

<b>Institution</b>	Universal Higher Education (UHE)
<b>Policy name</b>	Course Development and Review Policy and Procedure

## 1. Scope

This Policy and Procedure applies to the higher education courses at Universal Higher Education (UHE). It applies to all teaching staff members and external contributors engaged in developing, reviewing, and approving all UHE's subjects and courses.

## 2. Purpose

This Policy and Procedure is in place to ensure that UHE's courses are industry relevant and current, aligned with the institution's Strategic Plan, the academic quality and standards are maintained, and the course operation is financially viable. This assurance will be achieved through a rigorous development and review process involving both internal and external experts.

## 3. Regulatory Alignment

This Policy is built and implemented to comply with the regulatory requirements informed in the Higher Education Standards Framework (HESF) 2021:

- 1.4 Learning Outcomes and Assessment
- 3.1 Course Design
- 3.3 Learning Resources and Educational Support
- 5.3 Monitoring, Review and Improvement
- 6.2 Corporate Monitoring and Accountability
- 6.3 Academic Governance

## 4. Definitions

- 4.1 **Course:** The qualification that students will attain when they have successfully completed their studies at UHE. The terms 'program' and 'course' are used interchangeably but carry the same meaning.
- 4.2 **Development:** Introduction of new subjects and/or courses of study.
- 4.3 **Review:** The formal evaluation and assessment of the existing subjects and/or courses.

4.4 **Major course changes:** Are defined as significant changes to courses that may have a direct or indirect impact on the learning outcomes of a course, or a significant impact on students, which requires the material change notification to TEQSA. For major course changes, the appropriate form is to be completed. The submission will be reviewed and governance processes will be led by the Course Review Committee. Examples of major course changes include changes to the:

- a. Course name;
- b. Course structure including change of core subjects within a course;
- c. Credit points required to complete the course;
- d. Minimum entry requirements to the course;
- e. Course Learning Outcomes (CLOs);
- f. Graduate Attribute (GAs);
- g. Course duration/volume of learning;
- h. Addition of specialisations or changes to stream, major, minor, or specialisations within a course;
- i. Adding new delivery partners; and/or
- j. Delivery mode.

4.5 **Minor course changes:** Are defined as inconsequential changes to courses that do not have a direct or indirect impact on the learning outcomes of a course, or a significant impact on students, and do not require a material change notification to TEQSA. For minor course changes, the appropriate form is to be completed. The submission will be reviewed and approval decisions will be made by the Chief Academic Officer, reported to the Teaching and Learning Committee, followed by the Academic Board. Examples of minor course changes include:

- a. Replacement of an elective subject;
- b. Addition of an elective subject; or
- c. Deletion of an elective subject.

4.6 **Major subject changes:** Are defined as significant changes to subjects that may have a direct or indirect impact on student learning outcomes, or a significant impact on students. For major subject changes, the appropriate form is to be completed. The submission will be reviewed and governance processes will be led by the Teaching and Learning Committee. Examples of major subject changes include changes to the:

- a. Subject prerequisites;
- b. Subject learning outcomes;
- c. Type, timing and/or weighting of assessment tasks; and/or
- d. Student contact hours

- 4.7 **Minor subject changes:** Are defined as inconsequential changes to subjects that do not have a direct or indirect impact on student learning outcomes, or a significant impact on students. For minor subject changes, the appropriate form is to be completed. The submission will be reviewed and approval decisions will be made by the Chief Academic Officer, reported to the Teaching and Learning Committee, and followed by the Academic Board. Examples of minor subject changes include changes to the:
- a. Grammar, syntax, and formatting to improve clarity without altering the content;
  - b. Additional information for students, such as adding information relating to warnings against academic integrity breaches;
  - c. Wording to update the context, including industry developments;
  - d. Prescribed textbooks;
  - e. Details provided in rubrics and/or marking guides, which do not change the design of assessment or weighting; and/or
  - f. Specification of generic skills and assumed knowledge.

## 5. Policy Principles

- 5.1 UHE is committed to ensuring that its courses are industry-relevant and that they provide students with a high-quality learning experience. A robust and sustainable quality assurance system is integral to the maintenance of the quality of UHE's courses.
- 5.2 UHE takes an active approach to developing new courses and enabling existing courses to evolve through a cyclical process, incorporating regular monitoring, review, benchmarking, improvement, and re-accreditation.
- 5.3 The Academic Board holds the ultimate responsibility for maintaining the quality of UHE's courses, including:
- a. Subject and course approval processes;
  - b. Approving entry requirements to the courses;
  - c. Ensuring accreditation requirements of external bodies are met; and
  - d. Ongoing monitoring and review of subjects and courses.
- 5.4 UHE ensures its courses and subjects:
- a. Are developed in accordance with UHE's Strategic Plan and contribute to achieving the Institute's goals and objectives;
  - b. Offer valuable education experiences to students;
  - c. Are designed to be consistent with the Institute's resource planning and/or that resource planning is adjusted to support course and subject design; and
  - d. Are developed by incorporating course-level standards that align with UHE's Graduate Attributes, the Australian Qualifications Framework (AQF) learning outcomes, and

relevant professional standards. These standards are integrated into the learning outcomes, assessment tasks, and assessment marking criteria.

- 5.5 UHE's course review is based on the following principles:
- a. Course review informs planning and performance evaluation, and is part of UHE's quality assurance processes;
  - b. Course review will be undertaken both internally and externally, such that:
    - a) Internal annual review of courses applies explicit performance measures;
    - b) External holistic review of courses for each accreditation cycle is undertaken to examine curriculum content, teaching quality, assessments, and the overall pedagogy;
    - c) For courses with an accreditation period shorter than 5 years, at least one external course review will be completed within the accreditation cycle;
    - d) For courses with an accreditation period longer than 5 years, both mid-cycle and end-of-cycle external reviews will be conducted.
  - c. Course review is evidenced-based and is both strategic and operational in focus;
  - d. While all courses will be reviewed, prioritization of timing and resources will be given to those where data has indicated learning and teaching-related risk;
  - e. Course Review is a continuous process that closes the loop on previously identified issues and actions.
- 5.6 As part of the subject and course review process and to uphold integrity, UHE has an aligned and structured internal and external assessment moderation process in place (refer to the Student Assessment Policy and Procedure).

## 6. Procedure

### Course Development

- 6.1 UHE is committed to a culture of innovation, whereby all stakeholders have opportunities and are welcomed to contribute ideas and perspectives on new courses. In order to initiate course development research, the appropriate template is to be completed.
- 6.2 The Chief Academic Officer (CAO) will conduct the initial review. If the course has merit and aligns with UHE's Strategic Plan, the CAO, in consultation with the relevant discipline expert(s) and the Executive Management Group, will prepare a Course Proposal (using the appropriate template), including information on:
- a. Rationale for the course;
  - b. AQF course level;
  - c. Course overview;
  - d. Market research;

- e. Benchmarking against other providers of a similar course (national and international comparators); and
  - f. Financial implications.
- 6.3 The Chief Academic Officer will present the Course Proposal to the Board of Directors for a business case assessment with a focus on the assessment of course viability, industry relevance, and financial risks.
- 6.4 If the Board of Directors makes the decision to proceed with the course development, the Board of Directors will delegate the Academic Board to oversee the course development process. The actions of the Academic Board will be to:
- a. Review the Course Proposal and the business case assessment recommendations provided by the Board of Directors;
  - b. Activate the Course Development Committee and approving the composition of the membership which shall include:
    - a) Discipline experts with academic background;
    - b) Employers and/or other industry expertise;
    - c) A UHE representative to chair the committee; and
    - d) A UHE representative for project management;
  - c. Receive regular reports from the Course Development Committee to ensure the course development meets the academic, industry, and AQF standards.
- 6.5 The Course Development Committee is responsible for discussing, developing, and submitting a draft Course Document to the Academic Board for comment. The Course Document (using the appropriate template) will consist of at least the following:
- a. Course name;
  - b. Demand from industry;
  - c. Demand from prospective students;
  - d. Staffing considerations;
  - e. Compatibility with UHE strategy;
  - f. Course overview;
  - g. Course design (course learning outcomes, subjects, delivery mode, target students, and minimum entry requirements);
  - h. Resources required;
  - i. Benchmarking of similar courses at other institutions; and
  - j. Timeline for commencement of the course.

- 6.6 The Academic Board will consider the Course Document and will make one of the following recommendations:
- a. Approval for course development;
  - b. Further information is required to progress to full course development. The Course Document must then be submitted to the Academic Board giving details in the areas sought by the Academic Board; or
  - c. The Course Document is not suitable for progression to full development at this point in time.
- 6.7 If approved by the Academic Board, the course will be comprehensively designed with the oversight of the Course Development Committee. The course design documents must be in line with the AQF, HESF 2021, and UHE's policies as far as practicable, and be structured under the following headings (completed using the appropriate template):
- a. Course name;
  - b. Course rationale;
  - c. Qualification;
  - d. Entry requirements;
  - e. UHE's Graduate Attributes;
  - f. Mode of delivery;
  - g. Course map including subject scaffolding;
  - h. Arrangements for Recognition of Prior Learning;
  - i. Pathways and opportunities for further study;
  - j. Career outcomes and graduate employability;
  - k. Professional accreditation requirements;
  - l. Course Learning Outcomes;
  - m. Course Learning Outcomes and Graduate Attributes alignment; and
  - n. Subject Outlines.
- 6.8 Each Subject Outline (using the appropriate template) will contain the following:
- a. Subject code;
  - b. Subject name;
  - c. Subject description;
  - d. Administrative details;
  - e. Core or elective;
  - f. Subject pre-requisites;
  - g. Professional accreditation requirements;
  - h. Credit points;
  - i. Contact hours and self-study hours;
  - j. Delivery mode/teaching methodology;

- k. Work integrated learning (if applicable);
- l. Resources required;
- m. Subject Learning Outcomes;
- n. Weekly lecture topics;
- o. Assessment strategy and details;
- p. Required and recommended learning resources; and
- q. Constructive alignment.

- 6.9 On the completion of the course design, the Course Development Committee will invite two external experts to review the course design documents including fully designed subject materials. Course and subjects review checklists will be provided. The Course Development Committee will be responsible for responding to the external experts' preliminary reports and implementing their recommendations.
- 6.10 The external experts will review UHE's response to their preliminary report and recommendations, and subsequently provide their final report to UHE.
- 6.11 When the Course Development Committee is satisfied that the course design meets all requirements, the course design documents will be submitted to the Academic Board for approval for the accreditation application to TEQSA.
- 6.12 The course will not be marketed, and no offers of admission will be extended until TEQSA has granted the accreditation.
- 6.13 Once TEQSA accreditation is obtained, the course will be featured on UHE's website and included in the promotional materials. This process will be governed by the Marketing Policy.

### **Ongoing Course Review**

- 6.14 UHE has the quality assurance systems to continuously monitor its courses and related subjects. It incorporates both governance and operational elements to ensure:
- a. That courses stay up-to-date (and/or are regularly updated) and align with current knowledge and professional standards in all aspects of their design, delivery, and assessment;
  - b. That data of student performance relative to course and subject learning outcomes is available, allowing for the measurement, monitoring, and review of the extent to which these outcomes are being achieved (as well as continuous improvement to close-the-loop);
  - c. That the subject and associated assessment maintain a high standard.

- 6.15 UHE’s course review process involves an ongoing cycle of monitoring and improvement, which requires at least an annual review for all courses, alongside a more comprehensive review for each accreditation cycle, at a minimum.

### Internal Course Review

- 6.16 The annual review of each course includes the use of trend key performance measures to assess course viability, relevance, and quality. The following measures will be used:

Viability	Relevance	Quality
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Demand</li> <li>• Student load</li> <li>• Enrolment</li> <li>• Student cohort</li> <li>• Student retention and success</li> <li>• Profit margin</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Employer feedback</li> <li>• Graduate/alumni feedback</li> <li>• Benchmark with comparators</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Student learning experience through surveys such as the internal student evaluation through the Teaching and Subject Evaluation Survey (TSES) and Quality Indicators of Learning and Teaching (QILT)</li> <li>• Graduate outcomes</li> <li>• Graduate employment</li> <li>• First year retention</li> <li>• Progression into second/third year</li> <li>• Completion rates</li> </ul>

- 6.17 Annual course review reports will be prepared and presented by Program Coordinator (using the appropriate template) and overseen by the Chief Academic Officer, detailing areas raised during the academic year, including:
- a. Pass rate and retention;
  - b. Student feedback;
  - c. Lecturers’ feedback
  - d. Changes to subjects and/or course; and
  - e. Suggested actions where applicable.
- 6.18 This report is presented to the Teaching and Learning Committee, and the Academic board via the Teaching and Learning Committee.



### **Internal Subject Review**

- 6.19 Subject review (using the appropriate template) is organised by the respective Program Coordinators, with the oversight of the Chief Academic Officer, on a semester basis to ensure that quality standards are upheld and that the subjects remain current. The subject review considers feedback from students, external markers, and subject lecturers.
- 6.20 The subject review will adhere to a schedule overseen by the Chief Academic Officer, to ensure that all subjects are reviewed before the comprehensive external review.
- 6.21 The Program Coordinator will compile a Subject Review Report (using the appropriate template) each semester to present to the Teaching and Learning Committee. This report includes areas of concern or proposed changes that require the Teaching and Learning Committee to approve or discuss.
- 6.22 Minor changes can be implemented in time for the new semester, in keeping with the definitions of minor and major changes as outlined in the definitions above and as overseen and approved by the Chief Academic Officer, while major changes will need to be referred to the Course Review Committee for discussion and the Academic Board for approval.

### **External Course Review**

- 6.23 The holistic external course review will examine trend performance data on each course and engage external experts through the Course Review Committee. The review will focus on the following criteria (using the appropriate template):
- a. Course structure;
  - b. Course Learning Outcomes;
  - c. Course content and its relevance;
  - d. Subject descriptors and Subject Learning Outcomes;
  - e. Weekly topics of each subject and teaching materials including lecture slides, tutorial materials and supporting learning resources;
  - f. Assessment methods and marking guides including rubrics;
  - g. Work Integrated Learning and Learning Integrated Work (where applicable);
  - h. Admissions criteria;
  - i. Academic credit and Recognition to Prior Learning;
  - j. Compliance with external reference points e.g. AQF, Threshold Standards;
  - k. Constructive alignment;
  - l. Resource alignment (such as library, IT, academic support, and discipline-specific tools and equipment); and
  - m. Quality assurance arrangements for partnership (where third-party delivery is involved).

- 6.24 Two external experts with discipline expertise and industry experience will be engaged in the external course review process. The experts will prepare a report using a standard template provided by UHE. The external experts will be asked to provide the report in four weeks.
- 6.25 The Course Review Committee will review and discuss the external expert reports and will provide a report to the Academic Board for discussion. The report (using the appropriate template) will include:
- a. Reports by two external experts on each course
  - b. Recommendations for suggested changes by the Course Review Committee based on the external expert review, and
  - c. Revised course documentation.
- 6.26 The Academic Board will review the report and make a final decision. The Academic Board's decision will be reported to the Board of Directors. If the course revision is not approved by the Academic Board, the Course Review Committee will be asked to undertake further review.
- 6.27 UHE will submit a material change notification to TEQSA when a material change is implemented.
- 6.28 The Chief Academic Officer will oversee the secure storage of documentation related to subject and course development and review.

## 7. Version History

It is the joint responsibility of the Implementation Officer and Responsible Officer to ensure compliance with this policy.

<b>Responsible Officer</b>		Chief Academic Officer	
<b>Implementation Officers</b>		Registrar, Program Coordinator, teaching staff	
<b>Review Date</b>		13 August 2027	
<b>Approved by</b>			
Academic Board			
<b>Associated Documents</b>			
Benchmarking Policy and Procedure Governance Framework Quality Assurance Framework Student Assessment Policy			
<b>Version</b>	<b>Brief Description of the changes</b>	<b>Date Approved</b>	<b>Effective Date</b>
4.2		24 Jan 2024	24 Jan 2024
5.0	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Restructured the content in line with the unified policy template</li> <li>Integrated course development and review into a single policy</li> <li>Clarified the Scope and Purpose</li> <li>Updated the procedure to clarify the internal and external processes for subject and course development and review</li> <li>Added the Version History Table</li> </ul>	13 August 2024	13 August 2024