UNIVERSITY OF CANBERRA

COURSE GROUP REVIEWS - PURPOSE, PRINCIPLES, PROCESS AND TERMS OF REFERENCE

PURPOSE
1. The purpose of Course Group Reviews is to provide quality assurance through regular external review and to facilitate quality improvement with respect to courses offered by the University.

PRINCIPLES
2. Course groups are agreed groups of related undergraduate and postgraduate coursework courses together with their constituent units offered by the University.
3. A review of a Course Group will normally take place at least once every five years.

PROCESS
4. The review process will consist of the following stages:
   (i) Production of the self-review submission by the faculty and appointment of a review panel by the Chair of Academic Board
   (ii) Call to the University community for interested parties to provide comment
   (iii) One-day panel visit to discuss submissions, talk to stakeholders and develop recommendations
   (iv) Production of the Course Group Review Report
   (v) Response to the Report from the relevant Dean with an implementation plan
   (vi) Academic Board consideration of the Report, response and implementation plan and approval of the response and plan
   (vii) Reporting on implementation through faculty operational plans and reports.
5. Reviews will follow terms of reference below.
6. The submission, composition of the panel, review report, response and implementation plan will be published on the University website (limited to the UC domain).

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Endorsed: Academic Board Meeting No. 10/4 - 12 July 2010
Notes on stages in the review process (see also terms of reference)

- Responsibility for development of the faculty submission rests with the relevant Dean(s) in consultation with relevant course conveners. A staff member such as the ADE or business manager should be nominated as coordinator.

- Responsibility for appointing the review panel rests with the Chair of Academic Board, on behalf of the Board, following consultation with the relevant Dean(s).

- External members of the panel must be at arm’s length from the University. External members could include an academic staff member from a relevant course at another university, representation from an employer of graduates from courses in the group, an active practitioner representing the professions or a representative of a professional body.

- Faculties are asked to nominate a selection of potential external members from which two will be chosen. An academic from another university and a practising professional or major employer is a good combination. Selection of external members should be guided by the need for members to have sufficient knowledge of the group to be able to usefully contribute as well as sufficient detachment to provide an independent perspective. Adjunct staff or graduates, for example, are generally not preferred.

- Panel members will be expected to respect the sensitivity and confidentiality of review material.

- During the visit the review panel will evaluate the submissions and meet staff and students. The panel will consider each of the terms of reference and members will assist the Chair to write a review report. The report may provide commendations as well as recommendations.

- Recommendations from the review panel are advisory rather than mandatory. The faculty will provide a response to the report with an implementation plan. Where a recommendation is not accepted, reasons should be provided.

- Academic Board will consider the Course Group Review report, the faculty response and the implementation plan and approve the response and plan.

- The faculty annual operational plan will incorporate a progress report on the implementation plan.

Timetable for the review process

- Review panel members should be identified two months before the review visit.

- The call for submissions from the University community will be made when the Review timing is confirmed.

- The faculty submission must be completed at least a month before the review visit. Panel members need time to review the material.

- The review report will be completed within a month of the panel visit where possible.

- The faculty response should be submitted within a month of receiving the report.

Format and guidelines for Faculty submissions

1. Date of submission
2. Name of faculty
3. Name of course group
4. Courses in the course group (course codes and names)
5. Overview and introduction as set out below
6. Section on each term of reference as attached
7. Appendices:
- Determination of Course Particulars (DCP) for each course
- Latest (2009) annual course report for each course
- Reports from any professional accreditation or registration process.

Aim to provide a user-friendly self-review document that identifies issues for panel consideration. Additional issues may emerge in the review process.

Submissions should be no longer than 30 pages plus appendices. Paragraphs or subsections should be numbered for ease of reference.

The overview of 2-4 pages should cover:
- courses in the group, interrelationships and student pathways in broad terms
- student profile
- graduate destinations
- overall state of the course group (eg student numbers, satisfaction, staff profile)
- contextual factors such as recent leadership changes, new directions or related reviews
- issues identified by the group, action already underway and expected outcomes
- faculty plans and future directions for the course group and discipline.

To avoid repetitive detail, the body of the submission should use the terms of reference below as subheadings with information on all courses together under each heading. Comments on individual courses should be made where relevant.

Please note that an evidence-based approach is expected. Reference to external standards and benchmarking is desirable. The submission must refer to and comment on performance data from Annual Course Reports (enrolment and progression data, student feedback etc).

DCPs for the appendices will be supplied by Academic Policy and Review. Latest annual course reports (sent to faculties by Planning and Statistics) should be appended as well as evidence of any professional accreditation processes. Additional appendices should not be provided unless considered essential for the panel.

(Further information on Course Group Reviews, including course groups, the schedule and earlier review reports is at http://www.canberra.edu.au/learning-teaching/quality-assurance/course-reviews)
COURSE GROUP REVIEW PANELS – TERMS OF REFERENCE

Purpose and function
The purpose of Course Group Reviews is to provide quality assurance through regular external review and to facilitate quality improvement with respect to courses offered by the University.

Terms of reference
For the undergraduate and postgraduate coursework courses comprising a course group, the panel will examine evidence submitted to the Review and make recommendations regarding:

(a) The relevance and currency of the curricula in meeting the needs of students, the profession and employers.

(b) The current and likely future demand for the course areas and their viability with respect to students, employers, professions and partner organisations, and plans for future course developments (including prospective partnerships and the creation or closure of courses).

(c) The alignment of the curricula, teaching, learning and assessment processes with the aims and stated learning outcomes of the courses including generic skills, and with Faculty and University strategic directions, including the five signature themes of the University’s courses and disciplines.

(d) The relationship between the courses within the course group and other courses and course components across the University, and the research and research training programs of the University.

(e) The adequacy of learning resources (including library, IT and infrastructure support) and the level of student learning support.

(f) The effectiveness of quality assurance processes for courses and units including processes for benchmarking and obtaining student and employer feedback and the use of appropriate performance indicators.

(g) The adequacy of the level (for example, numbers, classification, qualifications, experience) of teaching staff (including sessional staff) and the quality of staff development and support provided for teaching staff.

(h) Any additional matter of relevance.

Membership
Chair of Academic Board (or nominee) (Chair)
Senior member of academic staff of the University from another faculty
Student representative
Up to four members (normally 2) external to the University
Total - up to 7 members (normally 5)

Method of appointment
All members of the panel (apart from the Chair of Academic Board) are appointed by the Chair of Academic Board, on behalf of Academic Board, after consultation with the relevant Dean(s).

Secretariat
Secretary for the review panel is provided by Academic Policy and Review.

Schedule of meetings
The duration of the review visit will be one day at the University. Teleconferences may also be used.