

Institution	Universal Higher Education (UHE)
Policy name	Course Development and Approvals Policy
Policy Governance	Academic Board

1. Introduction

Academic courses delivered by UHE must meet the changing needs of various stakeholders. Changes in the needs of industries and professions place an imperative on UHE to ensure that its graduates are work-ready, and their key skills, attributes and capabilities align with the needs of the employers and industry in Australia and internationally.

2. Policy principles

Course development, approval and review are inclusive and consultative processes incorporating expertise from a range of stakeholders during the design phase and the preparation of documentation to support the decision by the delegated authority. Pathways to approval or review, with varying requirements for consultation and documentation depending on the scale and scope of the proposed course are informed by early assessment of the viability and risk associated with the curriculum development.

UHE course development, approval and review policy is based on the following principles:

- Such policies are developed within UHE's Governance Framework and consistently with the UHE Academic Board's Terms of Reference, policy documents which have been formally approved by the Board of Directors.
- New course development is aligned with UHE's strategic directions
- Courses are developed with robust academic governance and oversight
- The design of the curriculum has engaged disciplinary expertise
- The design of the curriculum has engaged employers, industry and where relevant professional bodies
- The course proposal has a sound academic and business case which attests key criteria of *viability, relevance and quality*
- Each course meets the requirements of the Higher Education Standards Framework and the Australian Qualifications Framework (AQF)
- All courses are reviewed on a cycle of five (5) years by the Course Development Committee with the oversight of the Academic Board. Cyclical review provides the flexibility to be responsive to market opportunities and incorporate strategic consideration of course performance, market issues, viability, risk and resource implications
- Development and review of approved course includes systematic processes for monitoring the progress of course against quality indicators, external benchmarking and review of course learning outcomes

3. Policy outcomes

The policy for course development, approval and review is designed to:

- Facilitate the design and development of high-quality courses that meets recognised academic standards
- Allow the College to be responsive to market opportunities as measured by the ability to secure strategic and sustainable outcomes
- Integrate with the UHE's strategic planning and review systems

- Support the design, development, implementation, and review of courses through efficient and effective consultation with relevant internal and external stakeholders.

4. Academic and Business Case Assessment

UHE will use two forms of assessment in deciding new course development or review of existing courses.

- First, the Board of Directors will initiate a **Business Case Assessment** with a focus on assessment of course viability, industry relevance and financial risks
- An **Academic Case Assessment** will be initiated by the Academic Board with the Course Development Committee. The Academic Case will ensure that the course meets academic standards, and that various systems and processes are in place to assure quality and educational outcomes.

5. Roles and responsibilities

a. UHE Board of Directors

The UHE Board of Directors is responsible for the following:

- Outlining the courses that are planned as part of its annual strategic planning process
- Assessing the financial viability assessment of the course based on market research and other intelligence. The financial viability will include projection of students, income, expenditure, competition, and resource implications. The report on the business case assessment is forwarded to the Academic Board
- Receiving reports from the Academic Board on
 - Assessment of academic case
 - Outcome of the Academic Board resolution on course approval
- Identifying any financial risk associated with the delivery of the course

b. Academic Board

In relation to course development and approvals, UHE Academic Board is responsible for the following:

- Reviewing the Business Case Assessment undertaken by the Board of Directors
- Upon advice from the Board of Directors, activating the Course Development Committee with disciplinary and professional expertise
- Developing terms of reference of the Course Development Committee
- Approving the membership of the Course Development Committee about accessing expertise and input from
 - discipline experts with academic background
 - employer or industry expertise
 - A UHE representative to Chair the Committee
- Providing guidance to the Course Development Committee including
 - Providing standard templates for course and unit outlines and learning resources/guides
 - Mapping of course learning outcomes and graduate attributes with AQF
- Ensuring that the College has all necessary Academic Policies in place to (a) approve the course for submission to TEQSA and (b) to implement and deliver the course upon receiving the necessary accreditation(s) and approvals.
- Overseeing course development with regular updates from the Chair of Course Development Committee
- Initiating a review of the full course by an external expert (independent person not otherwise associated with UHE or ULG, and after ensuring no conflict of interest)

- Requesting the Course Development Committee to undertake further changes based on the recommendations of the expert
- Ensuring that the course meets Higher Education Standards and the AQF
- Ensuring that robust quality assurance processes are development to maintain quality and standards irrespective of delivery mode or location
- Providing recommendation to the Board of Directors on:
 - assessment of business and academic case
 - the development and review of the course(s),

Academic Board may further delegate specific approvals to the Course Development Committee under certain conditions and is responsible for reporting to the Board of Directors on approved course developments.

c. Course Development Committee

UHE Course Development Committee is responsible for the following:

- preparing a set of objectives for the course for approval by the Academic Board.
- preparing a course outline for approval by the Board, making clear reference to external benchmarks and indicating how external referencing will be built into the course design as it proceeds to detailed development.
- preparing the detailed course material necessary for approval by the Board and submission to TEQSA.
- after review by the Academic Board, the detailed course will be put to an external independent expert in the field for review. The expert to be appointed will be approved by the Chair of the Academic Board.
- the committee will then consider the recommendations of the external expert in finalising the course proposal to the Academic Board for approval.
- the Academic Board will then deliberate formally on approval of the course.
- after the course has been approved internally and by TEQSA, and appropriate cyclic review arrangements are in place, the committee will be disestablished.

d. Support Units

Support Units such as Library and IT are responsible for the following:

- providing appropriate support and advice to the College during course design and development
- ensuring that the support unit has the capacity and resourcing for new course(s)

6. Implementation and monitoring

The Academic Board has the responsibility to ensure effective implementation and monitoring of course development and approvals process. The Academic Board will review the following to make the final decision:

- Academic case from the Course Development Committee
- Review of the course by external expert
- Consultation and rigour of course development process
- Academic approval of course for submission to TEQSA for accreditation.