
Course Development Policy and Procedure

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1.0 Purpose

This policy and procedure describes the process by which Engineering Institute of Technology (EIT) higher education courses are developed and approved. It also outlines the process that EIT uses to assure itself and its stakeholders that when a new course is proposed, it forms a worthwhile addition to EIT's portfolio of courses, advances EIT's mission, is consistent with EIT's Strategic and Academic Planning and is justified in terms of meeting the needs of employers.

2.0 Scope

This document details the processes for the initial development of a new course. It does not detail the processes for ongoing course review within an accredited timeframe. It outlines:

- The planning and development of a new course or suite of new courses
- Approval of a new course or suite of new courses
- Seven year course reviews for the purpose of seeking renewal of accreditation for existing courses from various regulatory authorities and institutions/societies.

3.0 Objectives

These processes are also designed to assure EIT and its stakeholders that its course offerings:

- Advance EIT's mission and goals, and meets the needs of employers;
- Are consistent with the Strategic Plan and Teaching and Learning Policy and Plan;
- Are supported by resources which are conducive to the offering of quality courses;

- Are likely to produce graduates who are equipped with knowledge and skills which will allow them to gain or sustain high quality jobs, be of value to the community and which promote lifelong learning;
- Are planned with advice from relevant internal and external experts, are consistent with EIT policy, draw on the curriculum resources already available within EIT where applicable or take account of required new resources, take account of current best practice in the area, are job or career focussed, and are aligned to the needs of industry and the professions.

4.0 Implementation

Course Proposal

New higher education courses for development require a Course Proposal, which documents the strategic and business case for the new course, including high level market research. The Course Proposal provides an outline of the proposed course structure, requirements and content with supporting rationale, including initial information required by TEQSA as depicted in the *'Application Guide for Registered Higher Education Providers: Course Accreditation and Renewal of Course Accreditation'*. The Course Proposal must also take account of EIT's *Teaching and Learning Policy* and either ensure that it meets the requirements of EIT's *Teaching and Learning Plan* or amend the Plan if necessary. The market research data and recommendations must also be included, taking account of the typical minimum number for a course, being 20 for the initial cohort.

The Dean is responsible for initiating and authorising the Course Proposal to proceed through the academic committee approval process, or may be directed by the Academic Board to prepare a Course Proposal. The Dean may seek assistance and advice from the Deputy Dean, Business Development Manager and/or the Board of Studies.

The finalised Course Proposal is submitted to the Academic Board which will respond with decisions, this may include:

- Approval for course development to proceed;
- Approval for course development to proceed subject to the development of a business plan and/or further considerations of resources and/or further consultation with other support areas;
- Approval for course development to proceed subject to a review of the terms of reference, timeline and the membership of the review team;
- Approval for course development to proceed, subject to more technical details and/or modification of certain course content and structure and resubmission to the Academic Board for formal approval;
- Rejection of proposed course development activities.

In making a decision on whether to proceed with the Course Proposal (possibly with modifications), the Academic Board will have regard for whether the course:

- Will form a worthwhile addition to EIT's academic profile;
- Will advance EIT's Mission;
- Is consistent with EIT's Strategic Plan;

- Will attract economically viable numbers of students over the medium term;
- Demonstrates integrity and would make a strong contribution to a student's career
- Has the resources necessary to support the course development or for which plans are being prepared; and
- Is justified in terms of meeting community needs and the needs of employers.

Course Development Process

After approval by the Academic Board for course development to proceed, the Academic Board becomes the responsible committee for ensuring and maintaining the quality of each course development process. The Academic Board may delegate these responsibilities by appointing an ad hoc Course Advisory Committee (CAC) to develop the course.

The Deputy Dean is responsible for ensuring that relevant academic staff are given the opportunity to provide input into the course development process, as required, and that some academic staff may form part of the CAC membership. The CAC, in consultation with the Deputy Dean, will ensure that methodologies are put in place which:

- Provide for appropriate academic input from all relevant areas of EIT: from students and graduates, where relevant; and from external stakeholders;
- Ensure a relatively equal mix of both academics and independent industry members (non-faculty).
- Address and meet the requirements of the applicable Standards of the *Higher Education Standards Framework*, the *Australian Qualifications Framework (AQF)* and other external accreditation requirements, where relevant;
- Address the Course Review Criteria provided in the *Course Review and Quality Assurance Procedure, Appendix 1*;
- Provide for key support service and administrative areas to contribute to the course development project, where applicable;
- Ensures that EIT's strategic priorities are given due consideration in areas such as graduate attributes, evidence-based learning, internationalisation, and work integrated learning where relevant;
- Ensures that resource implications are addressed in parallel with academic developments;
- Ensures that the course can be presented in both a classroom and online environment, especially with regard to the use of virtual and remote labs and the potential remote location of some students and lecturers. In particular, avoiding high risk safety education and training which would require a physical presence of both equipment, students and lecturers;
- Includes a project timetable with specified milestones and deliverables, including documentation required for the approval process and the preparation for implementing the new course or course changes;
- Ensures the course can be implemented according to the planned timeframe.

Independent and acknowledged industry and academic leaders in their field may be drawn on to provide critiques and reviews of the work conducted by the CAC, particularly if there are minimum numbers of external members on the CAC.

The CAC will need to demonstrate that it has acted on feedback from the external reviewers in the final review of the course structure and content. Any substantial deviation in the commentary of independent experts from the work of the CAC must be included in their report to the Academic Board, together with advice on whether the external reviewer's comments have been included. The CAC must justify their reasons for not including external reviewer's comments.

Course Design & Documentation

The design for each course of study is specified in the Course Proposal which should form the basis of detailed documentation as part of the course development process including: the course structure; requirements and content with supporting rationale; unit outlines detailing learning outcomes, assessment tasks and resourcing; information needed to be conveyed to students.

The Course Proposal documentation must meet the standards of the regulatory authority, the Tertiary Education Quality and Standards Agency (TEQSA), and other engineering societies/institutions and regulators throughout the world.

Committee Approval

Progress reports will be prepared for the Academic Board for their consideration and approval. The Academic Board may direct the CAC to consider changes to the course, and take action to implement those changes. The CAC is at liberty to discuss the proposed changes with the Academic Board and provide a rationale for not implementing suggested changes. The Academic Board will have the final decision on implementation of changes and may at this late stage still put in specific desired modification which will be advised to the CAC to their assent.

Final approval of a course will only be given by the Academic Board when:

- the course meets the applicable Standards of the *Higher Education Standards Framework*, the *Australian Qualifications Framework (AQF)* and other external accreditation requirements, where relevant.
- the decision to approve a course of study is informed by overarching academic scrutiny of the course of study that is competent to assess the design, delivery and assessment of the course of study independently of the staff directly involved in those aspects of the course, and
- the resources required to deliver the course as approved will be available when needed.

The Governance Board does not review the details of any proposed higher education course unless they specifically request to do so. They however do discuss, modify and sign off on a regularly tabled Business Plan update - specifically on the Project Plan (and budget) outlining new courses, applications (such as accreditation) and general projects (e.g. IT upgrades). This is mainly from the perspective of the overall financial health of the college. The project plan (and associated budget) typically has a detailed future horizon of two years.

External Course Approval

Courses are accredited externally by the accrediting authority, TEQSA; normally for a period of up to seven years. However, a shorter course accreditation period may be approved by TEQSA.

Where a course is part of a set of nested courses, each course is accredited for the same period as the longest course in the set. A review date for each course will be set to allow sufficient time to submit a course accreditation renewal application to TEQSA within the required timeframes.

Consequential Changes

Course changes required by TEQSA, may generate consequential changes for other courses, such as for nested courses. In this situation, the Deputy Dean ensures that the consequential changes are prepared and submitted to the Academic Board for approval and implementation.

Course Accreditation Renewal

All higher education courses are subject to periodic review at least once in every seven-year period for the purpose of continuous improvement, benchmarking, and the regulatory requirements of renewal of course accreditation.

Course accreditation renewal will take account of the relevant appendices of the Course Review and Quality Assurance Procedure, which provides details of the processes and timelines.

5.0 Definitions

Course: A single course leading to an Australian higher education award.

Graduate attributes: Transferable, non-discipline specific skills that a graduate may achieve through learning that have application in study, work and life contexts.

Learning outcomes: The expression of the set of knowledge, skills and the application of the knowledge and skills a person has acquired and is able to demonstrate as a result of learning.

Unit: A discrete unit of study where a combination of units make up a course of study.

6.0 Related policies and procedures

The following policies and procedures are related to this policy:

- Course Review and Quality Assurance Policy
- Course Review and Quality Assurance Procedure
- Teaching and Learning Policy
- Teaching and Learning Plan
- Benchmarking Policy
- Academic Board Terms of Reference
- Board of Studies Terms of Reference
- Course Advisory Committee Terms of Reference

7.0 Accountabilities

The Academic Board is responsible for review and approval of this policy.

The policy is to be implemented via induction and training of staff and distribution to students and EIT's community via the website and other publications.