

Program Approval and Review

Approving authority	Academic Committee
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Description	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](#)

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

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 Strategy 2020-2025 and the Academic Plan;
- meet design principles consistent with University policy, external standards and requirements;
- respond to data about market position, competitor offerings, and market demand, to maintain relevance and currency;
- 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 ongoing 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 Executive Group.

Program Configuration Collection – data collection process for the Student System, Degree and Career Finder, Programs and Courses and CRICOS registration initiated on Executive Group’s approval of *New Program Strategic Brief*. Data types and field properties required as part of the Program Configuration Collection are authorised by the Registrar. The Program Configuration Collection for existing programs shall be undertaken by the Secretary, Programs Committee in the format authorised by the 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 Executive Group.

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 Credit Point (CP) weighting of a course (requires a new course code)

3. RESPONSIBILITIES

Senior Deputy Vice Chancellor, is the co-chair of the Program Strategy Board, who has University-wide oversight of the Program Approval and Review Process.

Deputy Vice Chancellor (Engagement), is the co-chair of the Program Strategy Board, who has responsibility for market research on new or changed program proposals.

Group Pro Vice Chancellor (PVC) is responsible for maintaining the health and strategic development of their Group Program Portfolio.

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.

Program Strategy Board is responsible for advising the Executive Group on the strategic management and financial viability of the University’s program portfolio.

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

The Board of Graduate Research, on behalf of Programs Committee, assures that the research component in Doctoral and Masters (Research) degrees meets 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) leads program development, reviews program performance and approves minor program changes.

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

4. PLANNING

The Group PVC maintains strategic management of the Program Portfolio, through regular monitoring and reporting, supported by quantitative and qualitative evidence of program performance. Each Group's strategic management of their program portfolio is informed by the University's Strategy 2020-2025 and insights from the Program Strategy Board which meets at least four times a year. At any time during the year, the Group PVC may forward to the Program Strategy Board a *New Program Strategic Brief* or *Program Withdrawal Submission*.

The Program Strategy Board provides advice and recommendations on programs to the Executive Group in relation to matters of design, marketing and financial viability. The Executive Group makes decisions about new programs, program withdrawals and major changes to programs.

The Executive Group communicates decisions about new programs, program withdrawals and major changes to the Registrar for implementation. The Registrar initiates the Program Configuration Collection for new or substantially changed programs to be published on Degree and Career Finder.

5. APPROVAL

After Executive Group 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. the program is consistent with the University's design principles;
- c. there is a clear purpose and curricula goals aligned with learning outcomes and the Griffith Graduate attributes;
- d. the learning activities, delivery mode and student experiences in the program are consistent with the intended learning outcomes;
- e. the program structure and course sequencing provide a coherent learning experience;
- f. assessment types and processes are appropriate to evaluate the students' learning outcomes;
- g. 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.

Based on 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.

6. WITHDRAWAL

Based on the Program Strategy Board's advice and recommendation, Executive Group approves the *Program Withdrawal Submission*, and forwards it to the Registrar for implementation.

7. REVIEW

Based on program diagnostic reports available via the Business Intelligence Portal, the performance and sustainability of a program is regularly monitored by the academic Group. As a member of the Program Strategy Board, the Group PVC is responsible for strategic program management and the health of the program portfolio. The Dean (Learning & Teaching) is responsible for assessing all 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 at least every five years and more frequently 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 for external professional accreditation reviews and the University's in-depth program reviews shall occur.

8. TRANSNATIONAL AUDITS

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

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.
