School and Discipline Characteristics

Authority Source: Vice Chancellor

Approval Date: 14/11/2012

Publication Date: 03/12/2012

Review Date: 14/11/2015

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Accessibility: Public

Status: Published

In developing this policy the University had regard to the provisions of section 40B(1)(b) of the Human Rights Act 2004 (ACT).

PURPOSE:

This policy provides detail on the standard characteristics of schools and disciplines at the University and outlines approval processes for introducing, closing, and remaining schools and disciplines.

PRINCIPLE:

Disciplines

At the University of Canberra, a 'discipline' is an organisational grouping of staff engaged in teaching and research in a recognisable branch of learning at the sub-faculty level. The grouping will possess sufficient critical mass to warrant official identification and performance monitoring.

In order for a discipline to be established and recognised as an official sub-group within the University:

- It will possess a minimum total teaching EFTSL of 100;
- It will engage a minimum of 5 FTE academic staff who identify with the discipline;
- Academic staff will be engaged in research related to the branch of learning; and
- Higher Degree Research students will be enrolled and supervised by staff within the discipline.

Where an organisational grouping does not meet the above criteria, a discipline might still be established taking into account the following considerations:

- The proposed discipline's course load is significant but taught mostly elsewhere;
- The proposed discipline possesses strong research outputs which compensates for a relatively small teaching load;
- The proposed discipline is an area with professional accreditation and/or strong industry engagement; or
- The proposed discipline is in an establishment period (it is anticipated that new disciplines will be given three year establishment periods).

Schools

At the University of Canberra, a 'school' is a management structure which sits below the level of the faculty. A school will often consist of several disciplines, except where there is an advantage in utilising the term 'school' for external communication (e.g. the School of Law).

In order for a school to be established and recognised as a management structure within the University:

- It will possess a minimum total teaching EFTSL of 250 which may be a combination of related disciplines or one larger discipline;
- It will engage a minimum of 10 FTE academic staff;
- Academic staff will be engaged in research related to the school;
- Higher Degree Research students will be enrolled and supervised by staff within the school; and
- There will be external value to industry or key stakeholders justifying the designation.

The Role of Head of Discipline / Head of School

A faculty may choose between appointing Heads of Discipline or Heads of School (HoD/HoS); both levels of management will not be supported within one faculty, unless approved by the Vice-Chancellor.

The HoD/HoS role is to support the Faculty Dean in the development, management, administration and marketing of disciplines. A position description is provided in Annexure 1.

Where possible, appointments to HoD/HoS roles will be made at Level D or above; there is an expectation that any HoD or HoS will lead the teaching and learning as well as the research activity of the Discipline/School.

Approval Process

The following changes to a discipline or school will require approval by the Vice-Chancellor at VCG, following Faculty Board and/or significant Faculty consultation:

- The introduction of a new discipline or school;
- The closure of a discipline or school; or
- A discipline or school name change.

Notice of approved discipline changes should be provided to SMG in a timely manner to ensure corporate systems and reporting are updated appropriately.

SUPPORTING INFORMATION:

- University of Canberra Act 1989 (ACT)
- Legislation Act 2001 (ACT)
- Human Resources Delegations
- Position Description, Head of Discipline / Head of School (Attached below)

DEFINITIONS:

Term	Definition
EFTSL	Equivalent Full Time Student Load
FTE	Full Time Equivalent (Staff)
HoD	Head of Discipline

HoS	Head of School
SMG	Senior Management Group
VCG	Vice-Chancellor's Group

NOTES:

POSITION DESCRIPTION

Position Title: **Head of Discipline / Head of School**
Faculty:
Discipline:
Reporting to: **Dean of Faculty**
Duration: **Fixed term appointment**

Position Purpose:

The role of Head of Discipline / Head of School is to support the Dean in the development, management, administration and marketing of education and research within the Discipline/School. The Head of Discipline / Head of School also works closely with the Associate Dean (Education) and Associate Dean (Research) and may report to one or both for all or some duties. The appointee will also be expected to continue to make contributions to the teaching effort of the Discipline/School, to demonstrate research performance and undertake professional activities in accordance with their substantive academic appointment.

Duties:

Specific duties required of the Head of Discipline / Head of School role may include:

Academic Leadership

1. Ensure academic leadership of disciplinary profile and industry engagement;
2. Provide leadership for the research activity of the Discipline/School, including allocation of resources, performance management and development of cross-university or external collaborative opportunities working with the Associate Dean (Research);
3. Assume leadership of respective Discipline areas including financial monitoring, allocation of resources across the Discipline/School and the guidance of marketing and representation of the Discipline/School both internally and externally;
4. Ensure quality assurance processes for units in the Discipline/School are in place including appropriate quality control measures in assignments, tests, laboratories and final examinations;
5. Ensure that there is an appropriate mix of courses within the Discipline/School and that student pathways exist between courses in the Discipline/School;
6. Work collaboratively with Associate Deans and colleagues to facilitate cross-Faculty, inter-disciplinary initiatives;
7. Oversee staffing needs including presentation of cases for staffing requests to the Dean and preparation of advertisements for new or vacant positions;
8. Ensure the appropriate distribution of staff expertise and Discipline/School-related resources across the courses and units within the Discipline/School;
9. Approve the Unit Outlines for all units offered by the Discipline/School (in consultation with unit convenor) and present them for the Dean's approval;
10. Negotiation of teaching workloads to staff, unit convenors in consultation with teaching staff of the Faculty and presenting them for the Dean's approval;

11. Other duties as requested by the Dean from time to time.

Indicative Administrative Duties of Head of Discipline / Head of School (when applicable)

1. Conduct Discipline/School meetings to discuss/resolve academic and teaching support issues;
2. Assist the Dean in the conduct of the Performance and Development Review Process for academic staff within the Faculty who teach into their Discipline/School;
3. Assist the Dean in workforce planning, including academic leave management.