

# Program Management Procedure Manual - Coursework

## Foreword

(1) This manual supports the Governance Rule, Schedule 2 – Delegation of Academic Matters of the Governance Rule, and the [Awards and Graduation Policy](#) and its 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) In the event of an inconsistency between an Academic Senate policy document and a Faculty policy, procedure or guideline, the policy document of Academic Senate prevails to the extent of the inconsistency.

(3) For information on designing, managing and reviewing courses offered by the University refer to the [Course Management and Assessment Procedure Manual](#).

(4) For information on admission and enrolment at the University refer to the [Admission and Enrolment Procedure Manual – Coursework Programs](#).

## Application of this Manual

(5) This manual is designed to provide clear and concise directions for staff and students of the University when designing, managing, and reviewing programs, and when recommending the introduction or discontinuation of coursework programs offered by the University.

(6) This manual applies to coursework programs and awards created and offered by the University of Newcastle (UON) including:

- a. enabling programs;
- b. undergraduate and postgraduate coursework programs; and
- c. coursework programs offered by the University of Newcastle to students studying in Australia and offshore, and including those enrolled through a partner institution.

(7) This manual generally 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.

(8) 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 will usually only be changed in that year if there are changes to external legislation or urgent amendments approved by the Chair, Teaching and Learning Committee.

## Communication with Students

(9) The University's primary method of communication with students is electronic, through the UoN student email account and/or the student's nominated preferred email account as recorded in myHub. Students may re-direct their University email to a personal account, but University staff will primarily use the UoN student email account.

(10) All students are expected to check their UoN student email account frequently.

### **Further Information for Staff**

(11) Where there is a perceived need for a variation from the processes described in this manual, staff should contact the Senior Manager Academic Administration, Student Central, Academic Division: [academicpolicy@newcastle.edu.au](mailto:academicpolicy@newcastle.edu.au)

(12) Where assistance is required with the interpretation of this manual, staff should contact Student Central.

(13) Staff may provide feedback on this manual by emailing [academicpolicy@newcastle.edu.au](mailto:academicpolicy@newcastle.edu.au)

### **Further Information for Students**

(14) For further information or clarification of the content contained in this manual contact [academicpolicy@newcastle.edu.au](mailto:academicpolicy@newcastle.edu.au)

## **Authorising Policy**

(15) This manual has been developed under the authority of the Academic Senate and the Teaching and Learning Committee.

(16) Academic Senate aims to ensure that there:

- a. is a broad range of coursework programs available to meet the needs of our students and the community;
- b. are clearly defined program structures outlined in the Schedules to the [Awards and Graduation Policy](#);
- c. is equitable access to our programs, and policies and procedures which encourage students to utilise learning support;
- d. are demonstrable learning outcomes associated with all coursework programs;
- e. is a commitment to the delivery of engaged learning opportunities in all coursework programs;
- f. are academic pathways that maximise the credit students can gain for learning already undertaken;
- g. is a robust system of quality assurance, to ensure the academic integrity and viability of all programs;
- h. are systems to support student progression;
- i. are transparent and accountable processes for amendment, review and disestablishment of programs; and
- j. is an alignment between coursework program offerings and the strategic goals of UON.

(17) The objective of this procedure manual is to provide clear and concise directions on the development and management of coursework programs to staff and students of the University.

# **Section 1 - Program Development**

## **Nomenclature**

(18) 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](#).

## **Rationale for Creating a New Program**

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

## Planning a New Program

(20) Any proposed new program must:

- a. comply with the:
  - i. [Australian Qualifications Framework \(AQF\) \(Second Edition\)](#) (excluding enabling programs);
  - ii. [Higher Education Standards Framework \(Threshold Standards\) 2015](#);
  - iii. [policy framework](#) of the University;
- b. be an enabling program, or be linked to an existing or new award;
- c. align with the strategic directions of the University as described in the current approved University Strategic Plan;
- d. ensure a breadth of expertise and stakeholder input by the inclusion of external representatives in the program planning team;
- e. ensure input from other Faculties and Divisions which may be involved in or affected by the introduction of the new program; and
- f. involve the Academic Division.

## Approval for Inclusion in the University's Profile

(21) Any proposed new program must be approved by the Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Academic) who will determine its viability and whether it is consistent with the profile of the University by reviewing the business plan for the program(s).

## Business Case

(22) Faculties will be required to develop a Business Case for any proposed program which will:

- a. be a new offering;
- b. replace an existing offering and have a possible flow on impact on the program viability, staffing, resources required to offer the program, or may compete internally with an existing program offered by the University or will impact on accreditation;
- c. have an increase in the number of units at the same or higher AQF Level;
- d. be offered at a higher AQF Level; or
- e. be offered in conjunction with another provider or a new location of offer for the University.

(23) The relevant Faculty Pro Vice-Chancellor is responsible for the timely development and submission of the Business Case to the Portfolio Strategy Group.

(24) Business Cases may only be considered and approved by the Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Academic) after they have been endorsed by the Portfolio Strategy Group.

(25) All Business Cases should be put forward using the 'Stage 1 - Business Case' template.

(26) All business plans associated with programs will be provided to the Secretary to the Program and Course Approval Committee (PCAC), once approved by the Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Academic).

## Equity Groups

(27) When developing a program Faculties need to take into consideration the institutional equity and diversity plan and supporting Faculty plans.

## **Matters for Consideration in the New Program Planning Process**

(28) The following matters must be considered as part of the program planning process and included in the program documentation, which is submitted to the Program and Course Approval Committee as part of any program proposal:

- a. The rationale for the new program and its relationship to the Faculty and [University Strategic Plan](#).
- b. A promotion and recruitment strategy.
- c. Evaluation and accreditation of the program by industry and/or professional body representatives.
- d. The Graduate Identity Learning Outcome Mapping of the program.
- e. The structure of the program including:
  - i. the sequence of courses;
  - ii. honours;
  - iii. Majors/ specialisations;
  - iv. core, compulsory and directed courses; and
  - v. elective courses.
- f. The mode(s) of delivery of the program.
- g. Campuses and locations where the program will be offered.
- h. Whether the program and its courses will be offered in semesters, trimesters or other delivery arrangements.
- i. Any proposed articulation and credit transfer arrangements.
- j. Whether the program and courses can be supported within the existing library and IT budgets or the Faculty/Faculties are intending to contribute funding.
- k. Admission requirements including any special selection procedures.

(29) The relevant Pro Vice-Chancellor may establish a Working Party or Planning Team to assist with the development of a new program

## **Consultation**

(30) The relevant Pro Vice-Chancellor and Assistant Dean (Teaching and Learning) for the Faculty proposing the program, has responsibility for oversight of the program approval process and will ensure that:

- a. the appropriate consultation and approval mechanisms take place within the Faculty, other Faculties and Divisions – this consultation must be included within the documentation supplied to PCAC for consideration;
- b. adequate time is built into the development of the program proposal to allow the Vice-Chancellor to approve its inclusion in the University's Profile and for the PCAC to approve the academic content of the program before any publicity for domestic students is undertaken, including listing in a [UAC](#) guide.

## **Approval of Academic Content**

(31) The academic content of new programs will be approved by PCAC on behalf of Academic Senate.

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

(33) Programs to be offered from 2020 will need to ensure that the content is submitted for consideration by the PCAC no later than May 2019. However, for programs to be included in the undergraduate [UAC](#) guide for the following year, new programs should be submitted to the February 2019 meeting of PCAC.

(34) In exceptional circumstances the Chair of the PCAC will exercise a delegation to approve academic content out of session.

(35) The business plan and the Vice-Chancellor's approval must be provided to the Secretary of the PCAC prior to the submission of the academic content to the PCAC.

(36) If the structure of the program, once developed, differs from the details outlined in the business plan, the Faculty is required to provide a revised business plan to the Vice-Chancellor for consideration and approval.

(37) The academic content of new courses associated with new programs will be approved by the relevant Faculty Board(s) and submitted to the PCAC for approval and addition to the University's Course Availability List (CAL).

## **Program Documentation**

(38) Programs approved by the PCAC will be recorded in the relevant schedules to the [Awards and Graduation Policy](#) and the University of Newcastle AQF Qualification Register.

(39) Specific award qualification requirements, including the volume of learning, are listed in the relevant Schedule to the [Awards and Graduation Policy](#).

(40) The official program documentation is available in NUSTAR.

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

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

## **Non-AQF Compliant Programs**

(43) All non-AQF compliant programs offered by the University of Newcastle 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); and
- d. an appropriate title that does not use nomenclature which is already used for an award leading to an AQF qualification.

## **Resourcing of Programs**

(44) The resourcing of programs is the responsibility of the relevant Faculty Pro Vice-Chancellor.

(45) The Pro Vice-Chancellor is also responsible for ensuring that where the program is offered by a third party provider, that the provider has allocated adequate resources to ensure that library, IT and other support services are provided to students at a comparable level to those available to students studying at the Callaghan campus.

## **Fees**

(46) The setting of tuition fees is the Vice-Chancellor's responsibility.

## **Authority to Promote a New Program**

(47) Preliminary marketing of a new program is permitted, with appropriate disclaimers, to domestic students and students studying off-shore only, following approval of the academic content of the program by PCAC.

(48) A proposed new award must be approved by the University and have received CRICOS registration prior to being marketed to international on-shore students.

(49) New programs need to receive appropriate Committee approvals by May for intakes to commence for the following academic year to enable the University to meet its Commonwealth Government reporting requirements.

## Section 2 - Structure of Coursework Programs

### Principles of Coursework Program Design - Undergraduate Programs

(50) The design of each undergraduate coursework program in the University must ensure that graduates have:

- a. met the graduate attributes profile and the generic skills defined by the Faculty and the University. The graduate attribute and generic skill mapping documentation must be approved by the PCAC on behalf of Academic Senate;
- b. had their perspectives and knowledge extended beyond a single field of study and/ or professional area through the completion of an elective;
- c. studied course content that is current, sufficiently challenging and addressed in the depth and breadth required to meet University and relevant external requirements; and
- d. had the opportunity to receive recognition for relevant prior learning.

(51) Undergraduate coursework program design should ensure that graduates have had an opportunity to:

- a. participate in different modes of educational delivery;
- b. investigate or research topics both independently and co-operatively; and
- c. undertake "engaged learning" opportunities, leadership courses, overseas exchange programs or similar, that contribute to their breadth of experience and knowledge.

### Undergraduate Program Structures

(52) An 80 unit undergraduate coursework program will:

- a. comply with the requirements as set out in the [Diploma Awards and Programs Schedule](#); and include at least 10 units of electives.

(53) A 120 unit undergraduate coursework program will:

- a. comply with the requirements as set out in the Advanced Diploma Awards and Programs Schedule; and include at least 10 units of electives.

(54) A 160 unit undergraduate coursework program will:

- a. comply with the requirements as set out in the [Associate Degree Awards and Programs Schedule](#); and include at least 10 units of electives.

(55) A 240 unit undergraduate coursework program will:

- a. comply with the requirements as set out in the [Bachelor \(240 unit\) Awards and Programs Schedule](#);
- b. require the completion of a 60 unit sequence of core courses with at least 40 units at the 3000 level; or
- c. require the completion of a major of a minimum of 80 units, which consists of at least 60 unique units of compulsory and/or directed courses with at least 40 units at the 3000 level;

- d. require the completion of a minimum of 40 units and no more than 100 units at the 1000 level;
- e. require the completion of at least 40 units at each level at the 2000 level and above in the program;
- f. include at least 10 units of electives.

(56) A 320 unit undergraduate coursework program will:

- a. comply with the requirements as set out in the [Bachelor \(320 unit\) Awards and Programs Schedule](#);
- b. require the completion of a 60 unit sequence of core courses with at least 40 units at the 4000 level; or
- c. require the completion of a major of a minimum of 80 units, which consists of at least 60 unique units of compulsory and/or directed courses with at least 40 units at the 3000 level;
- d. require the completion of a minimum of 40 units and no more than 120 units at the 1000 level;
- e. require the completion of at least 40 units at each level at the 2000 level and above in the program;
- f. include at least 10 units of electives.

(57) The structure of an undergraduate coursework program will be varied only in response to particular articulation agreements or external requirements, as approved by the PCAC.

(58) The structure of a combined degree will require the completion of each separate program component in accordance with clauses 59-67. See also 'Combined Degree Principles' below.

### **Combined Degree Principles**

(59) The core and minimum requirements for each component program must be met. This should be done economically, exploiting overlaps where possible, so that any accreditation of either program is not compromised. The maximum unit value at each level for a combined program containing two undergraduate programs will apply only to the component programs not the combined structures. This will allow the completion of more than 100 units at any level so long as no more than 100 units at each level contribute to each of the component programs.

(60) The structure of a combined program containing two undergraduate programs will be varied only in response to particular articulation agreements, external requirements, or with a detailed justification, as approved by the PCAC.

(61) Any courses in the programs that have overlapping content should be assessed in accordance with Academic Senate's credit and articulation procedures, ensuring that:

- a. the learning outcomes of the courses and the methods adopted to achieve these objectives are similar;
- b. the volume of learning of the courses is similar ;
- c. the breadth and depth of the material studied in the courses is similar; and
- d. the assessment used is in accordance with Academic Senate's policy on courses and assessment.

(62) Each combined degree must be approved by the PCAC, who will ensure that the approved combined degree has an appropriate study plan describing the structure and requirements to complete the combined degree within the advertised timeframe.

(63) The two programs that are to be combined will usually 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 Faculty Boards along with any requirements such as the graduates having to complete the lower level qualification first to graduate.

(64) Each component degree of a combined degree should be described in separate program documentation. The minimum requirements for each component program must be met.

(65) This means that a student will:

- a. complete the required programs within the combined degree and receive a testamur for each of the two degrees, simultaneously; or
- b. complete the 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 also; or
- c. complete the requirements for one program and not the requirements for the other and receive a testamur for the completed degree and leave the University.

(66) The volume of learning of two combined degrees will usually be less than two separate degrees. For example:

- a. 3+3 year programs (480 units if taken separately), the combined degree should normally be 320 units, i.e. volume of learning equivalent to 4 years;
- b. 4+3 programs (560 units if taken separately), the combined degree award should normally be 400 units, i.e. volume of learning equivalent to 5 years;
- c. 4+4 programs (640 units if taken separately), the combined degree award should normally be 480 units, i.e. volume of learning equivalent to 6 years;

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

(68) Consistent with the [AQF \(Second Edition\)](#) Qualifications Pathways Policy and Academic Senate credit and articulation policies, students entering a combined degree may apply and be granted credit from other institutions.

## **Program Listing**

(69) 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.

## **Program Components**

### **Courses**

(70) Courses and course management are described in the [Course Management and Assessment Procedure Manual](#).

### **Major**

(71) A major is a sequence of courses, approved by the PCAC, which students may be required to complete as part of their undergraduate program (except undergraduate Diplomas). Where there is no specific major then the core courses can form a major. Each major must have at least 60 unique units of courses and be a minimum of 80 units.

(72) Details of the requirements of a major are outlined in Clauses 55c and 56c.

(73) An undergraduate Diploma (80 units) may offer a major that is a sequence of courses in a discipline that has been approved by the PCAC. Where there is no specific major then the core courses can form a major. Each major must have at least 40 unique units.

(74) Majors approved by the PCAC will be included on the official academic transcript.

### **Double Major**

(75) 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. The selection of appropriate courses to complete a double major is a responsibility of the student.

## **Specialisation**

(76) A specialisation is a sequence of courses, approved by the PCAC, which students may be required to complete as part of their postgraduate coursework program. Specialisations approved by the Program and Course Approval Committee will be included on the official academic transcript.

(77) Where a specialisation is offered it must contain at least:

- a. 20 units in a 40 unit Graduate Certificate;
- b. 40 units in an 80 unit Graduate Diploma;
- c. 40 units in an 80 unit Masters program;
- d. 60 units in a 120 unit Masters program;
- e. 80 units in a 160 unit Masters program.

(78) A specialisation may not include any undergraduate courses.

## **Minor**

(79) A minor is a 40 unit sequence of courses providing depth of study in a second or third area of specialisation. Minors will be approved by the PCAC.

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

## **Compulsory Program Requirements**

(81) A compulsory program requirement is a course or other element in a program which is:

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

(82) Compulsory program requirements are typically elements which have a requisite associated with a placement or activity. This definition does not include core courses in the program.

(83) Compulsory program requirements are approved by the PCAC.

## **Requisites**

(84) Refer also to 'Course Requisites' in the [Course Management and Assessment Procedure Manual](#).

## **Delivery of Content**

(85) If a program is offered in different modes or locations the student learning outcomes must be the same.

(86) Modes include:

- a. Face to Face;
- b. Online. An online program is delivered through online technology; there is no requirement for a student admitted to such a program to physically attend any form of teaching or learning sessions. All online program must align to the online curriculum design principles. Program support is provided through technology.

(87) The mode of delivery of a coursework program, and the courses within a program, may differ between:

- a. Locations of offer:
  - i. The University of Newcastle is a multi-campus institution and the Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Academic) is responsible for the approval of new locations of offer.
  - ii. The PCAC is responsible for the approval of programs offered at each location.
- b. Academic Terms:
  - i. In accordance with the [Schedule 2 - Delegation of Academic Matters of the Governance Rule](#), all term dates (standard and non-standard) must be approved by the Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Academic). Refer also to the [Academic Calendar Approval Procedure](#).
- c. Third party providers:
  - i. If the program is offered through arrangements with another entity, whether in Australia or overseas, the relevant Faculty Pro Vice-Chancellor is responsible for ensuring a comparable standard of delivery of content to students and full compliance with the academic policies of the University of Newcastle and the Higher Education Standards Framework.

## Maximum Time for Completing a Program

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

(89) Under [ESOS legislation](#) an international student visa holder must complete a program within the 'expected duration of their Confirmation of Enrolment'. This means they must complete the program within the minimum duration specified unless they have compassionate or compelling circumstances, or are on an intervention plan.

## Professional Accreditation

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

(91) The professional accreditation of a program will only be promoted following the receipt of written advice from the accrediting authority by the University through the relevant Faculty Pro Vice-Chancellor.

(92) Professional accreditation will be noted by the PCAC on behalf of Academic Senate.

# Section 3 - Equity and Support

## Equitable Access

(93) Academic Senate supports the University's commitment to providing equitable access through enabling programs offered to Australian and international students. The content, skill development, confidence building and induction to University culture delivered by these programs provide a high quality preparation for University study. Programs offered include Open Foundation, Newstep, Yapug, English Language courses, and a range of bridging courses.

## Learning Support

## Managing Diversity

(94) Students with special needs admitted to a program are required to complete the requirements of that program (with reasonable adjustments if required).

(95) When a student is accepted into a program, the Faculty (in liaison with the Student Support Unit) is responsible for providing any reasonable accommodations necessary to allow the student to complete the program. Refer to the [Supporting Students with Disability Policy](#) for further information.

### **Learning Development**

(96) The Centre for Teaching and Learning is responsible for the development and implementation of strategies to engage and support student learning.

### **Scholarships**

(97) The University offers a variety of scholarships to support students and provide access to our programs, visit Scholarships for more information.

## **Section 4 - UON Graduate Identity**

(98) The University of Newcastle fosters enterprising, global graduates eager for life's challenges.

(99) A set of three Graduate Identity clusters have been formulated, as seen in Figure 1 below. While being easy to remember, the clusters are designed to communicate the complexity of a graduate profile and enable a level of individualisation for a program or specific student. Each cluster reflects a point of balance between related, and often challenging prospects. As demonstrated in Figure 1 - UON Graduate Identity Model, this point of balance is represented by a '~'. Thus, for:

- a. 'Academically Distinct ~ Career Ready' some programs will offer a larger component of theoretical content, others will be more practically oriented to a specific profession. However, all programs will be research led and will help students to develop graduate qualities desired by employers.
- b. 'Locally Engaged ~ Globally Aware' students will have opportunity to operate in the context of the local environment (which includes Singapore) and develop an understanding and respect for Indigenous knowledge. They will however, have the capacity to place their disciplinary knowledge and skills in the context of the world stage.
- c. 'Entrepreneurial Spirit ~ Social Responsibility' refers to opportunities for students to develop skills in innovation, creativity and entrepreneurship but to situate such a 'spirit' in the context of social responsibility to others, and the environment.

(100) The UON Graduate Identity clusters are not discrete elements, but rather overlap in terms of the skills needed to support them. Thus, they form symbiotic connections, where activities conducted to support one cluster facilitate a student's development and comprehension of the others. Central to the model is the core where all three clusters overlap. In this area a deliberate statement is made that it is not the intent to discard the careful and thoughtful work of the schools through their curriculum alignment. Rather to demonstrate that they form a core but only partial picture of the UON Graduate Identity and its employability strategy.

(101) To clarify each cluster and to create a deeper understanding of the Graduate Identity cluster titles, a set of descriptors have been developed. In acknowledgement that the Graduate Identity clusters may be used by UON to market its student employability differentiation, each set of statements firstly indicates the environment UON offers its students to support development in each Graduate Identity cluster. Secondly, two statements present, at a high level, the specific composites of the UON Graduate Identity reflecting each point of balance in the cluster.

(102) The Graduate Identity cluster descriptors are listed in Table 1.

**Table 1: The Graduate Identity Descriptors**

<b>Academically Distinct ~ Career Ready</b>
UON graduates benefit from a distinctive high quality academic experience informed by world-class research. Thus, - Our graduates possess a suite of skills and academic knowledge, readily transferable to the workplace. - Our graduates are self-directed individuals with a sound disciplinary background valuing life-long learning as professional development.
<b>Locally Engaged ~ Globally Aware</b>
UON graduates benefit from globally referenced curricula enhanced by a culturally rich learning environment. Thus, - Our graduates operate effectively in local and global communities by embracing and valuing diversity and respecting Indigenous knowledges. - Our graduates understand the complexity of global issues and exude strong interpersonal skills to operate in culturally diverse communities.
<b>Entrepreneurial Spirit ~ Socially Responsible</b>
UON graduates benefit from operating and collaborating responsibly in an authentic interdisciplinary learning environment. Thus, - Our graduates are intellectually curious; seeking creative and innovative solutions considerate of the social and ethical implications of their actions. - Our graduates are committed to sustainable development and communities valuing integrity, fairness and social responsibility.

(103) Table 2 – An Example Framework Indicating How Each Graduate Identity Cluster can be Integrated into Academic and Extra-curricular Activity

(104) While Table 2's Program - Curriculum Aligned row concentrates on undergraduate programs it is believed that each Graduate Identity cluster can also reflect activities compatible and enhancing postgraduate study.

## **Generic Skills**

(105) Within each of these overarching clusters there is a combination of six overlapping clusters of skills and abilities:

a. Communication: Graduates of the University will utilise:

- i. Oral; and
- ii. Written

communication as tools for negotiating, creating, interacting, relating to others, supporting new understanding, and furthering their own learning. Where proficiency in oral communication is not demonstrable an alternative approach will be identified to achieve this skill;

b. Teamwork: While graduates of the University are able to work independently, they also understand and recognise the importance of collaboration and being a reliable, committed, responsible and productive team member [Note: for online, Honours and Research Higher Degree programs, the PCAC may approve the substitution of Teamwork for 'Working with Others'];

c. Information literacy: Graduates of the University are able to locate, analyse, evaluate and synthesise information from a wide variety of sources;

d. Ability to use technology: Graduates of the University are proficient in the appropriate use of contemporary technologies and are adaptable to emerging technologies within their disciplinary context;

e. Problem solving: Graduates of the University are curious and imaginative thinkers with a desire to meet new challenges and uncover creative solutions; and

f. Ability to critically analyse: Graduates of the University will question existing knowledge by identifying, defining, analysing and resolving problems. Our graduates have the curiosity to explore, create, and be imaginative when presenting alternative solutions.

## Mapping

(106) All core and/or compulsory courses in new and revised programs need to be mapped, using the approved templates, to:

- a. AQF Qualification Descriptors for the relevant level and the Program Specific Outcomes against the Graduate Identity Clusters;
- b. Generic Skills; and
- c. Discipline Threshold Standards (if defined).

(107) Programs mapped to the University's previous Graduate Attributes will need to be remapped to the UoN Graduate Identity clusters when submitting any future major revisions to the program.

## Approval and Auditing - UoN Graduate Identity

(108) The PCAC approve UoN Graduate Identity mapping for each program, and will oversee and monitor program compliance with UoN Graduate Identity for all academic programs offered by the University.

# Section 5 - Engaged Learning

## Exchange

(109) The Student Exchange Program provides students with an opportunity to study overseas and to receive credit in their program at the University of Newcastle for the volume of learning undertaken. The University has reciprocal student exchange agreements with various international institutions, which also enables international students to study with the University for a single term or a whole year.

(110) While on exchange, students remain enrolled full time at the University of Newcastle (in special exchange codes) and continue to pay tuition fees to the University of Newcastle; or, defer their student contribution as a HECS-HELP loan. No additional tuition fees are paid to the host University.

(111) Students are required to be enrolled in a full time load at the overseas University while on exchange and must be able to receive academic credit from their home faculty for the courses they plan to take on exchange. Students are responsible for negotiating academic credit with their faculty.

(112) Further detail is provided in the Outbound Student Mobility Handbook.

## Study Abroad

(113) Study abroad also provides students with an opportunity to study overseas and to receive credit for their program at the University of Newcastle for learning undertaken overseas. The University has reciprocal arrangements with overseas partner universities, which also enable international students to study with the University for a single term or whole year.

(114) Unlike student exchange, study abroad participants must take a leave of absence from the University of Newcastle and pay tuition fees at the overseas institution.

(115) Further detail is provided in the Outbound Student Mobility Handbook.

## Short-term Overseas Experience

(116) Short-term overseas experiences are international activities that usually take place during University vacations

and typically last from one to eight weeks. Experiences could include overseas University courses, volunteering abroad, work placements and conferences.

(117) Further detail is provided in the Outbound Student Mobility Guideline.

## Placement

(118) A placement means a clinical placement, practicum, internship and any similar form of professional, industrial or vocational experience included in a course or program, in which students are:

- a. assessed; and/or
- b. awarded a grade; and/or
- c. required to complete for an award of the University.

(119) More information about the management of courses with placements is provided in the [Course Management and Assessment Procedure Manual](#).

## Work - Integrated Learning (WIL) and Research - Integrated Learning (RIL)

(120) WIL and RIL are the terms used to describe educational activities that integrate theoretical learning with its application in a workplace, profession, career or future employment. WIL is now available for a broad range of undergraduate programs. In some instances WIL may be recognised through assessment and credit. RIL opportunities are under development.

(121) The WIL experience can be off or on campus, real or simulated, depending on the discipline area, but must involve clearly stated outcomes and assessment, and be consistent with quality teaching and learning.

## Section 6 - Credit Transfer and Articulation

(122) In the context of this section:

- a. Authorised officer is the designated Student Central staff member, with overall responsibility for processing the credit applications and corresponding outcomes with students. Other Authorised Officers include:

Authorised Officer	Responsibility
Program Convenor	Approval of credit applications on case by case basis for specified and unspecified courses. Determining if the outcomes can be used as a precedent. Approval rescission of credit on recommendation of Academic Registrar.
Faculty Pro Vice-Chancellor	Approval of domestic and international articulation agreements. Currency of qualifications. Determine appeals for decisions by Program Convenor. Approve Faculty Credit Variances to be included in Faculty Credit Variances of this manual.
Admissions team in UON Global	Grant credit in accordance with approved articulation arrangements and precedents.

Authorised Officer	Responsibility
Admissions teams and Program Advisors in Student Central	<p>Grant credit in accordance with approved articulation arrangements and precedents.</p> <p>Notify students of Program Convenor determinations.</p> <p>Relinquish credit at the request of the student.</p> <p>Reject any applications that clearly fall outside of the eligibility criteria set out in this Manual for credit, including applications for cross-institutional enrolment.</p>
Pathways and Credit Senior Advisor	Recording and maintaining approved articulation arrangements in the credit transfer precedent database.

## Academic Program Pathways

(123) Academic Senate supports the University of Newcastle's commitment to lifelong learning and recognises the need to maximise the credit students can gain for learning already undertaken.

(124) The information on credit and articulation below outlines the requirements for the assessment and granting of credit and the development and approval of institutional articulation arrangements. The provisions of Section 6 of this Manual support the Schedules to the [Awards and Graduation Policy](#), along with 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](#). In the event of an inconsistency between this manual and legislation or the Rules and Schedules, the provisions of Commonwealth legislation or Rules and policies made by Council and Academic Senate prevails to the extent of the inconsistency.

## Credit

(125) The key principles on which the credit provisions are based include:

- a. students granted credit are not disadvantaged in achieving the expected learning outcomes for the program;
- b. the integrity of the program and the award are maintained;
- c. granting maximum credit for prior learning is in accordance with the maximum credit listed in the relevant Awards and Programs Schedules;
- d. ensuring a consistent and equitable approach to the granting of credit; and
- e. ensuring credit transfer provisions are publicly available and open to enquiry.

(126) Provisions regarding the granting of credit within undergraduate and postgraduate coursework programs are stipulated in the relevant Schedule to the [Awards and Graduation Policy](#). Individual exceptions may apply – these will be listed in the Appendix to the relevant Award and Program Schedule or within the relevant individual program schedule as approved by the PCAC and Academic Senate on the recommendation of the relevant Faculty Board.

(127) Eligibility for credit will be determined on the basis of the University's assessment of an individual's application (made in accordance with the prescribed forms), and information they have provided about prior study or learning. For specified credit to be approved the previous knowledge and skills of an applicant must still be current in the context of the program to which the student has been admitted.

(128) All new credit transfer and articulation agreements must be developed in accordance with the AQF Qualifications Pathways Policy (Australian Qualifications Framework – Qualifications Pathways Policy July 2011, page 77, section 2.1.10.) using the following as the basis of negotiations:

- a. 50% credit for a completed Advanced Diploma (AQF 6) or Associate Degree (AQF 6) linked to a 3 year Bachelor Degree;

- b. 37.5% credit for a completed Advanced Diploma (AQF 6) or Associate Degree (AQF 6) linked to a 4 year Bachelor or Bachelor (Honours) Degree;
- c. 33% credit for a completed Diploma (AQF 5) to a 3 year Bachelor Degree;
- d. 25% credit for a completed Diploma (AQF 5) to a 4 year Bachelor or Bachelor (Honours) Degree;

(129) Credit will not normally be granted for:

- a. qualifications equivalent to AQF Level 4 or below; or
- b. Certificates of Participation or Statements of Attainment; or
- c. incomplete AQF Diplomas or Advanced Diplomas or
- d. any course that is substantially equivalent to one that the student has previously counted towards the same award unless permitted by the Faculty Pro Vice-Chancellor. A student with a Commonwealth Supported Place will incur tuition fees at the non-award rate for any such enrolments.

(130) AQF Certificates below Level 4 provide vocational training skills below the minimum learning outcomes required for University level of study. Exceptions may be made where these qualifications form part of the volume of learning of a completed AQF Diploma or Advanced Diploma which exists as part of an articulation/credit transfer agreement.

(131) Subject to individual program schedules or exceptions approved by the relevant Faculty Pro Vice-Chancellor and listed in Faculty Credit Variances of this Manual, there is no maximum credit transfer when a student transfers from one incomplete University of Newcastle program/award to another at the same career (ie undergraduate to undergraduate or postgraduate to postgraduate) level, noting that this does not apply to students who are concurrently enrolled in two or more programs. Credit from completed awards undertaken at the University of Newcastle are subject to the maximum credit provisions specified in the relevant Awards and Programs Schedule.

(132) Authorised Officers are permitted to grant credit for identical courses taken at the University of Newcastle that:

- a. count towards the new program including any identified equivalent courses that form part of a PCAC approved transition arrangement for the program;
- b. meet the currency provisions; and
- c. do not exceed any limitations as set out in the relevant Schedules or variances listed in Faculty Credit Variances of this Manual unless the credit is for students transferring from an incomplete UON program. Students may be granted any relevant credit, regardless of Schedule limitations when the previous studies have been undertaken at the University of Newcastle towards an incomplete program/s.

(133) Existing credit transfer and articulation agreements will be honoured for the life of those agreements.

(134) Undergraduate courses will not count as credit in postgraduate programs, except where they form part of the volume of learning in the postgraduate program.

(135) Credit may be granted on the basis of courses and modules (e.g. a series of linked modules completed as professional development training within an approved period) undertaken in an AQF or a non-AQF compliant program with demonstrated comparable and equivalent:

- a. learning outcomes;
- b. volume of learning;
- c. content; and
- d. learning and assessment approaches.

(136) Credit may be granted for courses and awards completed at:



- a. recognised Australian higher education institutions;
- b. recognised overseas tertiary institutions;
- c. registered private providers of accredited tertiary education courses; and
- d. registered Vocational Education and Training providers.

(137) In making credit determinations:

- a. the currency of course content will be considered;
- b. the recommendation of the relevant Head of Schools; and
- c. evidence of relevant work experience may also be taken into account.

(138) Specified credit may be granted for the successful completion of a specific course or courses where the learning outcomes are the same and there is substantial overlap of content, as determined by the Faculty, and where the level is deemed to be equivalent to a University of Newcastle course or courses.

(139) The completion of core/compulsory courses, allow a student to demonstrate that they have acquired the learning outcomes required by the program. Credit for core/compulsory courses will be assessed and will only be granted by the Program Convenor where it is deemed that the student has met the learning outcomes and at least 80% of the content was the same.

(140) All students who are granted credit must complete more than 50% of their final year courses at the University (except in exceptional circumstances approved by the relevant Program Convenor).

(141) Unspecified credit may be granted for the successful completion of a specific course or courses deemed to be at an appropriate level. Unspecified credit will not be granted for core courses, and will not normally be granted for directed courses, except where specified in the Faculty Credit Variances of the Manual.

(142) Credit will not be granted for any courses with the following results:

- a. terminating pass (or equivalent); or
- b. conceded pass (or equivalent); or
- c. incomplete, special circumstances or withdrawn without academic penalty (or equivalent); or
- d. fail grade, including withdrawn fail.

(143) Where specified credit has been approved, such approval may be used as a precedent for the awarding of that credit in matching circumstances for three years unless otherwise approved by the relevant Faculty Pro Vice-Chancellor as listed in Faculty Credit Variances of this Manual.

(144) Credit precedents will be stored in the University's student record system for the term of their currency and may be applied by the relevant authorised officer.

(145) The Faculty Pro Vice-Chancellor, as Chair of the relevant Faculty Board, may approve Faculty specific or programs specific variances which are listed in the Faculty Credit Variances of this Manual, for the granting of credit towards courses within programs for which they have responsibility, ensuring such guidelines are compliant with the policies established by Academic Senate. Faculty credit variances may include:

- a. provisions relating to the currency of courses which should be no greater than the maximum duration of the program.
- b. limitation on the use of precedents deemed appropriate by the Faculty;
- c. limitation on the granting of credit for particular programs; and
- d. limitation on the granting of credit for core and directed courses.

(146) The relevant Program Convenor is responsible for assessing credit applications in accordance with the provisions of this manual, and the Faculty credit variances set out in the Faculty Credit Variances of this Manual, including:

- a. determining the credit to be granted (specified and/or unspecified);
- b. seeking advice from the relevant Course Co-ordinator or the Head of the relevant School if an application for credit relates to courses convened by another School;
- c. approving extensions of the time limit on credit in appropriate cases; and
- d. indicating if the credit granted will be a precedent.

(147) The relevant authorised officer may grant up to 20 units of unspecified credit at 1000 level and 20 units of unspecified credit at 2000 level for completed AQF Diplomas and Advanced Diplomas, subject to the relevant Awards and Programs Schedule and the Faculty approved variances listed in the Faculty Credit Variances of this manual.

(148) The relevant authorised officer may grant unspecified credit for elective courses for studies completed at an equivalent level at an Australian higher education or equivalent institution.

### **Recognition of Prior Learning**

(149) Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) is a process undertaken in assessing admission to the University.

(150) RPL will only be granted where:

- a. supporting documentation is provided in the form outlined in the admission process;
- b. it is assessed as meeting the requirements for programs approved by the relevant Faculty.

(151) The assessment of an application for RPL does not guarantee an enrolment in a program at the University of Newcastle.

(152) RPL may be used to grant exemptions in a program. The Program Convenor must specifically identify courses required in lieu of the exempted course/s.

(153) RPL can be awarded as specified or unspecified credit to reduce the volume of learning for the applicable program.

### **Currency of approval for credit**

(154) Approval for credit on admission to a program will be valid for one calendar year. Credit approval will lapse if the student does not accept and actively enrol in the program to which they are admitted within twelve months.

(155) Where approval for credit has lapsed, the student may reapply but the original approval is not guaranteed.

### **Credit for combined programs**

(156) Credit for combined programs may be granted in accordance with the Combined Program Principles (clauses 59-67) in this manual. Credit may be limited depending on the structure of the combined program.

### **Cross-Institutional Credit**

(157) International students on articulation arrangements must complete all courses at the University of Newcastle. Articulation students will not be permitted to undertake any cross-institutional enrolment unless approved by the relevant Faculty Pro Vice-Chancellor in exceptional circumstances only.

(158) Students must apply, pay any applicable fees and receive formal written permission from the University prior to

enrolling at another institution.

(159) Cross-institutional study may be available to undergraduate and postgraduate students who have successfully completed a minimum of 40 units of their program and are in good academic standing.

(160) Assessment for cross-institutional credit will be approved by the relevant Program Convenor in accordance with the provisions in clauses 122-148 and clause 154-156. Students may not exceed the maximum credit provisions as listed in the relevant schedule by undertaking cross institutional study. This means that where a student has commenced study at UoN and has been granted maximum credit they will be ineligible to undertake cross institutional study.

(161) An overall maximum of 40 units of cross-institutional credit may be approved, including a maximum of 10 units at the 3000 level within a 240 unit program; or 4000 level within a 320 unit program.

(162) For combined degree programs a maximum of 10 units at the highest level may be applied to each of the individual components.

(163) The Pro Vice-Chancellor is authorised to approve cross institutional study exceeding the 10 unit maximum listed in Clause 161 where the student would be significantly disadvantaged.

(164) Other limitations may apply – refer to Faculty approved variations in the Faculty Credit Variances of this manual.

(165) The provisions listed in clauses 160–161 do not apply to students on study abroad or exchange. However, students must apply for and receive permission for credit for exchange or study abroad prior to departure (where possible).

## **Articulation Arrangements**

(166) In accordance with the [Schedule 2 – Delegation of Academic Matters of the Governance Rule](#), the relevant Faculty Pro Vice-Chancellor may approve articulation arrangements with recognised overseas tertiary institutions, registered private providers of accredited tertiary education courses, and registered providers in the Vocational Education and Training (VET) sector.

(167) The Faculty Pro Vice-Chancellor will report to Academic Senate via Faculty Board on program articulation arrangements within their Faculty.

(168) Domestic private Registered Training Organisations (RTOs) and private VET Colleges wishing to have credit articulation arrangements with the University of Newcastle will need to lodge an application through the Pathways & Credit Senior Advisor for approval.

(169) The Pathways and Credit Senior Advisor will refer all such applications to the relevant Pro Vice-Chancellor who will make a determination as to whether the University will proceed with the application, and will advise the RTO of the outcome.

(170) Where articulation arrangements have been approved they may be applied by the relevant authorised officer without additional approval.

(171) The relevant Faculty Pro Vice-Chancellor will report approved articulation arrangements to the Pathways & Credit Senior Advisor for inclusion in the credit transfer precedent database.

## **Relinquishing Credit Transfer**

(172) A student may request in writing that credit granted not be counted towards their program. The authorised officer will process this request and notify the student of the amendment.

(173) Credit for exchange or cross institutional studies cannot be rescinded.

## **Time Limit on Credit**

(174) A time limit may apply where there is concern about the currency of the applicant's knowledge or skills, and/or where professional accreditation requirements limit the granting of credit. Such arrangements will be included in the Faculty Credit Variances of this Manual.

## **Rescission of credit**

(175) The University reserves the right to rescind credit where an error has been made or where the documentation provided by the applicant is incomplete, misleading or invalid. The rescission of credit may be approved by the Program Convenor on the recommendation of the Academic Registrar.

(176) The submission of falsified or misleading documentation may result in actions being taken in accordance with the [Student Conduct Rule](#).

## **Review of Credit Precedents and Articulation Arrangements**

(177) Where a change is made to a provision in this manual or where a precedent or articulation arrangement is reviewed and changed, the original approval will be honoured during this process.

(178) Credit precedents expire after seven years or such date as determined by the Program Convenor.

(179) Articulation arrangements are reviewed on expiry, and must be renegotiated when a program undergoes a major review. Agreements with:

- a. Australian providers expire after seven years;
- b. international agreements, memoranda of understanding, letters of credit and pathway arrangements may vary depending on the individual arrangement.

(180) When a review may result in a change to existing arrangements the partner institution will be consulted.

## **Appeals Against Decisions on Credit**

### **Process**

(181) The University offers the right of appeal against decisions on credit.

(182) The Student may lodge an appeal within five (5) working days of notice of the determination of credit.

(183) An appeal may only be on the basis of at least one of the following grounds:

- a. evidence of a breach of this procedure;
- b. evidence that the determination was affected by a Conflict of Interest (refer to [Conflicts of Interest Policy](#)); and/or
- c. new information has become available that could not reasonably have been provided by the student earlier, and it is probable that this information would have affected the determination.

(184) An appeal on the grounds of outcome alone will not be considered.

(185) An appeal must be made in writing and the grounds of appeal must be clearly set out.

(186) An appeal is to be made to an Appeal Officer, to be determined as follows:

Original decision maker	Appeal Officer
Admissions teams and Program Advisors in Student Central	Academic Registrar
Program Convenor	Relevant Faculty Pro Vice-Chancellor
Head of School	Relevant Faculty Pro Vice-Chancellor
Academic Registrar	Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Academic)
Relevant Faculty Pro Vice-Chancellor	Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Academic)

(187) Upon receipt of an appeal, the Appeal Officer:

- a. will consider the information provided in the appeal, to the extent that the information relates to one of the grounds of appeal set out in clause 183;
- b. will consider material taken into account by the original decision maker in making their determination, which is relevant to the grounds of appeal;
- c. may request further information from the student or from the original decision maker; and
- d. will then:
  - i. dismiss the appeal; or
  - ii. uphold the appeal and vary the original decision.

## Determination is Final

(188) The Appeal Officer will inform the student in writing of the determination, including reasons for the determination.

(189) The determination of the Appeal Officer is final and there is no further avenue of appeal within the University.

(190) The student may have the right to further appeal outside the University.

# Section 7 - Management and Quality Assurance

## Program Convenor

### Definition and Appointment

(191) A Program Convenor is the academic staff member of the University appointed by the Faculty Pro Vice-Chancellor with overall responsibility for the management and quality of a program (and the courses offered within that program) leading to an award of the University.

(192) The Program Convenor may be a Head of School, Head of Discipline or an academic appointed specifically for the task, depending on the structure of the Faculty. Other requirements include:

- a. each program is required to have a duly appointed Program Convenor;
- b. where more than one Faculty is involved (for example, combined programs) the appointment of the Program Convenor should be based on decisions of the relevant Pro Vice-Chancellors;
- c. where a program is offered on a number of campuses or in conjunction with a third party provider the Pro Vice-Chancellor may appoint Assistant Program Convenors for each campus to assist the Program Convenor;
- d. a Program Convenor will typically be an academic at a Level C or above;
- e. the Pro Vice-Chancellor will determine the term of office of a Program Convenor at the time of the appointment.

The usual term of office for a Program Convenor will be two years;

- f. the Pro Vice-Chancellor may designate an alternate to act as Program Convenor in the absence of the appointed staff member;
- g. the Program Convenor must be appointed at least 6 weeks prior to the start of any teaching period; and
- h. each Pro Vice-Chancellor will maintain a list of Program Convenors within their Faculty as a quality assurance mechanism when managing programs.

## **Roles and Responsibilities**

(193) The management and quality of existing programs are primarily the responsibility of the Program Convenor with support from the relevant Pro Vice-Chancellor and Heads of School.

## **Program Management**

(194) A Program Convenor as Chair of the Program Management Group is responsible for:

- a. writing the Annual Report on Program(s) for submission to first Faculty Board in a year. Refer to Clauses 199-204 – Program – Annual Program Reports;
- b. overseeing the development of the documentation required for an external review of the program. Refer to Section 8 External Program Review; and
- c. any other program related activity as required by the Faculty Pro Vice-Chancellor in which the program exists or is the lead Faculty for a combined degree.

## **Program Quality**

(195) The Program Convenor is responsible to the Pro Vice-Chancellor for program conduct, quality and performance and thus will be responsible for:

- a. assisting the Heads of School to ensure:
  - i. the quality and accuracy of course outlines and other materials used in the program;
  - ii. adequate staffing and resourcing of courses within the program; and
  - iii. where a program is offered in conjunction with a third party provider, that they comply with any academic contractual agreements described in a memorandum of understanding.
- b. assisting Course Co-ordinators for core courses to ensure congruency of assessment tasks with the learning objectives, and that the instructions, requirements and criteria are clear, appropriately weighted and timed;
- c. supporting peer review of teaching into the program;
- d. ensuring that content meets the learning outcomes for the program, and that course objectives are consistent with Graduate Learning Outcomes (Profile Statements and Attribute) Mapping;
- e. identifying possible issues in students' timetables;
- f. monitoring the program and addressing issues which may affect student success;
- g. monitoring program performance including admission criteria, rates of attrition, progression, any articulation arrangements and professional or accreditation requirements; and
- h. regularly reviewing and evaluating the performance of the program in accordance with University policy.

## **Student Matters**

(196) Program Convenors are responsible for contributing to the experience of students in the program and thus for:

- a. engaging with students and providing an approachable and supportive environment;
- b. endorsing aspects of a student's program of study if an amended program is required;

- c. providing recommendations on matters pertaining to the progress of students through the program, in consultation with the relevant Course Co-ordinators;
- d. facilitating active engagement by relevant academic staff in student orientation and transition activities for the program;
- e. developing effective means of communicating with students about the program and being responsive to their feedback. This should include meeting with students from the program at least once per teaching term in an environment enabling informal input and general group discussion (including face to face or online discussion forums);
- f. considering applications for credit and articulation in consultation with the Course Co-ordinator and in accordance with University Policy; and
- g. making and keeping appropriate written or electronic records of advice provided to students.

## **Program Management Groups**

(197) All programs are required to have a Program Management Group (see [Generic Program Management Group Terms of Reference](#)).

## **External (Professional or Industry) Advisory Groups**

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

## **Programs - Annual Program Reports**

(199) An annual program report on the performance of each academic program over the previous year will be prepared for the relevant Faculty Board by the Program Convenor. The annual program report for each program will usually be submitted to the first Faculty Board meeting of the year following delivery.

(200) To promote efficiencies and to achieve the best outcome from the review process, programs that are similar in nature should be reported in a single document. (Programs are not required to produce an annual report in the year an external program review is scheduled).

- a. Using the Annual Program Report Template, and supporting report templates: Annual Program Report Action Plan Template, External Program Review Self-Review Report Template, Annual Course Alignment Report Template and Annual Staffing Profile Report Template, the report will be produced by the Program Convenor in liaison with relevant academics and Faculty and School professional staff.
- b. The annual program report will highlight successes, areas for improvement and potential development. It will also contain an action plan outlining actions to be undertaken to address the goals and issues identified within the report (Annual Program Report Action Plan Template). Where an external accreditation has been completed within a 12 month period, the accreditation report can be used to supplement the annual program review.
- c. The annual program report will be evidenced based and include supporting data. For example, data indicating student demand, success, and satisfaction levels.
- d. Current student and graduate data can be obtained by the Faculty from the Program Performance Report (PPR) and in the Program and Core Course Reports which will be provided by Strategy, Planning and Performance (SPP) annually. Other relevant data not available in these reports may be requested from SPP.
- e. Following the submission of each annual program report to the relevant Faculty Board, the Pro Vice-Chancellor of the relevant Faculty must submit a summary report for all programs offered by the Faculty including any action plans to the PCAC, through the Teaching and Learning Committee, for consideration.
- f. A copy of each annual program report will be forwarded to SPP after submission to the relevant Faculty Board. SPP will monitor the implementation of any actions highlighted in the annual program reports for reporting to

the PCAC, through the Teaching and Learning Committee.

- g. Annual program reports will be retained by the University through the Records Governance Services for use in external program reviews.
- h. The PCAC, together with the Teaching and Learning Committee:
  - i. will provide an annual summary report on the annual program reports, usually to the second meeting of the Academic Senate of the year; and
  - ii. may seek advice from the Pro Vice-Chancellor when a program has consistently performed poorly, as to whether it should be suspended or discontinued.

(201) Annual Program Reports and Annual Program Report Summaries will be reviewed annually by the Office of the Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Academic), to enable sharing of best practice and to ensure any quality issues have been considered and appropriately addressed by Faculties. Specific focus will be placed on programs that have demonstrated significant improvement, and those requiring improvement through evidence of a pattern of poor performance or decline. In undertaking these reviews consideration is given to identifying program where:

- a. Overall student success rates, and of specific demographic cohorts (e.g. low SES; ATSI; commencing; disability; international; male/female), and their relation to UON averages for that level of program.
- b. Overall student program and institutional retention rates, and of specific demographic cohorts (Low SES; ATSI; Commencing; Disability; International; Male/Female), and their relation to UON averages for that level of program.
- c. When student and graduate satisfaction in the Student Experience Survey (SES) and Graduate Outcomes Survey (GOS):
  - i. is below 3.5 for Good Teaching Scale and/or Overall Satisfaction;
  - ii. has declined 10% or more for Good Teaching Scale and/or Overall Satisfaction from the previous year; or
  - iii. demonstrates an employment rate of 10% or more below Field of Education (FOE) averages for that discipline.

(202) Within the review of the Annual Program Reports, contextual factors such as cohort size, nature of the program (some programs are known pathway programs to other fields of study, eg B Arts and B Science) will be considered. Emphasis will be on areas of most risk, where there are large cohorts, and new programs.

(203) Those programs identified as at risk through the Annual Program Report process will be closely monitored by Faculties and the Office of the Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Academic), and will be required to provide an action plan that appropriately addresses the quality issues identified. Implementation of this plan will be monitored by the Assistant Dean (Teaching and Learning) and, through the School Improvement Plan process.

(204) Programs that demonstrate a pattern of under-performance in the criteria listed in Clause 201, over three or more years, may be subject to a bespoke review targeted to those factors. The programs will be identified in discussion with the relevant Faculty Assistant Dean (Teaching and Learning).

## **Student Feedback on Programs and Courses**

(205) The University uses a number of surveys designed as indicators of learning and teaching practices from the student perspective. They are an important source of information to inform individual teaching practice, decisions about teaching duties, as well as program and course curriculum design. They also enable the University to assess how effectively its learning environments and teaching practices facilitate student engagement and learning outcomes.

(206) Student surveys currently used by the University include:



- a. Graduate Outcomes Survey (GOS);
- b. Commencing Students Survey;
- c. International Student Barometer;
- d. Student Feedback on Courses (SFC);
- e. Student Feedback on Programs (SFP);
- f. Student Feedback on Teaching (SFT);
- g. Student Feedback on the University of Newcastle (SFUN); and
- h. Student Experience Survey (SES).

### **Implementation and evaluation of Student Feedback**

(207) The Strategy, Planning and Performance (SPP) Unit is responsible for the implementation, evaluation and management of surveys in the University.

(208) SPP will provide regular reports to Academic Senate, through the Teaching and Learning Committee, on survey outcomes.

### **School Improvement Plan Process**

(209) Each School will liaise annually with the Office of the Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Academic) and develop a School Improvement Plan. This plan will focus on program and course quality, with a specific focus on addressing factors that require amelioration. Emphasis is placed on program and course viability factors such as:

- a. enrolment trends;
- b. student success and retention;
- c. student and graduate feedback; and
- d. graduate outcomes and factors that affect these, including learning and teaching quality, curriculum and assessment design, resourcing, among others.

(210) The plan will contain actions at a School, program and course level. They will be informed by the Annual Program Report process and course level performance data.

(211) Relevant issues, actions and plans will be monitored at a Faculty level by the Assistant Dean (Teaching and Learning), and at Faculty Board to inform Faculty strategies and planning.

(212) Staff from the Office of the Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Academic) will meet with representatives from the School and the Faculty Assistant Dean (Teaching and Learning) to discuss progress a minimum of 3 times per year.

(213) The Office of the Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Academic) will report to Teaching and Learning Committee twice per year, with emphasis on issues identified at a UON level, how these are being addressed and the sharing of effective practices.

## **Section 8 - External Program Reviews**

### **External Program Reviews**

(214) A program review is the formal appraisal by a group of academic, professional experts, and stakeholders to the quality, currency and sustainability of academic program(s).

(215) All external program reviews will be conducted by an External Review Panel in accordance with the provisions listed below.

(216) The Academic Senate and the University's quality enhancement framework require that every program in the University is externally reviewed in a seven-year period. The cycle of external program reviews is approved by Academic Senate and is available from the Secretary to the PCAC.

(217) Within the External Program Review process Academic Senate requires that:

- a. each external program review addresses the External Program Review Generic Terms of Reference which may be extended to include other foci relating to the program(s) under review;
- b. the external program review process be transparent and clearly documented;
- c. where programs are offered in more than one location (including onshore and offshore) a single external program review is undertaken. This single review will consider the comparability of quality and learning experiences;
- d. where appropriate, professional accreditation reviews may be linked to or undertaken instead of external program reviews and conducted within a shorter timeframe than the seven year period prescribed by Academic Senate (refer to Clause 232 - Supporting Documentation for more information). In such cases, the Office of the Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Academic) will undertake a gap analysis to ensure the UON Terms of Reference (TOR) for external reviews have been appropriately addressed during the external accreditation. Programs that undertake this process will be required to report outcomes and improvement plans to address deficits to the PCAC;
- e. the relevant Faculty produces a Program Self-Review Report (see External Program Review Self-Review Report Template) prior to an external program review. This Program Self-Review Report will be provided to the External Review Panel as background for each program and the Faculty's plans for it;
- f. the relevant Faculty will include the approved business case for consideration by the External Review Panel (this requirement applies only to programs undertaking their initial External Review); and
- g. the Faculty ensures the timely implementation of PCAC approved review reports and agreed outcomes.

(218) This will be monitored by the PCAC and the Office of the Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Academic), with the assistance of SPP. The Faculties will be required to report regularly to the PCAC as outlined in the following sections.

### **External Review Panel Membership**

(219) The External Review Panel must comprise no less than seven members, including four external to the University, and consisting of at least one:

- a. employer from a related industry/service;
- b. senior academic teaching in a related field at another University;
- c. graduate of the program(s);
- d. Indigenous representative, nominated by the Pro Vice-Chancellor Indigenous Education and Research;
- e. level c academic (or an academic with significant related experience) of the University of Newcastle who is not contributing to the program(s) or from the same School, preferably an academic member of Academic Senate or its standing committees (where available); and
- f. representative from the Office of the Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Academic);
- g. senior member of Student Central, nominated by the Academic Registrar.

(220) The Chair will be appointed by the Pro Vice-Chancellor from among the senior academic members of the External Review Panel, typically the member appointed under Clause 219e.

(221) The Director, Strategy Planning and Performance (DSPP) will appoint a member of SPP to act as secretary to the external review panel.

## **Role of Chair of the External Review Panel**

(222) The Chair of the External Review Panel will:

- a. chair the External Review Panel meetings, ensuring all Terms of Reference for that external program(s) review are adequately addressed;
- b. ensure that all members of the External Review Panel have equal and fair opportunity for input;
- c. compile the review report in consultation with External Review Panel members, within the prescribed 6 week timeframe (as per clause 224c); and
- d. invite contributions from persons with particular expertise required for the External Review, and not represented on the External Review Panel.

## **Role of Pro Vice-Chancellor**

(223) The Faculty Pro Vice-Chancellor is responsible for:

- a. ensuring the relevant Faculty staff coordinate the review visit schedule;
- b. ensuring that external program reviews occur in accordance with the Academic Senate approved cycle of review;
- c. approving the Program Self-Review Report and providing this report to SPP no less than five weeks prior to the external program review;
- d. approving the terms of reference for the review in consultation with the Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Academic);
- e. approving of the final composition of the External Review Panel including appointing the Chair;
- f. forwarding the final Review Report, together with the draft Response and Action Plan to the Faculty Board(s), via the Faculty Teaching and Learning Committee, then to the PCAC for approval;
- g. ensuring the communication of review findings to stakeholders, including students and staff of the program, via website, forums and other means. Where more than one Faculty contributes to a program the Faculty Pro Vice-Chancellor who owns the program will have overall responsibility for the review; and
- h. ensuring that the Faculty implements the approved Response and Action Plan in a timely manner.

## **Role of External Review Panel members**

(224) The External Review Panel will:

- a. review the documentation supplied to them. This will be forwarded to members by the relevant Faculty within four weeks prior to them visiting the University;
- b. conduct interviews with the Program Convenor(s), students, members of staff involved in teaching in the Program(s) and any other person or people relevant to the External Review Panel's deliberations; and
- c. as a body, report the finding of the external program review to the relevant Pro Vice-Chancellors no more than six weeks following the completion of the review visit.

## **Initiating the Review**

(225) Programs that are similar in nature (including undergraduate and postgraduate) should be reviewed simultaneously as this may promote efficiencies and achieve the best outcome from the review process. Core, compulsory and directed courses offered within the program(s) must also be reviewed at the same time.

(226) Wherever relevant and/or practical, external accreditation documentation can be used to support the review process, as it will likely contain much of the required information. As stated, in cases of significant overlap, where it can be determined that there is an equivalent focus on academic quality assurance and rigour, the external accreditation process may be undertaken in lieu of the UON external review process.

(227) At the commencement of the review process the Office of the Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Academic) and/or SPP will offer training to Faculty staff involved in the review.

(228) The consultation, data collection and analysis process should begin at least one year prior to the scheduled review.

(229) A Call for Submissions will be forwarded by the Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Academic), with the assistance of SPP, to all staff and students and other relevant stakeholders of the program.

(230) Non-confidential submissions are included in the program documentation compiled and distributed by the relevant Quality Assurance, Teaching and Learning Officer.

(231) Confidential submissions are distributed to the External Review Panel by SPP during the review visit and collected at the conclusion of the review.

## **Documentation Required for the External Program Review**

(232) The following information is to be prepared by the relevant Faculty(ies) and provided to SPP at least five weeks ahead of the panel visit for checking. It will be subsequently forwarded to the External Review Panel at least four weeks prior to their visit to the University by the Faculty responsible for a program.

a. Program Self-Review Report:

- i. An executive summary of the program, as per the University supplied template, supported by the documentation requested below, to be facilitated by the Program Convenor and/or other relevant persons and approved by the Pro Vice-Chancellor. (See External Program Review Self-Review Report Template)

b. External Benchmarking:

- i. The relevant Faculty Pro Vice-Chancellor will ensure that the academic standards (including generic and discipline specific learning outcomes) are achieved by students and the standards actually achieved by students in the program are benchmarked against similar programs offered by other national or international higher education providers.
- ii. External benchmarking may include comparative data on similar offerings at other institutions on the performance of students in the program, including information on the performance of students by entry pathway, mode of study; and place of study
- iii. Comparative data should include student attrition, student progression, program completions and grade distributions;

c. Supporting Documentation (provided by SPP to the Faculties as required or requested)

- i. The latest Program and Core Course Report, overall and for each location, which contains trend data on demand, student success, attrition and retention. In generalist programs course reports are organised by discipline or major.
- ii. The previous external program review and subsequent actions and progress on their implementation (where possible).
- iii. Analysis of the alignment of course objectives with content, teaching, learning and assessment methods and graduate capabilities in existing and proposed core and directed courses. In the case of generalist programs, this would include representative examples from the majors and disciplines. The Annual Course Alignment Report Template will assist with this.
- iv. Program Handbook entry.
- v. Submissions (non-confidential): staff, service centres (including the Library), industry and other community stakeholders. Confidential submissions are distributed to the External Review Panel by SPP

during the review visit and collected at the conclusion of the review (see Initiating the Review).

- vi. The accreditation report (where relevant), if undertaken since the last review, and subsequent actions and progress on their implementation. In consultation with the Faculty and the Office of the Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Academic), Strategy, Planning and Performance (SPP) will undertake a comparison of the outcomes and the findings will be incorporated into a report that will be included as an addendum to the external program review. As stated, in cases of significant overlap and were it can be determined that there is an equivalent focus on academic quality assurance and rigour, the external accreditation documentation and report can be used to supplement the external program review.
  - vii. The last three annual program reports.
  - viii. A table indicating recent and relevant School linkages with industry, the community, and/or other non-University bodies/groups to ensure program relevance and/or currency.
- d. Student Feedback (provided by SPP to the Faculties as required or requested)
- i. Student submissions and results from focus groups, if undertaken.
  - ii. Summary results for the last three years from the Student Feedback on Courses (SFC), formerly known as Student Evaluation of Courses (SEC), for core, compulsory and directed courses.
  - iii. Latest Student Experience Survey (SES) outcomes, overall and for each program location.
- e. Other Student Survey Data (provided by SPP to the Faculties as required or requested)
- i. If not included in Annual Program Reports, the latest Graduate Outcomes Survey Data (GOS) data, including data on Overall Satisfaction, Good Teaching, Generic Skills and data on the employment status and salary range of graduates.
- f. Staffing Profile and Governance
- i. Provide a breakdown of academic staff, indicating student staff ratios and ratios of fulltime versus sessional /casual staff.
  - ii. Complete the Staffing Profile template (Annual Staffing Profile Report Template), to provide a list of ongoing academic staff, indicating courses taught and other responsibilities, qualifications, published research outputs and grants for the previous five years and professional development activities related to improving their teaching OR attach individual resumes with this information.
  - iii. List key support (professional) staff positions and their roles/responsibilities.
- g. Other Information
- i. data informing the committee of progression and completion rates for students within the program;
  - ii. evidence that graduates of the program have attained key graduate attributes, including an appropriate level of English Language proficiency. This evidence includes mapping of Graduate Attributes to learning outcomes (generic and discipline specific); and
  - iii. any additional information considered relevant for the evaluation of the program(s), especially where it will streamline the external program review process with professional accreditation.

## Post-Review Actions

(233) The external program review report will be sent to the relevant Pro Vice-Chancellor for checking of errors no later than 6 weeks following the External Review Panel meeting.

(234) The revised and agreed report is circulated to the Faculty for the development of a Faculty Response and Action Plan. The Faculty Response and Action plans are to be developed no later than 6 weeks following receipt of the final report (see Faculty Response and Action Plan Template) in consultation with the Office of the Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Academic). These are forwarded to PCAC, through the Teaching and Learning Committee for approval and SPP for noting and subsequent follow-up.

(235) The Office of the Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Academic), with the assistance of the Centre for Teaching and

Learning and SPP, will liaise with Faculties to assist with the implementation of the action plan, track progress against timelines and share good practices across the University. Tracking will occur through regular meetings between relevant Schools and the Office of the Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Academic), and recorded through the School Improvement Plan Process.

(236) Faculties, in consultation with the Office of the Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Academic) with the assistance of Strategy, Planning and Performance, must forward annual reports to PCAC as to the progress of implementation of review outcomes.

(237) External program review outcomes must be communicated to stakeholders, including students, staff, industry, professional and community bodies, and the External Review Panel. Communication strategies will include:

- a. A brief summary of the external program review report being placed on the Faculty website within two weeks of the approval of the report. This is to be facilitated by the Program Convenor and approved by the appropriate Pro Vice-Chancellor or delegate;
- b. A summary of the Faculty Response and Action Plan placed on the Faculty website within four weeks of its approval by the PCAC; and
- c. The PCAC will provide advice to Academic Senate on the status of the Faculty Response and Action Plan.

## Section 9 - Student Progress

(238) Students are expected to maintain a satisfactory rate of progress through their program. This section describes the monitoring and support provided to assist their timely completion of a program.

### Review of Progress - Stage One

(239) Students will be identified within Stage One where they are not maintaining a satisfactory rate of progress in their program, and meet one of the following criteria where the student:

- a. has failed a course that has been identified as a compulsory program requirement that must be satisfactorily completed to progress in the program; and/or
- b. is an undergraduate domestic, offshore, or International student not studying on a student visa, and has failed or withdrawn from more than 50% of units in a term; and/or
- c. is an International student, studying on a student visa, and has failed 50% or more of units in a term or has withdrawn from one of more courses in a term, without Student Central approval.

(240) Student Central must:

- a. identify Stage One students as soon as possible after the release of official results in a term;
- b. record Stage One status against a student record within the student system;
- c. provide the relevant Program and Faculty Liaison Coordinator (or nominee) with a list of Stage One students;
- d. contact Stage One students via email on behalf of Academic Registrar providing the following information:
  - i. an indication of why they were identified as Review of Progress;
  - ii. advice about how to access assistance and support;
  - iii. link to the online Progress to Success Plan;
  - iv. recommendation to students to consider remedial actions (this may also be referred to as an intervention strategy for international students); and
  - v. a warning that failure to improve their academic performance in the subsequent term of enrolment will result in a formal requirement to explain why actions, including suspension or exclusion from the

program, should not be taken.

- e. identify and monitor students who, at the fully graded date for the term, are deemed to be potentially Stage One due to having:
  - i. a combination of I and/or S grades that upon resolution may deem the student is Stage One; or
  - ii. an I or S grade against a compulsory program component (CPC) that must be satisfactorily completed to progress in the program.
- f. contact and case manage as appropriate potentially Stage One students; and
- g. take action as appropriate following conversion of I & S grades of potential Stage One students.

(241) The relevant Program and Faculty Liaison Coordinator (or nominee) ensures that the list of Stage One students is distributed to the Program Convenors for information and action as appropriate. Copies are also forwarded to the Faculty Pro Vice-Chancellor (or nominee) and the Assistant Dean (Teaching and Learning).

## **Students of Academic Concern - Stage Two**

(242) The Faculty Progress and Appeals Committee is authorised by Academic Senate to conduct Academic Concern reviews on its behalf.

(243) Students will be identified within Stage Two and be required to respond to a Notice of Academic Concern if they:

- a. have failed, for a second time, a course identified as a compulsory program requirement, regardless of the period lapsed and/or
- b. are an undergraduate domestic, offshore or International student not studying on a student visa, and have failed or withdrawn from more than 50% of units in two consecutive terms, regardless of the program and any intervening periods of absence including leave of absence, suspension, exclusion or non-enrolment; and/or
- c. are an International student, studying on a student visa, and have failed 50% or more of their units in a term or have withdrawn from one or more courses in two consecutive terms without Student Central approval, regardless of program and any intervening periods of absence, including leave of absence, suspension or non-enrolment.

(244) Student Central must:

- a. identify Stage Two students as soon as possible after the fully graded date for the term;
- b. record the Stage Two status against a student record within the student system;
- c. contact Stage Two students via email on behalf of the Academic Registrar, providing the following information:
  - i. an indication of why they were identified as being of Academic Concern;
  - ii. advice about how to access assistance and support;
  - iii. the Academic Concern plan template;
  - iv. the due date for the Academic Concern plan;
  - v. advice that failure to submit Academic Concern plan may lead to exclusion or suspension from the program; and
  - vi. contact information for assistance and advice about any aspect of the Academic Concern process.
- d. provide the relevant Program and Faculty Liaison Coordinator (or nominee) with a list of the Notice of Academic Concern students;
- e. identify and monitor students who, at the fully graded date for the term, are deemed to be potential Stage Two due to having:
  - i. a combination of I and/or S grades that upon resolution may deem the student is of Academic Concern;or

- ii. an I or S grade against a compulsory program requirement which has previously been failed.
- f. contact as appropriate potential Stage Two students;
- g. take action as appropriate following conversion of I & S grades of potential Academic Concern students; and
- h. ensure the resolutions of the Faculty Progress and Appeals Committees are implemented.

(245) The relevant Program and Faculty Liaison Coordinator (or nominee) ensures that the list of Academic Concern students is distributed to the Program Convenors for information and action as required. Copies are also forwarded to the Faculty Pro Vice-Chancellor (or nominee) and the Assistant Dean (Teaching and Learning).

(246) Students of Academic Concern Stage Two will:

- a. be expected to provide an Academic Concern plan addressed outlining:
  - i. an explanation for their previous academic performance and supporting documentary evidence;
  - ii. relevant factors impacting on their performance, with supporting documentation if relevant;
  - iii. information about any remedial actions that they have undertaken since first being advised of their Stage One status;
  - iv. their prioritised selection of up to three courses for the subsequent term, noting that these courses must be consistent with the program in which they are enrolled; and
  - v. strategies that they plan to follow to improve their academic performance, if permitted to continue.

## **Faculty Progress and Appeals Committee**

(247) Each Faculty shall establish a Faculty Progress and Appeals Committee with the following membership:

- a. the Deputy Head of Faculty, or nominee, who shall Chair the Committee;
- b. the Assistant Dean (Teaching and Learning); of the Faculty;
- c. the Program and Faculty Liaison Coordinator for that Faculty;
- d. one other member from a pool of five Faculty academic staff determined by the Pro Vice-Chancellor; and
- e. co-opted members from within or outside the Faculty for particular cases as determined by the Chair.

(248) The Faculty Progress and Appeals Committee shall have responsibility for matters referred to it:

- a. under this manual;
- b. under the [Course Management and Assessment Procedure Manual – Coursework](#) (Section 20); and
- c. any other student progress or appeals issue forwarded to it by the Faculty Pro Vice-Chancellor. In such cases the Committee shall advise the Pro Vice-Chancellor on an appropriate course of action.

## **Faculty Progress and Appeals Committee Meetings**

(249) The Faculty Progress and Appeals Committee will meet to:

- a. consider Academic Concern plans provided by relevant students;
- b. make a determination based on each student's previous academic record and the information provided to the Committee;
- c. determine actions to be applied to students who have not provided an Academic Concern plan, typically suspension for one academic year; and
- d. resolve all students of Academic Concern matters in a timely manner.

(250) The Faculty Progress and Appeals Committee may determine that the student has:



- a. addressed concerns relating to their previous academic performance, and may resolve to permit the student to either:
  - i. continue in the program; or
  - ii. continue in the program with specified conditions e.g. enrolment limited to specific courses or number of units, participation in an academic support program;
- b. not adequately addressed their previous academic performance and may resolve to apply one of the following sanctions:
  - i. allow the student to continue in the program but with specified conditions e.g. enrolment limited to specific courses or number of units, participation in an academic support program; or
  - ii. suspend the student from the program or Faculty for a specified period of up to one academic year; or
  - iii. where a student has previously been at Stage Two, exclude the student from the program or Faculty for a period up to one academic year.

(251) When suspending or excluding a student, the Faculty Progress and Appeals Committee will consider the following written evidence:

- a. progress towards program completion;
- b. whether the student has been provided with advice and support in relation to academic performance and the Review of Progress process;
- c. whether the student has been provided with advice and support in relation to social and non-academic support, such as the Dean of Students and Office of Student Advocacy (if applicable);
- d. whether the student has been provided with advice and support in relation to Disability Services (if applicable);
- e. whether any conduct issues have been referred for appropriate investigation and management under the [Student Conduct Rule](#); and
- f. any mitigating circumstances that the student has claimed are relevant.

(252) The Faculty Progress and Appeals Committee may also recommend that the student consider attending counselling services, or undertake alternative study options.

(253) The Secretary to the Faculty Progress and Appeals Committee will ensure that each student is provided with official notification of the outcome of the Academic Concern review and information on their right to appeal if they consider correct process has not been followed (procedural grounds). This is sent via email, usually within seven working days of the review.

(254) The Academic Registrar will:

- a. record all decisions and act as required under [ESOS Act](#) and [National Code of Practice for Providers of Education and Training to Overseas Students 2018](#).
- b. report annually to Academic Senate, through the Teaching and Learning Committee, the decisions of the Faculty Progress and Appeals Committees; and
- c. recommend strategies to Academic Senate to support student progression.

## **Appeals Against Faculty Progress and Appeals Committee Academic Concern Review Outcome**

(255) A student may appeal a decision made under the following clause:

- a. Clause 250.

(256) The student may lodge an appeal within five (5) working days of notice of the outcome.

(257) An appeal may only be on one or more of the following grounds:

- a. evidence of a breach of this manual;
- b. evidence that the determination was affected by a conflict of interest; and/or
- c. new information has become available that could not reasonably have been provided by the student earlier, and it is probable that this information would have affected the determination.

(258) An appeal on the grounds of outcome alone will not be considered.

(259) An appeal must be made in writing and the grounds of appeal must be clearly set out.

(260) An appeal is to be made to an Appeal Officer, to be determined as follows:

<b>Original Decision Maker</b>	<b>Appeal Officer/Body</b>
Faculty Progress and Appeals Committee	Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Academic)

(261) Upon receipt of an appeal made in time in accordance with Clause 256, the Appeal Officer:

- a. will consider the information provided in the appeal, to the extent that the information relates to one of the grounds of appeal set out in clause 257;
- b. will consider material taken into account by the original decision maker in making their determination, which is relevant to the grounds of appeal;
- c. may request further information from the student or from the original decision maker; and will then:
  - i. dismiss the appeal; or
  - ii. uphold the appeal and reverse the original decision; or
  - iii. uphold the appeal and vary the original decision.

### **Determination is Final**

(262) The Appeal Officer will inform the Student in writing of the determination, including reasons for the determination.

(263) The determination of the Appeal Officer is final and there is no further avenue of appeal within the University.

(264) The student may have the right to further appeal outside the University.

## **Section 10 - Amendments to Programs**

### **Major Program Revision**

(265) A major revision to an existing coursework program is any change that:

- a. may require additional resources from the Faculty, another Faculty of the University, or support areas;
- b. requires consultation external to the University;
- c. includes 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 core or compulsory course lists, ensuring all program learning outcomes are included and revised mapping provided for consideration;

- e. alters program requirements (this includes the requirement to complete prerequisites or compulsory program requirements);
- f. alters the attendance pattern or mode of offer of an existing program (e.g. external/off shore, online) or adds or deletes a location of offer for an existing program;
- g. changes the admission and selection criteria for a program including the English language proficiency requirements for the program;
- h. is deemed by the relevant Faculty Pro Vice-Chancellor to be a major revision.

## **Approval of Major Revisions**

(266) Major revisions to academic programs must be submitted to and be approved by the PCAC under the authority of Academic Senate; and

(267) Where applicable, submissions must include mapping documentation along with transition arrangements (refer to Section 11 for information on Transition Arrangements) to ensure students are not disadvantaged. Submissions must also include advice from the Faculty which offers the program, indicating:

- a. the intention, nature and effect of the proposed change;
- b. whether there are significant changes in the structure of the program;
- c. the specific courses in the program that will be changed;
- d. whether the proposed change has an impact on a School, Faculty or other area of the University, and if so appropriate consultation must take place before submission of the proposal to the PCAC for consideration. Details of the consultation must be included in the submission;
- e. whether the proposed change has implications for more than one program, and if so appropriate consultation must take place before submission of the proposal to the PCAC for consideration. Details of the consultation must be included in the submission;
- f. whether the proposed change involves a change to the Organisation of the Academic year (from semester to trimesters or vice-versa); and
- g. any resource implications of the proposed change.

(268) Submission must be in a timely manner for consideration by the PCAC no later than its May 2019 meeting. For inclusion in the [UAC](#) Guide or the University's prospectus, a program must be approved no later than the April meeting of the PCAC.

(269) In exceptional circumstances, submissions will be considered by the PCAC post the May 2019 meeting for implementation in 2020. These amendments may not appear in advertising materials if publication timelines have passed. Changes made after the May meeting of the PCAC will not be timetabled clash free and may not be allocated to preferred facilities or rooms. Faculties are responsible for promulgation to prospective students including UAC applicants and school leavers.

## **Notifying Staff and Students**

(270) The Assistant Dean (Teaching and Learning)s, and the Program Convenor of the program working with the Program and Faculty Liaison Coordinator is responsible for notifying relevant Faculty(ies), and other relevant staff of any impact caused by a major revision.

(271) The relevant Program and Faculty Liaison Coordinator will notify the Academic Registrar and students of any impact caused by a major program revision.

## **Discontinuation of a Program**

(272) Prior to 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 applicants in accordance with the [ESOS legislation](#).

## **When to Create a New Program Proposal**

(273) A major revision to an existing coursework program may result in the need to establish 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 its level and/or length (volume of learning) requiring allocation of a new program code.

(274) A Business Case may be required for the establishment of a new program resulting from the major revision of an existing program(s). Refer to clauses 22-26.

## **Minor Program Revisions**

(275) A minor revision to an existing coursework 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 Identity/Learning Outcome Mapping;
- d. involves changes to Nustar that do not impact on the program delivery, including amendments to the following Nustar text fields:
  - i. program description;
  - ii. Credit transfer;
  - iii. honours/additional Information;
  - iv. accrediting body;
  - v. transition requirements;
  - vi. international students;
  - vii. students with special needs;
- e. involves the addition and/or deletion of a course(s) to a directed course list;
- f. changes the nomenclature or code of a course(s) in a program;
- g. changes the descriptors used for marketing purposes.

## **Implementation of Minor Revision**

(276) The Quality Assurance, Teaching and Learning Officer(s) are responsible for the implementation of minor revisions.

## **Approval of Minor Revision**

(277) Minor program revisions are approved by the relevant Faculty Board on the recommendation of the Faculty Teaching and Learning Committee and may be submitted on a standard committee coversheet. A Nustar Report is not required.

(278) Faculty Boards are required to provide the PCAC with an annual report on the minor program revisions approved by the Faculty Board.

(279) The Pro Vice-Chancellor (or nominee) is authorised to approve minor program revisions on a case by case for specific students or a specific program. This may include substitution of courses within a directed course list.

(280) The 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.

### **Notifying Staff and Students**

(281) The Assistant Dean (Teaching and Learning) are responsible for notifying relevant Faculty(ies), and other relevant staff of any impact caused by a minor revision.

(282) The relevant Program and Faculty Liaison Coordinator will notify the Academic Registrar and students of any impact caused by a minor program revision.

## **Section 11 - Managing Transition**

### **Considerations**

(283) New programs for introduction in the following year should be approved by the PCAC by its May meeting of the preceding year. Major program revisions must be approved by the May meeting of the PCAC for implementation in the following year. There are a number of timelines and deadlines associated with these meetings. Contact the relevant Teaching and Learning Officer in each Faculty or the Secretary, PCAC.

(284) In managing transition all proposals for amendments should include information on:

- a. number of students impacted;
- b. possible disadvantages;
- c. impact on accreditation;
- d. impact on pipeline or pathway students, including articulation arrangements;
- e. anticipated duration of any teach out arrangements; and
- f. details of any impact on other Faculties or areas of the University.

(285) If accreditation is applicable to the program, this will need to be considered prior to revising the program, including any timeline, re-accreditation and graduate employability/registration issues.

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

(287) 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.

(288) It may not be possible for all students to transfer from the old program to the new program. This will depend on the extent of the program revisions and where the students are up to in their current studies, with consideration for the different cohorts, including part-time students and students on leave of absence. Analysis of the current cohort of students will be required.

(289) 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 the revision / new program. This will ensure that students who are unable to transfer to the new program are able to complete their studies under the old program, if necessary.

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

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

(292) Continuing students should not be required to extend the length of time to complete their degree because of a program revision.

(293) The Faculty should consult with International Admissions regarding international students in the application pipeline and what, if any, impact the new or revised program will have. Note: the Faculty will need to discuss with Newcastle International their obligations under [ESOS](#) for applicants who have already been made and accepted an offer into the current program.

(294) For exceptional cases that may fall outside of these guidelines, consultation with the Associate Director, Student and Academic Business may be required.

## **Processes**

### **New Program (new program code)**

(295) If a new program is being developed and replacing an old program, the old program needs to be discontinued. Only continuing students can remain in the old program, with no further (new) intake.

(296) A New Program Information Sheet will need to be completed for NUSTAR, including associated Australian Higher Education Graduation Statement (AHEGS) information. If the new program is to be offered to 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 where a new award is required, this has been established by Academic Senate.

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

(298) Ideally, all continuing students should be transferred to the new 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 should be kept to a minimum. This may involve some individually determined transitional arrangements, that is, 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 an individually determined set of courses to complete in the student's circumstance.

(299) Subject to approval of the transition arrangements by PCAC, students whose situation has been determined by the Program Convenor and Program and Faculty Liaison Coordinator (PFLC) as suitable and preferable to transfer to the new program will be transferred automatically. Credit will be automatically applied to the student's record.

(300) Students deemed eligible to transfer will be transferred internally by staff in Admissions and Enrolments and Student Systems following the provision of a confirmed list of transferring students supplied to the Manager, Admissions and Enrolments by the relevant Program and Faculty Liaison Coordinator (PFLC).

(301) The Program Handbook is to be updated by 1st October the year prior to the new program being offered, including any transition arrangements.

## **Revised Program (existing program code)**

(302) Ideally, all continuing students should be transferred to the 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.

(303) 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. This may involve individually determined transitional arrangements, that is, if the new program structure is suitable for an existing student with only a single or small number of courses that 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 an individually determined set of courses to complete in the student's circumstance.

(304) The Program Handbook is to be updated by 1st October the year prior to the revised program being offered, including all transition arrangements as approved by PCAC. Transition arrangements must include the statement "If you need additional information on the transition arrangements, please contact your Program Advisor".

## **Communication and Record Keeping**

(305) Students are to be advised about a new program or revision to their program with a personalised letter or other personalised communication. General communications may also occur to cohorts through email, student portal, blackboard, forums. The type of communication will depend on the extent of the changes. All communication is to be approved by the Program Convenor, and relevant PFLC.

(306) All staff in relevant areas are to be advised in writing by the Program and Faculty Liaison Coordinator in regards to a new program or revised program. Relevant areas include Student Recruitment, Admissions, Enrolments, UoN Global and Student Systems.

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

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

(309) All correspondence with students and/or cohorts and relevant advice is to be recorded via transcript text where applicable, e.g. "Transition: Amended program structure applies from 1 January 2014. On 1/2/14 student advised via email on courses required for completion - see reference TRIM doc xxx/14." (to be used in the case of a significant number of courses left to complete) or "Amended program structure applies from 1 January 2014. Transition: On 1/2/14 student advised via email that they were required to complete ABCD3456, ABCD4666 and ABCD4777" to be used in the case where a small number of courses are remaining to complete under the new arrangements.

(310) 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 sent to the Secretary, PCAC by the PFLC for retention on the central program files within TRIM.

# **Section 12 - Alignment between Programs and the University Strategic Plan**

(311) From time to time Academic Senate will develop procedures to ensure that the programs on offer align to the University of Newcastle Strategic Plan.

(312) The details of the procedures are included in this section as required.

## Section 13 - Relaxing Provision

(313) To provide for exceptional circumstances arising in any particular case, the Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Academic) on the recommendation of the relevant Pro Vice-Chancellors may relax any provision of this procedure manual.

## Section 14 - Appendices

(314) Appendix 1 - Outcome Mapping Templates:

- a. Outcome Mapping Template - Level 5 Diploma
- b. Outcome Mapping Template - Level 6 Advanced Diploma
- c. Outcome Mapping Template - Level 6 Associate Degree
- d. Outcome Mapping Template - Level 7 Bachelor
- e. Outcome Mapping Template - Level 8 Graduate Certificate
- f. Outcome Mapping Template - Level 8 Graduate Diploma
- g. Outcome Mapping Template - Level 8 Honours
- h. Outcome Mapping Template - Level 9 Masters Coursework
- i. Outcome Mapping Template - Level 9 Masters Extended
- j. Outcome Mapping Template - Level 9 Masters Research
- k. Outcome Mapping Template - Level 10 Doctoral Degree Professional
- l. Outcome Mapping Template - Level 10 Doctoral Degree Research

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

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

(317) Annual Program Report Template

(318) Annual Program Report Action Plan Template

(319) External Program Review Self-Review Report Template

(320) Annual Course Alignment Report Template

(321) Annual Staffing Profile Report Template

(322) External Program Review Generic Terms of Reference

(323) Faculty Response and Action Plan Template

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

(325) Faculty Credit Variances



## Status and Details

<b>Status</b>	Historic
<b>Effective Date</b>	1st January 2019
<b>Review Date</b>	18th December 2019
<b>Approval Authority</b>	Academic Senate
<b>Approval Date</b>	28th November 2018
<b>Expiry Date</b>	26th June 2019
<b>Responsible Executive</b>	Belinda Tynan Senior Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Academic)
<b>Enquiries Contact</b>	John Radvan Senior Manager, Academic Governance & Compliance

## Glossary Terms and Definitions

**"Academic Senate"** - The Academic Senate of the University as described in the University of Newcastle Act 1989.

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

**"Council"** - The governing authority of the University established under section 8A of the University of Newcastle Act 1989.

**"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.

**"Prerequisite"** - A condition or requirement which must be fulfilled for enrolment to a course.

**"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.

**"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.

**"Working day"** - Any day other than Saturday, Sunday, or a public holiday in Newcastle, on which business may be conducted.

**"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.

**"Academic year"** - The period 1 January to 31 December in a given year.

**"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.

**"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.

**"Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL)"** - Means an assessment of an individual's prior learning to determine where credit will be granted. RPL includes formal, informal, and non-formal learning.

**"Specified credit"** - Is credit granted towards specific courses of a program of study.

**"Unspecified credit"** - Is credit granted towards directed or elective courses of a program of study.

**"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.

**"Disability"** - As defined by the Disability Discrimination Act 1992 (Cth) (as amended from time to time, or as per any replacing legislation).

**"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.

**"Due date"** - The date specified in the course outline when an assessment item is to be submitted for marking or

another date that may be set by the Course Coordinator.

**"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.

**"Exemption"** - When referring to a student's learning pathway, exemption means being excused from undertaking preparatory subjects, units, modules or competencies in a course or program, while still being required to undertake the same number of subjects, units, modules or competencies as would be completed if an exemption had not been granted. 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.

**"Officer"** - Has the meaning given in the Corporations Act 2001 (Cth), or any replacing legislation.

**"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.

**"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.

**"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.

**"Third party"** - A person or group other than the University or any of the University's partner institutions.

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

**"Unit value"** - The unit value for the course: 5,10, 15, 20, 25, 30, 35, 40, 50, 60, 70 or 80 units.

**"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.