

---

**From:** Kelly Smith, Acting Pro Vice- Chancellor, (Academic Quality and Enhancement)

**Subject:** Draft Amendments to the Award Course Improvement and Accreditation Procedures

**Date:** 19 March 2026

---

## **Draft Amendments to the Award Course Improvement and Accreditation Procedures**

### **Purpose**

To seek feedback from the Flinders University community on the draft amendments to the Award Course Improvement and Accreditation Procedures.

### **Background**

In 2025, an internal audit was conducted to assess the design and operating effectiveness of the University's key processes and controls supporting compliance with professional accreditation requirements. The review focused on governance arrangements, readiness planning, and the monitoring and reporting of accreditation outcomes.

A key audit finding highlighted the need to review the Award Course Improvement and Accreditation Procedures to more clearly define minimum expectations and delineate roles and responsibilities relating to professional accreditation. In response, a stakeholder reference group comprising professional and academic staff, professional accreditation leads, support staff, and college leadership was convened to draft amendments to Section 5 *Professional Accreditation or Recognition (External)* of the Award Course Improvement and Accreditation Procedures.

These draft amendments were subsequently circulated to the Deans (Education) for feedback and then provided to the Responsible Officer for further review.

### **Proposed Amendments**

The proposed amendments include:

- Minimum expectations for managing professional accreditation.
- Timeline and preparation activities outlining planning and readiness steps.
- Internal approval requirements of College leadership.
- Reporting requirements and strengthened processes for updating governance bodies.
- Documentation and recordkeeping including expectations for maintaining accreditation records.
- Roles and responsibilities clarifying the delineation of responsibilities across roles.
- Submission and reporting framework diagram.

### **Feedback**

We invite feedback on the proposed amendments to be sent to [policy@flinders.edu.au](mailto:policy@flinders.edu.au) by close of business **Monday, 13 April 2026**.

## Award Course Improvement and Accreditation Procedures

### Table of Contents

1. Governing Policies
  2. Purpose
  3. Course (and Topic) Improvement
    - 3.1. Continuous improvement and monitoring
    - 3.2. Course Quality Advisory Groups
    - 3.3. External benchmarking
  4. Internal Course Accreditation
    - 4.1. Responsibility
    - 4.2. Submission content
    - 4.3. Submission format
    - 4.4. Review and decision
  5. Professional Accreditation or Recognition (External)
    - 5.1. Minimum expectations
    - 5.2. Timeline and preparation activities
    - 5.3. Internal review and submission
    - 5.4. Internal reporting requirements
    - 5.5. Documentation and recordkeeping
    - 5.6. Roles and responsibilities
  6. Authorities
  7. Related Links
- Annex A – Course Quality Advisory Group Composition and Terms of Reference  
Annex B – Higher Education Threshold Standards Table  
Annex C – Academic Monitoring, Review and Improvement  
Annex D – Professional Accreditation or Recognition (External) Submission and Reporting Framework

### 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)

The requirements and responsibilities for professional accreditation and recognition for award courses are based on the following principles:

- a. Seeking and maintaining appropriate professional accreditation is integral to institutional success, with failure to meet accreditation requirements presenting significant academic, reputational and regulatory risk.
- b. Professional accreditation is a continuous, cyclical process that requires sustained evidence capture, reporting and assurance across the accreditation lifecycle.
- c. Professional accreditation is a shared responsibility between Colleges and central University functions, with arrangements designed to support consistent practice, appropriate oversight, and coordinated engagement across the accreditation lifecycle.
- d. The University maintains central oversight and assurance of accreditation status and associated risks.
- e. Accreditation status is represented accurately and transparently to students and external stakeholders.

### 5.1. Minimum expectations

- a. Accreditation will be maintained while any students remain enrolled in the course.
- b. Each accredited or recognition-seeking course must have a nominated Academic Lead with relevant profession or discipline leadership responsibilities, such as the Teaching Program Director or Course Coordinator.
- c. Colleges must maintain an up-to-date register of courses with accreditation timelines and requirements and prepare for accreditation reviews in a planned and timely manner.

- d. Documentation must be completed sufficiently in advance of the due date to provide internal reviewers adequate time to complete their review.
- e. Accreditation outcomes, conditions, and risks are reported through appropriate governance channels.
- f. Final reports from accrediting bodies are appropriately registered and maintained within the University's approved records management system.
- g. Courses holding ~~provisional~~, conditional accreditation, or with an imminent accreditation expiry date ~~time-limited accreditation~~ are subject to enhanced oversight and reporting.

## **5.2. Timeline and preparation activities**

- a. Professional accreditation activities may be initiated as a result of:
  - i. accreditation of a new course
  - ii. reaccreditation or review of an existing course
  - iii. changes to professional accreditation standards, criteria, or reporting requirements
  - iv. significant changes made to a course
  - v. conditions or recommendations imposed by a professional accrediting body, or
  - vi. the expiry, withdrawal, or provisional status of professional accreditation.
- b. Colleges are responsible for identifying upcoming professional accreditation requirements and initiating preparation activities in a timely manner, having regard to accreditation expiry dates and external timelines. Forthcoming accreditation activities are to be planned sufficiently in advance to support appropriate consultation, preparation, and internal endorsement.
- c. Preparation activities are expected to include, where appropriate:
  - vii. internal familiarisation with current accreditation standards and requirements
  - viii. consultation with relevant stakeholders, including academic staff, portfolio leads, industry or professional advisory bodies, and students where appropriate
  - ix. identification of any curriculum, staffing, resource, or governance implications, and
  - x. early engagement with central University functions to support alignment with internal quality assurance and approval processes.
- d. The Academic Lead for the course, in accordance with the roles outlined in section 5.6, is responsible for overseeing the preparation of the professional accreditation submission and engagement with the relevant professional accrediting body.

## **5.3. Internal review and submission**

- a. Professional accreditation submissions are subject to appropriate internal review and endorsement prior to submission to the relevant accrediting body.
- b. Colleges are responsible for ensuring that draft submissions are reviewed for accuracy, completeness, and alignment with accreditation standards and University policy requirements. As part of this process, the Academic Lead will consult with relevant College leadership, including the Teaching Program Director, Dean (Education), and Dean (P&R) to obtain guidance and confirmation that academic, curriculum, staffing, and governance matters are accurately represented.
- c. The College Executive Leadership Team (CELT) must be satisfied that the submission appropriately reflects the course's compliance with accreditation requirements and that any associated risks, conditions, or implications have been considered prior to endorsement.
- d. Following internal endorsement, the Academic Lead submits the documentation to the professional accrediting body and manages ongoing engagement as required.

## **5.4. Internal reporting requirements**

- a. Academic Quality, Compliance and Risk is responsible for preparing and providing an annual Professional Accreditation Status Report to Academic Senate and the Courses and Admissions Committee to support institutional oversight of professional accreditation matters.

- b. Where required, Academic Quality, Compliance and Risk will also coordinate and prepare Material Change Notifications to TEQSA in accordance with the University's Material Change Notification Procedure.

### **5.5. Documentation and recordkeeping**

- a. Final reports issued by accrediting bodies are registered and maintained within the University's records management system by Academic Quality, Compliance and Risk to support institutional record integrity.
- b. Colleges are responsible for maintaining accreditation submission documentation and related correspondence and materials associated with accrediting body requirements, in accordance with the University's records management obligations.

### **5.6. Roles and responsibilities**

<p><b><u>Academic Lead (Course Accreditation Lead)</u></b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <u>Leads the preparation of professional accreditation submissions.</u></li> <li>• <u>Coordinates the collection of required data, evidence and supporting documentation.</u></li> <li>• <u>Engages relevant stakeholders early to inform submission development.</u></li> <li>• <u>Ensures alignment of submissions with accreditation standards, University policies and University or accrediting body approved templates.</u></li> <li>• <u>Briefs the Dean (Education) and relevant College leadership on progress and key issues.</u></li> <li>• <u>Coordinates responses to accrediting body monitoring, conditions or follow-up requirements.</u></li> <li>• <u>Maintains oversight of accreditation documentation within the College.</u></li> </ul>
<p><b><u>College Professional Accreditation Project Officer (or similar)</u></b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <u>Develops and monitors timelines to support preparation, internal review and approval of accreditation documentation.</u></li> <li>• <u>Prepares, reviews and customises documentation, templates, correspondence and reports for submission.</u></li> <li>• <u>Liaises with internal and external stakeholders to support accreditation activities.</u></li> <li>• <u>Formats, collates and quality-checks documentation prior to submission.</u></li> <li>• <u>Liaises with the Dean (Education) to review documentation for endorsement and approval to submit.</u></li> <li>• <u>Supports accreditation site visits and related logistics.</u></li> <li>• <u>Maintains College-level accreditation records and documentation.</u></li> <li>• <u>Liaises with Academic Quality and Enhancement to provide updated accreditation information, including final reports issued by accrediting bodies.</u></li> <li>• <u>Liaises with Marketing where applicable to ensure published information is accurate.</u></li> </ul>
<p><b><u>Course Coordinator / Topic Coordinator</u></b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <u>Supports the Academic Lead in the development of the submission and initiates any required topic changes.</u></li> </ul>
<p><b><u>College Dean (Education)</u></b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <u>Provides academic oversight of professional accreditation activities within the College.</u></li> <li>• <u>Reviews and endorses accreditation submissions prior to College approval.</u></li> <li>• <u>Confirms that appropriate academic and professional resources and governance arrangements are in place to support accredited programs.</u></li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <u>Reports professional accreditation activity to College Executive Leadership Team (CELT).</u></li> </ul>
<b><u>College Executive Leadership Team (CELT)</u></b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <u>Provides oversight of accreditation planning, key milestones and overall progress.</u></li> <li>• <u>Reviews and approves resourcing plans for accreditation activities including contingency for audits, conditions or non-compliance issues.</u></li> <li>• <u>Monitors escalated risks from accreditation processes and directs actions as needed.</u></li> <li>• <u>Ensures integration of accreditation resourcing into College budget and risk registers, with annual review of adequacy.</u></li> </ul>
<b><u>AQE – Curriculum Services</u></b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <u>Facilitates curriculum changes arising from an accreditation submission and ensures accreditation-related curriculum information is accurately reflected in CourseLoop.</u></li> </ul>
<b><u>AQE – Academic Quality, Compliance and Risk</u></b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <u>Receives updated accreditation information, including final reports from accrediting bodies, from the College via ServiceOne.</u></li> <li>• <u>Registers final reports issued by accrediting bodies in the University’s records management system.</u></li> <li>• <u>Updates accreditation end dates in CourseLoop.</u></li> <li>• <u>Prepares and provides an annual Professional Accreditation Status Report to Academic Senate and the Courses and Admissions Committee.</u></li> <li>• <u>Coordinates and prepares Material Change Notifications to TEQSA where required, in accordance with the University’s <i>Material Change Notification Procedures</i>.</u></li> </ul>

- ~~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

<b>Courses and Admissions Committee</b>	Determine whether a course is reaccredited or discontinued ( <u>applicable only to internal course accreditations</u> ).
<b>Academic Senate</b>	May direct a College to prepare an internal reaccreditation submission at any time.

## 7. Related Links

[Course Quality Advisory Groups](#)

---

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

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

Printed versions of this document are not controlled. Please refer to the Flinders Policy Library for the latest version.

## 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

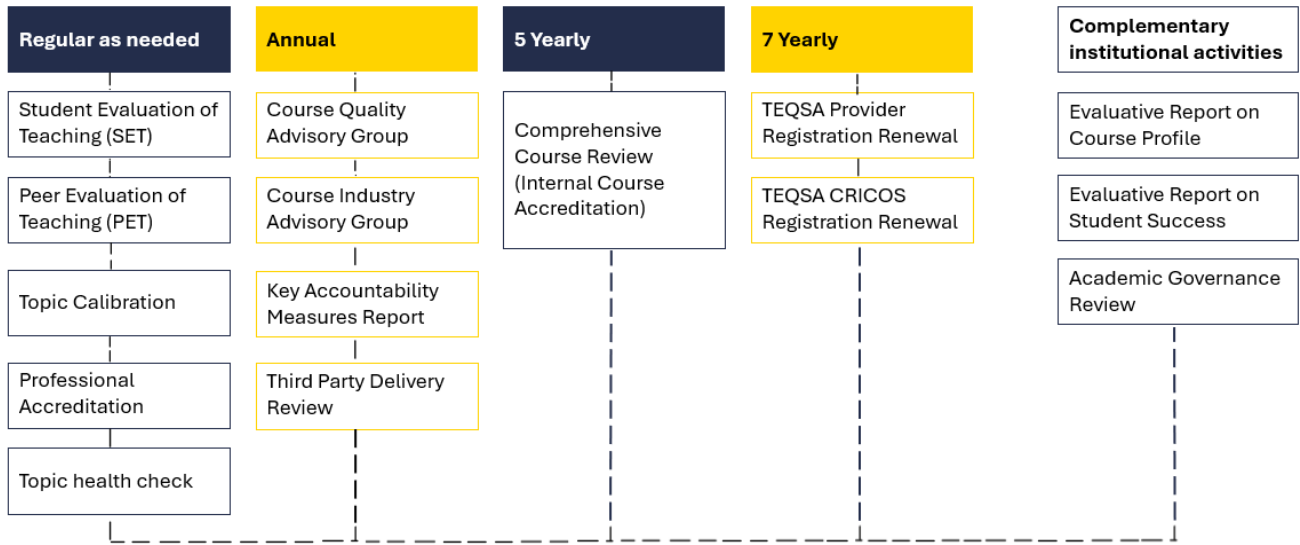
Higher Education Standards Framework standard	Column 2 Provider Registration	Column 3 Provider Category	Column 4 Course Accreditation	Column 5 Qualification
<b>Part A: Standards for Higher Education</b>				
<b>1. Student Participation and Attainment</b>				
1.1 Admission	✓		✓	
1.2 Credit and Recognition of Prior Learning	✓		✓	
1.3 Orientation and Progression	✓		✓	
1.4 Learning Outcomes and Assessment			✓	
1.5 Qualifications and Certification			✓	✓
<b>2. Learning Environment</b>				
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	✓			
<b>3. Teaching</b>				
3.1 Course Design			✓	
3.2 Staffing	✓		✓	
3.3 Learning Resources and Educational Support	✓		✓	
<b>4. Research and Research Training</b>				
4.1 Research	✓ (according to provider's circumstances)		✓	
4.2 Research Training			✓ (if applicable to the provider)	
<b>5. Institutional Quality Assurance</b>				
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)	

<b>6. Governance and Accountability</b>				
6.1 Corporate Governance	✓			
6.2 Corporate Monitoring and Accountability	✓		✓ (6.2.1i only)	
6.3 Academic Governance	✓			
<b>7. Representation, Information and Information Management</b>				
7.1 Representation	✓		✓	
7.2 Information for Prospective and Current Students	✓		✓	
7.3 Information Management	✓		✓	
<b>Part B: Criteria for Higher Education Providers</b>				
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



## Annex D – Professional Accreditation or Recognition (External) Submission and Reporting Framework

