



# COURSE AND UNIT DEVELOPMENT POLICY

<b>Policy Category</b>	Policy		
<b>Review</b>	3 years from date of Approval		
<b>Policy Code</b>	AP005		
<b>Contacts</b>	policy@top.edu.au		
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2018.08	Academic Board	30 August 2018	30 August 2018

## 1 PURPOSE

TOP is committed to providing high quality courses and units that comply with the Australian Qualifications Framework (AQF), Tertiary Education Quality Standards Agency (TEQSA) standards, the Higher Education Standards Framework 2015 (HESF 2015), and professional accreditation standards, where necessary.

The purpose of this policy is to highlight the principles and practices which underpin and guide the introduction and modification of academic courses and units.

TOP has Self-Accrediting Authority for courses in the field of Management and Commerce at AQF levels 5-9 and, as such, has developed strategies to enable effective judgement of whether required standards are appropriately applied and met throughout the development and approval of these courses. The policy provides details of procedures involved in the development, approval and accreditation process for all courses, including those for which TOP has Self-Accrediting Authority. Adherence to the principles and procedures ensures that: there is consistency across courses and units; courses are relevant and meet the changing demands of professions; courses comply with the applicable professional accreditation standards and requirements of AQF and TEQSA; and courses align with the strategic directions and academic standards of TOP, as set out in its policies.

## 2 SCOPE

This policy covers all new and amended courses and units (including structural changes) offered by TOP.

## 3 DEFINITIONS

**Australian Qualification Framework (AQF)** represents the policy for regulated qualifications in Australian education and training system. The AQF is the agreed policy of Commonwealth, State and Territory ministers. Courses are expected to comply with the detailed descriptors provided by the AQF for each qualification level.

**Courses** are programs consisting of a sequence of study units leading to the award of a qualification.

**Units** are distinct units of study within a course leading to the award of a qualification.

**Categories of Awards** TOP offers programs that lead to the following awards:

- Diploma;
- Associate Degree;
- Bachelor Degree;
- Graduate Certificate;
- Graduate Diploma; and
- Master Degree (coursework and research).

The AQF specifies that courses leading to these awards must be designed and accredited to demonstrate the learning outcomes specified at the relevant AQF Level.

**Major change to a unit** involves changes that may require a revised constructive alignment. Hence, a major change consists of one or more of:

- variations to unit learning outcomes;
- changes to types of assessment items;
- changes to the number of assessment items.

**Minor change to a unit** consists of changes such as:

- a different text and/or prescribed readings;
- changes to the essential content or delivery mode of tutorial activities;
- changes to field work requirements;
- changes to the percentage allocated to assessment tasks;
- changes to the timeframes specified for assessment tasks.

## **4 PROCEDURE**

### Course and Unit Design Principles

**4.1** A course or unit proposal must show evidence of academic merit with appropriate learning outcomes. Courses and units must be based on current knowledge and research-led approaches to education.

**4.2** Proposals should focus on:

- learning outcomes in the context of graduate skills;
- learning activities and assessment of achievement of learning outcomes; and
- the contribution of learning in specific units to the course as a whole.

**4.3** Courses should:

- have the potential to attract, support, challenge and retain students;
- provide combinations of exit points or nested courses within the course;
- demonstrate evidence of demand and response to anticipated changing national or international workforce needs;
- have evaluation and quality assurance procedures involved in all stages of the development;
- involve consultation with internal and external staff with expertise in the discipline;
- utilise TOP's "Smart Campus" concept, learning resources and teaching approaches to facilitate and enhance delivery;
- provide pathways of demonstrated efficacy for underrepresented cohorts, in line with TOP's access and equity strategies; and
- have alignment with TOP's mission and its aspiration to align its courses with partners and the mission of the Australia Technology Park.

## Course Development Procedure

- 4.4 Any department or division in TOP may propose a new course for development. TOP's Template for Submission of Proposals to Develop or Change a Course or Unit must be used for proposals (see Appendix to this Policy). The template requires details of: the recommendation; rationale; teaching and learning implications; resource requirements; other implications; consultation and contacts; requested resolution date; and signatures of Discipline Leader, Dean and QA expert.

Course proposals should consider specific details including:

### *Course design*

- Name of course;
- Field of education and AQF Level, and qualification to be awarded on completion;
- Course rationale relating learning outcomes, AQF level specification, unit learning outcomes and unit assessment;
- Course rules for progression including any prerequisites and compulsory requirements;
- Expected employment opportunities for graduates
- Due recognition of professional accreditation where relevant;
- Course duration;
- Projected student numbers over a four-year period.

### *Course delivery methods and learning outcomes*

- The units of study that comprise the course of study;
- Course structure, duration and mode of delivery;
- Course learning outcomes;
- Course content; and
- Course information for students.

### *Admission requirements*

- Standard requirements for both domestic and international students;
- RPL credit arrangements;
- Permissible exit pathways articulation arrangements, and pathways to further learning; and
- Alternative admission criteria.

### *Detailed unit outlines*

- Course code;
- Weight in Credit Points;
- Unit overview;
- Weekly lecture schedule;
- Reading guide including prescribed and recommended texts;
- Alignment of assessments, unit learning outcomes and course learning outcomes;
- Graduate Attributes;
- Assessment tasks;
- Student workload; and
- Availability for student consultation.

*Unit outlines need to demonstrate*

- Consistency of content and learning activities of each unit with the learning outcomes
- Current knowledge and scholarship in relevant academic disciplines;
- Study of the underlying theoretical and conceptual frameworks of the academic disciplines or fields of education or research represented in the course;
- Emerging concepts that are informed by recent scholarship, current research findings and, where applicable, advances in practice; and
- Design to foster progressive and coherent achievement of expected learning outcomes.

#### *Learning outcomes*

- Mapping of course and unit learning outcomes and assessment tasks against the relevant AQF level criteria; and
- Arrangements for moderating and benchmarking student assessment and achievement of student learning outcomes.

#### *Staff details*

- Workforce plan that demonstrates sufficient educational, academic support and administrative needs of student cohorts undertaking the course;
- An academic staffing profile that provides academic oversight and teaching capacity needed to lead students in intellectual inquiry suited to the nature and level of expected learning outcomes;
- Staff qualifications;
- Abbreviated curriculum vitae;
- Academic leaders involved in the course development; and
- Details of staff with responsibilities for academic oversight.

#### *Learning Resourcing and Educational Support*

- The learning resources, recommended for a course of study, relate directly to the learning outcomes, are up to date and are accessible when needed by students.
- Where learning resources are part of an electronic learning management system, all users have timely access to the system and training is available in use of the system.
- Access to learning resources does not present unexpected barriers, costs or technology requirements for students, including for students with special needs and those who study off campus.
- Students have access to learning support services that are consistent with the requirements of their course of study, their mode of study and the learning needs of student cohorts.
- Identification of any specific resource requirements;
- Financial arrangements; and
- Impact of the course or existing units or existing courses.

As noted in the template, the course development process is to include evidence of external inputs or, where relevant, reports from professional members or accreditation bodies.

## Course Development Approval Process

### 4.5 The Course and Unit approval process for those courses for which TOP has Self-Accrediting Authority (SAA) follows the following process:

#### Changes to courses and major changes to units

1. The course developer or the relevant division consults with, and submits the course proposal to the Deputy Principal (Academic) for review and comment.
2. Executive Committee (EC) arranges for documents to be scrutinised through TOP's QA process and any necessary revisions made prior to advancing the course.
3. The Dean forwards the document to the Course Advisory Committee (CAC) and Senior Academic Manager.
4. CAC considers the changes, requests further information or revisions if necessary and, when approved, progresses the proposal to Academic Board (AB) for their consideration and approval.
5. AB will consider the proposal and progress it to the SAA sub-committee of Council.
6. The SAA sub-committee of Council makes the final determination.

Feedback from an external reviewer is not required when changes involve fewer than 25% of the course learning outcomes or alterations to the sequence of fewer than 25% of the units.

Minor changes to units:

The Dean reports the change to CAC and AB for noting.

### 4.6 The Course and Unit approval process for courses for which TOP does not have Self-Accrediting follows the following process:

1. The course developer or the relevant division consults with, and submits the course proposal to the Executive Committee (EC) for review and comment
2. EC arranges for documents to be scrutinised through TOP's QA process and any necessary revisions made prior to advancing the course
3. EC sends the proposal to the CAC for review. CAC notes any further issues for the attention of the EC and the developer for review and revision;
4. On receipt of the revised copy, CAC will seek input from two reviewers: either an internal and external reviewer, or two external reviewers.
5. The officer at TOP will then notify the TOP case officer at TEQSA of the proposed course submission;
6. CAC forwards the revised proposal, with a recommendation and comments, to AB;
7. AB examines/reviews the proposal and approves, or requires amendments before approval;
8. The proposal is forwarded to the TOP's regulatory and compliance person who checks compliance with TEQSA requirements, and submits to the TEQSA portal.

## 5 RELATED DOCUMENTS

- i. Academic Quality Assurance Framework
- ii. Course and Unit Review Policy
- iii. Moderation Policy
- iv. Institutional Review Policy
- v. TOP Course Review Report Template

## 6 VERSION CONTROL

Historical Version	Approved by	Approval Date
2018.04	Academic Board	24 April 2018
2017.06	Academic Board	9 June 2017
2015.10	Academic Board	22 October 2015



## Template for Submission of Proposals to Develop or Change a Course or Unit

This template should be used for a proposal for a new course and/or unit or to change an existing courses and/or units. The deletion of a unit is considered a change to a course.

Please note that a separate form is required for each unit that is to be added or changed within a course.

Please complete all relevant sections, obtain the signatures required at the end of the proposal and submit your completed document as advised.

This submission relates to the following:

<input type="checkbox"/> New course	
<input type="checkbox"/> Amended course	
<input type="checkbox"/> Deletion of a course	
<input type="checkbox"/> New unit	
<input type="checkbox"/> Major change* to a unit	
<input type="checkbox"/> Minor change* to a unit	
<input type="checkbox"/> Deletion of a unit	
<b>Name of course/unit</b>	
Name of proposer	
Email	
Version date	
<input type="checkbox"/> This a revised submission	

\* See Appendix 1 for definitions

### PART 1: Recommendation

*Please provide a short statement of recommendation or recommended changes.*

### PART 2: Rationale

*Please note that changes to courses require benchmarking data, except for cases in which novel ideas or innovations are recommended. Changes to units do not require benchmarking, but it may be advantageous.*

**PART 3: Teaching and learning implications**

Please outline implications with respect to any of the following areas:

1. Learning objectives, outcomes and pedagogy
2. Assessment procedures
3. Course structure or sequencing
4. Quality implications/assurance
5. Academic support and/or student needs
6. Other

**PART 4: Resources required/changed**

The Deputy Principal (Academic) to confirm that resource requirements are met:

1. Teaching and support staff
2. Teaching space and facilities
3. IT requirements
4. Library requirements
5. Other resourcing implications

**PART 5: Other implications**

If applicable, please provide comments with respect to:

1. Admission details
2. Any other relevant information

**PART 6: Consultation and contacts**

Consultation has occurred with (if applicable):

External Expert (including TOP's detailed response): \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_  
(not required for less than 25% of changes to course learning outcomes or sequencing of units)

External stakeholders:

Date: \_\_\_\_\_  
(not required for less than 25% of changes to course learning outcomes or sequencing of units)

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

**PART 7: Requested resolution date: \_\_\_\_\_**

Reason:

**PART 8: Signatures required**

Discipline Head

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

QA Expert

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Dean

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

**PART 9: Progressing the proposal**

*Changes to courses and major changes to units:*

1. The Dean forwards the document to the Secretary of Course Advisory Committee ([sarah.chen@top.edu.au](mailto:sarah.chen@top.edu.au)) and Vice President (Compliance and Regulatory) ([cathy.xu@top.edu.au](mailto:cathy.xu@top.edu.au))
2. CAC considers the changes, requests further information or revisions if necessary and, when approved, progresses the proposal to AB for its notice or consideration if the course/unit is within the SAA scope.
3. AB will consider the proposal and, if necessary, progress it to the SAA sub-committee of Council.
4. The SAA sub-committee makes the final determination.

Changes to less than 25% of the course learning outcomes or less than 25% of the unit sequencing do not require an external reviewer.

Minor changes to units:

1. The Dean reports the change to CAC and AB for noting.

## **Appendix 1**

*Definition of a major change to a unit*

*A major change* involves changes that may require a revised constructive alignment. Hence, a major change consists of one or more of:

- variations to unit learning outcomes
- changes to types of assessment items
- changes to the number of assessment items.

*Definition of a minor change to a unit*

*A minor change* consists of changes such as:

- A different text and/or prescribed readings
- Changes to the essential content or delivery mode of tutorial activities
- Changes to field work requirements
- Changes to the percentage allocated to assessment tasks
- Changes to the time frames specified for assessment tasks