Program Design Policy

Section 1 - Purpose and Scope

(1) A function of The University of Queensland (UQ or the University) under the University of Queensland Act 1998 (UQ Act) is to confer higher education awards regulated under the Australian Qualifications Framework (AQF). The higher education awards conferred by UQ are prescribed in the University's Awards Policy.

(2) This Policy sets out the principles and requirements that inform the structure and design of all undergraduate and postgraduate coursework programs (hereafter programs) leading to the conferral of a UQ higher education award. All undergraduate coursework programs are expected to be compliant with this Policy by 2021, and all postgraduate coursework programs by 2023.

(3) This Policy should be read and applied in conjunction with the following:

a. Program Design Procedure; and
b. Program Approval Procedure.

(4) This Policy does not apply to Higher Degree by Research (HDR) or Higher Doctorate programs.

Section 2 - Principles and Key Requirements

Program Design Principles

(5) Programs at UQ will be aligned to the University's values and will:

a. be underpinned by a set of program specific learning outcomes and a graduate statement, informed by the UQ Graduate Statement and Attributes, that are developed through the courses in the program;
b. comply with the requirements of the Australian Qualifications Framework (AQF) including:
    i. volume of learning, and
    ii. learning outcomes (i.e. knowledge, skills, application of skills and knowledge);
c. be relevant and responsive to community and industry needs;
d. take advantage of the University's research strengths;
e. encourage cross-disciplinary collaboration and leveraging of expertise;
f. provide students with clarity about expectations;
g. provide a coherent and streamlined student experience; and
h. use nomenclature that is:
    i. unambiguously and readily identifiable with the qualification type, discipline, and (where applicable) the professional orientation of the program;
    ii. in the case of postgraduate coursework programs, consistent across a suite of postgraduate coursework awards and differentiates research from coursework;
    iii. easily recognisable by prospective students, employers and other stakeholders;
    iv. compliant with the AQF Qualifications Issuance Policy; and

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v. consistent with nomenclature that has national and international acceptance.

(6) The Program Design Procedure outlines the specifications and conditions applicable to the types of programs offered at UQ including nomenclature, duration, building blocks and qualification-specific components (e.g. research training for coursework masters programs), and program requirements.

Program Approval and Review

(7) In developing programs UQ will ensure:

a. programs and plans are consistent with the University's academic and/or strategic priorities;
b. programs and plans incorporate appropriate:
    i. learning experiences and learning outcomes,
    ii. teaching approaches,
    iii. assessment, and
    iv. evaluation of student learning;
c. the quality and integrity of UQ's programs meet the highest academic standards;
d. direct consultation occurs with:
    i. all relevant academic units that can contribute to respective areas of discipline expertise, including adherence to the requirements of the Collaborative Service Teaching Policy;
    ii. all relevant organisational units and their leaders in relation to resource implications (e.g. UQ Library, schools, institutes and faculties teaching into the program);
    iii. the Office of the Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Indigenous Engagement); and
    iv. relevant external and accreditation bodies, where applicable; and
e. compliance with all relevant legislation, such as the Tertiary Education Quality and Standards Agency Act 2011 (TEQSA Act) and the Education Services for Overseas Students Act 2000 (ESOS Act), and mandatory government requirements.

(8) The University-wide framework for approval of academic programs and courses is outlined in the Program Approval Procedure.

(9) The University ensures the systematic and regular review of curricula, teaching and program quality, and risk. All programs undergo annual academic quality assurance review, and a comprehensive review as per the Academic Program Review Procedure.

Section 3 - Roles, Responsibilities and Accountabilities

Vice-Chancellor

(10) The Vice-Chancellor exercises delegated authority from Senate to approve the introduction and discontinuation of coursework programs, on the advice of the Academic Board. The Vice-Chancellor also approves requests to vary or exempt a program from any of the principles outlined in this Policy and the accompanying procedures. The Vice-Chancellor may delegate powers to a member of the University Senior Executive Team as outlined in the Program Approval Procedure.

University Senior Executive Team (USET)

(11) Members of USET are responsible to the Vice-Chancellor for the quality and effectiveness of the University's programs, and are responsible for coordination and implementation of changes to the University's program portfolio.

Academic Board

(12) The Academic Board is the principal academic advisory body to the University Senate. The Academic Board provides expert advice to the Senate, the Vice-Chancellor and the Senior Executive on all matters relating to and affecting University teaching, research and educational programs.

Faculties

(13) The Executive Dean has overall accountability for the administration and quality assurance arrangements of academic programs offered by the Faculty, including:

a. the strategic aspects of new and major program initiatives before more detailed academic aspects of the programs are developed and referred for approval; and
b. the scheduled review of programs, including offshore program offerings and arrangements with third party providers (both onshore and offshore institutions).

(14) The Associate Dean (Academic) oversees the annual quality assurance process of the Faculty and its Schools in consultation with the Executive Dean, and the Heads of Schools.

Section 4 - Monitoring, Review and Assurance

(15) The quality of the standardised structure and design of the University's programs is assured through implementation of:

a. The academic program approval process.
b. The annual academic quality assurance process.
c. The comprehensive cyclical review of academic programs (refer to the Academic Program Review Procedure for more information); and
d. regular student feedback and student evaluation, such as student satisfaction surveys.

(16) The Program Bulletin provides access to the relevant forms, details of submitted program proposals, and the progress of these submissions through the approval process.

(17) The Academic Board through the Committee for Academic Programs Policy (CAPP) is responsible for monitoring university-wide compliance with, and review of this Policy for its effectiveness and ongoing relevance with UQ strategic objectives.

Section 5 - Recording and Reporting

(18) Design features and structural details relating to all programs offered by the University are published in the Programs Catalogue.

(19) Records relating to the structure and design of the University's programs, including approved variations and proposals initiated through the Program Approval Procedure, must be lodged in accordance with the Information Management Policy.

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Section 6 - Appendix

Terms	Definition
Australian Qualifications Framework (AQF)	A single comprehensive national qualifications framework that represents the national policy for regulated qualifications in Australian education and training.
AQF Qualifications Issuance Policy	The official AQF policy that stipulates the structure and content of qualification titles awarded by authorised organisations as part of Australia's national qualification framework.
CAPP	Committee for Academic Programs Policy
Course	A distinct unit of study within a program, for which a grade is given. Each course is identified by its alphanumeric code, a title and a fixed unit value.
Curriculum	Curriculum is the intersection of knowledge, skills, and attitudes focused on what is taught, learned and created through the purposeful selection and structuring of content in courses and programs.
Plan	A prescribed combination of courses within a program being either a field of study, major, extended major, specialisation, minor or extended minor.
Program	A sequence of study leading to the award of a qualification such as an undergraduate degree or diploma, and/or a postgraduate coursework qualification.

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