

## Program Approval and Review

<b>Approving authority</b>	Academic Committee
<b>Approval date</b>	17 September 2015
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<b>TRIM document</b>	2016/7006121
<b>Description</b>	This document describes the quality assurance process that ensures effective curriculum planning and design of the University's non-award and award programs.

### Related documents

[Framework for Quality Assurance](#)

[Program Planning and Approval Timelines](#)

[New Program Strategic Brief](#)

[Program Withdrawal Submission](#)

[New Program Proposal](#)

[Major Change to a Program Proposal](#)

[\[Scope\]](#) [\[Documentation\]](#) [\[Responsibilities\]](#) [\[Planning\]](#) [\[Approval\]](#) [\[Withdrawal\]](#) [\[Review\]](#) [\[Transnational Audits\]](#) [\[Major and Minor Changes\]](#)

## 1. SCOPE

The University self-accredits non-award programs and programs that lead to higher education awards that it offers and confers. The University offers programs that:

- align with the University's Strategic and Academic Plans;
- meet curriculum design principles consistent with University policy, external standards and requirements;
- develop the Griffith Graduate attributes, achieve the learning outcomes appropriate to the qualification type and meet employers' needs;
- are planned with advice from relevant internal and external experts and supported by resources appropriate to quality learning.

Program approval and review is the quality assurance process that ensures effective curriculum planning and design and sustainable program requirements and structures. This process includes:

- the planning and development of a new program or suite of new programs (including non-award programs);
- approval of a new program or suite of new programs (including non-award programs);
- regular monitoring of the performance and sustainability of programs; and
- program review for specific purposes such as initiating changes in curriculum, responding to external accreditation and registration processes.

## 2. DOCUMENTATION

*New Program Strategic Brief* - high level overview of the proposed new program for approval by the Deputy Vice Chancellor (Academic).

*Program Configuration Collection* – data collection process for the Student System, Degree and Career Finder, Programs and Courses and CRICOS registration initiated on Deputy Vice Chancellor (Academic)'s approval of *New Program Strategic Brief*. Data types and field properties required as part of the Program Configuration Collection are approved by the Deputy Vice Chancellor (Academic). The Program Configuration Collection for existing programs shall be undertaken twice a year by the Secretary, Programs Committee in the format authorised by the Academic Registrar.

*Program Withdrawal Submission* – provides the case for withdrawal of a program and outlines the teach-out and transition arrangements for continuing students for approval by the Deputy Vice Chancellor (Academic).

*New Program Proposal* - the curriculum design document, including program outcomes, program structure, program requirements, course descriptions, learning and teaching approach, assessment regime, prerequisites, entry levels and pathways; for approval of a new program by Programs Committee.

*Major Change to a Program Proposal* – updates the curriculum design document, when the overall program structure, program requirements, and/or content are changing to a significant degree, for approval by Programs Committee.

*Minor Change Proposal* – document specifying the following program changes, where there are no variations to program requirements, for the approval of the Dean (Learning & Teaching).

- Change to a program title or an award title (requires additional approval of Programs Committee)
- Renaming an academic plan
- adding or withdrawing a course/s
- replacing one course with another
- changing a trimester of offer for a course/s
- changing the CP weighting of a course (requires a new course code)

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## 3. RESPONSIBILITIES

Deputy Vice Chancellor (Academic) has University-wide oversight of the Program Approval and Review Process.

Group PVC is responsible for the Program Profile Plan (PPP), as part of the annual operational and strategic planning process, and for the endorsement of *New Program Strategic Brief* outside the annual PPP process.

DVC (Engagement) is responsible for market research on new programs proposals.

The Vice President (Global) is responsible for advising on new program proposals from an international student perspective, in addition to conducting due diligence and market research on new transnational program proposals.

Programs Committee has overarching responsibility for program approval for all of the University's qualifications.

Board of Graduate Research, on behalf of Programs Committee, assures that the research component in Doctoral and Masters (Research) degrees meet the learning outcomes for those qualification types, and is also responsible for the monitoring and review of Higher Degree Research (HDR) programs.

Group Board recommends to Programs Committee the approval of new programs and academic plans and program changes.

Dean (Learning & Teaching) oversees the development of the Group's program profile, leads program development, monitors program performance and approves minor program changes.

Academic Registrar is responsible for the Program Configuration Collection and the publication of the University's programs on the Programs and Courses website.

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## 4. PLANNING

Annually the Group PVC develops a Program Profile Plan (PPP) in the period May – August which specifies new programs and academic plans the Group wishes to introduce, together with timeframes for program withdrawals and major changes. The PPP is informed by the Academic Plan, strategic priorities of the group, campus profiles and student demand. The Program Profile may be accompanied by a number of *New Program Strategic Briefs* and *Program Withdrawal Submissions*.

Each Group's Program Profile Plan, *New Program Strategic Briefs* and *Program Withdrawal Submissions* are evaluated by the Deputy Vice Chancellor (Academic), DVC (Engagement) and the Vice President (Global), in conjunction with academic Group representatives.

The Executive Group considers the Program Profile Plan in the context of the University's operational planning and budget process and provides advice to the Deputy Vice Chancellor (Academic) for finalising and communicating decisions about new programs, program withdrawals and major changes to academic Groups.

At any time during the year the Group PVC may lodge a *New Program Strategic Brief* with the Deputy Vice Chancellor (Academic). Based on the information supplied in the *New Program Strategic Brief* the Deputy Vice Chancellor (Academic) will consider the proposal and advise the Group PVC whether or not the program is to proceed. The Deputy Vice Chancellor (Academic) will consult with the DVC (Engagement) and the Vice President (Global). The Deputy Vice Chancellor (Academic) in consultation with the DVC (Engagement) may grant "conditional approval" subject to further market research being undertaken, and specify whether it should be conducted by an internal or external agency. If the approval is subject to further market research, the results of that research will be submitted to the Deputy Vice Chancellor (Academic) and DVC (Engagement) so that a final decision can be made on the *New Program Strategic Brief*.

If the proposal is approved to proceed, the *New Program Strategic Brief* will be forwarded to the DVC (Engagement), Vice President (Global), PVC (INS), Dean (Learning Futures) and the Academic Registrar. The *New Program Strategic Brief* will also be submitted to Academic Committee for its information.

Once the Deputy Vice Chancellor (Academic) has made the decision to offer the program, the Academic Registrar will initiate the Program Configuration Collection for the program to be published on Degree and Career Finder.

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## 5. APPROVAL

After the Deputy Vice Chancellor (Academic) approves the development of a new program, the Dean (Learning & Teaching) is responsible for the quality of each program development within the Group and the *New Program Proposal* which describes the program's curriculum. The Dean (Learning & Teaching) shall recommend the *New Program Proposal* to Group Board for consideration on the basis that:

- a. there is a clear educational philosophy underpinning the curriculum;
- b. there is a clear purpose and curricula goals aligned with learning outcomes and the Griffith Graduate Attributes;
- c. the learning activities, delivery mode and student experiences in the program are consistent with the intended learning outcomes;
- d. the program structure and course sequencing provide a coherent learning experience;

- e. assessment types and processes are appropriate to evaluate the students' learning outcomes;
- f. academic support and advising arrangements for the program are suited to the intended student cohort and for their achievement of the learning outcomes.

The *New Program Proposal* as recommended by the Dean (Learning & Teaching) is considered by:

- a. Group Board of the host Group and by the other relevant Group Board for double/vertical degrees where the other component is offered by a School or Department outside the host Group; and
- b. Programs Committee.

On the basis of Programs Committee's approval of the *New Program Proposal* the Program Configuration Collection for the program shall be updated for the program to be published on Programs and Courses website.

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## 6. WITHDRAWAL

Where a program withdrawal is not included in the Group Program Profile Plan, the Group Pro Vice Chancellor may provide a completed *Program Withdrawal Submission* at any time to the Deputy Vice Chancellor (Academic) to change the Group's Program Profile Plan. Once the Deputy Vice Chancellor (Academic) has approved the *Program Withdrawal Submission*, it is forwarded to the Secretary, Programs Committee who notifies all relevant areas.

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## 7. REVIEW

The performance and sustainability of a program is regularly monitored by the academic Group on the basis of program performance data and course experience reports available via the Business Intelligence Portal. Deans (Learning & Teaching) are responsible for making an assessment of the available program data and making recommendations to the Group PVC about the timing of an in-depth program review.

In-depth program reviews are conducted on an 'as needs' basis when there is evidence that a program review is required, this may include:

- a. Program or market data highlight a change in demand or a consistent decline in performance;
- b. An impending major change in the external or internal environment (e.g. government policy) that is likely to directly impact on a program or to provide significant development opportunity;
- c. A recent alignment with an industry, government, education or professional partner;
- d. The fact that a key international relationship has commenced or is due to finish;
- e. The emergence of a thematic issue common to a number of programs within a Group or across multiple Groups that needs to be addressed;
- f. Professional accreditation review processes have not addressed core program performance issues.

Wherever possible, alignment between the timing and requirements for external professional accreditation reviews and the University's in-depth program reviews shall be realised.

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## 8. TRANSNATIONAL AUDITS

The Programs Committee may conduct audits of transnational programs for the purpose of reviewing the offshore partner/provider and their facilities to determine that a program offered offshore is equivalent to its onshore counterpart.

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## 9. MAJOR AND MINOR CHANGES

Where a program review results in major changes to the overall program structure, graduate outcomes and/or content, these changes are documented in the Major Change to a Program Proposal. The Dean (Learning & Teaching) shall recommend the Major Change to a Program Proposal for consideration by:

- a. Group Board of the host Group and by the other relevant Group Board for double/vertical degrees where the other component is offered by a School or Department outside the host Group; and
- b. Programs Committee.

Major program changes approved by Programs Committee may generate consequential changes for other programs, such as for double/vertical degrees, programs which share academic plans, or courses which are shared between programs. In this situation, the relevant Dean (Learning & Teaching) is responsible for approving all consequential changes and ensuring that Programs and Courses website is updated to reflect those changes.

Where a program review results in minor changes to course content, these changes are documented and approved by the relevant Dean (Learning & Teaching) then lodged with the Secretary, Programs Committee.