

# Program Management Manual - Coursework

## Section 1 - About this Manual

### Introduction

- (1) This manual supports the [Governance Rule](#), the [Awards and Graduation Policy](#) and their associated Schedules. In the event of an inconsistency between lower-level policy documents and a Rule(s) or Schedule to the Rule(s), the Rule(s) made by Council prevails to the extent of the inconsistency.
- (2) This manual has been developed in accordance with the [Awards and Graduation Policy](#) and its relevant schedules.
- (3) For information on courses, including designing, managing, and reviewing courses offered by the University, please refer to the [Course Management and Assessment Manual](#).
- (4) For information on admission at the University please refer to the [Admissions Manual - Coursework and Enabling Programs](#).
- (5) For information on enrolment at the University please refer to the [Enrolment Manual](#).
- (6) This manual will be revised annually and published on the University website. The manual remains in effect for the calendar year (January to December) and may be changed in that year if there are changes to external legislation or urgent amendments approved by the President Academic Senate.
- (7) For assistance or further information about the manual, please email [academicpolicy@newcastle.edu.au](mailto:academicpolicy@newcastle.edu.au).

### Purpose

- (8) This manual is designed to provide clear and concise directions for the staff of the University of Newcastle (University) when designing, managing, and reviewing programs, and when recommending the introduction or discontinuation of coursework programs offered by the University.
- (9) The manual is also available as information for students and community members.

### Scope

- (10) This manual applies to coursework programs and awards created and offered by the University including:
- a. enabling programs;
  - b. undergraduate and postgraduate coursework programs; and
  - c. coursework programs offered by the University to students studying in Australia and offshore, including those which students enrol through a partner institution.
- (11) This manual applies to the Joint Medical Program (JMP). In the event of an inconsistency between the manual and the policies and procedures specific to the JMP, then the policies and procedures of the JMP prevail to the extent of the inconsistency.

(12) This Manual makes references to College structures and positions. Equivalent structures and positions may exist in Pathways and Academic Learning Support Centre and are referenced where relevant.

## Section 2 - Programs Policy

### Part A - General Principles

(13) The following guiding principles should be met for all programs offered by the University:

- a. a broad range of coursework programs will be available to meet the needs of our students and the community;
- b. program structures will be clearly defined and outlined in the Schedules to the [Awards and Graduation Policy](#);
- c. there will be equitable access to all programs, and policies and procedures will encourage students to utilise learning support;
- d. demonstrable learning outcomes will be associated with all coursework programs;
- e. there is a commitment to the delivery of engaged learning opportunities in all coursework programs;
- f. academic pathways shall maximise the credit students can gain for learning already undertaken;
- g. a robust system of quality assurance will ensure the academic integrity and viability of all programs;
- h. systems will be in place to support student progression;
- i. transparent and accountable processes for amendment, review and disestablishment of programs will exist;
- j. coursework program offerings and the strategic goals of the University will be aligned; and
- k. the nomenclature must reflect the level and content of the program and must conform with the Schedules to the [Awards and Graduation Policy](#) and the [AQF \(Second Edition\)](#) Qualifications Issuance Policy.

(14) Coursework programs must ensure that graduates will:

- a. meet the graduate attributes and the generic skills defined by the College and the University. The graduate attributes and generic skill mapping documentation must be approved by the Program and Course Approval Committee (PCAC) on behalf of Academic Senate; and
- b. have had the opportunity to:
  - i. receive recognition for relevant prior learning;
  - ii. participate in different modes of educational delivery;
  - iii. investigate or research topics both independently and co-operatively; and
  - iv. undertake "engaged learning" opportunities, such as leadership courses, overseas exchange programs or similar, that contribute to their breadth of experience and knowledge.

(15) All non-AQF programs offered by the University must satisfy the following criteria:

- a. a demonstrable industry, professional, community or student need;
- b. a sound educational rationale as the basis for offering the program;
- c. comparability with AQF qualifications - this will be achieved by describing the program requirements using the AQF taxonomy of learning outcomes (knowledge, skills, application of knowledge and skills, and generic learning outcomes);
- d. a clearly defined volume of learning; and
- e. an appropriate title that does not use nomenclature that is already used for an award leading to an AQF qualification.

(16) All programs are required to have a Program Management Group (see [Generic Program Management Group](#)

[Terms of Reference](#)).

(17) Each program or suite of programs (i.e. group of coursework programs from the same discipline or program area) with professional accreditation is required to have an External (Professional or Industry) Advisory Group (see [External \(Professional or Industry\) Advisory Groups Terms of Reference](#)).

(18) The resourcing of programs is the responsibility of the relevant College Pro Vice-Chancellor. Where the program is offered by a third-party provider, the College Pro Vice-Chancellor is responsible for ensuring compliance with the [Third Party Arrangements – Education Policy](#) and its associated procedure where relevant.

(19) Each program is required to have a Program Convenor. A Program Convenor is the academic staff member of the University appointed by the College Pro Vice-Chancellor. The following principles and provisions apply to Program Convenors:

- a. where more than one College is involved in a program (for example, combined programs) the appointment of the Program Convenor should be based on decisions of the relevant College Pro Vice-Chancellors;
- b. where a program is offered on several campuses or in conjunction with a third-party provider the College Pro Vice-Chancellor may appoint Assistant Program Convenors for each campus to assist the Program Convenor;
- c. a Program Convenor will typically be a Level C academic or above;
- d. the usual term of office for a Program Convenor will be two years;
- e. the College Pro Vice-Chancellor may designate an alternate academic staff member to act as Program Convenor in the absence of the appointed Program Convenor; and
- f. the Program Convenor must be appointed at least six weeks before the start of any teaching period.

## **Program Handbook**

(20) The Program Handbook is the official record of program requirements available to students, the community, and the Commonwealth Government.

## **Communication with Students**

(21) The University's primary method of communication with students is by email.

(22) All students are required to check their University student email account frequently.

## **Part B - Program Development**

(23) New programs may be developed in response to the strategic directions of the University, College, or Division, or to meet projected market or student demand.

(24) Any proposed new program must:

- a. comply with the:
  - i. [Australian Qualifications Framework \(AQF\) \(Second Edition\)](#) ;
  - ii. [Higher Education Standards Framework \(Threshold Standards\) 2021](#); and
  - iii. relevant University policies, including the requirements of this manual; or
- b. be an enabling program, a non-award program, or be linked to an existing or new award; and
- c. align with the strategic directions of the University as described in the current [University Strategic Plan](#); and
- d. ensure a breadth of expertise and stakeholder input by the inclusion of external representatives in the program planning team; and
- e. ensure input from other Colleges and Divisions which may be involved in or affected by the introduction of the

new program.

(25) If a new program is being developed to replace an existing program, the existing program must be discontinued. Only continuing students nearing completion can remain in the existing program, with no further (new) intake.

## Part C - Program Approval Policy

(26) The following matters must be considered as part of the program planning process and included in the program documentation for submission to the PCAC for approval:

- a. the rationale for the new program and its relationship to the College and [University Strategic Plan](#), and outlining the time planned to market the program post-approval;
- b. evaluation of the program by industry and/or professional body representatives;
- c. evidence of consultation, or information on consultation undertaken, with accrediting bodies and a timeline of the accreditation process (where relevant);
- d. the Graduate Attribute Mapping of the program (see associated information);
- e. the structure of the program including:
  - i. the sequence of courses;
  - ii. honours;
  - iii. majors/specialisations;
  - iv. core, compulsory and courses on course lists; and
  - v. elective courses;
- f. compulsory program requirements, including any prerequisites. Prerequisites will be approved only where there is an evidence-based requirement such as safety;
- g. the mode(s) of delivery of the program;
- h. frequency of program intake for each target cohort. Undergraduate programs should be designed to allow students to commence at multiple points across the academic year, subject to viability factors;
- i. campuses where the program will be offered;
- j. whether the program and its courses will be offered in semesters, trimesters, or other delivery arrangements;
- k. any proposed articulation and credit transfer arrangements (please also see [Credit and Recognition of Prior Learning Policy](#)); and
- l. admission requirements including any special selection procedures.

(27) The PCAC is responsible for ensuring programs comply with the relevant University policies.

## Graduate Attributes

(28) Our Graduate Attributes inform curricula, co-curricula and extra-curricula activities and guide the development of our students. The 'Graduate Attributes' are a key initiative of the Life-Ready Graduates Pillar in the University of Newcastle's Looking Ahead [Strategic Plan 2020 - 2025](#).

(29) The Graduate Attributes are outlined in Table 1:

**Table 1 - Graduate Attributes**

Graduate Attribute	Description
Culturally Responsive	Our graduates apply their knowledge to provide the best opportunities for all, embracing the benefits of inclusiveness and diversity. They value and honour Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander histories and cultures. Our graduates will embrace culturally affirming environments and respectful relationships across diverse populations in Australia and around the world.

Graduate Attribute	Description
Community Ready	Our graduates understand their role in our regions, communities and society. They are committed to ensuring that they build sustainable local capacity, social equity and connectedness, with a sense of kindness and collective belonging.
Connected Leaders	Our graduates are clear communicators who are connected to their surroundings and understand the interdependence of the medium and the message. They exercise professionalism and ethical judgement to communicate with influence.
Shaped by industry	Our graduates are creative and entrepreneurial, adaptive to career opportunities, resilient and agile in their future-focused thinking for career and life ambitions.
Create solutions	Our graduates are curious critical thinkers and collaborators. They use their ability to analyse situations and data, interpret scenarios, and gather evidence to create solutions for an uncertain world.

(30) All core courses, or a selected subset, in new and revised programs need to be mapped using the approved interim templates (see Section 6 – Appendices). If the core courses do not demonstrate all skills, knowledge, or qualities, compulsory courses may be included in the mapping. The mapping will be from courses to:

- a. AQF qualification descriptors for the relevant level;
- b. Program learning outcomes; and
- c. Generic skills.

(31) The Graduate Attributes will be mapped against the Program Learning Outcomes and the AQF Qualification descriptors for the relevant level.

## Program Marketing

(32) Following the Program and Course Approval Committee (PCAC) approval of the program, preliminary marketing of a new face-to-face program is permitted. This marketing:

- a. is restricted to targeting domestic students and students studying offshore; and
- b. must have appropriate disclaimers.

(33) Marketing of a proposed new program that is associated with an existing award of the same program title and that will be offered both face-to-face onshore and online offshore to international students, should not commence until after the program is approved by the PCAC and CRICOS registration has been obtained.

(34) Marketing of a proposed new program and associated new award title that will be offered both face-to-face onshore and online offshore to international students should not commence until after the program is approved by the PCAC and the new award is established by Academic Senate and CRICOS registration has been obtained.

(35) The professional accreditation of a program will only be promoted following the receipt of written advice from the accrediting authority.

## Part D - Program Structure Policy

(36) All approved coursework programs are listed in the relevant schedule to the [Awards and Graduation Policy](#). The schedules also define the structure and requirements of coursework programs.

(37) An 80 unit undergraduate coursework program will comply with the requirements as set out in the [Diploma Awards and Programs Schedule](#).

(38) A 160 unit undergraduate coursework program will comply with the requirements as set out in the [Associate](#)

## [Degree Awards and Programs Schedule.](#)

(39) A 240 unit undergraduate coursework program will comply with the requirements as set out in the [Bachelor \(240 unit\) Awards and Programs Schedule](#).

(40) A 320 unit undergraduate coursework program will comply with the requirements as set out in the [Bachelor \(320 unit\) Awards and Program Schedule](#).

(41) An 80 unit undergraduate honours program will comply with the requirements as set out in the [Bachelor Honours Degree \(80 unit\) Awards and Program Schedule](#).

(42) A student will not be permitted to count any course towards a program where the course is substantially equivalent to one that the student has previously counted towards the same program.

(43) Variation to the program structure of an undergraduate coursework program may be approved by the PCAC, if the variation is in response to an articulation agreement or external requirements.

(44) The Program Convenor is authorised to approve the substitution of courses within a directed course list, on a case by case basis. Such approvals will be noted on the internal transcript.

(45) The Academic Division General Manager and Academic Registrar (or nominee) is authorised to allow students to count an approved directed course at a higher level for a directed course at a lower level provided the request does not impact on the minimum/maximum level requirements for the program.

(46) Core, compulsory and courses on a course list together contribute to both the graduate and level specific learning outcomes for a program.

## **Majors**

(47) Majors are only available in undergraduate programs. Details of the requirements of a major are outlined in the relevant Awards and Programs Schedule.

(48) A double major consists of two majors taken within a single Bachelor (240 units) or Bachelor (Honours) (320 units) program. Each major must conform to the requirements described in the program documentation. Each major must have 60 unique units.

(49) Only majors approved by the PCAC as part of the program approval process will be included on an official academic transcript. A major will not be included on the testamur.

## **Minors**

(50) Minors are a 40 unit sequence of courses only available in undergraduate programs. Minors must be approved by the PCAC as part of the program approval process.

(51) A minor will not be recorded on the official academic transcript.

## **Specialisations**

(52) Specialisations may only be offered in postgraduate programs.

(53) A specialisation cannot include any undergraduate courses.

(54) The volume of learning required for specialisations within postgraduate programs is outlined in the relevant Awards and Programs Schedules.

(55) Specialisations approved by the PCAC as part of the program approval process will be included on the official academic transcript. A specialisation will not be included on the testamur.

## **Compulsory Program Requirements**

(56) A compulsory program requirement is a course in a program that is:

- a. defined as compulsory in the approved program documentation and included in the Program Handbook entry;
- b. either graded or ungraded;
- c. required to be completed satisfactorily to either progress in the program or satisfy program requirements; and
- d. monitored for the purposes of academic progress.

(57) Failure in or withdrawal from a course set as a compulsory program requirement will result in students being considered under the Student Academic Progress Procedure.

(58) Compulsory program requirements are typically a placement or Work Integrated Learning (WIL) activity. Compulsory program requirements do not include core courses in the program.

## **Combined Programs**

(59) Each combined program will require the approval of a new program by the PCAC.

(60) The two programs to be combined should be at the same AQF level, however, accepted combinations include Level 7/ Level 8, Level 7/ Level 9, Level 8 / Level 9 and Level 9 / Level 10. Other combinations will be considered from time to time as proposed by College Boards along with any requirements such as the graduates having to complete the lower level qualification first to graduate.

(61) The structure of a combined program will require the completion of each separate program component.

(62) The core and minimum requirements for each component program must be met. This includes:

- a. ensuring that the the duration of the combined program is less than the the sum of the two component programs;
- b. ensuring that program accreditation is not compromised; and
- c. completion of no more than 100 units at the 1000 level may contribute to each of the component programs.

(63) The volume of learning of combined programs should be less than the total volume of the two separate programs. For example:

- a. 0.5 + 0.5 year programs (80 units if taken separately), the combined program should normally be 60 units;
- b. 1+1 year programs (160 units if taken separately), the combined program should normally be 120 units;
- c. 2+2 year programs (320 units if taken separately), the combined program should normally be 240 units;
- d. 3+3 year programs (480 units if taken separately), the combined program should normally be 320 units;
- e. 4+3 year programs (560 units if taken separately), the combined program award should normally be 400 units;
- f. 4+4 year programs (640 units if taken separately), the combined program award should normally be 480 units.

(64) If units vary from those described above, the relevant volume of learning information must be provided in published combined program information.

(65) Any courses in the programs that have overlapping content should be assessed ensuring that the:

- a. learning outcomes of the courses and the methods adopted to achieve these objectives are similar;

- b. volume of learning of the courses are similar;
- c. breadth and depth of the material studied in the courses are similar; and
- d. assessments used are in accordance with any relevant University policy on courses and assessment.

(66) Each component program of a combined program must be described in separate program documentation. This means that a student will complete the:

- a. required programs within the combined program and receive a testamur for each of the two degrees, simultaneously; or
- b. requirements for one program and receive the relevant testamur, then continue studying until the requirements of the second component program are met and receive that testamur; or
- c. requirements for one program and not the requirements for the other and receive a testamur for the completed degree and leave the combined program.

## Work Integrated Learning (WIL) and Placements

(67) A placement means a clinical placement, practicum, internship, work integrated learning or any similar form of professional, industrial or vocational experience included in a course or program, in which students are assessed and awarded a grade.

(68) A placement may be off or on campus, real or simulated, but must involve clearly stated outcomes and assessment, and be consistent with quality teaching and learning.

## Outbound Student Mobility Experiences

(69) Details about outbound student mobility experiences can be found in the [Outbound Global Experience Procedure](#).

## Modes and Campus of Offer

(70) Where a program is offered in different modes or campuses the student learning outcomes must be constant across all offerings.

(71) Modes include:

Mode	Description
Face-to-face	Programs are defined as face-to-face where at least two-thirds of the courses within the program are taught face-to-face;
Online	An online program is delivered through online technology and program support is provided through this technology. There is no requirement for a student admitted to such a program to physically attend any form of teaching or learning sessions or face-to-face formal examinations.

(72) Programs offered face-to-face may include a maximum of one-third of courses, including core courses, that are offered exclusively online. Where courses are offered both online and face-to-face, the amount of online may be higher than one-third. Extensive online offerings may result in some majors or specialisations not being available to international onshore students. Any such restrictions must be outlined in the Program Handbook.

(73) The mode of delivery of a coursework program (please refer to [Modes of Delivery for Courses](#)), and the courses within a program, may differ between:

- a. campus of offer:
  - i. the PCAC is responsible for the approval of programs offered at each campus.
- b. academic terms:



- i. all term dates (standard and non-standard) must be approved by the Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Academic) or Pro Vice-Chancellor Education Innovation. Refer also to the [Academic Calendar Approval Procedure](#).
- c. third party providers:
  - i. please refer to the [Third Party Arrangements – Education Policy](#) and its associated procedure.

## Maximum Time for Completion

(74) The maximum time for completing each program is detailed in the [Maximum Time for Completion of Programs Schedule](#).

(75) The PCAC may approve exceptions to the maximum time for completion to set a lesser maximum time for a new or existing program, as required for accreditation.

(76) International students who hold an Australian student visa are required to complete a program within the 'expected duration of their Confirmation of Enrolment', which is the minimum duration specified. Exceptions to this may be approved subject to approved compassionate or compelling circumstances, or an intervention plan.

(77) Compassionate or compelling circumstances are generally those beyond the control of the overseas student and which have an impact upon the overseas student's course progress or wellbeing. These could include, but are not limited to:

- a. serious illness or injury, where a medical certificate states that the overseas student was unable to attend classes;
- b. bereavement of close family members such as parents or grandparents (where possible a death certificate should be provided);
- c. major political upheaval or natural disaster in the home country requiring emergency travel and this has impacted on the overseas student's studies; or
- d. a traumatic experience, which could include:
  - i. involvement in, or witnessing of a serious accident; or
  - ii. witnessing or being the victim of a serious crime, and this has impacted on the overseas student (these cases should be supported by police or psychologists' reports);
- e. where the registered provider was unable to offer a pre-requisite unit, or the overseas student has failed a prerequisite unit and therefore faces a shortage of relevant units for which they are eligible to enrol.

(78) These are only some examples of what may be considered compassionate or compelling circumstances. The University will assess each case on its individual merits by considering documentary evidence to support the claim and keeping copies of these documents in the student's file.

## Part E - Program Monitoring, Review and Improvement

(79) All programs are subject to periodic (at least every seven years) comprehensive review and regular interim monitoring in accordance with the [Education Quality Assurance Policy](#) and its procedures.

(80) For Quality Assurance of Programs and Courses refer to the [Education Quality Assurance Policy](#).

## Part F - Program Completion Policy

(81) All coursework students are expected to maintain an acceptable standard of academic progress in each term. The University must monitor student academic progress to appropriately support those students who are at risk of not maintaining acceptable progress.

(82) Student academic progress will be monitored from a student's first term of study.

(83) Students who are suspended or excluded as a result of monitoring their academic progress:

- a. are not permitted to undertake studies in a different program during their period of suspension or exclusion;
- b. suspended students will be permitted to continue on probation following completion of their suspension period; and
- c. excluded students will be required to re-apply for admission for whatever programs are on offer at the time of application.

(84) Please refer to the [Student Academic Progress Procedure](#).

## **Part G - Program Revision Policy**

(85) Program revisions may constitute a major revision or a minor revision.

(86) The following general principles apply to all program revisions:

- a. if a program is accredited this will need to be considered before revising the program, including any timeline, re-accreditation and graduate employability/registration issues;
- b. the impact of the revision / new program will need to be considered for all offshore / multi-campus offerings, ensuring course availability on all campuses and to ensure that program learning outcomes are the same regardless of location or mode of delivery; and
- c. continuing students should not be required to extend the length of time to complete their degree because of a program revision.

### **Major Revisions**

(87) A major revision to an existing coursework program is any change that impacts on students and:

- a. may require additional resources from the College, another College of the University, or a support area;
- b. requires consultation external to the University;
- c. includes the addition or deletion of an undergraduate major or postgraduate specialisation [Note: must include Field of Education code appropriate to that major or specialisation];
- d. includes the additions to or deletions from the core or compulsory course lists;
- e. amends any transition arrangements;
- f. sets or changes program-based credit limits and currency;
- g. alters the program requirements (this includes the requirement to complete prerequisites or compulsory program requirements);
- h. alters the attendance pattern (e.g. removes or adds full or part-time attendance);
- i. alters the mode of offer of the program (e.g. removes or adds face to face or on-line);
- j. changes the term type (e.g. moves from semester based to trimester based offerings);
- k. adds or deletes a campus of offer for an existing program;
- l. changes the admission and selection criteria for a program including the English language proficiency requirements for the program;
- m. changes the maximum time to complete for the program to set a lesser maximum time; or
- n. is deemed by the relevant College Pro Vice-Chancellor to be a major revision.

(88) Major revisions to academic programs must be submitted to the PCAC for approval.

(89) When submitting a major revision that includes changes to core and, where relevant, compulsory courses, the submission must include a mapping of the program to the current Graduate Attributes.

## Minor Revisions

(90) A minor revision to an existing program is any change that:

- a. has minimal impact on academic content;
- b. does not impact the mode of delivery of a program;
- c. may affect Graduate Attribute/Learning Outcome Mapping;
- d. involves changes to the curriculum management system that do not impact on the program delivery, including amendments to the following curriculum management system text fields:
  - i. program description;
  - ii. assumed knowledge and/or recommended studies; and
  - iii. accrediting body;
- e. involves the addition and/or deletion of a course(s) to a course on a course list; or
- f. changes the descriptors used for marketing purposes.

(91) Minor revisions to programs must be approved by the relevant College Board or Pathways and Academic Learning Support Centre Board.

## Program Discontinuation

(92) The discontinuation of a program, at the initiative of a College via the College Board, must be approved by PCAC. Before approving the discontinuation of a program, the PCAC is required to ensure that:

- a. students enrolled in the program are not disadvantaged;
- b. appropriate teach-out or alternative arrangements have been made for current students; and
- c. consideration is given to international students and our obligations under the [ESOS](#) legislation.

(93) Academic Senate may direct that a program be discontinued.

(94) Consideration needs to be given to how discontinued courses may impact other programs, requiring appropriate consultation with the relevant areas.

# Section 3 - Program Management Roles and Responsibilities

(95) The Program Convenor is responsible to the relevant College Pro Vice-Chancellor for program management, quality, and performance of the program, including but not limited to:

- a. compliance related checks, where a program is offered in conjunction through a third-party arrangement (see [Third Party Arrangements – Education Policy](#));
- b. supporting peer review of teaching into the program;
- c. ensuring that program content, through the inclusion of specific courses, meets the program learning outcomes, and that course objectives are consistent with Graduate Attributes Mapping;
- d. ensuring that expected learning outcomes are specified, consistent with the AQF level and field of education of the qualification awarded, and informed by national and international comparators;

- e. identifying possible student timetable issues;
- f. identifying possible issues in the recommended enrolment pattern for the program;
- g. monitoring the program and addressing issues that may affect student success;
- h. monitoring program performance including admission criteria, rates of attrition, progression, any articulation arrangements and professional or accreditation requirements; and
- i. regularly reviewing and evaluating the performance of the program.

(96) Program Convenors are responsible for contributing to the experience of students in the program, including but not limited to:

- a. engaging in student orientation activities;
- b. engaging with students and providing an approachable and supportive environment;
- c. endorsing aspects of a student's program of study if an amended program is required;
- d. providing recommendations on matters pertaining to the progress of students through the program, in consultation with the relevant Course Co-ordinators;
- e. facilitating active engagement by relevant academic staff in student orientation and transition activities for the program;
- f. developing effective means of communicating with students about the program and being responsive to their feedback;
- g. considering applications for credit and articulation in consultation with the Course Co-ordinator and in accordance with the [Credit and Recognition of Prior Learning Policy](#); and
- h. making and keeping appropriate written or electronic records of advice provided to students.

## Section 4 - Procedures

### Part H - Program Approval Procedures

(97) The relevant College Pro Vice-Chancellor and Associate Dean (Education) proposing a program are responsible for oversight of the program approval process and must ensure:

- a. the appropriate consultation and approval mechanisms take place within the College and other Colleges and Divisions – evidence of this consultation must be included within the program documentation to be considered by PCAC; and
- b. adequate time is built into the development of the program proposal to allow the Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Academic) to approve inclusion of the program in the University's Profile and for the PCAC to approve the creation and academic content of the program before any domestic publicity is undertaken, including listing in a UAC guide.

### Pitch Paper and Business Case

(98) The College Pro Vice-Chancellor will support the development of a pitch paper and subsequent development of a business case for submission to Portfolio Strategy Group (PSG), using the curriculum management system, for any proposed program which will:

- a. be a new offering;
- b. replace an existing offering and have an increase in the number of units at the same or higher AQF Level;
- c. replace an existing offering and be offered at a higher AQF Level; or
- d. be offered in conjunction with another provider or a new location of offer for the University.

(99) The College Pro Vice-Chancellor may be required, on advice from the Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Academic), to develop a pitch paper and subsequent business case, using the curriculum management system, for submission to the PSG for any:

- a. proposed replacement program that may impact upon:
  - i. the program viability;
  - ii. staffing;
  - iii. resources required to offer the program;
  - iv. accreditation; or
  - v. viability of other offerings due to internal competition with an existing program offered by the University;
- b. proposal to offer an existing program at an additional location of offer; or
- c. proposed new combined degree program.

(100) Any proposed new program must be approved for inclusion in the University's profile by the Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Academic) who will review the business case for the program(s) to determine the viability of the program and its consistency with the profile of the University.

### **Submission to the Portfolio Strategy Group (PSG)**

(101) The Chair of PSG may endorse pitch papers and/or business cases between meetings of the PSG and in such cases the endorsement will be noted at the next meeting.

(102) Pitch papers and business cases will be considered for approval by the Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Academic) on the recommendation of the PSG.

### **Submission to Program and Course Approval Committee**

(103) If, once developed, the structure of the new program, implementation timelines, location or target cohorts differ from the details outlined in the approved business case, the College is required to provide a revised business case to the Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Academic) for consideration of approval, before submission to the PCAC.

(104) The PCAC is responsible for approving the Graduate Attribute mapping for each program and will oversee and monitor program compliance with the Graduate Attributes for all academic programs offered by the University.

### **Approval of Academic Content**

(105) The creation and academic content of new programs must be endorsed by the relevant College Board(s) or Pathways and Academic Learning Support Centre Board and approved by the PCAC on behalf of the Academic Senate after approval of the business case.

(106) New courses associated with new programs must be added to the University's Course Availability List (CAL) by no later than May in the year before the first offering. To be included in the undergraduate UAC guide for the following year, new programs should be submitted to the February 2023 meeting of the PCAC.

### **Program Planning**

(107) Once a business case associated with a program is approved, the program planning process must be undertaken by the relevant College Pro Vice-Chancellor or the Director, Pathways and Academic Learning Support Centre.

(108) Where relevant, the College will be responsible for the establishment and maintenance of professional accreditation for its approved programs.

(109) The specific award qualification requirements for programs approved by the PCAC must be recorded in the relevant schedules to the [Awards and Graduation Policy](#), including the volume of learning. The award must also be recorded in the University AQF Qualification Register.

(110) The official program documentation must be made available in the curriculum management system.

(111) Once a program has been approved by the PCAC, selected data fields in the curriculum management system will be used to populate the Program Handbook.

## **CRICOS Registration**

(112) A proposal to CRICOS register an existing program that is to be offered to international students onshore must be approved by the PCAC to ensure:

- a. the University meets the requirements of the [Education Services for Overseas Students \(ESOS\) Act 2000](#) (Cth) and [National Code of Practice for Providers of Education and Training to Overseas Students 2018](#); and
- b. the decision to commence intake of international onshore students aligns with the strategic direction of the University.

(113) Before the proposal to CRICOS register an existing program may be considered by the PCAC, and where the admission of international onshore students may impact on program viability (quality, profitability, market, and strategy), the Chair of the PCAC may require the College to:

- a. provide a statement of reassurance that can be noted by the PSG; or
- b. submit an abbreviated business case to the PSG.

## **Part I - Procedures for All Program Revisions**

### **Transitioning Students**

(114) The College Education and Innovation team will coordinate the implementation of the transition plans approved by the PCAC.

(115) All continuing students should be transferred to the new or revised program to receive the benefits of the improved program structure. This may not be possible in all cases depending on the nature and scope of the program changes, but students remaining in the old program structure should be kept to a minimum. Where continuing students in a combined degree are not transferred to the new version of the program and wish to complete only one of the two component programs, the College Pro Vice-Chancellor may approve provision to allow internal transfer to a single program in teach-out.

(116) The transition of students may require individualised transitional arrangements. If the new program structure is suitable for an existing student with only a single or small number of courses which are not consistent with the old and new structures, then a decision may be made that the student will transfer to the new program with a determined set of courses for the student to complete, based on their individual circumstances.

(117) The relevant College should consult with International Admissions and Compliance regarding international students in the application pipeline and what, if any, impact the new or revised program will have. Note: the College will need to discuss with Global Engagement and Partnerships Division their obligations under [ESOS](#) for applicants who have already accepted an offer into the current program.

(118) For revised programs (existing program code) it would be expected that students in the early stages of the degree would be transferred to the revised program. It may be necessary for those students in the latter stages of the

program to remain in the existing program arrangements, but there should be an attempt, wherever possible, to transfer students to the revised program arrangements.

(119) Students whose situation has been determined by the Program Convenor and Strategic Program Manager as suitable and preferable to transfer to the new program will be transferred automatically. Credit will be automatically applied to the student's record.

(120) Students deemed eligible to transfer will be transferred internally by Student Central.

## **Program Handbook Update**

(121) The Program Handbook is to be updated by 1st October in the year before the new or revised program will be offered, including any transition arrangements as approved by PCAC.

(122) The Program Handbook will include all transition arrangements for varying cohorts as applicable.

## **Communication and Record-Keeping**

(123) Students are to be advised about a new program or revision to their program with a personalised email, where relevant. General communications may also occur to cohorts through email, student portal, forums, or via the Learning Management System. The type of communication will depend on the extent of the changes. All communication is to be approved by the Program Convenor, and relevant Strategic Program Manager.

(124) All communication to individual students is to be recorded and kept on the student's electronic student file. This communication should be individualised, including details of the courses required for completion and/or the courses they have received credit for in the new program or new program structure.

(125) All correspondence with cohorts and relevant advice is to be recorded in TRIM.

(126) A transition folder should be created in TRIM for each program, including files on the transition arrangements, correspondence sent, students contacted, and cohort identification where applicable. A copy of this documentation should be stored in TRIM by the relevant Strategic Program Manager.

## **Part J - Major Program Revision Procedure**

### **Proposals**

(127) All proposals for major program revisions should include information on:

- a. the number of students impacted;
- b. possible disadvantages;
- c. impact on accreditation, where applicable;
- d. impact on pipeline or pathway students, including articulation arrangements;
- e. anticipated duration of any teach-out arrangements;
- f. details of any impact on other colleges or areas of the University; and
- g. include advice from the College which offers the program, indicating:
  - i. the intention, nature, and likely effect of the proposed change;
  - ii. whether there are significant changes in the structure of the program;
  - iii. the specific courses in the program that will be changed;
  - iv. whether the proposed change has an impact on one or more programs, a School, College or other area of the University; and if so, evidence of consultation that has taken place;

- v. whether the proposed change involves a change to the organisation of the academic year (from semester to trimesters or vice-versa); and
- vi. any resource implications of the proposed change.

(128) Detailed transition arrangements (preferably by cohort year) must be included in the program documentation submitted to the PCAC for consideration and approval.

### **New Program Proposals (as a result of a major revision)**

(129) A major revision to an existing coursework program may result in the need to create a new program. Examples include:

- a. a change to the name of an award (with no change to the course content) [Note: Commonwealth government reporting requirements state that changing names of awards/programs will require a new program code]; or
- b. modifications to ensure AQF compliance that alter the level and/or length (volume of learning) requiring allocation of a new program code.

### **Seeking Approval of a Major Program Revision**

(130) Major revisions to academic programs must be submitted to and be approved by the PCAC no later than the May meeting of the preceding year. For inclusion in the undergraduate UAC Guide or the University's prospectus, a program must be approved by PCAC no later than the February meeting of the preceding year.

(131) In exceptional circumstances submissions for major program revisions will be considered by the PCAC outside of the above timeline. In these circumstances, related amendments may not appear in advertising materials if publication timelines have passed. Changes approved by PCAC after the May meeting of the preceding year will not be timetabled clash-free and may not be allocated to preferred colleges or rooms. Colleges are responsible for the promulgation of related amendments to prospective students including UAC applicants and school leavers.

(132) As a matter of process, transition arrangements must be approved by the PCAC.

(133) If a new program is being developed to replace an existing program, the existing program must be discontinued. Only continuing students can remain in the existing program, with no further (new) intake.

(134) The discontinuation of a program, at the initiative of a College via the College Board or the PALS Board, is subject to approval by PCAC. Before approving the discontinuation of a program, the PCAC is required to ensure that:

- a. students enrolled in the program are not disadvantaged;
- b. appropriate teach-out or alternative arrangements have been made for current students; and
- c. consideration is given to international students and our obligations under the [ESOS](#) legislation.

### **Mapping**

(135) Course equivalencies (credit mapping) will need to be established and included in program documentation for all courses that will be discontinued as a result of a major revision / new program. This will ensure that students who are unable to transfer to the new program can complete their studies under the old program, if necessary.

(136) All formal articulation agreements affected by a major revision / new program will need to be identified and courses mapped accordingly and revised to reflect any program changes.

### **New Program - New Program Code**

(137) If a new program is to be offered to onshore international students, a CRICOS Code must be applied for. This can



only be done once the new program has been approved by the PCAC and the new award (if required) has been approved by Academic Senate.

(138) Information regarding the new program is to be sent to Admissions for University Admissions Centre (UAC) coding and website publication.

## **Part K - Minor Program Revision Procedure**

### **Seeking Approval of a Minor Program Revision**

(139) Minor program revisions are approved by the relevant College Board or Pathways and Academic Learning Support Centre Board.

### **Implementation of Minor Revision**

(140) The relevant Education and Innovation Officer is responsible for the implementation of minor revisions.

### **Notifying Staff and Students**

(141) The relevant Education and Innovation Officer is responsible for notifying relevant College(s), and other relevant staff of any impact caused by a minor revision.

## **Section 5 - Relaxing Provision**

(142) To provide for exceptional circumstances arising in any particular case (for an individual student or student cohort), the Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Academic) and President Academic Senate in a joint capacity and on the recommendation of a Pro Vice-Chancellor, may relax a provision of this manual.

## **Section 6 - Appendices**

(143) [Generic Program Management Group Terms of Reference](#)

(144) [External \(Professional or Industry\) Advisory Groups Terms of Reference](#)

(145) [New and Revised Programs Transition Checklist](#)

(146) [Modes of Delivery for Courses](#)

(147) [Interim Graduate Mapping Template - AQF 5 Diploma](#)

(148) [Interim Graduate Mapping Template - AQF 7 Bachelor](#)

(149) [Interim Graduate Mapping Template - AQF 8 Bachelor Honours](#)

(150) [Interim Graduate Mapping Template - AQF 8 Graduate Certificate](#)

(151) [Interim Graduate Mapping Template - AQF 8 Graduate Diploma](#)

(152) [Interim Graduate Mapping Template - AQF 9 Masters Coursework](#)

(153) [Interim Graduate Mapping Template - AQF 9 Masters Extended](#)



## Status and Details

Status	Historic
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Responsible Executive	Belinda Tynan Senior Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Academic)
Enquiries Contact	John Radvan Senior Manager, Academic Governance & Compliance <hr/> Student Central

## Glossary Terms and Definitions

**"Academic transcript"** - An official record of studies at the University.

**"Electronic records"** - Records communicated and maintained by means of electronic equipment. This is including, but not limited to, emails and electronic documents and spreadsheets.

**"Enabling program"** - A tertiary preparation program offered to domestic students.

**"Graduate"** - (Noun) Has the same meaning as in section 3(2) of the University of Newcastle Act 1989.

**"Nomenclature"** - The system of naming awards and programs offered by the University.

**"University"** - The University of Newcastle, a body corporate established under sections 4 and 5 of the University of Newcastle Act 1989.

**"Joint Medical Program (JMP)"** - the Bachelor of Medicine or Bachelor of Medical Science and Doctor of Medicine as delivered in partnership by University of Newcastle and University of New England.

**"Risk"** - Effect of uncertainty on objectives. Note: An effect is a deviation from the expected, whether it is positive and/or negative.

**"Core course"** - A course within a program which is necessary to fulfil the requirements of that program.

**"Course Availability List (CAL)"** - The list of courses approved by the Pro Vice-Chancellors of the Colleges, and under some circumstances by the President of Academic Senate, for offer in a particular term.

**"Elective"** - Any non compulsory course which may be undertaken within a program of study.

**"Academic staff"** - A person employed as an academic staff member or appointed as an academic honorary appointee (including adjunct, clinical, visiting, honorary and conjoint appointments), but does not include persons who are employed solely as teachers or professional staff.

**"Applicant"** - Where referring to a student, an applicant is an individual seeking entry to a program or course offered by the University or its partner organisation/s. For all other uses of this term, the generic definition applies.

**"Articulation agreements"** - An agreement between the University and another education provider that enables students to progress from a completed qualification to another with admission and/or credit in a defined pathway.

**"Award"** - When referring to a University qualification, this term means an academic qualification approved by Academic Senate that is conferred when a student has met the relevant program requirements. For all other uses of this term, the generic definition applies.

**"Campus"** - means any place or premises owned or controlled by the University, but may also specifically refer to a designated operating location such as the Callaghan Campus.

**"Continuing students"** - Students who have completed at least 10 units of study in their program at the University of Newcastle.

**"Course"** - When referring to a course offered by the University, a course is a set of learning activities or learning opportunities with defined, assessed and recorded learning outcomes. A course will be identified by an alphanumeric course code and course title. Course types include core courses, compulsory courses, directed courses, capstone courses and electives. For all other uses of this term, the generic definition applies.

**"Credit"** - When referring to course credit, credit is the recognition of equivalence in content and learning outcomes between different types of learning and/or qualifications. Credit can reduce the amount of learning required to achieve a qualification. For all other uses of this term, the generic definition applies.

**"Student"** - A person formally enrolled in a course or active in a program offered by the University or affiliated entity.

**"Credit transfer"** - Is a process that provides students with agreed and consistent credit outcomes for components of a qualification based on identified equivalence in content and learning outcomes between matched qualifications. Credit transfer involves mapping, comparing and evaluation the extent to which the learning outcome, discipline content and assessment requirements of the individual components of one qualification to another qualification.

**"Volume of learning"** - Identifies the notional duration of all activities required for the achievement of the learning outcomes specified for a particular AQF qualification type. It is expressed in equivalent full-time years.

**"Discontinued"** - When used in relation to a program, this refers to a program for which no new intakes are to be accepted. For all other uses the generic definition applies.

**"Discontinuation"** - When used in relation to a program, this refers to a program for which no new intakes are to be accepted. For all other uses the generic definition applies.

**"Establishment"** - When referring to an Award offered by the University, establishment means the process of approving an award that the University has decided to offer. For all other uses of this term, the generic definition applies.

**"Learning outcome"** - In accordance with the AQF definitions, the expression of a 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.

**"Level C academic"** - Senior Lecturer.

**"Postgraduate"** - Any qualification being at the level of Graduate Certificate or above.

**"Program"** - When referring to learning, a program is a sequence of approved learning, usually leading to an Award. For all other uses of this term, the generic definition applies.

**"Program Convenor"** - The academic staff member with overall responsibility for the management and quality of a program.

**"Registered Provider"** - An Australian educational institution listed in the Commonwealth Register of Institutions and Courses for Overseas Students (CRICOS) and therefore having a current CRICOS provider number/code.

**"Research"** - As defined in the Australian Code for the Responsible Conduct of Research, or any replacing Code or document.

**"School"** - An organisational unit forming part of a College or Division, responsible for offering a particular course.

**"Staff"** - Means a person who was at the relevant time employed by the University and includes professional and academic staff of the University, by contract or ongoing, as well as conjoint staff but does not include visitors to the University.

**"Suspension"** - The temporary termination of a student's rights and privileges for a specified period of time, which may include: (a) suspension from attendance at lectures, seminars, tutorials, practical classes, supervisor meetings or similar periods of instruction (b) withdrawal of the right to use, enter or to be within the Premises and/or (c) suspension from representing the University.

**"Term"** - When referring to an academic period, term means a period of time aligned to an academic year for the delivery of a course in which students enrol and for which they are usually charged fees for example semesters, trimesters, summer, winter or full-year term. The academic year for a term is determined by the academic year in which the course commences, not concludes. For all other uses of this term, the generic definition applies.

**"Testamur"** - A ceremonial document presented to a graduate upon the successful completion of their program.

**"Undergraduate"** - Refers to any qualification up to and including the level of a Bachelor Honours degree.

**"Unit"** - When referring to an academic unit, unit means the proportional amount of academic credit allotted to a course. This term is used to define the requirements for a program award of the University and indicate a student's enrolment load. For all other uses of this term, the generic definition applies.

**"Compulsory Course"** - A course within a major or specialisation, which is essential and must be satisfactorily completed to fulfill the requirements of that major or specialisation.

**"Major"** - When referring to a program major, this is a sequence of courses approved by the Program and Course Approval Committee, which students may be required to complete as part of their undergraduate program (except undergraduate Diplomas). Each major will contain at least 80 units with at least 60 unique units. For all other uses of this term, the generic definition applies.

**"Specialisation"** - When referring to a program, a specialisation is a sequence of courses, approved by the Program and Course Approval Committee, which students may be required to complete as part of their postgraduate coursework program. For all other uses of this term, the generic definition applies.

**"Domestic student"** - A student (as defined by the University) who is an Australian citizen, Australian Permanent Humanitarian visa holder, Australian Permanent Resident or New Zealand citizen (or dual citizenship holders of either Australia or New Zealand).

**"International student"** - A student (as defined by the University) who is not an Australian citizen, Australian Permanent Resident or New Zealand citizen (or dual citizenship holders of either Australia or New Zealand). This includes students who will be studying offshore and those who will be studying onshore and have a student visa, provisional residency, temporary residency, bridging visa, or any other category of non-permanent visa for Australia.

**"College"** - An organisational unit established within the University by the Council.

**"Learning Management System"** - The web-based system used to help facilitate online interactions between staff

and students in their learning and teaching activities.

**"Compulsory program requirement"** - Means a course within a program that is monitored for academic progress under the Student Academic Progress Procedure. It's status as a compulsory program requirement will be clearly stated in the course handbook. This course may be graded or ungraded and must be successfully completed to progress in the program or fulfill program requirements.