

Award Course Approval Procedures

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1. Governing Policy

[Award Courses Policy](#)

2. Purpose

- a. These procedures specify the process and responsibilities for developing proposals and obtaining approval for new, changed and discontinued courses and topics under sections 3.9 and 3.13 of the [Award Courses Policy](#).
- b. The course and topic approval process set out at section 4 also applies to proposals for new, changed or discontinued enabling courses under the [Enabling Courses Policy](#), with equivalent positions carrying out the requirements of College-based roles where an enabling course is delivered by an area or entity other than a College. In the case of Level 2 approvals, the position equivalent to the Vice-President and Executive Dean that may exercise this authority will be as delegated by the Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Students).

3. Course and topic development

- a. All proposals for new, changed or discontinued *courses and topics* must:
 - i. support curriculum that is coherent and cohesive, and is linked vertically through the sequencing of learning from introductory to advanced, and horizontally through alignment with learning outcomes and graduate qualities at the course level
 - ii. be developed in accordance with the [Award Courses Policy](#) and designed to comply with the requirements of the [Higher Education Standards Framework](#) and [Australian Qualifications Framework](#)
 - iii. meet the University's strategic educational goals and be consistent with relevant College and University strategic priorities including its international strategy

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- iv. be developed by or with oversight from academic staff with relevant expertise—this does not preclude drawing on the academic expertise of staff wherever they are located within the University, or on the expertise of suitably qualified people external to the University
 - v. complement the existing range of courses and topics
 - vi. have regard to identified demand and areas of stakeholder needs and requirements
 - vii. be offered within an appropriate teaching and learning environment, and within available resources
 - viii. align with the mode of delivery definitions specified at Annex B of the Award Courses Policy
 - ix. align with the structures specified in the Award Course Structure Standards, and
 - x. be developed in conjunction with Curriculum Services, who will facilitate the approval process, using the forms and tools approved for that purpose.
- b. In circumstances where a course is changed or discontinued, the University will put in place appropriate arrangements to ensure opportunity for students who have commenced a course to complete the award, or a similar award, without disadvantage. These arrangements will be made in accordance with the Teach-out and Student Transition Procedures.
- c. All *courses* must:
- i. be consistent with the requirements of the [Higher Degrees by Research Policy](#), if applicable
 - ii. be developed in accordance with the [Third-Party Academic Partnerships Policy](#), if applicable, and
 - iii. be developed with learning outcomes which include the Graduate Qualities, if applicable.
- d. All *courses and topics* must be designed, developed and delivered within a clear and coherent framework which comprises:
- i. a specified curriculum
 - ii. specified assessment arrangements
 - iii. clearly identified educational aims—these express the broad educational intentions of the course or topic, and associate the course or topic with the progressive acquisition of knowledge and skills in particular disciplinary or multi-disciplinary fields and, where relevant, with specific professions, occupations or areas of employment, and
 - iv. clearly identified learning outcomes—these specify the expected achievements that will be demonstrated by students in the areas of knowledge, skills and the application of knowledge and skills as a result of their successful completion of a course or topic. The nature of the knowledge, skills and the application of knowledge and skills expected of graduates are indicated so that the effectiveness of the proposed curriculum in meeting graduates' needs can be assessed
- and which:
- v. forms the basis for teaching and assessment activities
 - vi. is orientated towards the development of students as independent, lifelong learners
 - vii. maps the territory for students in useful ways, yet allows them room for their own exploration
 - viii. demonstrably constitutes a clear progression towards expertise in the discipline or field
 - ix. makes explicit the generic and discipline-specific capabilities that are to be gained, and
 - x. ensures that all the learning outcomes of the appropriate Australian Qualifications Framework qualification type descriptor are sufficiently evident.
- e. Additional educational aims and learning outcomes may be specified for a specialisation, a major or a minor sequence of topics offered within a course, at the discretion of the relevant College Education Committee, provided these are consistent with the educational aims and learning outcomes of the course/s in which these will be offered.

- f. For all *courses at Honours level* or above with a research project component, the project work required to satisfy the relevant AQF level qualification descriptor may take the form of a practice-based creative project.
- g. All new *topic* proposals must include indicative student workload expectations.
- h. If a proposed *postgraduate topic* (AQF level 8 or higher) shares content or activities with an undergraduate topic (AQF Level 7), section 3.15.b. of the [Award Courses Policy](#) applies. If the sharing is substantial, the higher level topic must have the same title as the lower level topic, with the addition of the suffix GE (graduate entry), and must have learning outcomes aligned with the higher AQF level.

4. Course and topic approval process

- a. The number of steps in the approval process depends on both the nature of the change and the level at which approval is required, as specified in s.4 of the [Award Courses Policy](#).
- b. If an adviser or approval authority has any doubts at any stage in the process that the level of approval sought is consistent with s.4 of the [Award Courses Policy](#), seek advice from the Pro Vice-Chancellor (Academic Quality and Enhancement), who may at any time determine the level of approval that is required.
- c. For ease of reference and administration, the four levels of authority specified in the [Award Courses Policy](#) have been grouped into three streams for the purposes of these Procedures:
 - i. establishment or discontinuation of a course, specialisation, major, minor or micro-credential (Level 4 or 3a)
 - ii. course change proposals (Level 3b)
 - iii. new or discontinued topic, and other topic and course changes (Level 1 or 2).

4.1. Establishment or discontinuation of a course, specialisation, major, minor or micro-credential (Level 4 or 3a)

Level 3a approval is required for the establishment or discontinuation of a new or combined course, specialisation, major, minor or microcredential, except when a specialisation, major or minor is to be established in a field of study not previously offered by the University, then level 4 approval is required. Level 3a approval is also required for new courses that involve a third-party academic partnership proposed in accordance with the [Third-Party Academic Partnerships Policy](#) and [procedures](#).

Step 1: Concept proposal*

Academic staff proposer	a. Following consultation with the Dean (Education), prepare a concept proposal in consultation with colleagues as appropriate, including the Teaching Program Director (if relevant) and the relevant officer in the Office of Academic Quality and Enhancement, using the Concept section of the prescribed Proposal form.
Relevant officer in the Office of Academic Quality and Enhancement	b. Submit concept proposal to College senior executive team. c. Facilitate the resolution of queries and communicate outcome to proposer.
College senior executive team	d. Consider concept proposal, and either authorise development of a full proposal or reject the concept proposal.

**A modified concept proposal may be used to seek approval from the Pro Vice-Chancellor (Academic Quality and Enhancement) to submit new course details for publication in the hard copy undergraduate SATAC guide. In these instances, the concept proposal must be accompanied by a Course Rule, a financial model and a report of market viability that would not otherwise be prepared until the development of the full proposal. The full proposal must then be developed and approved before applications can be invited from prospective students.*

Step 2: Full proposal

If the concept proposal is authorised by the College senior executive team:

Academic staff proposer	<ul style="list-style-type: none">a. Discuss requirements and prepare proposal on the prescribed form, with the relevant officer in the Office of Academic Quality and Enhancement.b. Consult with colleagues as appropriate during proposal development.
Relevant officer in the Office of Academic Quality and Enhancement	<ul style="list-style-type: none">c. Work with proposer and others to facilitate the development and quality assurance of the proposal.d. Work-flow to the College Dean (Education) via the Executive Officer of the relevant College Education Committee.e. Monitor and manage the approval status of the proposal and facilitate the resolution of queries.
College Dean (Education)	<ul style="list-style-type: none">f. Review proposal, obtaining advice from the College Education Committee where appropriate, and workflow with advice to Courses and Admissions Committee, via the Office of Academic Quality and Enhancement

Step 3.1: Level 3a approval

If the proposal is a Level 3a proposal:

Courses and Admissions Committee	Review proposal and make decision to approve or reject it, or refer it back for further work.
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Step 3.2: Level 4 approval

If the proposal is a Level 4 proposal:

Courses and Admissions Committee	<ul style="list-style-type: none">a. Review proposal and advise Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Students).
Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Students)	<ul style="list-style-type: none">b. Review proposal and Courses and Admissions Committee advice, and workflow with advice to Academic Senate, via the Office of Academic Quality and Enhancement.c. If the proposal incorporates financial modelling, consider the model and approve or reject it, or refer it back for further work, without reference to Academic Senate.
Academic Senate	<ul style="list-style-type: none">d. Review proposal and advice, and make decision to approve or reject proposal, or refer it back for further work.

Step 4: Notification of approval

Relevant officer in the Office of Academic Quality and Enhancement	If proposal approved, indicate this approval and close the item in the workflow tool. The tool will forward notifications to appropriate staff.
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4.2. Course change proposal (Level 3b)

- a. Course changes requiring approval at Level 3b are:
- i. changes to the name of a course or specialisation (as this will change the award name on a student's parchment)
 - ii. changes to course learning outcomes
 - iii. changes to a program of study where those changes alter the course learning outcomes
 - iv. changes to admission requirements
 - v. changes to progression rules that further restrict student progress
 - vi. changes to any course or topic (including a proposal for a new topic) that requires the University to establish a new agreement or vary an existing agreement with a third-party partner, as required by s.4.3 of the [Third-Party Academic Partnerships Policy](#) and [procedures](#).
- b. A Concept proposal is not required for these changes, as they do not involve the complexity of the activities addressed at 4.1. They are best articulated in a course change proposal and expedited through the approval process.

Step 1: Course change proposal

Academic staff proposer	<ul style="list-style-type: none">a. Following consultation with the Dean (Education), discuss requirements and prepare proposal on the prescribed form, with the relevant officer of the Office of Academic Quality and Enhancement.b. Consult with colleagues as appropriate during proposal development.
Relevant officer in the Office of Academic Quality and Enhancement	<ul style="list-style-type: none">c. Work with proposer and others to facilitate the development of the proposal.d. Work-flow to the College Dean (Education) via the Executive Officer of the relevant College Education Committeee. Monitor and manage the approval status of the proposal and facilitate the resolution of queries.
College Dean (Education)	<ul style="list-style-type: none">f. Review proposal, obtaining advice from the College Education Committee where appropriate, and workflow with advice to the Courses and Admissions Committee, via the Office of Academic Quality and Enhancement.

Step 2: Approval

Courses and Admissions Committee	Review proposal and make decision to approve or reject it, or refer it back for further work.
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Step 3: Notification of approval

Relevant officer in the Office of Academic Quality and Enhancement	If proposal approved, indicate this approval and close the item in the workflow tool. The tool will forward notifications to appropriate staff.
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4.3. New or discontinued topic, and other topic and course changes (Level 1 or 2)

a. Level 2 approval is required for:

- i. a new topic
- ii. discontinuation of a topic
- iii. changes to any aspect of governed topic information
- iv. changes to a course not covered under s.4.2, including changes to:
 - a course program of study where the change does not alter the learning outcomes
 - a course mode of delivery, that doesn't result in the change of a whole course from internal to online, or vice versa a change to the name of a major, minor or micro-credential (as this will not change the award name on a student's parchment).
 - the learning outcomes of a specialisation, major or minor, or a change to the criteria of a micro-credential, where these changes do not alter the learning outcomes of the course.

b. Level 1 approval is required for:

- i. amendments to a Course Rule which are consequential on other approved changes, or do not alter the content or meaning
- ii. changes to topic data that are consequential on other approved topic changes, or which do not alter the intention of what has been approved.

Step 1: Proposal

Academic staff proposer	<ol style="list-style-type: none">a. Discuss requirements and prepare proposal for change on the Change to an Existing Course/Topic proposal form, with the relevant officer in the Office of Academic Quality and Enhancement.b. Consult with colleagues as appropriate during proposal development.
Relevant officer in the Office of Academic Quality and Enhancement	<ol style="list-style-type: none">c. Work with proposer and others to facilitate the development of the proposal.d. Work-flow to:<ol style="list-style-type: none">i. the Pro Vice-Chancellor (Academic Quality and Enhancement) or sub-delegate if it is a level 1 proposalii. the College Vice President and Executive Dean or sub-delegate via the Executive Officer of the relevant College Education Committee if it is a level 2 proposal.

Step 2.1: Level 1 approval

Pro Vice-Chancellor (Academic Quality and Enhancement) or sub-delegate[#]

Review proposal and either approve or reject it, or refer it back for further work.

Step 2.2: Level 2 approval

Vice-President and Executive Dean or sub-delegate[#]

Review proposal, obtaining advice from the College Education Committee where appropriate, and make decision to approve or reject it, or refer it back for further work.

Step 3: Notification of approval

Relevant officer in the Office of Academic Quality and Enhancement

If proposal approved, indicate this approval and close the item in the workflow tool. The tool will forward notifications to appropriate staff.

[#]All sub-delegations must be in accordance with the [Delegations Policy](#).

5. Course approval reporting

- a. All Level 1 approvals must be reported to the relevant College Education Committee, at least quarterly.
- b. All Level 2 approvals must be reported to the Courses and Admissions Committee at least quarterly.
- c. All Level 3 approvals must be reported to the next Academic Senate meeting.

6. Authorities

Pro Vice-Chancellor (Academic Quality and Enhancement) or sub-delegate appointed in accordance with [Delegations Policy](#)

Determine approval level for course and topic proposals, in cases of doubt.

7. Related links

[Course and topic development and approval process](#)

Approval Authority	Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Students)
Responsible Officer	Pro Vice-Chancellor (Academic Quality and Enhancement)
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* Unless otherwise indicated, this procedure will still apply beyond the review date.

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