Program Approval Procedure

Section 1 - Purpose and Scope

(1) This Procedure outlines the University's processes for the development and approval of undergraduate and postgraduate coursework programs (hereafter programs) in conjunction with the Program Design Policy.

(2) This Procedure also covers:

a. major program initiatives which are inclusive of:
    i. proposals to offer a program on a collaborative basis with a partner organisation, including external delivery of a program (see clauses 27-28 below);
    ii. transnational education arrangements such as joint degree programs (e.g., joint award of a degree or dual badging) (see clauses 27-28 below); or
    iii. the introduction of plans in discipline areas not previously offered or numerous changes to the plans within a program.
b. the approval of program-related changes including program-specific variations or exemptions to requirements stated in a policy or procedure for:
    i. admission, enrolment and progression requirements (in conjunction with the Admission to Coursework Procedure, Academic Progression Procedure and Enrolment Procedure);
    ii. credit limits (in conjunction with the Credit and Recognition of Prior Learning Policy and Procedure); and
    iii. calculation of class of honours (in conjunction with the Awards Policy, Program Design Procedure and Bachelor Honours Degree Procedure.
c. pathway arrangements for the UQ College Foundation program;
d. collaborative academic program arrangements (in conjunction with the Collaborative Academic Program Arrangements Policy);
e. non-award study (e.g. enhanced studies, study abroad);
f. processes for the development and approval of shorter form credentials (in conjunction with the Shorter Form Credentials Policy);
g. non-standard course design (in conjunction with the Course Design Policy);
h. professional doctorates (in conjunction with the Professional Doctorates Policy); and
i. higher doctorates (in conjunction with the Higher Doctorates Policy).

(3) For Higher Degree by Research (HDR) programs refer to the Higher Degree by Research Candidature Policy and associated policies and procedures.

Section 2 - Process and Key Controls

(4) UQ courses, programs, plans and shorter form credentials are managed within the University's curriculum management system.

(5) Following initial consultation with the Associate Dean (Academic) proposals are developed in accordance with the

UQ Program Development Framework and the requirements specified in Section 3 in consultation with identified stakeholders. The Executive Dean or the Associate Dean (Academic) may also set additional requirements as part of the development process. Following internal review, typically through the Coordinating Unit's teaching and learning committee, proposals are referred to the Faculty through its Board of Studies, which will advise the Executive Dean on the proposed content and structure.

(6) For new and major program initiatives, a Program Development Business Case must be approved by the Executive Dean, Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Academic) and Provost before the detailed academic aspects of the proposal will considered by the Committee for Academic Programs Policy (CAPP).

(7) If the Executive Dean is satisfied the proposal aligns with the UQ Strategic Plan and the Faculty's strategic objectives they will refer the proposal to CAPP, except for:

a. adding or removing a course listed in a program course list – proposals are approved by the Executive Dean;
b. new and amended courses, stand-alone shorter form credential modules and stand-alone learning modules – proposals are approved by the Executive Dean unless otherwise specified under clauses 29-33;
c. new and amended course discipline descriptors – proposals are approved by the Academic Registrar;
d. variations to the Academic Calendar and/or courses to be offered in non-standard teaching periods – proposals are approved by the Academic Registrar.

(8) CAPP reviews the academic and quality assurance aspects of the proposal, and ensures the requirements set under relevant University policies and/or procedures are met. The following proposals also undergo compliance checks before they are considered by CAPP:

a. New and amended program requirements – by the Programs Sub-Committee (PSC).
b. Admissions requirements and admission schemes – by the Coursework Admission Standards Sub-Committee (CASSC).

(9) Proposals may be referred by CAPP to the Academic Board for advice and recommendation (where required or at the discretion of CAPP) or directly to the relevant decision-maker as set out in section 4 'Roles and Responsibilities'.

Section 3 - Key Requirements

Submission Requirements

(10) All proposals must address the following details (if applicable) in the relevant template, or in supporting documentation:

a. the rationale for the proposal;
b. marketing and/or communication requirements;
c. teaching and learning resource requirements;
d. involvement of other faculties/coordinating units in delivery arrangements;
e. evidence of consultation with relevant stakeholders as appropriate. For example:
    i. evidence of support from the unit leader (or delegate) of the Unit/Faculty contributing to the program;
    ii. summary of findings from consultation; and
f. potential duplication with other program and course offerings;
g. additional requirements set in clauses 12–33 where applicable.

(11) The submission guide available from the Program Bulletin documents the minimum submission requirements and

deadlines for types of program proposals to be referred to CAPP under the requirements of this Procedure.

New Programs and Major Program Initiatives

(12) In addition to clauses 10-11, proposals for new programs and major program initiatives must include:

a. confirmation that the Program Development Business Case has been approved by the Executive Dean, Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Academic) and Provost, prior to submission of the program proposal to CAPP; and
b. evidence of consultation with the Office of the Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Indigenous Engagement).

Changes to Program Structure and Program Requirements

(13) If a faculty proposes to amend the program requirements of an existing program in such a way that may impede continuing students from meeting those requirements, then, in addition to clauses 10-11, the faculty must specify whether continuing students enrolled in the program:

a. will be permitted to choose either to:
    i. continue their studies under the superseded program requirements in which they were enrolled prior to the change (i.e. a teach-out arrangement), or
    ii. be transferred to the program requirements (i.e. a transition arrangement); or
b. will be required to transition to the new structure and/or program requirements to be conferred the award (for example, for accreditation purposes); or
c. will be required to follow a defined transition plan combining the superseded and new requirements.

(14) Refer to 'Transition and Teach-out Arrangements for Programs, Plans and Suites of Shorter Form Credential Modules' provisions on the principles for transition arrangements.

Changes to Structure and Requirements of an Existing Suite of Shorter Form Credential Modules

(15) If a faculty proposes to amend the structure and/or admission, enrolment or completion requirements for an existing suite of shorter form credential modules, in addition to clauses 10-11, the faculty must specify whether continuing students enrolled in the suite:

a. will be permitted to choose either to:
    i. continue their studies under the superseded structure and/or the structure in which they were enrolled prior to the change (i.e. a teach-out arrangement), or
    ii. be transferred to the new structure or suite (i.e. a transition arrangement); or
b. will be required to transition to the new structure to complete the suite; or
c. will be required to follow a defined transition plan combining the superseded and new requirements.

(16) Refer to the 'Transition and Teach-out Arrangements for Programs, Plans and Suites of Shorter Form Credential Modules' provisions on the principles for transition arrangements.

Discontinuations

(17) Where a discontinuation of a program or plan that has student enrolments is proposed, a teach-out plan must be included in addition to the requirements of clauses 10-11.

(18) If the faculty proposes to offer students enrolled in the program the option to transfer to an alternative program, the proposal must include a transition arrangement that specifies:

a. how courses completed under the superseded program will be credited towards the program completion

requirements of the alternative program; and

b. the program requirements applicable to continuing students who transfer to the alternative program.

(19) Refer to the 'Transition and Teach-out Arrangements for Programs, Plans and Suites of Shorter Form Credential Modules' provisions on the principles for transition and teach-out arrangements, and the 'Transfer from an Undergraduate Program to a Postgraduate Program' provisions.

Program Suspensions

(20) Proposals to suspend a program or plan from new enrolments must outline arrangements for continuing students' enrolment in the program/plan. Suspensions are approved for a period of up to 12 months.

(21) Prior to the end of the suspension period, the faculty must advise CAPP on the status of the suspended program/plan. After considering the faculty's submission, CAPP may recommend:

a. the approval of a final extension, with a new deadline for recommencement of enrolments; or
b. that the program/plan be discontinued.

(22) The faculty's response to CAPP's recommendation will then be included in the submission provided to the relevant decision-maker as set out in section 4 'Roles and Responsibilities'.

Suspensions or Discontinuations of Shorter Form Credentials

(23) Discontinuation of a suite of modules:

a. when discontinuing a suite of modules, the faculty must make adequate teach out arrangements for all students currently enrolled or with an offer of enrolment in the suite;
b. if the faculty proposes to offer students enrolled in the suite of shorter form credential modules to be discontinued the option to transfer to another suite, the proposal must include a transition arrangement that specifies:
    i. how modules completed under the superseded suite will be credited towards the alternative suite; and
    ii. any additional requirements applicable to continuing students who transfer to the alternative suite.

(24) Discontinuation of a stand-alone module:

a. A stand-alone module may not be discontinued until all enrolled students have completed the module, unless the advertised minimum enrolment quota is not met.

(25) Suspension:

a. Proposals to suspend new enrolments in a Shorter Form Credential are approved for a maximum period of 12 months.

(26) Refer to the 'Transition and Teach-out Arrangements for Programs, Plans and Suites of Shorter Form Credential Modules' provisions on the principles for transition arrangements.

Transnational Offerings and Teaching of a UQ Program or Shorter Form Credential through Third-party Arrangements

(27) Faculties must establish, manage, and review quality assurance arrangements for all transnational program offerings and/or arrangements with third party providers that teach a UQ program (parts of a program or a whole program) or shorter form credential, including both on-campus and partner institutions.

This document may be varied, withdrawn or replaced at any time. Printed copies, or part thereof, are regarded as uncontrolled and should not be relied upon as the current version. It is the responsibility of the individual reading this document to refer to The University of Queensland's Policy and Procedure Library for the latest version.

(28) Where an external offering or arrangement between the University and an external party to teach a UQ program (parts of, or in its entirety) or shorter form credential is being developed as part of a new or restructured program or shorter form credential, in addition to the standard submission requirements in clauses 10-11, the faculty must meet the requirements set under the Collaborative Academic Programs Arrangements Policy and supply an Academic Quality Assurance Statement documenting the academic quality assurance arrangements put in place to ensure compliance with UQ policy, procedures and practices.

Courses, Shorter form Credentials and Stand-alone Learning Modules

(29) Approval of courses and course-level changes are normally the responsibility of the Executive Dean.

(30) Despite clause 29, a proposal should be considered by CAPP when the course:

a. forms part of the introduction of a new program, or a new plan in an existing program;
b. incorporates non-standard design;
c. requires consultation with relevant academic units that can contribute to respective areas of discipline expertise, including adherence to the requirements of the Collaborative Service Teaching Policy; or
d. requires consultation with relevant external and accrediting bodies.

(31) The Executive Dean or Associate Dean (Academic) may consult the Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Academic) to determine if a proposal under clause 30 should be considered by CAPP.

(32) Stand-alone learning modules are approved by the Executive Dean or authorised decision-maker (typically the Head of School) and may be referred to CAPP for academic review at the discretion of the Executive Dean or Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Academic).

(33) Stand-alone shorter form credential modules are approved by the Executive Dean, and suites of shorter form credential modules are referred to CAPP for academic review and approved by the Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Academic) (except where a shorter form credential suite is included in a program that leads to an AQF award).

Transition and Teach-out Arrangements for Programs, Plans and Suites of Shorter Form Credential Modules

(34) In circumstances where a program or suite of shorter form credential modules is changed or discontinued, the faculty will either put in place appropriate arrangements to ensure students who have commenced the program or suite are given a reasonable opportunity to finish it or will make alternative provisions.

(35) The following principles apply to transition and teach-out arrangements:

a. In some cases it may be necessary to transition students to a new or revised program/suite of shorter form credential modules to a new set of program/suite requirements. For example, a course or module may be recoded or no longer be offered, and/or program requirements modified to align with industry practice or to meet external accreditation requirements.
b. A teach-out arrangement may be offered instead of a transition arrangement when a program, plan or suite of shorter form credential modules is discontinued or superseded by another program, plan or suite. For example, where the alternative program/plan has few to no comparable courses to the superseded program/plan.
c. It is expected that the maximum duration of a transition or teach-out arrangement is the duration of the program/suite plus one year, with exceptions permitted at the discretion of the faculty.
d. A transition arrangement cannot guarantee that all students who access the arrangement will be able to complete the new program or suite in the same duration as would have applied had they remained in the original program or suite.

This document may be varied, withdrawn or replaced at any time. Printed copies, or part thereof, are regarded as uncontrolled and should not be relied upon as the current version. It is the responsibility of the individual reading this document to refer to The University of Queensland's Policy and Procedure Library for the latest version.

e. Transition and a teach-out arrangements will ensure that:
    i. academic standards are not lowered;
    ii. to the extent possible a student will have access to an arrangements that will not disadvantage them;
    iii. students receive clear communication about the details of the arrangement; and
    iv. in the case of a program, that the arrangement preserves the enduring value of the existing qualification that is being revised/replaced.

Transfer from an Undergraduate Program to a Postgraduate Program

(36) The Vice-Chancellor may approve a transitional scheme to allow students to transfer from an undergraduate program to a postgraduate program if the undergraduate program is being discontinued or replaced, wholly or partially, by a postgraduate program.

(37) The transitional scheme must be set out in the program completion requirements for the postgraduate program. The following requirements will also apply:

a. The transition arrangement under the scheme must:
    i. define the cohort of students entitled to access the transitional scheme; and
    ii. specify the program of study and minimum number of units a student is required to obtain to be eligible for the postgraduate award; and
b. The minimum remaining units the student is required to complete to be eligible for the postgraduate award must not be less than 50% of the program completion requirements for the postgraduate program.

(38) The Vice-Chancellor may exempt courses coded at level 3 or higher and completed by students while enrolled in the undergraduate program from the limitation on the granting of credit towards a postgraduate program, only if they are comparable to the courses the student is required to undertake in the postgraduate program.

Section 4 - Roles, Responsibilities and Accountabilities

Vice-Chancellor

(39) The Vice-Chancellor approves program development proposals, including:

a. the introduction and discontinuation of coursework programs
b. other program proposals of strategic significance, referred by CAPP to the Academic Board; and
c. exemptions from the requirements set under the Program Design Policy and/or other policies and procedures.

Provost

(40) The Provost recommends the strategic and financial aspects of new and major program initiatives before more detailed academic aspects of the programs are considered by the Committee for Academic Programs Policy and the Academic Board (where applicable).

Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Academic)

(41) The Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Academic) recommends the proposed curriculum of new and major program initiatives before more detailed academic aspects of the programs are considered by the Committee for Academic Programs Policy and the Academic Board (where applicable).

(42) The Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Academic) makes recommendations to the Vice-Chancellor on proposals referred by the Academic Board for approval and assures they align with the University's academic and strategic priorities.

(43) The Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Academic) approves:

a. (after the Vice-Chancellor has approved the introduction of a new program) the structural elements of the new program once it has been developed (e.g., plans, program requirements);
b. introduction and discontinuation of shorter form credential suites;
c. introduction, discontinuation and suspension of plans;
d. structural amendments to programs and suites of shorter form credential modules, including suspensions; and
e. program-specific requirements for admission, enrolment and progression.

Academic Board

(44) 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.

Committee for Academic Programs Policy (CAPP)

(45) CAPP reviews the academic aspects of proposals prior to consideration by the Academic Board and/or the Senior Executive. The Committee also advised and makes recommendations to the Academic Board on matters of policy relating to admission, enrolment, and progression.

(46) CAPP has established a number of sub-committees to perform compliance checks of program related changes, including Programs Sub-Committee (PSC) and Coursework Admission Standards Sub-Committee (CASSC).

Faculties

(47) The Executive Dean is responsible to the Provost and has overall accountability for the administration and quality assurance arrangements of academic programs and shorter form credentials offered by the Faculty, including:

a. the strategic aspects of proposals involving new or major program initiatives or suites of shorter form credential modules, before more detailed academic aspects of the proposals are developed and referred through the approval process;
b. the scheduled review of programs and shorter form credentials, including offshore program offerings and arrangements with third party providers (both onshore and offshore institutions).

   Refer to the Faculty, School and Institute Governance and Management Procedure for more information.

(48) The Executive Dean is also responsible for ensuring appropriate processes are implemented by the Faculty and the Coordinating Units to ensure proposals meet the requirements of relevant University policies and procedures.

(49) The Faculty (or program-based) Board of Studies is responsible for advising the Executive Dean on current and future issues that relate to the development, content and structure pertaining to academic programs, courses, and shorter form credentials. Boards of Studies will generally:

a. include representation from:
   i. coordinating units teaching into the programs offered by the Faculty;
   ii. students enrolled in the Faculty's programs; and
   iii. relevant external professional or employer groups (as required); and

b. consider advice from the Coordinating Unit on the development and review of courses, plans and programs administered by the Faculty.

(50) The Associate Dean (Academic) oversees quality assurance processes in the Faculty and coordinating units in consultation with the Executive Dean and the Heads of Coordinating Units.

Coordinating Units

(51) The Head of Coordinating Unit is responsible to the Executive Dean for the delivery and administration of courses, shorter form credentials and stand-alone learning modules.

Academic Registrar

(52) The Academic Registrar is responsible for the University's program, course and shorter form credential catalogues and approves new and amended discipline descriptors.

(53) The Academic Registrar approves applications for variations to the Academic Calendar and courses to be offered in non-standard teaching periods.

(54) Where a program is to be made available to international students, the Academic Registrar is responsible for registering the program in the Commonwealth Register of Institutions and Courses for Overseas Students (CRICOS) to meet the provisions of the Education Services for Overseas Students Act 2000.

Section 5 - Monitoring, Review and Assurance

(55) Academic Policy and Programs is responsible for monitoring the academic program approval process, the approval process of new and amended suites of shorter form credential modules and administering the curriculum management system and the Program Bulletin.

(56) The Academic Board, through CAPP, is responsible for monitoring university-wide compliance with this Procedure for its effectiveness and ongoing relevance with regard to UQ’s strategic objectives.

(57) Coordinating Units and Faculties are responsible for monitoring the effectiveness of their internal processes and alignment with this Procedure.

(58) The Academic Registrar will review this Procedure as required.

Section 6 - Recording and Reporting

Records

(59) The records of all proposals initiated through this Procedure shall be managed in accordance with the Information Management Policy.

Reports

(60) The President of the Academic Board reports annually to the Senate on program development proposals referred through the academic approval process and provides regular reports to the Vice-Chancellor and the Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Academic) following each Academic Board meeting.

(61) The Academic Registrar will provide reports relating to the program approval process to members of the University Senior Executive Team and the President of the Academic Board, as required.

This document may be varied, withdrawn or replaced at any time. Printed copies, or part thereof, are regarded as uncontrolled and should not be relied upon as the current version. It is the responsibility of the individual reading this document to refer to The University of Queensland's Policy and Procedure Library for the latest version.

(62) Planning and Business Intelligence will make reports on the program approval process and applicable performance metrics available to unit leaders as required.

(63) The Coordinating Units will provide reports to the Faculty as required.

Section 7 - Appendix

Definitions, Terms, Acronyms

Term	Definition
Building Block	See Section 2 of the Program Design Policy.
Commonwealth Register of Institutions and Courses for Overseas Students (CRICOS)	The Australian Government register that lists all Australian education providers offering programs to people studying in Australia on student visas and the programs offered.
Coordinating Unit	The organisational unit that administers the course, typically a School or Institute.
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.
Dual Program	A sequence of study under one set of program requirements that leads to two awards conferred simultaneously on separate testamurs.
Foundation Program	A program offered by UQ College that prepares international students for study at UQ. Graduate of the Foundation Program are guaranteed admission to a range of UQ programs, provided requirements including quota restrictions, grade point average, subject prerequisite and English language proficiency are met.
Integrated Program	A sequence of study under one set of program requirements that leads to a combination of awards on a single testamur.
Joint Degree Programs	Programs for which students are awarded a UQ degree (on the basis of study at UQ and credit for study undertaken at the partner institution) and receive an award from the partner institution (based on study at the partnership institution and credit for study undertaken at UQ). The arrangements for awarding the degree may include: 1. Joint Award of a Degree: Each institution awards a degree for the same program of work. An appropriate notation is made to this effect on the UQ testamur and is clearly specified in the agreement between UQ and the partner institution. 2. Dual Badging: The University (or another institution) awarding the degree recognises the involvement of the partner institution by inclusion of their crest etc. on the testamur.
Non-award Study	Where a student is enrolled to study one or more courses without being admitted to a program which leads to an award of this University.
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 postgraduate coursework qualification.
Program Bulletin	Provides staff-only access to development resources for courses, programs, plans and shorter form credentials.
Program Requirements	For the purpose of this Procedure, program requirements mean the program structure (e.g., types and sizes of building blocks used), the courses to be taken to complete the program, and any specific conditions of the program set out in the additional rules, including enrolment and progression requirements.
Shorter Form Credential	A distinct unit of study with academically assessed learning outcomes, which is generally offered outside an award program and is usually completed in a short time frame. A shorter form credential may be structured as a single module (e.g. a MOOC), or as a suite of combined modules resulting in a larger credential (e.g. a MicroMasters®).

Term	Definition
Stand-alone Learning Module	A University-led structured learning endeavour for which participants are not enrolled in a UQ course. Frequently, emphasis is placed on meeting the continuing professional development needs of individuals newly entering a field, returning to a field after a time of non-practice, maintaining currency, or in need of upgrading or updating skills. Stand-alone learning modules are not normally configured in SI-net.
Transnational Education	Means the marketing, enrolment processes and delivery of programs of study in a country other than Australia by UQ, where delivery includes a face-to-face component, regardless of whether or not the education and/or training leads to a UQ award.
Units	The value of an individual course which contributes to the total unit requirement of a program. 16 units equals 1 EFTSL – the equivalent full-time study load for a year.

Relevant Legislation and Information

(64) Relevant legislation and information includes:

a. Tertiary Education Quality and Standards Agency Act 2011 (Cth)
b. Higher Education Standards Framework (Threshold Standards) 2021
c. Education Services for Overseas Students Act 2000(Cth)
d. National Code of Practice for Providers of Education and Training to Overseas Students 2018
e. Tertiary Education Quality and Standards Agency (TEQSA)
f. Commonwealth Register of Institutions and Courses for Overseas Students (CRICOS).

Status and Details

Status	Current
Effective Date	1st August 2024
Review Date	1st September 2028
Approval Authority	Director, Governance and Risk
Approval Date	19th July 2024
Expiry Date	Not Applicable
Policy Owner	Kathryn Blyth Director, Academic Services Division and Academic Registrar
Enquiries Contact	Academic Services Division

This document may be varied, withdrawn or replaced at any time. Printed copies, or part thereof, are regarded as uncontrolled and should not be relied upon as the current version. It is the responsibility of the individual reading this document to refer to The University of Queensland's Policy and Procedure Library for the latest version.