

Award Course Improvement and Accreditation Procedures

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1. Governing Policies

[Educational Quality Framework](#)

[Award Courses Policy](#)

2. Purpose

To support the Course Improvement and Accreditation principles and requirements specified in the [Educational Quality Framework](#) and the [Award Courses Policy](#).

3. Course (and Topic) Improvement

3.1. Continuous improvement and monitoring

- a. Teaching Program Directors or their nominees are responsible for:
 - i. the identification of evidence that can guide the development and implementation of quality improvements to curriculum and teaching, and
 - ii. the regular monitoring of University quality indicator data (Key Accountability Measures (KAMs) and topic performance indicators).
- b. In consultation with Teaching Program Directors or their nominees, Topic Coordinators are responsible for the monitoring and improvement of topic curriculum and teaching delivery.

3.2. Course Quality Advisory Groups

- a. Course Quality Advisory Groups are an essential mechanism for the continuous monitoring of course quality and improvement.

- b. Course Quality Advisory Groups will have a common composition and Terms of Reference in accordance with [Annex A](#).
- c. A Course Quality Advisory Group must be convened at least once each year.
- d. Any proposed Course Quality Advisory Group members external to the university will be nominated by the relevant Teaching Program Director or nominee, and approved by the Dean (Education).
- e. Each Course Quality Advisory Group will produce an annual structured summary report reflecting its discussions and recommendations, to be submitted for the information of the College Education Committee and any relevant Industry Advisory Boards.

3.3. External benchmarking

Each year, College Deans (Education) request Topic Coordinators to nominate topics for calibration, ensuring that course and discipline rotation includes all courses within a five-year cycle. Calibration aims to provide a comparable review and constructive feedback for selected higher education topics, to demonstrate the appropriateness of the standards of learning outcomes, assessment and grades awarded. The focus is on professionally accredited courses, final-year undergraduate core or capstone topics, core postgraduate coursework topics, and core third-year topics in generalist degrees.

4. Internal Course Accreditation

4.1. Responsibility

The relevant Teaching Program Director or nominee will assume the role of academic lead, and will work closely with the University's Office of Academic Quality and Enhancement to prepare and finalise a submission for internal reaccreditation during the fifth year of the current accreditation period for the course or courses (or at the time specified by Academic Senate if the submission has been requested by Academic Senate).

4.2. Submission content

The submission will include the following:

- a. a summary of the improvements recommended as a result of the last reaccreditation submission, and details of how these have been developed and implemented
- b. observations and improvements made as a result of the continuous monitoring approach detailed in s.3 of these procedures, including:
 - i. outcomes based on recommendations made by Course Quality Advisory Groups since the last submission
 - ii. outcomes based on recommendations made by Industry Advisory Boards since the last submission
 - iii. outcomes of any academic calibration activities undertaken since the last submission, and
 - iv. improvement-focused changes to the teaching or other delivery aspects made since the last submission.
- c. the current Course Rule, including current Program of Study and Learning Outcomes for each course
- d. an outline of all topics included in the course
- e. details of any third-party agreements, including contract status
- f. credit and articulation agreements
- g. a submission from the Course Coordinator/s
- h. relevant professional accreditation information, including the most recent report, if applicable.

4.3. Submission format

The submission will:

- a. align the data and information listed at 4.2 above with the applicable standards of the [Higher Education Standards Framework](#) relevant to course accreditation, as outlined in Column 4 of the table at [Annex B](#), and
- b. include a set of recommendations to support the ongoing improvement of the course curriculum and delivery, and
- c. include a plan and timeframes for the development and implementation of the recommendations that must not extend beyond one year from the date of the finalised submission, unless an extension of time has been granted by the Pro Vice-Chancellor (Academic Quality and Enhancement).

4.4. Review and decision

- a. The submission will be provided to the Courses and Admissions Committee for review of the course's suitability for internal reaccreditation, including whether it meets the applicable standards of the [Higher Education Standards Framework](#).
- b. The Courses and Admissions Committee will determine whether to reaccredit the course for a maximum period of seven years, with the next reaccreditation submission due during the fifth year of accreditation, or to discontinue the course.
- c. The submission is maintained in CourseLoop and includes a record of:
 - i. the year during which the accreditation of the course will expire (typically the seventh year, or a shorter period if specified by the Courses and Admissions Committee)
 - ii. the recommended year for the next internal accreditation review (typically the fifth year, or a shorter period if specified by the Courses and Admissions Committee).
- d. The relevant College will work with the Office of Academic Quality and Enhancement to develop and facilitate approval for amendments to courses and topics aligned with improvements identified and recommended as a part of the submission.
- e. The Office of Academic Quality and Enhancement will provide the Courses and Admissions Committee with a report on the implementation of recommendations one year after the reaccreditation of the course.

5. Professional Accreditation or Recognition (External)

- a. Every course that is subject to professional accreditation or professional recognition will have an academic staff member nominated to lead professional accreditation/recognition activities.
- b. The nominated academic lead is responsible for preparing a professional accreditation or recognition submission for a course or courses requiring such accreditation or recognition and for informing relevant stakeholders of the outcome, with oversight of the Dean (Education).
- c. The nominated academic lead may request relevant data and information from other areas of the University to support the relevant College in addressing all submission requirements.
- d. Once approved by the College Senior Executive Team, the Dean (Education) is responsible for ensuring the submission is lodged with the relevant accrediting body.
- e. The Office of Academic Quality and Enhancement will provide the Courses and Admissions Committee with a report on the status of course professional accreditations or recognitions.

6. Authorities

Courses and Admissions Committee	Determine whether a course is reaccredited or discontinued.
Academic Senate	May direct a College to prepare an internal reaccreditation submission at any time.

7. Related Links

[Course Quality Advisory Groups](#)

Approval Authority	Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Students)
Responsible Officer	Pro Vice-Chancellor (Academic Quality and Enhancement)
Approval Date	12 July 2023
Effective Date	12 July 2023
Review Date*	2026
Last amended	Pro Vice-Chancellor (Academic Quality and Enhancement), 15 January 2025
CM file number	CF19/389

* Unless otherwise indicated, this procedure will still apply beyond the review date.

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Annex A – Course Quality Advisory Group Composition and Terms of Reference

1. Course Quality Advisory Groups are an essential mechanism for the continuous monitoring and improvement of curriculum and teaching quality.
2. The composition of a Course Quality Advisory Group must include:
 - a. Teaching Program Directors or their nominees for the course/s overseen by the Course Quality Advisory Group, one of whom must serve as the Chair
 - b. the academic lead for any professional accreditation relating to the course/s overseen by the Course Quality Advisory Group, if applicable
 - c. another Flinders University academic staff member with expertise in a related discipline area
 - d. at least two student representatives where available, or if more than one student is not available, one student representative
 - e. at least one member who is not a staff member of Flinders University, and has academic or industry expertise in the relevant discipline area, subject to the approval of the Dean (Education)
 - f. at least one representative from a professional body, government, community or other organisation with expertise in the discipline area, subject to the approval of the Dean (Education).
3. The Course Quality Advisory Group must meet at least once per year, coordinated and facilitated by the Colleges. The Chairs will periodically monitor course level quality indicator data (Key Accountability Measures (KAMs) and topic performance data and request input from Topic Coordinators where needed.
4. Course Quality Advisory Groups will:
 - a. review and make recommendations based on course and topic data, as well as student and industry feedback
 - b. offer advice on curriculum design, emphasising industry relevance through the reviews of work- integrated learning and/or industry project topics, to enhance students' job readiness
 - c. seek and contribute additional input focused on continuous improvement of the course/s and the topics within them
 - d. take a risk-based approach to identify topics within courses that require a more detailed review
 - i. if KAMs and topic performance data highlight indicators of risk, the Chair will request that the relevant Topic Coordinators submit a structured summary report focused on student learning and success, aligned with the KAMs and topic performance data for the relevant topics ahead of each meeting
 - ii. in accordance with Section 3.3 of the Educational Quality Framework, reports prepared by Topic Coordinators will incorporate insights from both student and peer evaluations of teaching.
5. Course Quality Advisory Groups will report to their respective College Education Committee:
 - a. annually for endorsement, the recommendations from each meeting through a brief summary report
 - b. annually, a summary of actions taken in response to the recommendations set out in the brief summary report previously submitted.

Annex B – Higher Education Threshold Standards Table

Column 4 has a specific focus on Internal Course Accreditation

Higher Education Standards Framework standard	Column 2 Provider Registration	Column 3 Provider Category	Column 4 Course Accreditation	Column 5 Qualification
Part A: Standards for Higher Education				
1. Student Participation and Attainment				
1.1 Admission	✓		✓	
1.2 Credit and Recognition of Prior Learning	✓		✓	
1.3 Orientation and Progression	✓		✓	
1.4 Learning Outcomes and Assessment			✓	
1.5 Qualifications and Certification			✓	✓
2. Learning Environment				
2.1 Facilities and Infrastructure	✓		✓	
2.2 Diversity and Equity	✓		✓	
2.3 Wellbeing and Safety	✓		✓ (only if regulation under the <i>Education Services for Overseas Students (ESOS) Act 2000</i> is required)	
2.4 Student Grievances and Complaints	✓			
3. Teaching				
3.1 Course Design			✓	
3.2 Staffing	✓		✓	
3.3 Learning Resources and Educational Support	✓		✓	
4. Research and Research Training				
4.1 Research	✓ (according to provider's circumstances)		✓	
4.2 Research Training			✓ (if applicable to the provider)	
5. Institutional Quality Assurance				
5.1 Course Approval and Accreditation	✓		✓	
5.2 Academic and Research Integrity	✓			
5.3 Monitoring, Review and Improvement	✓		✓	
5.4 Delivery with Other Parties	✓ (if applicable to the provider)		✓ (if applicable to the provider)	

6. Governance and Accountability				
6.1 Corporate Governance	✓			
6.2 Corporate Monitoring and Accountability	✓		✓ (6.2.1i only)	
6.3 Academic Governance	✓			
7. Representation, Information and Information Management				
7.1 Representation	✓		✓	
7.2 Information for Prospective and Current Students	✓		✓	
7.3 Information Management	✓		✓	
Part B: Criteria for Higher Education Providers				
B1 Classification of Higher Education Providers	✓	✓		
B2 Authority for Self-Accreditation of Courses of Study			✓ (if applicable to the provider)	

Annex C – Academic Monitoring, Review and Improvement

ACADEMIC MONITORING, REVIEW AND IMPROVEMENT

Key activity timeline

