



# COURSE DEVELOPMENT AND APPROVAL POLICY AND PROCEDURES

## Purpose

The development and approval of higher education courses of study at Lincoln Education Australia (LEA\*\*) involves a rigorous process of consultation, research, course and curriculum design, multiple cycles of review and improvement, and benchmarking before final internal approval. This process is designed to ensure that the proposed course shall be delivered to the highest possible standard and shall comply with the *Higher Education Standards Framework (Threshold Standards), 2015* and the *Australian Qualifications Framework, 2013*.

The *Course Development and Approval Policy and Procedures* defines the principles and procedures to guide the governance of academic standards in course development and approval at LEA.

\*\*The trading name for the Lincoln Institute of Higher Education (LIHE) is Lincoln Education Australia (LEA).

## POLICY

### Scope

This policy is applicable to all parties involved in the course development and approval process.

### Principles

The course development and approval process shall be structured, impartial and transparent.

Courses may be proposed in response to new developments, including new knowledge areas for consideration, advancements in technology, shifts in student demand, changes in focus of industry or stakeholders, or changes in strategic direction of LEA.

The Academic Board is responsible for ensuring that all courses of study offered are of the highest quality, therefore the Board shall only approve curricula for delivery that demonstrates such quality.



The Academic Board will draw on the recommendations of the Course Advisory Committee and internal and external expert advice during the course development and approval process.

All courses shall:

- Adhere to LEA's strategic goals and academic values
- Comply with the Threshold Standards 2015
- Meet the relevant AQF level specification requirements
- Be nationally and internationally competitive
- Have specified admissions criteria and pathways that are applied fairly and consistently
- Provide equivalent quality outcomes to all those who meet entry requirements, regardless of their background or mode of study
- Be intellectually challenging, encourage critical inquiry and draw upon advanced knowledge appropriate to the learning outcomes
- Have a strong foundation in theoretical frameworks, current research and scholarship, and trends in relevant industries
- Be built upon clearly defined learning outcomes
- Be built upon progressive and coherent achievement of learning outcomes
- Demonstrate a process of constructive alignment in the development and assessment of learning outcomes
- Have assessments appropriate for testing student achievement of learning outcomes
- Provide a pathway to work and further study, and
- Integrate processes of continual review and improvement

LEA shall facilitate equivalent access to higher education courses and associated services with a focus on ensuring that those from underrepresented and/or disadvantaged groups have full access, including:

- Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students
- Students who are part or full-time carers
- Students with disabilities
- Students experiencing mental or physical health concerns
- Mature-age students
- Students who are single parents
- Students from different cultural backgrounds
- Students for whom English is a second language
- Students who identify as LGBTI

Modes of delivery and accessibility considerations shall be embedded in the course development process at all stages.

As per the Tertiary Education Quality and Standards Agency (TEQSA) approval, lectures and tutorials are delivered as on campus, face-to-face by, or under the supervision of, experienced academics. All the course content, learning materials and activities have been designed to also enable blended or online delivery. All subject learning materials are hosted



on LEA's online repository, the Learning Management System (LMS), that provides continual access to all course information and learning resources, library and course-related policies and processes.

LEA will comply with the National Code of Practice for Providers of Education and Training to Overseas Students 2018 Standards 8.19 and 8.20, and/or any temporary changes to the National Code by TEQSA. As per Standard 8.19 LEA will not deliver more than one-third of the subjects (or equivalent) of the course by online or distance learning to an overseas student and as per Standard 8.20 LEA will ensure that in each compulsory study period for the course, the overseas student is studying at least one unit that is not by distance or online learning, unless the student is completing the last unit of their course.

## Initial Course Proposal

An initial proposal for a course may be put forward by the CEO, the Dean, or a senior academic for consideration by the Academic Board.

The initial proposal should consider:

- How the course aligns with LEA's strategic goals and future directions
- Domestic and international market for the course
- The cost of delivering the course, any financial risks, and the basis for predicted income

The Academic Board shall determine whether the proposed course:

- aligns with the Threshold Standards 2015 and AQF requirements
- meets industry and pedagogical best practice, and
- is competitive with other comparable national and international higher education providers

The proposal shall then be reviewed by the Corporate Governance Board. Preliminary approval of the Corporate Governance Board is required for the formal course development process to commence.

## Course Development Process

LEA may develop a course internally by its academic staff or adapt a course from Lincoln University College (LUC) Malaysia under the Memorandum of Understanding (MoU). Irrespective of whether a course is developed internally or adapted from LUC, the course development process as outlined below shall be followed:

### Stage 1

- Clarify the course rationale and the current market and educational practices in the discipline
- Investigate the current state of the field, graduate needs and outcomes, and the needs for students to succeed as a professional in their field

- Benchmark with similar courses of comparable providers - clarify course learning outcomes and preliminary course structure
- Seek external academic and industry input

## Stage 2

- Complete Initial Course Design - development of subjects, review of course learning outcomes

## Stage 3

- Initial Review of the Course Design by the Academic Board
- Further Development of Course – further development of subjects, review of course learning outcomes and AQF alignment

## Stage 4

- Prepare detailed Course Proposal for Academic Board. The course proposal to have the following minimum details:
  - Course Rationale
  - Strategic Alignment of the course
  - Market Outlook & Student Recruitment
  - Course Design – name of qualification, entry requirements, pathways, recognition of prior learning
  - Course Overview – course description, duration, course learning outcomes, graduate attributes, course structure and subjects, learning activities, mode of delivery, assessments
  - Course Mapping – AQF, graduate attributes, course learning outcomes, subject learning outcomes
  - Assessment and Course Materials
  - Student Enrolments and Fees
  - Staffing
  - Learning Resources
  - Information for Students and Student Support
  - Professional Accreditation
- Review of Draft Course Documents by the Academic Board - AQF mapping with course learning outcomes and graduate attributes; subject outlines, constructive alignment; and lecture slides, assessment details and tutorial plans for first year subjects
- Review of the Course/s by external expert

## Stage 5

- Final Review by Academic Board of all course materials - course proposal; review comments from subject experts; review comments from external course reviewer; and academic staff responses to review comments

## Course Approval



The Academic Board shall scrutinise all materials included in the full course proposal and may either return the proposal with feedback for revision, reject the proposal, or give provisional approval.

Approval shall only be granted if the Academic Board can be assured that the course is of sufficient academic quality, that the required resources are available (or shall be available upon final accreditation) and the course meets the requirements of the Threshold Standards 2015.

The Academic Board approval of the course is conveyed to the Corporate Governance Board for endorsement. The Corporate Governance Board shall then authorise the CEO to submit the formal application for course accreditation by TEQSA and where applicable, to the relevant professional accreditation authority.

## **Compliance**

All staff members and parties involved in course development and approval are required to comply with this policy and its procedures, and with related policies and respective procedures. Non-compliance may result in disciplinary action.



<b>File Number</b>	LEA-GEN-COR-70019-D
<b>Responsible Officer</b>	Chief Executive Officer
<b>Contact Officer</b>	Academic Dean
<b>Legislative Compliance</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <i>Higher Education Standards Framework (Threshold Standards) 2015</i></li><li>• <i>Australian Qualifications Framework</i></li><li>• <i>Tertiary Education Quality and Standards Agency Act 2011</i></li></ul>
<b>Supporting Documents</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <i>Course Proposal Template</i></li></ul>
<b>Related Documents</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <i>Academic Standards Policy and Procedures</i></li><li>• <i>Benchmarking Policy and Procedures</i></li><li>• <i>Course Review and Continual Improvement Policy and Procedures</i></li><li>• <i>Teaching and Learning Plan</i></li></ul>
<b>Superseded Documents</b>	
<b>Effective Date</b>	1 January 2022
<b>Review Date</b>	3 years from the effective date

## Definitions

**Academic Board:** Governing body responsible for academic matters, including learning and teaching, course approval, workforce planning, academic staff appointments, research and professional development, academic policies and procedures, overseeing student grievances and appeals processes. The Academic Board advises the Corporate Governance Board on academic matters.

**Assessment and Awards Committee:** Committee of the Academic Board that is responsible for monitoring the quality and adequacy of assessment of student learning and outcomes and conferral of authorised certification for qualifications at LEA.

**Australian Qualifications Framework (AQF):** National guidelines that regulate Australian post-compulsory education and training qualifications. The framework identifies learning outcomes for each AQF level and qualification, policy requirements, educational and economic objectives, governing and monitoring arrangements.

**Benchmarking:** Process of comparing practices, processes and performance outcomes for the purpose of identifying comparative strengths and weaknesses in order to develop and improve academic quality and performance.

**Corporate Governance Board:** Governing body responsible for oversight of all higher education operations, including the ongoing viability of LEA and the quality of its higher education delivery. The Corporate Governance Board guides the Management and delegates responsibility for academic matters to the Academic Board.

**Course:** Sequenced program of subjects that a student enrolls in and for which they receive a degree upon graduation.



**Course Advisory Committee:** Committee dedicated to developing the initial proposal of new higher education courses at LEA, including external benchmarking and external input.

**Course Coordinator:** Senior Academic staff member responsible for the delivery, planning and development of a course at LEA, particularly subject curriculum information, and works in conjunction with other academic staff, the Academic Board and its relevant Committees.

**Teaching and Learning Committee:** Committee of the Academic Board that is responsible for monitoring the quality of learning and teaching at LEA, interpreting and reporting data on student performance and courses, monitoring progress towards achieving the objectives of the *Teaching and Learning Plan* and the adequacy of all forms of support for learning and teaching present at LEA.

**Tertiary Education Quality and Standards Agency (TEQSA):** Australia’s regulatory and quality agency for higher education. TEQSA’s primary aim is to ensure that students receive high quality education at any Australian higher education provider.

## Review Schedule

This policy shall be reviewed by the Academic Board every three years.

Version History			
Version number:	Approved by:	Approval Date:	Revision Notes:
1.0	Academic Board	16/07/2020	New policy
1.1	Academic Board	22/02/2023	TEQSA and CRICOS requirements incorporated