Program Management Procedure Manual - Coursework

Foreword

(1) This manual supports the [Governance Rule](#), the [Awards and Graduation Policy](#) and their associated Schedules. In the event of an inconsistency between lower level policy documents and a Rule(s) or Schedule to the Rule(s), the Rule(s) made by Council prevails to the extent of the inconsistency.

(2) In the event of an inconsistency between a policy document approved by Academic Senate and a College policy, procedure or guideline, the policy document approved by 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 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 the staff of the University of Newcastle (University) when designing, managing, and reviewing programs, and when recommending the introduction or discontinuation of coursework programs offered by the University, and to provide information to students of the University.

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

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

(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 may be changed in that year if there are changes to external legislation or urgent amendments approved by the President Academic Senate.

Communication with Students

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

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

Further Information for Staff and Students

(11) For assistance or further information about the manual, please email academicpolicy@newcastle.edu.au.

Authorising Policy

(12) This manual has been developed in accordance with the [Awards and Graduation Policy](#) and its relevant schedules.

(13) The following guiding principles, established by Academic Senate must be met for all programs offered by the University:

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

Section 1 - Program Development

Nomenclature

(14) 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

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

Planning a New Program

(16) 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](#); and
        iii. relevant University policies;
   b. be an enabling program, a non award program, or be linked to an existing or new award;
   c. align with the strategic directions of the University as described in the current [University Strategic Plan](#);
   d. ensure a breadth of expertise and stakeholder input by the inclusion of external representatives in the program planning team; and
   e. ensure input from other colleges and divisions which may be involved in or affected by the introduction of the

new program.

Business Case

(17) The College Pro Vice-Chancellor will be required to develop a full business case for submission to Portfolio Strategy Group (PSG), using the template, for any proposed program which will:

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

(18) The College Pro Vice-Chancellor may be required, on advice from the Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Academic) and Vice President, to develop an abbreviated business case, using the template, for submission to the PSG for any:

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

(19) The Chair of PSG may endorse business cases between meetings of the PSG and in such cases the business case will be noted at the next meeting.

(20) Full or abbreviated business cases, or the waiver of the requirement for these, will be considered for approval by the Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Academic) and Vice President on the recommendation of the PSG.

(21) Approved business cases associated with programs will be provided by the Secretary to the Portfolio Strategy Group to the Secretary to the Program and Course Approval Committee (PCAC).

(22) Once a business case associated with a program is approved, the program planning process must be undertaken by the relevant Pro Vice-Chancellor.

Approval for Inclusion in the University's Profile

(23) The approval of the associated business case will also include approval of the program to be included in the University's profile.

Program Planning Process for New Programs

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

a. the rationale for the new program and its relationship to the College and University Strategic Plan;
b. a promotion and recruitment strategy, including sufficient time to market the program post-approval;
c. evaluation and accreditation of the program by industry and/or professional body representatives;
d. the Graduate Identity Mapping of the program (see associated information);
e. the ability of the program to support College plans and meet institutional targets associated with equity and

diversity;

f. 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.
g. the mode(s) of delivery of the program;
h. frequency of program intake for each target cohort;
i. campuses and locations where the program will be offered;
j. whether the program and its courses will be offered in semesters, trimesters or other delivery arrangements;
k. any proposed articulation and credit transfer arrangements;
l. whether the program and courses can be supported within the existing library and information technology (IT) budgets or the College/Colleges are intending to contribute funding; and
m. admission requirements including any special selection procedures.

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

Consultation

(26) The relevant Pro Vice-Chancellor and Assistant Dean (Teaching and Learning) for the College proposing the program are responsible for oversight of the program approval process and must ensure:

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

Approval of Academic Content

(27) The academic content of new courses associated with new programs must be endorsed by the relevant College Board(s) and submitted to the PCAC for approval, and added to the University's Course Availability List (CAL), by no later than May in the year before the first offering. For new programs to be included in the undergraduate UAC guide for the following year, new programs should be submitted to the February 2021 meeting of the PCAC.

(28) The creation and academic content of new programs must be approved by the PCAC on behalf of the Academic Senate after approval of the business case.

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

Program Documentation

(30) Programs approved by the PCAC must be recorded in the relevant schedules to the Awards and Graduation Policy and the University AQF Qualification Register.

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(31) Specific award qualification requirements, including the volume of learning, must be listed in the relevant schedule to the [Awards and Graduation Policy](#).

(32) The official program documentation must be made available in NUSTAR.

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

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

Non-AQF Compliant Programs

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

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

Resourcing of Programs

(36) The resourcing of programs is the responsibility of the relevant College Pro Vice-Chancellor. Where the program is offered by a third party provider, this responsibility extends to ensuring that the provider has allocated adequate resources to the library, IT and other services to provide comparable support students to that available to students studying at the Callaghan campus.

Fees

(37) The Vice-Chancellor is authorised to approve or alter tuition fees annually in line with the principles approved by the Council.

Authority to Promote a New Program

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

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

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

Approval to CRICOS Register an Existing Program

(41) A proposal to CRICOS register an existing program that is to be offered to international students onshore must be approved by the PCAC to ensure the University meets the requirements of the [Education Services for Overseas Students (ESOS) Act 2000 (Cth)](#) and [National Code of Practice for Providers of Education and Training to Overseas](#)

Students 2018, and the decision to commence intake of international onshore students aligns with the strategic direction of the University.

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

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

Section 2 - Structure of Coursework Programs

Principles of Coursework Program Design – Undergraduate Programs

(43) Undergraduate coursework program must ensure that graduates will:

a. meet the graduate identity profile and the generic skills defined by the College and the University. The graduate attribute and generic skill mapping documentation must be approved by the PCAC on behalf of Academic Senate;
b. have their perspectives and knowledge extended beyond a single field of study and/or professional area through the completion of a minimum of one elective;
c. study course content that is current, sufficiently challenging and addressed in the depth and breadth required to meet University and relevant external requirements; and
d. have had the opportunity to:
    i. receive recognition for relevant previous learning;
    ii. participate in different modes of educational delivery;
    iii. investigate or research topics both independently and co-operatively; and
    iv. undertake "engaged learning" opportunities, such as leadership courses, overseas exchange programs or similar, that contribute to their breadth of experience and knowledge.

Undergraduate Program Structures

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

(45) A 120 unit undergraduate coursework program will comply with the requirements as set out in the Advanced Diploma Awards and Programs Schedule.

(46) A 160 unit undergraduate coursework program will comply with the requirements as set out in the Associate Degree Awards and Programs Schedule.

(47) A 240 unit undergraduate coursework program will comply with the requirements as set out in the Bachelor (240 unit) Awards and Programs Schedule.

(48) A 320 unit undergraduate coursework program will comply with the requirements as set out in the Bachelor (320 unit) Awards and Program Schedule.

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

(50) The structure of a combined degree will require the completion of each separate program component per clauses

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51-59. See also 'Combined Degree Principles' below.

Combined Degree Principles

(51) The core and minimum requirements for each component program must be met. This should be done exploiting overlaps to ensure that the duration of the combined degree is less than the sum of the two component programs and ensuring that any program accreditation 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.

(52) Any courses in the programs that have overlapping content should be assessed 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 any relevant University policy on courses and assessment.

(53) Each combined degree must be approved by the PCAC.

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

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

(56) This means that a student will complete the:

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

(57) The volume of learning of two combined degrees should be less than two separate degrees. For example:

a. 1+1 year programs (160 units if taken separately), the combined degree should normally be 120 units, i.e. volume of learning equivalent to 1.5 years;
b. 2+2 year programs (320 units if taken separately), the combined degree should normally be 240 units, i.e. volume of learning equivalent to 3 years;
c. 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;
d. 4+3 year programs (560 units if taken separately), the combined degree award should normally be 400 units, i.e. volume of learning equivalent to 5 years;
e. 4+4 year programs (640 units if taken separately), the combined degree award should normally be 480 units, i.e. volume of learning equivalent to 6 years;

(58) If units vary from those described above, the relevant volume of learning information must be provided in

published combined degree program information.

Program Listing

(59) 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

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

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

Major

(62) Majors may only be available in undergraduate programs.

(63) Where there is no specific major then the core courses may form a major.

(64) Details of the requirements of a major are outlined in the relevant Awards and Programs Schedule.

(65) An undergraduate Diploma (80 units) may offer a major, the requirements of a major within an undergraduate Diploma are outlined in the relevant Awards and Programs Schedule.

(66) Only majors approved by the PCAC as part of the program approval process will be included on an official academic transcript.

Double Major

(67) 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.

Specialisation

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

(69) Specialisations approved by the PCAC as part of the program approval process will be included on the official academic transcript.

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

(71) A specialisation cannot include any undergraduate courses.

Minor

(72) A minor is a 40 unit sequence of courses that may be offered within an undergraduate program, providing a depth of study in a second or third area of specialisation. Minors must be approved by the PCAC as part of the program approval process.

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

Compulsory Program Requirements

(74) A compulsory program requirement is a course or other element in a program that 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.

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

(76) Compulsory program requirements are approved by the PCAC as part of the program approval process.

Requisites

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

Delivery of Content

(78) Where a program is offered in different modes or locations the student learning outcomes must be constant across all modes and locations.

(79) Modes include:

    a. face-to-face. Programs are defined as face-to-face where at least two-thirds of the courses within the program are taught face-to-face;

    b. online. An online program is delivered through online technology and program support is provided through this technology. There is no requirement for a student admitted to such a program to physically attend any form of teaching or learning sessions or face-to-face formal examinations.

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

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

    a. locations of offer:

        i. the PCAC is responsible for the approval of programs offered at each location.

    b. academic terms:

        i. all term dates (standard and non-standard) must be approved by the Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Academic) and Vice President or Pro Vice-Chancellor Education Innovation. 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 College Pro Vice-Chancellor is responsible for ensuring a comparable standard of delivery of content to students and full compliance with the relevant delegations, rules, policies and procedures of the University and the Higher Education Standards Framework.

Maximum Time for Completing a Program

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

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(83) The PCAC may approve exceptions to the maximum time for completion to set a lesser maximum time for a specific program or programs.

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

Professional Accreditation

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

(86) 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 College Pro Vice-Chancellor.

Section 3 - Graduate Identity Clusters

(87) A set of three Graduate Identity clusters have been formulated, as seen in the University of Newcastle Graduate Identity Model. 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. The 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 the 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.

(88) The 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 Graduate Identity and its employability strategy.

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

Approval and Auditing – Graduate Identity Clusters

(90) The PCAC approve the Graduate Identity cluster mapping for each program, as part of the program approval or a

major program revision, and will oversee and monitor program compliance with the Graduate Identity clusters for all academic programs offered by the University.

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

Table 1: The Graduate Identity Cluster Descriptors

Academically Distinct ~ Career Ready
University 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.
Locally Engaged ~ Globally Aware
University 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.
Entrepreneurial Spirit ~ Socially Responsible
University 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.

Generic Skills

(92) Within each of the overarching Graduate Identity clusters there is a combination of six overlapping skills and abilities:

a. Communication: Graduates of the University will be able to utilise:

   i. oral; and

   ii. written communication 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 will be able to work independently, they should 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 will be able to locate, analyse, evaluate and synthesise information from a wide variety of sources;

d. ability to use technology: graduates of the University will be 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 will be 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 will have the curiosity to explore, create, and be imaginative when presenting alternative solutions.

Mapping

(93) 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).

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

Section 4 - Engaged Learning

Outbound Student Mobility Experiences

(95) Details about outbound student mobility experiences can be found in the [Outbound Student Mobility Procedure](#).

Placement

(96) 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.

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

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

(98) Depending on the discipline area the WIL or RIL experience may be off or on campus, real or simulated, but must involve clearly stated outcomes and assessment, and be consistent with quality teaching and learning.

Section 5 - Credit Transfer and Articulation

(99) 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.

(100) In the context of this section, Authorised Officer refers to the designated Student Central staff member, with overall responsibility for processing the credit applications and corresponding outcomes for students. Other Authorised Officers include:

Table 2 – Credit transfer and articulation Authorised Officers

Authorised Officer	Responsibility
Program Convenor	Consider and determine the outcome of credit applications on a case by case basis for specified and unspecified courses. Determining if the outcomes of a credit application may not be used as a precedent.
Assistant Dean (Teaching and Learning)	Consider and determine the outcome of credit applications on a case by case basis for specified and unspecified courses, in the absence or in place of the Program Convenor on a case by case basis for specified and unspecified courses.
College Pro Vice-Chancellor as Chair of College Board	Approval of domestic and international articulation agreements. Determine appeals for decisions by Program Convenor. Approve College Credit Variances to be included in College Credit Variances of this manual (see clause 121).
Relevant Global and Student Central Staff	Grant credit in line with approved articulation arrangements and precedents. Grant credit for identical courses taken at the University subject to conditions listed in Clause 110. Grant up to 20 units of unspecified elective credit at 1000 level and 20 units of unspecified elective credit at 2000 level for completed AQF Diplomas and Advanced Diplomas, subject to conditions listed in clause 118. Grant unspecified credit for elective courses for studies completed at an equivalent level at an Australian higher education or equivalent institution. Notify students of Program Convenor determinations. Rescind credit at the request of the student. Rescind credit where students are over-enrolled. Reject any applications that fall outside of the eligibility criteria set out in this Manual for credit, including applications for cross-institutional enrolment. Recording and maintaining approved articulation arrangements in the credit transfer precedent database.

Credit

Credit Principles

(101) The key principles of credit provisions are:

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

(102) Provisions for 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 and these will be listed in the appendix to the relevant Award and Program Schedule or within the relevant approved program schedule.

(103) Credit may be granted for 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, deemed to be at an appropriate academic level, with demonstrated comparable or equivalent:

   a. learning outcomes;

b. volume of learning;

c. content; and

d. learning and assessment approaches.

(104) Where undertaken at an appropriate academic level, credit may be granted for courses and awards completed at:

a. recognised Australian higher education institutions;

b. recognised overseas tertiary institutions;

c. registered Australian private providers of accredited tertiary education courses; and

d. registered Australian Education and Training providers.

(105) 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.

(106) Credit will not be granted for:

a. qualifications equivalent to AQF Level 3 or below; or

b. qualifications equivalent to AQF Level 4, except where an articulation arrangement has been approved by the Program and Course Approval Committee; or

c. Certificates of Participation or Statements of Attainment, unless undertaken in an AQF or a non-AQF compliant program as per clause 104; or

d. incomplete AQF Diplomas or Advanced Diplomas which were undertaken at a VET or private provider;

e. professional experience or employment, except where professional experience is explicitly included in an admission pathway that leads to a reduction in the volume of learning required for the postgraduate program; or

f. any course that is substantially equivalent to one that the student has previously counted towards the same award.

(107) AQF Certificates at Level 4 and below, 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.

(108) Subject to individual program schedules or exceptions approved by the relevant College Pro Vice-Chancellor and listed in College Credit Variances of this manual, there is no maximum credit transfer for students who transfer from one incomplete University of Newcastle program/award to another at the same career level (i.e. undergraduate to undergraduate or postgraduate to postgraduate). 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.

(109) Credit may be granted 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. do not exceed any limitations as set out in the relevant Schedules or variances listed in College Credit

Variances of this manual unless the credit is for students transferring from an incomplete University 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.

(110) Undergraduate courses will not count as credit in postgraduate programs, except where undergraduate courses are explicitly included in the program or where the undergraduate qualification is included as an admission pathway that leads to a reduction in the volume of learning required for the postgraduate program.

(111) 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.

(112) 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.

Specified Credit

(113) 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 College, and where the level is deemed to be equivalent to a University of Newcastle course or courses.

(114) 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 College Pro Vice-Chancellor as listed in College Credit Variances of this manual.

(115) 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.

Unspecified Credit

(116) Unspecified credit may be granted for the successful completion of a specific course or courses deemed to be at an appropriate level, this credit will usually count only for electives, or where deemed appropriate by the Program Convenor, as directed course credit.

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

(118) 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.

Credit for combined programs

(119) Credit for combined programs may be granted in accordance with the Combined Program Principles (clauses 51-59) in this manual. Credit may be limited depending on the structure of the combined program.

College Credit Variances

(120) The College Pro Vice-Chancellor, as Chair of the relevant College Board may approve College specific or program specific variances which are listed in the College Credit Variances of this manual, for the granting of credit towards courses within programs for which they have responsibility, ensuring such variances are compliant with this manual. College 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 College;

c. limitation on the granting of credit for particular programs; and

d. limitation on the granting of credit for core and directed courses.

Currency of approval for credit

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

(122) Where credit approval has lapsed, the applicant may reapply, the original approval is not guaranteed.

Time Limit on Credit

(123) 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 College Credit Variances of this manual.

Assessing and Determining Credit

(124) Eligibility for credit will be determined based on the University's assessment of an individual's application (made using the prescribed forms), and information they have provided about prior study or learning.

(125) In making credit determinations, the following will be considered:

a. the currency of course content;

b. the recommendation from the relevant Heads of School; and

c. evidence of relevant work experience.

(126) The relevant Program Convenor is responsible for assessing credit applications in accordance with the provisions of this manual, including the College Credit Variances, and will:

a. determine the credit to be granted (specified and/or unspecified);

b. seek 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. approve extensions of the time limit on credit in appropriate cases; and

d. indicate if the credit granted should be marked as a non-precedent.

(127) All credit determination will be utilised as a credit precedent unless designated as a non-precedent by the Program Convenor at the time of approval.

(128) All students who are granted credit will be required to complete at least 40 units:

a. at the 2000/3000 level in a 160 unit undergraduate program;

b. at the 3000 level in a 240 unit undergraduate program; or

c. at the 4000 level in a 320 unit, or greater, undergraduate program.

Recognition of Prior Learning

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

(130) 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 the program.

(131) The assessment of an application for RPL does not guarantee admission to a program at the University.

(132) RPL may be used to grant exemptions in a program. In such circumstances, the Program Convenor must identify the courses required in place of the exempted course/s.

(133) RPL can be awarded as specified or unspecified credit to reduce the volume of learning for the applicable program, unless explicitly included in an admission pathway that leads to a reduction in the volume of learning required for a postgraduate program.

Cross-Institutional Credit

(134) International students on articulation arrangements must complete all remaining courses at the University. Articulation students will not be permitted to undertake any cross-institutional enrolment unless approved by the relevant College Pro Vice-Chancellor.

(135) Students must apply, pay any applicable fees, and receive formal written permission from the University before enrolling at another institution.

(136) 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.

(137) Assessment for cross-institutional credit will be approved by the relevant Program Convenor under clauses 135-142 and clauses 102-129. Students cannot 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 the University and has been granted maximum credit they will be ineligible to undertake cross-institutional study.

(138) 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. The relevant College Pro Vice-Chancellor is authorised to approve cross-institutional study exceeding the 10 unit maximum where the student would be significantly disadvantaged.

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

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

(141) The provisions listed in clauses 139-140 do not apply to students on study abroad or exchange. However, students must apply for credit as outlined in the [Outbound Student Mobility Procedure](#).

Articulation Arrangements

(142) The relevant College Board may approve articulation arrangements with recognised overseas tertiary institutions, registered private providers of accredited tertiary education courses, and Australian registered providers in the Vocational Education and Training (VET) sector where the arrangement is for 50% credit or less. PCAC must approve articulation arrangements for more than 50% credit. The College Board or PCAC must consult with the Deputy Vice-Chancellor Global for international articulation agreements.

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

(144) Domestic private Registered Training Organisations (RTOs) and private VET Colleges wishing to have credit

articulation arrangements with the University are required to lodge an application through the Pro Vice-Chancellor Student Experience and Academic Registrar.

(145) The Pro Vice-Chancellor Student Experience and Academic Registrar will refer all such applications to the relevant Pro Vice-Chancellor to make a determination and advise the RTO of the outcome.

(146) Where articulation arrangements have been approved, they may be applied by the relevant authorised officer, listed in table 2, without additional approval.

(147) The relevant College Board Chair will report approved articulation arrangements to the Pro Vice-Chancellor Student Experience and Academic Registrar for inclusion in the credit transfer precedent database.

(148) All new credit transfer and articulation agreements must be developed following 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 for qualifications in the same or related discipline:

  a. 120 units credit for an AQF level 6 qualification into a 3 year Bachelor Degree or a;
  b. 4 year Bachelor or Bachelor (Honours)Degree;
  c. 80 units credit for an AQF level 5 qualification into a 3 year Bachelor Degree or 4 year Bachelor or Bachelor (Honours) Degree.

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

Review of Credit Precedents and Articulation Arrangements

(150) 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.

(151) Articulation arrangements are reviewed on expiry, and must be renegotiated by the relevant College when a program undergoes a major or, minor program revision or in response to the outcomes of an external program review. Agreements with:

  a. Australian providers expire after seven years;
  b. international providers, memoranda of understanding, letters of credit and pathway arrangements are valid until the agreement expires. The duration of individual arrangements may vary.

Relinquishing Credit Transfer

(152) A domestic student may request in writing that credit previously granted not count towards their program. The relevant authorised officer will process this request and notify the student of the amendment.

(153) An international student studying on a student visa must seek permission from the Pro Vice-Chancellor Student Experience and Academic Registrar to relinquish credit. If the request will impact on the student's visa the request is likely to be denied.

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

Rescission of credit

(155) 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 Pro Vice-Chancellor Student Experience and Academic Registrar.

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

Appeals Against Decisions on Credit

Process

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

(158) The student may appeal within five working days of notice of the determination of credit.

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

a. evidence of a breach of the requirements of this manual;

b. evidence that the determination was affected by a Conflict of Interest (refer to [Conflict 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.

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

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

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

Original Decision Maker	Appeal Officer
Admissions teams and Academic Program Advisors in Student Central	Pro Vice-Chancellor Student Experience and Academic Registrar
Program Convenor	Relevant College Pro Vice-Chancellor
Head of School	Relevant College Pro Vice-Chancellor
Pro Vice-Chancellor Student Experience and Academic Registrar	Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Academic) and Vice President
Relevant College Pro Vice-Chancellor	Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Academic) and Vice President

(163) 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 160;

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 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

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

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

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

Section 6 - Management and Quality Assurance

Program Convenor

Definition and Appointment

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

a. each program is required to have a duly appointed Program Convenor;

b. where more than one College is involved in a program (for example, combined programs) the appointment of the Program Convenor should be based on decisions of the relevant Pro Vice-Chancellors;

c. where a program is offered on several 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 a Level C Academic or above;

e. the term of office of a Program Convenor will be determined by the Pro Vice-Chancellor 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 before the start of any teaching period; and

h. each Pro Vice-Chancellor will maintain a list of Program Convenors within their College as a quality assurance mechanism when managing programs.

Roles and Responsibilities

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

Program Management

(169) The Program Convenor as Chair of the Program Management Group is responsible for:

a. writing the Annual Report on Program(s) for submission to the College Board meeting held in the second quarter of the calendar year. Refer to clauses 175-189 – 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 for the program as directed by the Pro Vice-Chancellor.

Program Quality

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

a. assisting and advising 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 the third party provider complies with any academic contractual agreements;

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b. supporting peer review of teaching into the program;

c. ensuring that program content meets the program learning outcomes, and that course objectives are consistent with Graduate Learning Outcomes (Profile Statements and Attribute) Mapping;

d. identifying possible student timetable issues;

e. identifying possible issues in the recommended enrolment pattern for the program;

f. monitoring the program and addressing issues that 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 under this manual.

Student Matters

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

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

g. making and keeping appropriate written or electronic records of advice provided to students.

Program Management Groups

(172) All programs are required to have a Program Management Group (see Generic Program Management Group Terms of Reference).

External (Professional or Industry) Advisory Groups

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

Programs – Annual Program Reports

(174) An Annual Program Report on the performance of each academic program over the previous year will be prepared for the relevant College Board by the Program Convenor. The Annual Program Report for each program will usually be submitted to College Board in Quarter 2 in the year following delivery.

(175) To promote efficiencies and to achieve the best outcome from the review process, programs that are similar should be reported in a single document. (When a program has undertaken an external program review, Annual Program Reports are not required for the year following that external program review, as Annual Program Reports are for the previous academic year).

(176) The Office of the Pro Vice-Chancellor Education Innovation will facilitate school level workshops in Quarter 1 and

Quarter 3 to support the Annual Program Report process and to ensure it is integrated into the University's quality assurance framework, including the School Improvement Plan process. This will ensure patterns of performance at a School, College and University level are identified and that issues are addressed.

(177) Within the Quarter 1 workshop Program Convenors will be guided to:

a. consider the draft Annual Program Reports produced by the Program Convenors;
b. discuss and share areas and aspects of best practice; and
c. identify areas requiring improvement or further investigation.

(178) At the start of Quarter 3 each year, Program Convenors will be required to submit to the Office of the Pro Vice-Chancellor Education Innovation a brief report detailing their progress in implementing the action plan resulting from each Annual Program Report.

(179) Within the Quarter 3 workshop Program Convenors will be guided to:

a. report on the implementation of the action plan resulting from each Annual Program Report;
b. consider any updated actions or outcomes;
c. discuss and share areas of aspects of best practice; and
d. identify areas requiring improvement or further investigation.

(180) The Annual Program Report will be produced by the Program Convenor in liaison with relevant academics, and College and School professional staff, using the Annual Program Report Template.

(181) The final Annual Program Report will be:

a. evidence-based and include supporting data. For example, data indicating student demand, success, and satisfaction levels;
b. submitted to the relevant College Teaching and Learning Committee and College Board;
c. forwarded to the Office of the Pro Vice-Chancellor Education Innovation after submission to the relevant College Board;
d. retained by the University through the Governance and Assurance Services for use in external program reviews.

(182) A summary report of all programs offered by the College including any action plans will be submitted to the Teaching and Learning Committee, for consideration. This will be facilitated by the Office of the Pro Vice-Chancellor Education Innovation, in consultation with the Assistant Dean (Teaching and Learning) of the relevant College.

(183) The Office of the Pro Vice-Chancellor Education Innovation will monitor the implementation of any actions highlighted in the Annual Program Reports for reporting to the University Teaching and Learning Committee.

(184) The University Teaching and Learning Committee:

a. will provide an annual summary report on the Annual Program Reports, usually to the second meeting of the Academic Senate of the year; and
b. may seek advice from the relevant College Pro Vice-Chancellor when a program has consistently performed poorly, as to whether it should be suspended or discontinued.

(185) The Office of the Pro Vice-Chancellor Education Innovation will identify programs which have demonstrated significant improvement, and those requiring improvement due to a pattern of poor performance or decline. The following metrics will be used to identify these programs:

a. overall student success rates, and their relation to the University averages for that level of program.

b. success rates of specific demographic cohorts (e.g. low SES; Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students (ATSI), commencing, disability, international, gender), and their relation to the University averages for that level of program.

c. overall student program and institutional retention rates, and their relation to the University averages for that level of program.

d. student, program and institutional retention rates of specific demographic cohorts (e.g. low SES; Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students (ATSI), commencing, disability, international, gender), and their relation to the University averages for that level of program; and

e. when student and graduate satisfaction in the Student Experience Survey (SES) and Graduate Outcomes Survey (GOS):

    i. is below 3.5 on the Good Teaching Scale and/or Overall Satisfaction;

    ii. has declined 10% or more on the 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.

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

(187) Those programs identified as at risk through the Annual Program Report process will be closely monitored by the relevant College and the Office of the Pro Vice-Chancellor Education Innovation. The Program Convenor may 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.

(188) Programs that demonstrate a pattern of under-performance in the criteria listed in Clause 186, over three or more years, may be subject to a targeted academic audit which may include an examination of curriculum, pedagogy, design or other factors. The programs will be identified by the Office of the Pro Vice-Chancellor Education Innovation and/or Strategy, Planning and Performance in discussion with the relevant College Assistant Dean (Teaching and Learning).

Student Feedback on Programs and Courses

(189) The University uses several 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.

Implementation and evaluation of Student Feedback

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

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

School Improvement Plan Process

(192) Each School will liaise annually with the Office of the Pro Vice-Chancellor Education Innovation and develop a School Improvement Plan. This plan will focus on program and course quality, with a specific focus on addressing factors that require improvement. 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 but not limited to, learning and teaching quality, curriculum and assessment design, and resourcing.

(193) The School Improvement Plan will contain actions at a school, program and course level and will be informed by the Annual Program Report process and course level performance data.

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

(195) Staff from the Office of the Pro Vice-Chancellor Education Innovation will meet with representatives from the School and the College Assistant Dean (Teaching and Learning) to discuss progress a minimum of twice a year.

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

Section 7 - External Program Reviews

External Program Reviews

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

(198) All external program reviews will be conducted by an External Review Panel under the provisions listed below.

(199) 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 maintained by SPP.

(200) 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 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. In such cases, the Office of the Pro Vice-Chancellor Education Innovation will undertake a gap analysis to ensure the 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 any identified deficits to the PCAC;
   e. the relevant college produces a Program Self-Review Report (see External Program Review Self-Review

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Report–Template) before an external program review. This Program Self-Review Report will be provided to the External Review Panel as background for each program and the college's plans for it;

f. the Program Self-Review Report and other preparations for the External Program Review will be conducted in consultation with SPP;

g. the relevant college 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

h. the college ensures the timely implementation of the PCAC approved review reports and agreed outcomes.

(201) This process will be monitored by the PCAC. Colleges will be required to report regularly to the PCAC as outlined in the following sections.

External Review Panel Membership

(202) Appointment of the External Review Panel must consider each Panel member's ability to be impartial/objective (i.e. consideration of potential or perceived conflicts of interest), their expertise and their experience in the relevant field. The External Review Panel must be comprised of at least one of the following members:

a. an employer from a related industry/service;

b. a senior academic who is currently teaching in a related field at another University;

c. a recent graduate of the program(s), whose studies were completed within three years of the review date;

d. an Indigenous representative, nominated by the Pro Vice-Chancellor Indigenous Strategy and Leadership;

e. a Level C academic (or an academic with significant related experience) of the University 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);

f. a representative from the Office of the Pro Vice-Chancellor Education Innovation; and

g. a senior member of Student Central, nominated by the Pro Vice-Chancellor Student Experience and Academic Registrar.

(203) The Chair will be appointed from among the senior academic members of the External Review Panel, typically the member appointed under Clause 203e.

(204) 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

(205) 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 and the External Review Secretary, within the prescribed six-week timeframe; and

d. invite contributions from persons with particular expertise who are not represented on the External Review Panel, where this is required for the external review.

Role of the College Pro Vice-Chancellor

(206) The College Pro Vice-Chancellor is responsible for:

a. ensuring the relevant college staff coordinate the review visit schedule;

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b. ensuring that external program reviews occur on 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 before the external program review;

d. approving the terms of reference for the review in consultation with SPP and the Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Academic) and Vice President;

e. forwarding the executive summary from the final review Report, together with the draft Response and Action Plan to the PCAC for approval;

f. ensuring that review findings are communicated to relevant stakeholders; and

g. ensuring that the college implements the approved Response and Action Plan, where possible within 12 months.

Role of External Review Panel members

(207) The External Review Panel will:

a. review the documentation supplied to them. This will be forwarded to members by the relevant College within four weeks of the review;

b. conduct interviews with the Program Convenor(s), students, members of staff involved in teaching into the Program(s), and any other person/s relevant to the External Review Panel's deliberations; and

c. provide an external program review report to the relevant Pro Vice-Chancellors no more than six weeks following the completion of the review visit.

Initiating the Review

(208) By 1 August each year, in consultation with Colleges, SPP will collate the following year's external program review schedule and submit the schedule to the Academic Senate and the Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Academic) and Vice President for consideration.

(209) An out-of-cycle review may be initiated by the Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Academic) and Vice President, Academic Senate, or the relevant College Pro Vice-Chancellor if there are concerns relating to the program.

(210) Programs that are similar (including undergraduate and postgraduate) should be reviewed simultaneously as this may promote efficiencies and achieve the best outcome from the review process.

(211) At the commencement of the review process, SPP will offer guidance and information to college staff involved in the coordination of the review.

(212) The consultation, data collection, and analysis process should begin at least six months before the scheduled review.

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

(214) Non-confidential submissions included in the program documentation are compiled and distributed by the relevant Education and Innovation Officer.

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

(216) If an external review needs to be postponed approval must be sought from the original decision maker who initiated the review. The approval should then be communicated by the College to SPP and the PCAC Secretary for noting on the review schedule.

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(217) Examples of what may constitute a legitimate postponement or rescheduling may include, but is not limited to:

a. bringing a review forward to allow alignment with cognate programs;
b. where accreditation and a gap analysis has covered the External Program Review Terms of Reference within the necessary timeframe;
c. where a program curriculum has been substantially revised and the program has been given a new program code (and there has not been a graduating cohort of the new program); or
d. where a review is requested to inform program development, redesign or accreditation processes.

(218) Cancellation of a review may occur where a program has been discontinued. Approval must be sought from the original decision maker who initiated the review and then communicated by the relevant College to SPP and the PCAC Secretary for the review to be waived and the program removed from the seven-year rolling review schedule.

Documentation Required for the External Program Review

(219) The following information is to be prepared by the relevant colleges and shared with SPP at least six weeks ahead of the review event and provided to the External Review Panel at least four weeks before the review:

a. Program Self-Review Report;
b. External Benchmarking;
c. analysis of the alignment of course objectives with content, teaching, learning and assessment methods;
d. Program handbook entry;
e. the accreditation report (where relevant);
f. the last Annual Program Reports; and
g. program and course performance data;
h. student survey data;
i. Staffing Profile and Governance, including:
    i. a list of academic staff, indicating student-staff ratios, ratios of fulltime versus sessional/casual staff and an indication of courses taught and other responsibilities; and
    ii. a list of professional staff who assist in the management of the Program.
j. graduate identity mapping; and
k. any other information deemed relevant.

Post-Review Actions

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

(221) The revised and agreed external program review report will be circulated to the College for the development of a College Response and Action Plan. The College Response and Action Plan is to be developed no later than six weeks following receipt of the final report in consultation with the College, SPP and Office of the Pro Vice-Chancellor Education Innovation. The College Response and Action Plans are to be submitted to the relevant College Teaching and Learning Committee, College Board and the PCAC.

(222) Colleges must provide annual updates to the PCAC on the progress of the Response and Action Plan.

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

a. a summary of the external program review report being placed on the College 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 nominee; and

b. a summary of the College Response and Action Plan placed on the University website within four weeks of its approval by the PCAC.

(224) The PCAC will provide advice to Academic Senate on the status of the College Response and Action Plan.

Section 8 - Student Progress

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

(226) Student's academic progress will be monitored from their first term of study. After the first term of study an academic status of either Progressing, Referral or Probation (as outlined in Table 3) will be assigned. This status will remain in place until a further one standard term of enrolment has been completed at which point the status will be reassessed based on the student's performance. The Probation (1 year)* academic status will remain in place for a full year.

Table 3 – Student Academic Performance Matrix

Academic Performance in The Current Term

Student Academic Status at the commencement of the current term	Successfully completes 100% of course enrolments	Successfully completes between 65% and 99% of course enrolments	Successfully completes between 50% and 64% of course enrolments	Successfully completes between 0 and 49% of course enrolments	Failed or withdrawn from a compulsory program requirement
Progressing	Progressing	Progressing	Referral	Referral	Probation (1 year)*
Referral	Progressing	Progressing	Probation	Probation	Probation (1 year)*
Probation	Progressing	Referral	Suspension	Suspension	Suspension
Probation (1 year)*	Progressing	Referral	Suspension	Suspension	Suspension
Return from Suspension	Referral	Probation	Probation	Exclusion	Exclusion
Return from Exclusion	Probation	Probation	Probation	Exclusion	Exclusion

(227) Students who are suspended or excluded, and following a review, will be permitted to continue on probation.

Table 4 Student Academic Status Outcome / Action

Student Academic Status	Outcome / Actions
Progressing	Students will receive relevant notifications via email.
Referral	Students will receive relevant notifications via email. Students will be required to discuss their enrolment for the next term with a Student Progress Advisor.

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Student Academic Status	Outcome / Actions
Probation	Students will receive relevant notifications via email. Students will be contacted by their Student Progress Advisor, working in consultation with the Program Convenor. Students will be provided with an enrolment plan for the next term. The Program Convenor may determine that the student will be required to study part-time for a term.
Suspension	Students will receive relevant notifications via email. Students will be suspended for one year. Students will receive a phone call and follow up email from their Student Progress Advisor. Students may recommence study after the suspension period.
Exclusion	Students will receive relevant notifications via email. Students will be excluded from the University for at least one year. Students will receive a phone call and follow up email from their Student Progress Advisor. Students do not have an automatic right of re-admission. Excluded students will not be considered for admission to the University of Newcastle during the period of exclusion Students excluded from the University may apply for re-admission after the exclusion period.
Pending	Grades are not yet finalised. Academic Standing level will be assigned once grades are finalised.

Calculating and Assigning Student Academic Status

(228) Academic status is calculated at the end of each standard term using Table 3 Student Academic Performance Matrix.

(229) A withdrawal after the fourth week of the standard term will be deemed to be an unsuccessful attempt.

(230) Student Central will identify:

a. each student's academic status and send the relevant communication(s), as outlined in table 4; and

b. monitor students who, at the date of the official release of results, have a combination of I and/or S grades that upon conversion may result in an Academic Status of Referral, Probation, Suspension or Exclusion; and/or

c. monitor students who, at the fully graded date have an I or S grade against a compulsory program requirement.

(231) Student Central will ensure that the Program Convenors, College Pro Vice-Chancellor (or nominee), the Assistant Dean (Teaching and Learning), the Student Advocates and the Student Advancement Team within the Wollotuka Institute are provided information on students with an academic status of referral, probation, suspension or exclusion.

(232) Students who are placed on suspension or exclusion are not permitted to undertake studies in a different program during their period of suspension or exclusion.

(233) The Associate Director, Student and Academic Administration will:

a. record all decisions and act as required under the ESOS Act and National Code of Practice for Providers of Education and Training to Overseas Student 2018;

b. report annually to Academic Senate through the Teaching and Learning Committee, the decisions of the College Progress and Appeals Committees; and

c. recommend strategies to Academic Senate to support student progression.

Communications to Students with Progressing Academic Status

(234) Students identified as having Progressing Academic Status will be contacted, on behalf of the Associate Director, Student and Academic Administration, and provided with the following information:

a. an indication of why they were identified as having Progressing Academic Status; and

b. advice about how to access assistance and support, where appropriate.

Communications to Students with Referral Academic Status

(235) Students identified as having Referral Academic Status will be contacted, on behalf of the Associate Director, Student and Academic Administration, provided with the following information:

a. an indication of why they were identified as not maintaining an acceptable standard of academic progress;

b. advice about how to access assistance and support;

c. advice that, before the end of the second week of term, they will be contacted by their Student Progress Advisor to discuss their enrolment for the following term; and

d. advice that not maintaining an acceptable standard of academic progress in future terms may lead to suspension or exclusion.

(236) Student Central will ensure that the students with a Referral Academic Status are advised of:

a. the outcomes of not maintaining an acceptable standard of academic progress; and

b. how to access assistance and support.

Communications to Students with Probation Academic Status

(237) Students identified as having Probation Academic Status will be contacted, on behalf of the Associate Director, Student and Academic Administration, and provided with the following information:

a. an indication of why they were identified as not maintaining an acceptable standard of academic progress;

b. advice about how to access assistance and support;

c. advice that, before the end of the second week of term, they will be contacted by their Student Progress Advisor, who will have determined an enrolment plan in consultation with the Program Convenor. The Program Convenor may determine that the student may have to study on a reduced load for one term;

d. advice that, where a part-time enrolment plan is in place by the Program Convenor, they may request a review of the determination by the College Progress and Appeals Committee. Requests for review must be made in writing within five working days of notice of the enrolment plan;

e. advice that not maintaining an acceptable standard of academic progress in future terms may lead to suspension or exclusion.

(238) Student Central will ensure that the students are advised of:

a. the outcomes of not maintaining an acceptable standard of academic progress; and

b. how to access assistance and support.

Communications to Students with Suspension Academic Status

(239) Students identified as having a Suspension Academic Status will be contacted by Student Central after they receive the email from the Associate Director, Student and Academic Administration that provides the following information:

a. an indication of why they were identified as not maintaining an acceptable standard of academic progress;

b. advice about how to access assistance and support;

c. advice that they will be suspended from the University for one year;

d. advice that upon return to study following suspension, the Academic Status of Probation will apply and that

failure to maintain an acceptable standard of academic progress, regardless of their program of study, will lead to exclusion; and

e. advice that they may ask for their suspension to be reviewed by the College Progress and Appeals Committee.

Communications to Students with Exclusion Academic Status

(240) Students identified as having an Exclusion Academic Status will be contacted by Student Central after they receive the email from the Associate Director, Student and Academic Administration that provides the following information:

a. an indication of why they were identified as not maintaining an acceptable standard of academic progress;

b. advice that they will be excluded from the University for one year;

c. advice that they will need to reapply for admission at the end of the exclusion period if they wish to recommence study;

d. advice that upon readmission following exclusion, the Academic Status of Probation will apply and that failure to maintain an acceptable standard of academic progress, regardless of their program of study, will lead to exclusion; and

e. advice that they may ask for their exclusion to be reviewed by the College Progress and Appeals Committee.

Communications to International Students on a Student Visa with Exclusion Status

(241) International students who are excluded will have their Confirmation of Enrolment (CoE) cancelled and will be notified to seek advice from the Department of Home Affairs for the potential impact on their student visa. International students may apply for a review of the decision to exclude them from their program of study, as detailed in clause 244 of this manual.

Review of Suspension or Exclusion

(242) Students may apply to the College Progress and Appeals Committee for a review of their Suspension or Exclusion Academic Status.

(243) To lodge a request for review a student must apply within five University working days of receiving notification of the suspension or exclusion. The request for review must be submitted via the online form, the link to the online form will be provided in the email notification to students.

(244) In accordance with the ESOS Act, international students on a student visa must apply within five working days of receiving notification of the suspension or exclusion. If their application for review is rejected, students will have 20 working days to appeal the decision to exclude them from their program of study by following the University's complaints procedure.

(245) A valid appeal is one which addresses one or more of the following appeal criteria and includes relevant supporting evidence in writing:

a. procedural grounds - the University did not act following the relevant regulations and/or procedures in the assessment process and there is evidence of material irregularity or administrative error;

b. external impact – the student's performance was impacted by factors outside their control which contributed to their inability to meet the required academic standard and/or rate of progress to date, and the factors are unlikely to impact the student in the future; or

c. adverse circumstances – the student's performance was adversely affected by illness or other circumstances that they could not reasonably have made known to the University via the appropriate adverse circumstances procedures.

(246) The following are not valid grounds to request a review of suspension or exclusion:

   a. taking more than a standard full-time load in a term of study;

   b. personal or medical problems other than those permitted under the adverse circumstances policy and procedure;

   c. financial implications of the suspension or exclusion;

   d. a penalty imposed on a student for academic misconduct or plagiarism under University policy;

   e. a desire to continue study; or

   f. general unspecified grievances.

(247) A review request made on the grounds of an academic status of Suspension or Exclusion alone will not be considered.

College Progress and Appeals Committees Responsibilities

(248) The College Progress and Appeals Committee (CPAC) is authorised to consider:

   a. student appeals against a final result (see Course Management and Assessment Procedure Manual);

   b. student requests for a review of the determination by the Program Convenor that the student must study on a reduced load for one term; and

   c. student requests for review of suspension or exclusion which have been put in place as an outcome of the Student Academic Progress Process.

(249) The CPAC will 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 Associate Director, Student and Academic Administration, following a notification by an Officer of the University. In such cases, the Committee shall decide the appropriate course of action, in line with clause 252 of this manual.

College Progress and Appeals Committee Meetings

(250) The CPAC will meet to consider a requested review of suspension or exclusion made under this manual.

(251) A review request made on the grounds of outcome alone will not be considered.

(252) When considering a request for review of suspension or exclusion, the CPAC will consider:

   a. the student's progress towards program completion;

   b. whether the student has been provided with advice and support about academic performance and the Student Academic Progress process; and

   c. any mitigating circumstances that may be relevant.

(253) The CPAC may resolve to:

   a. uphold the suspension or exclusion;

   b. overturn the suspension or exclusion;

   c. overturn the suspension or exclusion with one or more of the following conditions;

      i. enrolment will be limited to specific courses or number of units (regardless of program of enrolment), or the student participation in an academic support program;

ii. where the student is in a teach-out program and would not be disadvantaged, transition to a current offering of the program;

iii. where the student is in a teach out program and would not be disadvantaged, transition to a current offering of the program and the application of specified conditions e.g. enrolment limited to specific courses or number of units;

iv. where the student is concurrently enrolled in two programs, the student must withdraw from one program;

v. where the student is concurrently enrolled in two programs, the student must withdraw from one program and specified conditions shall be applied e.g. enrolment limited to specific courses or number of units;

vi. where the student is enrolled in a combined degree program, the student must internally transfer into one of the two single degrees;

vii. where the student is enrolled in a combined degree program, the student must internally transfer into one of the two single degrees and specified conditions shall be applied e.g. enrolment limited to specific courses or number of units;

viii. the University will support the student's stated intention to internally transfer and specified conditions shall be applied e.g. enrolment limited to specific courses or number of units; or

ix. recommend that a student considers attending academic and wellbeing support services, or undertake alternative study options in a different program or institution that may be more appropriate to the student's interests and skills.

(254) Student Central will provide the secretarial support for the CPAC.

(255) The Secretary to the relevant CPAC will ensure that each student is provided with an official notification of the outcome of their review and information on their right to appeal (see clauses 255-257). This will be sent via email, usually within seven working days of the review.

Appeals Against an CPAC review

(256) A student may appeal an outcome of the CPAC, in writing, review within five working days of receiving the notice of the outcome of the review.

(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 the outcome of the review alone will not be considered.

(259) An appeal of the outcome of a review by the CPAC is to be made to the Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Academic) and Vice President.

(260) Upon receipt of an appeal made in time under clauses 255-256, the Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Academic) and Vice President:

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 256;
b. will consider material taken into account by the original decision-maker in making their determination, which is relevant to the grounds of appeal; and

c. may request further information from the student or the original decision-maker.

(261) After consideration of the appeal, the Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Academic) and Vice President may then resolve to:

a. dismiss the appeal;
b. uphold the appeal and reverse the original decision; or
c. uphold the appeal and vary the original decision.

Determination is Final

(262) The Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Academic) and Vice President will inform the student in writing of the determination, including reasons for the determination.

(263) The determination of the Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Academic) and Vice President 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 9 - 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 College, another College of the University, or a support area;
b. requires consultation external to the University;
c. includes the addition or deletion of an undergraduate major or postgraduate specialisation [Note: must include Field of Education code appropriate to that major or specialisation];
d. includes the additions to or deletions from the core or compulsory course lists, where the program learning outcomes are included and a revised mapping is provided for consideration;
e. alters the 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/offshore, 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. changes the maximum time to complete for the program; or
i. is deemed by the relevant College 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.

(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 College which offers the program, indicating:

a. the intention, nature, and likely 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 one or more programs, a School, College or other area of the University; and if so, evidence of consultation that has taken place;

e. whether the proposed change involves a change to the organisation of the Academic year (from semester to trimesters or vice-versa); and

f. any resource implications of the proposed change.

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

(269) In exceptional circumstances, submissions for major program revision will be considered by the PCAC outside of the timeline in clause 267. In these circumstances, related amendments may not appear in advertising materials if publication timelines have passed. Changes approved by PCAC after the May meeting of the preceding year will not be timetabled clash-free and may not be allocated to preferred colleges or rooms. Colleges are responsible for the promulgation of related amendments to prospective students including UAC applicants and school leavers.

Discontinuation of a Program

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

a. students enrolled in the program are not disadvantaged;

b. appropriate teach-out or alternative arrangements have been made for current students; and

c. consideration is given to international students and our obligations under the ESOS legislation.

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

When to Create a New Program Proposal

(272) 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 the level and/or length (volume of learning) requiring allocation of a new program code.

(273) The creation of new programs resulting from the major revision of an existing program must comply with the clauses 17-22 of this manual.

Minor Program Revisions

(274) 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. assumed knowledge and/or recommended studies;

  v. accrediting body;

  vi. transition requirements;

  vii. international students; and

  viii. students with special needs;

 e. involves the addition and/or deletion of a course(s) to a directed course list; or

 f. changes the descriptors used for marketing purposes.

Implementation of Minor Revision

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

Approval of Minor Revision

(276) Minor program revisions are approved by the relevant College Board.

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

(278) The Pro Vice-Chancellor Student Experience and Academic Registrar (or nominee) is authorised to allow students to count an approved directed course at a higher level for a directed course at a lower level provided the request does not impact on the minimum/maximum level requirements for the program.

Notifying Staff and Students

(279) The relevant Assistant Dean (Teaching and Learning) is responsible for notifying relevant College(s), and other relevant staff of any impact caused by a minor revision.

(280) The relevant Strategic Program Manager will notify the Pro Vice-Chancellor Student Experience and Academic Registrar and students of any impact caused by a minor program revision.

Section 10 - Managing Transition

Considerations

(281) 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.

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

 a. number of students impacted;

 b. possible disadvantages;

 c. impact on accreditation, where applicable;

 d. impact on pipeline or pathway students, including articulation arrangements;

 e. anticipated duration of any teach-out arrangements; and

 f. details of any impact on other colleges or areas of the University.

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

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

(285) 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.

(286) 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 can complete their studies under the old program, if necessary.

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

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

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

(290) The relevant College 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 College will need to discuss with Global Engagement and Partnerships Division their obligations under ESOS for applicants who have already accepted an offer into the current program.

(291) 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)

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

(293) Where a new program is proposed, a New Program Information Sheet will be completed for submission to PCACby the College.

(294) If the new program is to be offered to onshore international students, a CRICOS Code must be applied for. This can only be done once the new program has been approved by the PCAC and where a new award is required, this has been established by Academic Senate.

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

(296) 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.

(297) The transition of students may require individualised 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

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the old and new structures, then a decision may be made that the student will transfer to the new program with a determined set of courses for the student to complete based on their individual circumstances.

(298) As a matter of process, transition arrangements must be approved by the PCAC. Students whose situation has been determined by the Program Convenor and Strategic Program Manager as suitable and preferable to transfer to the new program will be transferred automatically. Credit will be automatically applied to the student's record.

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

(300) The Program Handbook is to be updated by 1st October in the year before the new program will be offered, including any transition arrangements.

Revised Program (existing program code)

(301) 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 and will depend on the nature and scope of the program changes, but students remaining in the old program structure should be kept to a minimum.

(302) 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.

(303) The transition of students may require individualised 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 a determined set of courses for the student to complete based on the student's individual circumstances.

(304) The Program Handbook is to be updated by 1st October the year before the revised program will be 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 Academic 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, forums, or via the Learning Management System. The type of communication will depend on the extent of the changes. All communication is to be approved by the Program Convenor, and relevant Strategic Program Manager.

(306) All staff in relevant areas are to be advised in writing by the College Education and Innovation Officer and/or Strategic Program Manager of a new program or revised program. Relevant areas as appropriate include Student Central units, Admissions(Global and/or Domestic), Marketing and Communications, affected Schools, Colleges, or other impacted areas.

(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 cohorts and relevant advice is to be recorded in TRIM.

(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 relevant Strategic Program Manager for retention on the central program files within TRIM.

Notifying Staff and Students

(311) The Assistant Dean (Teaching and Learning), and the Program Convenor of the program working with the Strategic Program Manager are responsible for notifying relevant colleges, and other relevant staff of any impact caused by a major revision.

(312) The relevant Strategic Program Manager will notify the Pro Vice-Chancellor Student Experience and Academic Registrar and students of any impact caused by a major program revision.

(313) The relevant Strategic Program Manager coordinates the implementation of the transition plans approved by the PCAC.

Section 11 - Alignment between Programs and the University Strategic Plan

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

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

Section 12 - Relaxing Provision

(316) To provide for exceptional circumstances arising in any particular case (for an individual student or student cohort), the Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Academic) and Vice President and President Academic Senate in a joint capacity and on the recommendation of a Pro Vice-Chancellor, may relax a provision of this procedure manual except for clauses relating to the determination of appeals against credit outcomes.

Section 13 - Appendices

(317) 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

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

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

(320) Annual Program Report Template

(321) External Program Review Self-Review Report Template

(322) Annual Course Alignment Report Template

(323) External Program Review Generic Terms of Reference

(324) College Response and Action Plan Template

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

(326) College Credit Variances

Status and Details

Status	Historic
Effective Date	13th January 2021
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Responsible Executive	Belinda Tynan Senior Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Academic)
Enquiries Contact	John Radvan Senior Manager, Academic Governance & Compliance Student Central

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.

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

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

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

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

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

conducted.

"Academic misconduct" - Means conduct by a student that is defined as academic misconduct in the Student Conduct Rule.

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

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

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

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

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

"Confirmation of Enrolment (CoE)" - Means the document issued through the Australian Government's relevant department and associated systems, by authorised officers of the University that confirms that an international student is eligible to enrol in a course. The CoE is required under Commonwealth Legislation for the student visa.

"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.

"Professional experience" - Has the same meaning as vocational placement in the Fair Work Act 2009 (Cth).

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

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

"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.

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

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

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

"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.

"Plagiarism" - is the presentation of the thoughts or works of another as one's own. Without limiting the generality of this definition, it may include: i.   copying or paraphrasing material from any source without due acknowledgment   ii.   using another person's ideas without due acknowledgment   iii.   collusion or working with others without permission, and presenting the resulting work as though it was completed independently.

"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.

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

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

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

"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.

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

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

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

"College Board" - The principal governance committee of the College.

"Learning Management System" - The web-based system used to help facilitate online interactions between staff and students in their learning and teaching activities.