Program Development Approval and Review Procedure

1. Purpose

This document details the procedures undertaken in the development of new programs, revisions and reviews of existing programs and approval authorities.

2. Scope

This Procedure supports the Program Development Approval and Review Policy and:

(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. New programs

3.1 Step 1: Concept proposal

(a) Any proposal relating to a new program commences with initial consultations involving following stakeholders or their nominee:

    i. the Executive Director, Academic;

    ii. the Director, Academic Programs;

    iii. the Head of Education Development;

    iv. the relevant Academic Head(s);

    v. the Executive Director, Future Students and Business Development;

    vi. Head of Strategic Initiatives; and

    vii. UNSW Faculty Dean or nominee

(b) If supported, a brief concept proposal is developed outlining the proposed program, key drivers for its development, alignment with the College strategic direction, estimated development costs, relevant UNSW degree or program into which graduates would progress and initial commencing enrolment forecasts.

(c) This is considered by:

    i. the College Executive Committee; and

    ii. the relevant UNSW Faculty nominee.

If supported, a business case is developed.

3.2   Step 2: business case

The development of the business case is coordinated by the Manager, Education Development, using the College business case template and has input from the following College teams or roles:

College functional team / role	Input
Academic Programs	• Business drivers • Alignment with College and UNSW strategic priorities • Benefits • Stakeholder engagement strategy • Coordination of business case inputs • Collate and/or coordination of student feedback
Marketing, Recruitment and Admissions	• Base case five (5) year commencing student forecasts • Market analysis and competitor landscape • Proposed pricing strategy and fees
HR	• Workforce Plan: Current vs Future State
Relevant UNSW Faculty QARC(s)	• Input into program structure.
Financial Planning and Analysis	• 5-year student enrolment and EFTSL forecasts; • Space capacity current vs future • Any capex estimates • One off project implementation costs • Full financials and sensitivity analysis (base case, best case, worst case) • Funding source
Head, Strategic Initiatives	• Project governance and resourcing • High level work plan / key milestones • Constraints, assumptions and dependencies
Legal and Compliance	• Risk framework management
UNSW Dean (or nominee)	• Requirements for graduate progression, including any quotas for domestic students. • Agreed use of university IP (if relevant)

Once completed, the business case is:

(a)   considered by the College Executive to ensure financial viability and alignment with the strategic direction of the College;

(b) if supported, signed off by the College CEO with a recommendation to the College Board of Directors;

(c) considered by the Board of Directors and if approved, proceeds to Step 3, the development of a comprehensive New Program Proposal.

3.3 Step 3: New Program Proposal

A Program Development team is established to develop the comprehensive Program Proposal, using the prescribed College template. The team comprises:

(a) at least one senior College academic leader with relevant discipline expertise;

(b) a senior UNSW Faculty representative with relevant discipline expertise;

(c) a College representative from the Educational Development team.

If a higher education award, curriculum developed by UNSW is used to develop the program, ensuring a coherent body of discipline knowledge that delivers learning outcomes that align with the Australian Qualifications Framework (AQF) for the level of award.

The College is licensed to use UNSW curriculum under the Master Services Agreement between the two institutions.

The New Program Proposal template includes admissions criteria, program structure, articulation pathways, constructive alignment of assessment and learning outcomes, national program comparators, projected enrolments, alignment with relevant AQF level criteria, course outlines and staffing.

The College advises TEQSA of its intention to submit a new program for accreditation in 6 months and seeks clarification around the detail required with the application;

3.4 Step 4: External review of New Program Proposal

Once the New Program Proposal is completed, it is sent to the following together with any related artefacts:

(a) an External Expert selected from the Tertiary Education Quality Standards Agency (TEQSA) Register of Experts, together with the TEQSA Expert Brief and Report Template;

(b) the relevant Faculty QARC for review / comment.

3.5 Step 5: College approvals

After any revisions have been incorporated, the New Program Proposal, together with the External Expert Report and Faculty Report are sent to the Program Development and Review Committee for consideration.

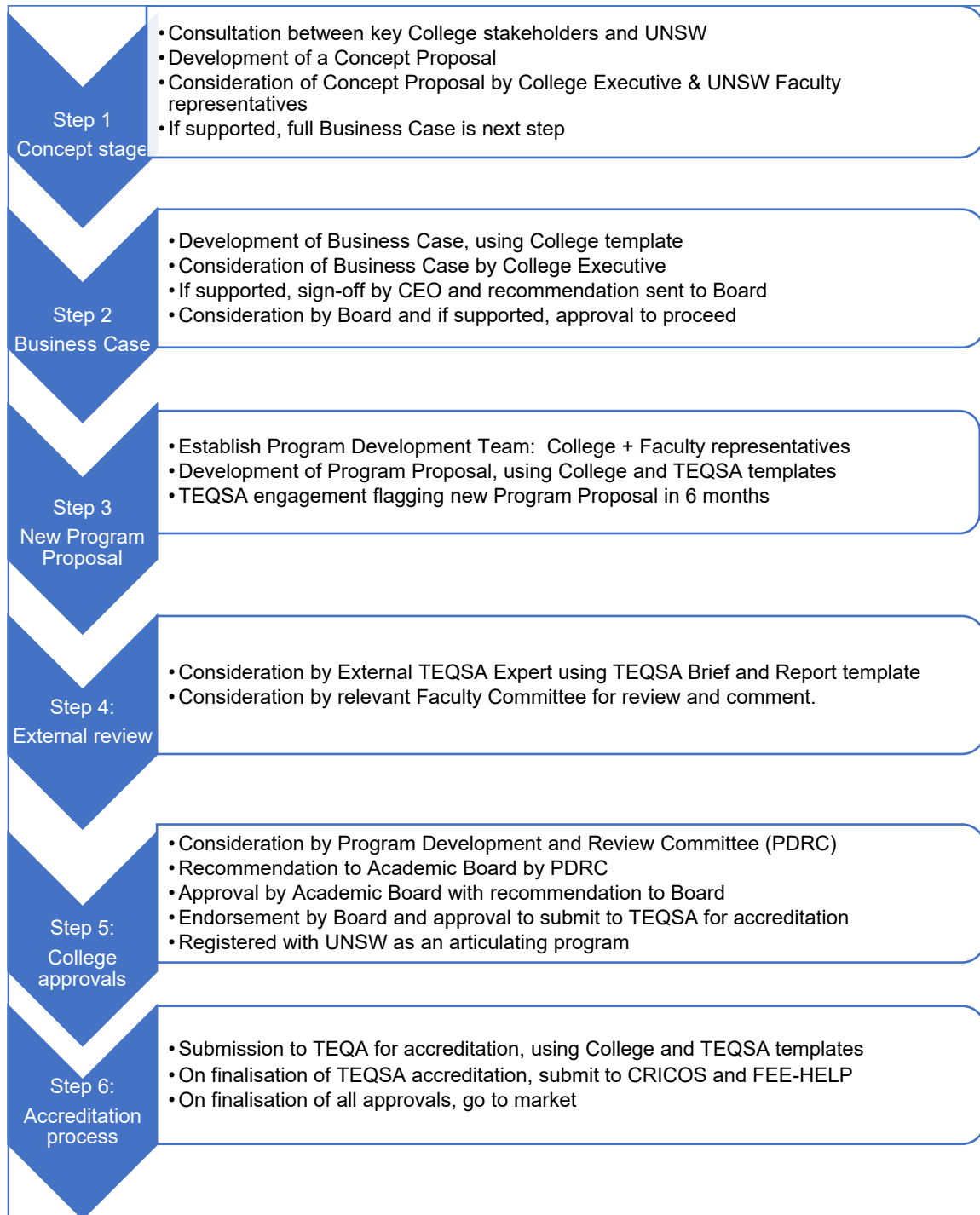If endorsed, a recommendation is made to Academic Board for review and approval.

The process between the External Expert, the Program Development and Review Committee and Academic Board can be iterative, until final Academic Board approval and a recommendation to the Board for submission to TEQSA for accreditation.

After Academic Board has approved the New Program Proposal, it is sent to the Board to endorse submission to TEQSA for accreditation and registered with UNSW as an articulating program.

3.6 Step 6: TEQSA process

An application for accreditation using TEQSA templates is submitted. On finalisation of accreditation, processes for CRICOS registration as well as adding the accredited program to the FEE-HELP scope are undertaken.

3.7 Summary of steps undertaken for new Program Development

Step 1
Concept stage
- Consultation between key College stakeholders and UNSW
- Development of a Concept Proposal
- Consideration of Concept Proposal by College Executive & UNSW Faculty representatives
- If supported, full Business Case is next step

Step 2
Business Case
- Development of Business Case, using College template
- Consideration of Business Case by College Executive
- If supported, sign-off by CEO and recommendation sent to Board
- Consideration by Board and if supported, approval to proceed

Step 3
New Program Proposal
- Establish Program Development Team: College + Faculty representatives
- Development of Program Proposal, using College and TEQSA templates
- TEQSA engagement flagging new Program Proposal in 6 months

Step 4:
External review
- Consideration by External TEQSA Expert using TEQSA Brief and Report template
- Consideration by relevant Faculty Committee for review and comment.

Step 5:
College approvals
- Consideration by Program Development and Review Committee (PDRC)
- Recommendation to Academic Board by PDRC
- Approval by Academic Board with recommendation to Board
- Endorsement by Board and approval to submit to TEQSA for accreditation
- Registered with UNSW as an articulating program

Step 6:
Accreditation process
- Submission to TEQA for accreditation, using College and TEQSA templates
- On finalisation of TEQSA accreditation, submit to CRICOS and FEE-HELP
- On finalisation of all approvals, go to market

Note: Steps 3 - 5 can be an iterative process.

4. Minor Program Changes

4.1 All programs except Foundation Studies

For higher education awards, ongoing monitoring and review of programs results in minor changes which improve the quality of the course but do not fundamentally impact on the structure, AQF level, duration, course design or delivery methods of an accredited program.

In such cases, the changes are:

(a) approved by the relevant Education Manager (Program Convenor);

(b) considered and noted by the Learning and Teaching Quality Committee;

(c) considered and noted by the Program Development and Review Committee.

TEQSA notification of changes is not required.

If progressively minor changes constitute a material change to an accredited program, the material change process is initiated.

4.2 Foundation Studies

A "non-significant" or "minor" change to a Foundation Studies course, includes any change, either one-off or cumulative, which results in a change to more than 10% (> 10%) of the course assessment or Course Learning Outcomes.

Minor changes to the Foundation Studies program are:

(a) endorsed by the relevant Education Manager (Program Convenor);

(b) considered and endorsed by the Learning and Teaching Quality Committee;

(c) considered and endorsed by the Program Development and Review Committee with a recommendation to Academic Board;

(d) assessed and approved by Academic Board.

A TEQSA notification is also required.

This variation from minor changes to other programs is a requirement under the Education Services for Overseas Students (Foundation Program Standards) 2021.

5. Material Program Changes

5.1 Process overview

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.

Alternatively, changes in the related graduate work environment, UNSW degree into which the pathway articulates, or market demand, may inform the need for a material program change.

A material change may include amendment of the program title, AQF level, significant revision of learning outcomes, course duration or entry criteria, replacement of at least 50% of courses within a program.

Step 1: The material program change process is initiated by the Chief Academic officer, on advice from the relevant Education Manager (Program Convenor) and after discussion with the relevant UNSW Faculty Dean or nominee.

Step 2: It is then submitted to the College Executive Committee for consideration of any financial implications or impact on College strategic direction.

This may influence next steps in terms of initiating the new program process at Step 2 and the teach out planning of an existing program.

The Material Change Notification is then sent to Program Development and Review Committee to consider next steps and teach out plan.
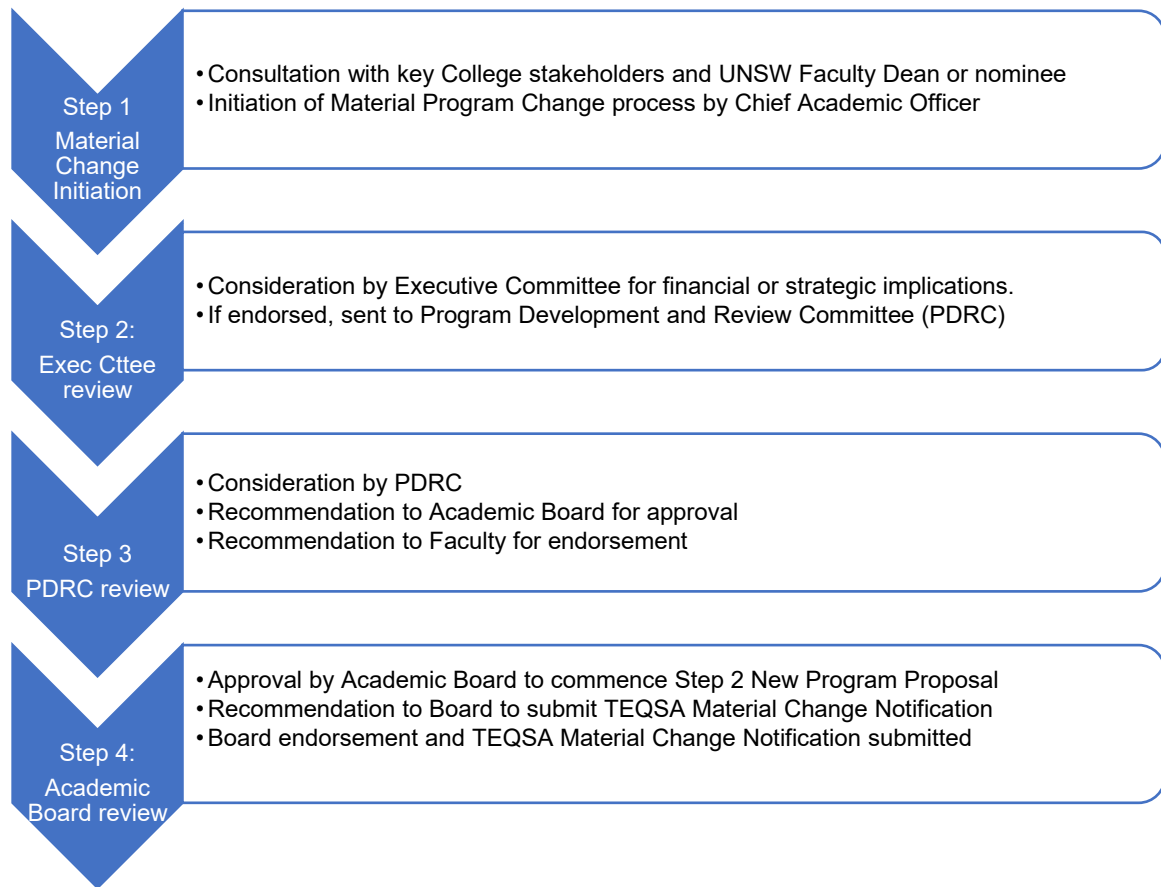
Step 3: Program Development and Review Committee considers the Material Change Notification and makes recommendation to:

(a) Academic Board for approval;

(b) UNSW Faculty for endorsement.

Step 4: Academic Board considers the Program Development and Review Committee recommendation. If approved:

(a) the Material Change Notification is sent to TEQSA;

(b) the new Program Development process is initiated at the relevant step; and

(c) the Board is updated.

5.2 Process summary

Step 1 Material Change Initiation	• Consultation with key College stakeholders and UNSW Faculty Dean or nominee • Initiation of Material Program Change process by Chief Academic Officer
Step 2: Exec Cttee review	• Consideration by Executive Committee for financial or strategic implications. • If endorsed, sent to Program Development and Review Committee (PDRC)
Step 3 PDRC review	• Consideration by PDRC • Recommendation to Academic Board for approval • Recommendation to Faculty for endorsement
Step 4: Academic Board review	• Approval by Academic Board to commence Step 2 New Program Proposal • Recommendation to Board to submit TEQSA Material Change Notification • Board endorsement and TEQSA Material Change Notification submitted

6. Program Withdrawal

A Program Withdrawal submission is completed by the Executive Director, Academic after discussions with the relevant UNSW Faculty.

It is then sent to the Executive Committee to assess the strategic and financial implications of withdrawing the program, together with the rationale.

If Executive Committee endorses the withdrawal, the Program Withdrawal submission, together with a detailed teach out plan that aligns with the requirements of the Higher Education Standards Framework, is submitted to the Program Development and Review Committee for consideration.

The Program Development and Review Committee considers the proposal and:

(a) makes a recommendation to Academic Board for approval, accompanied by the detailed teach out plan; and

(b) advises the relevant UNSW Faculty(s) and Committee(s) of the program's withdrawal and teach out plan.

The Executive Committee and Board ensure that withdrawal of the program is embedded within future planning.

7. Program review

7.1 Ongoing program monitoring

Ongoing monitoring and review of the quality of programs is undertaken within the academic governance structure. This includes outcomes against institutional benchmarks established by Academic Board and a range of other performance indicators, including:

(a) student enrolments against forecast;

(b) student and graduate survey outcomes;

(c) graduate performance at UNSW;

(d) pass rates;

(e) completion rates;

(f) student at risk statistics;

(g) academic integrity statistics;

(h) specific student cohort data and targeted support strategies;

(i) scholarship activity;

(j) updates on facilities, learning resources and educational support.

This data is reviewed at an aggregated level by Academic Board with finer grained oversight at other academic committees.

7.2 Academic program reviews of award programs

At least every five (5) years, Academic Board initiates an Academic Program Review of each AQF award program.

(a) Review panel

Academic Board nominates review panel members, in consultation with the senior academic staff within the College. The panel must include at least one external member with relevant discipline and academic management expertise, one member from the relevant UNSW faculty and a College Academic Head or Manager who is not directly involved in teaching or managing the program.

(b) Review brief

The review panel addresses:

    i.   accreditation and compliance, demand, viability and appropriateness of admission criteria;

    ii.   program design, including program learning outcomes and curriculum alignment;

iii. program delivery, including teaching, assessment, student support, teaching staff profile, academic and administrative management, processes and systems;

iv. student experience and outcomes, including trends in student satisfaction, student completion and retention rates and graduate outcomes and satisfaction;

v. emerging developments in the field of education, modes of delivery, the changing needs of students and identified risks to the quality of the course of study.

(c) Program review portfolio

A portfolio is provided to the program review panel prior to the program review. It will include program data, feedback and submissions to the review, a self-evaluation report and any reports from External Experts and TEQSA relating to the relevant program.

Submissions are invited from staff and students.

(d) Program review process

The panel will meet with key program stakeholders, including:

i. the Chief Academic Officer;

ii. the Head of Programs;

iii. a senior academic(s) from the relevant UNSW faculty;

iv. academic staff teaching into the program;

v. students / graduates.

Members will also undertake a tour of the facilities utilised by the program.

(e) Program Review Panel Report

The Review Panel Chair will prepare the final report, in consultation with other panel members and submit to the CEO and Chief Academic Officer within one month of the program review. The report will contain contextualised recommendations to address risks identified in the review process and to enhance the quality of the program. Recommendations should be rated in terms of their significance to the program quality.

(f) Executive Director, Academic response

The Executive Director, Academic will review the Report and initiate a response, addressing each of the Panel's recommendations. The response should also include timelines for completion of any agreed actions and clear articulation of action owners and resources.

The Response Report should be sent to the Review Panel within two months of being received by the Executive Director, Academic.

(g) Consideration by Academic Board

The Review Panel Report and the CAO Response will be then submitted to Academic Board for consideration and subsequent follow up. Implementation of actions will be overseen by the CAO and relevant Education Manager (Program Convenor) with a follow up report to Academic Board at the end of twelve (12) months.

8. Review of academic governance processes

The College Board Charter requires the Board to ensure, at least every seven years, a review of the effectiveness of academic governance processes is undertaken. This report is shared with UNSW Council, the College Executive Committee and Board.

9. 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 Dean or Nominee	• Endorses new program concepts, assessment design and articulation.
	• Collaborates on full program development.
	• Reviews articulation agreement and progresses the agreement for sign off in accordance with UNSW's Register of Delegations.

10.   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.
QARC	Quality Assurance Faculty Representative
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	• Higher Education Standards Framework (Threshold Standards) 2021 • Australian Qualifications Framework • Foundation Program Standards 2021 • ELICOS National Standards • National Code of Practice for providers of Education and Training to Overseas Students 2018
Policy	• Program Development Approval and Review Policy • Assessment Policy • Quality Assurance Framework
Procedures	• Approval of New Programs and Changes to Programs Procedure • Third Party Arrangements Procedure
Forms and templates	• Business Case for New Programs • New Program Proposal • Minor Change to a Program

	• Material Change to a Program Advice • Course Outline template • Teach Out Plan template

Procedure Governance

Program Development Approval and Review Procedure	
Category/Business Group	Academic Programs
Published Externally (Yes/No)	Yes
Approver	Executive Director Academic
Responsible Officer	Director, Academic Programs
Contact Officer	Director, Academic Programs
Effective Date	17/08/2023
Next Review Date	17/08/2026
Version	1.0

Revision History

Version	Approved by	Approval date	Effective date	Sections modified
1	Executive Director Academic – David West	04 August 2023	17 August 2023	N/A

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