

## 5.1.1 Course Development, Review and Approval Policy and Procedure (Higher Education)

### 1.0 Rationale

The Course Development, Review, and Approval Policy establish the requirements for the development, approval, review, and amendment of Higher Education courses delivered by Acknowledge Education (AE) and the International College of Hotel Management (ICHM) (the Colleges) to ensure they meet quality, relevance, and regulatory requirements.

The Policy provides a structured framework for continuous improvement, course development and review that is informed by academic input, stakeholder engagement, market analysis, self-assurance practices and regulatory compliance, under the oversight of the Academic Board.

### 2.0 Scope

This Policy applies to course development, approval, review, and amendment across the Colleges. It applies to all staff and governance bodies involved in these activities, including the Board of Directors, Academic Board, relevant academic committees, and authorised staff.

All course-related decisions are made within the *Governance Framework* and *Delegations Framework* of the relevant College responsible for the course, ensuring ongoing self-assurance and regulatory compliance.

### 3.0 Regulatory Context

Higher education courses are self-assured against the Higher Education Standards Framework (Threshold Standards) 2021 (detailed in Section 3.1). For courses delivered to international students, development and review processes are self-assured to ensure compliance with the *Education Services for Overseas Students Act 2000* (ESOS Act) and the *National Code 2018*, specifically regarding course duration, modes of delivery, work-based training, resource adequacy, and CRICOS registration requirements.

#### 3.1 Higher Education Standards Framework (Threshold Standards) 2021

Course development, approval, review, and re-approval activities must comply with the requirements of the Higher Education Standards Framework (Threshold Standards) 2021, including Standard 5.1 Course Approval and Accreditation. These requirements include:

- formal approval of courses prior to delivery
- oversight of course approval and review by academic governance processes
- independent academic scrutiny of course design, delivery, and assessment
- confirmation that appropriate staffing, resources, and support are available to deliver approved courses.

## 4.0 Principles of Course Design and Development

The principles of course design and development are as follows:

- Course design and development are supported by institution-wide quality assurance processes, including academic approval, validation, and review.
- Course development is informed by stakeholder input, including academic staff, students, industry representatives, and external referencing activities.
- Course proposals are supported by evidence of demand, market analysis, and alignment with institutional strategy.
- Course learning outcomes are defined at the appropriate AQF level and support the progressive and coherent achievement of learning outcomes.
- Learning outcomes, teaching activities, and assessment tasks are constructively aligned to support student achievement.
- Assessments are criterion-referenced or competency-based and designed to validly and reliably assess achievement of learning outcomes.
- Courses delivered in online or blended modes must demonstrate equivalence in learning outcomes and student experience, and comply with regulatory requirements for international student delivery.
- Course design and development support continuous improvement through monitoring, review, and enhancement of course quality.
- Courses are subject to ongoing monitoring annual review and comprehensive review in accordance with institutional requirements and at the discretion of the academic governing body.

## 5.0 Policy

### 5.1 Governance of Course Approval, Design and Development

Developing a new course is a significant academic undertaking requiring structured planning, defined responsibilities, and appropriate resource allocation. Course development, approval, and review are governed through established academic and corporate governance processes.

The Board of Directors determines whether course proposals proceed for further development based on strategic alignment, financial viability, and resource capacity. Where the Board of Directors endorses a proposal to proceed, the proposal is referred to the Academic Board for academic oversight and final academic approval of the course.

The Academic Board is responsible for academic governance of course development and approval and ensures that courses meet academic standards and regulatory requirements.

The Academic Board has final authority over the academic approval of courses, while the Board of Directors considers strategic, financial, and resource matters.

#### 5.1.1 New Offering Approval

- i. The Provost develops a Business Case evaluating strategic alignment and financial viability for Board of Directors approval.



- ii. The Academic Board then establishes a Course Advisory Committee to guide the academic design in accordance with the institution's Governance Charter.

### **5.1.2 New Course Development**

- i. The Provost and the A/Dean Academic Quality lead the development of each new course and ensure that all stages of the development process are appropriately managed and monitored.
- ii. Foundational course documentation, including the course structure, learning outcomes, admission criteria, and professional accreditation requirements as relevant, is developed and submitted to the CAC and Academic Board for endorsement.
- iii. The full curriculum is developed and mapped against relevant legislative instruments, regulatory requirements, and institutional standards, alongside a comprehensive self-assurance evidence portfolio, for review and endorsement by the CAC.
- iv. The CAC endorses the nomination of an independent External Expert to conduct a formal peer review of the course against approved Terms of Reference. The internal development team considers the findings and implements amendments to the documentation suite as appropriate.
- v. The revised course documentation is returned to the CAC for further review, recommendation, and final endorsement, alongside the External Expert's report and the internal team's response.
- vi. The Academic Board exercises its delegated authority to grant final academic approval for the course, including any professional accreditation documents as relevant, following receipt of the CAC's endorsement report, which outlines course design, alignment with AQF requirements, resource considerations, and industry relevance.
- vii. The Board of Directors formally ratifies the academically approved course as a governance resolution, authorising submission to the Tertiary Education Quality and Standards Agency (TEQSA) and any relevant professional accreditation authorities.

### **5.1.3 Developing Course Design will outline:**

- i. The qualification that will be awarded on completion.
- ii. The structure, duration, and mode of delivery for each unit
- iii. The units of study that make up the course.



- iv. Entry requirements, credit transfers and Recognition of prior learning.
- v. Learning outcomes, methods of assessment and student workload expectations.
- vi. Compulsory requirements for completion.
- vii. Consideration of award integrity risks faced by Generative AI.
- viii. For courses that lead to Master's courses, the research or research- related requirements are included in the course.

#### **5.1.4 Development of Learning Outcomes**

- i. Learning outcomes for each course of study are consistent with the level and field of education of the qualification awarded.
- ii. The specified learning outcomes for each course of study encompass discipline-related and generic outcomes, including:
  - a) specific knowledge and skills and their application that characterise the field(s) of education or disciplines involved.
  - b) generic skills and their application in the context of the field(s) of education or disciplines involved.
  - c) knowledge and skills required for employment and further study related to the course of study, including those required to be eligible to seek registration to practise where applicable; and
  - d) skills in independent and critical thinking suitable for life-long learning.

#### **5.1.5 Developing Methods of Assessment**

- i. Methods of assessment must be consistent with the learning outcomes being assessed and able to confirm that all specified learning outcomes are achieved and that grades awarded reflect the level of student attainment.
- ii. The grades allocated to assessment tasks should be consistent with the Colleges' policies for each unit.
- iii. Assessment of major assessable research outputs for higher degrees by research, such as thesis, dissertations, exegeses, creative works or other major works arising from a candidate's research, incorporates assessment by at least two assessors with international standing in the field of research, who are independent of the conduct of the research, competent to undertake the assessment and do not have a conflict of interest.
- iv. All assessments must be mapped appropriately to the unit learning outcomes, course learning outcomes and the Colleges' graduate attributes.



- v. All assessment development must consider the impact of academic award integrity, specifically regarding the use of Generative AI technology.

#### **5.1.6 Developing Course Content**

- i. The content and learning activities of each course of study engage with advanced knowledge and inquiry consistent with the level of study and the expected learning outcomes, including:
  - a. Current knowledge and scholarship in relevant academic disciplines
  - b. Study of the underlying theoretical and conceptual frameworks of the academic disciplines or fields of education or research represented in the course, and
  - c. Emerging concepts informed by recent scholarship, current research findings and, where applicable, advances in practice.
- ii. Development of course content for programs that are delivered through a third party delivery arrangement must adhere to the Colleges' Third Party Provider Framework.

#### **5.1.7 Course Approval**

- i. Course approval must be informed by independent academic scrutiny conducted by appropriately qualified persons not directly involved in the course development process.
- ii. In considering course proposals, the Academic Board evaluates course design, learning outcomes, assessment methods, delivery, and alignment with regulatory requirements.
- iii. Academic Board consideration is informed by academic scrutiny, including input from appropriately qualified academic staff not directly involved in the course development process.
- iv. The Academic Board may approve the course, including any professional accreditation documents as relevant, approve the course subject to conditions, or require further revision prior to approval.
- v. Following Academic Board approval, the Board of Directors ratifies the academically approved course as a governance resolution.
- vi. The course is submitted to TEQSA for accreditation, and any relevant professional accreditation authorities as applicable.

#### **5.1.8 Accreditation**



- i. Where professional accreditation of a course of study is required for graduates to be eligible to practice, the course of study is accredited and continues to be accredited by the relevant professional body.
- ii. When a higher education qualification is offered, the course of study leading to the qualification is accredited by TEQSA and the learning outcomes for the subjects and qualification are consistent with the level classification for that qualification in the Australian Qualifications Framework.

## **5.2 Course Monitoring, Review and Improvement**

Amendments to courses and units are classified as minor or major and are stipulated in the table in Appendix A.

All courses are subject to ongoing monitoring, including annual review, and periodic comprehensive review at defined intervals or at reaccreditation, under the oversight of the Academic Board.

Continuous improvement underpins course monitoring, review, and amendment processes to maintain the quality, relevance, and effectiveness of courses. This section outlines the processes for updating units, reviewing courses, and approving amendments.

### **5.2.1 Continuous Improvement**

- i. Senior academic staff, including course coordinators, unit coordinators or designated academic staff, update course content, learning outcomes, and assessment methods to maintain alignment with course requirements and academic standards.
- ii. External referencing and benchmarking activities inform updates to units and courses.
- iii. Units are subject to internal review and external referencing to ensure compliance with approved course structures.
- iv. Student performance data is monitored to assess the relevance and alignment of units with course outcomes.
- v. Academic staff and student support staff identify areas for course improvement.
- vi. Assessment validation and moderation requirements are governed through the Moderation, Validation and External Referencing Policy and the Moderation, Validation and External Referencing Procedure.

### **5.2.2 Course Review**

#### **Annual Course Review**

- i. Each course undergoes an Annual Course Review conducted in accordance with the institutional governance calendar, under the oversight of the Academic Board.
- ii. The Annual Course Review provides an interim evaluation of course performance, considering student progression, retention and completion data, student and staff feedback, assessment outcomes, and stakeholder input.



- iii. The review is initiated and overseen by the Dean Academic in consultation with the Associate Dean Academic Quality, who confirms the courses in scope, the applicable data collection frameworks, and reporting requirements for the current cycle. Where a course holds or is seeking professional accreditation, relevant accrediting body requirements are reflected in the review scope.
- iv. The Annual Course Review is endorsed by the Course Advisory Committee and reported to the Academic Board.
- v. Where significant performance concerns or persistent quality issues are identified, the Academic Board may resolve to initiate a triggered Comprehensive Course Review.

### **Comprehensive Review**

- i. Each course undergoes a Comprehensive Course Review on a cycle not exceeding five years from the date of the previous Comprehensive Course Review or last TEQSA accreditation, whichever is the most recent, or at an earlier date where required by an approaching TEQSA re-accreditation deadline or a formal resolution of the Academic Board to initiate a triggered review. The review is conducted under the oversight of the Academic Board.
- ii. The Comprehensive Course Review provides a longitudinal evaluation of course performance across all Annual Course Review cycles completed since the previous Comprehensive Course Review or last TEQSA accreditation, encompassing student outcomes, curriculum currency, AQF alignment, the status of prior improvement actions, and, where applicable, professional accreditation compliance.
- iii. The review is initiated and overseen by the Dean Academic in consultation with the Associate Dean Academic Quality, who confirms the courses in scope, the review period, and the data collection and reporting frameworks. Where a course holds or is seeking professional accreditation, relevant accrediting body requirements are reflected in the review scope.
- iv. The Comprehensive Course Review includes an independent external peer review conducted by a qualified External Expert nominated by the Course Advisory Committee, with Terms of Reference approved prior to the commencement of the external review.
- v. The Comprehensive Course Review is endorsed by the Course Advisory Committee following the completion of the external review and is formally approved by the Academic Board, which may approve the course, approve the course subject to conditions, or require further revision prior to approval.

The Academic Board maintains oversight of course review outcomes and associated actions.



### 5.2.3 Approval Process for Amendments to Courses and Units

Proposed amendments to courses and units are subject to approval processes to ensure compliance with academic standards and regulatory requirements.

- i. Proposed amendments are initiated through internal review and must align with institutional requirements and academic standards.
- ii. The CAC reviews proposed amendments, including alignment with relevant academic policies.
- iii. The CAC provides recommendations to the Academic Board.
- iv. The Academic Board reviews proposed amendments against regulatory requirements and academic standards.
- v. Approved amendments are implemented by designated academic staff under the oversight of the Academic Board.
- vi. Course Coordinators and academic staff monitor implementation of approved amendments.

### 5.2.4 Monitoring and Evaluation

- i. Monitoring includes evaluation of the effectiveness of amendments in improving course quality and alignment with academic objectives.
- ii. Student and staff feedback is collected and analysed to identify strengths and areas for improvement.
- iii. Outcomes of monitoring and evaluation inform further course development, improvement, and mitigation of risks to course quality.

## 6.0 Procedure

### 6.1 New Course Development

#### 6.1.1 Business Case and Initial Approvals

- i. The Provost, in consultation with the senior management team, shall synthesise a formal Business Case detailing the strategic rationale, financial viability, professional accreditation requirements as relevant and market demand for the proposed new course.
- i. The Business Case is submitted to the Board of Directors (BoD). The BoD will review, discuss, and consider approving the initiation of course development based on this submission.
- ii. Following BoD approval, the Chair of the Academic Board (acting in their capacity as a member of the BoD) shall present the approved Business Case to the Academic Board.
- iii. The Academic Board reviews the Business Case and formally approves the constitution of a Course Advisory Committee (CAC) specifically tailored to guide the proposed course as per the institutional Governance Charter.



#### 6.1.2 Initial Documentation and Endorsement

- i. The Internal Team is to guide the development of the initial academic documentation. This foundational suite must include:
  - Course Learning Outcomes (CLOs)
  - Admission Criteria
  - External Benchmarking data
  - Course Structure
  - Professional accreditation requirements
- ii. The Internal Team circulates these initial documents to the newly formed CAC for preliminary discussion and formal endorsement.
- iii. Upon securing CAC endorsement, the initial key documentation is escalated to the Academic Board for formal endorsement, allowing the detailed design phase to commence.

#### 6.1.3 Course Proposal Synthesis and Self-Assurance

- i. Following Academic Board endorsement, the Internal Team undertakes the comprehensive synthesis of the full course proposal and its supporting materials. This includes:
  - Unit Outlines
  - Constructive Alignment of assessments
  - Mapping of AQF, Graduate Attributes, CLOs, and Unit Learning Outcomes (ULOs)
  - Alignment with relevant professional and industry standards
  - This is not a comprehensive list, more documents may be required
- ii. In parallel to the curriculum design, the Internal Team must complete a comprehensive Self-Assurance document. Its accompanying evidence portfolio serves to substantiate all compliance and academic quality claims made within the self-assurance report.
- ii. The updates from the CAC are presented to the Academic Board through regular CAC minutes/ CAC report.

#### 6.1.4 Second CAC Meeting and External Expert Nomination

- i. The complete suite of course documentation and Draft self-assurance evidence is presented at a second convening of the CAC. Concurrently, the Internal Team submits a formal recommendation for the appointment of an independent External Expert.



- ii. The CAC critically discusses the documentation, recommends required amendments, and provides formal endorsement of both the current course documentation and the selected External Expert.
- iii. The Internal Team subsequently actions all feedback, amending the documentation as necessary to reflect the CAC's directives.

#### 6.1.5 External Review Preparation and Execution

- i. The Internal Team prepares the finalised suite of documentation for external peer review. This requires the creation of a formal Terms of Reference (ToR) and an explicit review template to guide the External Expert.
- ii. The prepared document suite, ToR, and review template are submitted to the CAC for final review and approval prior to external dispatch.
- iii. Once approved by the CAC, the documentation suite is formally transmitted to the External Expert for their independent review.
- iv. Upon receipt of the External Expert's recommendations and commentary, the Internal Team shall draft a formal response to all points raised and implement necessary amendments to the documentation suite.

#### 6.1.6 Final Committee Reviews and Academic Board Approval

- i. The updated suite of documents, the External Expert's unedited report, and the Internal Team's formal responses are submitted to the CAC. The CAC reviews the complete package to issue their final comments and ultimate endorsement.
- ii. The fully endorsed suite, now containing the CAC's final comments and the Internal Team's responses, is tabled at the Academic Board.
- iii. The Academic Board exercises its delegated authority to approve the course development, including any professional accreditation documents as relevant. Should the Academic Board provide any final conditions, comments, or recommendations, the Internal Team must respond and action these requirements before progressing.

#### 6.1.7 Final Board Sign-off and Accreditation

- i. The fully approved suite of documents is forwarded to the Board of Directors. As the BoD has delegated the authority for academic approval to the Academic Board, this final step serves as a formal governance resolution to ratify the course development and authorise submission to the regulating body.



- ii. Where professional accreditation is required, the application process may be conducted in parallel with, before, or after submission to the national regulatory body (e.g., TEQSA). The sequencing of professional accreditation is strictly at the combined discretion of the Academic Board and the Provost.

Where applicable, professional accreditation requirements are addressed as part of the accreditation process.

## **6.2 Course Monitoring, Review and Amendment**

Course monitoring, review, and amendment activities are undertaken to maintain course quality, ensure alignment with academic standards, and support continuous improvement.

### **6.2.1 Continuous Improvement**

- i. Unit coordinators or designated academic staff update unit content, learning outcomes, and assessment methods to maintain alignment with course requirements and academic standards.
- ii. External referencing and benchmarking outcomes are used to inform updates to courses and units.
- iii. Units are reviewed to ensure alignment with approved course structures, learning outcomes, and assessment requirements.
- iv. Student performance data, including progression, retention, and completion, is monitored to identify areas for improvement.
- v. Academic and student support staff identify and implement improvements to course delivery and student outcomes. Improvement actions arising from monitoring and review are recorded in course action plans, review reports, committee minutes, or other approved tracking records.
- vi. Assessment validation and moderation requirements are governed through the Moderation, Validation and External Referencing Policy and the Moderation, Validation and External Referencing Procedure.

### **6.2.2 Annual Course Review**

#### **6.2.2a Initiation and scope confirmation**

- i. The Dean Academic shall initiate the Annual Course Review in accordance with the institutional governance calendar. The Dean Academic formally notifies the Associate Dean Academic Quality, Course Coordinators, and Unit Coordinators of the commencement of the review cycle.
- ii. The Associate Dean Academic Quality confirms the review period, identifies the courses in scope, and establishes a schedule for the collection of required data



from Course Coordinators and Unit Coordinators. Where a course holds or is seeking professional accreditation, the Associate Dean Academic Quality identifies any applicable professional accrediting body requirements and confirms whether these requirements are to be addressed within the current review cycle.

- iii. The Associate Dean Academic Quality, in consultation with the Director of Teaching and Learning, confirms the data collection templates and reporting frameworks to be used for the current review cycle prior to the commencement of data compilation.

#### 6.2.2b Data Collection and Analysis

- i. The Course Coordinator, with input from Unit Coordinators and the Director of Teaching and Learning, compiles and analyses data across the following areas for the full review period, inclusive of all trimester cycles:
  - Enrolment data: Total enrolment numbers, disaggregated by new and continuing students, and by nested course where applicable.
  - Student progression rates: The proportion of students who progress from one study period to the next without interruption.
  - Attrition rates: Overall attrition disaggregated by new student cohorts and continuing student cohorts.
  - Pass rates and grade distributions: Unit-level and course-level pass rates, with grade distribution data presented across all trimesters.
  - Unit Evaluation Questionnaire results: Student satisfaction data disaggregated by trimester and unit, with identification of any units where satisfaction falls below the institutional threshold. Units meeting the threshold for escalation shall be flagged as Units for Attention.
  - Course completions data: The number of students who completed the course during the review period.
  - Graduate Satisfaction Survey outcomes: Results from the most recent Graduate Satisfaction Survey, including overall satisfaction and satisfaction with course outcomes.
  - Student disengagement and at-risk intervention outcomes: A summary of interventions initiated during the review period and the outcomes achieved for students identified as at risk of disengaging.
  - Professional accreditation data (where applicable): Evidence relevant to the course's compliance with professional accrediting body standards, including any data or metrics specified by the relevant accrediting body as part of ongoing accreditation requirements.

This is not an exhaustive list and further data domains can be identified by the Associate Dean Academic Quality

- ii. Unit Coordinators are responsible for providing accurate unit-level data and completing unit reports within the timeframes established by the Associate Dean Academic Quality.



iv. The Dean Academic and Associate Dean Academic Quality review the compiled data for completeness and accuracy before it is provided to the Course Coordinator for report synthesis.

#### 6.2.2c Annual Course Review Report Synthesis

- i. The Course Coordinator synthesises the Annual Course Review Report, drawing on data provided by Unit Coordinators and the Director of Teaching and Learning. The report must include:
  - A summary of findings across all data domains referenced in 6.2.2b.
  - Identification of any Units for Attention, including the nature of the concern and the trimester in which it was identified
  - Analysis of trends in student outcomes relative to prior review periods
  - Recommended improvement actions at both unit level and course level, with indicative timeframes and responsible parties
- ii. The completed draft Annual Course Review Report is submitted to the Dean Academic and the Associate Dean Academic Quality for academic quality review. Following their endorsement, the report is referred to the Quality team for review of all remaining quality and compliance matters prior to escalation to the Course Advisory.

#### 6.2.2d Course Advisory Committee Review and Endorsement

- i. The Annual Course Review Report is presented to the Course Advisory Committee (CAC) as a standing agenda item at its scheduled meeting.
- ii. The CAC reviews the findings, discusses the identified Units for Attention, and considers the recommended improvement actions. The CAC may recommend additional or amended actions as appropriate.
- iii. The CAC provides formal endorsement of the Annual Course Review Report and its associated recommended improvement actions. Where the CAC identifies concerns of a material nature, it may recommend the annual report be brought back to the CAC upon amendments for further deliberation.

#### 6.2.2e Academic Board Review and Approval

- i. The CAC Chair presents the endorsed Annual Course Review Report to the Academic Board at its next scheduled meeting, accompanied by a summary of the CAC's deliberations and any recommendations for escalation.
- ii. The Academic Board formally notes or approves the outcomes of the Annual Course Review and any associated improvement actions. The Academic Board may issue additional directions or conditions to be actioned by the Dean Academic and the Associate Dean Academic Quality.



- iii. Where the Academic Board identifies significant performance concerns, persistent issues across multiple review cycles, or material risks to course quality or regulatory compliance, it may formally resolve to initiate a triggered Comprehensive Course Review.

### **6.2.3 Comprehensive Course Review**

#### **6.2.3a Initiation and Scope Confirmation**

- i. The Dean Academic shall initiate the Comprehensive Course Review in accordance with the institutional governance calendar or, where applicable, in response to an approaching TEQSA re-accreditation deadline or a formal resolution of the Academic Board to initiate a triggered review. The Dean Academic formally notifies the Associate Dean Academic Quality, Course Coordinators, and Unit Coordinators of the commencement of the review.
- ii. The Associate Dean Academic Quality confirms the full review period, identifies the course or courses in scope, and establishes a schedule for the collection and compilation of all required data from Course Coordinators and Unit Coordinators. The review period shall encompass all Annual Course Review cycles completed since the previous Comprehensive Course Review or last TEQSA accreditation, whichever is the most recent.
- iii. The Associate Dean Academic Quality, in consultation with the Director of Teaching and Learning, confirms the data collection templates, longitudinal reporting frameworks, and self-assurance evidence requirements to be used for the current review cycle prior to the commencement of data compilation.
- iv. Where a course holds or is seeking professional accreditation, the Associate Dean Academic Quality identifies all applicable professional accrediting body requirements and confirms that these requirements are fully addressed within the scope of the Comprehensive Course Review.

#### **6.2.3b Data Compilation and Analysis**

- i. The Course Coordinator, with input from Unit Coordinators and the Director of Teaching and Learning, compiles and analyses cumulative data across the following domains for the full review period, presented longitudinally across all Annual Course Review cycles within scope:
  - Enrolment data: Total enrolment numbers across the full review period, disaggregated by new and continuing students, and by nested course where applicable, with identification of enrolment trends over time.
  - Student progression rates: The proportion of students progressing from one study period to the next without interruption, presented across the full review period with trend analysis.



- Attrition rates: Overall attrition disaggregated by new and continuing student cohorts, with longitudinal trend analysis across the review period.
- Pass rates and grade distributions: Unit-level and course-level pass rates with grade distribution data across all trimesters within the review period, including identification of any persistent underperformance at unit or course level.
- Unit Evaluation Questionnaire results: Cumulative student satisfaction data disaggregated by trimester and unit, with identification of units where satisfaction has persistently fallen below the institutional threshold across multiple review cycles.
- Course completions data: The total number of students who completed the course during the review period, with analysis of completion trends.
- Graduate Satisfaction Survey outcomes: Results from all Graduate Satisfaction Surveys conducted during the review period, including overall satisfaction, satisfaction with course outcomes, and trends across survey cycles.
- Student disengagement and at-risk intervention outcomes: A cumulative summary of interventions initiated across the review period and the outcomes achieved for students identified as at risk of disengaging.
- Employment and further study outcomes: Graduate employment rates and further study data, where available, as indicators of course relevance and the achievement of course learning outcomes.
- Curriculum currency and industry alignment: An evaluation of the currency of course content, unit design, and learning outcomes relative to current industry practice, professional standards, and employer expectations.
- AQF alignment: An assessment of the course's ongoing alignment with the relevant AQF level descriptor, including the appropriateness of learning outcomes, assessment design, and expected graduate capabilities.
- Prior Annual Course Review findings: A consolidated summary of all improvement actions recommended across prior Annual Course Reviews within the review period, including the status of implementation and any matters identified as unresolved or escalated.
- Professional accreditation data (where applicable): Cumulative evidence relevant to the course's compliance with professional accrediting body standards across the full review period, including any conditions, recommendations, or findings arising from prior accreditation activities.

This is not an exhaustive list and further data domains can be identified by the Associate Dean Academic Quality

- ii. Unit Coordinators are responsible for providing accurate unit-level data and completing unit reports within the timeframes established by the Associate Dean Academic Quality.



- iii. The Dean Academic and the Associate Dean Academic Quality review all compiled data for completeness and accuracy before it is provided to the Course Coordinator for report synthesis.

#### 6.2.3c Comprehensive Course Review Report Synthesis

- i. The Course Coordinator synthesises the Comprehensive Course Review Report, drawing on cumulative data provided by Unit Coordinators and the Director of Teaching and Learning. The report must include:
  - A longitudinal summary of findings across all data domains referenced in 6.2.3b
  - Identification of any persistent Units for Attention, including the nature of the concern, the review cycles in which it was identified, and the status of any prior improvement actions
  - Analysis of trends in student outcomes across the full review period relative to institutional benchmarks and sector comparators where available
  - An evaluation of curriculum currency, AQF alignment, and the ongoing suitability of course learning outcomes and assessment design
  - A summary of the status of all improvement actions from prior Annual Course Reviews, including any unresolved or escalated matters
  - Recommended improvement or remediation actions at both unit level and course level, with indicative timeframes and responsible parties
  - A self-assurance evidence portfolio demonstrating the course's compliance with all applicable legislative instruments, regulatory requirements, and, where relevant, professional accreditation standards
- ii. The completed draft Comprehensive Course Review Report is submitted to the Dean Academic and the Associate Dean Academic Quality for academic quality review. Following their endorsement, the report is referred to the Quality team for review of all remaining quality and compliance matters prior to escalation to the Course Advisory Committee.

#### 6.2.3d Course Advisory Committee Review, Nomination, and Endorsement

- i. The Comprehensive Course Review Report is presented to the Course Advisory Committee at its next scheduled meeting as a formal agenda item.
- ii. The CAC reviews the findings of the Comprehensive Course Review Report, considers the recommended improvement and remediation actions, and discusses any persistent Units for Attention or escalated concerns arising from prior Annual Course Reviews. The CAC may recommend additional or amended actions as appropriate.
- iii. Following its review of the Comprehensive Course Review Report, the CAC formally nominates an independent External Expert to conduct an external peer review of the course. The nominated External Expert must hold appropriate qualifications and standing in the relevant discipline at an AQF level equivalent to or higher than the



course under review, and must not have been directly involved in the development or delivery of the course.

- iv. The CAC approves the Terms of Reference for the external review prior to the commencement of the External Expert's review. The Terms of Reference shall define the scope of the review, the documentation to be provided to the External Expert, the criteria against which the course is to be evaluated, and the format and timeframe for the delivery of the External Expert's report.
- v. Where the CAC identifies significant material concerns arising from the Comprehensive Course Review Report prior to the commencement of the external review, it may require the report to be amended and resubmitted before the nomination and Terms of Reference are finalised.

#### 6.2.3e Independent External Review

- i. The External Expert conducts a formal review of the course against the approved Terms of Reference and relevant legislative instruments. The review is informed by the Comprehensive Course Review Report, the self-assurance evidence portfolio, and any additional documentation specified in the Terms of Reference.
- ii. The External Expert provides a written report of findings and recommendations to the Dean Academic and the Associate Dean Academic Quality upon completion of the review.
- iii. The Course Coordinator, in consultation with the Dean Academic and the Associate Dean Academic Quality, prepares a formal written response to the External Expert's findings. Where the External Expert's recommendations are accepted, the Course Coordinator implements the required amendments to the course documentation suite within the timeframes specified. Where recommendations are not accepted, the written response must provide a reasoned justification.
- iv. The amended course documentation, the External Expert's report, and the internal team's formal response are consolidated and returned to the Course Advisory Committee for final endorsement.

#### 6.2.3f Course Advisory Committee Final Endorsement

- i. The CAC reviews the amended course documentation, the External Expert's report, and the internal team's response at its next scheduled meeting.
- ii. The CAC considers whether the External Expert's recommendations have been appropriately addressed and whether the amended documentation meets the requirements of the Terms of Reference.
- iii. The CAC provides formal final endorsement of the Comprehensive Course Review, including the amended course documentation and the recommended improvement



actions, prior to escalation to the Academic Board. Where the CAC is not satisfied that the External Expert's findings have been adequately addressed, it may require further amendments before final endorsement is granted.

#### 6.2.3g Academic Board Review and Final Approval

- i. The CAC Chair presents the endorsed Comprehensive Course Review to the Academic Board at its next scheduled meeting, accompanied by the External Expert's report, the internal team's response, the CAC's deliberations, and any recommendations for escalation or conditions of approval.
- ii. The Academic Board exercises its delegated authority to formally approve the outcomes of the Comprehensive Course Review. The Academic Board may approve the course, approve the course subject to conditions, or require further revision prior to approval.
- iii. The Academic Board may issue additional directions or conditions to be actioned by the Dean Academic and the Associate Dean Academic Quality upon approval.

#### 6.2.4 Approval of Amendments to Courses and Units

- i. Amendments to courses and units are classified as minor or major as indicated in APPENDIX A.
- ii. Minor amendments are recorded through the relevant internal approval process and retained in course records.
- iii. Major amendments, including changes to course learning outcomes, course structure, volume of learning, or AQF level, require approval by the Academic Board and possibly TEQSA notice.
- iv. Proposed amendments are initiated through internal review processes and must align with institutional requirements and academic standards.
- v. The CAC reviews proposed amendments and provides recommendations to the Academic Board.
- vi. The Academic Board considers proposed amendments against academic standards, regulatory requirements, and institutional objectives.
- vii. Approved amendments are implemented by designated academic staff.

#### 6.2.5 Monitoring and Evaluation

- i. Course Coordinators or designated academic staff monitor implementation of approved amendments.



- ii. Monitoring includes evaluation of the effectiveness of amendments in improving course quality and alignment with course outcomes.
- iii. Student and staff feedback is collected and analysed to identify areas for further improvement.
- iv. Monitoring outcomes are documented in course reports, meeting minutes, review records, or other approved quality assurance records.
- v. Outcomes of monitoring and evaluation inform ongoing course improvement.

## 7.0 Roles and Responsibilities

### 7.1 Board of Directors (The Board)

- Determines whether course proposals proceed based on strategic alignment, financial viability, and resource capacity. The Board does not approve academic content or academic standards.
- Formally ratifies the academically approved course as a governance resolution, authorising submissions of New Course and Re-accreditation applications to relevant governing bodies.

### 7.2 Academic Board

- Approves courses prior to submission to TEQSA .
- Provides academic oversight of course monitoring, review, and improvement.
- Considers reports from CAC.
- Ensures courses meet academic standards and regulatory requirements.
- Has final authority over the academic approval of courses, including course design, learning outcomes, assessment, and academic standards.
- Formally approves the constitution of a CAC for each proposed new course in accordance with the Governance Charter.
- Formally endorses foundational course documentation escalated by the CAC during the new course development process.
- Formally notes or approves the outcomes of the Annual Course Review and any associated improvement actions, and may issue additional directions or conditions to be actioned by the Dean Academic and the Associate Dean Academic Quality.
- Exercises delegated authority to formally approve the outcomes of the Comprehensive Course Review, and may approve the course, approve the course subject to conditions, or require further revision prior to approval.
- May formally resolve to initiate a triggered Comprehensive Course Review where significant performance concerns, persistent issues across multiple review cycles, or material risks to course quality or regulatory compliance are identified.

### 7.3 Course Advisory Committee (CAC):

- Provides academic and industry input into course design and development
- Reviews course structure, learning outcomes, and assessment.
- Conducts Annual Course Review and periodic Comprehensive Review



- Reports to the Academic Board on course quality, performance, and improvement.
- Reviews and endorses the Annual Course Review Report and its associated recommended improvement actions at its scheduled meeting. Where concerns of a material nature are identified, may require the report to be returned for amendment and further deliberation before endorsement is granted.
- Reviews the Comprehensive Course Review Report, considers recommended improvement and remediation actions, and discusses any persistent Units for Attention or escalated concerns arising from prior Annual Course Reviews.
- Formally nominates an independent External Expert to conduct external peer review during the Comprehensive Course Review, and approves the Terms of Reference for the external review prior to its commencement.
- Provides formal final endorsement of the Comprehensive Course Review, including amended course documentation and recommended improvement actions, prior to escalation to the Academic Board. Where the CAC is not satisfied that the External Expert's findings have been adequately addressed, it may require further amendments before final endorsement is granted.
- Reviews proposed amendments to courses and units, including alignment with relevant academic policies, and provides recommendations to the Academic Board.
- The CAC Chair presents endorsed Annual Course Review Reports and Comprehensive Course Review Reports to the Academic Board at its next scheduled meeting, accompanied by a summary of the CAC's deliberations and any recommendations for escalation or conditions of approval.

#### **7.4 CEO (Chief Executive Officer)**

- The CEO's role is limited to strategic alignment, financial viability, and resource capacity and does not extend to academic judgement or approval.

#### **7.5 Chief Financial Officer (CFO)**

- Recommends course fees as part of the course development process.

#### **7.6 Provost**

- Develops and submits a formal Business Case to the Board of Directors, detailing the strategic rationale, financial viability, professional accreditation requirements, and market demand for proposed new courses.
- Oversees course development and ensures appropriate academic scrutiny and quality assurance.
- Provides academic leadership across course development and review processes.
- Leads the development of each new course in conjunction with the Associate Dean Academic Quality, ensuring all stages of the development process are appropriately managed and monitored.
- Determines, in conjunction with the Academic Board, the sequencing of professional accreditation in relation to TEQSA submission.

#### **7.7 Dean - Academic**



- Initiates the Annual Course Review and Comprehensive Course Review in accordance with the institutional governance calendar and formally notifies the Associate Dean Academic Quality, Course Coordinators, and Unit Coordinators of the commencement of each review cycle.
- Reviews all compiled data for completeness and accuracy, together with the Associate Dean Academic Quality, before the data is provided to the Course Coordinator for report synthesis.
- Endorses the completed draft Annual Course Review Report and Comprehensive Course Review Report for academic quality prior to referral to the Quality team.
- Receives the External Expert's written report of findings and recommendations upon completion of the independent external review, and is consulted in the preparation of the formal written response to those findings.
- Actions any additional directions or conditions issued by the Academic Board upon approval of the Annual Course Review or Comprehensive Course Review.

### **7.8 Associate Dean - Academic Quality**

- Leads the development of each new course in conjunction with the Provost, ensuring all stages of the development process are appropriately managed and monitored.
- Works with CAC to ensure course design meets academic and regulatory requirements
- Confirms the review period, identifies courses in scope, and establishes a schedule for the collection of required data from Course Coordinators and Unit Coordinators for each Annual Course Review and Comprehensive Course Review cycle
- In consultation with the Director of Teaching and Learning, confirms the data collection templates, reporting frameworks, and self-assurance evidence requirements to be used for each review cycle prior to the commencement of data compilation.
- Identifies applicable professional accrediting body requirements and confirms that these requirements are addressed within the scope of the relevant review cycle.
- Reviews all compiled data for completeness and accuracy, together with the Dean Academic, before the data is provided to the Course Coordinator for report synthesis.
- Endorses the completed draft Annual Course Review Report and Comprehensive Course Review Report for academic quality prior to referral to the Quality team.
- Receives the External Expert's written report of findings and recommendations upon completion of the independent external review, and is consulted in the preparation of the formal written response to those findings.
- Actions any additional directions or conditions issued by the Academic Board upon approval of the Annual Course Review or Comprehensive Course Review.

### **7.9 Director of Teaching and Learning:**

- Is consulted by the Associate Dean Academic Quality in confirming data collection templates, reporting frameworks, and self-assurance evidence requirements for each review cycle.
- Provides input into the compilation and analysis of data for Annual Course Reviews and Comprehensive Course Reviews.

Contributes input to the Course Coordinator for the synthesis of Annual Course Review Reports and Comprehensive Course Review Reports.

### **7.10 Quality and Accreditation Manager**



- Coordinates submission of approved course documentation to TEQSA, in consultation with the Dean (Higher Education) and the Provost.
- Supports compliance with accreditation requirements and quality assurance processes associated with course approval and accreditation.
- Reviews all quality and compliance matters in endorsed Annual Course Review Reports and Comprehensive Course Review Reports prior to escalation to the Course Advisory Committee.

**7.11 Course Coordinators (or their delegates)**

- Carry out unit adjustments to enhance course quality and alignment as outlined in the Quality Assurance Policy: Moderation, Validation, and External Referencing Policy.
- Oversee the accurate execution of approved amendments within each course.
- Monitor the implementation of approved amendments to assess their effectiveness in enhancing course quality and alignment.
- Collaborate with academic and pastoral care staff to identify areas for improvement and opportunities for enhancing subject unit content and delivery.
- Compile and analyse data across all required domains for Annual Course Reviews and Comprehensive Course Reviews, with input from Unit Coordinators and the Director of Teaching and Learning.
- Synthesise the Annual Course Review Report and the Comprehensive Course Review Report, drawing on data and input provided by Unit Coordinators and the Director of Teaching and Learning.
- Prepare a formal written response to the External Expert's findings during the Comprehensive Course Review, in consultation with the Dean Academic and the Associate Dean Academic Quality. Where recommendations are accepted, implement the required amendments to course documentation within the timeframes specified. Where recommendations are not accepted, provide a reasoned justification.
- Provide accurate unit-level data and complete unit reports within the timeframes established by the Associate Dean Academic Quality for Annual Course Reviews and Comprehensive Course Reviews.

**7.12 Independent External Expert:**

- Conducts an independent, formal review of the course against the approved Terms of Reference and relevant legislative instruments, informed by the Comprehensive Course Review Report, the self-assurance evidence portfolio, and any additional documentation specified in the Terms of Reference.
- Provides a written report of findings and recommendations to the Dean Academic and the Associate Dean Academic Quality upon completion of the review.
- Must hold appropriate qualifications and standing in the relevant discipline at an AQF level equivalent to or higher than the course under review, and must not have been directly involved in the development or delivery of the course.

## 8.0 Definitions

Term	Definition
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**Acknowledge Education Pty. Ltd.**

acknowledgeeducation.edu.au | ABN 15 005 596 565 | CRICOS 00197D | PRV 12146 | RTO 4112 | SCHOOL 1997

**International College of Hotel Management**

ichm.edu.au | ABN 64 080 984 738 | PRV 12099 | CRICOS 02914G



Accreditation	The process of official recognition or approval by a regulatory authority or accrediting body to ensure that courses and educational programs meet predetermined standards of quality and compliance
Academic Board	A committee responsible for overseeing the academic aspects of the organisation, including the academic approval and review of courses and course proposals.
ASQA (Australian Skills Quality Authority)	The regulatory authority responsible for the quality assurance and accreditation of vocational education and training providers in Australia.
Australian Qualifications Framework (AQF)	A national policy that ensures the alignment and consistency of qualifications offered in Australia's education and training sectors.
Board of Directors (The Board)	The governing body responsible for the strategic oversight of the entity or entities to which this policy applies.
Course Accreditation	The process of obtaining official recognition and approval for a course by relevant regulatory bodies.
Course Advisory Committees (CAC)	Discipline-specific committees established by the Academic Board to assess the viability and relevance of proposed courses, composed of various stakeholders, including industry and student representatives.
Course Approval	The formal approval of a new course or a significant modification to an existing course through the institution's approved governance processes.
Course Development	Creating and designing new courses or modifying existing courses to meet educational objectives and requirements.
Course Feasibility and Market Analysis Form	A document used to submit preliminary proposals for new courses to the relevant executive officer for initial strategic and resource review.
Course Review	The systematic evaluation and assessment of courses to ensure their quality, relevance, and effectiveness in achieving desired learning outcomes.
Curriculum	The overall structure, content, and organisation of a course, including the sequence of topics, learning objectives, instructional materials, and assessment methods.
Executive Team	A group of high-level executives within AE, typically responsible for strategic decision-making and policy implementation comprising of the CEO, CFO, CIO, Dean, Head of VET, Quality Assurance Manager and Director of Student Recruitment.
Industry Regulator	A governing body or organisation overseeing and regulating specific industries, ensuring that courses meet industry standards and requirements for graduates to work in the respective field.
Internal Team	The Internal Team refers to the group of staff responsible for leading and coordinating the development, documentation, and self-assurance activities associated with a new course or course review. The Internal Team is convened by the Provost.
Stakeholders	Individuals or groups with a vested interest or involvement in the courses, such as students, faculty members, staff, administrators, industry professionals, regulatory authorities, and other relevant parties.
Validation and Reaccreditation Process	An evaluation process to ensure compliance with approved course structures, learning outcomes, and assessment strategies.

## 9.0 Related Documents

### Acknowledge Education Pty. Ltd.

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Document Name
1.4.1 Student Assessment and Awarding of Grades Higher Education Courses Policy
AE Governance Framework
Moderation, Validation and External Referencing Policy
Moderation, Validation and External Referencing Procedure
Governance Charter

## 10.0 Document Information

Document Name	Course Development, Review and Approval Policy and Procedure
Document Number	5.1.1
Purpose	To establish a systematic approach for course development, review, and approval at AE and ICHM, ensuring courses meet quality standards, relevance, and compliance with regulations.
Audience	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Staff   <input type="checkbox"/> Students   <input type="checkbox"/> Public
Category	Institutional Quality Assurance
Subcategory	Course Approval and Accreditation
Approval Date	28/06/2026
Effective Date	28/06/2026
Last date of approval	28/06/2026
Review Date	28/06/2028
Responsible Officer	Associate Dean – Academic Quality
Policy Advisor(s)	Head of Quality and Risk, Provost
Approving Authority	Board of Directors
Endorsing Body	Academic Board
Contact	<a href="mailto:Regulatorcompliance@ae.edu.au">Regulatorcompliance@ae.edu.au</a>

## 11.0 Change Log

Date	Version	By	Notes
19/08/2013	1	ML	Created Policy
05/03/2015	2	BS	Updated format
12/03/2015	2	BS	Reviewed and endorsed by AB
16/01/2018	180116	BS	Minor change re-formatting
26/03/2021	3	TW	Significant changes to reporting lines
16/6/2021	3.1	TW	Updated in line with Wells Report to align more closely with HESF 2015
30/05/2023	3	Dean	Changed policy format in line with new branding. Added definitions and roles and responsibilities. Minor re-write for rationale. Aligned regulatory context with HESF.
14/04/2026	4	Associate Dean – Academic Quality	Comprehensive revision expanding scope to AE and ICHM. Clarified and strengthened governance structures. Formalised course approval, amendment, and 5-year comprehensive review cycles. Updated roles



			<p>and continuous improvement frameworks to support self-assurance. Policy and Procedure consolidated in one document.</p> <p>Policy and procedure were reviewed and endorsed by the Academic Board (07/05/2026) for approval by the Board of Director subject to minor amendments.</p>
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## APPENDIX A

Table 1 Guideline of Minor and Major Course Variation

Area of Change	Sector	Permissible via Internal Academic Governance (Minor)	Requires Notification / Application to Regulator (Major)
<b>Course Content &amp; Curriculum</b>	HE	Minor unit/subject updates, reading list revisions, and periodic course reviews that do not alter the fundamental course outcomes <a href="https://www.teqsa.gov.au/guides-resources/resources/guidance-notes/guidance-note-changes-course-study-may-lead-accreditation-new-course">https://www.teqsa.gov.au/guides-resources/resources/guidance-notes/guidance-note-changes-course-study-may-lead-accreditation-new-course</a> .	Significant shifts altering the core nature, field of education, or AQF level of the course. Non-self-accrediting providers must notify TEQSA to determine if a "new course" application is required.
<b>Assessment &amp; Delivery</b>	HE	Adjusting assessment tasks (provided learning outcomes are still confirmed) and minor shifts in blended learning formats.	Major shifts in delivery mode (e.g., shifting entirely online for CRICOS students) or changes/events that jeopardise mandatory professional accreditation.
<b>Volume of Learning &amp; Duration</b>	HE	Minor scheduling or semester adjustments within standard AQF volume of learning boundaries.	A substantial reduction in course duration or volume of learning that significantly departs from standard AQF guidelines.