Program Development Approval and Review Policy

1. Purpose

UNSW College is registered with the Tertiary Education Quality Standards Agency (TEQSA) as a higher education provider. As a non-self-accrediting Institute of Higher Education, all award programs are accredited by TEQSA.

This Policy provides the governance and administrative framework in which programs are developed, revised and approved by the College to ensure their quality, viability and relevance, prior to any required TEQSA submission for accreditation or notification.

2. Scope

This Policy:

(a) applies to all College programs including award programs and non-award programs;

(b) covers new program development, revisions to existing programs and program withdrawals.

3. Policy statement

The UNSW College approach to the development, approval and ongoing oversight of programs is guided by its Quality Assurance Framework, the Learning and Teaching Quality Framework and the following principles:

(a) programs must be consistent with the regulatory framework in which the College operates, including the Higher Education Standards Framework (Threshold Standards) 2021, the Australian Qualifications Framework (AQF), Foundation Program Standards 2021, the ELICOS National Standards and The National Code of Practice for Providers of Education and Training to Overseas Students 2018;

(b) programs must support the strategic goals of the College articulated in the Strategic Plan and the Teaching and Learning Plan;

(c) programs must be consistent with relevant College policies and procedures, including those identified in the Related Policy and Supporting Documents section of this Policy;

(d) programs will be developed in collaboration and consultation with UNSW, external discipline experts and other stakeholders to ensure relevance and enhance opportunities for graduate progression to further study;

(e) programs will have defined learning outcomes that align with the qualification level;

(f) formal assessments will be aligned to program and course learning outcomes to ensure a coherent development of knowledge that meets program learning objectives;

(g)   critical oversight of program quality will include student feedback and the monitoring and review of both current student and graduate data with outcomes informing ongoing improvements;

(h)   programs will respond to market demand to ensure ongoing relevancy and viability.

4.   Overview of program quality assurance

The framework below provides an overview of the College approach to quality assurance of program development, revision and withdrawal.

4.1   New program proposal:

(a)   New program proposals will be developed collaboratively with UNSW to maximise opportunities for graduate progression to the University and performance across further studies.

(b)   The initial business case proposing a new program is considered by the College Executive to ensure financial viability and alignment with the strategic direction of the College, with subsequent advice provided to the Board of Directors. The Board of Directors then considers the business case.

(c)   If the initial business case is approved by the Board, a comprehensive Program Proposal will be developed for critical review by external experts, the Program Development and Review Committee and Academic Board. This may be an iterative process before finalisation and approval by Academic Board with a recommendation to the Board of Directors for subsequent submission to TEQSA for accreditation.

4.2   Minor change to a program

(a)   Minor changes to programs in response to ongoing monitoring and review which includes student and graduate data as well as student survey outcomes, are approved by the relevant Education Manager, considered and noted by the Learning and Teaching Quality Committee and the Program Development and Review Committee.

(b)   Initial Program Proposals are updated in the College's academic information system to reflect any changes. If revisions collectively over time constitute a material change to an accredited program, the material change process is initiated.

(c)   The Foundation Program Standards require the College to submit changes which are not significant to the College's Academic Board for assessment and approval, as well as send a notification to TEQSA.

4.3   Material change to program:

(a)   Ongoing monitoring and program reviews or progressive minor changes which collectively constitute a material change, may change the program to such an extent that it fundamentally becomes a 'new' program.

(b)   At that time, the College will submit a Material Change Notification to TEQSA and re-commence the process relating to a New Program Proposal. Changes of this

nature will not be implemented before completing the New Program process and TEQSA accreditation is finalised.

4.4 Program withdrawal

(a) Programs may be withdrawn as a result of changes in market demand or material changes which result in replacing a current program with a new program.

(b) Notice of proposed withdrawal, together with a comprehensive teach-out plan, will be considered and recommended by the Learning and Teaching Committee to the Program Development and Review Committee. The Program Development and Review Committee reviews the Plan and recommends it to Academic Board, which is the approving authority for both withdrawal of the program and the teach out plan. This can be an iterative process before final endorsement by the governing body for notification to TEQSA.

(c) The program to be withdrawn must be still accredited during the teach out period and academic and student experience standards during the teach out must be maintained and continue to align to the Higher Education Standards Framework.

4.5 Third party arrangements

(a) Third party arrangements include arrangements for partial or whole delivery of College programs, online or face-to-face, through another entity either on shore or offshore.

(b) Setting up a third-party arrangements requires adherence to strict protocols set out in the Third Party Arrangement procedure and requires approval of Academic Board and TEQSA.

(c) Programs delivered through third-party arrangements that lead to a College award will be monitored by the Learning and Teaching Quality Committee to ensure:

  i. arrangements meet the requirements of the relevant regulatory framework(s);

  ii. programs and assessments are substantially the same as that delivered by the College onshore at the Sydney campus;

  iii. programs are consistent with relevant College policies and procedures.

(d) Academic Board will require an audit of any third-party arrangements periodically, but at least every three (3) years.

4.6 Program reviews

(a) Ongoing monitoring and review of programs by College academic committees is informed by a range of information and data, including feedback relating to student evaluation outcomes, student and graduate outcomes benchmarked against agreed College academic standards, external referencing and updates on facilities, learning resources and educational support.

(b) At least every five (5) years, Academic Board initiates an Academic Program Review of each program, which includes staff and student interviews, a review of academic progression and benchmarking against comparable national programs.

4.7 Review of academic governance processes

(a) The Board Charter articulates a requirement of the Board that it ensure, at least every seven (7) years, a review of the effectiveness of academic governance processes is undertaken, that the review findings are considered by the UNSW Council and that any agreed actions are implemented.

5. Roles, responsibilities and delegations

Role	Responsibility
Academic Board	• Provides critical oversight of academic quality, including approval of new programs, approval of program withdrawals and teach out plans and approval of material changes to existing programs. • Provides advice to the Board of Directors on academic matters, including new programs, academic Policy, practice and quality assurance.
Board of Directors	• Approves initial new program business case and any required funding. • Endorses TEQSA submissions approved by Academic Board. • Initiates periodic reviews of academic governance to ensure its effectiveness.
College Executive	• Advises the Board of Directors on financial viability and alignment with College strategic direction of all programs
Education Manager	• Provides academic leadership for and quality enhancement of a program or program cluster
External experts	• Provide critical analysis of new programs and at times, input into periodic program reviews
Learning and Teaching Quality Committee	• Provides oversight of any third-party arrangements with subsequent reporting to Academic Board. • Notes minor program changes approved by the relevant Education Manager.
Program Development & Review Committee	• Provides critical oversight of new program development, program withdrawals and reviews, with subsequent recommendations to Academic Board. • Notes reports on minor program changes.
UNSW Faculty QARC	• Endorses new program concepts, assessment design and articulation.

	- Collaborates on full program development. - Finalises articulation agreement.

6. Definitions

Definitions and Acronyms	
Academic governance	Academic committees established by the governing body for oversight of academic quality, which include Academic Board, Program Development and Review Committee, Learning and Teaching Quality Committee, Assessment and Integrity Committee, Assessment Sub-Committees and Student Misconduct and Appeals Sub-Committee.
Academic information system	The College's approved enterprise-wide system for the management and storage of curriculum information.
AQF	Australian Qualifications Framework
Award	A diploma of certificate conferred following completion of a program. It provides official recognition of successful completion of that program and carries the official seal of the College.
Award programs	Award programs identified in the Australian Qualifications Framework (AQF) which are required to meet the corresponding specifications identified for the particular level of qualification.
Course	A planned and structured sequence of learning and teaching that allows a student to gain knowledge skills and understanding in relation to an agreed set of learning outcomes. Is sometimes called a 'unit' or 'subject' in other institutions.
Higher education awards	Awards that are governed by the Higher Education Standards Framework (Threshold Standards) 2021
New Program Business Case	A document outlining key elements of a new program concept, including business drivers, alignment with strategic direction, analysis of current vs future state, benefits, scope and financial analysis, risks, project governance and way forward if approved.
Non-award programs	An approved course of study that does not lead to an AQF award but leads to a College qualification. This can include a tertiary preparation program, an English Language Intensive Course for Overseas Students (ELICOS) or a Foundation Studies program.
Program	An approved set of requirements and courses into which a student is admitted which will lead to a College award.
Program Proposal	A document that is developed to reflect the key elements of a program, including the program rationale, student forecasts, admissions criteria, award requirements, learning outcomes and

	AQF alignment, program structure, modes of delivery, rules in relation to advanced standing, articulation pathways, academic workforce planning, program design quality assurance, development team, external oversight detail, ongoing review and monitoring processes, alignment of assessment with course and program learning outcomes, and course outlines.
Teach Out	The status of an academic offering to indicate it has been closed but remains open and relevant for existing students to complete their program.
TEQSA	Tertiary Education Quality Standards Agency
Third Party Arrangements	Arrangement between UNSW College and another party (in Australia or overseas) to deliver some or all of a program or course that leads to a College award.

Related Policy Documents and Supporting Documents	
Legislation	• Tertiary Education Quality and Standards Agency Act 2011 (Cth) • Higher Education Standards Framework (Threshold Standards) 2021 • Australian Qualifications Framework • Education Services for Overseas Students 2000 (Cth) • Foundation Program Standards 2021 • ELICOS Standards 2018 • National Code of Practice for providers of Education and Training to Overseas Students 2018
Policy	• Program Design Policy • Assessment Policy • Quality Assurance Framework • Third Party Arrangements Policy
Procedures	• Approval of New Programs and Changes to Programs Procedure • Development of a Teach Out Plan Procedure • Third Party Arrangements Procedure
Forms	• Business Case for New Programs • New Program Proposal • Minor Change to a Program • Material Change to a Program Advice • Course Outline template

7.   Policy Governance

Program Development Approval and Review Policy	
Category/Business Group	Academic Programs
Published Externally (Yes/No)	Yes
Approver	Academic Board
Responsible Officer	Executive Director Academic
Contact Officer	Director, Academic Programs
Effective Date	17/08/2023
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Revision History

Version	Approved by	Approval date	Effective date	Sections modified
1	Academic Board	08 August 2023	17 August 2023	N/A

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