Course Accreditation and Amendment Procedure

Section 1 - Governing Policy

(1) This Procedure is governed by the Course Accreditation, Amendment and Review Policy.

Section 2 - Scope

(2) This Procedure describe how courses and units at ACU are approved, amended, suspended, and discontinued.

Section 3 - Definitions

(3) General definitions in this document are consistent with the Course Accreditation, Amendment and Review Policy and the Glossary of Student and Course Terms.

Section 4 - Course Approval

(4) Proposals for new courses require two stages of approval:

a. Strategic / Management approval will consider the fit of the proposal with ACU's Strategic direction, the ACU Mission, Identity and Values, market demand, resource implications and financial viability and compliance with the Higher Education Standards Framework (Threshold Standards) 2021 (HESF).
b. Academic approval will consider ACU's academic requirements and compliance with the requirements of the Australian Qualifications Framework (AQF) and the Higher Education Standards Framework.

(5) Proposals for strategic / management approval are developed by Faculties or the Course Incubator and must address all requirements set out in Schedule 1 and the relevant Course Management and Approval System (CMAS) templates, and:

a. must be submitted via the relevant systems template and workflow on CMAS;
b. must provide evidence of required consultation as per clauses (48) or (49) of this Procedure;
c. must be submitted in accordance with the timelines set out in Schedule 3 of this Procedure.

(6) If a proposal for strategic / management approval of a new course is rejected by the Provost and Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Academic), then no further development may be undertaken.

(7) Once strategic / management approval has been granted, the relevant Faculty must establish a Course Development Committee, as detailed in Schedule 5 to oversee the development of the proposal for academic approval.

(8) Proposals for academic approval must address all requirements as set out in Schedule 2 and the relevant CMAS

templates, and:

a. must be submitted via the relevant template and workflow on CMAS;
b. must be submitted in accordance with the timelines set out in Schedule 3 of this Procedure;
c. must provide evidence of required consultation as set out in Section 11 of this Procedure;
d. will be endorsed by the relevant Faculty Board(s)in the case of courses in an existing discipline; and
e. will be considered by the Courses and Academic Quality Committee (CAQC) who may:
    i. in the case of courses in an existing discipline, endorse the proposal for consideration and approval by the Academic Board or refer the proposal back to the relevant Faculty Board for reconsideration;or
    ii. in the case of courses proposed through the Course Incubator, recommend the proposal for consideration and endorsement by Academic Board.

(9) For new courses within existing disciplines, Academic Board will approve the course or refer the proposal back to CAQC or Faculty Board for reconsideration.

(10) For new courses in disciplines not identified in the Constitution, Academic Board will consider the entire proposal and may recommend to Senate for approval or refer the proposal back to CAQC, Faculty Board or the Course Incubator for reconsideration.

Section 5 - Course Amendments

(11) Course amendments fall into two categories:

a. amendments with a significant resource implication requiring both strategic / management and academic approval; or
b. amendments requiring academic approval only.

(12) Strategic / management approval from the Provost is required when the proposed amendments lead to a change as set out in section 1.3.1 in the Framework for Leading and Managing Change, facilities modification and / or additional financial investment. This approval must be obtained before the academic approval can proceed.

(13) Depending on the nature of the amendment, the change may be considered either a minor change or a major change which will determine the relevant approval pathway as outlined in Schedule 4.

(14) Minor changes are unit level changes that:

a. affect units within course rules without changing the course structure;
b. do not impact service teaching arrangements between Faculties.

(15) Major changes are course level changes including the following:

a. changes to course structure;
b. changes to location and / or study mode;
c. making a course available to study for international students on a student visa for the first time;
d. changes to the admissions requirements;
e. changes to units where the change impacts a service teaching arrangement; or
f. any course change that is made post handbook publication date.

(16) Changes to fee type must be approved by the Provost.

(17) Changes where there is no curriculum change, for example course rules, admission requirements etc, can be approved via executive action by the Chair, Academic Board.

Section 6 - Unit Approval and Amendments

(18) New units are approved by the relevant Faculty Board, or CAQC in case of units developed by the Course Incubator. Where new units form part of a new or amended course, they must be submitted as part of the course approval proposal.

(19) Proposals for new and amended units must:

a. include evidence of consultation with the Centre for Education and Innovation.
b. meet the requirements for moderation as set out in Section 10 of this Procedure; and
c. address all requirements set out in the relevant CMAS templates.

(20) Proposals for new and amended units must be submitted via the relevant workflow and approval pathway on CMAS.

(21) Unit amendments are normally considered as minor changes and may be approved by the relevant Faculty Board.

(22) Where amendments to a suite of units exceed 30% of the overall course / specialisation / major, the change is considered to be a major change requiring approval as set out in Schedule 4 of this Procedure.

(23) Where there have been minor amendments over the previous two years that cumulatively exceed 30% of the overall course / specialisation / major, the next change will be considered to be a major change requiring approval as set out in Schedule 4 of this Procedure.

Section 7 - Microcredentials

(24) Microcredentials are approved according to the pathway outlined in Schedule 4 of this Procedure.

(25) Proposals for new or amended microcredentials must address all requirements set out in the relevant CMAS templates and the moderation requirements as set out in Section 10 of this Procedure and be submitted via the relevant approval pathway on CMAS as set out in Schedule 4 of this Procedure.

Section 8 - Course Suspension

(26) Suspension of a course, specialisation major or minor is subject to the Course and Unit Viability Analysis Policy and may be a precursor to discontinuation.

(27) Suspension of a course or specialisation may also be subject to Government legislative requirements where Commonwealth Supported Places (CSP) are offered in that course.

(28) The Provost is responsible for approving amendments to the enrolment plan.

(29) Where a Faculty intends to suspend a course, specialisation, major or minor, it will develop a proposal for the Provost which outlines the following:

a. the nature of the suspension, whether temporary or as a precursor to discontinuation;
b. quantitative offer and enrolment data relating to the last intake/s (if applicable);

c. campus locations where course is to be suspended;
d. duration of suspension;
e. impact on resources, staffing and continuing students or applicants including evidence of consultation with the Academic Registrar and Director, Student Administration, the Chief Marketing Officer and Director, Global Engagement;
f. impact on pathway programs or double degrees with other Faculties where units of study might still be required for course completion or are identified as part of a transition plan, if applicable; and
g. next steps to be undertaken by Faculty e.g. review of course with intention to revise, review of market demand, future intention to discontinue, communication with other Faculties, accreditation body etc.

(30) In consideration of any suspension of a course or specialisation, the Provost must determine whether there is a requirement for notification to the Department of Education of the intention to suspend.

(31) If the Provost determines that notification to the Department of Education is required, this must be done prior to 31 July of the year before the suspension is due to take effect.

(32) Proposals for suspension approved by the Provost noted at CAQC.

(33) Following approval of a suspension, any necessary change management processes must be initiated if required.

(34) Where the Provost approves suspension of a course, specialisation or major:

a. this will be reported to the Academic Board via CAQC;
b. a material change notification may be lodged with TEQSA in accordance with the TEQSA Material Change Notification Policy; and
c. the Faculty will inform the relevant areas of the University for action.

(35) Following suspension of a course, specialisation major or minor no new offers of admission may be made for that course, specialisation, major or minor for enrolment periods from the date of approved suspension. Any students that have received an offer may have the offer withdrawn in accordance with the Admission to Coursework Programs Policy.

(36) Following suspension of a course, specialisation or major, and providing it is within the accreditation period for the course, then a course may be reinstated by action of the Provost, with a memo to CAQC, noted by Academic Board through the CAQC minutes.

(37) Where a course is suspended as a precursor to discontinuation, the Faculty must commence the discontinuation process as outlined in Section 9 of this Procedure.

Section 9 - Course Discontinuation

(38) A proposal to discontinue a course, specialisation major or minor will be recommended by Faculty Board, endorsed by CAQC and approved by Academic Board.

(39) Any such proposal must be submitted via the relevant template and workflow on CMAS and should include a discontinuation plan with a set time period for the course to remain open for teach out where applicable.

(40) Where Academic Board has approved the discontinuation of a course, specialisation or major:

a. relevant areas of the University will be notified of the discontinuation for action via the minutes of Academic Board;

b. no new offers of admission may be made in the course, specialisation or major for enrolment periods from the date of approved discontinuation;
c. arrangements will be made to ensure all existing students can either complete the course of study, or transition to an equivalent or suitable course at no disadvantage; and
d. a material change notification may be lodged with TEQSA in accordance with the TEQSA Material Change Notification Policy.

(41) Academic Board will monitor any discontinued courses which are in teach out to ensure that the approved teach out plan is adhered to. Any course which exceeds the approved duration will be subject to further review. Courses which are in teach out, remain subject to the review provisions in Section 8 of the Course Accreditation, Amendment and Review Policy.

Section 10 - Moderation

(42) In any proposal that involves the creation of new course components (including units), the relevant Committee Chair will appoint external moderators as a part of the quality assurance strategies in the development of the proposal.

(43) At least one of the external moderators will be an academic, external to the University who has expertise in the discipline / content area(s) as well as in higher education curriculum requirements. They may be appointed:

a. to moderate components of the course (including unit sequences) or the course as a whole – in which case normally at least two moderators would be appointed, at least one of whom must be an academic moderator, to cover the full scope of the course; or
b. to moderate individual units or groups of units – in which case at least one academic moderator, but usually two, would be appointed in each case.

(44) For moderation of units the moderators will assess the quality of the new unit(s) on the basis of the unit outline(s). Moderators will be provided with a template, a summary description of the course, including course objectives and overall structure.

(45) The formal award title may be in the form of the course category together with:

a. unit learning outcomes;
b. unit content;
c. relevance and appropriateness of the unit in the context of the overall course design;
d. standard of anticipated learning outcomes, given the level of the unit and the course;
e. appropriateness of teaching organisation, including:
    i. teaching and learning strategy;
    ii. duration;
    iii. mode of delivery (for example lectures, tutorials, workshops, laboratory sessions);
    iv. professional experience, contract learning, individual student tasks, etc;
    v. assessment strategy and nature of assessment; and
    vi. standard of anticipated learning outcomes, given the level of the unit and the course.
f. currency and sufficiency of texts, bibliography and other resources.

(46) The Course Development Committee or Course Review Committee must engage with and respond to the external moderator’s findings.

(47) Amendments to existing units will be internally moderated.

Section 11 - Consultation

(48) Faculties must ensure that the relevant stakeholders are consulted in any new course proposal or course amendment proposal.

(49) The Provost must ensure that the relevant stakeholders are consulted in any new course proposal from the Course Incubator.

(50) For consultation with internal University stakeholders there must be a minimum consultation period of ten working days.

New Course Proposals

(51) Consultation for new course approval is a two-stage process.

Strategic / Management Consultation Stage

(52) This stage of consultation supports the Provost in determining whether to grant strategic / management approval for a proposal.

(53) Prior to submission to the Provost, Faculties or the Course Incubator must consult with relevant Faculty staff, relevant external stakeholders and seek endorsement from the University areas identified in CMAS. Relevant internal consultees for this stage include the following staff:

a. Academic Registrar;
b. Associate Director, Student Administrative Services;
c. Marketing and External Relations;
d. Global;
e. Properties and Facilities;
f. Other relevant Faculties; and
g. Education Pathways, where relevant.

Academic Consultation Stage

(54) This stage of consultation supports CAQC in determining whether to endorse academic approval for a proposal.

(55) Prior to submission to CAQC, Faculties or the Course Incubator, must take into consideration advice from the Course Development Committee (CDC), relevant industry and other external stakeholders, Faculty staff, and must seek endorsement from the relevant University areas identified in CMAS. Relevant internal consultees for this stage include the following staff:

a. Academic Registrar;
b. Associate Director, Student Administrative Services;
c. Global;
d. Education Pathways;
e. Information Technology;
f. Centre for Education and Innovation;
g. Library;

h. Properties and Facilities; and
i. Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Catholic Mission).

(56) Evidence of consultation and endorsement must be submitted for both stages of approval as part of the course proposal.

Course Amendment Consultation

(57) Where an amendment to a course requires strategic / management approval both stages of consultation must be undertaken. Faculties must seek endorsement from the relevant University areas identified in CMAS. Relevant internal consultees for this stage include the following staff:

a. Academic Registrar;
b. Associate Director, Student Administrative Services;
c. Global;
d. Information Technology;
e. Centre for Education and Innovation;
f. Library;
g. Properties and Facilities;
h. Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Catholic Mission);
i. Education Pathways, where relevant; and
j. Partner Faculties where there is a Service Teaching Arrangement.

Section 12 - External Accreditation

(58) Faculties or the Course Incubator are responsible for oversight of external / professional accreditation according to the requirements of the relevant accrediting body.

(59) Outcomes of applications for external / professional accreditation will be reported to Academic Board as required.

Section 13 - Record Keeping

(60) Records will be retained on CMAS and via the Faculty Board, Courses and Academic Quality Committee, University Research Committee and Academic Board minutes.

(61) Records will be held in accordance with the Records and Archive Management Policy and the relevant Australian Government and State records acts.

Section 14 - Review

(62) Unless otherwise indicated, this policy will still apply beyond the review date.

Section 15 - Schedules

Schedule 1: Strategic / Management Approval Key Requirements

(63) For all new course proposals and for course amendments with resource implications, Faculties and the Course Incubator must address the following key areas. The CMAS templates include information on how to address each

requirement in the relevant field:

a. alignment with:
    i. ACU Strategic Plan and Vice-Chancellor and President's Strategic Priorities;
    ii. ACU Mission, Identity and Values; and
    iii. Research and Enterprise Vision 2033: In Service of a Flourishing Humanity.
b. locations - identify campuses under consideration, including online;
c. likely demand - include domestic and international market analyses / insight data demonstrating a demand;
d. expected load - domestic and international, by campus identifying what is realistically achievable;
e. fee types proposed;
f. proposed mode of offering;
g. staffing - what staff (professional and academic) will be required to establish and launch the course and maintain it at full offering, which of these are new positions, if not new what are staff doing to enable them to obtain the relevant expertise to deliver / administer this course;
h. external accreditation requirements - relevant body, existing relationship, timelines, cost;
i. Work Integrated Learning / Professional Experience - identifying relevant partnerships in place or those to be developed;
j. relationship to other ACU courses - indicating likely suspension and / or discontinuation, pathway programs, postgraduate pathways;
k. CRICOS registration where relevant;
l. any new technologies, new facilities or dedicated teaching spaces that may be required;
m. capacity of existing specialist spaces;
n. Library resourcing over and above existing; and
o. draft Business Plan.

Schedule 2: Academic Approval Key Requirements

(64) For all new course proposals and for course amendments, Faculties must address, as a minimum, the following key areas. The CMAS templates include information on how to address each requirement in the relevant field:

a. alignment with AQF level;
b. relationship to other courses - pathways, nesting, exit points and shared majors / minors / units;
c. course learning outcomes;
d. graduate attributes and generic skills;
e. professional experience;
f. strategically critical inclusions, including:
    i. Indigenous knowings;
    ii. safeguarding children and vulnerable adults;
    iii. internationalisation;
    iv. ACU Mission, Identity and Values;
    v. mapping of Laudato Si and SDGs (Sustainable Development Goals);
    vi. community engagement per the Community Engagement Time Release Policy;
    vii. professional accreditation.
g. Teaching / Research nexus and scholarly underpinnings of course content and pedagogical approach;
h. quality assurance processes and risk management for the course;
i. academic staff profile - statement about existing or new staff including the use of sessional staff (appropriate

knowledge and skills to ensure scholarly approach);

j. evidence of Constructive Alignment;
k. evidence of External Benchmarking and Moderation;
l. course rules;
    i. admission requirements including English Language Proficiency (ELP) requirements;
    ii. inherent requirements.
m. generic unit outlines; and
n. course maps.

Schedule 3: Timelines

(65) The following timelines apply to the development and submission of proposals for new courses, and amendments to course and units. They are developed with regard to the requirements for submission of data on course and unit offerings to the Australian Government, publication requirements of the Tertiary Admission Centres and requirements for appropriate marketing and promotional timelines for both domestic and international markets.

(66) Depending on the nature of the proposal, Faculties or the Course Incubator should also consider the published meeting dates for the relevant governance committees to ensure that the appropriate endorsement and recommendation is received prior to the Academic Board.

COURSES

Item	Approval Timeline
Review of offerings	
A consolidated annual proposal from each Faculty for the: Development of new course(s) Cyclical Review of existing course(s) Discontinuation of existing course(s).	The first Academic Board of each year
New courses	
Courses published / offered through a Tertiary Admission Centre (all undergraduate courses Initial Teacher Education courses)	The final Academic Board of the calendar year 13 months before the year of offering (i.e.: November 2024 for a course to be introduced in 2026) This is to meet government reporting guidelines and to provide sufficient time for marketing and promotion.
Courses offered through direct application	No later than the third Academic Board of the year for courses to be offered from Semester 1 of the following year. No later than the fourth Academic Board of the year for courses to be offered from Semester 2 of the following year.
Major Course Changes	
Courses published / offered through a Tertiary Admission Centre	February Academic Board of the year preceding year of offering (i.e.: February 2025 for a major change to be introduced in 2026)
Courses offered through direct application	No later than the third Academic Board of the year for courses to be offered from Semester 1 of the following year. No later than the fourth Academic Board for the year for courses to be offered from Semester 2 of the following year.

UNITS

Item	Approval Timeline
Approval of new units in existing courses	
Units in a course to be offered in the following academic year	By 30 September of the year preceding year of offering.

(67) In exceptional circumstances, where a case for an urgent need for introduction or modification, based on the University's strategic direction and / or information or feedback from the profession and / or professional body, these timelines may be varied with the prior written approval of the Provost and the Chair, Academic Board. Faculties must demonstrate that a variation will not cause any disadvantage to students.

Schedule 4: Course Proposal / Change Types and Approval Pathways

(68) The Course Proposal/Change Types and Approval Pathways should be used to determine the appropriate approval pathway for the proposal.

Schedule 5: Course Development Committee

Establishment

(69) The Executive Dean will establish a Course Development Committee to prepare the course and curriculum proposals for any new course or specialisation proposed by the Faculty. In the case of double degrees, the relevant Executive Deans will collaborate regarding the composition and terms of reference of the Committee.

(70) The Provost will establish a Course Development Committee for any new courses proposed through the Course Incubator.

Membership

(71) Committee membership will be approved by the Executive Dean(s). When appointing the Committee, the Executive Dean(s) will nominate the Chair of the Committee and will provide the Chair with the Committee's terms of reference. In the case of a double degree, the Chair will be appointed from the Faculty with primary administrative responsibility for the course.

(72) Committee size will vary reflecting the nature of the proposed course. The following categories of persons will be represented on Course Development Committee:

a. academic staff;
b. Senior Course Leadership involved in the delivery of the course which could include Head of Discipline, National Course Coordinator or Professional Practice Leader;
c. representative from the Centre for Education and Innovation;
d. representative from the office of the Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Research and Enterprise) where relevant;
e. representative from Marketing and External Relations;
f. representative from Global and Education Pathways where relevant;

(73) In addition a Course Development Committee may also include potential clients for whom the course is planned and external academic members.

(74) Where a course requires accreditation by a professional body, membership of the Course Development Committee will include appropriate representation from that body.

(75) Where required, the Executive Dean may invite additional member(s) of the Centre for Education and Innovation to provide input and advice regarding curriculum design (e.g., graduate attributes and capabilities and learning

outcomes) and delivery (e.g., use of learning management system and new technologies) of units of study prior to establishing a rationale for the introduction of the course (see Section 4 of this Procedure) and during the course development stage as required.

(76) The Committee must consult with the Associate Dean (Learning and Teaching), Faculty of Theology and Philosophy regarding Core Curriculum units.

Consultation

(77) External bodies should be consulted by the Committee, where appropriate.

Reporting and Recommendation

(78) The Committee may be required to make interim reports to the Faculty Board(s) during the exploratory or development phases. In the case of Course Incubator courses such reports would be to the Provost.

(79) The Committee Chair will recommend new course proposals to the Executive Dean(s) for consideration by the Faculty Board(s) in accordance with the usual processes of the Faculty/ies.

Section 16 - Revisions to this Procedure

(80) A summary of revisions made to this Policy compared to the previously published version is available in the Status and Details tab. For older changes, check the Status and Details tab within previous versions of the document. These are accessible via the Historic Versions tab.

Section 17 - Associated Information

(81) For related legislation, policies, procedures and guidelines and any supporting resources, please refer to the Associated Information tab.

Status and Details

Status	Current
Effective Date	27th September 2024
Review Date	27th September 2027
Approval Authority	Governance Officer
Approval Date	18th September 2024
Expiry Date	Not Applicable
Responsible Executive	Helen Murnane Academic Registrar
Responsible Manager	Gerard Goodwin-Moore National Manager, Student Policy and Appeals
Enquiries Contact	Catherine McKiver Senior Policy Officer Student Administration