Higher Education Course Advisory Group Terms of Reference

Section 1 - Establishment

(1) The Higher Education Course Advisory Groups are established under the Academic Board Terms of Reference.

Section 2 - Functions and Responsibilities

(2) The Higher Education Course Advisory Group (CAG) oversees and advises on the quality of a group of cognate courses. A single CAG may encompass other aligned, non-nested courses where practical and academically reasonable.

(3) The CAG is established by a Faculty Pro Vice-Chancellor.

(4) The CAG engages stakeholders (including students, graduates, staff, the disciplines, employers, industry, relevant professional bodies and the wider community) in developing, proposing, reviewing and improving the course/s. It will maintain and advance the University's academic standards and have regard for stakeholder interests and relevant legislative and regulatory requirements.

(5) The CAG will provide advice on:

a. the need and demand for the course in the context of professional strategic directions and workforce needs;
b. the course learning outcomes, and incorporation of the University's graduate attributes;
c. professional attributes, as designated by an external professional body as part of accreditation;
d. the course structure;
e. the desired and appropriate teaching and learning methods, modes of course provision and assessment strategies; and
f. appropriate articulation and partnering arrangements.

(6) The CAG will receive relevant information and evaluate course performance on an annual basis against a set of performance indicators, which may include:

a. load, number and characteristics of students entering the course;
b. retention, progression and completion rates of the student population in the course;
c. aggregated students' evaluation for course units and the course/s as a whole;
d. student satisfaction generally;
e. graduate satisfaction and employer satisfaction with the quality of the graduates; and
f. any other information as it deems pertinent.

(7) The CAG will contribute to developing submissions for a course's academic and professional accreditation.

(8) The CAG will regularly conduct external referencing (benchmarking) of the success of CDU student cohorts against

comparable courses of study at other institutions, by:

a. analysing progression rates, attrition rates, completion times and rates and, where applicable, comparing different methods and locations of delivery;
b. comparing assessment methods and grading of students' achievement of learning outcomes for selected units of study within courses of study.

Section 3 - Membership

(9) The CAG should be composed of approximately ten (10) members, drawn from a range of stakeholder groups, who can contribute to the development and enhancement of the course. Most members should not be University employees. A typical membership would include ex officio members and representatives from Category A and Category B. Ex officio and Category A members are voting members and contribute to quorum. Category B members are non-voting members and do not contribute to quorum.

(10) Ex officio members:

a. The relevant Faculty Pro Vice-Chancellor (or delegate) (Chair); and
b. Course coordinator/s of the relevant course/s.

(11) Category A members:

a. External stakeholders, such as employers of graduates from the course or members of relevant professional bodies;
b. Academic/s of appropriate seniority from other tertiary institution/s;
c. Enrolled student/s from the course/s; and
d. Graduate/s of the course/s.

(12) Category B members:

a. VET staff representative/s from a cognate training package;
b. Academics of appropriate seniority from other disciplines or faculties; and
c. CDU Library employees.

(13) Category A and Category B members will be appointed by the Chair in consultation with relevant CAG members and discipline staff.

Section 4 - Chair

(14) The Chair of the CAG will be the Faculty Pro Vice-Chancellor or their delegate.

Section 5 - Secretary

(15) Secretariat and administrative support will be provided by the faculty.

Section 6 - Terms of Office

(16) Category A members will be appointed for a term of two (2) years. This may be renewed up to two (2) times at the discretion of the CAG Chair.

(17) Category B members are appointed by the contributing faculty for terms at their discretion and are observers but have no voting authority.

Section 7 - Quorum

(18) At a meeting of the CAG, a quorum is constituted as 50% plus one (1) voting members of the Group.

Section 8 - Meetings

(19) For courses under development or subject to re-accreditation, the CAG will meet regularly and as required.

(20) For established courses the CAG will meet at least once a year and more often as required, to undertake an annual review of the program and report to the appropriate Faculty Learning and Teaching Committee on the performance of the course in the previous twelve (12) month period.

Section 9 - Agenda

(21) The agenda is to be distributed with supporting documentation normally at least seven (7) days prior to the meeting date.

Section 10 - Minutes

(22) Meeting minutes will be taken and distributed within two weeks of the meeting.

Section 11 - Reporting

(23) The minutes and action items from the CAG will be provided to the next meeting of the Faculty Learning and Teaching Committee.

(24) Recommendations should normally be established by consensus. Where necessary, contrary views may be noted in the minutes.

Section 12 - Conflicts of Interest

(25) Where a member has an actual, potential or perceived conflict of interest regarding an agenda item, they must declare this to the Chair at the commencement of discussion of the item, and be prepared to excuse themselves from the discussion, or the room, if required, as per the terms of the Conflicts of Interest Policy.

Section 13 - Non-compliance

(26) Non-compliance with governance documents is considered a breach of the Code of Conduct - Employees or the Code of Conduct - Students, as applicable, and is treated seriously by the University. Reports of concerns about non-compliance will be managed in accordance with the applicable disciplinary procedures outlined in the Charles Darwin University and Union Enterprise Agreement 2025 and the Code of Conduct - Students.

(27) Complaints may be raised in accordance with the Complaints and Grievance Policy and Procedure - Employees and Complaints Policy - Students.

(28) All staff members have an individual responsibility to raise any suspicion, allegation or report of fraud or corruption in accordance with the Fraud and Corruption Control Policy and Whistleblower Reporting (Improper Conduct) Procedure.

Status and Details

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Glossary Terms and Definitions

"Faculty" - An organisational and academic unit in the University that delivers courses and conducts research.

"University" - Charles Darwin University, a body corporate established under section 4 of the Charles Darwin University Act 2003. The University is comprised of the various faculties, CDU TAFE, organisational units, and formal committees, including the governing University Council and Academic Board.

"Governance document" - means policy or procedure published in the Governance Document Library. Policies and procedures are collectively called ‘governance documents’ and are often referred to as ‘policy’ or ‘University policy’.