COURSE AND UNIT DEVELOPMENT, APPROVAL AND REVIEW POLICY

Approving authority	Academic Board
Purpose	This policy sets out the basis for approving Courses and Units and for the review of Courses and Units.
Responsible Officer	Academic Dean
Next scheduled review	September 2026
Document Location	http://www.ozford.edu.au/higher-education/policies-and-procedures/
Associated documents	Academic Staff Professional Development Policy and Procedure
	Assessment Policy and Procedure
	Assessment Moderation Policy and Procedure
	Benchmarking Policy and Procedure
	Course Discontinuation , Termination and Teach Out Policy and Procedure
	Free Intellectual Enquiry in Learning and Teaching Policy
	Records Management Policy and Procedure
	Unit Coding Policy
	Unit Credit Points Policy
	Student Feedback Policy and Procedure
	Learning and Teaching Plan
	Course and Unit Development, Approval and Review Procedure

1.   PRINCIPLES

The Ozford Institute of Higher Education (hereafter referred to as "the Institute") processes for development of new courses and the review of existing courses will be consistent with and take account of matters specified in the Higher Education Standards Framework and be aligned to the Institute's Strategic Plan.

A key strategic objective is to strive for excellence in learning, teaching and scholarship for all courses in ways which deliver practical employment outcomes for graduates. The Institute's approach to learning and teaching is underpinned by well-designed courses that are of interest to students, informed by theory, research and practice, challenging and of relevance to contemporary industry and potential employers. In adopting this approach, the Institute:

- ensures that that the curriculum is designed and assessed in a way which aligns unit learning outcomes through content and assessment to course learning outcomes.
- engages students with advanced knowledge and inquiry, critical and independent thinking and research-based learning appropriate for the AQF level of the course.
- focuses on employability using an internship approach.
- Offers industry relevant and professionally recognised courses through accreditation and recognition arrangements with relevant professional bodies such as the Chartered Accountants Australia and New Zealand and CPA Australia.
- Provides a personalised learning opportunities through flexible learning approaches.
- Encourages and fosters opportunities for cross-cultural interaction and discussion.

All courses will be regularly evaluated and continually improved by evidence-based review both internally and externally through expert and comprehensive reviews.

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2. SCOPE

This policy applies to all staff involved in the review of all Institute courses listed on the National Register and the development of all courses that the Institute seeks to have listed on the National Register.

3. DEFINITIONS

Accredited course
Means a course of study that TEQSA has approved to be listed on the National Register

AQF
Australian Qualifications Framework

Assessment
The process of forming a judgement on the quality and extent of student achievement or performance and, therefore, by inference, is a judgement about the learning itself.

Benchmarking
Benchmarking can be defined as a quality process used to evaluate performance by comparing institutional practices to sector good practice.

Course
A course is a cluster of prescribed units of study in a broad area of academic interest leading to the award of an AQF qualification. A course may contain a minimum number of units (or units) to be completed sequentially over a period of time.

Learning activities
Means the tasks that students undertake in order to develop and gain mastery of the knowledge, skills and professional behaviours that are desired as learning outcomes.

National Register
Means a register established and maintained by TEQSA of registered higher education providers and accredited courses.

Substantive change
Substantive change is one or a collection of changes that significantly change the accredited course or unit or change the nature of the risk or risk mitigation strategies of the Institute.

Whether a change is Substantive or not is determined by the Responsible officer and endorsed by the Executive Management team of the Institute. Any change of accredited course or unit name is automatically regarded as a substantive change.

Unit
A unit of study is an individual subject that is studied as part of a course. It is the smallest stand-alone component of a course that can be recorded on an academic transcript and has an assigned credit point value. Units of study can be core (mandatory) or elective (optional). A unit can also be viewed as the study of a particular topic within a wider field and is a unit of the basic building block of a qualification.

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4. POLICY

Course Design

4.1 The design and structure of Institute courses will:
- have a defined set of course learning outcomes;
- constructively align learning activities and assessment tasks to ensure the development and attainment of those learning outcomes;
- build on clearly stated prerequisite knowledge and/or assumed background;
- be aligned with the Australian Qualifications Framework and relevant professional standards;
- have an expected student workload that corresponds to the unit value of the course.
- include external benchmarking/referencing and external expert review.

External experts

4.2 The Institute recognises the importance in course development and review of external input from academic and discipline experts and therefore:
- The Education Committee will include appropriate external academic member(s) for the courses on the Institute's areas of teaching; and
- Additional external experts will be appointed to the Education Committee by the Academic Board when required for new course development processes and comprehensive reviews.

4.3 Where an independent expert is required for a new course application or comprehensive review, the Institute will select a suitable independent expert based on the following criteria :
- the person is independent from the Institute and does not have (or intend to have) any material or significant dealings with the Institute (or an associated entity) that could interfere with the exercise of independent judgement.
- the person is a fit and proper person able to provide expert advisory services, having regard to the individual's character, competence and conduct.
- the person can attest to no actual or perceived conflict/s of interest, or where conflict/s of interest do exist, that these are capable of being effectively managed.
- the person has appropriate qualifications and experience to undertake the review having regard to the type and complexity of the review.

4.4 In selecting independent experts, consideration will be given to suitably qualified experts on the TEQSA register of experts.

4.5 The engagement of the independent expert for evaluation of a new course or comprehensive review will be undertaken by the Academic Dean and reported to the Education Committee and the Academic Board. The Institute will keep records to support the selection of the expert.

Development of new course applications

4.6 The Institute will prepare all new course applications and supporting evidence in the manner required by TEQSA.

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4.7   The development of all new courses will commence with the preparation of an initial course proposal that sets out:
- Course Rationale and alignment to the Institute's Strategic Plan
- Business Opportunity/Problem
- Business case

4.8   The Governing Board will review and approve initial proposals for new courses. The new course development work may then commence.

4.9   The Institute will develop the new course, a full course proposal and an application for the new course will be prepared as required by TEQSA.

4.10   All newly designed courses will be reviewed by an independent expert.

4.11   The Education Committee will advise and report to the Academic Board on the development of proposed new courses including assessing the extent new courses meet the Threshold Standards, AQF, professional accreditation requirements, and TEQSA requirements.

4.12   The Academic Board will scrutinise new course proposals and applications and approve suitable new courses that comply with the Threshold Standards, AQF, and TEQSA application requirements.

4.13   The Governing Board will subject to Academic Board approval, review and approve suitable new course proposals and applications for submission to TEQSA.

4.14   The application for accreditation of a course will be made in the TEQSA approved form, supported by all required evidence and accompanied by the relevant fee.

4.15   The Institute will respond in a timely manner to all TEQSA queries, requests for information or requests for comment on assessment reports.

Re-accreditation of accredited courses

4.16   The Institute will prepare all course re-accreditation applications and supporting evidence in the manner required by TEQSA. The application will be submitted to TEQSA at least 180 calendar days before the current accreditation period for the course(s) is due to end or if an extension is granted, by the date approved by TEQSA.

4.17   The Education Committee will monitor, provide advice and recommend the re-accreditation application once all Threshold Standards, AQF, professional accreditation requirements and TEQSA application requirements are met.

4.18   The Academic Board will scrutinise all course re-accreditation applications and where suitable, endorse the submission of the application.

4.19   The Governing Board will subject to Academic Board endorsement, review the application and approve submission of the application to TEQSA.

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4.20   The application for renewal of accreditation of a course will be made in the TEQSA approved form, supported by all required evidence and accompanied by the relevant fee.

4.21   The Institute will respond in a timely manner to all TEQSA queries, requests for information or requests for comment on assessment reports.

Comprehensive Course Reviews

4.22   A comprehensive course review of the Institute's accredited courses will be undertaken in accordance with the cyclical course review schedule. The comprehensive course review will normally be conducted prior to the course re-accreditation application.

4.23   Additional comprehensive course reviews may be undertaken as determined by the Academic Board, which may act on the advice of the Education Committee.

4.24   Comprehensive course reviews are conducted with the objective of mitigating future risks to the quality of education provided and to make informed adjustments in the areas of admissions, assessments, progression, learning support and learning resources. Comprehensive reviews will consider emerging developments in the field of education, modes of delivery, the changing needs of students and identified risks to the quality of the course of study. Comprehensive reviews will incorporate and be informed by internal and external data and information.

4.25   The President and CEO and Academic Dean will identify one or more internal and/or external discipline experts to undertake the comprehensive course review. The comprehensive course review process will include an evaluation of the course by at least one suitably qualified independent expert.

4.26   The Education Committee will advise and report to the Academic Board on the comprehensive course review process and outcomes. This will include:
- Reporting to the Academic Board as to the extent existing courses undergoing comprehensive reviews meet the Threshold Standards, AQF, any professional accreditation requirements and relevant TEQSA requirements;
- Making recommendations to the Academic Board on the continuation of an accredited course; and
- Advising whether any changes to an accredited course are warranted.

4.27   The Academic Board will scrutinise the comprehensive course review report, consider and approve any changes to an accredited course.

Interim course reviews

4.28   All accredited courses will undergo regular (usually annual) course review in accordance with the cyclical course review schedule.

4.29   The interim course reviews provide an opportunity for reflective practice to confirm what worked well and to identify areas for improvement and strategies to strengthen the course offering for the following year. The review will involve reviewing student progress, feedback from stakeholders and updating learning resources and materials, syllabus, class delivery, assessments and other pedagogical matters.

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4.30   The Education Committee will review the course review outcomes and make recommendations about any required changes to accredited courses to the Academic Board.

4.31   The Academic Board will scrutinise the course review report, consider and approve any changes to the Institute's accredited courses.

Unit reviews

4.32   Individual units of existing courses will be reviewed by the Institute once in every third offering in alignment with the moderation process set out in the **Assessment Moderation Policy and Procedure**.in accordance with the cyclical course review schedule.

4.33   Unit reviews will take into account stakeholder feedback and input including student feedback, teaching staff feedback and subject or discipline expert input.

4.34   The Education Committee will review the unit review outcomes and make recommendations about any required changes to the Academic Board. Where there are no substantive changes to the unit, the Executive Management team will approve the change.

4.35   The Academic Board will scrutinise the unit review report, consider and approve any changes.

5.   QUALITY ASSURANCE

To ensure that this policy is fit for purpose and meet the requirements of the HESF Threshold Standards the policy will be:

5.1   internally endorsed by the Executive Management Team on development or review, prior to approval by the Academic Board;

5.2   externally reviewed as part of any independent review of the HESF Threshold Standards approved by the Governing Board;

5.3   internally reviewed by the Responsible Officer every three years from the date of approval (if not earlier).

5.4   referenced to the applicable HESF Threshold Standard and/or other legislation/regulation.

6.   FEEDBACK

Feedback or comments on this policy is welcomed by the listed Responsible officers of the Institute.

7.   ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

This policy has been developed with reference to the following:
- Queensland University of Technology, Curriculum design, approval and accreditation, 2020 (https://www.mopp.qut.edu.au/C/C_04_01.jsp)
- University of Queensland, Course Design Policy , 2023 (Course Design - Policy - Policies and Procedures Library - The University of Queensland, Australia (uq.edu.au))

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- University of Melbourne, Courses, Subjects, Awards and Programs Policy, 2023 (https://policy.unimelb.edu.au/MPF1327/)
- Deakin University, Higher Education courses policy, 2023 (Higher Education Courses policy / Document / Deakin Policy Library)
- Deakin University, Curriculum Design and Delivery Procedure, 2023 (https://policy.deakin.edu.au/document/view-current.php?id=127)
- TEQSA, Guidance note: Academic governance (v3.0), 2023 (Guidance note: Academic governance | Tertiary Education Quality and Standards Agency (teqsa.gov.au))
- TEQSA, Application Guide for Registered Higher Education Providers Course Accreditation and Renewal of Course Accreditation, 2023 (https://www.teqsa.gov.au/guides-resources/resources/application-guides/application-guide-registered-higher-education-providers-new-course-accreditation-renewal-course-accreditation-existing-providers)
- TEQSA, Independent Experts engaged by providers, 2020 (Independent Experts engaged by providers | Tertiary Education Quality and Standards Agency (teqsa.gov.au))

8.   VERSION CONTROL

Version	Date approved	Description	Approved by
1.0	December 2013	Initial issue	AB
2.0	March 2015	Update according to the HES 2015	AB
3.0	June 2018	Revised to reflect changes to governance framework	AB
4.0	November 2020	Revised to reflect TEQSA requirements	AB
5.0	September 2023	Revised to reflect internal review of course approval and review arrangements	AB
Related legislation/ regulation/ standard	Tertiary Education Quality and Standards Act 2011 (Cth) Higher Education Standards Framework (Threshold Standards) 2021 (Cth)		

Note:

AB = Academic Board

TEQSA = Tertiary Education Quality and Standards Agency

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