



Course Design, Approval, Review and Discontinuation Policy

1. Purpose

- 1.1 The purpose of this policy is to provide a framework for the design and development of courses and units of study delivered by Western Sydney University International College (WSUIC) to ensure that they are effective in promoting high quality, meaningful, relevant study and promote a positive student learning experience.
- 1.2 This policy also outlines the quality assurance process in which new programs are developed, as well as the framework for the ongoing monitoring and review of all programs.

2. Scope

This policy applies to all courses being delivered by WSUIC.

3. Definitions

“Articulation”

A defined pathway that enables a student to progress from a completed course of study with guaranteed admission and/or credit.

“Assessment”

Gathering evidence about the current levels of capability and competency of students using valid (fit-for-purpose) tasks and procedures.

“Benchmarking”

A process that is evidence-based and uses a validated quality and standards framework. Benchmarking is evidence-based and can be used to both prove and improve quality.

“Course”

An integrated, scaffolded and coherent set of units of study that lead to the award of a qualification.

“Credit arrangements”

Formal negotiated agreements within and between issuing organisations or accrediting authorities about student entitlement to credit. Credit can be given in the form of block, specified or unspecified credit.



“Discontinuation”

Cancellation of a program by ceasing to take new enrolments and removing it from the approved list of programs.

“Evaluation”

Making judgements of worth about the quality of inputs and outcomes (including the evidence gathered during assessment).

“Learning”

A demonstrably positive improvement in the capabilities and competencies that count.

“Moderation of assessment”

Quality assurance, control processes and activities such as peer review that aim to assure consistency or comparability, appropriateness, and fairness of assessment judgments along with the validity and reliability of assessment tasks, criteria and standards.

“Quality”

Fitness for purpose/fitness of purpose and performance to an agreed standard.

“Recognition of prior learning”

An assessment process that involves assessment of an individual’s relevant prior learning (including formal, informal and non-formal learning) to determine the credit outcomes of an individual’s application for credit.

“RQSF”

Refers to the integrated Risk, Quality and Standards Framework for Learning and Teaching at WSUIC.

“Standard”

A level of achievement with clear criteria, indicators and means of testing.

“Strategy”

Linking relevant, desirable and clear ends to the most feasible means necessary to achieve them.

“Transition”

Arrangements that apply to a cohort or individual students where a program is cancelled, including transfer of a cohort or individual students to an alternative program with relevant advanced standing.



“Unit of study”

A structured and coherent set of assessment-focused learning activities that work in conjunction with the other units of study making up a course to achieve course-level learning outcomes.

4. Policy Statement

- 4.1 All courses must comply with the relevant provisions of the Higher Education Standards Framework (Threshold Standards) 2021 and the Australian Qualifications Framework (AQF).
- 4.2 WSUIC approves units of study and courses to fit the distinctive backgrounds, abilities, needs and experience of the international students attending WSUIC. This customisation supports the student experience and provides students with the capabilities, skills and knowledge to enable them to successfully articulate to WSU and complete their bachelor studies.
- 4.3 A key element of this customisation is that WSUIC retains equivalent content, learning outcomes and assessment tasks for units/courses delivered by WSUIC as the Western Sydney University (WSU)/Western Sydney University The College (WSTC) corresponding units and courses being used for articulation into WSU programs whilst ensuring that the course design, learning methods, resources and support systems used to deliver these outcomes optimise the performance of WSUIC students.
- 4.4 WSUIC is committed to ensuring that course development and review are evidence-based, structured, transparent and documented and are aligned with the strategic goals of WSUIC and best practice in pathways education.
- 4.5 The internationally benchmarked WSUIC Risk, Quality and Standards framework for Learning and Teaching and the [FLIPCurric](#) quality system are used to underpin the customisation process.
- 4.6 Changes to any element of a course or unit of study delivered by WSUIC will be reviewed by the Academic Quality Committee after receiving input from the relevant Course Convenor for the course under review. This will then be forwarded to the relevant WSU committee before being submitted to the Academic Board for approval. Once approved any changes to a course/unit of study will be endorsed by the WSUIC Board of Directors.



5. Course Design and Customisation

- 5.1 Prior to commencing the process for the development of a new course or unit of study, (or the continuation of an existing one at its seven-year review point) the Academic Quality Committee in consultation with other stakeholders should determine that the course is demonstrably viable. This requires the Course Convenors, under the coordination of the Academic Director, to confirm that there is sufficient demand for the course, that articulation into the relevant WSU course is confirmed and that WSUIC has the capacity to deliver and maintain it effectively and sustainably.
- 5.2 In tailoring each WSUIC course to the particular backgrounds, abilities, needs and experience of the international students, WSUIC:
- 5.2.1 Refers to the key quality checkpoints in the RQSF and to the internationally benchmarked FLIPCurric quality checkpoints
 - 5.2.2 Addresses each of the relevant Higher Education Standards
 - 5.2.3 Ensures alignment with the course outcomes and assessment tasks used in the WSU course to which the WSUIC course articulates.
- 5.3 Consistent with the RQSF, particular focus is given by the WSUIC Academic Quality Committee, then Academic Board and the Board of Directors to confirming the relevance, active learning, theory-practice links, clear direction, clarity of assessment expectations, timeliness, quality and availability of relevant student support, outcomes focus, ease of attendance and effective use of online learning in each customised course.

6. Course Monitoring and Review

- 6.1 All accredited courses are subject to regular and ongoing review for their effective performance using the WSUIC tracking and improvement system to identify key areas for improvement and confirm their continued relevance. This system uses benchmarked trend data on demand, retention, progression, assessment performance, completion, student satisfaction with learning, teaching, support and administration and performance of WSUIC graduates in the WSU courses to which they are given articulation, supplemented by a range of qualitative feedback tools.
- 6.2 This ongoing tracking data is reviewed regularly by the WSUIC Academic Quality Committee and reported at Academic Board and Board of Directors' meetings. These reports are then compiled into annual course reports, reviewed by the WSUIC Academic Quality Committee which makes recommendations for improvement to the WSUIC Academic Board, which in turn, commissions improvement action projects, the effective delivery of which is the responsibility of the relevant



Course Convenor, administrative or support staff members.

6.3 If there is any requirement to vary a unit or any unit enhancements or revision, it shall go through the appropriate approval process according to the "HEPP_QN Unit Change Guide" document which was approved by the WSUIC Academic Board in November 2022. Once the variation is approved, the relevant Course Convenor will enact the recommendations and report to the Academic Director on the implementation of the enhancements.

6.4

6.5 All WSUIC courses are externally reviewed every seven years. In this review the continued relevance of its program level outcomes, learning design, learning methods and resources, student support systems, recruitment and administration, along with the performance of all WSUIC graduates in their WSU course are evaluated. Particular attention is given to the quality of assessment and the outcomes of the WSUIC assessment moderation system.

7. Course Discontinuation

7.1 The discontinuation of a course must be approved by the WSUIC Board of Directors on the recommendation of the WSUIC Academic Board.

7.2 The discontinuation must be formally approved and endorsed before any students are notified that the course is discontinued.

7.3 Where students are currently enrolled in a discontinued course an appropriate transition (teach-out) plan must be recommended by the WSUIC Academic Board and approved by the Board of Directors.

7.4 Students will be notified at least one teaching session in advance of teach-out commencing.

8. Approval Processes

8.1 The WSUIC Academic Director and Academic Board, working in consultation with the relevant WSU and Navitas staff, prepare a business plan for any course development proposal with a view to demonstrating that there is suitable demand and resources to deliver it. This is presented to the WSUIC Board of Directors for approval.

8.2 The WSUIC Academic Board gives oversight to course customisation and review at WSUIC in conjunction with its Academic Quality Committee and makes recommendations to the WSUIC Board of Directors for approval.

8.3 WSUIC participates in WSU academic governance processes which give feedback and input into course design, approval, review and discontinuation.



9. Contribution to Course Review by Academic Staff

9.1 WSUIC has identified key performance indicators which provide data for teaching staff to ensure continuous improvement. These include but are not limited to:

9.1.1 Student feedback on teacher surveys

9.1.2 Peer observations and feedback and

9.1.3 Teaching excellence awards.

9.2 This process ensures program delivery standards are high, and that teachers have an opportunity to provide feedback into the program review processes.

See WSUIC Staff Professional Development Policy for further information

10. Quality and Compliance

10.1 This policy is reviewed periodically (at a minimum every two years) to ensure regulatory compliance, operational currency, the identification of continuous improvement opportunities and risk identification and mitigation. This review is reflected in WSUIC's Quality Management Framework and Risk Management Framework.

10.2 This policy will be available on the WSUIC website for students and the WSUIC SharePoint site for staff access.

10.3 Emails will be issued to all staff to inform and update them on any changes to the policy and/or procedures and guidelines.

10.4 New staff will receive policy information during the induction process where it relates to their position.

11. Related Forms and Documents

- 'Getting Started' section of FLIPCurric.

12. Related Policies, Procedures, Guidelines and Legislation

- Higher Education Standards Framework (HESF) 2021 Standard 3.1 Course Design, Standard 5.1 Course Approval and Accreditation, Standard 6 Governance and Accountability
- TEQSA Guidance Notes - Academic Governance
- TEQSA Guidance Notes – Academic Quality Assurance
- TEQSA Guidance Notes - Course Design



Approval and Amendment History

Approval Authority:	Western Sydney University International College Academic Board
Policy Owners:	Academic Director/Academic Leadership Team
Approval Date:	3 May 2019
Date for Next Review:	4 April 2025

Amendments		
Revision Date	Version	Summary of changes
2/11/2016	1.0	New Policy Developed
23/1/2017	1.1	Add link to updated WSU University Review Policy in Clause 7
7/11/2017	2.0	Complete re-write of Policy. Approved by BoD 7/11/2017
03/05/2019	2.1	Included Guidance Notes in related legislation section; added relevant HESF standards Reworded/revised sections 4.1, 4.5, 9.2 Replaced Program Coordinator with Course Convenor Removed section 9 Annual Reporting to TEQSA and 10 Program Accreditation by TEQSA.
06/07/2021	2.1	Updated HESF 2021