# Course Quality Assurance and Review Procedure

University of Southern Queensland

## 1 Purpose

To outline the process for monitoring the quality of the University's Courses.

## 2 Scope

This Procedure applies to all Courses offered by, or on behalf of, the University.

## 3 Procedure Overview

This Procedure outlines the process used to assure the quality of the University's Courses. This Procedure aligns with the:

- *Australian Qualifications Framework*
- *Education Services for Overseas Students Act 2000*
- *Higher Education Standards Framework (Threshold Standards) 2021:* Standard 1.4 Learning Outcomes and Assessment, Standard 3.1 Course Design, Standard 5.2 Academic and Research and Integrity, Standard 5.3 Monitoring, Review and Improvement, Standard 5.4 Delivery with Other Parties, Standard 6.3 Academic Governance and Standard 7.3 Information Management
- *National Code of Practice for Providers of Education and Training to Overseas Students 2018*, where applicable
- *Tertiary Education Quality and Standards Agency Act 2011*

In the context of Higher Degree by Research courses, the relevant line supervisor is the Dean (Graduate Research School).

## 4 Procedures

The purpose of the quality assurance process for Courses is to:

- ensure regular monitoring of the quality of Courses to assure the University that the Course is contributing to learning in the program as intended and that the Learning Outcomes are consistent with those stated for the Course
- provide a mechanism for Students to provide feedback regarding the quality of key elements of a Course and teaching within the Course



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- enable academic Employees to engage in scholarship of teaching by reflecting on feedback and Course performance
- identify any actions that will lead to improvement of Course performance and Students' experience of teaching and learning at the University
- gather evidence as part of the Employee performance planning and review process and performance management discussions with the Course teaching team
- gather evidence as part of reporting requirements to professional, statutory, and regulatory bodies.

## 4.1 Quality assurance cycle

Each Study Period, Courses are monitored as part of the quality assurance cycle. Monitoring is undertaken with reference to Student feedback survey data compiled in the Survey Report and/or Course performance data generated in the Course Report.

Course Reports are refreshed regularly and are accessible by all Employees. There are two mechanisms to assess Course quality assurance:

- end-Study Period Continuous Course Reflections and
- the Courses in context annual report

A Sentinel Indicator for overall satisfaction with Course quality in the Student survey is set by Academic Board and informs the quality assurance process.

## 4.2 Student feedback surveys

At the start of the year, a schedule of Student Feedback Survey administration dates is released for all Study Periods.

Normally, an end-Study Period survey is automatically released in each Study Period of offer for Courses with 10 or more enrolments.

Survey participants are based on Students recorded in the student administration system as being currently enrolled in the Course as close as possible to the time of deployment of the survey. Students who have withdrawn from a Course after the Census Date for the Study Period are excluded from participating in the associated survey.

Once Student feedback surveys are closed to Student responses, the data is consolidated into a Student Survey Report. The Report is made available on the Academic Quality SharePoint site as soon as practicable after the end-Study Period survey.

Access to Student Survey Reports is limited to the Course Coordinator, the Associate Head (Learning and Teaching Student Success), Dean (Learning and Teaching


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Futures), Dean (Curriculum and Quality), evaluations unit staff and line supervisors from Head of School upwards.

### 4.2.1 Alternative evaluation methods

Courses with nine (9) or fewer enrolments, including dissertation and project-based Courses, are required to use alternative methods for evaluating Student satisfaction with the Course, such as open-comment questions or in-class instant response mechanisms.

Alternative evaluation methods will be determined by the Course coordinator.

### 4.2.2 End-Study Period Course quality reviews

The Course Coordinator reviews the following Course data and materials at the conclusion of each relevant Study Period with Course teaching staff including the relevant Discipline Lead and Program Director:

- Student evaluation data, whether through the Student feedback survey or alternative methods of evaluation
- Course Report data on Student performance outcomes
- Academic Misconduct data, as available, to identify academic integrity risks, trends or recurring issues and to devise improvements to Course or Assessment design
- Course design, Assessment and learning materials, including reviewing whether the Assessment provides evidence that Students are achieving the Course Learning Outcomes.

The Program Director, Discipline Lead, Course Coordinator and teaching team are expected to engage in a scholarly process of critical reflection, interpretation and, where appropriate, identification of improvements to both the teaching of the Course and the Course itself. The process will be facilitated by the relevant Associate Head (Learning, Teaching and Student Success).

For Courses flagged as not meeting the Sentinel Indicators at the end-Study Period evaluation point, the Associate Head (Learning, Teaching and Student Success), Program Director, Discipline Lead, Course Coordinator and teaching team will participate in a Course Enhancement Conversation facilitated by the Curriculum and Quality unit in conjunction with the Head of School.

A Course Enhancement Conversation will validate the Sentinel Indicator where there is teaching team agreement that there are quality issues with the Course.

Where the Sentinel Indicator is validated, the Course Coordinator and teaching team initiate agreed changes to the teaching and/or delivery of the Course to enhance Student learning experiences early in the Course.



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A summary report on Course Enhancement Conversations conducted is prepared and submitted to Associate Heads and School Learning, Teaching and Student Success Committee and Learning and Teaching Committee, for noting at the end of each Study Period.

### 4.2.3 Continuous Course Reflections

Outcomes of the Course quality assurance process are documented through the Continuous Course Reflection (CCR).

The Course Coordinator, in consultation with the Discipline Lead and Program Director is responsible for:

- completing the CCR within the curriculum management system within two (2) weeks of the release of the Student Survey Report for their Course(s) including a list of one (1) to three (3) achievable and measurable actions and improvements, if applicable, arising from the consideration of evaluation data, including those that will not result in changes to the Course and the reasons for the decision.
- implementing the actions and updating the status of these actions within the curriculum management system.
- ensure that a summary of student feedback, including how the Course Coordinator has responded and any resulting actions, is shared with current and future students in the Course Specification and on the StudyDesk
- initiating the change approval process, where changes are proposed for a Course and clearly evidenced, in accordance with the relevant Policy Instruments and internal processes.
- reviewing trends over time and, importantly, whether previous improvement actions have been effective once implemented.

The CCR is approved by the Course Coordinator's Associate Head (Learning, Teaching and Student Success).

Course improvement actions are based on evidence and where justified may include full or partial Course redesign, professional development activities for teaching staff and other support activities. It is generally recommended that a course redesign take place as part of a wider program review unless evidence supports a priority change where Students are significantly impacted by inaction. Where practicable, actions are implemented in the next Study Period for the Course (or within six (6) months for shorter duration Courses), with progress reported on in the next monitoring cycle.

CCRs will be reviewed by the relevant Program Directors to inform Phase 1 and Phase 2 of the Comprehensive Program Review process as outlined in the Program Quality Assurance and Review Procedure.


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### 4.2.4 Monitoring and review

Associate Heads (Learning, Teaching and Student Success) will monitor and review the continuous reflections through the School Learning, Teaching and Student Success Committees. A summary report on CCRs is submitted to the Education Committee for noting at the end of each Study Period.

During the review process, the Associate Head (Learning, Teaching and Student Success) may identify Courses requiring additional support which can be referred to the Dean (Learning and Teaching Futures) where relevant teams will provide targeted support to the Course team to improve the outcomes of the course.

### 4.2.5 Courses delivered with other parties

Where a Course is delivered wholly or partly by another party on behalf of the University, the Course must be subject to the same quality assurance and review requirements as Courses delivered directly by the University.

The University must obtain sufficient and timely Student feedback, Course performance data and other relevant information to monitor the quality of the Course and identify areas requiring improvement.

The relevant Course Coordinator, Program Director and Associate Head (Learning, Teaching and Student Success) must ensure that identified improvement actions relating to delivery by another party are documented, monitored and, where necessary, escalated in accordance with the University's quality assurance and governance processes.

### 4.2.6 Management of quality assurance information

Information collected, generated and retained through the Course quality assurance and review process must be managed in accordance with the University's privacy, information management, records management and information security requirements.

Access to Student feedback, Course Reports, Continuous Course Reflections and associated quality assurance records must be limited to Employees and/or Third Parties who require access for an authorised University purpose.

Student feedback and other quality assurance information must be reported and used in a manner that protects the privacy and confidentiality of individual Students, Third Parties and Employees, including where small cohort sizes or qualitative feedback may enable individuals to be identified.

Records of Course reviews, decisions, improvement actions and their implementation must be retained as evidence of the University's monitoring, review and continuous improvement activities.



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# 5 References

Nil.

# 6 Schedules

This procedure must be read in conjunction with its subordinate schedules as provided in the table below.

# 7 Procedure Information

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| **Accountable Officer** | Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Students and Education) |
| **Responsible Officer** | Dean (Curriculum and Quality) |
| **Policy Type** | University Procedure |
| **Policy Suite** | Academic Programs and Courses Quality Policy |
| **Subordinate Schedules** | |
| **Approved Date** | |
| **Effective Date** | |
| **Review Date** | |
| **Relevant Legislation** | Higher Education Standards Framework (Threshold Standards) 2021 |
| **Policy Exceptions** | Policy Exceptions Register |
| **Related Policies** | Assessment Policy<br><br>Curriculum Design Policy<br><br>Learning and Teaching Policy<br><br>Student Academic Integrity Policy |
| **Related Procedures** | Assessment Procedure<br><br>Coursework Curriculum Design and Structure Procedure<br><br>Student Academic Misconduct Procedure<br><br>Work Integrated Learning Activities Procedure |

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| **Related forms, publications and websites** | Assessment and Grades – Roles and Responsibilities Schedule<br><br>Assessment Pattern Schedule<br><br>Assessment Types Schedule<br><br>Australian Qualifications Framework<br><br>Course Enhancement Conversations Supporting Protocol<br><br>Coursework Curriculum Design and Structure Schedule |
| **Definitions** | **Terms defined in the Definitions Dictionary** |
| | Academic Misconduct<br><br>Admission<br><br>Assessment<br><br>Award Program<br><br>Course<br><br>Course Coordinator<br><br>Coursework<br><br>Coursework Program<br><br>Head of School/College<br><br>Sentinel Indicator<br><br>Student<br><br>Study Period<br><br>University |
| | **Definitions that relate to this procedure only** |
| | |
| **Keywords** | |
| **Record No** | 21/304PL |

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