Academic Offerings Approval Procedure

Version	Approved by	Approval date	Effective date	Next review
1.1	Deputy Vice-Chancellor Academic	25 March 2020	25 March 2020 (section 3 only) 1 July 2020	July 2023

Procedure Statement

Purpose	This Procedure specifies the governance and administrative framework and processes for the establishment, revision and disestablishment of academic offerings to ensure their quality, viability and relevance.
Scope	The Procedure applies to all new and continuing programs leading to an award, and to specialisations and courses, including non-AQF courses.
Are Local Documents on this subject permitted?	☒ Yes, however Local Documents must be consistent with this University-wide Document. ☐ No

Procedure Processes and Actions

Contents

1. Governance and administrative framework

1.1. Academic governance of academic offerings

1.1.1 Academic Board and University governance committees

The Academic Board is the principal academic body of the University and is responsible for overseeing academic governance and the maintenance of academic standards.

The Academic Board Programs Committee (ABPC) and the University Higher Degree Research Committee (UHDRC) are responsible for considering and recommending to the Academic Board academic proposals related to their terms of reference.

For information on the terms of reference for Academic Board and University governance committees refer to the University of New South Wales Rules on the Governance website at: https://www.gs.unsw.edu.au/UniversityofNewSouthWalesRules.pdf. For information on the Register of Delegations refer to the Governance website at: https://www.gs.unsw.edu.au/registerofdelegations/RegisterofDelegations.pdf

1.1.2 Academic Programs Advisory Group (APAG)

The Academic Programs Advisory Group (APAG) reviews academic proposals and alerts University and Academic Board governance committees to issues of significance, including those relating to risks, compliance, implementation and operational matters.

APAG assists academic proposal proponents to identify issues, gaps and other information requirements prior to consideration by University governance committees.

For information on the terms of reference for APAG refer to [Appendix 1](#).

1.1.3 Faculty governance

Faculty Boards or delegated Committees are responsible for recommending academic offerings to ABPC and UHDRC and for approving academic offerings.

Approval via circulation should be used in exceptional circumstances only, and with the approval of the President of the Academic Board.

For information on the terms of reference for Faculty Boards refer to the *University of New South Wales Rules* on the Governance website at: https://www.gs.unsw.edu.au/UniversityofNewSouthWalesRules.pdf and https://www.gs.unsw.edu.au/facultyandcommittees/index.html.

1.1.4 Associate Dean (Education/Research) or equivalent

The Associate Dean (Education/Research) or equivalent has responsibility for approval of revisions to programs, specialisations and courses that do not require formal committee review.

1.2. Management oversight of academic offerings

The Dean and the relevant Deputy Vice-Chancellor, Deputy Dean/Associate Dean, Head of School and Faculty Executive Director have responsibilities for operational considerations associated with academic offerings in addition to specific approval authority provided for in this Procedure.

The Academic Programs Business Group (APBG) advises the Academic Board, ABPC and UHDRC on Business Cases associated with proposals for new programs and certain larger specialisations. The APBG makes recommendations on commercial and business-related aspects of academic proposals, such as student demand, graduate demand, resource implications, impact on existing programs and courses, and risk. The Business Case may also address other drivers for the proposal, such as equity or strategic considerations.

For information on the terms of reference for the APBG refer to [Appendix 2](#).

1.3. Approval components

Establishment, revision or disestablishment of an academic offering requires the completion and approval of an academic proposal in the University academic information system, and in some cases an authority to proceed (ATP) and/or a business case. See Sections 2, 3 and 4 for details on requirements for components.

- An **authority to proceed (ATP)** proposal allows the relevant authority to determine whether a new academic offering has sufficient merit to proceed to the next approval stage and typically requires a summary of the academic offering, positioning in relation to other academic offerings, evidence of likely demand, initial estimates of resource implications, information about third-party arrangements and identification of interested UNSW stakeholders.

- The **academic proposal** provides the academic case for the establishment, revision or disestablishment of an academic offering and is a key element of UNSW's quality assurance process for programs of study that lead to a higher education qualification. It provides information required to comply with the Higher Education Standards Framework, A;ustralian Qualifications Framework and UNSW policies and procedures. Establishment proposals are used to create an academic offering, revision proposals are used to change an existing academic offering and disestablishment proposals are used to Suspend, place in Teach out or Inactivate an academic offering. Academic proposals should be progressed in a timely fashion to ensure their continued currency and relevance.

- The **business case** allows the university to understand the commercial and operational implications of an academic offering and considers factors such as competitive advantage, commercial viability and resourcing, strategic investments, risk management and contractual arrangements. It is typically developed in consultation with Faculty leadership, External Relations, and Finance, as needed.

  Approval components may require consultation with impacted parties to be undertaken and issues to be addressed before they are approved ([refer to section 5.1](#)).

1.4. Delegation of Authority

Individuals with authority to endorse or approve an authority to proceed, academic proposal, or business case (i.e. Heads of School, Deans, Faculty Executive Directors, Associate Deans / Deputy Deans, Deputy Vice-Chancellors, President of the Academic Board) may nominate another officer to perform this function where the Register of Delegations permits a nomination to be made. The nomination must be made in accordance with the nomination procedure set out in section 1.4 of the Register of Delegations. This delegation must be formally recorded in the curriculum governance system and will be applicable to all approvals within their authority, except where noted in this Procedure.

Where a Faculty Board delegates authority to a subordinate committee, the delegation must be formally recorded with Governance so that it can be reflected in committee documentation systems. The delegation must be consistently applied without exception.

2. Establishment of new academic offerings

2.1. Establishment of a new program

New programs require an ATP, an establishment proposal and a business case (with some exceptions, listed in section 2.1.5 below).

2.1.1 ATP approval workflow for a new program

The approval workflow for an ATP for a new program is:

1. Endorsement by the Dean of the relevant Faculty. Where the Dean's nominee is the author of the application, the Dean cannot delegate authority.
2. Approval by the relevant Deputy Vice-Chancellor.

Associate Deans (or equivalent) of all Faculties will be notified when an ATP for a new program is approved.

An establishment proposal and business case may be submitted for approval only once the ATP for the proposed program has received final approval. When an ATP has been approved, an establishment proposal and business case (where required) must be submitted within one year of that approval.

2.1.2 Business case approval workflow for a new program

The approval workflow for a business case for a new program is:

1. Endorsement by the Faculty Executive Director.

2. Review by the Academic Programs Business Group (APBG). The APBG recommends approval of the associated academic proposal. Where a program is being proposed for equity or strategic reasons, and commercial viability cannot be demonstrated, the APBG may request advice to inform its recommendation from the relevant DVC.

3. Noting by Academic Board Programs Committee (ABPC) or University Higher Degree Research Committee (UHDRC) when considering the establishment proposal. Establishment proposals with a business case that has a recommendation not to approve will be routinely starred at ABPC or UHDRC.

4. Noting by Academic Board when considering the establishment proposal. Establishment proposals with a business case that has a recommendation not to approve will be routinely starred at Academic Board. APBG recommendations are also used to guide endorsement by the DVC as Ready for Market.

2.1.3 Establishment proposal approval workflow for a new program

The approval workflow for an establishment proposal for a new program is:

1. Endorsement by the relevant Faculty Board or Committee.
2. Review by APAG. This must be completed before the establishment proposal can proceed to ABPC or UHDRC.
3. Endorsement by ABPC or UHDRC and recommendation to the Academic Board for approval. The Business Case must be considered by the APBG before the establishment proposal can proceed to the ABPC or UHDRC.
4. Approval by the Academic Board.

2.1.4 Approval to offer a Program

A program that has been approved by the Academic Board must be endorsed as Ready for Market by the relevant Deputy Vice-Chancellor before it is marketed, submitted for publication or CRICOS registration, and before enrolment processes are instigated.

All approvals for academic components that make up a program (i.e. specialisations and/or courses) should proceed simultaneously so that all related academic offerings are endorsed prior to, or concurrently with, final approval by the Academic Board.

Where a program establishment proposal is assessed as having a higher than typical level of risk, whether academic, operational or financial, the Academic Board may require that the program be reviewed under the *Academic Offerings Review Procedure* within a set number of years, as a condition of approval.

The establishment proposal for a double degree will include information relating to supplementary rules where required (typically where programs involve cognate disciplines) and address timetabling of courses to ensure that students can complete in the published duration. Typically, all other academic attributes are pre-determined by the constituent programs.

2.1.5 Approval workflow exceptions

Exceptions to the processes set out in 2.1.1 to 2.1.3 are:

- Where a new program is required to be established for administrative purposes, the requirement for an ATP may be waived by the Head of Academic Administration, Student Services and Systems for coursework programs and the Director, Graduate Research School for higher degree research programs. A Business Case for these programs is not required.
- An exemption from a Business Case may be granted at the discretion of the relevant Deputy Vice-Chancellor.

- New double degree programs comprising two existing programs do not require a Business Case. However, the viability of the combination must be addressed as part of the ATP.

- An articulated suite of postgraduate programs only require one ATP and Business Case for the suite but will require an establishment proposal for each of the individual programs in the suite.

2.2. Establishment of a new specialisation (excluding minors)

New specialisations require an ATP and an establishment proposal. Specialisations of 96 UOC or more (undergraduate) and 72 UOC or more (postgraduate) also require a business case.

2.2.1 ATP approval workflows for new specialisations (excluding minors)

The approval workflow for an ATP for a new specialisation, excluding minors, is:

1. Endorsement by the Head of School where the specialisation is owned by a School.
2. Approval by the Dean of the Faculty that owns the specialisation.
3. Undergraduate specialisations of 96 UOC or more and postgraduate specialisations of 72 UOC or more will also require approval from the relevant DVC.

2.2.2 Business case approval workflows for new specialisations (excluding minors)

The approval workflow for a business case for a new specialisation of 96 UOC or more (undergraduate) and 72 UOC or more (postgraduate) is:-

1. Endorsement by the relevant Faculty Executive Director.

2. Review by the Academic Programs Business Group (APBG). The APBG recommends approval of the associated academic proposal. Where a specialisation is being proposed for equity or strategic reasons, and commercial viability cannot be demonstrated, the APBG may request advice to inform its recommendation from the relevant DVC.

3. Noting by Academic Board Programs Committee (ABPC) or University Higher Degree Committee (UHDRC) when considering the establishment proposal. Establishment proposals with a business case that has a recommendation not to approve will be routinely starred at ABPC or UHDRC.

4. Noting by Academic Board when considering the establishment proposal. Establishment proposals with a business case that has a recommendation not to approve will be routinely starred by Academic Board.

2.2.3 Establishment proposal approval workflows for a new specialisation (excluding minors)

The approval workflow for an establishment proposal for a new specialisation (excluding minors) is:

1. Notification to the Head of School where the specialisation is owned by a School.
2. Recommendation for approval by the relevant Faculty Board or Committee.
3. Review by APAG. This must be completed before the establishment proposal can proceed to ABPC or UHDRC.
4. Endorsement by ABPC or UHDRC and recommendation to the Academic Board for approval. The Business Case for a specialisation of 96 UOC or more (undergraduate) and 72 UOC or more (postgraduate) must be considered by the APBG before the establishment proposal can proceed to the ABPC or UHDRC.
5. Approval by the Academic Board.

2.2.4 Approval to offer a Program

A specialisation of 96 UOC or more and postgraduate specialisations of 72 UOC or more that has been approved by the Academic Board must be endorsed as Ready for Market by the relevant Deputy Vice-Chancellor before it is marketed, submitted for publication or CRICOS registration, and before enrolment processes are instigated.

2.2.5 Adding a specialisation to an existing program

Where a new major, honours or postgraduate specialisation is being added to an existing program or programs, the establishment proposal and approval must specify the relevant programs. A corresponding program revision proposal is not required.

To add an existing specialisation to an existing program, an author can choose to:

- revise the specialisation to include it in additional programs; or
- revise the program to add the specialisation.

Only one of these revision proposals is required. Advice can be sought from Academic Administration.

2.2.6 Approval workflow exceptions

Exceptions to the processes set out in 2.2.1 to 2.2.3 are:

- Where a new specialisation is required to be established for administrative purposes, the requirement for an ATP may be waived by the Head of Academic Administration, Student Services and Systems for coursework programs and the Director, Graduate Research School for higher degree research programs. Where exemption is given for an ATP, a Business Case (where applicable) is also not required.
- An exemption from a business case may be granted at the discretion of the relevant Deputy Vice-Chancellor.
- Where an ATP and business case for a program also include and specify new specialisations associated with the creation of the new program, a separate ATP and business case (where applicable) are not required for the specialisation.

2.3. Establishment of a new minor

All new minors require an ATP and an establishment proposal.

2.3.1 ATP approval workflow for a new minor

The approval workflow for an ATP for a new minor is:

1. Endorsement by the Head of School where the minor is owned by a School.
2. Approval by the Dean of the Faculty that owns the minor.

2.3.2 Establishment proposal approval workflow for a new minor

The approval workflow for an establishment proposal for a new minor is:

1. Notification to the Head of School where the minor is owned by a School.
2. Approval by the relevant Faculty Board or Committee.

The owning Faculty is required to consult with relevant Faculties where the specialisation is to be included in other Faculties' programs.

2.3.3 Adding a minor to an existing program

Where a new minor is being added to an existing program or programs, the establishment proposal and approval must specify the relevant programs. A corresponding program revision proposal is not required.

To add an existing minor to an existing program, an author can choose to:

- revise the minor to include it in an additional program; or
- revise the program to add the minor.

Only one of these revision proposals is required. Where the Faculty owner of the minor is different to the Faculty that owns the program, advice should be sought from Academic Administration.

2.3.4 Approval workflow exceptions

Exceptions to the processes set out in 2.3.1 to 2.3.3 are:

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- Where a new minor is required to be established for administrative purposes, the requirement for an ATP may be waived by the Head of Academic Administration, Student Services and Systems for coursework programs.
- Where an ATP and business case for a program also include and specify new minors associated with the establishment of the new program, a separate ATP is not required for the minor.

2.4. Establishment of a new course

All new courses require an ATP and an establishment proposal.

2.4.1 ATP approval workflow for a new course

The ATP for a new course requires information on staffing needs, likely student numbers, curriculum-fit (including whether the course is core or elective and linkages to other programs or specialisations), and facilities and resources.

The approval workflow for an ATP for a new course is:

1. Endorsement by the Head of School.
2. Approval by the relevant Dean with notification of the approval to the Faculty Executive Director.

2.4.2 Establishment proposal approval workflow for a new course

The establishment proposal for a new course requires the following information:

- A description of the course
- The course learning outcomes and the relationship to program and specialisation learning outcomes
- High-level assessment structure and indication of any mandatory attendance and participation requirements
- Delivery mode/s (e.g. face-to-face) and/or format/s (e.g. intensive)
- Inherent requirements and prerequisites
- Course career

Information in the course outline and the course content must be consistent with the approved establishment proposal.

The approval workflow for an establishment proposal for a new course is:

1. Notification to the Head of School.
2. Approval by the relevant Faculty Board or Committee.

2.4.3 Approval workflow exceptions

Exceptions to the processes set out in 2.4.1 to 2.4.2 are:

- Where a new course is required to be established for administrative purposes, the requirement for an ATP may be waived by the Head of Academic Administration, Student Services and Systems for coursework programs and the Director, Graduate Research School for higher degree research programs.
- Where an ATP and business case for a program also include and specify new courses associated with the creation of a new program, a separate ATP is not required for the course.

2.5. Establishment of a new non-AQF course or credential

Proposals for the establishment of a micro-course or shorter form credential with no specific relationship with current AQF qualifications (including short courses, micro-credentials, digital badges, whether based on existing courses or not, and courses designed for specific professional markets such as finance and information technology courses) may require approval, depending on the nature of the course or credential and the potential for use as a component of an AQF qualification.

Proposals for the establishment of a non-AQF course or credential, including the division of existing courses into sub-components (such as digital badges), must be approved by the Associate Dean (Education) with an establishment proposal, with notification to the Faculty Board or delegated academic committee, in the following circumstance:

- where successful completion of the proposed non-AQF course or credential is intended to allow admission, credit or exemption towards a UNSW program of study, and/or

- where the proposed non-AQF course or credential contains a total of at least six hours of coursework and is assessed by at least one hour of examination or student assessment activity.

An ATP and Business Case are not required for non-AQF course or credential proposals.

The establishment proposal must be created in the university academic information system and will detail:

- The learning outcomes, and the relationship to existing course or program learning outcomes and/or admission requirements, where it is envisaged that the credential could be used for credit or admission
- The volume of learning in equivalent units of credit
- Assessment structure
- Likely costs and income with evidence of endorsement by the Faculty Executive Director.

For all other non-AQF proposals for micro-credentials, a Head of School must approve the courseware and assessments.

All non-AQF courses and credentials must be clearly distinguished from AQF awards and qualifications and the university approved templates must be used when issuing certification to students.

3. Revisions to academic offerings

Revisions to academic offerings require different levels of approval depending on the type of academic offering (program, specialisation or course) and the nature of the change. The intention is to streamline approval processes for lower risk changes, while ensuring robust quality assurance and consultation around more sensitive and impactful changes. Only revisions categorised as Level 4 or 5 require approval by Academic Board.

Revisions to academic offerings require an academic proposal to be completed in the academic information management system. Supporting information on the rationale for the change, transitional arrangements, resource implications and evidence of consultation may be required.

For efficiency, a consolidated approval process may be used for revisions that apply broadly to a Faculty's programs at the discretion of the Head of Academic Administration, Student Services and Systems (for coursework programs) or the Director, Graduate Research School (for higher degree research programs). For example, if a Faculty proposes to change the English language requirement for all their programs (within the English language proficiency requirements approved by the Academic Board) this may be actioned as a single approval (e.g. via a memo to the committees) and then updated in all the relevant records upon approval (liaise with Academic Administration for this).

Some revisions must be actioned via establishment of a new academic offering rather than by changing attributes of an existing offering. This is usually because of constraints applied by the government in reporting specifications. Refer to section 3.6.

Advice can be sought from Academic Administration on which level of revision is appropriate for any individual case.

3.1. Level 1 revisions

Revisions categorised as Level 1 are financial and/or operational in nature, e.g. organisational ownership changes, and changes relating to the management of admission applications.

The Associate Dean (Education) approves Level 1 revisions for:

- Courses
- Minors.

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The Deputy Vice-Chancellor Academic or Dean of Graduate Research approve Level 1 revisions for:

- Majors
- Postgraduate Specialisations
- Programs

3.2. Level 2 revisions

Revisions categorised as Level 2 are deemed to be academic in nature, but of low risk and with localised applicability, not typically requiring broad Faculty or institutional consultation, i.e. course assessment structure, career outcomes and pathways, field of education.

Level 2 revisions require a revision proposal to be approved by the Associate Dean (Education), or equivalent.

3.3. Level 3 revisions

Revisions categorised as Level 3 are deemed to be academic in nature, and of sufficient sensitivity to be subject to broad Faculty consultation, i.e. course name changes, course delivery changes, and changes to academic rules in minors that may have a potential impact on learning outcomes.

Level 3 revisions require a revision proposal to be approved by the relevant Faculty Board or Committee.

Where an existing minor is offered in programs outside the owning Faculty, evidence of consultation and support for the proposed change by the other Faculty or Faculties must be provided.

3.4. Level 4 revisions

Level 4 revisions are only applicable to specialisations (excluding minors) and programs.

Revisions categorised as Level 4 are academic in nature, potentially highly impactful, and requiring of broad institutional consultation.

The approval workflow for a Level 4 revision is:

1. Recommendation for approval by the relevant Faculty Board or Committee
2. Review by APAG. This must be completed before a revision proposal can proceed to the relevant university academic committee
3. Endorsement by the ABPC or UHDRC and recommendation to Academic Board for approval
4. Approval by Academic Board.

3.5. Level 5 revisions

Level 5 revisions are only applicable to programs. These involve a substantial set of changes to a program which change the focus of the program, such as simultaneous changes to learning outcomes, structure and target market.

Level 5 revisions follow the same endorsement and approval workflow steps as Level 4 revisions but should only be approved following completion of an Academic Program Review or Accreditation Review for the program.

3.6. Changes that require establishment of a new academic offering

3.6.1 Programs

The following attributes of an existing program typically cannot be changed with a revision proposal. A new program will usually be required to be created via an establishment proposal:

- Award Title
- Program Code
- Career
- AQF level
- Size of disciplinary core.

Where a new academic offering is required to be created to accommodate a change which is essentially a revision, an exemption from the ATP approval process may be approved by the Head of Academic Administration.

When changing a program's delivery location, delivery mode or introducing a third-party provider, staff are advised to contact Academic Administration for advice. Depending on the change, this may require the completion of a business case to be considered by the Academic Programs Business Group as part of a revision proposal, or may be best managed as a new academic offering.

3.6.2 Specialisations

The following attributes of an existing specialisation cannot be changed with a revision proposal. A new specialisation must be created via an establishment proposal:

- Name
- Career
- Specialisation type.

3.6.3 Courses

Units of credit of courses cannot be changed with a revision proposal. A new course must be created via an establishment proposal. Furthermore, where significant changes are required to a course that significantly alter the learning outcomes and course content, consideration should be given as to whether this is a revision or should be treated as a new course.

4. Disestablishing an academic offering

Academic offerings can be disestablished for academic, strategic or administrative reasons.

Disestablishment of an academic offering involves one or more of the following:

Suspension: the process followed when an academic offering will not be offered to new applicants for a specified period, to evaluate whether it should continue to be offered.

Teach out: the process followed when an academic offering will be permanently closed and no longer offered. Academic offerings placed in Teach out do not have to be preceded by a period of suspension where there is certainty that the academic offering will no longer be offered. Academic offerings may be administratively placed in Teach out where superseded by an equivalent new offering. Programs and specialisations will be in a status of Teach out until there are no longer any students enrolled.

Inactivation: when the status of an academic offering is updated to 'Inactive' in the relevant administrative systems.

The processes involved depend on the type of academic offering and are described in 4.1 to 4.3.

4.1. Programs

Depending on the level of certainty about the future of the program, a program can be suspended or placed in Teach out. A program may be in a status of suspension for a maximum of three years. After this the program must either be re-opened, or it will be considered to be in Teach out prior to Inactivation. When there are no longer any students enrolled in a program identified as Teach out, the program will be inactivated. A program that has been placed in Teach out or inactivated cannot be reopened.

A proposal to disestablish a program must contain the following information:

- Reason for Suspension or Teach out
- Program application and enrolment data
- Proposed timing of Suspension or Teach out
- Identified impacts of disestablishment including resolution of any third-party arrangements
- Student transition plan, which addresses the impact on applicants and students and their ability to complete the program in the maximum time for completion (as specified in the *Academic Progression*

). This must include consideration of students on approved program leave or academic suspension.

- Evidence of consultation with impacted parties and resolution of issues. In the case of a cross-faculty double degree award program the Managing Faculty is required to consult with the secondary Faculty.

Once a program is approved for Suspension or Teach out, the Managing Faculty must liaise with relevant units, including External Relations and Admissions, regarding any follow up actions required on their part (e.g. existing applications offers and deferrals on previous code, updating marketing collateral).

A decision not to offer a core course, specialisation or any other component of a program without appropriate substitution and without which the program cannot be completed constitutes a decision to Suspend or Teach out the program and must be dealt with according to this Procedure.

The Academic Board, after advice from the Deputy Vice-Chancellor Academic or Provost, and after consultation with the Faculty, may require the Faculty to Suspend or Teach out a program on the basis of low enrolments, duplication of outcomes, consideration of the overall portfolio of academic offerings, or consistently poor student experience feedback.

4.1.1 Suspension approval workflow

The approval workflow for the Suspension of a program is:

1. Endorsement by the relevant Dean
2. Approval by the relevant Deputy Vice-Chancellor
3. Noting by ABPC or UHDRC.

A request to re-open a program follows the same approval workflow and must be supported by a rationale addressing the concerns that led to suspension.

If a program has not been reviewed within the last seven years, it must be reviewed according to the *Academic Offerings Review Procedure* prior to re-opening. It must also be compliant with University policies and procedures that are applicable at the time of re-opening and the HESF and AQF.

A program that has been in a period of suspension for 3 years that will not be reopened, will be placed in Teach out with approval of the relevant DVC and noting by the relevant University committees.

4.1.2 Teach out approval workflow

The approval workflow for the Teach out of a program is:

1. Endorsement by the relevant Dean
2. Approval by the relevant Deputy Vice-Chancellor.
3. Noting by the relevant Faculty Board or committee
4. Noting by the relevant university committee (ABPC or UHDRC)
5. Review by APAG of Faculty transition plan.

Where the program to be placed in Teach out is in a category listed in the University's funding agreement under *Closure of courses*, the Office of the Deputy Vice-Chancellor Academic will liaise with the Commonwealth regarding approval of the Teach out.

4.2. Specialisations

Majors and postgraduate specialisations may be Suspended or put into Teach out, however, typically the expectation is that specialisations are put into Teach out when a Faculty does not wish to continue to offer the specialisation in the future. A specialisation will remain in a status of Teach out until the inactivation process can be followed when the specialisation is no longer required for graduation. A specialisation in Teach out or Inactive cannot be reopened and the process for establishing a new specialisation must be followed. A specialisation may be in a status of Suspension for a maximum of three years. After this the specialisation must either be re-opened, or it will be considered to be in Teach out.

A disestablishment proposal for a specialisation requires the following information

- Reason for Suspension or Teach out
- Enrolment data

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- Proposed timing of Suspension or Teach out
- Identified impacts of disestablishment on programs within and outside the Faculty
- A plan to manage the dissolution of any relevant third-party arrangements
- Student transition plan
- Evidence of consultation with impacted parties.

Where the specialisation to be placed in Teach out is in a category listed in the [University's funding agreement](#) under *Closure of courses*, the Office of the Deputy Vice-Chancellor Academic will liaise with the Commonwealth regarding approval of the Teach out.

The Academic Board, after advice from the Deputy Vice-Chancellor Academic or Provost, and after consultation with the Faculty, may require the Faculty to Suspend or Teach out a specialisation on the basis of low enrolments, duplication of outcomes, consideration of the overall portfolio of academic offerings, or consistently poor student experience feedback.

4.2.1 Suspension approval workflow

The approval workflow for the Suspension of a specialisation excluding Minors is:

1. Endorsement by the relevant Head of School where the specialisation is owned by a School.
2. Endorsement by the relevant Dean
3. Approval by the relevant Deputy Vice-Chancellor
4. Noting by the relevant university committee (ABPC or UHDRC).

A request to re-open the major follows the same approval workflow and must be supported by a rationale addressing the concerns that led to suspension.

Minors cannot be suspended.

A specialisation that has been in a period of suspension for 3 years that will not be reopened, will be placed in Teach out with approval of the relevant DVC and noting by the relevant University committees.

4.2.2 Teach out approval workflow

The approval workflow for the Teach out of a specialisation (excluding minors) is:

1. Endorsement by the relevant Head of School
2. Endorsement by the relevant Dean
3. Approval by the relevant Deputy Vice-Chancellor
4. Noting by the relevant Faculty Board or committee
5. Noting by the relevant university committee (ABPC or UHDRC)
6. Review by APAG of Faculty transition plan.

The approval workflow for the Teach out of a minor is:
1. Endorsement by the relevant Head of School
2. Approval by the relevant Faculty Board or committee.

No associated program revision is required to remove the specialisation from the associated programs in which it appears as the removal is implicit in the request to Teach out the specialisation.

4.3. Courses

A course may be made Inactive when a Faculty does not wish to continue to offer the course in the future. Where an Inactive course is reopened, it must follow the process for establishing a new course to ensure that the re-opened course is current and compliant with procedures. The Suspension or Teach out process does not apply to courses.

A disestablishment proposal to make a course Inactive requires the following information:

- Reason for Inactivation
- Enrolment data and trends
- Proposed timing of Inactivation

- The role of the course in related programs, specialisations and as a course prerequisite within and outside of the Faculty. This is important so that students are able to complete their program of study within the minimum time required.
- Resolution of any third-party arrangements,
- Evidence of consultation with impacted parties

The approval workflow to Inactivate a course is:

1. Recommendation for inactivation by the relevant School or Faculty
2. Endorsement by Head of School with notification to the Faculty Executive Director
3. Approval by the relevant Faculty Board or Committee.

The timing of a decision to Inactivate a course must be considered. A course may be closed at any time prior to the course planning deadline for the following year. Once enrolments have opened, and a course has registered enrolments, it may be cancelled in special circumstances and in consultation with Scheduling and Academic Administration. A disestablishment proposal must be submitted to be effective in the following year.

The Deputy Vice-Chancellor Academic (DVCA) or Provost, after consultation with the Faculty, may require the Faculty to inactivate a course on the basis of low enrolments, duplication of content, consideration of the overall portfolio of academic offerings, or consistently poor student experience feedback.

A course may be administratively inactivated, in consultation with Schools and Faculties, if it is not offered for three consecutive years, unless a justification is provided for approval by the DVCA. E.g. some project, independent study, or research courses are not regularly offered but may need to be kept active.

5. Operational considerations

5.1. Consultation

Where the establishment, revision or disestablishment of an academic offering can reasonably be anticipated to impact on another School or Faculty, the proponent is expected to consult with them and address potential issues as part of the academic proposal prior to it being considered by the relevant approval authority.

The approval authority may choose to not consider an academic proposal until evidence of adequate consultation is provided.

Where it is anticipated that a change to UNSW academic offerings may impact on parties outside of UNSW, the same expectations for evidence of consultation hold.

5.2. Third-party arrangements

All third-party arrangements associated with an establishment, revision or disestablishment proposal, particularly arrangements to deliver some or all of a program or course, must comply with UNSW policies and procedures. Faculties are responsible for development and management of third party agreements, including liaison with the Legal Office and the Office of the DVCA. A draft of any third-party agreement for programs must be submitted to APBG and APAG for consideration. Where there is a Third-Party Agreement for a course this should be submitted to the Faculty Board or committee, along with the establishment proposal.

Signed Third-Party agreements must be in place prior to a program being marketed and opened to enrolments. Consideration should also be given to mitigation measures for identified risks, ensuring that required resources are in place and confirming that UNSW still wishes to proceed with offering the program, specialisation or course.

5.3. Approval cut-off dates

All new and revised academic offerings must be approved by 30 June in the year prior to the first intake to ensure that all necessary arrangements (e.g. Handbook publication, CRICOS registration, marketing and agent notification, student load planning, student enrolment planning, and resource development) are in

place before commencement, and to meet key administrative deadlines for curriculum planning, publishing and enrolment. The exception is new research programs or coursework programs which are fully online, and associated new courses. These must be approved at least six months prior to the first intake.

APAG can recommend a shorter cut-off date in exceptional circumstances.

5.4. Transition plans

The transition plan is to support students to complete the program or specialisation with the published structure, academic requirements, and learning outcomes, or equivalent, in place at the time of their initial enrolment.

The transition plan forms part of the approval documentation for the revision or Teach out of a program or specialisation.

The transition plan must specify arrangements for students enrolled in, on approved leave from, or accepted into the program (including options to remain in the program during Teach out or to transfer without disadvantage to an equivalent program) and demonstrate how the quality and integrity of the student experience will be maintained.

A brief stakeholder communication plan should also be included.

Accountabilities	
Responsible Officer	Deputy Vice-Chancellor Academic (DVCA)
Contact Officer	Head of Academic Administration
Supporting Information	
Legislative Compliance	This Procedure supports the University's compliance with the following legislation: *Australian Qualifications Framework 2013* *Disability Standards for Education 2005* (Cth) *Education Services for Overseas Students Act 2000* (ESOS Act) *Higher Education Standards Framework (Threshold Standards) 2015* *Tertiary Education Quality and Standards Agency Act 2011* (Cth)
Parent Document (Policy)	Academic Offerings Governance Policy
Supporting Documents	Nil
Related Documents	Academic Offerings Nomenclature Procedure Academic Offerings Review Procedure Academic Progression and Enrolment Policy Academic Progression Procedure Admission to Coursework Programs Procedure Admission of Higher Degree Research Programs Procedure Admissions Policy Assessment Design Procedure Assessment Implementation Procedure Assessment Policy Conditions for Award of Doctor of Philosophy Policy Conditions for Award of Master of Philosophy Policy

	Education Quality Policy
	Education Quality Procedure
	Equity, Diversity and Inclusion Policy
	Higher Degree Research Admissions and Pathways Guideline
	Integrated Curriculum Framework
	myExperience Survey Procedure
	Recognition of Prior Learning (Coursework Programs) Procedure
	Register of Delegations
	Scientia Education Experience
	University Medal Policy
	University Medal Procedure
	Program Design and Delivery Policy
	Program Design Procedure
	Program Delivery Procedure
	Work Integrated Learning Procedure
Superseded Documents	Program Disestablishment Procedure, v1.1
File Number	2020/005612

Definitions and Acronyms

Academic offering	A program, specialisation or course.
Academic proposal	An approval document providing academic details relating to an academic offering. There are three types: establishment proposal, revision proposal, and disestablishment proposal.
Administrative closure	Closure of an offering for administrative reasons where it has been superseded by an equivalent new offering.
AQF	Australian Qualifications Framework.
Authority to proceed (ATP)	An approval document providing a high level justification to establish a new academic offering.
Award/Qualification	A degree, diploma or certificate conferred following completion of an award program. It provides official recognition of successful completion of that program and carries the official seal of the University.
Business case	An approval document providing the commercial and operational rationale to establish a new academic offering
Career	Career refers to a student's academic level. UNSW has the following careers: Undergraduate, Postgraduate, Research and Non-award.
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.
Course Authority	Position with overarching responsibility for all aspects of a course. The Course Authority may delegate responsibilities to nominated staff or an administrative unit within a School or Faculty.

Curriculum Governance System	The approved enterprise-wide university system for the management and storage of curriculum information.
Dean	Includes the Rector of UNSW Canberra and the DVCA with respect to the DVCA Board of Studies
Disestablishment	The discontinuation of offering an academic program, specialisation or course. It can incorporate the 3 processes of Suspension, Teach out and Inactivation.
Disestablishment proposal	An academic proposal to Suspend or Teach out an academic offering.
Establishment proposal	An academic proposal to create a new academic offering.
Faculty Board	Includes a board of studies established by Council which is authorised to act as a Faculty Board.
HESF	Higher Education Standards Framework (Threshold Standards) 2015
Inherent requirements	The essential elements of a program or course that all students must meet for admission, progression and successful completion of a program or course. They are used as a reference point for students to identify their ability to successfully undertake the course of study and for identifying potential educational adjustments for students.
Inactivation	The administrative process of updating the status of an academic offering to 'Inactive' in the SIMS and academic information system.
Major	A specified sequence of study in a discipline or sub-discipline area within a program. Majors require students to take an approved set of courses at different levels and units of credit. In postgraduate programs, the term specialisation is used instead of major. In some programs more than one major may be completed.
Managing Faculty	In a double degree the Managing Faculty is the Faculty with overarching responsibility for the administration of a double degree.
Minor	A specified sequence of study within a discipline or sub-discipline, smaller in size and scope than a major.
Offer	A formal invitation from the University to an applicant to commence a program (award or non-award).
Prerequisite	A course that must have been successfully completed prior to a student undertaking another course, usually due to the need for a student to have particular knowledge in order to engage successfully with the curriculum in the latter course.
Program	An approved set of requirements, courses and/or supervised research into which a student is admitted. In some cases, this will lead to a UNSW award.
Program Authority	Position with overarching responsibility for all aspects of a program. The Program Authority may delegate responsibilities to nominated staff or an administrative unit within a School or Faculty.
Program rules	The academic requirements a student must satisfy to be awarded the qualification. Program rules include core, electives, and general education course rules; unit of credit requirements; specialisation requirements; and limit rules.
Ready for Market	A program that has been established under the Register of Delegations by the Academic Board must be endorsed as "ready for market", before it is marketed,

	submitted for publication or CRICOS registration and before enrolment processes are instigated.
Revision proposal	An academic proposal to change attributes of an already approved and existing academic offering.
Specialisation	The umbrella term for the defined area of disciplinary study. In undergraduate programs, they are referred to as majors and minors. In postgraduate coursework program they are referred to as specialisations. *See Major and Minor.*
Student Information Management System (SiMs)	The approved enterprise-wide university system for the admission and management of students.
Suspension	The process by which an academic offering is suspended, at which point it will not be offered to new students for a specified period
Teach out	The status of an academic offering to indicate it has been closed but remains open in the relevant academic administration system for existing students to complete their program and / or specialisation.
Unit of credit (UOC)	The value assigned to programs and courses indicating workload and thus duration. For a course, UOC indicates the student workload expectations and the contribution of the course to meeting program requirements.

Revision History

Version	Approved by	Approval date	Effective date	Sections modified
1.0	Deputy Vice-Chancellor Academic	20 March 2020	1 July 2020	New procedure
1.1	Deputy Vice-Chancellor Academic	25 March 2020	1 July 2020 with early implementation of section 3 on 25 March 2020	Section 3 (only) effective from 25 March

6. Appendices

<u>**APPENDIX 1**</u>

ACADEMIC PROGRAMS ADVISORY GROUP

TERMS OF REFERENCE

PURPOSE OF THE GROUP

The Academic Programs Advisory Group's purpose is to support the quality and efficacy of the academic offerings approval process. The group reports to the Academic Board Programs Committee (ABPC) and University Higher Degree Research Committee (UHDRC). The group is tasked with reviewing academic program and specialisation proposals to identify issues of either academic or operational significance for the attention of the Committees in advance of meetings or for follow up through operational channels where this is more appropriate. The group will also identify gaps and other information requirements and play a support role through providing feedback to proposal proponents in order to assist and guide them in the academic proposal development process.

ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

The Group is responsible for:

- Supporting the work of ABPC by providing advice and input in relation to the Committee's responsibility for detailed examination of program and specialisation matters as outlined in the Terms of Reference:
  - 2.2 (b) *Considering and recommending to the Academic Board for approval the establishment, major revision or termination of university coursework programs, including program rules and other academic requirements*
  - 2.2 (c) *Considering and providing advice to the Academic Board on broad issues relating to the quality and standards of academic coursework programs*
- Supporting the work of UHDRC by providing advice and input in relation to the Committee's responsibility for detailed examination of program matters as outlined in the Terms of Reference:
  - 2.2 (c) *In relation to higher degree research programs and higher doctorates, considering and recommending to the Academic Board for approval the establishment, revision or termination of all award programs, including program rules and other academic requirements*
- Examining the operational aspects of program and specialisation proposals in order to identify issues, constraints and risks with a focus on operational, policy and procedural, regulatory, data, system and reporting considerations.
- Identifying significant issues with proposals for consideration by ABPC and UHDRC.

MEMBERSHIP

The group's membership is intended to provide for breadth of expertise, with both academic and professional staff membership. Given the advisory-only role of the group, the membership is intended to be inclusive and others may be invited to join meetings according to the issues discussed.

Members:
Head, Academic Administration [Chair] and/or nominee
Director, Student Services and Systems

And representatives of the following roles/offices:
Faculty Associate Dean (Education) [may be on a rotating basis]
Office of the Pro-Vice-Chancellor (Education)
University Planning and Performance
Office of the Deputy Vice-Chancellor Academic
Academic Board
Governance

Admissions Office
Graduate Research School

MEETING SCHEDULE

The Group will meet on a regular basis, approximately 2 weeks in advance of meetings of ABPC.

REPORTING AND MINUTING

Feedback from meetings will be provided to proposal proponents through comments in the Curriculum Governance System as soon as practicable following meetings. The Group will report as a standing agenda item at ABPC and UHDRC. Additionally, the group will report through operational management channels on an as needs basis according to the issue.

There will be no administrative support for the Group and there is no expectation for comprehensive minutes.

Academic Offerings Approval Procedure
Version: 1.1 Effective 1 July 2020 (implementation of section 3 from 25 March 2020 to 30 June 2020)

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APPENDIX 2

ACADEMIC PROGRAMS BUSINESS GROUP
TERMS OF REFERENCE

PURPOSE OF THE GROUP

The purpose of the Academic Programs Business Group [APBG] is to advise the Academic Board on all Business Cases associated with new Program and larger specialisation proposals. The APBG will make recommendations to the Board on commercial and business-related aspects, such as student demand, graduate demand, resource implications, impact on existing programs and courses, and risk. The Business Case may also address other drivers for the proposal, such as equity or strategic considerations. The group will also identify gaps and other information requirements and play a support role through providing feedback to proposal proponents in order to assist and guide them in the business case development process.

Most new program proposals will be required to include a Business Case which will be endorsed by the relevant Faculty Executive Director prior to consideration by APBG. Academic approval bodies will not address the Business Case, and the APBG will recommend the establishment proposal proceed or not prior to the academic proposal being considered by the Academic Board Programs Committee or University Higher Degree Research Committee.

ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

The Group is responsible for:

- Supporting the Academic Board in relation to its responsibilities to approve new programs and larger specialisations by providing advice and input on commercial, risk and resource considerations of new proposals;
- Making recommendations to Academic Board Programs Committee and University Higher Degree Research Committee on whether a new establishment proposal for a program or larger specialisation should proceed in relation to its commercial viability, resource implications or risk profile.

MEMBERSHIP

Pro-Vice-Chancellor (Education) (Chair)
Director, Student Services and Systems
Chief Financial Officer or nominee
Director, Risk Management Office or nominee
Vice-President, External Relations or nominee
Head, Academic Administration
Director, Graduate Research School
Faculty Executive Director representative

Quorum: 5 members

MEETING SCHEDULE

The Group will meet approximately two weeks before each ABPC. Meetings may be by circulation or in person.

REPORTING AND MINUTING

The outcomes of the meeting and feedback will be recorded in the Curriculum Governance System with a clear recommendation and provided to proposal proponents and the appropriate committee.

APPENDIX 3

Academic Single Program Establishment Process
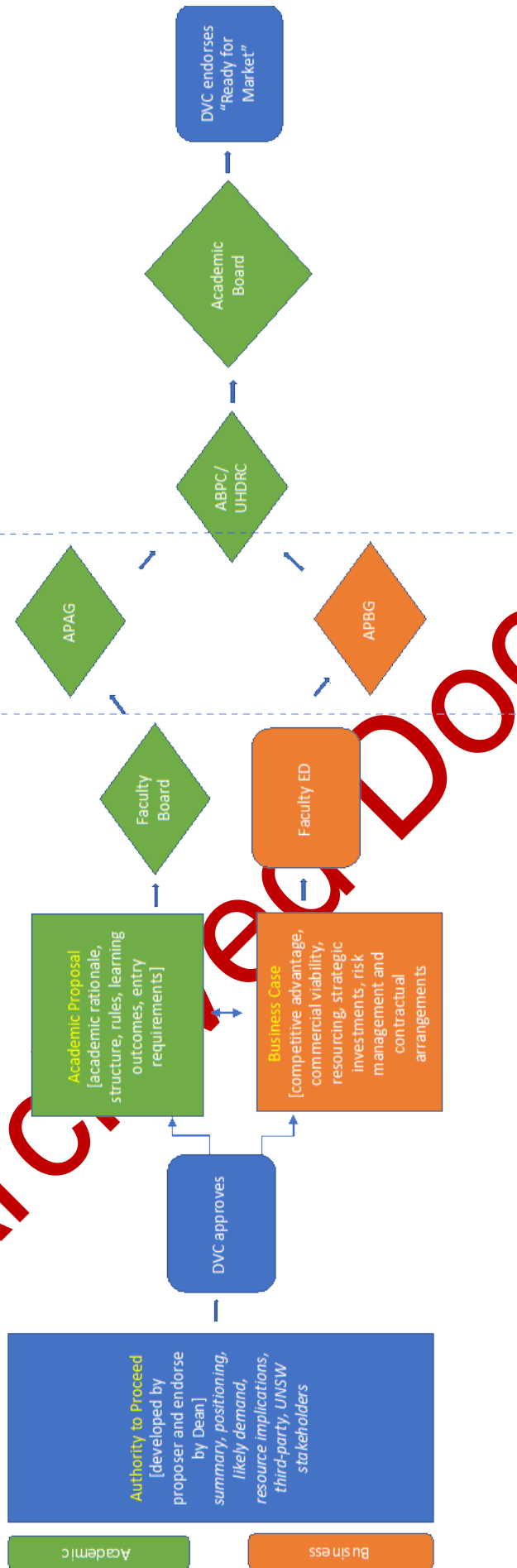
Please note: the APAG & APBG provide advice and are not a part of the formal approval process