Course Review Procedure

Related Policies

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Responsible Officer

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Approved by

Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Students & Education)

Approved and commenced

Month, 2012

Review by

Month, 2015

Responsible Organisational Unit

Office of the Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Students & Education)

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1 Objective

The objectives of this Procedure are to:

- ensure a robust, efficient and effective system for the management and implementation of reviews of courses and elements of courses as detailed in the Reviews Policy;
- support organisational units in meeting the requirements of the Reviews Policy; and
- support organisational units in meeting the principles contained within the Learning and Teaching Evaluation Policy.

2 Scope

This procedure applies to all aspects of higher education and vocational education and training coursework courses and research higher degrees.

3 Course Review Procedure

3.1 Identifying the need for a Targeted Course Review

3.1.1 Academic Senate, PPRC and/or an organisational unit may identify the need for a targeted review of all or elements of a course/s as a result of one or more of the following triggers:

- the identification of risk, strategic need/opportunity for course review
- the regular evaluation of unit and course/major evaluation reports
- major organisational or external environmental change posing risks or creating opportunities
- an external professional accreditation or audit exercise becomes due
- a cyclic review becomes due; although reliance on cyclical reviews will be the exception and their use in specific situations will require explicit justification.

3.1.2 For quality improvement purposes, all coursework courses will be reviewed annually.

- An annual Course Evaluation Report will be submitted by Course / Major / Discipline Coordinators by March of the following year. These reports are online and accessed through the Student Evaluation, Review and Reporting Unit (SERRU) website, via the Course and Unit Evaluation Webpage. These Course Evaluation Reports will be submitted to the Learning & Teaching Evaluation Sub-Committee of ULTC for consideration and assessment. See section 3 of the Guidelines for Course Review.

3.1.3 Any element of a course may be identified for review, but most commonly, the review would focus on:

- unit/s of study within a course/s
- major/s within a course/s
- an entire course offering
- alignment with the Australian Qualifications Framework (AQF)
- higher degree by research program
- other selected aspects of a course offering, as highlighted via the annual evaluation of courses.
3.1.4 All targeted course reviews are approved by Academic Senate based on recommendations from one of its sub-committees:

- ULTC: coursework courses
- Research College Board: higher degree by research programs.

PPRC may provide input into the deliberations of the sub-committees.

3.2 Commissioning Targeted Course Reviews and Review Approvals

3.2.1 An organisational unit/s may identify the need for a review of a course, or particular elements of a course, and recommend a review to the relevant sub-committee of Academic Senate using the Targeted Course Review Recommendation template. See section 4 of the Guidelines for Course Review. This will include recommendation of the review methodology, timeline and expected outcomes.

The Academic Senate sub-committee either:

a) endorses the recommendation and forwards to Academic Senate for approval or
b) amends and/or returns the recommendation to the organisational unit/s with written instructions for amendment and subsequent re-submission or
b) declines the proposal and i) informs the organisational unit and ii) Academic Senate in writing to seek approval of its decision.

3.2.2 Where an Academic Senate sub-committee identifies the need for a targeted course review, either based on a recommendation from an organisational unit or as a result of some other trigger, the sub-committee will report to Academic Senate before commissioning the review in writing. This will include details of the review methodology, timeline and expected outcomes. See section 5 of the Guidelines for Course Review.

3.2.3 Where PPRC has identified the need for an administrative or organisational unit review in an area related to a planned targeted course review, Academic Senate and PPRC will give consideration to the appropriateness of a combined review process.

3.2.4 On receipt of a directive from the Academic Senate sub-committee to conduct a review, the organisational unit/s will develop a proposal using the Targeted Course Review Proposal template. See sections 6 and 7 of the Guidelines for Course Review.

3.2.5 At the recommendation of its sub-committee, Academic Senate:

a) approves the targeted course review proposal in writing (via its sub-committee) or
b) amends and/or returns the targeted course review proposal to the proposer/s (via its sub-committee) with written instructions for amendment and subsequent re-submission.
3.3 Conducting a Course Review

3.3.1 Following approval by Academic Senate, the organisational unit/s implement the targeted course review proposal. See section 7 of the Guidelines for Course Review for details specific to different review methodology, including:

- self-review
- internal or external panel review
- external consultancy
- internal or external audit
- professional accreditation.

3.3.2 Any subsequent proposed changes to the approved targeted course review proposal are to be submitted to the relevant sub-committee of Academic Senate for approval using the Proposal Amendment template. See sections 6 and 7 of the Guidelines for Course Review.

At the recommendation of its sub-committee, Academic Senate will either (via its sub-committee):

a) approve the proposed changes in writing
b) amend and/or return the proposal to the proposer/s with written instructions for amendment and subsequent re-submission
or
c) decline the proposed changes and inform the proposer/s in writing.

3.3.3 The relevant Head/s of the organisational unit/s are normally responsible for resourcing reviews of activities in their portfolio.

3.4 Reporting and Follow-up

3.4.1 Unless otherwise specified by the sub-committee of Academic Senate, the relevant Head of the organisational unit/s will initially receive the review report. Within one month of receipt of the report, a copy of the report and an initial response to the content will be submitted to the Academic Senate sub-committee for consideration, using the Review Report Response template. See section 9 of the Guidelines for Course Review.

3.4.2 The Academic Senate sub-committee will subject the review report content and organisational unit response to careful scrutiny and may require further work or explanation from the organisational unit. The Head of organisational unit/s (or their nominee) will be invited to attend the meeting to answer any questions that may arise. The sub-committee will subsequently:

- decide which recommendations and/or other conclusions arising from the review are to be acted upon
- identify which organisational unit/s will implement the approved recommendations and/or other actions
- identify and address any resourcing implications
- submit their findings to Academic Senate for approval and PPRC for information.

The sub-committee will then inform the organisational unit/s in writing, specifying expected timeframes for completion.
3.4.3 Unless otherwise specified by Academic Senate, the relevant Head of the organisational unit/s is responsible for delivering on the approved recommendations and actions arising from review.

3.4.4 Within one month of receipt of the sub-committee’s written advice regarding the review report and initial response, the relevant Head of the organisational unit/s develop a review Outcomes Implementation Plan and submit this to the Academic Senate sub-committee using the Outcomes Implementation Plan template. See section 10 of the Guidelines for Course Review.

The Academic Senate sub-committee either:

- endorses the Outcomes Implementation Plan
- or
- amends and/or returns the Outcomes Implementation Plan to the Head of organisational unit/s with written instructions for amendment and subsequent re-submission.

Once the relevant sub-committee has endorsed the Outcomes Implementation Plan, they will submit it to Academic Senate for approval and PPRC for information.

3.4.5 Any requests for subsequent changes to approved review Outcomes Implementation Plans are to be submitted to the Academic Senate sub-committee using the Changes to Outcomes Implementation Plan template. See section 10 of the Guidelines for Course Review.

The Academic Senate sub-committee either:

- endorses the proposed changes, submits to Academic Senate for approval and notifies the proposer of approval in writing
- or
- declines the proposed changes, submits to Academic Senate for approval and informs the proposer(s) in writing of their decision.

3.4.6 The organisational unit/s submit follow-up reports to the Academic Senate sub-committee as per the timeline specified in the approved Targeted Course Review Proposal, using the Follow-up Report template. See section 11 of the Guidelines for Course Review.

3.4.7 The Academic Senate sub-committee will subject the Follow-up Report to careful scrutiny and may require further work on or further explanation of those documents. Any directives from the sub-committee for further explanation or work will be carried out by the organisational unit/s to a timeline agreed with the sub-committee. The Academic Senate sub-committee will subsequently:

- endorse the follow-up report and submit to Academic Senate for approval and PPRC for information
- or
- endorse the follow-up report with the recommendation for a subsequent follow-up report at a future specified time, and submit this recommendation to Academic Senate for approval and PPRC for information.

3.4.8 Approval of the final review follow-up report by the Academic Senate concludes the review process.
3.5 Communication of Course Review Plans and Outcomes

3.5.1 The organisational unit/s will ensure that students, staff and other stakeholders (as appropriate) are informed as to how review outcomes have been used to maintain or improve the quality of learning experiences.

3.5.2 If there is media interest in the review and its outcomes, refer to section 8 "Media Guidelines" of the Course Review Guidelines to guide the process of releasing information.

3.6 Monitoring of Course Review Outcomes

The relevant sub-committee of Academic Senate will:

- maintain a register of approved course reviews
- monitor the implementation of reviews
- ensure course reviews include AQF compliance
- receive mandated follow-up reports on implementation of recommendations
- provide an annual report to Council, through Audit and Risk Committee, on review activity and associated outcomes.

4 Definitions and Acronyms

**Australian Qualifications Framework**
The AQF is the national policy for regulated qualifications in Australian education and training. It incorporates the qualifications from each education and training sector into a single national qualifications framework.

**Annual Course Review**
The annual monitoring of a course in regard to the student profile, learning and teaching quality, resources and market responsiveness, to identify and implement initiatives for enhancement.

**Course**
A program of study leading to an award.

**Higher Degree Research Program**
An award beyond the basic-level higher education qualification with at least 2/3 research content.

**Major**
An area of specialisation continued for the duration of a degree at a deeper level of content with knowledge and expertise developed to a high level, providing the basis for postgraduate study.

**Organisational Unit**
Faculty, School, Centre, University Institute, other University Entity, Division, Section or University Business Enterprise.

**PPRC**
Planning Performance and Review Committee of the Senior Management Team. Responsible for coordination of reviews pertaining to management and administrative matters.

- Other selected aspects of a course offering, as highlighted via the annual course review dashboard reporting process.

**Targeted Course Review**
The element/s of a course identified for detailed review. Most commonly, the targeted course review would focus on:
Course Review Procedure (Month, 2013)

- Unit/s of study within a course
- Major/s within a course
- An entire course offering
- Higher degree by research program

**Unit of Study**
A separately assessable part of a course.

**ULTC**
University Learning and Teaching Committee. A sub-committee of Academic Senate.

5 Supporting Documentation

- Course Review Guidelines and Templates
- Course Review Flowchart

6 Versioning

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<th>Former Version(s)</th>
<th>Version 1 – <em>DRAFT Course Review Procedure</em></th>
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