

Course and Unit Review Policy and Procedure

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2018.08	Academic Board	30 August 2018	30 August 2018

1. PURPOSE

In order to achieve and maintain academic excellence, it is the policy of the Institute to regularly review and assess the quality of the teaching and learning experience. Course and Unit reviews are integral part of this process and an important element of the Institute's partial Self Accrediting Authority status. A formal review serves to: evaluate the level of attained educational aims and learning outcomes; ensure compliance 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; identify areas where performance may be improved; and recommend strategies for improving performance. In addition to formal reviews, the Institute will regularly engage in informal reviews through consultation and engagement with academic staff, students, the profession and other key stakeholders.

Processes for reviewing, monitoring and evaluating the Institute's academic programs form part of its quality assurance framework. They are to be conducted in accordance with the policies, standards and strategic directions of the Institute, and with reference to relevant comparative and evaluative data. The principles and procedures outlined in this policy provide the framework within which the Teaching and Learning Committee, on behalf of the Academic Board, oversees the review and evaluation of the Institute's academic courses and units.

2. SCOPE

This policy applies to all full-time and sessional academic staff and to all courses and units offered by the Institute.

3. DEFINITIONS

Academic Quality Assurance is a framework that provides principles and processes aimed at ensuring the academic quality in terms of overall strategic planning and policy.

Benchmarking is the process of comparing processes and performances with comparable educational institutions. It enables valid and relevant comparisons and provides an external reference point for the achievement of educational standards.

Course and Unit Review is the evaluation of an academic program, including its structure, learning outcomes, currency of curriculum and quality of teaching and learning including assessment.

Dean means the Dean of a School or his/her nominee

Feedback is information and evidence used to reflect upon and improve performance. It is gained from processes such as consultation, questionnaires and surveys and is regularly sought from student groups and relevant professional, accrediting and employer groups.

Moderation is a quality assurance process that ensures appropriate standards are maintained. It facilitates consistency and reliability in the assessment of student learning and performance.

4. PROCEDURES

Course and unit review principles

4.1 Course and Unit Reviews are conducted with specific reference to:

- data collected from evaluations related to teaching and learning;
- internal and external moderation procedures and benchmarking;
- analysis of student outcomes data;
- overall benchmarking relevant to core structure and unit outline; and
- consultation with lecturers, students, graduates, employers and other relevant stakeholders.

4.2 Moderation is key to course and unit reviews. Course and unit reviews utilise moderation results to ensure standards of assessment and marking are comparable to those in other Australian institutions of higher education and to gain feedback on features of course design. The Institute's Moderation Policy specifies standards, frequency and responsibilities for both internal and external moderation.

4.3 A review is aimed at confirming the program delivery of quality outcomes and satisfying the needs identified at the time of its approval. As a minimum, reviews should ensure that courses and units are consistent with the Australian Qualifications Framework (AQF), industry standards, and standards established by HESF (2015).

Course Reviews

A Major review of every course will be initiated by the Academic Board and will be conducted by the Course Advisory Committee no less than every five years. Refer to the Institutional Review Policy for details regarding scheduling of reviews. An Interim review will be initiated and conducted by CAC every 2-3 years, or as considered appropriate in response to Course moderation feedback.

4.4 The Course Advisory Committee will require Course Leaders to use the Institute's Course Review Template to prepare the report (see appendix to this Policy for the Template). Course Leaders are expected to obtain input from stakeholders in preparing the report. (Note: In most cases the Course Leader will be the Dean of the relevant school.)

4.5 For Major reviews, a Panel should be constituted consisting of Deans of relevant schools or their nominees, Chair of CAC or nominee, Senior Academic Manager, Disciplinary leaders or their nominees, Graduates of the program and at least one external expert.

4.6 The Dean of the relevant school will arrange for documents to be scrutinised through the

Institute's QA process and any necessary revisions made prior to advancing the proposed report to CAC.

- 4.7 When deemed necessary, CAC will seek further feedback from one or more external experts.
- 4.8 On completion of the review, the report will be progressed from the Course Advisory Committee to the Academic Board. The report will include recommendations and may include strategies for change.
- 4.9 The discipline Leader will be required to work with the appropriate group within the Institute to prepare a response to the recommendations, and to supplement the report with an Implementation Plan. The plan will include a time frame for implementation and monitoring responsibilities and note the affected parties.
- 4.10 The Course Advisory Committee Report and the Response and Implementation Plan will be provided to the:
 - Academic Board.
- 4.11 The Administration Office will provide administrative support for the reviews through the collection of core data in the areas of admissions, enrolments, student progress, and graduate satisfaction.
- 4.12 Data for course reviews is supplemented by:
 - Graduate destinations – within six months of graduation a short survey of graduates in full-time employment for industry and salary level;
 - Student Satisfaction Survey; and
 - Benchmarking.

Evaluation of Units

- 4.13 No less than every two years, an evaluation of each unit will be conducted by teaching staff.
- 4.14 Evaluations will consider the ongoing relevance and value of the Unit, taking account the aims and learning outcomes of the course in which it is offered, and any proposed changes or improvements having regard to:
 - student demand and enrolments;
 - content, mode of delivery, teaching and learning methods, assessment methods, grade distributions and student progression;
 - the extent to which units meet learning outcomes;
 - outcomes of internal and external moderation processes;
 - feedback from students from the unit evaluation component of the Student Questionnaire on course experience; and
 - progression rates on unit completion for each year of the course.
- 4.15 A student evaluation of a unit and its teaching methods will be conducted at the end of each semester. Information derived from student evaluations of units and teaching methods will be assessed to:

- assist staff members to develop and evaluate the unit by gaining feedback from students about the unit structure, content and resources and appraisal of teaching performance;
- assist with the two-year evaluation of units and the five year course review; and
- identify patterns of grades.

Feedback from reviews

4.16 The Dean of the relevant School is to ensure that information about changes made to courses, teaching methods and assessments as a result of the processes of course and unit review is published and effectively disseminated to staff and students. Students must be given reasonable notice of any consequences that may affect their study choices.

5 RELATED DOCUMENTS

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

6 VERSION CONTROL

Historical Version	Approved by	Approval Date
2018.04	Academic Board	24 April 2018
2017.05	Academic Board	30 May 2017
2016.11	Academic Board	9 November 2016
2016.06	Academic Board	17 June 2016
2009.03	Academic Board	03 Mar 2009

Appendix
TOP Education Institute
Course Review Report Template

Report prepared by:

Date:

Consultations undertaken in performing review:

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1. Background

This report applies to [name of program], which has been subjected to a thorough course review process during [dates for time period] in preparation for a TEQSA re-accreditation review scheduled for [date]. This report presents relevant background information, summarises key strengths and issues in relation to student participation, teaching, and staffing, and makes specific recommendations for action prior to the major review in [date]. In determining the content of the report, TEQSA requirements and the Institute's 'Course and Unit Review Policy and Procedure' have been taken into consideration.

1.1 Overall analysis of course performance since last accreditation.

2. Consideration of Course Rationale

2.1 Expected graduate employment opportunities

3. Review of Student Participation and Attainment

3.1 Analysis of student outcomes data including student feedback.

4. Review of Curriculum and Teaching

4.1 Course design

Updated benchmarking and suggested variations from accredited proposal, if any. Comments may relate to one or more of:

- Qualifications to be awarded on completion
- Admissions criteria
- Course learning outcomes, methods of assessment and indicative student workload, and national/international comparators
- Structure, duration and modes of delivery
- List of units of study (indicating whether compulsory or elective)
- Compulsory requirements for completion
- Exit pathways, articulation arrangements, and pathways to further learning
- Research content
- Currency of knowledge
- Planned staffing complement (reviewed below)

4.2 Alignment of course outcomes and units

Consider the alignment table (from TEQSA accredited proposal), that is, the table mapping the alignment between learning outcomes to AQF level specifications, unit learning outcomes and unit assessment (learning outcomes should include both discipline-related and generic outcomes).

4.3 Unit guides

Updated benchmarking and suggested variations from accredited proposal, if any. Such comments may relate to:

- Unit learning outcomes (including both discipline-related and generic outcomes)
- Duration
- Level
- Credit points
- Prerequisites
- Topics
- Prescribed and recommended texts for the unit
- Assessment tasks and weighting
- Student workload
- Delivery mode
- Learning activities
- Work-integrated learning (if applicable)
- Specialised facilities or equipment (if applicable).

4.4 Learning resources available including learning support and appropriateness of teaching spaces

5. Projected Student and Staff Numbers

<Use the TEQSA templates for projected student and staff numbers>

5.1 Projected student numbers

5.2 Staff numbers and qualifications

Table showing qualifications and experience of research supervisors for Higher Degrees by Research (HDR)

<Use the TEQSA template for research management and supervision arrangements>

5.3 Qualifications and experience of academic leader of the course

Resumes for any staff already engaged (available on request)

Position descriptions for those not yet appointed, if applicable

6. Description of Research Environment in each Field of Study

7. Summary of Benchmarking Data and Conclusions

7.1 Overall quality of the program

Include consistency with AQF, sector standards, and standards established by TEQSA

7.2 Currency of knowledge in the course and effectiveness of learning strategies

7.3 Adequacy of staffing and resources

Include staff profile, teaching and learning space, learning resources and support

8. Recommendations and Strategies for Change

Statement of how information derived from evaluation and review processes will be used to develop and shape the teaching and learning environment.

Plans/requirements for the next major internal review of [program] scheduled for [date] and TEQSA re-accreditation review scheduled for [date].

Proposed strategies to achieve change.

List of recommendations

9. Appendix: Research Policies

All policies available on request