

Higher Education Course Accreditation Procedure

Section 1 - Preamble

(1) This procedure outlines the requirements for the accreditation, re-accreditation, amendments and discontinuation of Higher Education (HE) award courses, enabling programs and units.

(2) As a self-accrediting higher education provider CDU must ensure that the development, approval, delivery and discontinuance of all new and amended HE courses and units comply with professional accrediting and disciplinary bodies and the following regulations as set out in the Educational Quality and Excellence Framework Policy:

- a. [Higher Education Standards Framework \(Threshold Standards\) 2021](#);
- b. [Higher Education Support Act 2003](#);
- c. [Australian Qualifications Framework](#);
- d. [Education Services for Overseas Students Act 2000](#);
- e. [ELICOS Standards 2018](#); and
- f. [National Standards for Foundation Programs](#).

(3) All HE courses and units must align to the [Units and Courses Policy](#).

(4) The HE course accreditation and re-accreditation process runs on a 7-year cycle, whereby each course is allocated a review date for re-accreditation. In some instances, a HE course may be subjected to an earlier review to meet professional registration or other requirements.

Section 2 - Purpose

(5) This procedure outlines the process to approve, accredit, reaccredit and amend HE courses and units to support requirements as set out in the Units and Courses Policy.

(6) This procedure outlines the procedures, approval workflows and delegations across a common curriculum lifecycle of product prioritisation, planning, design and review that are aligned to academic governance.

Section 3 - Scope

(7) The procedure applies to the accreditation of all HE courses and unit accreditation, re-accreditation, amendments and discontinuation.

(8) The procedure does not apply to the approval of Higher Degrees by Research, VET courses, non-award courses and non-accredited micro-credentials.

Section 4 - Procedure

HE Product Prioritisation

(9) The first phase of the curriculum lifecycle is Product Prioritisation where the Vice-Chancellor decides as to the strategic fit and financial viability of a proposed product.

(10) Prior to HE course accreditation for new, adapted and re-accredited products, a Business Case must be prepared by the Faculty Pro Vice-Chancellor.

(11) Business cases for HE product prioritisation are categorised as:

- a. New product proposals outside current core business or markets (i.e., fields of education) requiring significant development that are subject to robust analysis.
- b. Adapted product proposals within current core business or markets subject to a fast-track business case approval process.
- c. Re-accredited (7 year) HE course proposals also subject to a fast-track business case approval process. The business case for re-accredited courses must include a Major Course Review based on Annual Course Monitoring (ACM) data and details of quality improvements for the previous 7 years.

(12) The business case must provide adequate information to decide whether the product should be added or retained in the University's product portfolio, including:

- a. market and student demand;
- b. previous performance over 7 years for re-accredited courses;
- c. results of interim monitoring including institutional and external benchmarks;
- d. resource and staffing requirements; and
- e. additional associated costs beyond the Faculty budget.

(13) The next stage of the procedure, curriculum planning, cannot commence until the Business Case is submitted by the Faculty Pro Vice-Chancellor to the Vice-Chancellor and approved.

HE Course Planning

(14) The second phase of the curriculum lifecycle is Course Planning where the Faculty Pro Vice-Chancellor approves the overarching course details.

(15) Once a new, adapted or re-accredited product has been prioritised and approved for curriculum development by the Vice-Chancellor, the Faculty must prepare a HE course plan in the Curriculum Management System (CMS).

(16) All HE course plans must include detailed information regarding:

- a. course information:
 - i. course award type, title and AQF level;
 - ii. course rationale;
 - iii. course learning outcomes;
 - iv. nested awards, including exit awards;
 - v. articulation agreements;
 - vi. standard part time and full-time completion times;
 - vii. volume of learning;

- viii. standard annual load;
- ix. modes of delivery;
- x. delivery locations other than Australia;
- xi. delivery in languages other than English;
- xii. third party arrangements;
- xiii. work integrated learning;
- xiv. placements;
- xv. professional accreditation; and
- xvi. pathways to further learning.
- b. course Offering Information:
 - i. student cohorts including international onshore and offshore; and
 - ii. fee categories.
- c. award Information:
 - i. course award and post nominal; and
 - ii. majors and specialisations including post nominal.
- d. admission Criteria and Associated Information:
 - i. selection methodology for undergraduate, postgraduate, standalone bachelor honours and graduate entry bachelor;
 - ii. english language proficiency; and
 - iii. essential requirements for admission.
- e. marketing Information:
 - i. course description;
 - ii. course structure including major, minor specialisations and course completion rules; and
 - iii. career opportunities statement.
- f. inherent requirements;
- g. incidental fees and costs; and
- h. educational facilities.

(17) The next stage of this procedure, curriculum design, cannot commence until the Faculty Pro Vice-Chancellor approves the HE course plan in the CMS workflows.

HE Course and Unit Design

(18) The third phase of the curriculum lifecycle is Course and Unit Design where Academic Board conducts a quality review and ensures compliance with the academic requirements of the University and the legislation as prescribed in section 1.2.

(19) Once a HE course plan is approved by the Faculty Pro Vice-Chancellor, the Faculty must prepare and submit a course and unit design in the CMS.

(20) All HE course designs must include detailed information regarding:

- a. course structure, including major, minor and specialisations and course completion rules;
- b. course learning outcomes that address knowledge and skills and are consistent with AQF level and field of education;
- c. relationship to distinctive graduate attributes;
- d. inherent requirements;

- e. course benchmarking;
- f. learning and teaching overview;
- g. proportion of research;
- h. academic staff;
- i. pathways, articulation and precedents;
- j. use of educational technology;
- k. learning and teaching resources;
- l. student course engagement and progression evaluation;
- m. study plan; and
- n. description of majors and minors and completion rules for each.

(21) All HE unit designs must include detailed information regarding:

- a. unit details;
- b. unit description including whether it is core or elective;
- c. duration and credit points;
- d. pre-requisite/assumed knowledge, co-requisite if applicable;
- e. unit learning outcomes including relationship to course learning outcomes;
- f. assessment items including relationship to unit learning outcomes;
- g. learning design;
- h. student engagement and progression evaluation;
- i. unit offering;
- j. delivery mode;
- k. cross institutional credit transfer, if applicable; and
- l. incidental fees and costs.

(22) Where new units are proposed as part of a HE course they must be submitted by the Faculty in the CMS, approved by the College Learning and Teaching Committee (CLTC), resolved by the Academic Programs Committee that recommends the course to Academic Board for approval.

(23) Where a HE course is shared by two Faculties (i.e. double degree) there must be evidence of consultation and approval by both College Learning and Teaching Committees.

(24) Once the CLTC approves the HE course and new unit/s design in the CMS, it must be reviewed by the Academic Programs Committee and recommended to Academic Board for final approval.

(25) Once Academic Board approves a HE course and/or unit it is accredited.

(26) Once Academic Board approves a new HE course it declares the Award.

Course Review

(27) The fourth phase of the curriculum lifecycle is Course Review where every HE course must be subjected to 2 levels of course review:

- a. Annual Course Review where quality improvements are identified and reported on through the Annual Course Monitoring (ACM) process. Course improvement plans must be approved by CLTC and submitted to Academic Board for noting.
- b. Major Course Review that occurs at least once every 7 years (usually in year 6 of the accreditation cycle) for the

purposes of re-accreditation. These reviews are informed by previous Annual Course Reviews, student feedback at the unit level, external referencing of student cohort success and satisfaction, assessment methods and grading against comparable courses. The outcomes of the Major Course Review must inform the Business Case for re-accreditation or discontinuation as set out in sections 4.1 to 4.5 in this procedure.

(28) Faculties must establish Course Advisory Groups to conduct Annual and Major Course Reviews, report on outcomes and ensure improvement plans are implemented.

(29) Annual or Major Course Reviews may result in amendments, revision, suspension and/or discontinuation of HE courses.

(30) Minor and major amendments must consider and minimise the potential impact on students and across courses.

(31) A minor amendment to a unit involves amendments within a course accreditation/re-accreditation period that do not involve substantial change such as:

- a. adding a new learning method;
- b. changes to teaching responsibility;
- c. changes to assumed knowledge;
- d. clarifying current learning outcomes, unit description, assessment items; and
- e. additional student information.

(32) A minor amendment to a course involves amendments within a course accreditation/re-accreditation period that do not involve substantial change such as:

- a. clarifying current learning outcomes; and
- b. additional student information.

(33) Minor amendments to a course or unit are submitted through the CMS and approved by the Faculty Pro Vice-Chancellor.

(34) A major amendment to any unit includes:

- a. changes to learning outcomes;
- b. changes to assessment methods ;
- c. removing or adding unit/s;
- d. changes to work integrated learning; and
- e. change to delivery mode.

(35) Major amendments to units are submitted through the CMS and approved by the CLTC, and approved by the Chair Academic Programs Committee.

(36) A major amendment to a course involves amendments that involve a significant change within a course accreditation/re-accreditation period such as:

- a. changing course title;
- b. changing AQF level;
- c. changing type of qualification;
- d. change to course outcomes;
- e. change to entry requirements;

- f. changing course duration and volume of learning;
- g. change to delivery mode;
- h. change to graduate attributes;
- i. removing offerings or adding additional course offering locations;
- j. changes to course structure including, major, minor and specialisation and course completion rules;
- k. adding international cohort;
- l. adding new specified/unspecified pathways and precedents;
- m. changes in response to professional accreditation; and
- n. changing third party arrangements.

(37) Major amendments to courses are submitted through the CMS and approved by the CLTC, followed by an Academic Programs Committee review, and Academic Board and Vice-Chancellor approval.

(38) Where numerous amendments to a HE course are proposed the Chair Academic Programs Committee will determine if the changes are so significant that the Faculty Pro Vice-Chancellor will submit of a business case for re-accreditation as detailed in section 4.1 Product Prioritisation of this procedure.

(39) Proposals for course discontinuation are submitted through the CMS and approved by the Faculty Pro Vice-Chancellor, followed by an Academic Programs Committee Review and Academic Board and Vice-Chancellor approval. However, the Vice-Chancellor may initiate and approve course discontinuation without the approval of the Faculty Pro Vice-Chancellor.

Section 5 - Non-compliance

(40) Non-compliance with Governance Documents is considered a breach of the [Code of Conduct - Staff](#) or [Code of Conduct - Students](#), as applicable, and is treated seriously by the University. Reports of concerns about non-compliance will be managed in accordance with the applicable disciplinary procedures.

(41) All staff members have an individual responsibility to raise any suspicion, allegation or report of fraud or corruption in accordance with the Fraud and Corruption Control Governance Framework, [Fraud and Corruption Control Policy](#) and [Whistleblower Reporting \(Improper Conduct\) Procedure](#).

Status and Details

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Responsible Executive	Fiona Coulson Deputy Vice-Chancellor Academic
Implementation Officer	Louise King Director Educational Quality and Excellence
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Glossary Terms and Definitions

"Faculty" - An organisational and academic unit in the University that delivers courses and conducts research.