Protocols: Curriculum development, approval and accreditatation

Protocols to accompany the policy for curriculum development and approval

(Manual of Policy and Procedures C/4.1)

January 2015
<table>
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<tr>
<th>Versions</th>
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<tr>
<td>Version 1</td>
<td>Jan – Dec 2010</td>
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<td>Added information on MOUs.</td>
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<td>Name change for OTQ to LTU.</td>
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<td>Version 3</td>
<td>Jan – Dec 2012</td>
<td>Reviewed December 2011, no changes made</td>
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<tr>
<td>Version 4</td>
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<td>Reviewed to align with changes to MOPP C/4.1, effective July 2013.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Version 5</td>
<td>January 2015</td>
<td>Revised terminology under Sec 8 'Monitoring' (Course Analytic Profile)</td>
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These protocols accompany the policy for Curriculum Development, Approval and Accreditation at MOPP C/4.1 and describe the process for curriculum development at QUT. Further information relating to curriculum design is available in MOPP C/4.2 Curriculum Design.
## 1. Definitions

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<th>Term</th>
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<tr>
<td>Academic Plan</td>
<td>An Academic Plan describes and documents the curriculum design and the inclusion of QUT’s teaching and learning priority areas within the curriculum.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Business Case</td>
<td>A Business Case describes and documents the strategic value of the curriculum initiative and the associated opportunities and risks.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Course Evaluation Portfolio</td>
<td>A Course Evaluation Portfolio collates a range of course performance data from the current accreditation period, informing curriculum design for the reaccreditation process.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Curriculum Change Statement (CCS)</td>
<td>A Curriculum Change Statement describes and documents the nature of and rationale for a curriculum initiative which occurs within an accreditation cycle and does not require re-accreditation of the course.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Curriculum Bulletin Board (CCB)</td>
<td>The Curriculum Bulletin Board is an online space used to provide information on curriculum developments to a diverse group of staff throughout the University with an interest in curriculum development and approval.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Curriculum Concept Plan (CCP)</td>
<td>A Curriculum Concept Plan is the initiating document for a course accreditation or re-accreditation. The CCP describes and documents a proposed course, providing a rationale, and identifying risks and opportunities which may trigger further consultation with appropriate stakeholders.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Curriculum Proposal</td>
<td>A Curriculum Proposal is the suite of documents required for course accreditation, including documents developed by faculties, divisional endorsements, and curriculum outlines.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Curriculum Outline</td>
<td>A Curriculum Outline describes the requirements for entry, intended learning outcomes, content, learning activities, and completion requirements for a unit, study area or course.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Curriculum Development Team</td>
<td>A Curriculum Development Team is a group comprising academic and professional staff from within and outside the faculty, established for the purpose of developing new or revised curriculum.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Curriculum Endorsement List (CEL)</td>
<td>The Curriculum Endorsement List is an online space where completed curriculum proposals are posted to allow formal endorsements by stakeholders before submission to a faculty academic board.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Curriculum Standards Reference Group (CSRG)</td>
<td>The Curriculum Standards Reference Group is a Council committee that will provide recommendations to Faculty Academic Boards regarding the alignment of proposals for course accreditation/reaccreditation to the Higher Education Threshold Standards and QUT Curriculum Design policy.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Customised and Transnational Supplement</td>
<td>A Customised and Transnational Supplement describes the specific details associated with delivery to corporate or transnational student cohorts.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Faculty Curriculum Development Officer</td>
<td>A Faculty Curriculum Development Officer is a professional staff member responsible for coordinating the development and approval of curriculum.</td>
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2. Introduction

The Protocols for Curriculum Development, Approval and Accreditation describe the process of developing and accrediting award courses (including customised and transnational courses), and approving study areas and units at QUT. The key features of the Curriculum Development, Approval and Accreditation Process are:

- A strong alignment with the annual planning and review cycle, and the course quality assurance cycle (see C/4.6).
- An emphasis on curriculum design (see C/4.2) and consultation with internal and external stakeholders.
- Minimal approval points where a number of curriculum developments can be approved at faculty academic board and all other developments move directly from faculty academic boards to University Academic Board for approval.

The purpose of the Curriculum Development, Approval and Accreditation Process (CDAAP) is to provide faculties with the support systems and tools to check that the curriculum they are seeking to approve is viable, well-designed, and can be implemented efficiently. The CDAAP (see C/4.1) incorporates the activities of planning, consultation, documentation, implementation and monitoring. The Protocols describe these activities as Initiation, Planning, Design and Development, Approval and Accreditation, and Implementation. These steps are complex and can overlap or be cyclical rather than occurring as a linear process.

At the end of the development and approval process, University Academic will accredit a course for a fixed period of no more than five years. At the end of the accreditation period, the course will need to be reviewed and reaccredited, if it is to continue. Through the accreditation period, ongoing course performance is monitored and evaluated against both internal QUT performance indicators and external measures of student satisfaction through QUT’s course quality assurance process (see C/4.6). Some courses are also monitored by professional accreditation bodies.

Alignment with the course quality assurance cycle

The CDAAP is closely aligned with the course quality assurance cycle which involves an ongoing cycle of monitoring and improvement.
Course quality assurance informs the development and improvement of courses and tracks the impact of curriculum changes. Data gained through course quality assurance reporting also provides course teams with an evidence base guiding curriculum design through the re-accreditation process. The Course Transformation and Reaccreditation Plan, which summarises the strategic direction of the faculty’s academic programs, is part of the course quality assurance cycle, and is the first step in the CDAAP.

Emphasis on curriculum design

The CDAAP builds on QUT’s Curriculum Design policy (see C/4.2), which describes the key characteristics of curriculum at QUT. Policies for assessment (C/5.1), graduate capabilities (C/4.3) and work integrated learning (C/4.4) also provide guidance for curriculum design.

Curriculum renewal continues throughout the accreditation period of a course. There needs to be a continual flow of evidence on the appropriateness and effectiveness of the curriculum, both from the perspective of individual students and for the course as a whole. QUT uses the following strategies to monitor and evaluate its curriculum:

- the course quality assurance system (see C/4.6);
- REFRAME evaluation of learning and teaching (see C/4.7);
- standardised monitoring and intervention processes for student engagement in the first year;
- use of assessment items early in the course or semester to provide evidence of student progress and engagement (see C/5.1).

The Protocols for CDAAP facilitate incorporation of the characteristics of curriculum design into course development, approval and reaccreditation activities. Guidelines for good curriculum design have been developed separately to support the Curriculum Design policy and can be accessed via the teaching intranet.

Minimal approval points

Increased focus on curriculum design enables a streamlined and flexible CDAAP which minimises the approval steps. Opportunities for divisions to make meaningful contributions to the curriculum are built into the development process, rather than being seen as a separate checkpoint late in the sequence. All curriculum initiatives are considered by faculty academic boards which, depending on whether course accreditation is required, either approve the initiative or endorse and forward directly to University Academic Board for accreditation. Any other committee involvement occurs for the purposes of consultation and feedback during the development of the curriculum initiative.

Learning and Teaching Unit support

The Learning and Teaching Unit provides advice to faculties on Curriculum Development, Approval and Accreditation and can provide assistance on request from the faculty with respect to:

- approval pathways and triggers for re-accreditation
- consultation requirements
- documentation
- course, study area and unit outlines
• course structures and course regulations
• use of Academic Database
• establishing faculty processes for approval
• managing assessments from external assessors
• convening meetings of divisional representatives
• use of the Curriculum Bulletin Board and Curriculum Endorsement List
• committee submissions
• support for curriculum development teams

3. Initiation

Curriculum development activity is generally initiated following strategic consideration of the faculty’s current suite of courses through the Course Transformation and Reaccreditation Plan, and secondly through the development of Curriculum Concept Plans for each curriculum initiative.

- The Course Transformation and Reaccreditation Plan (CTRP) initiates the Curriculum Development and Reaccreditation Process by providing an early notification of proposed curriculum actions for all courses, including reaccreditation and mid-cycle review, for the following five years. For each curriculum initiative, faculties establish a Curriculum Development Team to lead the development and design of the curriculum.

- For proposals for course re-accreditation, the Lead Curriculum Developer develops a Curriculum Concept Plan (CCP) as a planning document to initiate discussions with relevant stakeholders.

- For smaller scale, lower risk curriculum initiatives occurring during an accreditation period, the Lead Curriculum Developer uses a Curriculum Change Statement (CCS) to provide notification to stakeholders of the initiative and for use in the approval process.

- Consultation with internal stakeholders is facilitated by faculties through an online space, the Curriculum Bulletin Board, which provides access to both Curriculum Concept Plans and Curriculum Change Statements. Additional advice is provided for higher-risk initiatives through the Programs Executive Committee and the Curriculum Standards Reference Group. Faculties are also expected to consult with industry, the professions, students and alumni during the development process.

- Memoranda of Understanding: Faculties are recommended to use the Curriculum Bulletin Board for consultation regarding curriculum related Memoranda of Understanding (MOUs) to help facilitate communication and input from University stakeholders.

- Faculties determine the Approval Pathway based on the scope, scale and associated risk of a curriculum initiative, and whether course accreditation/re-accreditation is required. The approval pathway helps to determine the tools and documentation to be used in the development, the consultation required, and the delegated committee authorities for approval.
3.1. Course Transformation and Reaccreditation Plan

Annually each faculty produces a Course Transformation and Reaccreditation Plan (CTRP), as part of their strategic planning package, which outlines the strategic direction of the faculty’s academic programs and indicates curriculum activity likely to occur in the following year. Preparation of the CTRP is the responsibility of the executive dean, and includes:

- a brief analysis of the faculty’s strategic position relating to courses;
- a summary of planned action including plans for curriculum review, transformation and reaccreditation.

These details are based on consideration of:

- an environmental scan of external and internal factors that should occur as part of the faculty’s planning
- those courses which are reaching the end of their accreditation period
- those courses for which a mid-cycle review is about to commence
- course performance, including any courses identified as ‘underperforming’
- course viability and sustainability
- the Consolidated Courses Performance Report
- QUT’s strategic planning documents including the QUT Blueprint and faculty action plans.

The CTRP is intended to provide information to University stakeholders, and faculties are encouraged to use their CTRP to initiate discussions about their planned curriculum developments for the following year. However, it is recognised that not all planned actions are known at the time of the development of the CTRP and that additional curriculum initiatives may arise opportunistically during the year.

Committee consultation

The Faculty Academic Board endorses the CTRP as part of the annual planning and review cycle and forwards the report to Finance and Resource Planning together with the faculty’s planning documents. The Learning and Teaching Unit prepares a consolidated report for consideration by the following committees:

- Vice-Chancellor’s Advisory Committee (VCAC) considers matters relating to viability and risk, to facilitate interfaculty discussions on possible joint activities and enable divisions to identify and plan for potential resource impacts.
- University Learning and Teaching Committee (ULTC) considers quality themes.

3.2. Curriculum Development Team

A Curriculum Development Team is established by the faculty for the purpose of developing new or revised curriculum, and is responsible for the planning, consultation, and design and development processes. Composition of a Curriculum Development Team may vary depending on the scope and scale of the curriculum change, and over time, as differing areas of expertise are needed. Membership should include the Lead Curriculum Developer and a faculty curriculum development officer. Divisional or external stakeholders may be included, where relevant.
3.3. Curriculum Concept Plan

For proposals for course accreditation or reaccreditation, the Lead Curriculum Developer prepares a Curriculum Concept Plan (CCP). The purpose of a CCP is to

- signal that a curriculum initiative is ready to move into the formal curriculum development and approval process;
- provide initial details to relevant stakeholders within the University to allow appropriate consultation to commence;
- determine the required approval pathway, consultation and documentation;
- assist faculties and divisions in allocating academic and professional staff resources;
- inform the development and design processes.

The CCP is an initiating document, and is intended to provide brief details only of the proposed initiative. It is understood that details may change during the development process or that the curriculum initiative may not proceed once more information is known. The CCP template (available on the CDAAP SharePoint site) includes guidelines on the information that should be provided.

Committee consultation

- The Executive Dean (or delegated to the Assistant Dean Teaching and Learning) endorses the CCP for submission to the Curriculum Bulletin Board.
- Faculty Executive Committees or Faculty Academic Boards may wish to discuss CCPs, but formal endorsement is not a requirement at this early stage of the process.

3.4. Curriculum Change Statement

For proposals for revision to an accredited award course, the Lead Curriculum Developer prepares a Curriculum Change Statement (CCS) which provides the context for the curriculum initiative. Design and development for a CCS is minimal, and it is expected that this has occurred in conjunction with the preparation of the statement. Once stakeholder input has been sought through the Curriculum Bulletin Board, the curriculum initiative can therefore proceed directly to approval.

Documentation accompanying a change statement may include:

- new or changed curriculum outlines (see Section 5.3)
- changes to standard study plans or lists of units
- a curriculum map for a course or study area (if it has changed from the previous approved version or did not previously exist)
- results of stakeholder discussions (e.g. email or phone conversations) included either as attachments or as a summary in the covering committee submission.

To streamline documentation, unnecessary sections should be deleted from the CCS. A template, including guidelines, is available on the CDAAP SharePoint site.
3.5. Stakeholder Consultation

Curriculum Bulletin Board

Stakeholder consultation is facilitated by faculties posting Curriculum Concept Plans (CCP) and Curriculum Change Statements (CCS) to the online Curriculum Bulletin Board. Faculties are encouraged to make CCPs/CCSs available to the University as soon as possible to encourage stakeholder engagement and expedite the process. Divisions should be given ten working days to respond to a concept plan or change statement. Feedback gained through the Curriculum Bulletin Board should be noted under ‘Consultation’ in the submission to FAB/UAB.

Internal Stakeholders

Following initial notification of the curriculum initiative through the Curriculum Bulletin Board, the Course Development Team is responsible for ensuring ongoing consultation with interested faculties and divisions. This consultation can occur through

- representation of relevant stakeholders on the Curriculum Development Team
- formal regular or ad hoc meetings with divisional representatives; or
- phone and email discussions

For larger scale developments, the results of the consultation process with divisions are summarised in an Endorsement Form which is used in the approval process (see Section 6.2).

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<td>• requests for capital expenditure or additional space requirements</td>
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<td>• corporate award courses requiring lease or purchase of off-campus space (this will also require approval from the Vice-Chancellor – see C/5.3)</td>
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<td>• any non-standard administrative procedures resulting from corporate, transnational or joint award courses.</td>
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<td>• CRICOS codes</td>
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<td>• appointment of new academic or professional staff</td>
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<th>Division of Technology, Information and Learning Support</th>
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<td>• new discipline areas requiring new print and electronic resources (QUT Library)</td>
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<td>• strategies to embed information literacy into units or courses (QUT Library)</td>
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<td>• advice of the use of IT services (ITS)</td>
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<td>• new or changed delivery modes requiring the use of IT Services (ITS)</td>
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<td>• new or changed delivery modes requiring audio-visual or media support (Integrated Help Services)</td>
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<td>• off-campus delivery issues such as access to QUT electronic resources resulting from corporate, transnational or joint award courses</td>
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<td></td>
<td>• on campus delivery modes using block, intensive, residential or non-standard timetabling periods</td>
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<td>• off-campus delivery infrastructure</td>
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<td></td>
<td>• a range of tools, resources and services to assist faculties with course and unit design</td>
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<td>• advice on developing a curriculum map</td>
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<td>• advice on policy requirements and recommended good practice for curriculum structures</td>
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<td></td>
<td>• inclusion of first-year experience principles in the curriculum</td>
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<td>• inclusion of real-world learning in the curriculum</td>
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<th>Research courses</th>
<th>Learning and Teaching Unit</th>
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<td>• policy and procedural advice on consultation, documentation and approval.</td>
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<th>Contracts and customised courses</th>
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<td></td>
<td>• advice and support for the development of all research degrees</td>
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<td>• advice and support on transnational HDR cohorts</td>
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<tr>
<th>Office of Commercial Services</th>
<th>Programs Executive Committee</th>
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<td></td>
<td>The Programs Executive Committee (PEX) is a Vice-Chancellor’s committee that provides faculties with early strategic advice on the accreditation and reaccreditation of courses. PEX endorsement is required for the following proposal types:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
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<td>• Accreditation of a new award course</td>
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• Reaccreditation of an existing postgraduate award course
• Reaccreditation of an existing undergraduate award course not judged to be lower-risk

Submission to PEX should be in the form of a two-page memo and course costing. Annotated templates for both of these documents are available on the CDAAP SharePoint site. The PEX meets monthly and faculties should make submissions directly to Governance and Legal Services.

**Curriculum Standards Reference Group**

The Curriculum Standards Reference Group (CSRG) is a Council committee that provides recommendations to faculty academic boards on any matters to be addressed to ensure the alignment of curriculum proposals with the Higher Education Threshold Standards. Submission to the CSRG is required for the following proposal types:

• Accreditation of a new award course
• Reaccreditation of an existing award course (undergraduate or postgraduate) not judged to be lower-risk

CSRG considers the full curriculum proposal, which is submitted via the Curriculum Endorsement List. Divisional assessment of the proposal via the CEL can occur concurrently with consideration by the CSRG.

At the conclusion of the process, course teams will be provided with a set of recommendations to be addressed prior to endorsement at FAB. Changes made in response to CSRG recommendations should be summarised under ‘Consultation’ in the submission to FAB/UAB.

**External stakeholders**

QUT values the contributions of business, industry, and the professions in the curriculum development process. The Curriculum Development Team is expected to provide evidence of input from a range of external sources appropriate to the scope and risk of the curriculum initiative. For example, new or extensively revised large scale discipline offerings should include comprehensive evidence of rigorous external review by authoritative sources.

Depending on the scale and risk, evidence of input may be gained through any or all of the following:

• faculty advisory committees
• surveys of industry professionals
• discussions with professional bodies and/or industry representatives
• peer review by relevant faculty staff or independent external assessors
• specially commissioned panels
• or as otherwise determined in consultation with the Learning and Teaching Unit.

Input from external stakeholders may range from

• helping to ensure that the faculty is attuned to professional and community trends
• identifying needs and opportunities in teaching in response to changes in industry, the professions or the community
• early input and advice on particular curriculum initiatives in terms of industry relevance and professional practice
• detailed review of the academic aspects and pedagogical approaches of the curriculum initiative.

Students and alumni
Evidence of the input of existing and prospective students is essential to all major curriculum developments. Faculties are expected to achieve this through the following:
• consideration of student feedback on courses and teaching
• focus groups with students to obtain more detailed feedback on particular issues relating to the course
• surveys of students and/or alumni on particular aspects of the proposed development
• course quality assurance processes.

3.6. Memoranda of Understanding
The executive dean of faculty is responsible for signing curriculum-related Memoranda of Understanding (MOUs) or International Cooperation Agreements (ICA). Before signing such agreements, the following aspects need to be part of the consideration (see G/6.1), including:
• operational, workload, space or human resources impacts of the contract or MOU for relevant areas of the University;
• any reputational risks if the contract or MOU fails for any reason, or any impacts on other potential business suppliers or educational partners by virtue of the contract or MOU; and
• the need for due diligence checks in relation to the other party/ies to the agreement.

Agreements made in curriculum-related MOUs and ICAs can have a number of operational requirements which need to be considered to enable successful implementation such as entry points and advanced standing arrangements. Communication with Student Business Services will be a significant starting point.

Faculties are encouraged to make use of the Curriculum Bulletin Board as a communication tool, in order to ensure that all operational requirements to implement the MOU arrangements across all relevant areas have been considered before signing. Faculties can choose to either post the draft MOU, or to post a brief Curriculum Change Statement describing the proposal.

3.7. Approval Pathways
The consultation, documentation, and committee approval required will depend on the risk and scale of the curriculum initiative being proposed. Three broad proposal types can be defined, each with different documentation and committee approval requirements.
• Accreditation of a new award course
• Reaccreditation of an existing award course
• Revision to an accredited award course
Documentation and approval for the reaccreditation of an existing award course will differ, depending on whether the course is postgraduate or undergraduate, and lower- or higher-risk.

For detailed information on the approval and documentation requirements for each of these proposal types, please refer to the CDAAP Quick Guide, available on the CDAAP SharePoint site.

Final approval includes ensuring that the course is viable, and that the curriculum has been well-designed and can be implemented within QUT’s parameters for good practice. In order for the approving body (FAB or UAB) to answer these questions, the evidence needs to be clearly presented in the documentation provided for approval (see Section 6 for further detail).

4. Planning

Planning for the curriculum development is informed by the initial work undertaken in the Curriculum Concept Plan and needs to be revisited periodically as the curriculum is developed. Planning activities provide information to help inform the curriculum design and development by

- providing guidance on the background work that faculties should undertake to inform the curriculum initiative
- ensuring that both the interests and needs of the target student cohort and the requirements of industry and professions are well understood
- highlighting issues to be considered when assessing the strategic value of a curriculum initiative
- ensuring that all associated opportunities and risks are considered
- initiating the documentation and associated evidence that governance committees will need to scrutinise as part of a formal accreditation process.

The information gained through the planning process is summarised in the Business Case, which forms part of the Curriculum Proposal used in the approval process. The activities undertaken include

- **Rationale**: developing a rationale for the curriculum initiative (based on risks and opportunities, an environmental scan, and information from the Individual Course Report(s)).
- **Market Analysis**: undertaking a market analysis to fully describe the market for the course.
- **Budget and Resource impacts**: resource impacts and viability (based on completing a course costing).
- **Customised and Transnational**: planning for additional requirements for customised or transnational courses to ensure that issues relating to strategy, governance and curriculum design and delivery specific to corporate and transnational awards are considered.

Annotated templates have been developed for the Business Case and the Customised and Transnational Supplement, which include guidelines on each of these planning activities. The templates can be accessed through the CDAAP SharePoint site.
Faculties may choose to use school-level committees and/or their Faculty Teaching and Learning Committee for consultation during the development of the Business Case.

Additional tools
The following tools are provided to accompany the Business Case, and can be accessed from the CDAAP Sharepoint site:

- Course Costing
- Opportunities and Risk assessment worksheet.

5. Development and Design
Curriculum development and design focuses on curriculum design, developing course structures, writing course, study area and unit outlines that describe the curriculum, and planning the implementation of the curriculum. The details of how the curriculum has been designed are captured in the Academic Plan. The Academic Plan provides course teams with the ‘blueprint’ for their course or study area to guide future work or review, as well as providing an overview of the underlying thinking and reference to evidence that underpins the curriculum design process. It is also a key document and ultimately a record for the University’s accreditation processes.

The Development and Design Phase process includes

- designing the curriculum
- determining the course structure
- defining the core curriculum elements
- writing curriculum outlines
- devising an approach to course transition and developing a Transition Plan
- developing an Implementation Plan, for activities that will be required post-approval.

5.1. Curriculum Design
QUT describes curriculum design as the architecture of a course of study that
- embodies a philosophy of learning and teaching,
- articulates a clear set of desired learning outcomes and
- describes how the planned learning environment will support the student to achieve those learning outcomes.

C/4.2: Curriculum design at QUT has three key characteristics that underpin all curriculum development and approval activities in order to support the University’s overall vision of providing real world learning environments and programs

The Curriculum at QUT

- is designed to support student learning
- embeds real world learning pedagogies
- reflects a whole of course design
The curriculum design process should ensure that the curriculum
- is designed to support student learning towards achieving the desired learning outcomes
- addresses the market needs and strategic direction identified in the Business Case
- is based on QUT’s principles for curriculum design, and
- incorporates QUT’s priorities for teaching and learning.

The curriculum for a course, study area or unit is approved by the relevant approval authority through the curriculum outline and associated Academic Plan (see C/4.1).

Detailed guidance on curriculum design is provided through the Teaching Intranet, at http://www.intranet.qut.edu.au/teaching/course-and-unit-design.

5.2. Core Curriculum Elements

The core curriculum data for a course or study area describe the course type (e.g. bachelor, masters), code, title and credit points. These details need to be worked out at an early stage in the development process to allow core details (code, title, credit points etc) to be entered into the Student and Academic Management System (SAMS). This allows the course details to be made available to other systems such as Academic Database (for approval purposes), and Studyfinder (to promote the course to students subject to final approval). This also ensures that new units, study areas and courses are included on relevant government reporting.

5.3. Curriculum Outlines

A Curriculum Outline is written in student-centred language and describes the course, study area or unit and is developed for the benefit of both prospective and enrolled students, as well as staff involved in the approval and delivery of the curriculum. Curriculum Outlines are held in the Academic Database, which ensures that all outlines are formally approved.

Course and study area outlines

Course and study area outlines incorporate
- formal course requirements which state the requirements for admission to and completion of the course or study area
- the outcomes that students can expect from the course in terms of learning outcomes, career outcomes, professional membership and pathways to other study.

Unit outlines

Unit outlines
- describe the desired learning outcomes for a particular unit and how the planned learning environment (activities, assessment, and resources) will support the student to achieve those learning outcomes
are developed through a whole of course approach which ensures that the unit coordinator can clearly describe to students
  – how the unit contributes to the learning outcomes of the course as a whole, and
  – how the knowledge, skills, and dispositions that students will gain through completion of the unit build on those from previous units in the course, and contribute to other units within the course structure.

**Academic Database**

All course, study area and unit outlines are held in Academic Database. An Academic Database record is created automatically when a new unit (or unit version) is set to 'planned' in the Student and Academic Management System (SAMS) but course and study area records need to be created manually. An electronic workflow is used in Academic Database to record the approval process (see Section 6.4).

**5.4. Transition Plan**

**Transition Plan**

Where a new course or new version of a course is replacing an existing offering, or where any courses are being discontinued, the Course Development Team should complete a Transition Plan in consultation with Student Business Services.

Planning for transition should ensure that
- all enrolled students will be able to complete their studies
- processes for managing student transition are agreed between the faculty, Student Business Services and any other relevant stakeholders
- all issues relating to student transition have been considered.

**5.5. Implementation Plan**

Where there is more work to be done following approval (for instance, developing university wide minors), an Implementation Plan is used to record and monitor the work to be undertaken, together with timelines and responsibilities. The Implementation Plan may include detail relating to
- the management of identified high risks (based on the risk identification undertaken for the Business Case)
- outstanding issues relating to curriculum design, student transition, or operations identified during the design and development process or through discussions with stakeholders
6. Approval

Once the Curriculum Outlines, Business Case, Academic Plan and any supplementary documents have been finalised, the curriculum initiative can be approved. The following activities are required for approval.

- **Curriculum Proposal**: The documents required for approval are packaged together into a Curriculum Proposal.

- **Divisional Endorsements**: Depending on the curriculum proposal, one or more formal endorsements from divisions or other faculties are required. These endorsements are gained by posting the curriculum proposal to an online space, the Curriculum Endorsement List.

- **Committee submissions** are required for all curriculum initiatives at both faculty academic board and University Academic Board.

- **Committee approval** is either at faculty academic board or University Academic Board depending on the curriculum initiative. Courses offered transnationally require additional approval from the Vice-Chancellor to teach offshore.

6.1. Curriculum Proposal

The **Curriculum Proposal** is the package of documents required for approval of proposals for reaccreditation. The full package of documents is put together to post on the Curriculum Endorsement List, and for CSRG consideration (where required), but the full package may not always be required for FAB endorsement and UAB approval. The Curriculum Proposal includes:

- Committee submission memo
- Academic Plan
- Curriculum Map
- Curriculum Outlines

Plus the following documents, where relevant:

- Business Case
- Course Costing
- Changes to study packages or standard study plans
- Transition Plan
- Customised Education and Transnational Supplement
- Opportunities and risk assessment matrix
- Divisional Endorsement Forms

6.2. Divisional Endorsements

The consultation process for larger scale initiatives includes a final endorsement by divisions to assure the approving authority that relevant issues have been considered, and identify any outstanding issues to be resolved before
implementation. This endorsement process is managed through an online space, the Curriculum Endorsement List:

- Faculties post the Curriculum Proposal to the Curriculum Endorsement List.
- Faculties send an email (based on a standard proforma) to the relevant divisions who review the Curriculum Proposal and complete a Divisional Endorsement Form.
- The divisions send the completed Divisional Endorsement Form to the faculty; these forms become part of the curriculum proposal and are included in the submission to the Faculty Academic Board.

6.3. Committee Approval

The CDAAP Quick Guide provides detailed information on the committee approval required for a range of proposal types, based on C/4.1.

Faculty Academic Board

Faculty academic boards are responsible for confirming the following prior to their endorsement or approval of a curriculum initiative:

- the curriculum initiative is consistent with the faculty's and the University's strategic plan
- the course, study area, or unit is viable, and QUT has suitably qualified staff to deliver the proposed curriculum
- the curriculum initiative conforms to the relevant sections of University policy
- all relevant consultations have been undertaken, divisions have endorsed the curriculum initiative where required (by completing a Divisional Endorsement Form), and processes are in place to resolve any outstanding issues
- all issues raised by the Programs Executive Committee or Curriculum Standards Reference Group have been responded to appropriately
- joint or double degrees have been endorsed by the other owning Faculty Academic Board
- appropriate external review of curriculum has occurred
- full documentation is retained in accordance with QUT’s record management policy (F/6.1).

University Academic Board

University Academic Board is responsible for approving the following:

- course code and award titles to be shown on parchment
- approved abbreviation
- course regulations (course structure, entry and completion requirements)
- any deviations from existing policy
- offering of courses.

University Academic Board approves the offering of a course based on the assurance from the faculty academic board that the curriculum initiative meets the requirements as outlined in the responsibilities for faculty academic boards above.

Approval to teach offshore
All transnational courses require additional approval to teach offshore. Following University Academic Board approval, the faculty provides the request to the Vice-Chancellor to approve the transnational course to teach offshore, together with the following documentation:

- a Curriculum Proposal which includes a Customised Education and Transnational Supplement
- a draft or final contract, International Cooperation Agreement, or memorandum of understanding
- confirmation that all stakeholders have been consulted and have confirmed that all issues have been resolved or can be resolved during implementation of the course.

6.4. Academic Database

The Academic Database is used to manage and record curriculum approvals. Once the curriculum initiative moves to approval, the following activities occur in Academic Database:

- the faculty inserts approval dates and TRIM record references into the Academic Database record
- the faculty submits all associated curriculum outlines into the electronic workflow

Further detail on these processes is available in the Academic Database user manuals for Unit Outlines and Courses & Study Areas.

6.5. Committee Submissions

Faculties write covering submissions for approval at either faculty academic board or University Academic Board. The covering submission provides the committee with a clear indication of the items requiring approval, an executive summary of the curriculum initiative, and a discussion of the consultation process undertaken and any outstanding issues.

For proposals for course accreditation or reaccreditation, it is recommended that the submission to University Academic Board include the Academic Plan, the curriculum map and the course outline(s). It is recommended that all other components of the Curriculum Proposal be provided to members as ‘additional papers’, through an appropriate online space (e.g. the Governance and Legal Services website).
7. Implementation

Once the curriculum initiative has been approved, the faculty is responsible for ensuring that all outstanding academic, administrative, and delivery details are finalised before the course, study area or unit is offered. Where relevant, the implementation can be monitored using the Implementation Plan.

- **Academic implementation**: Ongoing development of teaching materials, associated Study Areas B and additional unit information may occur after approval.
- **Administrative implementation**: Any outstanding administrative arrangements need to be put in place before the course, study area or unit is offered.
- **Records Management** is used to ensure that the approved curriculum proposals are recorded in QUT electronic records management system (TRIM) and on the Academic Database record.
- **Delivery**: Any outstanding delivery arrangements need to be put in place before the course, study area or unit is offered.

7.1. Academic Implementation

It is expected that, in the cases of new courses or major revisions, some aspects of the curriculum design will continue throughout the implementation of the course. The development of teaching materials and additional unit information for later-years units, for example, may not take place until closer to the actual delivery of the units. In some cases, revision to approved unit outlines may be necessary in response to minor course review or changing industry conditions. Such revisions should be approved through established faculty procedures.

7.2. Administrative Implementation

Immediately following approval, a number of actions need to occur:

*Student and Corporate Systems*

*Courses and Study Areas:*

**Academic Database:**
- Following faculty academic board endorsement/approval, the faculty notes the approval date in the associated curriculum outlines (courses and study areas only), makes other updates as required and either approves the record, or moves it further in the workflow for University Academic Board approval (as appropriate).
- Following University Academic Board approval, the faculty notes the approval date in the associated curriculum outlines (courses and study areas only), makes other updates as required and approves the record.

Following approval, curriculum outlines are displayed to students through QUT Virtual and Studyfinder:
- Unit outlines – displayed automatically on QUT Virtual following approval through Academic Database.
Course/Study Area outlines – appropriate information is displayed on Studyfinder through a manual process

SAMS

– The approval of the Academic Database records provides an automatic email to relevant stakeholders including Student Business Services.
– For new course/study area codes or new versions, Student Business Services (SBS) are responsible for making the relevant records active in the Student and Academic Management System (SAMS) following receipt of the email notification from Academic Database. Faculties are recommended to ensure that the course or study area has been made active, and to contact SBS directly if necessary.
– Where changes do not involve a new version (e.g. substitution of units within a course/study area, SBS is responsible for making these changes on the active version on SAMS, and the faculty is responsible for ensuring that these changes are made.

Studyfinder:
– Faculties are responsible for entering course and study area information into Studyfinder.

Units:

Academic Database:
– Faculties ensure that any final changes have been made to the Academic Database record, and the record is approved in Academic Database.

SAMS:
– For all new or changed units, SBS is responsible for making changes on active units or making new units or new versions active, based on the automatic notification from Academic Database.
– The faculty is responsible for ensuring that this occurs, and that the information held in Academic Database is the same as that in the Student and Academic Management System.

QUT Virtual:
– All unit outlines are automatically transferred to QUT Virtual for display to students once they are approved in Academic Database.
– Approved unit outlines are transferred hourly during business hours.
– Unit outlines will only display on QUT Virtual provided the unit is active in SAMS and has an active availability for the relevant semester and year.

Blackboard:
– Unit coordinators use QUT Blackboard (a web-based Learning Management System) to provide students with additional information about the unit including relevant learning materials.

Deadlines for offering

Courses, study area and units need to be made active on SAMS by the deadlines for reporting to the Department of Education, Employment and Workplace Relations (DEEWR) before they can be offered in the following period. Deadlines are
For offering in Jan – June – reporting is 1 April, final deadline for SAMS is 3rd week of March

For offering in July – Dec – reporting is 1 October, final deadline for SAMS is 3rd week of September.

CRICOS Registration

Each new course that QUT offers as an onshore full-time internal course available to international students must be registered on the Commonwealth Register of Institutions and Courses for Overseas Students (CRICOS) and be provided with a CRICOS code. In some cases, restructured courses may need to be re-registered on CRICOS. Student Business Services (SBS) identifies any courses which need to be added to the Register as part of the consultation process with faculties and is responsible for submitting the application. Faculties also have a responsibility to ensure that they have consulted with SBS and that a CRICOS registration has been submitted where required.

Advertising

Domestic students: A new course may be advertised for the domestic market as ‘subject to final approval’ at any time prior to the final approval by University Academic Board. Before advertising a course, faculties must be able to confidently specify the award title, broad structure, market orientation, and mode of offering. Before a course is advertised, a Curriculum Concept Plan should have been posted to the Curriculum Bulletin Board, and a ‘planned’ record entered into the student and academic management system (SAMS).

International students: For the international market, in accordance with the Education Services for Overseas Students (ESOS 2000 Act), a new course may not be advertised offshore until it has received full approval by University Academic Board and has been recognised on the Commonwealth Register of Institutions and Courses for Overseas Students (CRICOS).

Transnational courses: A transnational award course cannot be advertised or offered transnationally by any party until approval by the Vice-Chancellor has been given.

7.3. Records Management

QUT’s electronic record keeping system (TRIM) is use to hold all relevant documentation relating to the curriculum development and approval.

- When a new course or study area is set to ‘planned’ in the Student and Academic Management System (SAMS), an associated curriculum folder is automatically created in TRIM, QUT’s electronic record keeping system.
- Faculties are responsible for submitting the Curriculum Proposal and any other relevant documents (including confirmed minute extracts from FAB) to the course folder in TRIM.
- Governance and Legal Services will add a UAB minute extract to the course approval folder, following confirmation of the minutes (at the following meeting).
- For detailed information on TRIM and curriculum development and approval record-keeping, please refer to the guidelines here.
7.4. Delivery

A number of aspects relating to delivery may need to be finalised following approval. Faculties continue to liaise with the Division of Technology, Information and Learning Support to ensure that the following details are finalised before the curriculum is offered:

- new print and electronic resources required for a new discipline area (QUT Library)
- strategies to embed information literacy into unit or courses (QUT Library)
- advice on the use of IT services (ITS)
- new or changed delivery modes requiring audiovisual or media support (Integrated Help Services)
- off-campus delivery requiring remote access to QUT electronic resources (ITS/QUT Library)

8. Monitoring

Curriculum design and renewal is a cycle that continues throughout the life of a course. This involves a continual flow of evidence on the appropriateness and effectiveness of the curriculum, both from the perspective of individual students and for the course as a whole. QUT uses the following strategies to monitor and evaluate its curriculum to inform changes that are designed to improve student learning:

- the course quality assurance system (see C/4.6);
- student evaluation of units (see C/4.5 and C/4.7);
- standardised monitoring and intervention processes for student engagement in the first year;
- use of assessment items early in the course or semester to provide evidence of student progress and engagement (see C/5.1).

Course Analytic Profiles

The first activity in the course quality assurance cycle following the approval of a new or changed course will normally be the Course Analytic Profile (CAP) (see C/4.6). The primary purpose of the CAP is to prompt an annual check of each course’s performance.

Following any course change, the CAP should include

- consideration of whether or not the course is delivering the expected learning outcomes, and meeting market needs identified during the Curriculum Development and Approval Process.

Full details of the activities relating to ongoing monitoring of curriculum are provided in the Protocols: Course Quality Assurance.

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1 formerly known as Individual Course Reports