EIT Course Review and Quality Assurance Policy

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Definitions:

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.

Subject: A discrete unit of study and a combination of subjects that make up a course of study.

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

Purpose: This policy provides a framework for the Engineering Institute of Technology (EIT) to conduct academic reviews of its higher education courses, which is transparent for all stakeholders. The process involves linking intention and design, implementation, outcomes (which are reviewed) and improvement.

The purpose is to:

- ensure that courses are reviewed systematically for continuous improvement
- provide quality assurance based on coherent improvement processes integrating key elements of teaching and learning to achieve outcomes
- build upon and align with other academic policies and procedures to achieve key objectives identified by the Institute.
Benchmarking with comparable courses nationally and/or internationally will also be used to inform academic review.

**Scope:**

This policy is relevant for EIT academic and administration staff as well as external stakeholders involved in both the creation of academic programs and quality assurance. It applies to all higher education courses, campuses and members of the EIT’s higher education community, the general community, industry and the professions.

Subjects within nested courses will be reviewed together as one subject, taking into account the objectives for each course and their individual learning outcomes. Key activities that form part of this review process are to collect data on student learning, provide interpretation of that data, and indicate emerging trends according to key indicators of student performance.

This policy does not focus on the teaching capacity of individual teachers within the course.

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

**Essential Supporting Documents:**

**Related Documents:**
- EIT Course Review and Quality Assurance Procedure
- EIT Course Review Implementation Plan
- Benchmarking Policy
- General Unit Policy
- Course and Unit Amendment Policy
- Course and Unit Discontinuation Policy
- Assessment Policy
- Assessment – A Code of Practice
- Moderation Policy
- Student Learning and Feedback Assessment Policy
- Teaching and Learning Resources Policy - Development and Review
- Information Literacy and Resource Access Policy

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1. **INTRODUCTION**

The overarching objective of the EIT is to offer higher education courses that are coherent, integrated, and enable students to achieve the requisite outcomes appropriate to the course aims. Ongoing responsibility for program quality will be embedded in management practice.

Systematic review and external re-accreditation provide an opportunity for continuous program improvement that will incorporate input from all major stakeholder groups. Academic offerings will be reviewed in terms of relevance, demand, quality and deliverability. Courses and units may also come under review due to requests or feedback received from lecturers, students and/or administrative staff.
The key objectives of the course review process are:

a. **Relevance of courses**
   This relates to the course reputation as viewed by key stakeholders and to the meaningful contribution that its graduates can make to their profession and to society. It is reflected in the alignment of course content and outcomes to labour market priorities and those areas identified by Government and industry partners as being high priority.

b. **Viability of courses**
   This refers to its cost effectiveness and sustainability. It also reflects the demand for the course, how well students progress through the course, and the return on investment from the course offering.

2. **ACCOUNTABILITY WITH REGARD TO THE QUALITY OF EIT COURSES**

The Dean of Engineering is accountable for the quality of program-related processes and practices of the EIT reflected in program design, delivery, assessment and management. The Course Advisory Development Committee and the Teaching and Learning Committee of the Academic Board will provide assistance to the Dean in the work planning process. The EIT’s course management and reporting arrangements will:

- ensure achievement of consistent and high standard learning outcomes and assessments for the course in an on-line delivery mode environment
- ensure quality assurance is embedded in the EIT management processes
- develop graduate capabilities and competencies identified as important to stakeholder groups and that meet accreditation standards
- relate capability and competency development to learning outcomes and activities
- measure capability and competency development and learning outcomes through valid and reliable assessment strategies.
- provide resources that support students’ learning to achieve learning outcomes
- ensure effective, efficient and appropriately documented course management.

3. **MEASURING ACCOMPLISHMENT OF GRADUATE ATTRIBUTES AGAINST KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATORS**

The criteria to measure and evaluate program performance will be consistent and vigorous. Program quality will be reflected in program design, delivery, assessment and management to:

- ensure consistent and high standard learning outcomes and assessments for the on-line mode of delivery
- develop the graduate capabilities and competencies identified as important by stakeholder groups
- relate capability and competency development to learning outcomes and activities
- measure capability and competency development and learning outcomes through valid and reliable assessment strategies.

The relevant Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) as set out in EIT’s Strategic Plan will be integrated into the EIT’s profile planning processes and measured against the EIT’s
generic graduate attributes and those that are specific to higher education courses of study that the EIT is authorised to offer, as specified in Appendix 4 of the EIT Course Review and Quality Assurance Procedure document.

The underlying principles in achieving course review objectives are that processes are to be:

1. Evidence based
2. Efficient (particularly in its use of staff time)
3. Rigorous
4. Transparent
5. Objective
6. Inclusive of staff at all levels

4. APPROVAL AND IMPLEMENTATION OF REVIEW OUTCOMES

4.1 Course and subject approval
The following provides an overview of the types of course approval processes:

1. All new higher education courses are subject to approval (strategic and business case) by the Academic Board and the external accrediting authority.
2. Any proposal to make a major change to higher education course structure, content or delivery requires a course change proposal to be approved by the Academic Board and the external accrediting authority.
3. Minor changes to courses and subjects that constitute continuous improvement, whilst maintaining coherency of the course, only requires internal approval by the Academic Board.

The EIT will implement regular review processes across the key areas listed under the objectives of this policy. A variety of academic review mechanisms are available to the EIT such as:

- internal partial course and subject review
- external full course review
- external audit/assessment/accreditation
- professional accreditation.

4.2 Frequency
Course reviews will be conducted regularly at the completion of each cohort, at least every two years for Masters and every year for Graduate Diploma. A complete course review is also required every 5 years for renewal of accreditation by the external accrediting authority.

Subject reviews will be conducted at the end of every six months for the first cohort term. After that, subjects will be reviewed at a minimum of once during the duration of the course. Subjects will also be reviewed every 5 years for renewal of accreditation by the external accrediting authority, as part of the course review process.

4.3 Types of Review

**Internal Review:**
A range of data will be collected from internal sources that will contribute to the academic review process. Data will be sourced from information held by the Institute such as enrolment data and assessment data, together with feedback collected from students via surveys and other mechanisms, and feedback from staff via meetings or other mechanisms.

This data will be analysed individually and collectively, and combined with data obtained
from external stakeholders, when appropriate, and reported to the relevant academic committee for consideration.

External Review – ongoing course review:
Data will be collected from potential employers and industry professionals, seeking their feedback on subjects and courses via a variety of collection methods.

Benchmarking activities:
These will also be conducted with partnering institutions and outcomes used to inform curriculum review. (Refer to the Benchmarking Policy for further details of the process and activities.)

External Review – accreditation:
All non self-accrediting institutions wishing to offer higher education courses in Australia are subject to external assessment for registration of the organisation and accreditation of its higher education courses by the Tertiary Education and Quality Standards Agency (TEQSA). Renewal of approval occurs every five years as a general rule, but the interval may be altered by TEQSA. Any proposal to make a major change to an approved higher education course structure, content or delivery, which constitutes a ‘material change’ requires a course change proposal to be approved by the Academic Board and the external accrediting authority.

The Academic Board shall have regard for the nature and extent of the changes recommended, and if deemed to be major changes requiring approval by TEQSA, then a submission shall be prepared to seek approval from TEQSA before implementing the changes. Otherwise, the Academic Board makes the final approval decision on all changes to its higher education courses.

Professional Accreditation:
The EIT’s higher education courses are not required to be accredited by a professional agency as they are postgraduate courses. Students usually have already completed an undergraduate degree, which enables professional registration and is recognised for work in the Engineering profession.

4.4 Implementation of Review Outcomes
The following academic committees and personnel are responsible for implementing changes to curriculum that have been approved as a result of an academic review process.

a. The Academic Board is responsible for receiving, reviewing and approving changes to individual subjects and courses overall.

b. The Course Advisory Committee is responsible for receiving recommendations arising from feedback collected from stakeholders and making recommendations for change to the Academic Board for approval.

c. The Dean of Engineering has overarching responsibility for implementing approved changes to subjects and the course and reporting outcomes to the Academic Board.

d. Course and Subject Coordinators are responsible for implementing and monitoring relevant changes made to subjects and courses under their responsibility and reporting outcomes to the Dean, the Course Advisory Committee and the Academic Board.

The Terms of Reference for each of the academic governance committees shall determine the composition of panel members and their responsibilities.