



AUSTRALIAN INSTITUTE
OF HIGHER EDUCATION

Course Management and Continuous Improvement Policy and Procedure

Category: Academic (ACA)

1. Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to outline the governance, processes and implementation, and feedback mechanisms that will be undertaken to assure continuous improvement in the quality of teaching and learning as well as improvement in the academic and administration framework that supports teaching and learning within the Australian Institute of Higher Education Pty Ltd (“AIH” or “the Institute”)

2. Policy Statement

This **Course Management and Continuous Improvement Policy and Procedure** is authorised by the Academic Board and aims to engage every member of academic and administrative staff in the process of quality assurance and improvement. Quality within this Policy addresses the quality of the institute. In general, quality can be defined as the value added to the student by his/her engagement with the Institute. Quality can be assessed with the aid of a broad range of indicators such as those described below.

This Policy is to be read in conjunction with the *AIH Business Plan*. The areas of differentiation of AIH of cultural intelligence, close industry networking and relationship, as well as embedded international aspects in its curriculum will continue to be developed and strengthened over time. Adherence to the AQF, professional bodies and industry benchmarks will also serve to guide and continuously improve the performance of AIH.

3. Governance

The Academic Board has ultimate responsibility for the quality of teaching and learning and will review both the procedures and performance indicators at the end of semester, with a formal review of teaching and learning biennially, and a formal review of each course triennially.

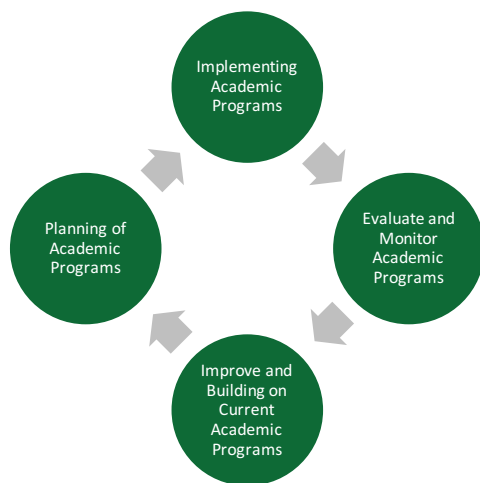
The Dean and the Teaching and Learning Committee will be accountable to the Academic Board for continuous improvement of the processes associated with teaching and learning. The Dean and Course Advisory Committees will be accountable to the Academic Board for the continuous review of curriculum to maintain relevance and rigor.

The Executive Management has responsibility for the quality of the operations of the Institute, compliance with the regulatory framework and will review procedures and performance each semester with a formal review of facilities and services annually. This is to be done with a view to implementing performance improvements strategies for students and staff.

The Board of Directors has ultimate responsibility for the business performance and compliance with the regulatory framework. Reports on quality improvements are provided to the Board of Directors by the Academic Board and Executive Management. These reports provide the basis for informing and / or changing the current Strategic Plan of AIH with a view of improving upon the current processes and procedures.

The diagram below and explanation below illustrate how the PIER (planning, implementation, evaluation and review) framework works between the various governance committees. The AIH Business Plan should be consulted for the Governance structure of AIH.

- The Course Advisory Committee is responsible for planning each course. The Dean and the Teaching and Learning Committee are responsible for implementing the courses, and then providing performance and benchmarking data to the Academic Board concerning the course.
- Data pertaining to academic issues from the Teaching and Learning Committee and the Course Advisory Committees are fed to the Academic Board which evaluates and reviews the information. If necessary, the Board of Directors is notified. Data pertaining to administrative matters from the Executive Management is fed to the Board of Directors.
- Depending on the issue, the Board of Directors and/ or the Academic Board will evaluate and review the data with a view providing recommendations for quality improvement. These recommendations will be passed down to the other Committees for implementation.
- Teaching evaluations will be considered at Academic Board Level only in accordance with the privacy policy relating to Academic staff and not at the Teaching and Learning Committee where other staff are present.



4. Implementation

The Academic Board, the Teaching and Learning Committee, or the Course Advisory Committees may direct that particular issues be addressed and that specific data be gathered to inform these issues pertinent to quality management, monitoring, and continuous improvement. Upon receiving a report, the Academic Board in consultation with the Course Advisory Committees, will if necessary, alter a policy or practice within the academic environment of the Institute.

Organisational development processes will be led by fostering collaboration and be based on the assumption that all staff members have a desire and a capacity to contribute to improvement in teaching and learning. Typically initiatives will be conceived, planned, executed and reviewed by teams.

5. Key sources of data

The Academic Board and its subordinate committees have an interest in both formative and summative evaluation. Formative evaluation informs the design of measures for improvement, while summative evaluation provides a scorecard against which to judge past performance.

Key sources of data will include, but are not limited to:

5.1 Feedback on teaching and learning by students

- a) Student evaluation (surveys) pertaining to facilities, student services and resources
- b) Student evaluation (surveys) of the academic experience
- c) Focus groups for collecting information of subjective experience of students from time to time to investigate particular themes, including the social life of the campus, student relations with staff and the use of support services

- d) Data collected on graduate satisfaction and the attainment of employment
- e) Exit Interviews conducted with students who leave AIH prior to the completion of their course

Policies pertaining to the area of teaching and learning by students include:

- *Course Design, Development and Evaluation Policy and Procedure*
- *Mainstreaming Communication Policy*

5.2 Student Progress

- a) Grade distributions, course completions and graduation rate
- b) Database of student grievances, appeals, and academic misconduct
- c) Student attrition rate and progress each semester and annually
- d) Relevant feedback from industry partners, employers of graduates, and alumni

Policies pertaining to the area of monitoring and improving on student progress include:

- *Academic Misconduct Policy*
- *Student Assessment Policy*
- *Student Progression, Exclusion and Graduation Policy and Procedure*
- *Student Admission Policy*
- *International Student Transfer between Registered Providers Policy and Procedure*
- *International Student Deferment, Suspension and Cancellation of Study Policy and Procedure*

5.3 Staff Performance and Review

- a) Probation and performance review information of academic and support staff collected by the Dean
- b) Probation and performance review information of administration staff collected by relevant members of Executive Management
- c) Scholarship output and professional activities of academic staff

Policies and plans pertaining to the area of performance and review include:

- *Scholarly Activity Policy*
- *Staff Development Policy*
- *Management of Personal Information Policy*
- *Records Management Policy*
- *Staff Recruitment Policy*

5.4 Quality of Academic and Support Services

- a) Welfare and counselling support
- b) Library services, quality of software, and information technology support
- c) Career advising and support
- d) Literacy support services

Policies and plans pertaining to the area of quality of academic and support services include:

- *Student Grievance Handling and Resolution Policy and Procedure*
- *Advanced Standing and Credit Transfer Policy and Procedure*
- *Student Consultation Policy*
- *Critical Incident Management Plan*
- *Facilities Review and Improvement Policy*

- *Refund Policy*
- *International Student Refund Policy*

6. Scholarly Activity and Quality Management

The development of performance information, its review in the light of educational theory and its contribution to the development of education theory is a legitimate form of scholarship within the terms of the Institute's policy on scholarly activity. Moreover it is a form of scholarship to be encouraged for its contribution to the institutional development of AIH as a quality provider.

7. Articulation

Articulation agreements are vital to the maintenance of educational pathways within the overall economy. However, they also provide points at which gaps can open in an otherwise seamless transition between programs. AIH will only develop an articulation agreement with another institution after its programs have been shown to offer a genuine articulation with the Institute's courses. No blanket agreements for a particular number of unspecified credit points will be given. In general, credit will only be given for particular units, where the content and objectives can be shown to have been met by the program from which the particular students will have graduated.

AIH may enter into agreements with specific institutions to provide recognition of their credentials and credit for particular units. Before entering into such agreements, AIH will map the competency units provided by the institution against the learning outcomes provided by the units of study within the relevant AIH course. Exemption from an AIH unit of study will be provided where there is a substantial match. A substantial match means that the student has the skills and knowledge to provide the same chance of success as would be enjoyed by a student who had completed the entire AIH course from its beginning. Exemptions will only be provided under the agreement for specific AIH units that have passed the substantial match test. There will be no unspecified credit.

8. Specific procedures

The form for evaluation and feedback by students of each unit of study and its delivery is attached at Schedule 1. The form for lecturer evaluations and feedback is attached at Schedule 2 to this policy. Student feedback forms will be completed by students at the end of delivery of each unit of study. The unit lecturer must leave the room while students are filling out the form, and a student will be delegated to collect forms and seal them in an envelope before signing and printing his/her name across the sealed flap. Quantitative data will be collated and returned to the both the lecturer and the lecturer's supervisors after the results for the students in that unit of study have been published.

The data will be given to staff as a means of informing their own identification of target areas for individual improvement. Data drawn from the student evaluations on all unit deliveries will be aggregated and de-identified for use in institutional development. Variances in the data should be investigated to identify benchmarks of best practice and means of wider adoption of the best practice so identified.

9. Cross Institutional Benchmarking

A formal benchmarking process must be conducted biennially with a similar higher education institution or institutions. Portfolios of student work will be exchanged. assessment practices will be benchmarked to assure their rigour. Students' performance will be compared across institutions to provide assurance that student achievement is within educational industry norms. Where common assessment tasks can be agreed with other institutions, these will be used as a basis for comparison. Terms of reference and benchmarking partners will be determined by the Academic Board. The specific arrangements and agreements will be developed by the Dean.

The methodology will be reviewed by the Academic Board and endorsed prior to implementation. The benchmarking task will be undertaken by the Teaching and Learning Committee with the results reviewed by the Academic Board.

Of particular interest will be the following items:

- pass/fail rates, retention rates and graduation rates;
- performance on any assessment tasks common to participating institutions;
- student need and demand for course offerings based on student enrolment statistics, market research and analysis;
- critical review and assessment of the range and diversity of units of study within a course;
- the adequacy and appropriateness of course-related information provided to students;
- ongoing evaluation of the modes of study and the course delivery method;
- comprehensive data analysis (based on unit and course feedback / evaluation data) to indicate significant trends.

10. Other Relevant Policies

This policy operates in conjunction with the Academic and Administrative Policies, Procedures and Plans of AIH as Outlined in Section 5 above.

11. Version Control

Policy Code	ACA-HE-09
Version	2015.1
Cumulative Version	Version 8
Policy Owner	Dean
Authorising Body	Academic Board
Date Approved	21 October 2015
Next Review Date	21 October 2017
Relevant Stakeholders	CEO; Dean; All academic staff