Academic Offerings Review Procedure

Version | Approved by | Approval date | Effective date | Next full review
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5.0 | Deputy Vice-Chancellor Academic Quality | TBA | (TBC) | (TBC)

**Procedure Statement**

**Purpose**
This procedure specifies the framework, processes and responsibilities for monitoring and review of UNSW programs, specialisations and courses.

**Scope**
The procedure applies to all UNSW programs, specialisations and courses.

**Are Local Documents on this subject permitted?**
☒ Yes, however local documents must be consistent with this university-wide Document
☐ No

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Overview

The UNSW academic offerings monitoring and review framework specified in this procedure comprises:

1. Course monitoring and routine review processes conducted each time a course is offered
2. Comprehensive course review process conducted as determined by Faculties and Schools
3. Program monitoring and routine review processes conducted on a regular basis
4. Comprehensive program review process conducted every five to seven years, or earlier

Microcredentials and short courses monitoring and review processes are specified in the Microcredentials and Short Courses Procedure.

The academic offerings monitoring and review framework is defined within the context of the University strategy and quality assurance and enhancement framework specified in the Education Quality Policy and Education Quality Procedure, including relevant academic policies and procedures, and the Research Training Policy Framework.

The academic offerings monitoring and review framework is informed by the TEQSA Higher Education Standards Framework (HESF), Australian Qualifications Framework (AQF) and other internal, external and legal requirements.

Purpose

The purpose of the academic offerings monitoring and review framework and processes is to:

1. Ensure that academic offerings are fit for purpose, relevant, take account of emerging developments in the field of education and modes of delivery and respond to the changing needs of students / candidates and expectations of employers.
2. Guide and evaluate improvements to the quality of academic offerings, learning and teaching, research training and supervision, and student / candidate experience and outcomes.
3. Identify examples of good practice to be shared across the University.
4. Identify issues to be addressed and opportunities to be acted upon.
5. Mitigate risks to the quality, relevance and viability of the education and research training provided and consider academic, strategic, operational, commercial and market implications.
6. Ensure alignment with the University, Faculty and School strategies, goals and priorities.
7. Ensure compliance with the University policies and procedures, Higher Education Standards Framework (HESF), Australian Qualifications Framework (AQF) and other internal, external and legal requirements, including third-party arrangements and external accreditation standards.

Principles

Academic offerings monitoring and review framework and processes will:

1. Be informed by the University strategy and represent a key component of the broader University quality assurance and enhancement framework,
2. Be clearly defined, transparent, rigorous, proportionate to risk and undertaken in an ethical and accountable manner with a commitment to integrity,
3. Be managed and streamlined to maximise efficiency and efficacy, with data collected, managed and recorded in accordance with the relevant University policies and procedures, legislation and other requirements,
4. Be evidence-based and supported by the University and Faculty data dashboards, internal and external benchmarking, appropriate consultation, and input from relevant stakeholders,
5. Consider academic, strategic, operational, commercial and market factors, and address opportunities, risks and issues that impact on academic offerings quality, relevance and viability and experience and outcomes for students, staff and other stakeholders,
6. Inform and guide improvement, development of risk mitigation strategies and identification of best practice, with outcomes from monitoring and review and implementation of review recommendations monitored, reported and further supported, as specified in the relevant procedures,
7. Have roles and responsibilities defined in the relevant policies, procedures and guidelines and aligned with the University governance and management framework,
8. Have approval authorities set out in the UNSW Register of Delegations and the UNSW Rules, and
9. Be overseen by the Academic Board responsible for the quality and academic standards for the University’s academic offerings.
1. Course monitoring and review

1.1 Faculties and/or Schools must develop a Faculty/School Course Monitoring and Review Procedure (the Procedure) that documents Faculty and/or School level course monitoring and review processes, including roles and responsibilities, implementation, and reporting requirements.

1.2 The Procedure must specify processes and criteria for initiating a comprehensive review of courses in response to course monitoring and routine review outcomes, and for scheduling comprehensive reviews of courses when required. Regular reviews of individual courses or identified groups of courses are recommended, proportionate to risk and in line with available resourcing.

1.3 The Procedure must be approved by the Dean (or delegate) and reported to the University Academic Quality Committee (UAQC). The Procedure must be reviewed at least every five years.

1.4 Faculties and/or Schools must maintain a repository of course review information which includes course review dates, implementation status and other details, as determined by Faculties or Schools.

1.5 Course monitoring and routine reviews must be conducted each time a course is offered and may result in a requirement for a comprehensive course review subject to criteria set by the Faculty or School, for a course to be revised or otherwise supported, and/or for a best practice to be shared.

1.6 Faculties and/or Schools must implement and support quality assurance processes and continuous improvement for all courses, including identification of best practice, and review the appropriateness of their overall course portfolio and curriculum alignment on a regular basis.

1.7 Heads of School (HOS) (or delegates) will report on course monitoring and review outcomes to the Faculty Education Committees (or equivalent) on an annual basis.

1.8 Faculties are required to provide summary reports on course monitoring and reviews outcomes, including best practice, to the ADE/DDE group on an annual basis for discussion. The ADE/DDE group will provide a summary report, synthesising the experience across Faculties, to UAQC at the beginning of each calendar year.

2. Program monitoring

2.1 Faculties and/or Schools must develop a Faculty/School Program Monitoring procedure that documents Faculty and/or School level program monitoring processes, including roles and responsibilities and reporting requirements. This document and associated processes will be determined by Faculties and/or Schools, and may include requirements specified at the University level by the Deputy Vice-Chancellor Academic Quality (for coursework programs), Pro Vice-Chancellor Research Training and Entrepreneurship and Dean of Graduate Research (for HDR programs) or the Academic Board.

2.2 Program monitoring must be conducted annually for both individual programs (including specialisations), and at least every 3 years for the overall program portfolio.

2.3 Program monitoring and routine review will include identification of risks and issues requiring further investigation and remedial actions, and best practice. Program monitoring and routine review outcomes will result in commendations and recommendations to support program development and continuous improvement of education and research training and student experience and outcomes.

2.4 Faculties and the Graduate Research School will report to the Academic Board (via UAQC or UHDRC) on program monitoring outcomes at the beginning of each calendar year.

3. Program review

3.1 Program review process

a) All programs must be comprehensively reviewed at least every five\(^1\) to seven years, commencing with the year of the first intake of students. Earlier reviews can be required by the Faculty or the Academic Board.

b) Programs will be reviewed by an independent panel and provide an evidence-based evaluation of a program's relevance, quality, viability, outcomes, risks, opportunities and strategies for enhancement. Program reviews will be informed by program monitoring outcomes, data, internal and external benchmarking, and feedback from relevant stakeholders.

3.1.1 Program review process

a) The Managing Faculty is responsible for:

i. Scheduling program reviews,

ii. Preparing program review proposals, including the terms of reference (TOR), data, and proposing

\(^1\) 5-year program review is recommended for externally accredited programs to align with the external accreditation period.
review panel membership and timelines,

iii. Ensuring that sufficient resources and support are provided to conduct the review, including collection and analysis of data and input,

iv. Notifying all relevant stakeholders, including Faculties and Schools contributing to the program or offering related double degree programs or that could be impacted by program review outcomes or interested in collaboration opportunities,

v. Inviting submissions and organising surveys, focus groups and program review events,

vi. Supporting conduct and completion of the program review process, including reporting on the program review outcomes and implementation of review recommendations, and

vii. Liaising with the Program Review Committee regarding advice on the program review process.

b) The Program Review Committee (PRC) will provide advice to Faculties, authorise program review templates and guidelines, and oversee the program review process on behalf of the Academic Board.

3.2 Program review schedule

a) At the end of each calendar year Faculties must submit to PRC:

i. A draft program review schedule with an indicative list of program reviews planned for the next seven years, including information on external accreditation and other formal reviews, new, suspended and disestablished programs and requests to PRC, prior to the Faculty Education Committee (or equivalent) approval, and

ii. The final approved program review schedule, with the list of program reviews scheduled for the following year to be reported to the Academic Board end of each year.

b) Faculties must consult with:

i. Academic Administration to determine whether a program revision must be preceded by a program review (as specified in the Academic Offerings Approval Procedure), and

ii. The PRC Chair to determine program review requirements for Generalist, combined reviews and externally accredited programs, programs proposed to be suspended or disestablished, including when program portfolio reviews could impact on scheduled program reviews, and substantially revised programs.

c) Where there has been a major revision or a change of program code, a program should be considered the same program for review purposes if there is a substantial continuity of name, expected cohort, structure and outcomes.

d) Suspended programs must be reviewed within the seven-year maximum period and either be closed or re-opened.

e) Programs to be disestablished with the final intake within the seven-year period since the last program review do not need to be reviewed.

f) In exceptional circumstances PRC may approve conduct of reviews beyond the maximum period.

3.3 Program review proposal

a) Faculties must submit to PRC a program review proposal with the TOR, review panel membership and review dates prior to the proposal being approved by the Faculty Education Committee (or equivalent) or Faculty Board. This must include a justification for variations from standard program review requirements, such as for externally accredited program reviews or due to small program enrolment numbers.

b) Where a program has been externally accredited within 12 months of the scheduled program review event, any findings and outcomes of that accreditation process or any material presented to the accrediting body that substantially satisfies the requirements of this procedure may be relied on in place of the relevant requirements under this procedure.

c) Faculties must submit to PRC requests for any variations to the standard program review requirements specified in this procedure for approval by PRC or PRC Chair prior to the review commencing.

3.4 Program review panel composition

a) The Managing Faculty is responsible for nominating members of the program review panel, in consultation with relevant Heads of School, partner Faculties and third parties, consistent with the principles below.

b) The program review panel membership must, at a minimum, consist of four members:

i. A Chair with relevant experience in academic quality assurance processes,
ii. At least one member external to UNSW (except for HDR program reviews)
iii. At least one senior academic from UNSW external to the Managing Faculty, and
iv. At least one current student or candidate from the program(s) under review, or recent graduate who completed their studies in the program within the last 12 months;

c) Additional members are permitted, including a Future Students representative or a PRC member.
d) Larger membership is recommended for a combined, Generalist or a large program review.
e) The program review panel membership must meet the Representation on Committees and Decision-Making Bodies Procedure requirements, and take into consideration impartiality, expertise in relevant field(s) and experience in academic quality assurance leadership.
f) Persons involved in management of the program(s) under review or a Head or School contributing 24 UOC or more into the program are not permitted to be nominated as review panel members.
g) Requests for variations from these requirements must be submitted to PRC for approval.

3.5 Program review terms of reference (TOR)

a) Reviews of programs must, at a minimum, address:
   i. Program role and positioning
   ii. Program design
   iii. Program delivery
   iv. Student (or candidate) experience and outcomes

b) Faculties can determine additional TOR.
c) Program reviews must include a review of all majors, minors, postgraduate specialisations, double degree programs and exit programs associated with the program under review, and all teaching locations, delivery modes or partners.
d) Further details on the program review terms or reference will be specified in the program review templates and guidelines authorised by PRC. Variations from the minimum program review TOR may be requested from PRC.

3.6 Program review portfolio

a) The program review portfolio is the set of documentation provided to the program review panel at least two weeks prior to the program review event and must include the Self-Evaluation Report (SER), data reports, submissions, documentation from previous program review and program monitoring outcomes, and other material, as specified in the templates and guidelines.
b) The SER is prepared by the Program Authority in consultation with the HOS and ADE. The SER must evaluate the program(s) in relation to the TOR and reflect critical analysis of the data and other input.
c) Data reports will include standardised program data provided in the University’s centrally supported program review (APR) data dashboards, myExperience and QILT data provided by the PVCESE Insights and Engagement, Future Students data, and other data relevant to addressing the TOR.
d) The Managing Faculty will invite submissions (and/or organise focus groups and surveys) from members of the University community, alumni and other stakeholders, such as employers and industry representatives, and, if applicable, from third party stakeholders.

3.7 Program review event

a) The Chair of the program review panel is responsible for the program review event, including setting the agenda in consultation with the panel members.
b) Program review panel members can request additional information, data and input and / or the opportunity to tour relevant facilities.
c) Unless a variation is approved by the PRC, the program review panel must meet with:
   i. The Managing Faculty (or GRS) senior officers,
   ii. A Future Students representative (unless appointed as a panel review member),
   iii. A PRC member (unless appointed as a panel review member),
   iv. The Program Authority,
   v. Members of the teaching / supervision staff,
   vi. Student / candidate and alumni representatives, and
vii. Industry and employer representatives.

### 3.8 Program review panel report

a) The Chair of the program review panel will prepare the program review panel report, in consultation with the program review panel members, and submit the panel review report to the Dean (or delegate) within one month of the review event.

b) The Dean (or delegate) may consult with the Chair on any clarifications required.

c) The program review panel report must
   i. Include an overview of the review process,
   ii. Summarise key findings and overall evaluation of the program(s) under review,
   iii. Address each TOR in relation to the evidence presented in the program review portfolio and at the program review event, and
   iv. Provide commendations and recommendations.

### 3.9 Faculty response and reporting

a) The Faculty response must be provided to the program review panel for noting within two months of receipt of the program review panel report.

b) The Faculty response must address each recommendation and include implementation strategies for accepted recommendations, or alternative strategies for recommendations not accepted, confirming the availability of required resourcing and detailing responsible person(s), proposed tasks and actions and implementation timelines.

c) Faculties must prepare a program review precis outlining the program review outcomes to be shared with the University community and other stakeholders.

d) The program review panel report, Faculty response and a program review precis must be tabled at the Faculty Education Committee (or UHDRC for University-wide HDR programs) and submitted to PRC together with the cover sheet, program review portfolio and program review event agenda and minutes/notes.

e) Faculties must report to PRC on the implementation of recommendations within one year of the program review event. PRC can request further updates as required.

f) PRC will liaise with the TEQSA Program Board or other stakeholders should there be concerns with the program review or implementation process and support required.

g) PRC will report to the Academic Board on program review outcomes at the beginning of each year.

### 4. Responsibilities

a) Deans and ADEs (or equivalent) have overall responsibility for the implementation and management of the academic offerings monitoring and review framework and processes in their Faculties, including the implementation of recommendations and reporting.

b) Teams within UNSW Planning and Performance (UPP), the Pro Vice-Chancellor Education and Student Experience, the Graduate Research School and the DVC Academic Quality are responsible for providing data to inform course and program monitoring and review.

c) Heads of Schools have the overall responsibility for course and program monitoring and review processes in their Schools, including the implementation of recommendations and reporting, and ensuring the School’s repository of course review information is up to date.

d) Faculty Boards and Committees will oversee the academic offerings monitoring and review processes in Faculties.

e) The University Academic Quality Committee (UAQC) will oversee the course review and monitoring processes for courses and coursework programs.

f) The University Higher Degree Research Committee (UHDRC) will oversee and support the HDR programs monitoring and review processes.

g) The Program Review Committee (PRC) will oversee program review processes, issue program review guidelines and templates and provide advice to stakeholders conducting program reviews, as required.

h) The University’s TEQSA Program Board will support Faculties, as required.

i) The Academic Board will oversee the academic offerings monitoring and review processes and the quality of academic offerings and academic standards in the University.
### Accountabilities

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<th>Role</th>
<th>Name</th>
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<tr>
<td>Responsible Officer</td>
<td>Deputy Vice-Chancellor Academic Quality</td>
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<td>Contact Officer</td>
<td>President, Academic Board</td>
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### Supporting Information

#### Legislative Compliance

This procedure supports the University’s compliance with the following legislation:
- Australian Qualifications Framework 2013
- Education Services for Overseas Students Act 2000 (ESOS Act) (Cth)
- Higher Education Standards Framework (Threshold Standards) 2021
- Tertiary Education Quality and Standards Agency Act 2011 (Cth)

#### Parent Document (Policy)

Academic Offerings Governance Policy

#### Supporting Documents

- APR Dashboards
- APR SharePoint Program Review Committee Guidelines and Templates

#### Related Documents

- Academic Offerings Approval Procedure
- Academic Offerings Nomenclature Procedure
- Education Quality Policy
- Education Quality Procedure
- myExperience Survey Procedure
- Microcredentials and Short Courses Procedure

#### Superseded Documents

Academic Offerings Review Procedure, v4.1

#### File Number

TBA

### Definitions and Acronyms

#### Academic Offerings Monitoring and Review Framework

The Academic Offerings Monitoring and Review Framework is the principal quality assurance and enhancement mechanism by which the University ensures that its programs, specialisations and courses are monitored, reviewed, revised and supported to ensure they meet appropriate standards for quality, relevance and viability, and to mitigate risks, address opportunities for enhancement of education and research training provided, student experience and outcomes, and share best practice.

#### AQF

Australian Qualifications Framework.

#### Associate Dean

For the purposes of this procedure, Associate Dean refers to Associate Dean (Education) or Deputy Deans, or equivalent.

#### Course

A planned and structured sequence of learning and teaching, normally over one teaching period in duration, that allows a student to gain knowledge, skills and understanding in relation to an agreed set of learning outcomes.

#### Course monitoring and routine review

Monitoring of key course data and indicators (typically: student satisfaction; grade distribution; student success, enrolments and withdrawals data) and routine review of key course aspects and outcomes each time a course is offered.

#### Course comprehensive review

A process determined by Faculties and/or Schools which provides an evidence-based evaluation of a course’s quality, outcomes, risks and viability. Takes place cyclically or in response to the presence of risk factors; results in recommendations for enhancement and a closing-the-loop mechanism.

#### Coursework

A mode of study largely, or wholly, constituted of courses involving directed learning, including face-to-face class instruction, online learning, distance learning, or combinations of these. It is a term commonly used with regard to undergraduate and postgraduate study. The other mode of postgraduate study is research.

#### Dean

The Dean of a Faculty, Rector of UNSW Canberra, Dean of Graduate Research, or Chair of Boards of Studies.
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<th><strong>Double degree</strong></th>
<th>The concurrent or sequential study of two award programs (within or spanning the undergraduate or postgraduate careers) leading to two separate awards</th>
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<tr>
<td><strong>External Accreditation</strong></td>
<td>Formal or informal accreditation of a program or course by an accrediting body or regulatory authority</td>
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<td><strong>External Benchmarking</strong></td>
<td>Comparison of an aspect of a program, specialisation or course with an external comparator(s).</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Faculty</strong></td>
<td>A group of schools or units of related disciplines constituted as a faculty by the University Council in accordance with UNSW By-laws, or a body having similar status and equivalent responsibilities.</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Faculty/School Course Monitoring and Review Procedure</strong></td>
<td>Procedure developed by Faculties and/or Schools that will document Faculty level course monitoring and review processes, TOR, roles and responsibilities, implementation and reporting requirements. The procedure will also specify criteria and process for scheduling comprehensive course reviews.</td>
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<td><strong>Generalist Program</strong></td>
<td>A Program which is largely composed of specialisations, such that more than 50% of the disciplinary core is taken in majors or postgraduate specialisations.</td>
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<td><strong>Higher Degree Research (HDR) Program</strong></td>
<td>Postgraduate programs of study which involve a higher degree research candidate.</td>
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<td><strong>Internal Benchmarking</strong></td>
<td>Comparison of an aspect of a program, specialisation or course, or relevant data and trends, with relevant University, Faculty or School programs, specialisations or courses.</td>
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<td><strong>Managing Faculty</strong></td>
<td>Faculty (or the GRS) responsible for management of the program</td>
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<td><strong>Program</strong></td>
<td>An approved set of requirements, courses and/or supervised research which, on completion, will lead to a UNSW award.</td>
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<td><strong>Program Authority</strong></td>
<td>Position with overarching responsibility for all aspects of a program, including certifying that students have satisfied requirements for the qualification related to that program.</td>
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<td><strong>Program monitoring</strong></td>
<td>Program monitoring (including specialisations) conducted on a regular basis.</td>
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<td><strong>Program review</strong></td>
<td>Comprehensive review of a program conducted by an independent panel, as a requirement of the University, accrediting authorities and TEQSA.</td>
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<td><strong>School</strong></td>
<td>An academic area or organisational unit which is responsible for teaching in disciplines or subject areas and which forms part of a Faculty.</td>
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<td><strong>Specialisation</strong></td>
<td>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.</td>
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<td><strong>Student</strong></td>
<td>A person who has accepted an offer to a program of UNSW (award or non-award), has enrolled in at least one course in that program and retains an active status in that program.</td>
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<td>Acting Vice-President and Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Academic)</td>
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