



THE UNIVERSITY OF
NOTRE DAME
A U S T R A L I A

POLICY:

**HIGHER EDUCATION COURSE APPROVAL, AMENDMENT, MONITORING, REVIEW,
RE-ACCREDITATION AND DISCONTINUATION**

Purpose: Sets out the University's approach to course approval, amendment, monitoring, review, re-accreditation and discontinuation.

Location of Policy The policy is maintained on the National Drive.

Responsible Executive: PVC (Academic)

Responsible Office: Academic Registrar

Contact Officer: Academic Registrar

Effective Date: 16 March 2015

Review Date March 2018

Modification History: Created: 24 November 2014; replaces Policy: Course Management (January 2010) and Policy: Course Reviews (June 2009)

Related Procedures: Procedure: Higher Education Course Approval, Amendment and Discontinuation;
Procedure: Higher Education Course Monitoring, Review and Re-accreditation

Authority: Endorsed by Academic Council: 24/11/2014. Approved by Vice Chancellor: 12/03/2015.

1	Purpose	3
2	Definitions	3
3	Scope	4
4	Exclusions	4
5	Principles	4
6	Roles and Responsibilities.....	5
7	Supporting Procedures	8

1 Purpose

- 1.1 The University of Notre Dame Australia (**University**) is committed to systematic and rigorous processes for the approval, amendment, review, re-accreditation and discontinuation of courses that support alignment with the University's objectives, uphold academic standards and quality and ensure ongoing relevance and viability.
- 1.2 This Policy outlines principles for the approval, amendment, review, re-accreditation and discontinuation of courses and clarifies the responsibilities and accountabilities of staff in these processes.

2 Definitions

For the purposes of this Policy, the following definitions apply:

Academic Council means the Academic Council established in accordance with the University Statutes.

AQF means the Australian Qualifications Framework

Certificate has the same meaning as given in the University's General Regulations.

Course has the same meaning as given in the University's General Regulations.

Courses with a major research component mean a course of study that involves conduct of research leading to a thesis/dissertation which is a major component of the overall course requirements (that is comprising two thirds or more of the student load). Examples include Masters by Research; Master of Philosophy; Doctor of Philosophy; and Professional Doctoral Degrees.

Coursework courses accredited by the University comprise: undergraduate and postgraduate courses leading to a single award; combined degree courses leading to a single award; double degree courses leading to two separate awards; and nested award courses that provide articulated pathways from qualifications at lower AQF level 5 and above to those at higher AQF levels.

Degree has the same meaning as given in the University's General Regulations.

Diploma has the same meaning as given in the University's General Regulations.

Discontinuation means a course that is closed for intake of commencing students, but may have continuing student enrolments until those students are either transitioned to another course or they complete the course in accordance with approved transition arrangements.

Executive Council means the Executive Council established as a standing committee by the University Statutes.

Non-award courses are courses offered by the University that do not lead to a recognised AQF qualification and include Foundation Year courses, Tertiary Enabling Programs and University Certificates.

Relevant Deans means each Dean with responsibility for either (a) the school delivering the course; or (b) another school with similar courses and discipline areas; or (c) the Directors, Academic Enabling and Support Centre (AESC) in the case of non-award courses delivered by the AESC.

UCAC means the Unit and Course Accreditation Committee of the University.

USRO means the University Statistics and Reporting Office.

3 Scope

This policy applies to all courses.

4 Exclusions

Vocational Education and Training qualifications and units of competency.

5 Principles

5.1 Course approval and review processes verify that:

5.1.1 the design of courses and curriculum align with and advance the Objects and Strategic Goals of the University and meet the needs of employers and the wider community.

5.1.2 courses are designed to ensure equivalency of outcomes and standards for students, irrespective of study location or mode of attendance.

5.1.3 course requirements, including entry criteria, expected learning outcomes, course structure and other award requirements:

5.1.3.1 align with the appropriate AQF specifications for the level and qualification type of the award;

5.1.3.2 meet the applicable standards within the Higher Education Standards Framework;

- 5.1.3.3 comply with any relevant requirements for professional accreditation or recognition; and
- 5.1.3.4 are comparable to those for similar courses in the discipline or field of study.
- 5.1.4 there are appropriate arrangements in place to manage and quality assure all aspects of the arrangement and to protect the academic integrity of the course where course delivery involves an external third party.
- 5.2 Course and award requirements will be documented in Course Regulations that specify the minimum requirements for completion of an award. In the case of awards with a major research component and no coursework, requirements are documented in the relevant Degree Regulations.
- 5.3 Non-award courses will comprise a structured sequence of units and shall be approved by Academic Council subject to verification that the course will meet, and continue to meet, relevant academic standards and educational requirements.
- 5.4 Coursework awards shall be monitored on an annual basis, and subject to external review and/or professional accreditation on a cyclical basis to identify and respond to issues affecting academic quality, student experiences, and ongoing viability and relevance.
- 5.5 Amendments to coursework awards will be subject to an approval process that takes into account implications for academic and resourcing arrangements.
- 5.6 Courses shall be re-accredited each five years and re-accreditation decisions shall take into account formal review outcomes.
- 5.7 Course discontinuation shall be undertaken in such a way as to minimise disadvantage to students and manage risk to the University's reputation and achievement of its Objects.

6 Roles and Responsibilities

6.1 *Academic Council*

In accordance with Statute 35.9:

- (a) approves: academic content and standards of courses; re-accreditation of courses; major changes to existing courses relating to academic content and standards; and

the Terms of Reference, timing and scope of course reviews and refers decisions to the Vice Chancellor for noting.

(b) recommends: to the Vice Chancellor for approval courses not to be re-accredited.

6.2 **Relevant Deans**

(a) endorse:

- annual course reports for submission to UCAC;
- the self-review process for course reviews of coursework courses;
- formal responses to course review recommendations

(b) report on main outcomes of review processes to the PVC, Academic (or delegate) when review recommendations have been addressed

(c) ensure that:

- coursework courses are managed in accordance with appropriate regulatory and policy requirements;
- documentation supporting proposals to UCAC and Academic Council are complete and accurate and have been developed with relevant external industry/professional input.

6.3 **Executive Council** considers and makes recommendations to the Vice Chancellor on:

- the strategic alignment, relevance, long-term sustainability and viability of proposed new courses and of proposed major changes to existing courses
- proposals for course discontinuance, taking into account proposed transition arrangements.

6.4 **Unit and Course Accreditation Committee (UCAC)**

(a) recommends to Academic Council: new courses; changes to new courses, re-accreditation of courses, the Terms of Reference, timing and scope of course reviews;

(b) reviews and endorses detailed transition plans to ensure that teach-out arrangements are appropriate and minimise disadvantage to students for courses that are to be discontinued.

6.5 **Pro Vice Chancellor, Academic (PVC Academic)**

(a) endorses Terms of Reference, scope and process for course reviews;

(b) monitors the quality and performance of courses and makes recommendations to Deans and/or Academic Council and/or the Vice Chancellor on actions for improvement;

(c) provides a summary of outcomes and advice that course review processes have been concluded to Academic Council.

6.6 **Pro Vice Chancellor, Research (PVC Research)**

(a) monitors the quality and performance of courses with a major research component and makes recommendations on actions for improvement;

(b) endorses Terms of Reference, scope and process for reviews of courses with a major research component.

6.7 Office of Quality Management and Academic Development (QMAD)

- (a) provides:
- a high level summary of the outcomes of annual course monitoring to the PVC Academic (or delegate);
 - in consultation with the URSO, data on course performance to schools to support course monitoring and course review processes
- (b) advises Deans and Associate Deans (Teaching and Learning) (or equivalent) of the timeline and requirements for annual course monitoring and reporting, including grouping of courses;
- (c) develops and maintains a schedule of course reviews in consultation with the Academic Registrar (or nominee) and presents this for endorsement and updating each year to Academic Council;
- (d) manages feedback on course review processes and reports the outcomes to Academic Council; and makes recommendations to Academic Council about any changes to the course review process.

6.8 Research Directors

- (a) ensure that:
- courses with a major research component are managed in accordance with appropriate regulatory and policy requirements;
 - documentation supporting proposals to the Research Degrees and Scholarships Committee and Academic Council are complete and accurate and have been developed with relevant external input;
- (b) endorse:
- annual course reports relating to courses with a major research component for submission to UCAC;
 - the self-review process for course reviews of courses with a major research component;
- (c) prepare formal responses to course review recommendations relating to courses with a major research component;
- (d) report on main outcomes of review processes to the PVC Academic (or delegate) when review recommendations have been addressed.

6.9 Academic Registrar

- (a) endorses minor course amendments prior to implementation;
- (b) receives forms and associated paperwork for course approval, course amendment and course discontinuation and ensures that these are complete and are considered in accordance with procedure;
- (c) determines (in consultation with the PVC, Academic) if a business case is required to support proposed major changes

- (d) maintains a formal record of all minor course amendments and presents an annual report of the amendments to Academic Council;
- (e) supports course discontinuation by ensuring variation to enrolments and course offers are made, and that course information and marketing materials are updated as necessary.

7 Supporting Procedures

Procedure: Higher Education Course Approval, Amendment and Discontinuation

Procedure: Higher Education Course Monitoring, Review and Re-Accreditation

8 Related Policies

Policy: Double and Combined Degrees

Policy: Nested Awards

Policy: The Award of a Degree with Honours