

# Unit of Study Review Policy

## Section 1 - Purpose

(1) This Policy supports the assurance and enhancement of the quality, integrity, and relevance of the University's suite of units of study (units) and ensures that these meet agreed institutional, disciplinary and regulatory standards regarding teaching, learning and the student experience.

(2) This Policy should be read in conjunction with related course of study and unit of study policies.

### Scope

(3) This Policy applies to all units that are available for credit within award courses and enabling programs.

(4) This Policy applies to units within the Bachelor of Philosophy/Master of Research but does not apply to other Graduate Research awards.

(5) This Policy does not apply to microcredentials (see [Microcredentials Policy](#)).

## Section 2 - Policy

(6) Unit Review is designed to ensure that units:

- a. provide students with an exceptional academic experience that meets their needs, as well as contributing to the course learning outcomes of the course/s of study in which they are a core requirement;
- b. are fit for purpose and meet all internal and external requirements and standards; and
- c. are reviewed through a credible, effective, and fair quality assurance system overseen by the University's academic governance processes.

(7) The Unit Review process will:

- a. address the role of the unit within the course and how it contributes and aligns to the course learning outcomes;
- b. provide staff with opportunities to evaluate selected units and their delivery in depth; and
- c. facilitate ongoing improvements to unit design and delivery.

(8) This Policy documents the process by which units are selected for and subjected to review using a needs/risk-based approach that considers:

- a. the role of the unit in assuring achievement of the course learning outcomes and alignment to the [Australian Qualifications Framework](#);
- b. units that have shared teaching with other units;
- c. units that have a high student load and/or that are part of the core zone of more than one course;

- d. units identified to have one or more significant issues, including but not limited to:
  - i. low success rate;
  - ii. low student satisfaction;
  - iii. significant concerns regarding academic integrity;
  - iv. high rates of special consideration applications;
  - v. high rates of academic appeals;
  - vi. low or decreasing enrolments;
  - vii. issues related to enrolment numbers and/or performance of specific cohorts;
- e. units that are integral to a course's alignment with and achievement of key institutional priorities, such as employability, sustainability or Indigenous connected curriculum;
- f. units that are integral to the external Accreditation of a course; and
- g. units identified through internal or external Accreditation processes to undergo a Unit Review.

(9) Sufficient units from a course must be selected to undergo Unit Review within the Accreditation cycle of the course to ensure that the achievement of course learning outcomes and alignment with the [Australian Qualifications Framework](#) can be assured.

(10) Units that appear in the core zone of more than one course can be reviewed against the needs of all courses in a single review.

(11) External Referencing must be undertaken for some of the units selected for Unit Review to assure assessment methods and grading of student achievement of unit learning outcomes, and alignment with external comparators. At a minimum External Referencing must be completed in:

- a. at least one (1) core unit for courses with a duration equivalent to one (1) year or less; or
- b. at least two (2) core units for courses with a duration greater than one (1) year, including Capstone units in Undergraduate Bachelor courses of study.

(12) External Referencing must be conducted by an individual/s external to Macquarie University. In some cases, External Referencing may be satisfied through external course Accreditation process. External Referencing will be conducted prior to the panel review and in accordance with the University's [Unit of Study External Referencing Guidelines](#).

## Section 3 - Procedures

### Part A - Unit Review Process

(13) The Faculty/College Authority will select and schedule units to undergo Unit Review annually based on a need/risk basis, including which units will undergo External Referencing. This may include units within courses undergoing review and reaccreditation.

(14) Where appropriate, units may be bundled to be reviewed at the same time.

(15) The Unit Review will be carried out by a Review Panel nominated by the Faculty/College Authority consisting of at least two (2) academics whose expertise or experience will be valuable to the review and who are not currently involved with the delivery of the unit.

(16) For units requiring External Referencing, the Unit Convenor, in consultation with the Course Authority, will identify an appropriate reviewer external to the University who is suitably qualified and has current knowledge and skills in the

relevant discipline and experience in learning and teaching.

(17) The Unit Convenor will enter the required review information into the approved University system and provide the Review Panel, and where required, the External Reviewer, with the necessary information and materials to conduct the review.

(18) The External Reviewer will complete their review using the External Peer Review of Unit Template, or a suitable alternative. The completed template will be attached or linked to the Unit Review Template within the approved University system.

(19) The Review Panel will complete their review and submit their comments and recommendations in the approved University system.

(20) The Unit Convenor will plan for and implement any required changes or enhancements to the unit informed by any recommendations made by the Review Panel, in consultation with the Course or Course Component Authority.

(21) An annual report of all Unit Reviews in the Faculty/College, undertaken in the previous year, is submitted to the Faculty/College Board for noting.

## **Part B - Responsibilities**

(22) The Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Academic) is responsible for:

- a. regular review for improvement purposes of the systems which support this Policy.

(23) The relevant authorised Course Authority and/or Course Component Authority is responsible for:

- a. selecting the review panel;
- b. recommending any proposed changes or enhancements to be made to units; and
- c. reviewing the progress of any planned changes or enhancements.

(24) The relevant authorised Faculty/College Authority is responsible for:

- a. collaborating with Course Authorities in the selection of units to undergo External Referencing;
- b. overseeing Unit Reviews across the Faculty/College to ensure sufficient units within each course are being reviewed; and
- c. finalising the accumulated Faculty/College report on units reviewed in that year.

(25) The Unit Convenor is responsible for providing the Review Panel with the necessary information and materials for the Unit Review, including:

- a. identifying and liaising with an External Reviewer if external benchmarking is to be undertaken, and preparing and sharing materials and information required for external review with the external reviewer, prior to the panel review;
- b. being available for consultation during the Unit Review; and
- c. planning and implementing any required changes or enhancements to the unit informed by the Review Panel's recommendations.

(26) The Panel Chair is responsible for:

- a. liaising with other panel member/s to facilitate the efficient review of the unit; and
- b. finalising the Unit Review Report and recommendations within the approved University system.

## Section 4 - Guidelines

(27) See the [Unit of Study External Referencing Guidelines](#).

## Section 5 - Definitions

(28) The following definitions apply for the purpose of this Policy:

- a. Accreditation means the process 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.
- b. Course Authority is the person assigned by a Faculty or the Macquarie University College to perform certain roles within the course lifecycle processes at a course level, for example Course Director, Head of Department, Program Director.
- c. Course Component Authority is the person assigned by a Faculty or the Macquarie University College to perform certain roles within the course lifecycle processes at a course component level, for example Head of Discipline, (Deputy) Head of School.
- d. External Referencing means a process through which a higher education provider compares an aspect of its operations with an external comparator(s).
- e. Faculty/College Authority is the person assigned by a Faculty or the Macquarie University College to perform certain roles within the course lifecycle processes at a senior leadership level, for example Deputy Dean, Associate Dean, Associate Director.
- f. Unit Review is the process in which the units of study identified through a risk-based approach are subject to an in-depth evaluation of their design, delivery and performance.

## Status and Details

<b>Status</b>	Current
<b>Effective Date</b>	26th March 2024
<b>Review Date</b>	1st March 2027
<b>Approval Authority</b>	Academic Senate
<b>Approval Date</b>	26th March 2024
<b>Expiry Date</b>	Not Applicable
<b>Responsible Executive</b>	Rorden Wilkinson Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Academic)
<b>Responsible Officer</b>	Taryn Jones Pro Vice-Chancellor (Education) +61 2 9850 2796
<b>Enquiries Contact</b>	Office of the Pro Vice-Chancellor (Education)