

Course Development Approval and Review Policy

1. PURPOSE

The development and delivery of high- quality courses are fundamental to the success of UTS College. This policy articulates the principles of the development, approval and review of courses delivered by UTS College and third parties to ensure that courses meet the desired student learning outcomes of specific subjects and the graduate attributes of each program as well as being compliant with all relevant legislative and stakeholder requirements.

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2. SCOPE

This procedure applies to:

- All UTS College staff responsible for any aspect of the development, approval and review of all courses offered by UTS College and a 3rd party, regardless of location or mode of delivery.
- It also applies to any external advisory groups and other relevant bodies such as the UTS College Academic Board.
- The development, approval and review of the UTS Foundation Studies Programs remains the responsibility of UTS, however UTS College is responsible for advising UTS on the efficacy of the programs and initiating reviews when and where improvements and enhancements would benefit the quality of the programs.

3. PRINCIPLES

3.1. UTS College is committed to ensuring that:

- 3.1.1. **Courses are developed and approved to meet UTS College organisational needs** – The course approval process encourages and facilitates the development of high-quality courses that reflect the UTS College model of learning, ensuring they are sustainable and provide learning outcomes and student experiences that are aligned with UTS College’s strategic direction, purpose, and values.
- 3.1.2. **Courses are developed using best practice principles** – Course development is underpinned by best practices in curriculum design and contemporary pedagogies. When developing courses, a quality-assurance approach will be taken that ensures constructive alignment of the assessments, learning activities and the intended learning outcomes. Courses are developed in line with the principles of the UTS College Model of Learning and the Integrated Model guidelines.
- 3.1.3. **Courses are developed to ensure equity for students** – There is equivalence of learning outcomes for students regardless of the location or mode of study. Courses

must recognise the diversity and variety of the educational and personal backgrounds of students. Courses must provide educational opportunities that support transition to higher education learning and the acquisition of skills necessary for the student's successful participation in the course. Refer to the Access and Inclusion Framework, and the Education Access and Inclusion Policy and procedure.

- 3.1.4. **Courses must comply with the relevant legislation and organisational policies** – Course development, approval and review is guided by all the UTS College policies and principles relevant to the design, delivery, management and quality assurance of courses. Courses must comply with the relevant provisions of the Higher Education Standards Framework (Threshold Standards) as required by the Tertiary Education Quality and Standards Agency (TEQSA); the Foundation Program standards; the Australian Qualifications Framework (AQF); and the Education Services for Overseas Students (ESOS) Act and ELICOS Standards for ELT courses.
- 3.1.5. **Course approvals follow appropriate governance and financial authority** – Course approvals require financial authorisation by the UTS College Executive Team. Financial authorisation is required for new courses and major changes to existing courses or subjects. Requests for course financial authorisation are made in the form of a business case via the Executive representative for Education. Executive approval must be gained before the proposal goes to the Academic Board. Course approvals involve rigorous oversight by the UTS Academic Board and its sub-committees. It is a requirement of approval that a proposed course of study demonstrates that it will meet the requirements of the HES Framework and that sufficient resources will be available. Foundation courses and major and minor changes to Foundation courses are approved by UTS. Significant changes require TEQSA accreditation/approval. Award Course proposals and major changes that include material/significant changes require TEQSA accreditation / approval
- 3.1.6. **External articulation** – External articulation arrangements for relevant Diploma and Graduate Certificate courses are approved by the appropriate UTS Faculty and by the UTS Courses Accreditation committee.
- 3.1.7. **Courses are regularly reviewed** – UTS College performs a comprehensive review of courses and course delivery on a five-year cycle. In addition to the cyclical course review, certain circumstances will trigger an earlier review. Examples of this include (but are not limited to):
- Performance indicators (including student feedback) highlighting areas of concern
 - Major changes to Award courses
 - Changes of more than 25% for the UTS Foundation Studies program
 - Recommendations from the regular review of subjects
- 3.1.8. **Subjects/levels are regularly reviewed** – UTS College conducts a regular review (typically on an annual basis) of subjects/levels to ensure adherence to the Higher Education Standards. These take into consideration changes to curriculum, standards, pedagogy, and student performance. In addition, continuous improvements are recorded and tracked in a register and semester student performance reports are analysed and reported on via the ASC.

4. POLICY STATEMENTS

4.1. New course development

4.1.1. Initial assessment of course proposals for new courses / major changes to existing courses

- a. Proposals for new courses, major changes to existing courses and delivery of courses through third parties, emanate from many sources including the UTS College Education Management team, the UTS College Limited Board, the UTS College Academic Board or other internal sources
- b. The business case for a new courses /major changes (2) to a course must include:
 - Alignment with UTS College’s strategic direction, purpose and values;
 - A rationale for the new course/ major change (2) or new delivery site;
 - Outline of the new course/major change (2) aims;
 - A market intelligence report of course demand and projected enrolment; and
 - An outline of resource requirements.
- c. The Executive will determine if the commercial aspects of the business case are viable and credible. The Executive may endorse the business case before being considered by the UTS College Limited Board
- d. Major course changes within the Executive’s approved delegated authority will be approved by the Executive. If the cost of major changes exceeds that limit the Executive will review and endorse the proposal before it is considered by the UTS College Limited Board for approval
- e. Approval from a financial perspective must be gained before the new course or the major change progresses to the Academic Board for further review.

4.1.2. Development and approval of new courses / major changes to existing courses

- a. A formal course proposal for the development of a new course or major changes to an existing course is presented to the Academic Board for approval in line with the processes outlined in the Procedures for Course Development, Approval and Review. In the case of Foundation Studies, the proposal goes to the UTS Associate Dean’s Teaching and Learning Network for approval
- b. At the recommendation from its committees, the Academic Board is responsible for approving all new courses and major changes to existing courses and delivery of courses through third party agents prior to submission of the course to the accreditation process of TEQSA, UTS for credit recognition and articulation arrangements, or other relevant external accrediting authority
- c. Courses offered in all locations and modes of delivery will have quality assurance arrangements endorsed by the UTS College Academic Board.

4.1.3. Proposal and approval of minor and standard changes

- a. Minor changes to courses are to be proposed by Program Manager or DOS and approved by the Learning and Teaching Committee and/or Academic Standards Committee in line with the process as outlined in the Procedures for Course Development Approval and Review
- b. Standard changes are to be tracked in the continuous improvement register and follow the process for approval as outlined in the Procedures for Course, Development Approval and Review.

4.1.4. Course review and moderation

- a. UTS College is committed to a cyclical moderation of its equivalent courses, including those offered through third parties in offshore locations, with stakeholders such as the relevant faculty of the University of Technology, Sydney
- b. UTS College is committed to a cyclical review of its courses by the Learning and Teaching Committee. These reviews should occur every 5 years, unless circumstances trigger the need for an earlier review. The reviews will include external referencing or other benchmarking activities
- c. The reviews are informed and supported by the regular review of subjects/levels, student performance reports, learning analytics and feedback from stakeholders
- d. External input will be sought via the Course Advisory Committees (CAC) or external consultants for ELT.
- e. The cyclical review will generate course-specific reports and recommendations for the Academic Board. The objective of these reviews to consider:
 - All programs
 - Alignment of subject learning outcomes across the program in regard to UTS equivalent
 - Program design, including program learning outcomes and curriculum alignment (including assessment)
 - Best practice learning and teaching in accordance with the UTS College model of learning and (ILM guidelines for academic)
 - External factors including accreditation and compliance and the appropriateness of the admission criteria
 - Course delivery from all locations benchmarked both external (where possible) and with UTS in regard to student performance
 - Feedback from students and teachers considered and incorporated where appropriate
 - Student experience and outcomes of the program informed by the student performance reports, including equity and diversity in the student profile, trends in student satisfaction, student completion, qualification and retention rates, and student performance at UTS
 - Mode of delivery
- f. In addition for:

- Diploma programs – Alignment of subject learning outcomes across the program in regard to UTS equivalent and for non-UTS equivalent subjects, emerging developments in the field of education incorporated where appropriate
- UTS College Foundation Studies – Curriculum relevance and currency in light of emerging developments in education and relevant disciplines and engagement with UTS faculties. Australian Year 12 Curriculum and student performance in Diploma programs
- ELT program – Curriculum relevance and currency in light of emerging developments in the ELICOS sector Student performance in academic programs at UTS College

4.1.5. Subject/level reviews

- a. Subjects/Levels will be regularly reviewed (typically on an annual basis) and a report generated for the Academic Board and sub- committees. The continual improvement approach and procedure will help inform the review.
- b. The review will address the following as a minimum for:
 - Academic subjects
 - i. Adherence to UTS College Learning and Teaching Integrated Model of Learning and associated best practice guidelines
 - ii. Appropriateness of subject learning outcomes and their alignment with equivalent subject at UTS where applicable
 - iii. Suitability and quality of subject/level contents and assessment methods
 - iv. Adequacy of student support
 - v. External benchmarking results (where possible)
 - vi. Benchmarking performance against equivalent UTS subjects (where applicable)
 - vii. Student performance in regard to progress, retention, completion and qualifications
 - viii. Student performance at UTS compared with Direct entry UTS students.
 - ix. Staff and student feedback and actions taken to address this
 - x. Any identified risks or issues
 - ELT Levels
 - i. Appropriateness of learning outcomes and their alignment with original approval
 - ii. Suitability and quality of level contents and assessment methods
 - iii. Adequacy of student support
 - iv. External benchmarking results (where possible)

- v. Student performance in regard to progress, retention, completion and qualifications (where possible)
 - vi. Student performance at UTS compared with Direct entry UTS students (where possible).
 - vii. Staff and student feedback and actions taken to address this
 - viii. Any identified risks or issues
- c. In addition, student performance is monitored and reviewed each semester via the student performance reports and learning analytics in the sub committees of the Academic Board. Information from the continuous improvement processes may trigger earlier reviews or action

5. RESPONSIBILITIES

- 5.1. **Dean** – responsible for overseeing the development, approval and review of all UTS College courses and the delivery of those courses by UTS College and third parties
- 5.2. **UTS College Board** – responsible for approving business cases for course proposals prior to further course development.
- 5.3. **The Executive** – responsible for endorsing the commercial aspects of business cases for course proposals prior to being considered by the UTS College Board.
- 5.4. **Learning and Teaching Committee (LTC)** – responsible for approving minor and endorsing major changes to courses and new courses. Overseeing course reviews and implementing of changes. Monitoring and reviewing learning and teaching practices.
- 5.5. **Courses Advisory Group (CAC)** – contributes expert advice and expertise on the development of courses and adherence to the Higher Education Standards and supports ongoing monitoring and review of courses.
- 5.6. **Academic Board** – is responsible for approving all new courses and major changes to existing courses prior to submission of the course to the accreditation process of TEQSA or other relevant external accrediting authority. Is also responsible for endorsing the recommendations from the review and moderation process of the LTC and ASC and the quality assurance arrangements for all courses offered in all locations and modes of delivery.
- 5.7. **Education Managers** – Responsible for overseeing the development and maintenance of quality curriculum. The monitoring and review of adherence to best practices in pedagogy.
- 5.8. **Transnational Education Quality Manager** – responsible for collecting and analysing feedback from students and teachers in transnational centres, informing the continuous improvement process. Liaising with transnational partners in subject reviews and benchmarking.
- 5.9. **Diploma Program Managers** - responsible for managing the development, approval and review of all their discipline courses/subjects and ensuring compliance with educational

standards and best practice pedagogy. Responsible for collaborating with UTS counterparts and external competitors for moderation and benchmarking of courses.

- 5.10. **Program Manager UTS Foundation Studies** - responsible for regular review of all subjects and initiating benchmarking with other Foundation Programs and program reviews with UTS when required. Also, the PM ensures compliance with educational standards and best practice pedagogy.
- 5.11. **Director of Studies (English Programs)** - responsible for regular review of all English course materials to ensure adherence to ELICOS standards and best practice pedagogy. Also, responsible for initiating benchmarking with other University English pathway programs and moderation of assessments and examinations delivered through Transnational third parties.
- 5.12. **Academic Standards Committee (ASC)** - responsible for approving changes to entry requirements and modes of delivery. Ensuring compliance with the relevant provisions of the Higher Education Standards Framework (Threshold Standards); the Foundation Program standards; the Australian Qualifications Framework (AQF); and the Education Services for Overseas Students (ESOS) Act and ELICOS.
- 5.13. **Learning Quality Unit Manager** – leading the continuous improvement process and review of subjects and providing expert advice on pedagogy, learning design and curriculum development. Ensuring compliance with the relevant provisions of the Higher Education Standards Framework (Threshold Standards); the Foundation Program standards; the Australian Qualifications Framework (AQF); and the Education Services for Overseas Students (ESOS) Act and ELICOS

6. RELATED DOCUMENTS

UTS College Policies and Procedures

- Assessment Policy and Procedure
- Course Equivalence Policy
- Recognition of Prior Learning Policy and Procedure

UTS College Guidelines

- Course and Assessment Design Guidelines
- Integrated Model Guidelines canvas course
- Learning and Teaching Best Practice Guidelines

Legislation

- Education Services for Overseas Students (ESOS) Act 2000
- Higher Education Standards Framework (Threshold Standards) 2021

- Tertiary Education Quality and Standards Agency Act (TEQSA) 2011
- ELICOS Standards 2018

DEFINITIONS

Award Course	A course of study leading to a diploma or certificate of UTS College that is conferred on a student by the UTS College Limited Board
Business Case	Original proposal for a new course or major changes to an existing course.
Course	The sequence of academic subjects that leads to the award of a qualification or a statement of program completion. The sequence of ELT levels that lead to statement of program completion.
Equivalence	Courses are equivalent if they have the same intended learning outcomes and graduate attribute profile.
External Referencing including moderation	A process through which a higher education provider compares an aspect of its operations with an external comparator(s) e.g., comparing the design of a course of study and/or student achievement of learning outcomes with that of a course from another provider.
Formal course proposal	Detailed proposal that is prepared for the Academic Board after the UTS College Board accepts the initial proposal.
Learning Outcomes/Intended Learning outcomes	Learning outcomes express the knowledge and skills a person acquires and is able to demonstrate as a result of learning Both Program Learning Outcomes (PLO's) and Subject Learning outcomes (SLO's)
Level	A 200-hour block of curriculum material for a specific English level
Major Change Two categories 1) Not a material/ significant change. Doesn't require TEQSA approval	Proposed changes that don't fundamentally change the nature of the course of study to the extent that TEQSA would require accreditation of a new course. Examples include introducing or changing learning outcomes, introducing a new subject or substantial changes to an existing subject. Will require approval by Academic Board and may need UTS approval regarding credit recognition but doesn't require TEQSA approval
2) Major change – Material/ significant change – requires TEQSA approval	Material/significant changes include: a) substantial variations to course delivery; or b) substantial changes to course nomenclature, duration, entry requirements, outcomes or structure; or c) any other changes that fundamentally change the nature of the course of study to the extent that TEQSA would require accreditation of a new course. For Foundation Studies: changes, whether incremental or at one time, to more than 25% of the total number of course units or subjects from the time the Program was last approved by UTS.

Minor Change	<p>Changes that impact the learning objectives or alignment in a subject</p> <p>Examples: Changes to a subject/level such as new topics, updating assessment weightings, types of assessment or changes to subject sequence in a course study plan.</p> <p>Requires approval from the sub-committees of the Academic Board</p> <p>Does not require approval by UTS regarding credit recognition.</p>
New Course	A course that is not currently being offered by UTS College.
Non-award course	English Language Intensive Courses for Overseas Students (ELICOS) programs and UTS Foundation Studies Program
Program	A program is the term used to describe an organizational area of educational specialization or a field of study. It may include a number of courses or a single course with multiple course delivery options
Staff	People employed to work on an ongoing, fixed term, sessional or casual basis under the terms and conditions of an employment agreement (contract) issued by UTS College.
Standard Change	<p>Changes that do not impact the learning objectives or alignment in a subject. They should be recorded in the continuous improvement register and approval sought as per the Continuous improvement procedure.</p> <p>Examples include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ changing a text but leaving an activity the same, changing a question in an activity discussion, exam, worksheet, adding, removing or changing content in a lesson without affecting overall lesson objectives
Subject	A unit of study within a course
UTS College	UTS College Limited, its representative offices and its controlled entities.

APPROVAL		
Policy Title	Course Development Approval and Review Policy	
Policy ID	PO/EDUC/07/25	
Policy Category	Academic	
Policy Audience	Staff, Students, Affiliates and Third Parties	
Policy Owner	Dean	
Approval Authority	Academic Board	
Endorsed by	ASC	Date: 24 July 2025
Approved by	Academic Board	Date: 7 August 2025
Next Review Date	6 August 2028	

VERSION HISTORY

No.	Author	Description of change/purpose	Date
1.0		April 2022	
1.1	Dean	Further alignment to HESF in response to Internal Audit	
1.2	Learning Quality Unit Manager	Updated approval process to include financial authority to proceed	23 July 2025