

# Course Development, Approval, Amendment and Discontinuation Procedure

## Purpose

1. This Procedure gives effect to the Course Development, Approval, Amendment and Discontinuation Policy and outlines the processes for the development, approval, amendment and discontinuation of higher education courses of study at Global Higher Education (GHE) in line with all relevant regulatory requirements including the *Higher Education Standards Framework (Threshold Standards) 2021*, the *Australian Qualifications Framework (AQF)*, the *ESOS Framework*.

## Scope

2. This Procedure applies to all higher education courses developed, approved and delivered by GHE.
3. Details for the GHE approach to the course design are provided in the **Course Design Policy**.
4. Procedures for the monitoring and review of courses are outlined in the **Course and Unit Review Policy**.

## Definitions

5. Definitions for key terms are presented in the Glossary of Terms which may be accessed on the GHE website at <https://www.globalhe.edu.au/policy>

## Suite documents

6. This Procedure is linked to the Course Development, Approval, Amendment and Discontinuation Policy.

## Procedure

### New courses

#### *Process summary*

7. The development and approval of new courses consists of the following key steps (as summarised in Figure 1):
  - a) proposal of new course concept (any GHE member);
  - b) submission of course concept to the Board of Directors (BoD) by the Chief Executive Officer (CEO);
  - c) BoD approval to proceed to full course and business case development;
  - d) Academic Board oversees full course development by Course Development and Advisory Committee (CDAC);
  - e) CEO develops full business case in liaison with CDAC;

- f) an external review of all course documentation by an experienced, credentialed and independent expert/s with the recommendations and an implementation plan considered by Academic Board for approval;
- g) full course proposal and business case are submitted to Academic Board for approval;
- h) full course proposal is submitted to BoD for approval of the Business Case and decision to proceed with the accreditation application to TEQSA.

*Initial new course proposals*

8. New course development proposals are presented for approval to the Board of Directors by the Chief Executive Officer (CEO) via the *Initial New Course Development Authorisation Form*.
9. New course development proposals include:
  - a) demonstration of alignment to GHE strategy;
  - b) identification of the potential market opportunity including:
    - i) identification of points of difference from Australian competitors;
    - ii) projected initial enrolments based on review and analysis of available datasets for student enrolments including commencements in the relevant field of education in Australian higher education;
  - c) initial estimates of resourcing requirements including the number of new staff, units and infrastructure.
10. If the proposed new course is approved for development, the Board of Directors will then delegate:
  - a) the preparation of a full business case to the Chief Executive Officer;
  - b) the oversight of course development to the Academic Board.

*Preparation of full business case*

11. The function of the business case is to ensure that:
  - a) the proposed course is:
    - i) aligned to, and will contribute to achievement of, the GHE Strategy;
    - ii) financially viable;
  - b) GHE has the ability to apply and sustain adequate resources required for the successful delivery of the course, including ensuring that an appropriate staffing profile and levels are maintained to provide a learning environment aligned to the requirements of the course, and to enable the achievement and demonstration of student learning outcomes.
12. The full business case will therefore include at a minimum;
  - a) review and analysis of available datasets for student enrolments including commencements in the relevant field of education in Australian higher education to demonstrate current and future demand;
  - b) potential outcomes for graduates of proposed courses including employer and industry demand and projected occupations, the communities they may live in and the organisations they may work in, referencing relevant government and industry reports;
  - c) analysis of potential markets for the proposed course in Australia and internationally;
  - d) identification of points of difference from Australian competitors and analysis of course streams, student numbers and provider type;
  - e) data on projected growth in non-University Higher Education Provider (NUHEP) competition based on authoritative sources;
  - f) financial projections under three scenarios (worse case, balanced, best case);

- g) analysis of resourcing requirements including new staff, new units and infrastructure.

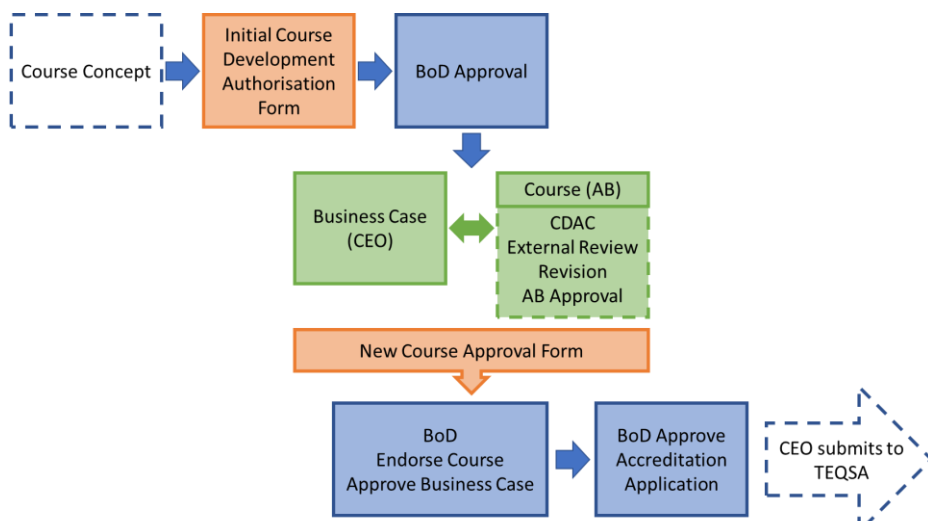
*Course development*

13. The Academic Board considers the new course development documentation from the Board of Directors and prepares any further information required to specify the course development parameters before instructing the Course Development and Advisory Committee (CDAC) to prepare a full course proposal according to the **Course Design Policy**.
14. The CEO develops the full business case in liaison with CDAC to ensure alignment as the course develops.
15. During the course development process the Academic Board will oversee the work of the CDAC and receive regular reports indicating progress, issues and other considerations as may arise. The Academic Board will also provide regular updates to the Board of Directors.
16. Once the CDAC has prepared the course documentation, via the *New Course Approval Form*, the Academic Board will review all documentation and instruct the Academic Director to engage an experienced, credentialed, independent external expert to undertake a review and consider the recommendations as per the requirements of the **Course and Unit Review Policy**.

*Internal approvals and submission for accreditation*

17. Following the satisfactory resolution of any issues raised during the independent external review, the Academic Board will provide final academic scrutiny of the new course, formally approve the course, and resolve to recommend endorsement to the Board of Directors.
18. The business case will form part of the *New Course Approval Form* and will therefore accompany the submission of the full course proposal to Academic Board for noting.
19. In considering the recommendation to endorse the new course from Academic Board and whether to submit an application for accreditation to TEQSA the Board of Directors will satisfy itself, amongst other concerns, that:
  - a) the proposed course meets the relevant sections of the Threshold Standards;
  - b) GHE has the financial, human and learning resources to support and sustain the delivery of the course, as evidenced by the Business Case.
20. The Board of Directors is responsible for approval of the submission of the accreditation application to TEQSA.
21. Following approval by the Board of Directors, the Chief Executive Officer will submit all relevant forms to TEQSA and liaise with the regulator as required.
22. Where a course is to be offered to overseas students studying in Australia on a student visa, CRICOS registration must also be sought for that course.

*Figure 1: Course Development and Approval Process Summary*



## Course amendments

23. Recommendations for changes to courses may arise from:
  - a) responses to student or staff feedback or other processes as part of internal and external quality assurance activities, such as course reviews, benchmarking, ongoing monitoring and evaluation of courses by the Teaching, Learning and Quality Committee (TLQC);
  - b) changes in external regulatory or accreditation requirements.
24. The procedure for implementing outcomes from formal course reviews commissioned by the Academic Board to the CDAC or an independent external expert is outlined in the Course Review Policy and Procedure.
25. Recommendations for course amendments are submitted to Academic Board for its consideration. Processes for approval depend on whether amendments are considered minor or major.

### *Minor amendments to courses*

26. The Academic Board is responsible for approving minor changes to existing accredited higher education courses.
27. A minor amendment to a course includes one or more of the following:
  - a) changes to prescribed and recommended readings for units to maintain currency and relevancy;
  - b) changes to the wording of learning outcomes over time that do not significantly alter the focus, assessment, curriculum or intended outcomes of the course as a whole;
  - c) modification of prerequisites and co-requisites for individual units that do not compromise the integrity and coherency of the course;
  - d) any other minor amendment that is not considered by the Academic Board to constitute a major amendment as outlined below.

### *Major amendments to courses*

28. Major amendments are those that may impact the approved scope of GHE's courses as accredited by TEQSA. Where the Academic Board determines that a proposed change is major the matter is referred to the Chief Executive Officer for immediate notification to and liaison with TEQSA prior to the amendments taking effect.
29. Changes to the following characteristics are considered by TEQSA to constitute major amendments to a course that may require accreditation as a new course<sup>1</sup>:
  - a) course title including specialisations;
  - b) AQF level;
  - c) course duration or volume of learning;
  - d) delivery mode or methods;
  - e) course content including new disciplines which may impact staffing needs;
  - f) admission requirements;
  - g) course design including the addition/withdrawal of new units, significant changes to learning outcomes and assessment types or weighting within units, changes to and introduction of work integrated learning or placements;
  - h) delivery with third parties;
  - i) student workload;

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<sup>1</sup> TEQSA Guidance note: *Changes in a Course of Study that may lead to Accreditation as a New Course*, Version 1.0, 6 March 2017

- j) inclusion of delivery to international students where existing approvals are not in place;
  - k) accreditation status (if professionally accredited).
30. Following confirmation from TEQSA that the change is permissible under the accreditation requirements of the course, the Academic Board will approve the change and refer the matter, including TEQSA's advice, for noting to the Board of Directors. Should TEQSA notify GHE that the changes represent the need for a new course accreditation application to be submitted, the Academic Board will not approve the recommended change to the existing course.
  31. Where a course amendment affects currently enrolled or deferred students, the Academic Director will notify students of the amendment, the options available to students and any transitional arrangements that will be put in place.
  32. TEQSA must be notified of any proposed changes to GHEs CRICOS registration for a course that affect the following characteristics at least 30 days prior to the changes taking effect:
    - a) course duration, including holiday breaks;
    - b) modes of study, including on-line, distance or work-based training;
    - c) number of overseas students enrolled at the provider, within the limit or maximum number approved by the ESOS agency for the location;
    - d) arrangements with other education providers, including partners, in delivering a course or courses to overseas students.

#### **Discontinuation of a course and teach-out**

33. A proposal for provider-initiated course discontinuation of a currently accredited higher education course at GHE requires approval by the Board of Directors in consultation with the Academic Board.
34. The proposal to discontinue a course may be submitted to the Board of Directors by the CEO and must be accompanied by a report setting out the rationale and evidence supporting the recommendation. The report must also detail the risks currently associated with the course and any compliance issues.
35. Following the consideration of a proposal for course discontinuation, the Board of Directors will instruct the CEO to prepare an impact analysis which outlines the potential impact on current students and potential students to whom GHE may have already made an offer, the refund and tuition assurance obligations of GHE, impact on load and revenue in the short to medium term, the proposed teach-out period, regulatory obligations, and a communication plan with TEQSA and other regulatory, government or accreditation bodies.
36. Following consideration of the impact analysis, and consultation with the Academic Board, should the Board of Directors approve a decision to discontinue an accredited higher education course, a Material Change Notification must be submitted to TEQSA within 14 days. Communication about the proposed decision with students and/or staff will not proceed until confirmation is received from TEQSA.
37. Where a decision to discontinue a course arises from a regulatory decision GHE must comply.
38. Whether a proposal to discontinue a course is a provider-initiated decision or an external regulatory decision, GHE is obliged under the *HESF (2021)* and the *ESOS Framework* to have effective teach-out or course transition plans in place. This applies regardless of whether students will continue to be enrolled at the due date for renewal of course accreditation.
39. On the instruction of the Board of Directors, the CEO and the Academic Director will jointly coordinate and oversee the completion of a Course Teach-Out Plan in line with the **Course Teach-Out Policy** for the relevant course in consultation with all relevant stakeholders.

## Roles and responsibilities

40. The CEO is responsible for:
  - a) presenting Initial New Course Development Proposals and preparing the Business Case for each new course to the Board of Directors;
  - b) submission of documents to TEQSA for course accreditation and liaison with TEQSA as required;
  - c) undertaking an impact analysis of proposals for course discontinuation;
  - d) notification of changes to courses including decisions to discontinue courses with TEQSA and other relevant stakeholders including other accreditation, government or regulatory bodies.
41. The Academic Director is responsible for the preparation and implementation of teach-out plans in accordance with the **Course Teach-Out Policy**.
42. The CDAC is responsible for:
  - a) developing/or reviewing course and curriculum in line with the parameters as set by the Academic Board, the CDAC Terms of Reference, the **Course Design Policy** and other relevant GHE policies;
  - b) ensuring the quality and compliance of all course proposals;
  - c) reporting to and responding to advice and requests from the Academic Board.
43. The Academic Board is responsible for:
  - a) overseeing course development/or review by the CDAC;
  - b) noting, approving or rejecting recommendations by the TLQC, CDAC, or an independent reviewer;
  - c) delegating to CDAC or TLQC advice from external experts as required;
  - d) approval of minor course amendments within the scope of the existing accreditation requirements of a course;
  - e) advising the Board of Directors of recommendations that constitute major changes to accredited courses and that require notification and potential approval by TEQSA;
  - f) provide final academic scrutiny and approval of courses and make recommendations to the Board of Directors for endorsement of courses.
44. The Board of Directors is responsible for:
  - a) endorsing, approving and/or rejecting recommendations for new course development and course discontinuation;
  - b) delegation to the Academic Board for oversight of the course development process including for approval of courses;
  - c) approval of course business cases and ensuring that GHE has the necessary resources to support the sustained successful delivery of proposed and existing courses;
  - d) approval of all course accreditation applications to TEQSA.
45. The Manager, Quality and Compliance is responsible for:
  - a) benchmarking GHE policy and standards with those adopted elsewhere in the higher education sector;
  - b) monitoring of information available from the review of records relating to the implementation of this procedure;
  - c) all records management arising from the implementation of this Procedure.
46. All staff are responsible for becoming familiar and complying with this Procedure.

## Associated information

<b>Related Internal Documents</b>	Course Development, Approval, Amendment and Discontinuation Policy Initial Course Development Authorisation Form New Course Approval Form Course Design Policy Course and Unit Review Policy Course Teach-Out Policy Course Teach-Out Plan Template Governance Framework Quality Assurance Policy Glossary of Terms
<b>Related Legislation, Standards and Codes</b>	<i>Tertiary Education Quality and Standards Agency Act 2011</i> <i>Higher Education Standards Framework (Threshold Standards) 2021</i> <i>Education Services for Overseas Students (ESOS) Act 2000</i> <i>National Code of Practice for Providers of Education and Training to Overseas Students 2018</i> TEQSA Guidance Note: <i>Changes in a Course of Study that may lead to Accreditation as a New Course</i> , Version 1.0, 6 March 2017
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<b>PinPoint DocID</b>	2517

## Change history

<b>Version Control</b>	Version 1.6	
<b>Change Summary</b>	22-Oct-19	V1.0 draft to 29 Nov 19 Board of Directors (BoD) meeting for consideration and recommended to the Academic Board (AB) for further development with minor amendments
	11-Dec-19	V1.1 draft incorporating BoD requested amendments approved by AB 20-Dec-19 with minor amendments
	7-Feb-20	V1.2 revised version approved by AB 7-Feb-20 and recommended to the 21-Feb-20 BoD for endorsement who requested further changes
	10-Apr-20	V1.3 revised version addressing BoD requested changes approved by AB 30-Mar-20 by Flying Minute and endorsed by BoD 10-Apr-20
	10-Jul-20	V1.4 administrative updates
	4-Dec-20	V1.5 minor amendment approved by Academic Director removal of ambiguity relating to external reviews (amend cl16 delete cl17)
	29-Jun-23	V1.6 added cl22, 32, amended 28, 40b approved by AD/CEO 29-Jun-23 and administrative updates following TEQSA registration

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