



Academic Quality and Governance Framework

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1. Purpose

This Framework seeks to outline the academic quality and governance framework through Australian Institute of Higher Education Pty Ltd ('the Institute') delivers its programs and academic priorities.

2. Principles

Key principles informing this Framework include:

- The Institute is committed to the establishment, maintenance and promotion of sound governance within the Institute, including responsible and accountable management of the Institute;
- All international, national and state legislation, corporate responsibilities, accountability frameworks, regulations, codes of practice and standards that are applicable to the Institute form part of the governance framework;
- The Institute ensures that a student representation is included within its deliberative and decision-making processes and encourages students to participate in these processes.

3. Context

This Framework has been developed to ensure Governing Committee members are clear on the governance structure, member's obligations and operations supporting the Governance Committee's.

4. Scope

This Framework applies to the Institute, all courses and all Governance Committee members.

5. Definitions

See the *AIH Glossary of Terms* for definitions.

6. Framework Details

6.1 Introduction

The governing body is the Institute's Board of Directors established under the Constitution.

The Institute's Board of Directors delegates the responsibility to ensure that the Institute fulfils its responsibilities regarding academic matters and meet its obligations and responsibilities as a higher education provider to the Institute's Academic Board.

The Institute's Academic Board, as the principal academic body of the Institute, governs and is responsible for all academic matters at the Institute. The Institute's Academic Board's key mandate is to ensure that the Institute's courses and outcomes, and student experiences and success, are of the highest quality. The Institute's Academic Board oversees all matters relating to teaching, learning and scholarship within the Institute. The Institute's Academic Board operates independently of the ownership and management of the Institute to assure academic integrity and has responsibility for the achievement of the Institute's educational philosophies and plans. The Institute's Academic Board and its Committees develop, implement, endorse and review academic policies, and monitor the delivery of the Institute's courses and academic programs.

The Institute's Academic Board delegates responsibility to:

- the Course Advisory and Review Committee to oversee the development and ongoing review of all the Institute's courses;
- Grades Ratification Committee to approve results before publication and review and monitor assessment procedures and policies;
- Appeals Committee to review students' academic appeals regarding admission, retention, dismissal and other academic matters such as grade appeal and determine whether to grant or dismiss the application, and
- the Teaching and Learning Committee for monitoring and reporting on quality assurance processes for teaching and learning within the Institute in order to ensure that day-to-day academic operations meet quality educational standards.

Review of Terms of Reference

After consultation with the Academic Board, and following any external review as appropriate, and at all times aware and protective of the independence of the Academic Board on all matters in its terms of reference, the Institute's Board of Directors may approve, review and amend these terms of reference.

6.2 Academic Board and Committee Membership

Background

This section assists the Institute's Board of Directors, the Institute's Academic Board and its Standing Committees to fulfil their roles and responsibilities as outlined in the Standing Orders and Terms of Reference for each committee and describes the procedures that must be followed by the committee in performing its functions and duties.

Appointment and Skills of Committee Members

- Membership of the Academic Board is determined by the Institute's Board of Directors and will be reviewed at least once every two years to ensure that the balance and type of members is the optimum to achieve the Institute's educational philosophies and academic strategic priorities.
- The Chair of the Institute's Academic Board is an independent appointment and is appointed by the Institute's Board of Directors.
- Internal member appointments to committees should broadly reflect the diversity of the student and staff population as well as the seniority and appropriate experience suitable for the functions of the Committee and will be reviewed at least every two years.
- A committee member may resign from the Committee by notice in writing to the Committee Chairperson.

- A committee may co-opt members on the basis of their experience as necessary.
- At the discretion of the Institute's Board of Directors, independent members of the Institute's Academic Board and committees may be required to enter into a Deed of Confidentiality.

Induction

All new members will be asked to complete a ***Fit and Proper Person Declaration*** and sign a ***Confidentiality Agreement*** prior to formally joining the Board of Directors, Academic Board and/or any of its Standing Committees.

Before a new Committee member attends any Committee meetings, the Chairperson or their nominee will meet with the new members to brief them on the Terms of Reference and perform an induction. A copy of all relevant governance documents will be provided.

Members' Duties

Members must always:

- act in the best interests of Institute as a whole;
- act in good faith, honestly and for a proper purpose;
- exercise appropriate care and diligence;
- not improperly use their position to gain an advantage for themselves or anybody else; and
- avoid conflict of interest; or where there is any real, perceived or potential conflict of interest with any item on the Board's agenda, declare to the Chair.

Minutes

- All Board and Committee meetings will be supported by a secretariat.
- The secretary appointed by the Institute's Academic Board/committees must minute all meetings and the Chairperson should sign the minutes within a reasonable time after the meeting if satisfied the minutes are accurate.
- The Chairperson is responsible for ensuring the minutes are accurately recorded, prepared and distributed.
- Minutes should record not only the decisions taken, but also the basis on which the decision was made (key documents considered and key points that were taken into consideration by the governing body in making its decision), as well as actions arising.

Independent Advice

- Membership of the Institute's Academic Board will include independent members who are ordinarily resident in Australia at all times.
- The Institute's Board of Directors may commission independent advice or assistance to assist the Institute's Academic Board/ Standing Committees in carrying out its terms of reference.

Quorum

The quorum will be three members except for the Appeals Committee which will have a quorum of two members. Vacant positions are not counted in calculating the quorum. Where a loss of quorum is identified, the meeting may be adjourned until a time the Chair determines.

In the case of a tied vote, the Chair has the casting vote.

Absence from meetings

In the absence of the Chairperson, the Deputy Chairperson will Chair. In the absence of the Chairperson and Deputy Chairperson, the members present will elect a member to act as Chairperson.

Governance Calendar

A governance calendar will be published annually.

Period of Office

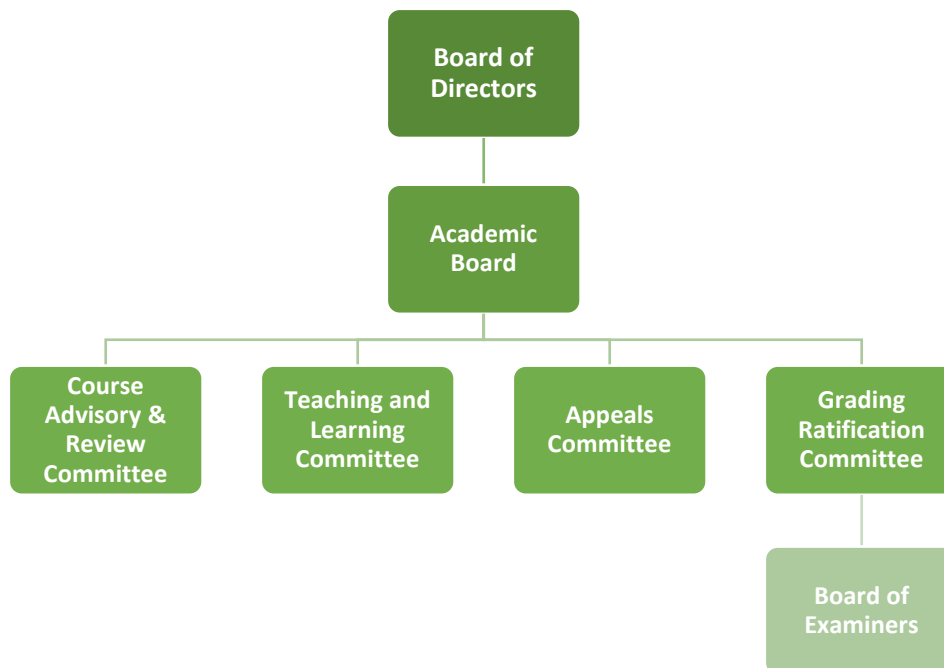
Aside from staff and student positions, all positions on the Institute's Board of Directors, Academic Board and/or any of its Standing Committees shall be for a period of three (3) years.

Review Process

The Academic Board will conduct a self-review and a review of the Standing Committees against the Higher Education Threshold Standards and against this Framework every 2 years.

At least once every 5 years, a review of all Governance Committees will be conducted by an independent external auditor. The independent external auditor will determine the effectiveness of the governing body and academic governance processes. The findings of such reviews will then be reviewed by the Academic Board and the Board of Directors and actions agreed upon to address the findings. The agreed actions will be implemented and monitored regularly.

6.3 Governance Structure



6.4 Academic Board

Role

The Institute's Academic Board is an independent body of senior academics, industry practitioners and a student representative established under the Constitution; responsible for the academic governance of all the Institute's courses. The Institute's Academic Board has the delegated authority of the Institute's Board of Directors to provide advice and academic oversight of all courses delivered by the Institute including the conferral of its higher education awards and the delegation of academic governance to an appropriate body. The Institute's Academic Board advises the Institute's Board of Directors on matters relating to teaching, scholarship and academic governance.

Responsibilities

Using the powers established by this framework and/or delegated to it by the Institute's Board of Directors the functions of the Institute's Academic Board are to:

- Monitor the academic management of the Institute and its performance as a higher education institution and provide guidance and direction to the Institute's Board of Directors on any measures to be taken to ensure that academic standards are comparable to those of other university and higher education institutions delivering similar courses and consistent and in compliance with the Australian Qualifications Framework.

- Foster excellence in teaching and learning and develop in its students a capacity for lifelong learning.
- Assure the quality of teaching and learning within the Institute and ensure a teaching and learning framework is in place.
- Act as a forum for the debate of academic issues.
- Ensure a culture of scholarship, critical and independent thought, and free intellectual inquiry is developed and nurtured within the Institute.
- Consider and make decisions on the admission of students, teaching, assessment and requirements for graduation, prizes, awards and scholarships.
- Monitor and review teaching and learning strategies with the Institute's commitment to practice-based learning in mind.
- Review and advise on matters relating to policies and procedures to ensure that they are appropriate and reflect higher education best practice while meeting the professional education needs of the relevant industries.
- Determine appropriate strategies for benchmarking courses delivered against similar courses delivered by other university and higher education institutions.
- Receive and respond accordingly to reports from standing committees or working groups and ensure that their delegated responsibilities are discharged.
- Consider and recommend on any matter referred to the Institute's Academic Board by the Institute's Board of Directors.
- Recommend the conferral of educational awards accredited by relevant educational bodies and authorities by the Institute's Board of Directors.
- Monitor that academic staff are employed with appropriate qualifications.
- Ensure that academic policy is implemented, monitored effectively and regularly updated.
- Ensure that the Academic Board and its policies and procedures are reviewed on a regular basis, either in the form of a self-review or an external review.
- Oversee academic processes including admission standards, recognition of prior learning and fair and reasonable grievance processes.
- Protect academic integrity within the Institute through effective policies and measures to:
 - Ensure the integrity of student assessment;
 - Ensure the integrity of research and research activity where this is carried out;
 - Prevent, detect and address academic misconduct by students or staff, including cheating and plagiarism;
 - Ensure that academic staff are free to make public comment on issues that lie within their area of expertise.
- The Academic Board may further delegate these powers or functions from time to time.

Membership

- The Institute's Academic Board will be composed of no less than six and no more than ten members. The indicative composition of the Board will include a minimum of three senior academics and/or senior industry practitioners, one student representative, one academic from the Institute and the Institute's Executive Dean.
- At least 50% of members must be independent and external to the Institute.
- The Chair of the Institute's Academic Board is an external member.

Frequency of Meetings

The Institute's Academic Board meets at least six times per year according to the Annual Governance Calendar and may be convened with reasonable notice for additional meetings at the request of the Institute's Board of Directors.

Standing Committees

The following committees have delegated responsibilities as detailed in their Terms of Reference for assisting the Institute's Academic Board in its role as the principal academic advisory body of the Institute:

- Course Advisory and Review Committee
- Grade Ratification Committee
- Board of Examiners
- Appeals Committee

- Teaching & Learning Committee

6.5 Course Advisory and Review Committee (CARC)

Role

The Course Advisory and Review Committee is a standing committee of the Institute's Academic Board with delegated authority to oversee the development and monitor the review of all the Institute's higher education courses, prior to submission to the Institute's Academic Board

Functions

The functions of the Course Advisory and Review Committee are to:

- Consider and provide advice to the Institute's Academic Board regarding all new course and course change proposals.
- Advise and review the Institute's annual course review cycle.
- Approve on behalf of the Institute's Academic Board all course accreditation documentation before submission to TEQSA.
- Provide curriculum guidance and support for the Institute.
- Ensure appropriate development, monitoring and review of programs that meets learning outcomes and aligns with industry.

Membership

- One external Academic Board member who will act as Chair of the Committee
- The membership evolves in response to changes to working parties during ongoing development of the program.
- Members should comprise of academics and industry practitioners who are experts in the discipline/field of the course being reviewed.
- Executive Dean
- Assistant Dean
- Course Coordinator, Accounting and Business
- Course Coordinator, Business Information Systems
- Registrar
- Student or Alumni Representative

Frequency of Meetings

The Committee will meet at least twice per year according to the Annual Governance Calendar and may be convened with reasonable notice for additional meetings as and when required.

6.6 Grade Ratification Committee (GRC)

Role

The Grade Ratification Committee is a standing committee of the Institute's Academic Board and provides governance to ensure the integrity of grades issued by the Institute for all subjects. The Institute's Academic Board recognises the responsibility of the Executive Dean to oversee academic quality within the Institute and across different delivery locations to ensure compliance to relevant regulatory frameworks. The Grade Ratification Committee has authority to determine the validity of grades.

Functions

The functions of the Grade Ratification Committee are to:

- To oversee adherence and alignment to course learning and assessment processes.
- Approve subject results.
- Approve changes to assessment structures outside the Assessment Policy Parameters.
- Make recommendations to the Institute's Academic Board regarding teaching best practice initiatives, risk of non-compliance with the Australian Qualifications Framework (AQF) and Tertiary Education Quality Standards Agency (TEQSA) initiatives.
- Maintain secure and accurate records of all grades and Grade Ratification Committee meetings.

- Refer grades to the Academic Board for approval when the Grade Ratification Committee cannot agree on academic results.
- Delegate responsibility to the Institute's Board of Examiners to review grades, analyse results and recommend them to the Grade Ratification Committee.
- Receive reports from the Board of Examiners.

Membership

Membership of the Grade Ratification Committee consists of:

- One external Academic Board member who will act as Chair of the Committee
- Executive Dean
- Assistant Dean
- Registrar

Frequency of Meetings

The Committee will meet at least three times per year according to the Annual Governance Calendar and may be convened with reasonable notice for additional meetings in order to determine academic results.

6.7 Board of Examiners (BoE)

Role

The Board of Examiners is a sub-committee of the Grade Ratification Committee. The Board of Examiners consider students' overall results for subjects and report them to the Grade Ratification Committee for approval.

Functions

The functions of the Board of Examiners are to:

- Recommend to the Grade Ratification Committee subject results.
- Recommend to the Grade Ratification Committee changes to assessment structures outside the Assessment Policy Parameters.
- Review and provide an analysis of subject results to the Grade Ratification Committee.
- Liaise with Lecturers to determine reasons for anomalies in subject results.
- Amend final results in the event of an error.
- Grant supplementary assessment in accordance with the Institute's policy.

Membership

Membership of the Board of Examiners consists of:

- Executive Dean who will act as Chair of the Committee
- Assistant Dean
- Registrar
- Course Coordinator, Accounting and Business
- Course Coordinator, Business Information Systems

Frequency of Meetings

The Board of Examiners will meet at least three times per year according to the Annual Governance Calendar and may be convened with reasonable notice for additional meetings in order to determine academic results.

6.8 Appeals Committee

Role

The Appeals Committee is a standing committee of the Institute's Academic Board and provides governance to ensure the integrity of the Institute's student academic appeal process. The Appeals Committee has the authority to determine the outcome of all student academic appeals.

Functions

The functions of the Appeals Committee Chair or the Appeals Committee are to:

- Determine the general conduct of the appeal hearing and the procedures to be adopted, as it thinks fit, based on general principles of natural justice and procedural fairness

- Investigate the appeal, which may include reviewing the available evidence or seeking additional evidence or clarification on matters from staff or students, while ensuring appropriate confidentiality is maintained
- Interview staff or students as required, including those against whom the appeal is made and the appellant, ensuring all parties are offered the right to have their chosen support person in attendance at the interview
- Document the outcome and reasons for the outcome of the appeal in writing and return to the Secretariat.

The Appeals Committee Chair has the power to:

- Review, uphold or dismiss or vary the determination of the complaint without convening the Appeals Committee
- Refer the matter to the Appeals Committee if a determination cannot be made
- Refer the matter back to the Institute for further inquiry and determination.

The Appeals Committee has the power to:

- Hear the appeal in relation to the determination of the appeal
- Review, uphold, dismiss or vary the determination of the appeal
- Refer the matter back to the Institute for further inquiry and determination.

Membership

Membership of the Appeals Committee consists of:

- One external Academic Board member who will act as Chair of the Committee
- At least one other external Academic Board member who will act as a member of the Committee

Frequency of Meetings

The Committee will be convened as and when required.

6.9 Teaching and Learning Committee (T&L)

Role

The Institute's Academic Board delegates responsibility to the T&L for monitoring and reporting on quality assurance processes for teaching and learning within the Institute to ensure that the day-to-day academic operations meet quality educational standards. The Chair of the T&L reports regularly to the Academic Board on all T&L functions, activities and undertakings.

Functions

The functions of the T&L are to:

- Provide a forum for the discussion of teaching and learning trends, issues and challenges. Encourage a culture of scholarship throughout the School and advise the Academic Board on procedures relating to teacher appointment and evaluation.
- Ensure the implementation of academic policies relating to all teaching and learning processes.
- Oversee the student assessment process is implemented (assessment validation, moderation, examinations).
- Regularly report to the Institute's Academic Board on student's progress, attrition and completion rates; and surveys (SELTS and Graduate Destination).
- Monitor and review student support strategies implemented to ensure student success (language difficulties, academic support, intervention processes).
- Receive reports and review statistics relating to student appeals against assessment, grievances, discipline and misconduct.
- Ensure benchmarking activities are occurring.
- Monitor annual Professional Development Plans for academic staff to ensure that professional and discipline based expertise is current, that teaching skills are maintained and updated and that scholarly activity is undertaken.

- Ensure there is a regular course review process, to improve the quality of teaching through regular use and review of subject/course evaluation surveys and report on any changes relating to the course structure or delivery methodology.
- Develop strategies and monitor their effectiveness for the provision of appropriate literacy and numeracy support.
- Ensure the quality of teaching and learning.
- Develop and monitor the progress of a Teaching and Learning Plan.

Membership

Membership of the Teaching and Learning Committee consists of:

- One external Academic Board member who will act as Chair of the Committee
- Executive Dean
- Assistant Dean
- Learning Resources and Support Officer
- Course Coordinator, Accounting and Business
- Course Coordinator, Business Information Systems
- Lecturer Representative
- Registrar
- Student Representative

Frequency of Meetings

The Committee will meet at least three times per year according to the Annual Governance Calendar and may be convened with reasonable notice for additional meetings.

6.10 Student Representation

The Institute strongly values the contribution of students to the quality improvement of higher education at the Institute. For this reason, the Institute strongly encourages students to be involved as a student representative.

Formal and informal avenues for student representation

The Institute has a number of formal and informal avenues available for students to become actively involved in decision making. Students can:

- Become a member of the Academic Board
- Become a member of the Teaching and Learning Committee
- Become a member of the Course Advisory and Review Committee
- Participate in student feedback surveys
- Provide feedback informally or formally to a member of staff or a student representative

Role of student representatives on Academic Board and standing committees

The Academic Board and standing committees meet regularly throughout the year. Student representatives on these committees are required to:

- Make considerable effort to attend all meetings with a minimum attendance of 80%
- Make themselves known and available as a student representative committee member to the Institute's student community
- Gather views from their peers regarding various aspects of their courses and/or study and to communicate these views to their respective committees
- Make recommendations for changes for the benefit of the Institute's student community
- Not discuss their own or another individual's personal or academic progression problems except when these raise more general concerns that might affect all other students
- Abide by the member duties as outlined in this Framework

Student representative eligibility criteria

In order to be eligible to become a student representative on a committee, students must:

- Be currently enrolled in a course at the Institute with no outstanding debts
- Have at least 1 year remaining in their studies at the time of nomination
- Be able to demonstrate active participation at the Institute through attending events, workshops and attendance of classes
- Have made satisfactory academic progress in accordance with the ***Student Progression and Exclusion Policy*** and associated Procedure

Student representative nomination and appointment process

Nominations for student representatives on committees will be called for at the commencement of each academic year or if and when a student representative is no longer able to fulfil their duties on a committee.

Students can be nominated to be a member on a committee by staff, other students or an individual may nominate themselves. Students must meet the required eligibility criteria to proceed to the next stage.

Once nominations have closed, any eligible nominees will be contacted and requested to attend an interview with a Selection Committee.

The Selection Committee will comprise of at least 3 members. Members may include:

- The Executive Dean
- The Assistant Dean
- The Registrar
- An external member of the Academic Board

Once all nominees have been interviewed, the Selection Committee will take a vote on who should be appointed as a student representative member on the committee.

The successful nominee will be contacted and informed of their appointment as the student representative. The student representative will be required to undergo an induction and sign the required declarations/agreements.

Period of Office

A student representative can remain on a committee for a period of up to one (1) year. Any current student representatives at the time that elections are called can choose to nominate again for the same or a different position to that being currently held.

7. Legislation

This Framework seeks to comply with the Higher Education Standards Framework 2015 Standard 6.3 (Academic Governance) which specifies that:

1. Processes and structures are established and responsibilities are assigned that collectively:
 - a. achieve effective academic oversight of the quality of teaching, learning, research and research training
 - b. set and monitor institutional benchmarks for academic quality and outcomes
 - c. establish and maintain academic leadership at an institutional level, consistent with the types and levels of higher education offered, and
 - d. provide competent advice to the corporate governing body and management on academic matters, including advice on academic outcomes, policies and practices.
2. Academic oversight assures the quality of teaching, learning, research and research training effectively, including by:
 - a. developing, monitoring and reviewing academic policies and their effectiveness

- b. confirming that delegations of academic authority are implemented
- c. critically scrutinising, approving and, if authority to self-accredit is held, accrediting or advising on approving and accrediting, courses of study and their associated qualifications
- d. maintaining oversight of academic and research integrity, including monitoring of potential risks
- e. monitoring and initiating action to improve performance against institutional benchmarks for academic quality and outcomes
- f. critically evaluating the quality and effectiveness of educational innovations or proposals for innovations
- g. evaluating the effectiveness of institutional monitoring, review and improvement of academic activities, and
- h. monitoring and reporting to the corporate governing body on the quality of teaching, learning, research and research training.

- 3. Students have opportunities to participate in academic governance.

This Framework also seeks to comply with the Higher Education Standards Framework 2015 Standard 5.3 (Monitoring, Review and Improvement).

8. Version Control

This Framework has been endorsed by the Australian Institute of Higher Education Board of Directors and Academic Board as at September 2017 and is reviewed every 3 years. The Framework is published and available on the Australian Institute of Higher Education website <http://www.aih.nsw.edu.au/> under 'Policies and Procedures'.

Change and Version Control				
Version	Authored by	Brief Description of the changes	Date Approved:	Effective Date:
2016-1	Executive Dean	New Document.	6 July 2016	7 July 2016
2017-1	Registrar	Added to new template. Included formal review procedure. Revised terms of reference for Appeals Committee. Updated Committee memberships.	4 August 2017	7 August 2017
2017-2	Registrar	Added a section for student representation.	13 September 2017	15 September 2017