COURSE REVIEW AND IMPROVEMENT
POLICY & PROCEDURE

1. Overview

The objective of this policy is to provide a framework for review and evaluation of accredited courses within the Higher Education Leadership Institute ("the Institute") in the context of maintaining academic standards and continuous quality improvement.

2. Continuous evaluation of delivery and assessment

The Institute is committed to ensuring that the processes for course delivery and the monitoring of assessment systems lead to continuous improvement of the Institute's courses.

Continuous monitoring and review of course delivery and assessment enables the Institute to:
   i.   evaluate the quality of delivery methods;
   ii. monitor and review the assessment methodology and instruments;
   iii. identify areas of strength and areas for improvement, and strategies to address these;
   iv. document improvements to courses over time.

Processes for continuously monitoring and evaluating courses include:

2.1 Student feedback:

Students provide continuous feedback throughout the duration of a course. Evaluation questionnaires are distributed during selected subjects and at the conclusion of a course and are anonymous. Evaluation questionnaires will cover subject content and workload; teaching effectiveness; the quality and adequacy of learning and support resources and services; delivery mode; and assessment strategies. The evaluation questionnaires are analysed by the Dean who, in turn, provides a comprehensive summary on feedback received from students to the Academic Quality Committee. This feedback will also form part of course reviews where relevant (refer section 3 below).

2.2 Student representation on the Academic Quality Committee:

The Institute fosters input and feedback on course content and delivery mechanisms, and administrative and support systems via representation on the Academic Quality Committee by individuals currently undertaking the Institute's courses.

2.3 Educator Feedback:

Educators are provided with opportunities for evaluation of subjects as well as the teaching and learning environment. Educators have direct and frequent access to their peers and the Dean and Course Coordinator to allow for the exchange of information and to maximise communication. Meetings of educators are opportunities to review course delivery and assessment.

2.4 Moderation of Assessment:

Moderation of assessment is conducted to ensure consistency, equity and fairness in assessment practices (Refer section 8 of *QAF001 Quality Assurance Framework* and *QAF048 Assessment Validation and Moderation Procedures*).

2.5 Academic Quality Committee:

The Academic Quality Committee is responsible for monitoring student progress; reviewing outcomes of student feedback; reviewing student results and reporting to the Academic Board. The Academic Quality Committee makes recommendations to the Academic Board on changes to existing courses, including matters pertaining to delivery.

2.6 Course Advisory Committee:

The Course Advisory Committee reviews, monitors and assesses the achievement of each course's aims and learning outcomes and ensures the ongoing currency and relevance of curriculum, course objectives and subjects that make up the course.

2.7 Academic Board:

The Academic Board is responsible for the achievement of educational objectives, the development and implementation of academic policy and monitoring of the teaching and learning environment and receives reports from its Course Advisory Committee and Academic Quality Committee.

3. Periodic reviews of courses and subjects

All courses (and their constituent subjects) offered by the Institute are subject to periodic evaluation of the design and content of each course and course delivery mechanisms. The Institute undertakes cyclical reviews of its courses through its discipline-specific Course Advisory Committee. The objective of these reviews is to ensure that a particular course's aim; learning outcomes; content and structure; assessment activities and marking criteria; learning and support resources; study mode(s); and delivery method(s) are monitored, evaluated and updated in a systematic way.

3.1 Continuous review

The course approval cycle is normally seven years. Formal reviews of a course will be held in the third and sixth year of accreditation in accordance with section 3.2 below. However, between these formal reviews, changes to a course (and its constituent subjects) may be required to respond to specific feedback received from stakeholders (as noted in section 2 above) or amendment of content due to changes in the external real-world environment. Normally, a subject would be reviewed at least annually through the process of continuous review.

These changes should be considered by the Course Advisory Committee and any changes implemented or proposed will be reported to the Academic Board through the Dean's Report.

The Dean will keep a register of all changes to the Institute's curriculum.

3.2 Triennial review

The Institute will conduct a triennial review for each accredited course and its constituent subjects. This review process will be conducted by the Course Advisory Committee under the direction of the Dean.

The triennial review will address the following criteria:
  i. the role of the course within the Institute's educational profile and its ongoing contribution to the vision, mission and strategic goals of the Institute;

ii.   the demand for the course (based on enrolment statistics and market research and analysis);

iii.   the impact of similar courses on the Institute's course offerings by competitor higher education providers;

iv.   review of course aims, expected learning outcomes, methods for assessment of those outcomes, content and structure, learning strategies and resources, study mode(s) and delivery method(s) with reference to the AQF level of the course;

v.   adequacy, currency, and appropriateness of assessment practices and marking criteria;

vi.   emerging developments in the course discipline specifically, and education generally;

vii.   the changing needs of students;

viii.   quality of student and educator support services;

ix.   the quality, scope and adequacy of course-related information provided to students;

x.   analysis of significant trends drawn from student and educator evaluation and feedback data;

xi.   any identified risks to the quality of the course;

xii.   the systematic collection and analysis of data relating to admission and enrolment statistics, progression rates, deferral, withdrawal and retention rates, students' achievement of learning outcomes, completion times and rates, results per subject, graduate employability, and feedback from various stakeholders and external experts.

The review will generate a course-specific report for the Academic Board which will be presented by the Dean. Recommendations arising from the review process will be implemented by the Course Coordinator.

4.   Course review guidelines

Course review at HELI may be conducted through external reviewers and/or the Peer Review Portal (PRP)[1], in which review documentation, feedback reporting and communications will be managed.

In reviewing courses and their constituent subjects, reviewers (nominated Committee members, external experts including those of the PRP, and relevant academic staff) are provided with the following guidelines to inform their review processes. The guidelines provide a standardised format to facilitate analysis of data and the generation of critical issues for reporting purposes.

Reviewers should begin evaluation processes by asking the following questions:

a.   what are the intended learning outcomes of the course?

b.   how do course learning outcomes relate to external benchmarking standards, the AQF, and professional and industry body requirements?

c.   how do the subjects contribute to the overall aim of the course?

Reviewers should assess the planning and deliberative processes through which course learning outcomes were originally determined and how the course was designed to enable achievement of those outcomes. To this extent, reviewers should ask:

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[1] 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.

d. how does the Institute ensure that course content enables students to achieve the intended learning outcomes?
e. how does the Institute ensure that the design and organisation of the course is effective in promoting learning and achievement of the intended learning outcomes?

Reviewers should consider the information available to students, educators and staff. They should consider how subject specifications are used to promote understanding about the subject learning outcomes and the other strategies used to communicate information. Reviewers should ask:

f. how are the intended learning outcomes for a subject and its constituent parts (e.g. assessment strategies) communicated to students and educators?
g. do students know what is expected of them?

Reviewers should evaluate how the assessment process enables the subject learning outcomes to be demonstrated and assessed objectively. Reviewers should ask:

h. does the assessment process enable students to demonstrate achievement of the specified learning outcomes?
i. are there criteria that enable examiners to distinguish between different categories of achievement?
j. is the reviewer confident in the security and integrity of the assessment procedures employed?
k. does the assessment strategy have an adequate formative function in developing a student's abilities?

In their report, reviewers should provide a critical evaluation of the course and its subjects. Reviewers should address the following questions:

l. Does the design and content of the course encourage achievement of the intended learning outcomes in terms of: knowledge and understanding, cognitive skills, subject-specific skills (including practical/professional skills), transferable skills, progression to employment and/or further study, and personal development?
m. Is there documentation that the course content and design is informed by recent developments in techniques of teaching and learning, by current research and scholarship, and by any changes in relevant occupational and professional requirements?

5. Course improvement process

The following procedures are in place to effect improvements to the course and delivery system. The Dean drives the review and improvement process and is supported by the Course Coordinator.

Step 1: Identified material changes arising from the review of a course are presented to the Academic Board for endorsement through the Dean's Report. Depending on the nature of the change these may flow from deliberations by either the Academic Quality Committee or the Course Advisory Committee.

Step 2: The Dean will ensure that all administrative processes and requirements are completed for implementation of changes endorsed by the Academic Board. This includes changes to student information, the website and marketing and promotional materials. All changes must comply with the Institute's policies and Academic Board directives.

Step 3: The Dean ensures that appropriate notification is communicated to students prior to implementation of any changes, including details of the specific changes, a rationale for the changes and the impact of the changes on students.

Step 4: Throughout the change process, the Dean monitors risk management implications, including: the relationship of the changes to the Institute's mission and goals; issues related to course resourcing; the impact on compliance with regulatory requirements; consistency with the Institute's policies; impact of changes on educators and students and the provision of sufficient notification and support.

Step 5: All changes are recorded in accredited course of study *Subject Change Registers* in academic staff *Smartsheet Workspace.*

6. Related documents

- QAF001 Quality Assurance Framework
- QAF048 Assessment Validation and Moderation Procedures

7. Version history

Version	Approved by	Approval Date	Details
1.0	Academic Board	20 April 2016	Document creation and initial approval
1.1	Dean	23 September 2016	To incorporate nomenclature of "educator"
2.0	Academic Board	13 June 2018	Amendments for better alignment to HESF2015 and to acknowledge the role of the Course Coordinator
2.1	Academic Board	4 March 2020	Added the option of using the Peer Review Portal in addition to external course reviewers
2.2	Academic Board	16 March 2022	Minor amendments including alignment to HESF2021 and content updates

Document owner: Dean