

Teaching and Learning Quality Assurance Manual



Office of Pro Vice-Chancellor Teaching and Learning

Title:	Introduction
Last Revised:	July 2004
Antecedents:	<i>Foreword, Introduction and Background: 2000 Quality Assurance Manual, which has been revised at various times since 1992</i>
Date Approved:	Academic Senate, 15 June 2001, minute 2.13

Introduction

This Manual relates to the quality assurance of teaching and learning and is intended to provide guidance to Deans, Associate Deans (Teaching and Learning), Heads of Schools and Faculty Executive Officers on the University's quality assurance, monitoring and evaluation functions — and the reporting requirements of Faculties — through identifying the relevant formal legislation, policy and procedural documentation that has evolved since 1992. Versions of the Manual were produced in 1995 and 1996. After progressive updating between 1996 and 2000, a revised version was produced in 2001. Since then, the Manual has been updated regularly to take account of minor policy and procedural changes.

The primary emphasis of the Manual reflects the University's continued focus on quality assurance and the interrelationship between Academic Senate — and through it, the University Teaching and Learning Committee (UT&LC) — and the Faculties. For the Academic Senate to fulfil its role through the T&LC of assuring the quality of teaching and learning in the University, it relies on the Faculties through their Executive Committees and Teaching and Learning Committees to take primary responsibility for identifying strategies to address problems and for the implementation of measures for improving quality in relation to University and Faculty plans and objectives in teaching and learning.

Note: The procedures outlined in this Manual covering course proposals and reviews relate primarily to coursework awards. Similar, but separate, procedures relate to research higher degree awards.

Background

The two antecedent institutions of the University of Tasmania used various policies and procedures to monitor and review academic programs and standards, a number of which formed the basis of the 'quality assurance agenda' adopted by the Academic Senate for the new University which was established in 1991. However the current quality assurance arrangements were shaped and influenced to a large extent by the policies and priorities instituted through the activities of the Committee for Quality Assurance in Higher Education (CQAHE). The CQAHE introduced a program of reviews of Australian universities in 1993 and set aside funds for allocation to universities on the basis of positive recommendations from the Committee, initially in the areas of teaching and learning, research, and community service. In agreeing to participate, the University adopted national guidelines and expectations about monitoring and evaluation of teaching and learning activities, including those established by the AVCC for Course Development and Review. The Academic Senate consequently approved a policy framework for *Quality Management in the University of Tasmania* which:

- espoused principles for quality management;
- defined the roles of Academic Senate, the Faculties and departments for quality assurance;
- established an Academic Senate Committee for Quality Assurance (ASCQA) "to draft and keep under review University codes of practice for assuring the quality of the University's teaching and learning activities and course accreditation" and to monitor and evaluate the activities in the Faculties; and
- required each Faculty to establish a Faculty Committee for Quality Assurance and course accreditation.

In 1994, a University Teaching Committee was introduced initially to encourage, oversee and administer initiatives to promote teaching excellence. Over time the Committee developed a stronger leadership role by promoting and developing good teaching practice across the University and in 1997 drafted a Teaching Development Plan which included strategies for improvement, targets and indicators. In late 1997 Academic Senate agreed to combine the established course accreditation and quality assurance procedures, developed by ASCQA, with the teaching and learning policy role of the Teaching Committee to form a single more streamlined Teaching and Learning Committee (UT&LC).

With the appointment of a Pro Vice-Chancellor (Teaching and Learning) early in 2001, further revision and clarification of policies and responsibilities were undertaken.

In 2002, Academic Senate and Council agreed to establish the position of Associate Dean (Teaching and Learning) in each Faculty and to require Faculties to establish Faculty Teaching and Learning Committees. These replaced the former Chairs of Degree Boards and Degree Boards respectively.

Structure of the Manual

- **Responsibilities and structures for quality assurance in teaching and learning** – clarifies the various roles, structures and responsibilities associated with quality assurance in teaching and learning. An overall QA framework is provided.
- **New course proposals** – sets out the process for seeking approval of new courses which are proposed by Faculties.
- **Significant amendments to existing courses** – outlines the process to be followed when significant amendments are being proposed to existing courses. A definition of what constitutes a significant amendment is provided.
- **Reviews of units** – guidelines for reviewing units offered by Schools.
- **Annual course reports** – course reports are to be submitted annually to the Faculty Teaching and Learning Committee.
- **Cyclic course reviews** – outlines a process whereby all courses are to be reviewed on a regular basis.
- **Course/discipline reviews by external, including professional, bodies** – sets out the process to be followed for courses that are reviewed by external bodies such as professional accreditation agencies.
- **School reviews** – describes the process for reviewing Schools and/or disciplines.
- **Quality audits** – outlines a process for auditing various groups, processes or services for strategic reasons.
- **Summary of review processes** – provides a summary table setting out frequency of review processes and indicating who is responsible for each process.