

## Course Review, Amendment and Approval Policy and Procedure HEPP28

### PURPOSE

This policy provides a framework for the approval, design, development and review of higher education courses delivered by Southern Cross Education Institute (Higher Education) and to ensure a consistent course quality assurance process is maintained.

### SCOPE

This policy and procedure is for all staff who approve, develop and review new and existing accredited courses of Southern Cross Education Institute (Higher Education) including members of the academic board and its relevant committees. This policy also informs external benchmarking and internal quality assurance processes that align with national higher education standards.

### DEFINITIONS

Course	A course of learning comprising one or more units of study, or structured workplace learning that leads to the award of a qualification.
SCEI-HE	Southern Cross Education Institute (Higher Education)

### POLICY

1. Course Review and Amendments:
  - 1.1 All higher education courses delivered by SCEI-HE are subject to a process of continuous review and improvement. The process provides for ongoing evaluation of curriculum and of course delivery mechanisms;
  - 1.2 By continuously monitoring and reviewing course delivery and assessment, SCEI-HE is able to:
    - 1.2.1 ensure courses remain aligned with the SCEI-HE's strategic goals;
    - 1.2.2 maintain and reflect the principles of best practice in curriculum design;
    - 1.2.3 determine the relevance and applicability of the curriculum;
    - 1.2.4 if effective in achieving their stated learning outcomes;
    - 1.2.5 determine the quality of delivery methods;
    - 1.2.6 monitor and review assessments and assessment processes, especially with respect to the use of new technology such as AI;
    - 1.2.7 advise on and review academic misconduct strategies;
    - 1.2.8 identify areas of strength;
    - 1.2.9 ensure courses remain relevant to stakeholders, including potential employers;
    - 1.2.10 ensure courses meet accreditation, legislative and regulatory requirements;
    - 1.2.11 identify areas for improvement, and strategies to address them; and
    - 1.2.12 improvements over time.
  - 1.3 Course reviews are undertaken by the Academic Director and the Teaching and Learning Committee and include the input of internal and external stakeholders, including at least one independent external academic or industry expert to ensure objective oversight in line with HESF Standard 6.2.2.
  - 1.4 The course review reports to, and make recommendations to, the Course Advisory Committee on the quality and effectiveness of a course as a whole and any desired amendments;
  - 1.5 Subject to approval by the Course Advisory Committee, the review and recommendations are submitted to the Academic Board for final approval; and
  - 1.6 The Course Advisory Committee will be discipline-based to ensure adequate focus on each course being reviewed and will include external expertise to provide independent perspectives on course quality and relevance.
2. SCEI-HE's Academic Governance structure is designed to ensure the quality of SCEI-HE's courses, the effectiveness of course delivery and assessment and the effectiveness of the student and lecturer support infrastructure.
  - 2.1 Teaching and Learning Committee is responsible for:
    - 2.1.1 Providing academic quality assurance and encouraging the sharing of good practice in teaching and learning activities;
    - 2.1.2 Undertake stakeholder feedback research activities;
    - 2.1.3 Undertaking regular reviews of courses at the end of each delivery period, including student results and course performance;
    - 2.1.4 Undertaking regular external referencing (benchmarking) activities for each course;

- 2.1.5 Monitoring the teaching and learning standards; and
- 2.1.6 Advising on outcomes of surveys/feedback.
- 2.2 Course Advisory Committee is responsible for:
  - 2.2.1 Review of quality assurance and compliance of existing courses;
  - 2.2.2 Recommend the cessation of courses;
  - 2.2.3 Make recommendations to the Academic Board in relation to existing TEQSA-accredited courses;
  - 2.2.4 Review external referencing and stakeholder research information and suggest changes to the Academic Board to improve or amend the course;
  - 2.2.5 Ensure that SCEI-HE's TEQSA-accredited courses meet all professional requirements prior to and post submission to the relevant peak professional bodies and accrediting agencies; and
  - 2.2.6 Ensure that all SCEI-HE courses are compliant with any changes to legislation or the requirements of the peak professional bodies and accrediting agencies.
- 2.3 Academic Board is responsible for:
  - 2.3.1 Providing quality assurance of all teaching, assessment and research activities;
  - 2.3.2 Approving any review to changes to existing courses;
  - 2.3.3 Approving any cessation to existing courses; and
  - 2.3.4 Providing leadership and direction with course accreditation.

## PROCEDURE

### 1. Feedback and Review Procedure

- 1.1 Student feedback
  - 1.1.1 It is expected that students will provide feedback throughout the delivery of each course.
  - 1.1.2 Student surveys are administered in the final week of delivery of each unit and at the conclusion of each course.
  - 1.1.3 Students provide feedback on:
    - 1. the curriculum;
    - 2. resources and facilities available to students;
    - 3. the delivery approach of the lecturer;
    - 4. assessment processes; and
    - 5. student administration and support services.
  - 1.1.4 The survey data is analysed by the Academic Director and by the Teaching and Learning Committee.
  - 1.1.5 The Academic Director provides course coordinators and lecturers with a comprehensive summary of the feedback received from students.
- 1.2 Feedback from graduates
  - 1.2.1 An annual survey of SCEI-HE graduates is organised by the Academic Director. The Academic Director provides collated data to the Teaching and Learning Committee for analysis.
- 1.3 Lecturer feedback
  - 1.3.1 Lecturers are provided with opportunities for evaluation of SCEI-HE's curriculum and of the teaching and learning approaches.
  - 1.3.2 Lecturers have direct and frequent access to their peers and to the Course Coordinators and Academic Director to facilitate the exchange of information and to maximise communication.
  - 1.3.3 Regular meetings of lecturers provide the opportunity to review SCEI-HE's approaches to course delivery and assessment.
  - 1.3.4 Additionally, lecturers are required to participate in the annual performance review and development process, which includes access to professional development opportunities focused on higher education pedagogy, technology-enhanced learning, and emerging assessment methods, including AI, to ensure teaching quality aligns with HESF Standard 3.2.3.
- 1.4 Benchmarking
  - 1.4.1 SCEI-HE will undertake internal and external benchmarking of course and curriculum design by arrangement with other higher education providers.

### 2. Benchmarking (External Referencing) Reviews

- 2.1 SCEI-HE will form partnerships with other higher education providers to develop and implement ongoing benchmarking relationships. External referencing evaluates against peer providers and national standards. By use of these partnership arrangements, the Teaching and Learning Committee will undertake a biennial

benchmarking process to provide the Academic Board with the following information:

- 2.1.1 the need and demand for each of SCEI (Higher Education)'s courses;
- 2.1.2 the relevance of the units of study within each course;
- 2.1.3 the suitability of the course curriculum;
- 2.1.4 the adequacy and appropriateness of course-related information which is provided to students;
- 2.1.5 the relevance of the modes of study and the course delivery method.
- 2.2 The Teaching and Learning Committee will apply the following procedure when undertaking institutional benchmarking:
  - 2.2.1 the Academic Board will specify the terms of reference for the benchmarking activities to be undertaken by the Teaching and Learning Committee;
  - 2.2.2 the Academic Board will affirm benchmarking partners;
  - 2.2.3 benchmarking will include comparative data, and performance indicators.
- 2.3 The Teaching and Learning Committee will develop a report highlighting course and curriculum-related strengths and weaknesses. The report developed will be presented to the relevant Course Advisory Committee and the Academic Board and will include recommendations for improvements and changes for the endorsement of by the Academic Board. The Committee shall document how benchmarking outcomes are prioritized and integrated into course improvement plans, with progress reported to the Academic Board to ensure systematic application in line with HESF Standard 5.2.2.

### **3. Course Monitoring**

- 3.1 SCEI-HE's Academic Director will initiate an annual review of each accredited course using student performance data, survey feedback, staff input, and benchmarking results. This review to be undertaken by the Teaching and Learning Committee. The annual review will generate a course-specific report for the Course Advisory Committee based on data collated from student and teacher feedback, disaggregated by delivery location and mode of delivery (e.g., face-to-face, online, offshore), including comparisons of student outcomes, satisfaction, progression, and completion rates.
- 3.2 The annual review cycle will address the following criteria:
  - 3.2.1 student need and demand for the course;
  - 3.2.2 the range, depth, and currency of units of study available within the course;
  - 3.2.3 the quality and scope of course-related information provided to students;
  - 3.2.4 the appropriateness and flexibility of the methods of delivery used for the course, including evaluation of learning resources to ensure accessibility for students with disabilities in compliance with relevant accessibility standards and HESF Standard 3.3.2;
  - 3.2.5 analysis of trends drawn from student, graduate and lecturer evaluation and feedback data;
  - 3.2.6 Statistical analysis of:
    - 1. student performance;
    - 2. attrition rates; and
    - 3. completion rates.
- 3.3 Based on student and lecturer feedback, the Academic Director and the Teaching and Learning Committee will produce an evaluation report for review by the relevant Course Advisory Committee. The Course Advisory Committee will decide on recommendations for endorsement by the Academic Board. Endorsed recommendations will be implemented by the Academic Director.

### **4. Comprehensive Course Review**

- 4.1 A formal and evidence based review of courses delivered by SCEI-HE will be conducted by the Course Advisory Committee (CAC) triennially in accordance with a course review schedule established by the Committee and approved by the Academic Board.
- 4.2 Course review processes will focus on the following criteria:
  - 4.2.1 review of course objectives, structure, units of study, learning objectives, assessment activities, resources, study modes and delivery methods with reference to the AQF level for the course;
  - 4.2.2 adequacy, currency, and appropriateness of the curriculum, including analysis of emerging developments in the discipline or profession;
  - 4.2.3 adequacy, currency, and appropriateness of assessment practices to address the changing needs of student cohorts and employers;
  - 4.2.4 the conduct and delivery of the course;
  - 4.2.5 the quality of student support services, including accessibility and suitability for diverse student cohorts such as international students, students with disabilities, and underrepresented groups, to

- ensure equitable access in line with HESF Standards 1.3.3 and 2.2;
- 4.2.6 identify and respond to risks to course quality (e.g. low progression, attrition, staff expertise gaps);
- 4.2.7 the impact of similar courses offered by other higher education providers;
- 4.2.8 the systematic collection and analysis of data relating to admission and enrolment statistics, deferral, withdrawal and retention rates, student results per unit of study, graduate employability, feedback from professional bodies and peer review processes, and evaluation of admission criteria and processes to ensure fairness, consistency, and transparency in compliance with HESF Standard 1.1; and
- 4.2.9 Where applicable, the quality and relevance of work-integrated learning (WIL) components, including industry partnerships and student outcomes, to ensure alignment with HESF Standard 5.4 and TEQSA's guidance on work-integrated learning.
- 4.3 Recommendations arising from the review process will be presented to the Academic Board for endorsement. Endorsed recommendations will be implemented by the Academic Director.
- 4.4 Where course recommendations and changes are classified as 'significant' under TEQSA's Guidance Note on Course Accreditation (e.g., changes to AQF level, volume of learning, or course outcomes), these changes will be submitted to the Board of Directors for approval and notified to TEQSA in accordance with regulatory obligations.
- 4.5 Reviewers (CAC) should begin evaluation processes of the course outcomes by asking questions such as the following:
  - 4.5.1 What are the intended outcomes of the course?
  - 4.5.2 How do course outcomes relate to external benchmarking standards, the AQF, and professional and industry body requirements?
  - 4.5.3 How do the units of study contribute to the overall aim of the course?
- 4.6 Reviewers (CAC) should assess the planning and deliberative processes through which course outcomes were originally determined and how the course was designed to enable outcomes to be achieved. To this extent, reviewers should ask questions such as:
  - 4.6.1 How does SCEI-HE ensure that course content enables students to achieve the intended learning outcomes?
  - 4.6.2 How does SCEI-HE ensure that the design and organisation of the course is effective in promoting student learning and achievement of the intended learning outcomes?
  - 4.6.3 Does the design and content of the course encourage achievement of the intended learning outcomes in terms of:
    - 1. knowledge and understanding;
    - 2. cognitive skills;
    - 3. unit-specific skills (including practical/professional skills);
    - 4. transferable skills;
    - 5. progression to employment and/or further study; and
    - 6. personal development?
  - 4.6.4 Is there documentation that confirms that the course content and design is informed by:
    - 1. recent developments in techniques of teaching and learning;
    - 2. current research and scholarship; and
    - 3. any changes in relevant occupational and professional requirements?
- 4.7 Reviewers (CAC) should consider the information available to students, lecturers and support staff. They should consider how unit specifications are used to promote understanding of the unit outcomes and the strategies used to communicate information. Reviewers should ask questions such as:
  - 4.7.1 How are the intended outcomes for a unit and its constituent parts (e.g. assessment methodology) communicated to students and staff?
  - 4.7.2 Do students know what is expected of them?
- 4.8 Reviewers (CAC) should evaluate how the assessment process enables the unit outcomes to be demonstrated and assessed objectively. Reviewers should ask questions such as:
  - 4.8.1 Do the assessment processes enable learners to demonstrate achievement of the specified learning outcomes?
  - 4.8.2 Are there criteria that enable examiners to distinguish between different categories of achievement?
  - 4.8.3 Is the reviewer confident of the security and integrity of the assessment procedure employed, including the accessibility and cybersecurity of technology used in assessments to ensure

compliance with HESF Standard 3.3 and TEQSA's guidance on technology-enhanced learning?

4.8.4 Does the assessment strategy have an adequate formative function in developing student abilities?

## 5. Implementation of Changes

The following procedure is in place to implement changes to courses, course and unit curricula and/or course delivery processes. SCEI-HE's Academic Director is responsible for the change process.

### 5.1 Step 1 – Consultation

Reviewers consult stakeholders regarding any proposed changes. Stakeholders include:

- 5.1.1 Students;
- 5.1.2 teaching staff;
- 5.1.3 administration staff;
- 5.1.4 student support staff;
- 5.1.5 potential employees;
- 5.1.6 professional bodies (where applicable);
- 5.1.7 Course Advisory Committee; and
- 5.1.8 Academic Board.

### 5.2 Step 2 – Proposal

Reviewers submit proposals to the appropriate committee for formal endorsement and approval. This would require:

- 5.2.1 a submission to the Course Advisory Committee; and
- 5.2.2 final approval by the Academic Board.

### 5.3 Step 3 – Liaison

Reviewers liaise with the Academic Director to ensure that all administrative processes are completed for implementation of changes. This includes changes to:

- 5.3.1 unit guide(s);
- 5.3.2 the student handbook;
- 5.3.3 the SCEI-HE website;
- 5.3.4 marketing and promotional materials; and
- 5.3.5 All changes must comply with SCEI-HE policies and any directives of the Academic Board.

### 5.4 Step 4 – Notification

The Academic Director is responsible for ensuring that students are notified prior to the implementation any changes. Key course review outcomes and changes shall be communicated to students and stakeholders via the SCEI-HE website or other public channels to ensure transparency in line with HESF Standard 6.3.4.

### 5.5 Step 5 - Evaluation of Changes

The Academic Director shall evaluate the effectiveness of implemented changes within one delivery cycle and report outcomes to the Teaching and Learning Committee to ensure continuous improvement aligns with HESF Standard 5.3.2.

### 5.6 Risk Management

Throughout the change process, the Academic Director monitors risk management implications, including:

- 5.6.1 issues related to course resourcing;
- 5.6.2 the impact on compliance with legislative and statutory requirements;
- 5.6.3 consistency with SCEI-HE's policies;
- 5.6.4 impact of changes on teaching staff and students; and
- 5.6.5 the provision of sufficient notification and support.

## RELATED DOCUMENTS

Academic Board TOR HETOR02

Teaching and Learning Committee TOR HETOR03

Course Advisory Committee TOR HETOR09

Benchmarking Policy and Procedure HEPP40

Course Development and Approval Policy and Procedure HEPP41

Course Discontinuation Policy and Procedure HEPP38

[TEQSA and the Australian Qualifications Framework – Questions and answers](#)

[TEQSA Guidance Note – Course design \(including learning outcomes and assessment\)](#)

[TEQSA Guidance Note – External referencing \(including benchmarking\)](#)



[TEQSA Guidance Note – Joint and dual awards](#)  
[TEQSA Guidance Note – Technology-enhanced learning](#)  
[TEQSA Guidance Note – Work-integrated learning](#)

#### LEGISLATIVE CONTEXT

Australian Qualifications Framework  
Education Services for Overseas Students Act 2000  
Higher Education Standards Framework (Threshold Standards) 2021  
National Code of Practice for Providers of Education and Training to Overseas Students 2018  
Tertiary Education Quality and Standards Agency Act 2011

#### RESPONSIBILITIES

##### Academic Director

- Compliance with this policy and procedure in the proposal, development and approval of new courses.

##### Academic Board

- Approve new courses and changes to existing courses and units; and
- Ensure quality assurance of all courses.

#### DOCUMENT AND RECORD CONTROL

<b>Created</b>	Dec 2015 (V1.0)
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