic quality is consistent with equivalent programs offered by other higher education institutions.
    - 5.1.1 See the *Policy: Benchmarking* for requirements for approval, project management and reporting of benchmarking.
    - 5.1.2 Where practicable, program benchmarking activities should also compare the programs' market share and, where a program is more successful in recruiting students, identify its points of difference.
  - 5.2** A program's assessment design should be benchmarked against discipline and/or professional standards, in one or more of the following ways:
    - 5.2.1 a benchmarking exercise in partnership with a program in the same discipline area at another higher education institution
    - 5.2.2 expert peer review through a professional association, or
    - 5.2.3 peer review by other academic staff of the University who have experience of a similar program and of courses at a similar stage of the program.
  - 5.3** Benchmarking in relation to a program should include design and marking of assessment tasks for courses at all levels of the program (from introductory to advanced),
    - 5.3.1 In particular, each program in preparation for comprehensive review will carry out benchmarking of the matters listed in paragraph 5.3.4 of the *Higher Education Standards Framework (Threshold Standards) 2021*, namely: 'the external referencing of success of student cohorts against comparable courses of study, including:
      - 5.3.1.1 'analyses of progression rates, attrition rates, completion times and rates and, where applicable, comparing different locations of delivery, and
      - 5.3.1.2 'the assessment methods and grading of students' achievement of learning outcomes for selected units of study within courses of study'.
- Courses selected for this benchmarking should include capstone courses.

## 6 PROGRAM MONITORING AND REPORTING

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- 6.1** The Deputy Vice-Chancellor, Learning and Teaching will oversee processes for annually monitoring academic quality, relevance and viability of coursework programs.

- 6.1.1 Curriculum and Quality will coordinate and support annual program monitoring by
  - 6.1.1.1 developing process information and report templates
  - 6.1.1.2 providing advice for schools, faculties and other areas on process requirements
  - 6.1.1.3 supporting Faculties and Schools in the procurement and analysis of program and student data ,
  - 6.1.1.4 initiating and monitoring the process each year to ensure timely completion, and
  - 6.1.1.5 maintaining a central record of annual program monitoring reports.
- 6.2** Annual program monitoring for coursework programs:
  - 6.2.1 informs planning of program improvements and the identification and mitigation of risks to academic quality and standards
  - 6.2.2 enables academic managers and academic governance committees to oversee program performance
  - 6.2.3 provides records of program quality to inform internal program reviews and (where relevant) external professional accreditation reviews, and
  - 6.2.4 contributes to ensuring programs continue to align with the University's Objects and strategic priorities.
- 6.3 Annual monitoring of program performance**
  - 6.3.1 To support a systematic approach, the performance of coursework programs is monitored using the University's agreed set of program performance indicators and targets.
  - 6.3.2 Program performance indicators and targets are recommended by Academic Standards and Policy Committee for approval by Academic Council based on the advice of the Deputy Vice-Chancellor, Learning and Teaching.
    - 6.3.2.1 Performance indicators and targets are based on trend data for metrics commonly used in the higher education sector, requirements in the *Higher Education Standards Framework (2021)* and align with the University's learning and teaching priorities. They should include indicators for admissions, enrolments, student progress, retention and completion, student satisfaction and graduate outcomes.
    - 6.3.2.2 Where applicable, program performance targets are externally referenced through the use of national sector data for the discipline (for example, based on field of education or QILT study area) wherever this is available.
    - 6.3.2.3 The Deputy Vice Chancellor, Learning and Teaching may, from time to time, add additional information or requests for information to the templates prepared by Curriculum & Quality.
- 6.4** Curriculum & Quality maintains a repository of program performance data and will prepare an annual Program Performance Report for each program or group of closely-related programs showing performance against the performance indicators and targets in clause 5.3. Based on the performance indicators and targets described in clause 5.3, Curriculum & Quality will identify programs which are 'at risk,' meeting or exceeding thresholds and recommend that faculties consider and comment on those programs in particular.
- 6.5** Faculties will consider the information provided in the Program Performance Report and, in consultation with the relevant School:

- 6.5.1 Identify if further monitoring or analysis is required to understand underlying patterns or risks in program performance (i.e. whether lapses are apparently temporary or part of longer-term trends);
- 6.5.2 Summarise current developments and innovations in program design and delivery contributing to its success;
- 6.5.3 Plan evidence-based actions to mitigate risk, continue to improve program performance and/or prevent future under-performance;
- 6.5.4 If necessary, recommend that a comprehensive review of an 'at-risk' program be brought forward under conditions stated in 6.2.6;
- 6.5.5 Provide an update on the progress of any agreed actions for programs deemed 'at risk', if any, in the previous Program Performance Report
- 6.5.6 Where a program is being offered for the first time, is undergoing or is about to undergo a comprehensive program review, is suspended or in teach-out, the Faculty should indicate this and no further comment is necessary.
- 6.5.7 The faculty manager will send a copy of each completed Program Performance Report Analysis to Curriculum and Quality.

## **6.6 University-level summary of outcomes of annual program monitoring**

- 6.6.1 The Deputy Vice-Chancellor, Learning and Teaching will review the completed Program Data Summary Analyses, and, assisted by the Head, Curriculum & Quality will prepare a high-level consolidated analysis of the outcomes of annual program monitoring for Academic Council that includes:
  - 6.6.1.1 a data-driven and risk-based consolidated analysis of the performance of the University's coursework programs
  - 6.6.1.2 current developments and innovations in program design and delivery, and
  - 6.6.1.3 the planned response to issues and risks identified in program monitoring that have implications for
    - the quality, relevance and viability of specific programs, and
    - achievement of the University's learning and teaching priorities.
- 6.7 At the completion of the annual program monitoring process each year Curriculum & Quality will seek feedback from stakeholders on the process, evaluate them, and propose process improvements to the Deputy Vice-Chancellor, Learning and Teaching for submission via Academic Standards and Policy Committee for approval by Academic Council.

## **7 COMPREHENSIVE PROGRAM REVIEW**

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- 7.1 In accordance with the *Policy: Programs and Courses*, the time frame for program review and reaccreditation by the University is normally five years.
- 7.2 Each program will undergo a comprehensive review in the year before its accreditation by Academic Council expires
- 7.3 The Deputy Vice-Chancellor, Learning and Teaching will, with the support of Curriculum & Quality, maintain the University's schedule for program review and reaccreditation, and provide this annually for Approval by Academic Council.
  - 7.3.1 A school or faculty may submit a request to the Deputy Vice-Chancellor, Learning and Teaching, via Curriculum & Quality, to change the scheduled accreditation expiry date of a program.

- 7.3.2 The Deputy Vice-Chancellor, Learning and Teaching may approve such a request (subject to ratification by Academic Council) for a reason such as to:
  - 7.3.2.1 address risks to quality, relevance or viability of a program that have been identified
  - 7.3.2.2 enable the University's comprehensive review of a program to coincide with its external professional reaccreditation review, so that a single set of review work can serve both reviews, or
  - 7.3.2.3 allow more time to monitor the effects of major changes to a program, so this can inform review.
- 7.3.3 However, in all cases review of a program must be completed in time for the program to be reaccredited by the University within seven years of the date of its previous University accreditation.
- 7.4** Comprehensive program review of a coursework higher education program will include review of:
  - 7.4.1 The program's alignment with the University's Objects, strategic priorities and plans
  - 7.4.2 The development of the program including major and or minor amendments, the findings of program monitoring, and the implementation of agreed actions to improve the program arising from previous comprehensive program reviews (if applicable).
  - 7.4.3 The program's viability in terms of revenue and costs, student recruitment, enrolment, progression and completion.
  - 7.4.4 The program's curriculum, teaching and assessment to determine if they are current, effective, resourced and informed by best practice and research in pedagogy and the discipline.
  - 7.4.5 The strengths and areas for development of the program and actions and proposals in place to further improve the program.
  - 7.4.6 The program's academic quality against the relevant standards of the Higher Education Standards Framework, Australian Qualifications Framework, and any other applicable government accreditation standards.
  - 7.4.7 Consider:
    - 7.4.7.1 approved credit pathways into the program;
    - 7.4.7.2 findings of analysis of the program's market, demand for the program and retention of students, with benchmarking of the program against competitor programs (on aspects such as program structure, placements and other work integrated learning);
    - 7.4.7.3 the program's expected enrolment load in the University's enrolment plan, and;
    - 7.4.7.4 any relevant third-party arrangements to deliver the program;
  - 7.4.8 Be informed by external referencing and benchmarking to determine program quality, which will include, at a minimum:
    - 7.4.8.1 comparison of the program with other similar programs offered at other institutions in terms of student enrolment, experience, progression and graduate outcomes.
    - 7.4.8.2 admission requirements, curriculum design, teaching quality and assessment;
    - 7.4.8.3 feedback from relevant industry, professional, and/or community representatives; on the quality of the program and our graduates, and how this can be improved.
- 7.5** The outcomes of the comprehensive program review may include an improvement of the



program through major and/or minor changes, discontinuation of the program if it is no longer relevant or viable, or the design of a new program.

**7.6** A comprehensive program review will be conducted according to the following process:

- 7.6.1 The faculty and school that manages the program should start planning for the review in the year before the year in which the review is scheduled to occur.
- 7.6.2 Curriculum & Quality will meet with the executive dean, head of school and relevant school staff to discuss the review process, the scope of upcoming reviews and administrative matters.
- 7.6.3 The chair of the program review panel will be nominated by the executive dean and approved by DVC Learning and Teaching.
- 7.6.4 The chair is responsible for setting up the program review panel in consultation with the executive dean. The review panel membership will normally include:
  - 7.6.4.1 A minimum of four members excluding the chair and no more than eight members to ensure a good balance between rigour and practicality
  - 7.6.4.2 At least one senior academic from outside the university with expertise in the program discipline
  - 7.6.4.3 A relevant industry, profession or community representative where applicable
  - 7.6.4.4 At least one current student or recent graduate of the program
  - 7.6.4.5 A senior academic from outside the school delivering the program with expertise in academic quality assurance
  - 7.6.4.6 In the case of programs that are cross-faculty programs the panel will include representation from all relevant faculties/schools including the relevant program coordinators.
- 7.6.5 The chair in consultation with the executive dean, the head of school and Curriculum & Quality will set out review panel meetings, processes and timelines for the review and endorsement of the self-assessment report and program improvement plan.
- 7.6.6 Curriculum & Quality will provide guidelines, templates and program performance data for the self-assessment report and program improvement plan to ensure compliance with review criteria outlined in 6.3.
- 7.6.7 The chair will ensure that the head of school and the program coordinator complete the self-assessment report and program improvement plan in accordance to agreed processes and timelines.
- 7.6.8 Attached to the program self-assessment report will be a program improvement plan setting out activities proposed by the school to further improve the program and address any areas for improvement identified in the self-assessment report. The program improvement plan should consider input from relevant parts of the University and stakeholders on the feasibility and resource implications of the actions proposed in the program improvement plan including:
  - Academic Registrar
  - Finance
  - People and Culture
  - Marketing Office
  - IT
  - Facilities
  - Library
  - Other schools and faculties

- Admissions Office
  - International Office
  - Third parties involved in the delivery of the program, design of the program or the recruitment of students into the program
- 7.6.9 When the chair of the review panel is satisfied that the self-assessment report is complete and the improvement plan is resourced and realistic they will submit the self-assessment report and improvement plan:
- 7.6.9.1 If it is a coursework program to the faculty board for endorsement.
  - 7.6.9.2 to the Research Degrees and Scholarships Committee if it is a higher degree by research program,
  - 7.6.9.3 to the School external advisory board for information.
  - 7.6.9.4 the executive dean will submit to the Deputy Vice-Chancellor, Learning and Teaching (via Curriculum & Quality) for review:
    - the faculty board endorsed self-assessment report and the program improvement plan;
    - where the program has undergone a professional reaccreditation review in the past five years, the report of that review, and the faculty's response to it.
  - 7.6.9.5 The executive dean will also provide the completed review report(s) and approved program improvement plan to the external advisory committee for the program, for its information.
  - 7.6.9.6 The Deputy Vice-Chancellor, Learning and Teaching will provide the final version of the self-assessment report and program improvement plan with other relevant documents to:
    - Program and Course Accreditation Committee for endorsement, then
    - Academic Council for approval.
- 7.6.10 For higher degree by research program, the process will be the same as in clause 6.5 and its subclauses, except that:
- 7.6.10.1 the National Director, Research Office will prepare the response
  - 7.6.10.2 the Pro Vice-Chancellor, Research will carry out the actions allocated to an executive dean in 6.5.3 and 6.5.9, and
  - 7.6.10.3 the Research Degrees and Scholarships Committee will consider the review submission for endorsement before they are submitted to Program and Course Accreditation Committee.
- 7.7** In considering an executive dean's program review submissions, Program and Course Accreditation Committee will make one of the following recommendations, for Academic Council to consider for approval:
- 7.7.1 to renew the accreditation of the program;
  - 7.7.2 to renew the accreditation of the program with conditions
  - 7.7.3 to decline renewal of accreditation and recommend discontinuation of the program.
- 7.8** The executive dean will direct the school that manages the program to:
- 7.8.1 implement the changes according to the approved program improvement plan and timeframes; or
  - 7.8.2 address the conditions set by Academic Council; or
  - 7.8.3 suspend the program and commence the discontinuation process.
- 7.9** Upon the approval of the program improvement plan where major changes to the program are required e.g., changes to program design, learning outcomes and course structure, the school

program authority will commence the change process promptly, according to relevant program change and approval policies and procedures to ensure that the changes are implemented within the approved timeframe

- 7.10** The head of school will regularly report the progress of the implementation of the program improvement plan to the faculty board.
- 7.11** Curriculum & Quality will monitor the progress in 6.7 via the faculty board and report any deviations from the approved program improvement plan to the Deputy Vice-Chancellor, Learning and Teaching who will take appropriate action to ensure compliance with approved recommendations in 6.6. The Deputy Vice Chancellor, Learning and Teaching will, assisted by the Head of Curriculum and Quality, provide a regular summary report to Academic Council of the comprehensive program review process.

## 8 QUALITY ASSURANCE OF THIRD-PARTY ARRANGEMENTS

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- 8.1** The *Procedure: Program and Course Life Cycle* states the provisions for quality assurance of a third-party arrangement that must be included in the University's legal agreement with the third-party organisation for delivery of a program or course.
- 8.2** Where a program or course managed by a faculty is delivered via a third-party arrangement, the executive dean will oversee the relevant school's management and quality assurance of the arrangement and the delivery.
- 8.3** The faculty and/or school that manages the relevant program or course will:
  - 8.3.1 maintain and regularly review a register of risks in relation to the third-party arrangement which records how these risks are being mitigated
  - 8.3.2 liaise regularly with the third-party organisation to:
    - 8.3.2.1 support it in meeting the terms and conditions of the legal agreement, and
    - 8.3.2.2 verify that it is doing so
  - 8.3.3 review the third-party arrangement annually, considering evidence as to whether:
    - 8.3.3.1 the third-party organisation is meeting the terms and conditions of the legal agreement, and
    - 8.3.3.2 the academic quality and student experience of the delivery are satisfactory, and
  - 8.3.4 track completion of improvements identified as needed in monitoring and/or review of the third-party arrangement.
- 8.4** The executive dean will report annually to the Deputy Vice-Chancellor, Learning and Teaching, via Curriculum & Quality, on each of their faculty's current third-party arrangements, using the report template for this purpose maintained by Curriculum & Quality.
  - 8.4.1 The report template will require statements on the following matters, and evidence in support of the statements:
    - 8.4.1.1 who is responsible for monitoring the quality of the third-party arrangement and whether it is delivering the expected outcomes
    - 8.4.1.2 whether teaching, learning support and assessment are being carried out in compliance with university policies and procedures and with the regulatory standards relevant to the type of program
    - 8.4.1.3 that academic standards, volume of learning and students' learning outcomes are equivalent to those in deliveries of the program or course solely by the University

- 8.4.1.4 whether staff of the third-party organisation who teach in the program or course have the required level of qualification
- 8.4.1.5 whether the school is providing induction, training and support to staff of the third-party organisation in accordance with the legal agreement for the third-party arrangement
- 8.4.1.6 collection of student and stakeholder feedback and how this has been used in monitoring and review
- 8.4.1.7 monitoring of the third-party arrangement, any corrective actions taken or planned and their relationship with the risk register for the third-party arrangement
- 8.4.1.8 that the third-party arrangement has undergone its annual review and what the review found, and
- 8.4.1.9 any other external review of the third-party delivery or significant quality assurance information in relation to the delivery, and any resulting recommendations for improvement.
- 8.5** Curriculum & Quality will collate executive deans' reports on third-party arrangements in a consolidated report to the Deputy Vice-Chancellor, Learning and Teaching, who will submit it to Academic Standards and Policy Committee, and Academic Council, for noting.
- 8.6** When monitoring of a third-party arrangement reveals that the third-party organisation is not complying with an obligation of the legal agreement for the arrangement, or that there is some other risk to the quality of the delivery, the executive dean will:
  - 8.6.1 invoke the relevant clauses of the agreement and
  - 8.6.2 negotiate with the third-party organisation to resolve the issue.
- 8.7** The executive dean will:
  - 8.7.1 inform the Deputy Vice-Chancellor, Learning and Teaching and Curriculum & Quality immediately of any serious non-compliance or risk (for example, an issue that may harm the University's reputation or involve financial loss) identified by monitoring of a third-party arrangement, and
  - 8.7.2 update them regularly on progress towards resolving the issue.

## 9 QUALITY ASSURANCE OF COURSE OUTLINES

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- 9.1** Course outlines will be reviewed by the program coordinator, before the start of the relevant teaching period.
- 9.2** The Program coordinator will check that the course outline for each delivery of the course is consistent with the instructions in the University's course outline template and will consider:
  - 9.2.1 the curriculum design
  - 9.2.2 their alignment with the declared course learning outcomes, and
  - 9.2.3 whether the course outline is consistent with the instructions in the University's course outline template.
- 9.3** Associate deans, learning and teaching will monitor course outlines and audit samples of them to ensure that the faculty's course outlines are consistent with the instructions in the University's course outline template.
- 9.4** The section on peer review of teaching below provides for quality assurance of course outlines as part of peer review.

## 10 PEER REVIEW OF TEACHING

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- 10.1** Executive deans and heads of school will ensure that teaching staff in the faculty's schools participate in regular peer review of their teaching, comprising review of course outlines, assessment design, course delivery and learning management system course sites.
- 10.2** Teaching staff member will normally undergo annual peer review of at least one of:
  - 10.2.1 a teaching artefact, such as a learning management system course site or the assessment tasks for a course, or
  - 10.2.2 an instance of teaching, such as a lecture, workshop, lab session or synchronous online class.
- 10.3** Peer review of teaching should be scheduled to provide evidence of learning and teaching practices for other program and course quality activities, such as:
  - 10.3.1 to assess the effectiveness of changes to courses in response to student feedback
  - 10.3.2 external benchmarking, and
  - 10.3.3 comprehensive program review.
- 10.4** Peer review of teaching will be carried out using the University's templates for this purpose, which are available from the peer review of teaching web page maintained by Curriculum and Quality.
  - 10.4.1 In exceptional circumstances, however, the Deputy Vice-Chancellor, Learning and Teaching may, at the request of an executive dean, permit use of another template for peer review of teaching.
- 10.5** Where peer review of teaching is used to review a course the staff member coordinates, the review will cover:
  - 10.5.1 course outlines and course materials to ensure that assessment tasks (including any final exam):
    - 10.5.1.1 are constructively aligned with course learning outcomes, and course learning outcomes with program learning outcomes
    - 10.5.1.2 are consistent with current practice in the discipline and/or profession
    - 10.5.1.3 are at a level of difficulty appropriate to the level of the course and its place in the program sequence, and
    - 10.5.1.4 are designed as far as possible to ensure academic integrity
  - 10.5.2 marking rubrics
  - 10.5.3 the staff member's synchronous teaching, and
  - 10.5.4 the learning management system course site.
- 10.6** Staff who are not course coordinators, such as casual sessional staff, can also undergo peer review of their teaching as a professional development measure.
- 10.7** The University's protocol for peer review of teaching is that it must be:
  - 10.7.1 a collegial dialogue based on mutual respect, in which
  - 10.7.2 the reviewer and staff member whose teaching is being reviewed share responsibility for quality assurance of teaching.
  - 10.7.3 The *Guideline: Peer Review* provides detailed guidance on the peer review of teaching process.
  - 10.7.4 In exceptional circumstances, however, the Deputy Vice-Chancellor, Learning and Teaching may, at the request of an executive dean, permit a different protocol for peer review of teaching than the university protocol.
- 10.8** Peer review of teaching is expected to be in three steps:
  - 10.8.1 Step 1, 'feed-up' – self-reflection to focus the review:
    - 10.8.1.1 Using the relevant peer review template, identify the aspect(s) of teaching to be reviewed and self-reflect, also considering any previous review of these

aspects.

10.8.1.2 In some circumstances an academic staff member may be directed by their line manager or head of school to focus on specific aspects, as a result of factors such as faculty or school strategic initiatives, or student feedback.

10.8.2 Step 2, 'feedback' – carry out the review:

10.8.2.1 Identify an appropriate peer (an academic colleague from within or outside the discipline, school or faculty) to carry out the review; in some circumstances the staff member's head of school or executive dean may assign a peer or expert to do this.

10.8.2.2 Hold an initial meeting to agree on what aspects of teaching will be reviewed.

10.8.2.3 Undertake the peer review.

10.8.2.4 Hold a conversation in which constructive feedback is given, reflection takes place and future action is agreed on.

10.8.2.5 Decide on further reflection and future action, and complete the peer review template (preferably after the peer review meeting when there has been time for reflection).

10.8.3 Step 3, 'feed forward':

10.8.3.1 Take the actions decided on and document their outcomes: this might include an account of trying an action and:

- finding that it is an error and perhaps abandoning it, and why, or
- finding that it succeeds, and what the evidence of this was.

10.8.3.2 Retain the documented actions and outcomes to be considered in the next peer review of the teaching artefact or instance of teaching.

10.8.3.3 To complete the cycle, decide whether a further round of feedback should take place before the next review.

**10.9** Peer review of teaching should occur:

10.9.1 regularly in each course to evaluate changes to course design or assessment and support continuous improvement, or

10.9.2 where indicators such as a low satisfaction rating in student surveys or an unusual grade distribution suggest that course design and/or assessment may need attention.

**10.10** After each peer review of teaching has been completed, the staff member whose teaching has been reviewed will provide the completed peer review of teaching template to their head of school to be retained in a secure file for purposes of:

10.10.1 promoting good practice among a community of teaching practice

**10.11** Schools should hold meetings of teaching staff to reflect on the collective experience of peer review of teaching as part of continuing professional learning.

**10.12** Teaching staff should use completed peer reviews of teaching for career planning; applying for teaching awards, citations and fellowships; and applying for promotion.

## 11 BOARD OF EXAMINERS REVIEW OF ASSESSMENT

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**11.1** At the end of each teaching period, the school board of examiners will:

11.1.1 review the distribution of final grades in each course

11.1.2 confirm that

11.1.2.1 courses have carried out moderation of marking of assessment tasks in the teaching period, and

11.1.2.2 where students have a narrow fail grade, their assessment tasks have been

second-marked.

- 11.2** Where the distribution of proposed grades is skewed (for example, a high proportion of HDs or high failure rates), the course coordinator should explain the results to the board with evidence of one or more of the following:
- 11.2.1 internal review of course assessment tasks have found that:
    - 11.2.1.1 they are aligned to the course learning outcomes
    - 11.2.1.2 the tasks are appropriate to the level of the course, and
    - 11.2.1.3 the skewed grades distribution cannot have been the result of a breach of academic integrity
  - 11.2.2 moderation of marking in the course has found that the marking is consistent, and/or
  - 11.2.3 students' results in the course are consistent with students' results in the same course in previous teaching periods.

## 12 COURSE-LEVEL REVIEW OF ASSESSMENT

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- 12.1** At the end of each teaching period, the relevant program coordinator, course coordinator and other staff who teach in a course should review course assessment, considering:
- 12.1.1 any feedback on it from students, teaching staff or other stakeholders, and
  - 12.1.2 whether the course staffing is adequate for quality and sustainability of teaching and assessment.
  - 12.1.3 The review will cover:
    - 12.1.3.1 assessment methods and tasks
    - 12.1.3.2 marking rubrics
    - 12.1.3.3 marking and grading, and
    - 12.1.3.4 assessment feedback to students.
  - 12.1.4 The review should inform changes to assessment in the next offering of the course, and these changes and the feedback that led to them should be summarised in the course outline for that offering.
  - 12.1.5 The course coordinator will provide a report of the course assessment review to:
    - ~~12.1.5.1~~ the program coordinator of any program for which the course is a required course or restricted elective course.
    - 12.1.5.2 The program coordinator will:
      - ensure that these course assessment review reports contribute to regular review of the assessment design of the program or major, and
      - retain the reports as part of the program's or major's portfolio of evidence for annual program monitoring and comprehensive program review.

## 13 TEACHING AND COURSE EXPERIENCE SURVEYS

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- 13.1** The University uses two standard surveys, which are administered online, to gather students' feedback on their educational experience in coursework programs.
- 13.1.1 The student experience of teaching (SET) questionnaire collects students' feedback on the teaching of individual teachers in a course.
  - 13.1.2 The student experience of course (SEC) questionnaire collects students' feedback on a course.
  - 13.1.3 In program and institutional-level monitoring and review processes, data on student satisfaction from these surveys complements data on the student experience which the

University obtains annually as part of the national Quality Indicators for Learning and Teaching.

- 13.2** Student completion of these questionnaires is voluntary and the feedback collected is treated as confidential and be managed in accordance with the University's *Policy: Privacy*.
- 13.3** The standard SET and SEC questionnaires will be used to gain students' feedback on teaching and on a course, unless the Deputy Vice-Chancellor, Learning and Teaching approves a request to use another questionnaire, or a modified version of a university questionnaire.
  - 13.3.1 Curriculum & Quality will review such requests from heads of school and advise the Deputy Vice-Chancellor, Learning and Teaching on them.
  - 13.3.2 In their decision on such a request, the Deputy Vice-Chancellor, Learning and Teaching will consider whether the request demonstrates that:
    - 13.3.2.1 the standard questionnaires are insufficient and/or
    - 13.3.2.2 additional items are needed (for example, to meet professional accreditation requirements).
- 13.4** Individual teaching staff or course coordinators may administer their own questionnaire as part of their teaching practice in delivering a course, to students enrolled in the course, provided that such a questionnaire:
  - 13.4.1 is not administered to students in the same week as the university SET questionnaire or SEC questionnaire, and
  - 13.4.2 does not have items similar to those of the university SET questionnaire or SEC questionnaire.
- 13.5** A SEC questionnaire will be administered for a course every time the course is offered.
- 13.6** Each teaching staff member will have a SET questionnaire administered about their teaching in a course at the following times and in the following circumstances (other than in courses the head of school has exempted from being surveyed):
  - 13.6.1 at least once a year in at least one course
  - 13.6.2 when they teach in a course for the first time, and
  - 13.6.3 where the staff member, their head of school, the executive dean or the Vice-Chancellor requests it, and
  - 13.6.4 at least every third time they teach in a course.
- 13.7** The requirements of clause 13.6 apply to any teaching staff member who is engaged with students in at least 25 percent of the duration of scheduled learning activities in the relevant course.

## **14 ADMINISTRATION OF TEACHING AND COURSE EXPERIENCE SURVEYS**

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- 14.1** Only Curriculum & Quality will administer standard and non-standard versions of the University's student experience of teaching (SET) and student experience of course (SEC) questionnaires.
  - 14.2** Surveys are scheduled by Curriculum & Quality in consultation with faculties and schools, to coincide the University's academic calendar and teaching periods..
    - 14.2.1 Before each survey period, Curriculum & Quality will provide students and academic staff with information about the questionnaires and how responses to them will be used, including instructions to students on acceptable language to use when giving feedback.
    - 14.2.2 Curriculum & Quality will liaise with schools and other relevant academic areas to schedule surveys for individual teachers.



- 14.2.2.1 For courses delivered in a standard semester the questionnaires will not be administered before the last three weeks of the semester.
- 14.2.2.2 For courses delivered outside of a standard semester and/or courses with a combination of face-to-face teaching and online teaching or self-study, the questionnaires will be administered before the final dates for teaching and/or student attendance.
- 14.2.2.3 Where a course has a succession of teachers, the SET questionnaire will be administered at the end of each teacher's section of the course.
- 14.2.3 In each survey period, heads of school will support the survey process by ensuring that academic staff in the school:
  - 14.2.3.1 are aware of the requirements of this procedure for collection and use of student feedback via the SEC and SET questionnaires
  - 14.2.3.2 encourage and support students to complete the questionnaires and give honest, considered responses, and
  - 14.2.3.3 preserve respondents' anonymity and maintain the integrity of the survey process.
- 14.3** Curriculum & Quality will process questionnaire responses, generate reports of questionnaire responses and maintain records of survey results and of survey planning and deployment.
  - 14.3.1 To maintain student confidentiality any survey data based on less than five respondents will not be reported.
- 14.4** All staff involved in the survey process or who receive reports of these surveys will:
  - 14.4.1 keep students' feedback on staff members' courses and teaching in confidence, sharing it only with those who need to be involved in discussions of the feedback with the staff member, and
  - 14.4.2 ensure individual students are not identified in relation to feedback they have provided.
  - 14.4.3 Where a student's response is not kept confidential, or an individual respondent is identified, the head of school will address the breach to protect the student and ensure the breach is not repeated.

## 15 INTERPRETATION AND USE OF TEACHING AND COURSE EXPERIENCE SURVEY RESULTS

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- 15.1** Individual academic staff member should regularly review the feedback from student experience of course (SEC) and student experience of teaching (SET) surveys and use it to inform continuous improvement of their teaching and of courses they coordinate.
- 15.2** When assessing the teaching performance of an individual academic, the head of school or the line manager will ensure that the SEC and SET survey results is used alongside other evidence of teaching quality e.g., Peer Review of Teaching and the Scholarship of Learning and Teaching, and not used in isolation.
- 15.3** Low response numbers make student experience of course (SEC) and student experience of teaching (SEC) survey results less reliable.
- 15.4** While students' written comments can be useful to inform teachers' self-reflection on their practice, establishing their validity is difficult, and they cannot be assumed to represent the views of other students in the course. Accordingly, they should be used with caution when considering quality of teaching of individual staff or the quality of a course.
- 15.5** Students' responses on questions may be influenced by contextual factors unrelated to the

quality of teaching or course design. Accordingly, interpretation of results of individual surveys should consider factors such as:

15.5.1 previous survey results for the teacher or course

15.5.2 survey results for courses with similar characteristics (discipline, class size, level of study, study mode)

15.5.3 whether the course is a prescribed elective or required course for the relevant program or discipline major, and

15.5.4 whether the course is being offered for the first time or has just been changed.

**15.6** Teaching staff may use SEC and SET survey results for career planning; applying for teaching awards, citations and fellowships; annual performance review and applying for promotion.

15.6.1 Individual SET and SEC reports will indicate where the overall score meets or exceeds the commendable performance standard (80<sup>th</sup> percentile) or is below the minimum standard (10<sup>th</sup> percentile).

15.6.2 The school-level compilation report of summary statistics that is provided to executive deans, heads of school and program coordinators for each survey period will identify individual surveys with scores at or above the commendable standard or below the minimum standard.

15.6.3 As part of annual review of a teaching staff member's performance, they will discuss their SET and SEC survey results with their line manager and use them for continuous improvement of course quality and student learning experience.

**15.7** The University's course outline template should include information on improvements made to the course in response to student feedback, in the relevant section of the template.

**15.8** Academic staff are encouraged to discuss the feedback from previous course experience and experience of teaching surveys with students to gain more qualitative information on how students' learning experience can be improved. Such discussions are also an opportunity to inform students of improvements to the course in response to feedback from previous cohorts of students.

**15.9** Results from a SEC or SET questionnaire may only be used for research or published in a research output with the approval of the Human Research Ethics Committee (HREC).

15.9.1 Only de-identified survey data can be used for research purposes.

15.9.2 The data must also be aggregated where it is used in these ways and must be from:

15.9.2.1 a SET questionnaire on the teaching of a person other than the researcher and/or

15.9.2.2 a SEC questionnaire on a course coordinated by a person other than the researcher.

15.9.3 The ethics approval application must specify the classes/student cohorts to be surveyed for the purpose of the research.

15.9.4 If the HREC approves the research:

15.9.4.1 when the students to be surveyed for the research are invited to complete the questionnaire(s), the invitation will inform them that:

- participation is voluntary
- their responses may be used for research purposes, and
- no individual student will be identified in the survey process or in published research outputs; and

15.9.4.2 staff involved in the research will preserve the confidentiality and anonymity of students' responses and, in particular, ensure individual students cannot be identified from communications in relation to the research or in research

outputs.

## 16 MICROCREDENTIALIALS

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### 16.1 A microcredentialial will:

- 16.1.1 have a course outline in the same way as other courses: see the *Procedure: Program and Course Information*
- 16.1.2 be reviewed by a peer teaching staff member the first time it is offered and at least every second time it is offered thereafter, and
- 16.1.3 be subject to student experience of course and student experience of teaching surveys in the same way as other courses.

### 16.2 Each head of school will provide an annual report to the faculty board on microcredentialials delivered by the school and numbers of students who completed them.

## 17 SHORT COURSES

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### 17.1 The school that offers a short course will have a systematic approach to assuring its educational quality and ensuring that students enrolled in it have a good student experience.

- 17.1.1 There will be a peer review of the short course before it is first delivered and regularly after that.
- 17.1.2 Students will have an opportunity to give feedback on their experience of delivery of the short course.
- 17.1.3 Heads of school will each year provide a report to the faculty board on their school's delivery of short courses and its activities to quality assure these.

## 1 RELATED DOCUMENTS

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### 1.1 *Guideline: Peer Review*

## 18 INTERPRETATION AND DEFINITIONS

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### 18.1 Interpretation

- 18.1.1 The following rules of interpretation apply to this procedure:
- 18.1.2 The University's *Policy Framework* sets out the hierarchy of the University's policy documents
- 18.1.3 Should any provision in this procedure be inconsistent with a provision of a document higher in the University's hierarchy of policy documents as stated in the [Policy Framework](#), the higher document prevails and overrules this procedure to the extent of the inconsistency.
- 18.1.4 This procedure must be read alongside other closely-related policy documents:
  - 18.1.4.1 the policy that it supports, identified in the Purpose section
  - 18.1.4.2 closely-related policies and regulations listed in the Related policies and regulations sections
- 18.1.5 the *Code of Conduct (Staff)* and *Code of Conduct (Students)*, which include a requirement to comply with policy documents of the University, and
  - 18.1.5.1 any other documents listed in the Related documents section.
- 18.1.6 Where this procedure uses:

- 18.1.6.1 the verbs 'will' or 'must', it states a requirement
- 18.1.6.2 the phrases 'cannot', 'must not' or 'only [position title] can', it states a prohibition
- 18.1.6.3 the words 'include', 'includes; or 'including' followed by a list, the words 'without limitation' are taken to follow immediately
- 18.1.6.4 the phrase 'for example' or 'such as' followed by a single instance or list, the instance or list is not exhaustive
- 18.1.6.5 the phrases 'described in', 'set out in', 'specified in' or 'stated in', it will be read as if the words 'expressly or impliedly' appeared immediately before them;
- 18.1.6.6 the singular, it also means the plural, and vice versa
- 18.1.6.7 any gender, it includes the other genders, and
- 18.1.6.8 a reference to a statute, ordinance, code or other law, it includes regulation, by-laws, rules and other statutory instruments under it for the time being in force and consolidations, amendments, re-enactments, or replacements of any of them.

## 18.2 Definitions

**18.3** The definitions section of the Policy: Programs and Courses defines the terms used in this procedure, other than those listed below

**18.4** The following terms have the meanings stated below:

- 18.4.1 **Asynchronous** means, of teaching, that it is provided in a digital form so that students may view and/or participate in the teaching at a different time.
- 18.4.2 **Capstone course** means a course that enable students to demonstrate that they have completed several learning outcomes of a program.
- 18.4.3 **Commendable performance standard** in relation to a student experience of teaching survey or student experience of course survey, has the meaning stated in clauses 15.7.1 and 15.8.1.
- 18.4.4 **Component single degree** has the meaning stated in the *Procedure: Program and Course Design*.
- 18.4.5 **Directed individual study course** has the meaning stated in the *Procedure: Program and Course Design*.
- 18.4.6 **Double degree** has the meaning stated in the *Procedure: Program and Course Design*.
- 18.4.7 **Major** has the meaning stated in the *Procedure: Program and Course Design*.
- 18.4.8 **Microcredential** has the meaning stated in the *Procedure: Program and Course Design*.
- 18.4.9 **Minimum performance standard** in relation to a student experience of teaching survey or student experience of course survey, has the meaning stated in clauses 15.7. 1 and 15.8.2.
- 18.4.10 **Prescribed elective** has the meaning stated in the *Procedure: Program and Course Design*.
- 18.4.11 **Required course** has the meaning stated in the *Procedure: Program and Course Design*.
- 18.4.12 **Short course** has the meaning stated in the *Procedure: Program and Course Design*.
- 18.4.13 **Synchronous** means, of teaching, that students view and or participate in it at the time the teacher delivers it, either face-to-face or online.

Version	Date of approval	Approved by	Amendment
1	13/01/2023	Vice Chancellor	New procedure