

University Reviews - Academic Policy

1. Purpose

1.1 Consistent with the University's Quality and Standards Framework, the University undertakes external reviews as part of its commitment to quality assurance and quality improvement, contributing to its alignment and compliance with the Higher Education Standards Framework.

1.2 This policy identifies the requirements for and the purpose, scope and nature of external reviews.

1.3 This policy must be read in conjunction with the University Reviews – Procedures.

2. Scope and application

2.1 This policy applies to external cyclical reviews of programs and governing bodies of the University and commissioned thematic and functional area reviews.

3. Definitions

3.1 Refer to the University's Glossary of Terms for definitions as they specifically relate to policy documents.

Organisational unit means the operational support areas of the University identified in the functional organisations chart.

Portfolio Manager means the member of the University Executive to whom a Dean of School or the Director of an organisational unit reports.

Review Lead is the senior staff member or program coordinator assigned to coordinate the review on behalf of the organisational unit or school, and who is responsible for developing key review documentation.

Thematic Review is a review focusing on an identified strategic priority area or institutional wide issue not addressed through other review processes.

4. Principles

4.1 External reviews are intended to:

- (a) contribute to identification and implementation of changes, developments and improvements that strengthen effectiveness;
- (b) ensure ongoing compliance with the *Australian Qualifications Framework (AQF) and the Higher Education Standards Framework (Threshold Standards) 2021 (Cth)*;
- (c) build a culture of critical self-reflection that informs evidence-based quality assurance and continued quality improvement; and
- (d) ensure alignment with the University's strategic direction.

4.2 Timing and Frequency

4.2.1 The timing and frequency of reviews is determined by the review type:

- (a) Cyclical reviews will be conducted for all programs and governing bodies of the University on a five-yearly basis; and
- (b) Commissioned reviews will be scheduled as required with priorities established annually by University Council, Academic Board or conducted at the discretion of the Vice-Chancellor and President (VCP).

4.3 Review Panel

4.3.1 Reviews will be undertaken by a panel appointed by the Portfolio Manager. The review panel will provide independent advice and recommendations through evaluation of evidence provided in a review portfolio and site visit interviews, to identify:

APPROVAL AUTHORITY

Academic Board

RESPONSIBLE EXECUTIVE MEMBER

Vice-Chancellor and President

DESIGNATED OFFICER

Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Academic)

FIRST APPROVED

3 December 2013

LAST AMENDED

1 July 2024

REVIEW DATE

1 July 2029

STATUS

Active

(a) strengths, good practices, positive outcomes and productive improvements in performance in recent years, and ongoing compliance with relevant Higher Education Standards and other legislation; and

(b) areas in which practices, performance, and outcomes should be enhanced or improved, including in relation to comparable practices, performance and outcomes elsewhere, approaches to assuring and improving quality, and maintaining compliance with relevant legislation.

4.4 Terms of Reference

4.4.1 Reviews are to be conducted following the approved terms of reference consistent with the University Reviews – Procedures.

5. Authorities and responsibilities

5.1 The Academic Board makes this policy in accordance with the *University of the Sunshine Coast Act 1998 (Qld)*.

5.2 The Vice-Chancellor and President is authorised to make procedures and guidelines for the operation of this Policy. The procedures and guidelines must be compatible with the provisions of this policy.

5.3 The Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Academic) is authorised to make associated documents to support the application of policy documents. These must be compatible with the provisions of the respective policy document.

5.4 This policy operates from the Last Amended date, will all previous policies related to the University reviews are replaced and have no further operation from this date.

5.5 All records relating to the University reviews must be stored and managed in accordance with the Information Management – Governing Policy.

5.6 This policy must be maintained in accordance with the Policy Framework – Procedures and reviewed on the standard five year policy review cycle.

5.7 Any exception to this policy to enable a more appropriate result must be approved in accordance with the Policy Framework – Procedures prior to deviation from the policy document.

5.8 Refer to Schedule C of the Delegations Manual in relation to the approved delegations detailed within this policy document.

5.9 The following authorities are delegated under this policy for the approval of review terms of reference, appointment of panel members and post-review reporting:

REVIEW ACTIVITY	UNIVERSITY OFFICER
Program	Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Academic)
Organisational Unit	Vice-Chancellor and President or Deputy Vice-Chancellor / Pro Vice-Chancellor responsible for the organisational unit/functional area
Research Centres and Institutes	Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Research and Innovation)
School	Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Academic)
Committee/Board	Vice-Chancellor and President
Thematic	Vice-Chancellor and President

END

RELATED DOCUMENTS

- Coursework Curriculum - Academic Policy
- Governance Framework - Governing Policy
- Information Management - Governing Policy
- Planning and Reporting Framework - Governing Policy
- Policy Framework - Governing Policy
- Policy Framework - Procedures
- Risk Management - Governing Policy
- University Reviews - Procedures
- USC University Research Centres and Research Institutes - Operational Policy

LINKED DOCUMENTS

- University Reviews - Procedures

SUPERSEDED DOCUMENTS

- Committee/Board Reviews and Self-Reviews - Operational Policy
- Review of Academic Board and its Committees - Procedures
- Program Review - Procedures
- School Reviews - Operational Policy
- School Reviews - Procedures
- Organisational Unit Reviews - Operational Policy
- Organisational Unit Reviews - Procedures
- University Reviews - Procedures

RELATED LEGISLATION / STANDARDS

- University of the Sunshine Coast Act 1998 (Qld)
- Tertiary Education Quality and Standards Agency (TEQSA) Act 2011 (Cth)
- Higher Education Standards Framework (Threshold Standards) 2021 (Cth)