QAF010 COURSE DEVELOPMENT AND APPROVAL POLICY & PROCEDURE

1. Overview

The objective of this policy is to provide a framework for the design, construction and approval of courses within Higher Education Leadership Institute ("the Institute") in the context of developing academically rigorous courses that meet the *Higher Education Standards Framework*[1].

2. Course design principles and practice

In designing courses, the Institute adheres to the professional development standards indicated by academic research in its fields of expertise as well as the standards and guidelines established by peer higher education providers, professional bodies and peak industry associations (where applicable). In line with these principles courses are designed to:

    a. provide students with accredited qualifications in their chosen field of study;

    b. provide a critically reflective theoretical and experiential learning context;

    c. extend students' abilities to apply for and engage in a range of career options;

    d. integrate theory and practice in a dynamic learning environment;

    e. provide support to promote and foster personal and professional development.

The Dean is responsible for leading and facilitating the course design and development process. To ensure quality in course design and content, courses are developed in consultation with a Course Advisory Committee[2] which is commissioned by the Academic Board to contribute advice and expertise to the initial development of a course and to support the ongoing review and monitoring of that course. A Course Advisory Committee also assists in identifying need and demand for a course and to assist academic staff with industry and content specific advice and guidance in the development of the Institute's courses.

Each Course Advisory Committee will be comprised of members drawn from the Academic Board, Institute academic staff, other higher education providers, the professions and industry as well as those with curriculum design and development expertise.

Course development is grounded in an educational philosophy that emphasises the centrality of the learner within the learning process and which supports the personal and professional development of each student to foster innovation, critical thinking, and ethical and professional practice. The Institute's courses are structured to enable students to expand their professional interests across a range of related disciplines and enhance their future employment prospects.

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[1] Higher Education Standards Framework (Threshold Standards) 2021
< https://www.legislation.gov.au/Details/F2021L00488 >

[2] Refer to the *Governance Charter [QAF002]* for more detailed information on Course Advisory Committees and their terms of reference

3. Course development process

Courses will be developed by the Institute using the following process:

Step 1: Development of a business and academic case

The first step will involve the development and consideration of the strategic, business and academic case for the course in the *New Course Proposal* form [FRM050]. The proposal will include an analysis of:

   a. how the development of the proposed course helps achieve the strategic objectives of the Institute;
   b. the demand and need for the course in industry and the broader community (underpinned by market research);
   c. the academic basis for the proposed course (underpinned by research into the body of knowledge);
   d. how the proposed course complements the present range of courses offered by the Institute (having regard to the range of existing courses, the evidence of demand for the course and identified areas of industry and community need);
   e. forecast enrolments in the proposed course over the first five years of accreditation;
   f. the capacity of the Institute to deliver the proposed course;
   g. the cost to develop the course and, where necessary, the cost to develop the capability of the Institute to deliver the course.

Step 2: Approval to proceed to course development

Based on the criteria outlined in Step 1, a new course proposal is developed for presentation to the appropriate bodies within the Institute's governance structure.

The CEO will present the proposal to the Institute's Board of Directors for approval. The Board of Directors will consider the proposal against the strategic objectives it has set and will review the financial implications of proceeding with development. The proposal may require that the Board of Directors revise the Institute's strategic objectives in order for the course to fit into the Institute's overall strategic planning. The Board of Directors will ensure that adequate funds are available to support the development and implementation of the new course if it is approved.

The Board of Directors may:

   a. support the proposal and recommend it be referred to the Academic Board for implementation;
   b. request further information regarding the proposal before making a final decision;
   c. reject the proposal as it is not compatible with the strategic plan or physical or financial resources of the Institute.

Step 3: Academic Board actions course development

If the Board of Directors approves the new course proposal, the Academic Board will convene a Course Advisory Committee to oversee the development of the course. The Academic Board may utilise an existing Course Advisory Committee (where one exists), modify the membership of a current Course Advisory Committee, or create a new Course Advisory Committee.

The Dean will normally lead a team of academics and work with the Course Coordinator and the Quality Manager in developing a new course proposal.

The Course Advisory Committee will review the new course proposal and during its deliberations will ensure that the course is:

    a. equivalent to similar courses delivered by other higher education providers (supported by benchmarking);

    b. of a suitable quality and meets appropriate academic standards (supported by mapping against the attributes of a course at the same level as outlined in the Australian Qualifications Framework).

The Course Advisory Committee will consider and review the following key elements of the course design:

1. The course's aims and learning outcomes;
2. The graduate destinations for those who have successfully completed the course;
3. The graduate attributes required to be successful in the context of points 1 & 2 above;
4. The body of knowledge that the course will draw on in the context of points 1-3 above;
5. The appropriate course structure and delivery mode(s) to deliver the outcomes envisaged in points 1-4 above;
6. The subjects that make up the course;
7. The learning outcomes for each subject;
8. How the graduate attributes in point 3 are developed through the individual subject;
9. The overall assessment methodology for the course;
10. The rules for course progression and completion.

A review of the course proposal may be conducted through the Peer Review Portal (PRP)[3], in which review documentation, feedback reporting and communications will be managed.

Step 4:   Creating course documentation for submission

Based on the deliberations of the Course Advisory Committee and the course specifications decided, the documentation of the course in the format required by the accreditation authority (TEQSA)[4] can now proceed.

Step 5:   Validating and approving the course accreditation application before submission

There are several steps that will be taken to validate the course documentation prior to submission to TEQSA. This validation is designed to pre-empt any concerns that the accreditation authority or its appointed external experts may raise about the course.

1. The Course Advisory Committee will critically review the final draft of the course documentation and provide feedback to the course documenters.
2. The final draft of the course documentation, incorporating the amendments recommended by the Course Advisory Committee, will be sent to one or more external experts to critically review and provide feedback. The preference is for external reviewers who are listed on the TEQSA Register of External Experts:

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[3] TEQSA has endorsed the Peer Review Portal (PRP) as an online support mechanism enabling education providers in meeting national standards in external peer review. The PRP is a document and workflow management system that provides a robust framework for management review. It also assists in sourcing appropriately qualified external expert reviewers.

[4] Refer to https://www.teqsa.gov.au/application-forms-and-guides

3. The external review may be conducted through the PRP, in which review documentation, feedback reporting and communications will be managed. The external experts will be familiar with the discipline area of the course as well as the requirements for accreditation of higher education courses in the non-self-accrediting sector.

4. Any recommendations by the external experts are referred back to the Course Advisory Committee for review before incorporation into the final application.

5. A summary of the Course Advisory Committee's consideration of each external reviewer's feedback is sent back to the respective external reviewer to seek their affirmation that any substantive issues raised by them have been adequately addressed.

6. Any further feedback from the external experts is considered by the Dean before incorporation into the final application (if applicable).

7. The final application is referred to the Academic Board for approval.

8. The Academic Board recommends the final application to the Board of Directors for approval.

9. The Board of Directors approves the application.

10. The application is lodged with TEQSA.

4. Version history

Version	Approved by	Approval Date	Details
1.0	Academic Board	20 February 2016	Document creation and initial approval
1.1	Dean	12 May 2017	Minor changes in line with development of New Course Proposal form
2.0	Academic Board	28 February 2018	Changes to section 2 for better alignment to other documents
2.1	Dean	24 September 2019	Update out-of-date website link
2.2	Academic Board	4 March 2020	Added the optional use of the Peer Review Portal in conducting CAC and expert reviews
2.3	Dean	1 July 2022	Added final consideration by external reviewers to changes resulting from their reports

Document owner: Dean