

# Coursework Quality Assurance - Evaluation Procedure



## 1 Purpose

To outline the processes for the University to evaluate its Coursework curriculum to inform evidence-based continuous quality enhancement.

## 2 Scope

This Procedure applies to all Coursework curriculum.

This Procedure is to be read in conjunction with the Program Quality Assurance and Re-accreditation Procedure.

## 3 Procedure Overview

This Procedure outlines an evidence-based approach to Coursework curriculum quality assurance using a risk-based framework evaluating the quality of the University's curriculum.

## 4 Procedures

A risk-based quality assurance framework prioritises the identification of aspects of curriculum where quality is most at risk and addresses risks to quality through enhancement activities, resulting in an improved risk profile over time.

### 4.1 Curriculum quality assurance framework

The curriculum quality assurance framework of evaluation activities begins at the school (Course) level, feeds through to the faculty (programs and Study Components) level, and is then consolidated at the University level, with appropriate oversight and governance mechanisms at each level.

Curriculum quality assurance:

1. informs strategic planning and is part of the University's academic quality framework;
2. is evidenced-based and is both strategic and operational in focus;
3. informs the development, improvement and re-accreditation of programs, in accordance with the Program Quality Assurance and Re-accreditation Procedure and the Program

Change, Suspension and Discontinuation Procedure, and monitors curriculum changes; and

4. is a continuous process which closes the loop on previously identified issues and actions.

The curriculum quality assurance framework is comprised of the following elements.

#### **4.1.1 At the school level - Courses overview**

1. Mid-Teaching Period Course Enhancement Conversations facilitated by the Academic Quality Unit for Courses identified by the Sentinel Indicator. These Courses are provided support by the Academic Quality Unit in collaboration with the relevant faculty Associate Dean (Learning, Teaching and Student Success) (LTSS) and school for monitoring, reviewing and enhancement of quality based on Student feedback and data included in the Survey Reports and Course Reports;
2. End-Teaching Period Course Resource Reviews facilitated by the schools;
3. Monitoring and review of Course Action Plans arising from Course Enhancement Conversations and Course Resource Reviews by school LTSS committees; and
4. School reporting on evaluation activities via the school LTSS committees to the faculty LTSS Committee which in turn reports to the Education Committee, a standing committee of Academic Board.

#### **4.1.2 At the faculty level - programs and program Study Components overview**

1. Program/Study Component Review Conversations for programs and Study Components displaying the Sentinel Indicators to facilitate monitoring, review and enhancement of programs and Study Components based on the Program Report and Program Major Report;
2. Annual Program Review by Program Directors to monitor program performance and build the Program Review Portfolio in preparation for the three-year and comprehensive program reviews under the Program Quality Assurance and Re-accreditation Procedure;
3. Faculty monitoring and review of actions arising from Program Review Conversations; and
4. Faculty annual reporting to the Education Committee, a standing committee of Academic Board.

#### **4.1.3 At the University level - overview**

1. Annual Faculty Consolidated Program Quality Report;
2. Faculty narrative to accompany the USQ Consolidated Program Quality Report;
3. Consideration of the University Consolidated Program Quality Report by the Education Committee; and
4. Consideration of the University level report by Academic Board and Council.

The roles and responsibilities for each aspect of the curriculum quality assurance framework are outlined in the following sections and are to be read in conjunction with the School and College Leadership and Management Structures, Roles and Committees Model (*refer to Section 7, Related forms, publications and websites*).

## **4.2 School level - Courses**

Each Course offered in each Teaching Period must be monitored for quality, with reference to the Student feedback survey data compiled in the Survey Report and/or data generated in the Course Report.

A mid and end-Teaching Period survey will be conducted for each Course with 11 or more Enrolments.

Courses with 10 or fewer Enrolments are required to use alternative methods for evaluating Student satisfaction with the Course, such as open-comment questions or in-class instant response mechanisms.

### **4.2.1 Mid-Teaching Period Course Enhancement Conversations**

To reflect the risk-based approach to curriculum quality assurance, the Sentinel Indicator score for Course satisfaction in the Student survey (at both mid and end-Teaching Period) which triggers a Course Enhancement Conversation is:

1. for the years 2020-2021, less than or equal to 3.5 with 5 or more responses
2. for the years 2022-2023 less, than or equal to 3.6 with 5 or more responses
3. for the years 2024 onwards, less than or equal to 3.7 with 5 or more responses.

Mid-Teaching Period Course Enhancement Conversations will be facilitated by the Academic Quality Unit for Courses displaying the Sentinel Indicator.

Course Enhancement Conversations provide the opportunity for the teaching team (including the Course Examiner) and school representatives (including the Associate Head (LTSS) and

discipline leaders) to unpack the data provided by the Student Survey Report, with reference to the teaching context and Course Report.

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

A summary report about the Course Enhancement Conversations conducted is prepared by the Academic Quality Unit and submitted to Associate Heads and school committees for noting at the end of each Teaching Period.

#### **4.2.2 End-Teaching Period Course Resource Reviews**

At the end of each Teaching Period, each Course will have a Course Resource Review.

Course Resource Reviews for Courses displaying the Sentinel Indicator will be facilitated by the Head of School.

End-Teaching Period Course Resource Reviews for all other Courses (including those using the Student feedback survey and alternative methods of evaluation) will be facilitated by the Associate Head (LTSS). These reviews are an opportunity to reflect on what is working well in a Course, and to document in the Course Action Plan actions taken (if any) to enhance the Course.

#### **4.2.3 Course Action Plans**

For all Courses, whether or not they are the subject of a Course Enhancement Conversation or a Course Resource Review, the Course Examiner is responsible for writing the Course Action Plan which must be lodged in the Faculty Centre at the end of each Teaching Period.

The Course Examiner is responsible for implementing the Course Action Plan.

The Course Examiner is responsible for closing the loop with Students, by providing details of actions taken in response to Student feedback.

#### **4.2.4 Monitoring and review**

Associate Heads (LTSS), through the school or college LTSS Committee, are responsible for monitoring and reviewing Course Action Plans for all Courses in the school or college and reporting to the faculty LTSS Committee.

### **4.3 Faculty level - programs and Study Components**

The following sections outline the processes for ongoing, internal evaluation of program and Study Components. These evaluation activities inform Program/Study Component Review Conversations and the Annual Program and Study Component Review, in preparation for external program review, and are to be read in conjunction with the Program Quality Assurance

and Re-accreditation Procedure. Under that Procedure, faculties and colleges are required to prepare a Program Review Portfolio which must include any evaluations and benchmarking conducted during the current accreditation period.

### **4.3.1 Program and Study Components Review Conversations**

To reflect the University's risk-based approach to curriculum quality assurance, Sentinel Indicators which trigger a Program Review Conversation are as follows:

1. Undergraduate EFTSL <30
2. Postgraduate EFTSL <15
3. Commencing and continuing attrition
  - a. Undergraduate attrition ?20%
  - b. Postgraduate attrition ?10%
4. Progression rate <80% (Australian Government benchmark)
5. Completions
  - a. Undergraduate completion count <30
  - b. Postgraduate completion count <15.

Program and Study Components Review Conversations will be facilitated by the Academic Quality Unit. These conversations provide the opportunity for the Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Academic Affairs), Associate Dean (Academic) and program team (including Head of School, Program Director, Associate Head (LTSS) and Study Component Convenors) to consider the data provided by the Program Report or Program Major Report with reference to the teaching context.

### **4.3.2 Annual Program Review**

For all other programs and Study Components not the subject of a Program and Study Components Review Conversation, the Program Director will conduct an Annual Program Review considering the following quality indicators:

1. analysis of all Program, Major, Course and Survey Reports for Core Courses and Majors within the program, with a particular focus on Courses displaying the Sentinel Indicator, to document changes made to Courses within the program and Majors during the reporting period as a result of Course Action Plans;

2. cohort analysis to identify cohorts which are at particular risk. A non-exhaustive list of such cohorts includes, for example, Students with English as a second language, International Students, Students receiving Credit; and
3. consideration of significant controls on academic quality such as Academic Integrity and Assessment policies and Procedures.

The findings of Annual Program Reviews will inform:

1. the Program Review Portfolio required under the Program Quality Assurance and Re-accreditation Procedure; and
2. the Faculty Program Portfolio Rolling Strategic Plan (approved by the Provost) which guides curriculum development and accreditation activity. The Plan, with relevant updates, is submitted annually to the first meeting of the calendar year of Academic Board.

#### **4.3.3 Program and Study Component Action Plan**

At the completion of the Program and Study Components Review Conversation or Annual Program Review, the Program Director is responsible for writing the Program and Study Components Action Plan which must be lodged in the Faculty Centre.

The Program Director is responsible for implementing the Program and Study Components Action Plan.

The Program Director is responsible for reporting to the appropriate faculty-level committee regarding the Annual Program and Study Components Review.

#### **4.3.4 Monitoring and review**

The relevant Associate Dean is responsible for monitoring and reviewing Program and Study Components Action Plans for all Programs and Study Components within the faculty and reporting on implementation to the appropriate faculty-level committee.

### **4.4 University level**

Annually, post-Census Date during Teaching Period 1, the Academic Quality Unit, working with Planning and Performance Services, will produce the University Consolidated Program Quality Report for the previous year. This report will draw on data in the Program and Program Majors dashboard, and present consolidated data for the University, its partners, and faculties.

The Consolidated Program Quality Report will be tabled annually at Education Committee for

consideration, with recommendations provided to Academic Board on issues of concern and trends and summaries of Student experiences.

## 4.5 Program and process evaluation

From time to time, the Provost may commission process and program evaluations of academic activity at the University. Evaluations will be guided by the domains of appropriateness, effectiveness, efficiency, impact, and sustainability.

## 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

<b>Accountable Officer</b>	Provost
<b>Responsible Officer</b>	Dean (Academic Transformation)
<b>Policy Type</b>	University Procedure
<b>Policy Suite</b>	<a href="#">Academic Programs and Courses Quality Policy</a>
<b>Subordinate Schedules</b>	
<b>Approved Date</b>	5/4/2022
<b>Effective Date</b>	5/4/2022
<b>Review Date</b>	5/4/2025
<b>Relevant Legislation</b>	<a href="#">Higher Education Standards Framework (Threshold Standards) 2021</a>
<b>Related Policies</b>	<a href="#">Coursework Curriculum Design Policy</a> <a href="#">Learning and Teaching Policy</a>
<b>Related Procedures</b>	<a href="#">Coursework Curriculum Design and Structure Procedure</a>
<b>Related forms, publications and websites</b>	<a href="#">Australian Qualifications Framework</a> <a href="#">School and College Leadership and Management Structures, Roles</a>

[and Committees Model 2021](#)

[Course Enhancement Conversations Supporting Protocol](#)

[Coursework Curriculum Design and Structure Schedule](#)

## Definitions

### Terms defined in the Definitions Dictionary

#### [Core Course](#)

A Course that combines introductory discipline knowledge with enabling students to gain skills and knowledge for successful tertiary study and lifelong learning, and provides a foundation for the Graduate Attributes. A Core Course must be passed to fulfil the requirements of the program.

#### [Course](#)

A discrete element of a program, normally undertaken over a single Teaching Period, in which the Student enrolls, and on completion of which the Student is awarded a grade.

#### [Coursework](#)

A method of teaching and learning that leads to the acquisition of skills and knowledge and does not include a major research component.

#### [Enrolment](#)

The process of admitting Students to one or more Courses for the current Academic Year.

#### [Examiner](#)

A University staff member, normally an academic staff member, continuing or fixed term, appointed to be responsible for the conduct and Assessment of a Course in accordance with the prescribed Course Specification.

#### [Head of School/College](#)

An academic staff member responsible for the administration of the Course offerings in one or more discipline areas.

#### [Major](#)

A coherent set of at least eight (8) which provides depth of study within a specific subject area or discipline.



### Minor

A coherent set of at least four (4) Units which provides a sub-disciplinary focus and allows a Student to extend or complement their Major or Discipline Study Courses.

### Policy

A high level strategic directive that establishes a principle based approach on a subject. Policy is operationalised through Procedures that give instructions and set out processes to implement a Policy.

### Procedure

An operational instruction that sets out the process to operationalise a Policy.

### Sentinel Indicator

Within the learning and teaching ecosystem a Sentinel indicator would suggest the need for investigation to determine the nature of the quality of the student experience.

### Student

A person who is admitted to an Award Program or Non-Award Program offered by the University and is: currently enrolled in one or more Courses or study units; or not currently enrolled but is on an approved Leave of Absence or whose admission has not been cancelled.

### Study Component

A coherent set of Courses that develop a particular academic theme. This includes Majors, Extended Majors, Minors and Specialisations.

### Teaching Period

The period during which a Course or study unit is offered. Examples of teaching periods include, but are not limited to, semesters, trimesters, blocks, intensives and sessions.

### University

The term 'University' or 'USQ' means the University of Southern Queensland.

### **Definitions that relate to this procedure only**

## **Annual Program/Study Component Review**

A regular evaluation activity to be undertaken by the Program Director resulting in a Program/Study Components Action Plan. For all other programs/Study Component not subject to a Program/Study Components Review Conversation.

## **Course Action Plan**

A summary of the Course Enhancement Conversation or Course Resource Review including details of actions to be taken to enhance the Course. To be lodged in the Faculty Centre.

## **Course Enhancement Conversation**

Mid-Teaching Period conversations which are facilitated by the Academic Quality Unit, adopting a risk-based approach to curriculum quality where Sentinel Indicators are contextualised by historical Course data and discussion with the teaching team (including the Course Examiner), and School or College representatives (including the Associate Head (Learning, Teaching and Student Success) and discipline leaders).

## **Course Resource Review**

An opportunity for schools to monitor and review all Courses at the completion of the Teaching Period. Course Resource Reviews for Courses displaying the Sentinel Indicator will be facilitated by the Head of School/College. All other Course Resource Reviews (including those using the Student feedback survey and alternative methods of evaluation) will be facilitated at the school level by the Associate Head (Learning, Teaching and Student Success). All Courses require a Course Action Plan in response to the Course Resource Review.

## **Course Report**

Course Reports are available on the Academic Quality SharePoint site and are refreshed regularly. Course Reports are accessible by all staff of the University.

## **Program/Study Components Action Plan**

A summary of the Program/Study Components Review Conversation including detail of actions to be taken to enhance the program/Study Components or, where an Annual Program Review has been undertaken, a summary of findings and actions to be taken in response. To be prepared and lodged by the Program Director in the

Faculty Centre.

### **Program/Study Components Review Conversation**

A conversation between key stakeholders in a program or Study Component triggered by the Sentinel Indicator/s resulting in Program/Study Components Action Plan.

### **Program Report**

Program Reports are available on the Academic Quality SharePoint site and will be updated post-Census Date during Teaching Period 1, for the previous year (e.g., the Program Reports for 2020 will be updated and available after census date in Teaching Period 1, 2021). Program Reports are accessible by all staff of the University.

### **Program Major Report**

Program Major Reports are available on the Academic Quality SharePoint site and will be updated post-Census Date during Teaching Period 1, for the previous year (e.g., the Program Major Reports for 2020 will be updated and available after Census Date in Teaching Period 1, 2021). Program Major Reports are accessible by all staff of the University.

### **Program Review Portfolio**

See *Program Quality Assurance and Accreditation Procedure* for the requirements for this portfolio, which is to include evaluation and benchmarking activities as outlined in this Procedure.

### **Survey Report**

Survey Reports consolidate data from the Student feedback survey and are available on the Academic Quality SharePoint site. Reports are available as soon as is practicably possible after each Student feedback survey at mid and end-Teaching Period survey points. Access to Survey Reports is limited to the Course team (Course Examiner), the Associate Head (Learning, Teaching and Student Success), Associate Dean (Learning, Teaching and Student Success), Associate Dean (Academic), Academic Quality Unit staff and line supervisors from Head of School/College up to the Vice-Chancellor.

**Keywords**

**Record No**

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