

Course of Study Reaccreditation Policy

Section 1 - Purpose

- (1) This Policy and its procedures document the process through which approved award courses of study ('courses') are reaccredited by the University.
- (2) The purpose of this Policy is to support the assurance and enhancement of the quality, integrity, and relevance of the University's suite of award courses. It contributes to this goal by ensuring that all courses:
- provide students with an exceptional academic experience that meets their needs, as well as the requirements of industry, disciplinary fields, and scholarly understandings, in alignment with national and global priorities;
 - are reaccredited through a system overseen by the University's academic governance processes;
 - meet with the object and functions of the University as contained in its Act of Incorporation ([Macquarie University Act 1989](#), clause 6);
 - meet applicable external regulatory requirements (see Associated Information); and
 - meet any applicable sector codes and standards (see Associated Information).
- (3) This Policy also seeks to assist courses with applicable professional or industry peak body accreditation requirements by ensuring strong integration between internal and external processes and alignment of workflow requirements.
- (4) This Policy is part of Stage 5 Reaccreditation of the Curriculum Lifecycle Framework and should read in conjunction with all policies and procedures specific to this Stage and the Curriculum Lifecycle Framework.

Scope

- (5) This Policy applies to all Macquarie University award courses that align with the categories of the [Australian Qualifications Framework](#) including Combined Degrees and the Master by Research courses, but excluding:
- double degrees where each core zone is accredited separately; and
 - other Postgraduate Higher Degree Research awards.
- (6) This Policy does not apply to non-award programs of study.
- (7) The University's [Microcredentials Policy](#) should also be consulted if the educational product is a microcredential (refer to [Microcredentials Policy](#)).

Section 2 - Policy

- (8) Reaccreditation is designed to ensure that all courses of study:
- are fit for purpose and meet all internal and external requirements and standards;
 - are periodically warranted, through credible, effective and fair quality assurance processes;
 - benefit from enhancement processes that deliver continual improvement;

- d. provide students with opportunities to evaluate their learning experience beyond individual units of study ('units');
- e. provide staff with opportunities to evaluate the course and its delivery; and
- f. benefit from consultation with relevant industry partners and professional associations.

(9) Course Reaccreditation is informed by:

- a. transparent and coherent institutional processes;
- b. institutionally agreed data points;
- c. the latest pedagogical and professional developments in the scholarship of teaching and learning, and the discipline field;
- d. external referencing, including course-specific benchmarking against national and, where appropriate, international comparators;
- e. a risk-based approach to decision making;
- f. an approach to implementation of review recommendations that is monitored by Faculty Boards and is designed to drive the enhancement process;
- g. the feedback of students, staff, alumni and industry; and
- h. the judgements of the Academic Senate, the Vice-Chancellor, and the Executive Group.

(10) Courses will be subject to reaccreditation at least once in a seven (7) year cycle.

(11) Courses will be subject to annual monitoring that supports the reaccreditation process (see [Course of Study Monitoring and Review Policy](#)).

(12) The annual course monitoring process can trigger an In-Cycle Review or the full reaccreditation process (see [Course of Study Monitoring and Review Policy](#)).

(13) If a course is not approved for reaccreditation, it must be discontinued as per the [Course of Study Suspension and Discontinuation Policy](#).

Section 3 - Procedures

Part A - Schedule, Planning, Preparation, and Pre-Review Phase

(14) The Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Academic) will maintain a [Course Reaccreditation Schedule \(CRS\)](#) that will note each course's seven (7) year accreditation cycle. Each year Faculties will confirm that the CRS remains current or request changes as required. Any update to the CRS will be sent to the Academic Standards and Quality Committee for endorsing and the amended version uploaded as Associated Information under this Policy.

(15) Where a course would benefit from undergoing reaccreditation with other courses for reasons such as alignment or progression these courses may be bundled as a group to move through the reaccreditation process at the same time.

(16) The course reaccreditation process will be conducted through the approved University system.

Course Reaccreditation Domains

(17) The course review will be conducted across specific subject Themes with supporting data points and reporting templates contained in the following Domains:

- a. Institutional Domains including Themes aligned to the [Higher Education Standards Framework \(Threshold Standards\) 2021](#);
- b. Faculty-Specific Domains determined by each Faculty for application to its entire coursework suite; and
- c. Course-Specific Domains determined by the relevant Course Authority, approved by the Faculty Authority and applicable to the course being considered for reaccreditation.

(18) Institutional Domains and their constituent Themes including data points and reporting templates will be finalised by the Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Academic) and approved by the Academic Standards and Quality Committee (see Associated Information).

(19) Faculty-Specific Domains and their Themes and supporting Data Points will be finalised by the Faculty Executive Dean and approved by the relevant Faculty Board (see Associated Information).

(20) Course-Specific Domains will be finalised by the relevant Course Authority and approved by the Faculty Authority.

(21) As part of the reaccreditation process, students, alumni, and staff will be surveyed regarding their experience of the Course under review.

(22) Industry, professional association, and community representatives will be invited to provide feedback regarding the Course under review.

Review Panel

(23) The Course will be reviewed by a Review Panel.

(24) The Course Review Panel will comprise of at least five (5) members, including:

- a. a senior academic in the discipline area external to the University to act as Panel Chair;
- b. a senior academic in the discipline area external to the University;
- c. a senior Macquarie university academic who, if possible, is from a related discipline and does not contribute to the teaching of the course;
- d. a current student or recent alumni; and
- e. an industry or professional association representative.

(25) The Executive Dean will appoint the members of the Course Review Panel on advice from the Course Authority.

(26) The Review Panel will convene at the University to complete its work. While an in-person site visit will be the usual method, the Panel may, if necessary, convene partially or fully online for some or all of its activities.

(27) The Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Academic), in consultation with Faculties, will finalise an institutional schedule for Review Panel visits in the year before the course is scheduled for reaccreditation.

Part B - Review Phase

(28) Course Review Panel meetings will be conducted over consecutive days at a time agreed by the Faculty or The College and the Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Academic) office in the assigned year.

(29) As well as the information provided for the consideration of the Course Review Panel through the [Curriculum Management System](#), the Panel may seek further consultation with course staff and students during its visit to the University.

(30) The Course Review Panel will provide, where applicable, Commendations that acknowledge excellence in the

Course as demonstrated by the relevant Domain data and inputs.

(31) The Course Review Panel will provide, where applicable, recommendations for enhancement of the Course as demonstrated by the relevant Domain data and inputs.

(32) Recommendations will be either:

- a. A (Academic) recommendations that relate to academic judgements and those areas in which the Academic Senate exercises oversight; or
- b. B (Business) recommendations that relate to business judgements and those areas in which the Vice-Chancellor and the Executive Group exercise oversight.

(33) The Course Review Panel will finalise their commendations and recommendations and convey them to the Course Authority and Executive Dean before the end of the site visit.

Part C - Post Review Phase

(34) The Course Authority has the opportunity to correct any errors and omissions contained in the Course Review Panel's commendations and recommendations.

(35) The Executive Dean will respond to the Course Review Panel's commendations and recommendations.

(36) The Education Strategy Committee will review the Executive Dean's response to the commendations and recommendations and may seek clarification.

(37) The Course Authority, with assistance from the Faculty Authority, will develop a Course Success Plan based on the Course Review Panel's Recommendations.

(38) A Course Success Plan will deliver one of the following outcomes:

- a. renewal of the course with changes that may or may not require governance approval;
- b. replacement of the existing course because the recommended changes are sufficient to trigger a new course accreditation requirement (see [Course of Study Revision Policy](#) and [Course of Study Suspension and Discontinuation Policy](#)); or
- c. removal of the course (see [Course of Study Suspension and Discontinuation Policy](#)).

(39) The Faculty Authority will endorse, and the Executive Dean will approve the Course Success Plan.

Part D - Implementation of Course Success Phase

(40) The Course Authority will lead the implementation of the approved Course Success Plan.

(41) Faculty Boards will monitor the progress of approved Course Success Plans as a standing agenda item and can request action to ensure the timely completion of the Plan.

(42) The Course Authority will submit a final report on delivery of the Course Success Plan to the Academic Senate (via the Faculty Board and the Academic Standards and Quality Committee) within one (1) year of the Panel visit. The final report may include activities that are still being completed.

Part E - Course Reaccreditation

(43) The Academic Senate will determine one (1) of four (4) options:

- a. Full Reaccreditation; or
- b. Conditional Reaccreditation where planned changes are still in progress, but will not be completed before the commencement date for the next course cycle; or
- c. Provisional Reaccreditation where identified concerns need to be addressed before reaccreditation can be approved; or
- d. Re-accreditation is not approved.

(44) The Academic Senate will approve Full Reaccreditation when a course with Conditional Reaccreditation completes the required changes as per the final report.

(45) If a Course with Conditional Reaccreditation fails to complete the required changes by the agreed date, the Academic Senate can consider an extension of the course's conditional status or withdraw accreditation.

(46) An Annual Institutional Report on Course Reaccreditation will be compiled by the Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Academic) for the Education Strategy Committee, the Executive Group, the Academic Standards and Quality Committee, and the Academic Senate.

Part F - Review

(47) The reaccreditation process will be subject to improvement review. Timing will usually be aligned with the Course Reaccreditation Schedule unless triggered by a Thematic Review called by the Vice-Chancellor or the Academic Senate.

(48) Domains may be revised as needed, noting that:

- a. the Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Academic) will finalise any revision of Institutional Domains for the approval of the Academic Senate (see Associated Information); and
- b. the Executive Dean will finalise any Faculty-Specific Domains for the approval of the relevant Faculty Board.

Part G - Responsibilities

(49) Responsibilities related to these Procedures are as follows:

- a. the Academic Senate is responsible for approving a course for reaccreditation;
- b. the Academic Senate has oversight of academic-related recommendations (A Recommendations) resulting from the reaccreditation process;
- c. the Executive Dean is responsible for approving a Course Success Plan;
- d. the Faculty authority is responsible for approving Course Specific Domains;
- e. the Academic Senate is responsible for approving the Institutional Domains;
- f. the Faculty Board is responsible for approving any revisions to Faculty Specific Domains;
- g. the Vice-Chancellor and the Executive Group have oversight of business-related recommendations (B Recommendations) resulting from the reaccreditation process;
- h. the Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Academic) is responsible for the operationalisation, management, and improvement of the reaccreditation process;
- i. a relevant authorised Course Authority is responsible for leading the Faculty response to the reaccreditation process; and
- j. the Director, Macquarie University College (The College) performs the same role as an Executive Dean in this Procedure and the Academic Standards and Quality Committee is the equivalent decision point to a Faculty Board for any course reaccreditation being completed in The College.

Section 4 - Guidelines

(50) Nil.

Section 5 - Definitions

(51) Commonly defined terms are located in the University [Glossary](#). The following definitions apply for the purpose of this Policy:

- a. Academic recommendations aim to address issues related to the quality and outcomes of teaching, learning, and research training.
- b. Accreditation means the process within the Curriculum Lifecycle Framework where the design of a new academic item (course, course component or unit) is undertaken followed by the submission of an academic case through the pertinent academic governance process.
- c. Business recommendations aim to address issues related to strategic or commercial matters relating to the curriculum or teaching.
- d. Commendation means a Review Panel acknowledgment of excellence by a Course as demonstrated against the relevant Domains and inputs during the Review phase.
- e. Conditional Reaccreditation means an action resulting from the implementation phase of a course review, when the Academic Senate cannot grant full reaccreditation due to the course still working through some of the proposed remediation actions as part of the success plan.
- f. Course Authority is the person assigned by a Faculty or equivalent to perform certain roles within the Curriculum Lifecycle processes at a course level, for example Course Director, Head of Department, Program Director.
- g. Course Reaccreditation means the process, within the Curriculum Lifecycle Framework, for the formal appraisal of a course against institutional and course specific domains takes place, involving a group of academic, professional experts and stakeholders.
- h. Course Specific Domain means a domain inherent to a specific course.
- i. Course Success Plan means the plan developed by the authorised course authority to address issues highlighted as a result of a review process.
- j. Curriculum Management System means Macquarie's 'single source of truth' and repository for all curriculum information including courses, course components (majors, specialisations, and minors) and units.
- k. Data Point means a unit of information, derived from a measurement, and represented numerically and/or graphically, provided to support the processes of review, monitoring and reaccreditation via institutional dashboards and to be used as evidence to justify action or success plans.
- l. Domain means an area against which a course's relevance, quality and viability is evaluated during the review phase. They could also be described as the Review Terms of Reference.
- m. Faculty Authority is the person assigned by a Faculty or equivalent to perform certain roles within the Curriculum Lifecycle processes at a Senior Leadership level, for example: Deputy Dean, Associate Dean, Associate Director.
- n. Faculty Specific Domain means a domain inherent to all courses owned by a specific Faculty.
- o. Full Reaccreditation means an action resulting from the review phase of a course, when Academic Senate either:
 - i. approves the positive recommendations of the Review Panel granting the course permission to continue its delivery without amendments; or
 - ii. approves successful execution of success plan after the implementation phase (Year 7th of cycle), granting the course permission to continue its delivery.

- p. In-cycle review is a targeted review process conducted if a risk to the quality of the course is identified by an Annual Health Check or as a directive of an Executive Dean.
- q. Institutional Domain means a domain inherent to all courses.
- r. Provisional Reaccreditation means an action resulting from the implementation phase of a course review, when the Academic Senate delays the full reaccreditation of a course until identified concerns are addressed.
- s. Recommendation means an action resulting from a review process where a panel or other authority provide a course of action based on the evaluation of the submission against domains, data and/or other supporting resources.
- t. Thematic Review means an institutional review process that examines a specific issue of concern across a number of courses of study.
- u. Theme means a sub-area within a Domain against which a course's relevance, quality and viability is evaluated during the review phase.

Status and Details

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