

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

### 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.

### DEFINITIONS

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| Course  | A program of learning comprising one or more subjects 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 development at SCEI-HE is predicated on an educational philosophy that emphasises that the student is at the centre of the learning process. SCEI-HE's approach supports the personal and professional development of each student so that innovation, critical thinking and ethical and professional practice is encouraged.
2. All of SCEI-HE's courses will be developed to enable students to expand their professional interests across a range of related disciplines and enhance their future employment prospects.
3. SCEI-HE's courses are designed, developed and reviewed according to SCEI-HE's approach to continuous quality improvement.
4. Processes of course and curriculum design and amendment at SCEI-HE are informed by:
  - 4.1 academic research in relevant fields of expertise;
  - 4.2 standards and guidelines established by peer institutions of higher education;
  - 4.3 advice, guidelines and standards of relevant professional bodies; and
  - 4.4 with appropriate industry associations.
5. Higher Education courses at SCEI-HE are designed to:
  - 5.1 provide students with accredited qualifications in their chosen field of study;
  - 5.2 provide a critically reflective theoretical and experiential learning context;
  - 5.3 expand the options available to students to engage in a range of career options;
  - 5.4 integrate theoretical and practical learning in a dynamic and supportive learning environment; and
  - 5.5 support to promote personal and professional development.
6. Course Review and Amendments:
  - 6.1 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;
  - 6.2 By continuously monitoring and reviewing course delivery and assessment, SCEI-HE is able to:
    - ensure courses remain aligned with the SCEI-HE's strategic goals;
    - maintain and reflect the principles of best practice in curriculum design;
    - determine the relevance and applicability of the curriculum;
    - if effective in achieving their stated learning outcomes;
    - determine the quality of delivery methods;
    - monitor and review assessments and assessment processes, especially with respect to the use of new technology such as AI;
    - advise on and review academic misconduct strategies;
    - identify areas of strength;
    - ensure courses remain relevant to stakeholders, including potential employers;
    - ensure courses meet accreditation, legislative and regulatory requirements;
    - identify areas for improvement, and strategies to address them; and
    - improvements over time.
  - 6.3 Course reviews are undertaken by the Academic Director and the Teaching and Learning Committee and include the input of internal and external stakeholders;

- 6.4 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;
  - 6.5 Subject to approval by the Course Advisory Committee, the review and recommendations are submitted to the Academic Board for final approval; and
  - 6.6 The Course Advisory Committee will be discipline-based to ensure adequate focus on each course being reviewed.
7. 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.
- 7.1 Teaching and Learning Committee is responsible for:
    - Providing academic quality assurance and encourage the sharing of good practice in teaching and learning activities;
    - Undertake stakeholder feedback research activities;
    - Undertaking regular reviews of courses at the end of each delivery period including student results and course performance;
    - Undertaking regular external referencing (benchmarking) activities for each course;
    - Monitoring the teaching and learning standards; and
    - Advising on outcomes of surveys/feedback.
  - 7.2 Course Advisory Committee is responsible for:
    - Review of quality assurance and compliance of existing courses;
    - Recommend the cessation of courses;
    - Make recommendations to the Academic Board in relation to existing TEQSA accredited courses;
    - Review external referencing and stakeholder research information and suggest changes to the Academic Board to improve or amend the course;
    - 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
    - Ensure that all SCEI-HE courses are compliant with any changes to legislation or the requirements of the peak professional bodies and accrediting agencies.
  - 7.3 Academic Board is responsible for:
    - Providing quality assurance of all teaching, assessment and research activities;
    - Approving any review to changes to existing courses;
    - Approving any cessation to existing courses; and
    - Providing leadership and direction with course accreditation.

## PROCEDURE

### 1. Feedback and Review Procedures

#### 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:
  - the curriculum;
  - resources and facilities available to students;
  - the delivery approach of the lecturer;
  - assessment processes; and
  - 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.
- 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. 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:
  - the need and demand for each of SCEI (Higher Education)'s courses
  - the relevance of the units of study within each course
  - the suitability of the course curriculum
  - the adequacy and appropriateness of course-related information which is provided to students
  - the relevance of the modes of study and the course delivery method
- 2.2 The Teaching and Learning Committee will apply the following procedures when undertaking institutional benchmarking:
  - the Academic Board will specify the terms of reference for the benchmarking activities to be undertaken by the Teaching and Learning Committee
  - the Academic Board will affirm benchmarking partners
  - 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.

## **3. Annual Review of Courses**

- 3.1 SCEI-HE's Academic Director will initiate an annual review of each course and 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.
- 3.2 The annual review cycle will address the following criteria:
  - student need and demand for the course
  - the range, depth, and currency of units of study available within the course
  - the quality and scope of course-related information provided to students
  - the appropriateness and flexibility of the methods of delivery used for the course
  - analysis of trends drawn from student, graduate and lecturer evaluation and feedback data
  - Statistical analysis of:
    - student performance;
    - attrition rates; and
    - 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. Triennial Course Review**

- 4.1 A formal 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:

- 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;
  - adequacy, currency, and appropriateness of the curriculum;
  - adequacy, currency, and appropriateness of assessment practices;
  - the conduct and delivery of the course;
  - the quality of student support services;
  - the impact of similar courses offered by other higher education providers; and
  - 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.
- 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 Reviewers (CAC) should begin evaluation processes of the course outcomes by asking questions such as the following:
- What are the intended outcomes of the course?
  - How do course outcomes relate to external benchmarking standards, the AQF, and professional and industry body requirements?
  - How do the units of study contribute to the overall aim of the course?
- 4.5 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:
- How does SCEI-HE ensure that course content enables students to achieve the intended learning outcomes?
  - 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?
  - Does the design and content of the course encourage achievement of the intended learning outcomes in terms of:
    - knowledge and understanding;
    - cognitive skills;
    - unit-specific skills (including practical/professional skills);
    - transferable skills;
    - progression to employment and/or further study; and
    - personal development?
  - Is there documentation that confirms that the course content and design is informed by:
    - recent developments in techniques of teaching and learning;
    - current research and scholarship; and
    - any changes in relevant occupational and professional requirements?
- 4.6 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:
- How are the intended outcomes for a unit and its constituent parts (e.g. assessment methodology) communicated to students and staff?
  - Do students know what is expected of them?
- 4.7 Reviewers (CAC) should evaluate how the assessment process enables the unit outcomes to be demonstrated and assessed objectively. Reviewers should ask questions such as:
- Do the assessment processes enable learners to demonstrate achievement of the specified learning outcomes?
  - Are there criteria which enable examiners to distinguish between different categories of achievement?
  - Is the reviewer confident of the security and integrity of the assessment procedures employed?
  - Does the assessment strategy have an adequate formative function in developing student abilities?

## 5. Implementation of Changes

The following procedures are in place to implement changes to courses, course and unit curriculum 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:

- Students;
- teaching staff;
- administration staff;
- student support staff;
- potential employees;
- professional bodies (where applicable);
- Course Advisory Committee; and
- Academic Board.

### 5.2 Step 2 – Proposal

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

- a submission to the Course Advisory Committee; and
- 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:

- subject guide(s);
- the student handbook;
- the SCEI-HE website;
- marketing and promotional materials; and
- 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.

### 5.5 Risk Management

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

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

## RELATED DOCUMENTS

HEPP38 Course Discontinuation Policy and Procedure  
HEPP40 Benchmarking Policy and Procedure  
HEPP41 Course Development Policy and Procedure  
HETOR02 Academic Board TOR  
HETOR03 Teaching and Learning Committee TOR  
HETOR09 Course Advisory Committee TOR  
[TEQSA Guidance note – Joint and dual awards](#)  
[TEQSA Guidance note – Technology-enhanced learning](#)  
[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 – Work-integrated learning](#)



## LEGISLATIVE CONTEXT

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

## 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 subjects; and
- Ensure quality assurance of all courses.

## DOCUMENT AND RECORD CONTROL

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|---------------------|--|
| Created             | December 2015 (V1.0)   |
| Amended             | June 2020 (V1.1), Sep 2021 (V1.2); Oct 2023 (V1.3)             |
| Reviewed by         | CEO; Quality Assurance and Risk Manager; and Academic Director |
| Approved by         | Academic Board (12 October 2023)                               |
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