Program Approval and Review Policy (GC)

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Document

Document Name	Program Approval and Review Policy (GC)
Brief Description	Program approval and review as part of the College's Quality Assurance processes incorporates the planning, development, approval and subsequent review of programs.
Responsibility	Academic Board
Initial Issue Date	26/02/2020

Version Control

Date	Version No.	Summary of Changes	Reviewer Name and Department/Office
7.03.2023	5	Edited to clarify external assessment steps prior to seeking Board approval. Removal of additional table and updates to RASCI Table. Incorporated comprehensive review terminology.	Academic Director

Related Documents

Name	Location
Moderation of Assessment Policy	Policy HUB
Program Approvals Table	Policy HUB
Quality Assurance Framework	Policy HUB

Contents

1   Purpose and Scope

Griffith College is registered with the Tertiary Education Quality Standards Agency (TEQSA) as a higher education provider, without self-accrediting authority. Program approval and review is the quality assurance process that ensures effective curriculum planning and design and sustainable program requirements and structures.

Introduction

This Program Approval and Review Policy ("**Policy**") sets out the College's approach to the process undertaken to ensure appropriate and sustainable program development, approval and review.

2   Policy Statement

This policy iterates the principles of:

- the planning, development and approval of a new program;
- regular monitoring of the performance of existing programs; and
- program changes for specific purposes such as initiating changes in curriculum and responding to external forces, such as market and environmental changes and changes to related Griffith University programs or industry feedback received via the College's governance structure.

2.1   Documentation

Griffith College utilises a range of documents to facilitate approval and review processes:

- *New Program Proposal* – the curriculum design document, including program outcomes, program structure, program and/or graduating requirements, AQF mapping, staffing, credit eligibility for entry to Griffith University Bachelor programs, course outlines (which will encompass learning and teaching activities, assessment regime, generic skills mapping, any pre-requisite or co-requisite courses), any program specific information (e.g. specialist facilities, quota management, industry experiences or field trips, etc);
- *Minor/ Major Change Proposal* – This document is categorised as major or minor based on the significance of the change. The document updates the New Program Proposal document to highlight changes to program structure, program learning outcomes, generic skills mapping, AQF mapping. This document will also include a detailed rationale for change, and planned transition arrangements for students currently studying the program, or already packaged to begin the program in the future. If there are expected to be implications for credit into Griffith University programs, this will also be mapped.
- *Annual Program Performance Reports* – these documents are developed annually throughout the lifetime of a program, including enrolments, pass rates, completion rates, academic integrity statistics, academic probation and exclusion statistics, recommendations from the Formal Review of Courses (Tier 1 or Tier 2), moderation and benchmarking of assessment outcomes (refer to the Moderation of Assessment Policy), student survey data, and performance of graduates at the University. These documents are tabled annually at the relevant Program Advisory Committee (and an aggregated 'all programs' version is tabled at Academic Board) for comment and continuous improvement throughout the period of accreditation. These annual reports then form the foundation of the program review.
- *Assessment reports provided by external independent experts* against relevant Higher Education Standards (2021) Threshold Standards;
- *Accreditation and renewal of accreditation submissions* – a compilation of multiple pieces of evidence, driven by a "Scope of Evidence Required" prepared by TEQSA for programs out of Self-Accrediting Authority scope. The requirements will vary according to risk factors and the nature of the program,
- *Program Withdrawal Proposal* – provides the case for withdrawal of a program and outlines the teach-out and transition arrangements for continuing students.

2.2 Program Approval Processes

The approval processes for minor change, major change, a new accreditation, or a renewal of accreditation have been outlined in the Program Approvals Table. Responsibilities are outlined below:

Responsibility	Position 1 College Director & Principal	Position 2 Academic Director	Position 3 Quality & Compliance Manager	Position 4 Director Student Academic Services
Discussions with relevant university personnel including Group PVC (new programs), Group Dean (L &T) and Program Director	A	R	S/C/I	I
Write the proposal	C	R/A	S/C	I
Assign document number in Program Approvals Register. Provide feedback based on TEQSA Threshold Standards/ ESOS or other compliance considerations	I	CI	R	I
Edits and/or endorses proposal	C	A/R	S/C	I
Proposal tabled at Management Committee for comment from all functional areas	CI	R	R/S	I
Notifies Manager, Academic Credit Transfer	A	C	S	R
Seeks industry feedback; on program design; graduate suitability for employment (Diploma). (New Program)	I	R/A	S/C	I
Seeks external independent assessment for reaccreditation and new program accreditation application against HESF evidence.	A	R	S	I
Seeks University endorsement; Programs Committee, Credit Office, and Group Program Partner	I	R	SI	SI
Obtain approvals; Program Advisory Committee; Academic Board and Governing Board as relevant	A	R	C/S	I
Submit to TEQSA for (non-SAA) accreditation and CRICOS registration (New Program/International delivery) and for addition to National Register	A	C/I	R	I

R = Responsible, A = Accountable, S = Supporting, C = Consulting, I = Informed.

During the consideration of each type of proposal, the approving bodies will consider the following factors:

- there is a clear educational philosophy underpinning the curriculum;
- there is a clear purpose and curricula goals aligned with learning outcomes of the program and the College's generic skills strategy;
- the learning activities, delivery mode and student experiences in the program are consistent with the intended learning outcomes;
- the program structure and course sequencing provide a coherent learning experience;
- assessment types and processes are appropriate to evaluate the students' learning outcomes in alignment with the AQF level;
- academic support and advising arrangements for the program are suited to the intended student cohort and for their achievement of the learning outcomes.

2.3 Comprehensive and Regular Program Review

The performance and sustainability of a program is regularly monitored by the College on the basis of performance data. This is carried out by the Program Convenor informally each trimester, and then formally via the Program Advisory Committees, where Annual Program Reports are measured against key performance indicators. Performance data (of Programs, Courses and College) and trends over

time are monitored and overseen by the Academic Board as part of the comprehensive review process during a period of accreditation and prior to renewal.

Griffith College will consider a range of factors throughout reviews, as outlined in the Quality Assurance Framework to ensure ongoing improvement in processes and performance of its programs. Reviews are an important part of Griffith College and Griffith University's Quality Assurance Frameworks. The following areas are reviewed and inform the College's review process and renewal applications.

- Program and course design – continued relevance and fit for purpose, currency and appropriateness of program content and structure, overview of major/minor changes undertaken over the period of accreditation to date; often in response to Griffith University's changes in the relevant bachelor program as a result of the University's systematic 5 year review;
- Staffing – qualifications, experience, scholarly activity and quality of teaching including student survey outcomes;
- Learning resources and environment (including physical and digital experiences);
- Monitoring and Review – a holistic review of the Annual Program Performance Reports compiled to date are considered for student outcomes; external benchmarking activities undertaken during the period of accreditation to date; and where possible due to the availability of disciplines, comparisons with outcomes at other Navitas colleges;
- External environmental factors – changes in demand, impending changes in government policy, recent realignment with an industry, education or professional partner, emergence of a thematic issue;
- Any other elements particular to the discipline or level of the program.

2.4   Withdrawal or Suspension of a Program

The Academic Director may propose a withdrawal of a program at any time, in response to internal or external drivers.

A proposal to withdraw a program may be influenced by a range of factors that could include changes in government policy, industry or professional occupational changes, or global, national or local economic conditions that impact enrolments at the College. A decision to withdraw a program may also be initiated in response to changes in related programs at Griffith University, into which graduates from the College articulate. In all cases, the College has a commitment to the educational interests and welfare of its students and will provide timely and considered advice to students on how it will impact the study options available to them.

The Academic Director, in consultation with key stakeholders will consider timing of the withdrawal and all relevant student cohorts likely to be impacted by the decision. Withdrawal options may include ceasing or suspending program delivery at one particular site (campus) or ceasing or suspending delivery at all sites (campuses).

A proposal outlining the rationale, timing and teach-out details will be tabled at the Academic Board for consideration and approval. On approval of Academic Board, the decision will then be reported to TEQSA as a material change, and other relevant stakeholders, including Griffith University.

3 Compliance

3.1 General

College Director & Principal and Academic Director will ensure staff are informed about this Policy through staff meetings and communications. Teaching Staff will be made aware of policies relating to Quality Assurance including the process for approval and reviews to programs at induction and at regular intervals as required.

All Staff will be made aware of this Policy through the College website, digital campus, communication from Student and Academic Services / Compliance.

3.2 Relevant Legislation

Higher Education Standards Framework 2021 (Threshold Standards) 5.1-5.3, 6.1-6.3

3.3 Review

This Policy is reviewed as part of the Quality Assurance Framework for any changes to; operational, procedural and regulatory compliance requirements. This review process aims to ensure alignment to appropriate strategic direction and continued relevance to Griffith College's current and planned operations.

3.4 Records Management

All records in relation to this document will be managed as follows:

Record type	Owner	Location	Retention	Disposal
Policy	Academic Director	Policy Hub	Permanently with control in place for revisions	Policy Hub archive

1. PROGRAM APPROVALS TABLE

	Minor Change to Program	Major Change to Program	New Program Accreditation	Renewal of Accreditation (Non-SAA)
Definition	Replacement, redesign or renaming of _up to_ 50% of courses within a program across the entire period of accreditation. Routine updates to course outlines, including course learning outcomes, textbooks, assessment schedules and generic skills are taken to be continuous improvement activities and are reported to the relevant Program Advisory Committee annually (reference: Moderation of Assessment Policy). These continuous improvement activities would _not_ constitute a minor change.	As a non-self-accrediting provider, the College defines a major change in alignment with the definition for major program changes published by TEQSA (reference: Material Change Notification Policy[1]). • Change to a program title; • Significant redesign of program learning outcomes; • Discontinuation of a program; • Notable reduction in program duration; • Change in mode of delivery; • Change or addition of delivery location; • Introduction of new majors or specialisations; • Replacement, redesign or renaming of _more than_ 50% of courses within a program across the entire period of accreditation.	The introduction of an entirely new program; Or Where major changes to a program significantly alter the fundamental nature of a program, or the outcomes for students, this may require a major change to be reclassified as a new accreditation. Judgements on these cases would be taken in consultation with the TEQSA Case Manager, and relevant College and University stakeholders (e.g. Academic Board Chair, Group Dean (L&T)).	College programs may be accredited by TEQSA for a period up to 7 years. Prior to a renewal, the College will present a review of the program, and develop a proposal for renewal of accreditation to the respective approving body. (Independent Expert Assessment will inform and assure compliance against the HESF) 2021 and or required remedial action).
University approval process[2]	• Program Director collaborates with College staff to develop Minor Change Proposal, program structure, rationale, credit, etc. • Minor Change Proposal considered and approved by relevant Dean (L&T) • Minor Change Proposal noted by University Programs Committee.	• Program Director collaborates with College staff to develop Major Change Proposal, program structure, rationale, credit, etc. • Major Change Proposal considered and approved by relevant Dean (L&T) • Major Change Proposal considered and approved by University Programs Committee.	• Early conversations with the Senior Deputy Vice Chancellor, Group PVC and Dean (L&T) will inform the College's development of a New Program Proposal. • Program Director collaborates with College staff to develop New Program Proposal, including, program structure, rationale, credit, etc. • New Program Proposal considered and approved by relevant Dean (L&T) • New Program Proposal considered and approved by University Programs Committee.	• Program Director collaborates with College staff to design any proposed changes to accompany renewal. • Proposal for renewal of accreditation considered and approved by relevant Dean (L&T). • Proposal for renewal of accreditation noted by University Programs Committee.

College approval process[2]	• Academic Director and Program Convenor develop Minor Change Proposal, including program structure, rationale, credit, etc. • Minor Change Proposal considered and approved Program Advisory Committee. • Minor Change Proposal noted by Academic Board.	• Academic Director and Program Convenor develop Major Change Proposal, including program structure, rationale, credit, etc. • Major Change Proposal considered by Program Advisory Committee, for recommendation to Academic Board for approval. • Major Change Proposal considered and approved by Academic Board.	• College Director & Principal, Academic Director and Program Convenor develop New Program Proposal, including program structure, rationale, credit, etc. The proposal will be sent to experienced professionals engaged in industry and/or professional bodies for comment. Independent discipline experts may be engaged to assess the full application. • New Program Proposal (inclusive of evidence as required for TEQSA assessment), considered and endorsed by Academic Board.	• Academic Director and Program Convenor develop Proposal for Renewal of Accreditation, including program structure, rationale, credit, etc. • Proposal for Renewal of Accreditation reviewed by Program Advisory Committee, for recommendation to Academic Board for endorsement. • Complete re-accreditation submission (inclusive of evidence as required by TEQSA) endorsed by Academic Board.
TEQSA approval process (Non-SAA Fields of Education)	• No notification required for minor change.	• Once all College and University approvals have been achieved, an email notification is sent to TEQSA. There is no fee associated with a notification. The TEQSA Assessment team will confirm receipt of the notification within 30 days, and may seek additional information.	• Once all College and University approvals have been achieved, a full TEQSA accreditation application will be submitted. • The content of this submission will be determined by the "Scope of Evidence" document prepared by TEQSA (at the request of the College). • Assessment may take up to 9 months before decision.	• Once all College and University approvals have been achieved, a full TEQSA renewal of accreditation application will be submitted. The content of this submission will be determined by the "Scope of Evidence" document prepared by TEQSA (at the request of the College). • Assessment may take up to 9 months before decision.

[1] The term 'material change' is used to capture changes to the provider that encompass governance, good standing, financial viability, third party arrangements, and impacts on students. This policy focuses purely on the elements of the 'material change' definition that relate to *program* changes, hence the use of the term 'major change'.

[2] The College and University Committee processes will usually occur concurrently. Where an alteration is required by either process, the other will be notified.