

Version	v1.0
Short description	This procedure outlines the approval processes for any changes to higher education award courses.
Relevant to	All academic and professional staff involved in proposing, endorsing or approving amendments to existing higher education courses.
Authority	Academic Board
Policy owner	Manager, Academic Quality and Standards
Responsible office	Office of the Vice Chancellor
Date approved	30 August 2023
Date effective	1 February 2024
Review due	August 2028
Related Avondale documents	<p>Course Accreditation Procedure</p> <p>Course Quality Assurance Policy</p> <p>Course Re-accreditation Procedure</p> <p>Course Suspension & Discontinuation Procedure</p> <p>Unit Development, Amendment & Discontinuation Procedure</p>
Related legislation	<p>Australian Qualifications Framework Second Edition 2013</p> <p>Education Services for Overseas Students Act 2000</p> <p>Higher Education Standards Framework (Threshold Standards) 2021</p>
Key words	Amendment, course change, course design, learning outcomes, re-accreditation

1. PURPOSE

- 1.1 This procedure supports the Course Quality Assurance Policy by outlining Avondale University's (Avondale) processes regarding the approval of amendments to existing higher education courses.
- 1.2 Avondale is authorised by the Tertiary Education Quality and Standards Agency (TEQSA) to self-accredit its courses.

2. SCOPE

- 2.1 This procedure applies to:
 - Higher Education Coursework courses;
 - Higher Degree by Research (HDR) courses.
- 2.2 This procedure does not apply to Vocational Education & Training courses.

3. DEFINITIONS

- 3.1 **Accreditation:** the process (or the outcome of the process) by which a proposed course is initially assessed and assured for quality of design, delivery and student outcomes in the context of the Higher Education Standards Framework, Australian Qualifications Framework, and industry standards.
- 3.2 **Benchmarking:** in the context of course accreditation, benchmarking involves comparing performance outcomes, academic standards and/or processes with similar courses of study delivered by other providers. 'Internal benchmarking' against other relevant courses offered by Avondale may also be undertaken.
- 3.3 **Course:** a coherent sequence of units and/or research component, usually leading to a degree or other award.
- 3.4 **Course amendment:** any change to an existing course.
- 3.5 **Major amendment (to a course):** an amendment to a course that substantially affects the course structure or learning outcomes and could significantly impact a student's ability to complete the course.
- 3.6 **Minor amendment (to a course):** an amendment to a course that does not involve substantial change to the course structure or learning outcomes and would not significantly impact a student's ability to complete the course.
- 3.7 **Professional Accreditation:** the process (or the outcome of the process) by which a program of study is validated by a professional or regulatory body as a program that prepares students for registration in a regulated profession.

4. CLASSIFICATION

- 4.1 Course amendments are classified as either minor or major as defined in sections 4.4 and 4.5.
- 4.2 If there is any uncertainty regarding the classification of a proposed amendment, the question should be referred to the Vice Chancellor for resolution prior to the application being commenced.

- 4.3 Where numerous amendments to a course are proposed, the Vice Chancellor will determine if the changes are so significant that an application for early re-accreditation is required.
- 4.4 Examples of minor amendments typically include a change to any of the following:
- a) course learning outcomes - clarification only
 - b) course related requirements or information for students
 - c) course commencement date
 - d) unit sequence
 - e) admission requirements
 - f) unit prerequisites
 - g) placement/ internship/ work integrated learning offerings
 - h) *Australian Higher Education Graduation Statement (AHEGS)*
 - i) course description
 - j) 6-digit ASCED Code.
- 4.5 Examples of major amendments typically include a change to any of the following:
- a) course title
 - b) course learning outcomes - substantive change
 - c) course duration or volume of learning
 - d) removing or adding physical course offering locations
 - e) course structure including to a major, minor or specialisation
 - f) course completion rules
 - g) delivery mode
 - h) third party arrangements
 - i) adding an international cohort.

5. APPLICATION

- 5.1 The application for a:
- 5.1.1 minor change is prepared by the Course Convenor in consultation with the Head of School
 - 5.1.2 major change is prepared by the Course Convenor in consultation with the Head of School and Deputy Vice Chancellor
 - 5.1.3 Transition Plan (if relevant, refer to section 5.4) is prepared by the Course Convenor.
- 5.2 Any proposals to change a course must address any potential effects on professional accreditation and special requirements of the course.
- 5.3 All applications require an impact assessment and risk analysis of proposed course changes including, but not limited to:

- a) the impact on other Avondale courses such as combined or double degrees
- b) resourcing and capability to deliver the changed course, including impact on staffing
- c) arrangements for and quality of teaching and learning
- d) compliance with legal and external requirements (eg AQF, ESOS Act)
- e) compliance with Avondale rules, delegations, policies and procedures
- f) effectiveness and practicality of administration (eg timetabling)
- g) student needs.

5.4 Applications for any course amendment which has any impact on students must be accompanied by a Transition Plan for Continuing Students.

6. CONSULTATION

6.1 The Course Convenor must ensure that proper consultation with all relevant parties is conducted and documented, including, but not limited to:

- 6.1.1 school staff (academic and professional) who are, or may be, impacted by the proposed changes;
- 6.1.2 other departments of the university, including SAS, Library, Advancement and other schools (where relevant); and
- 6.1.3 for major amendments, relevant external stakeholders (e.g. industry partners, graduate employers), particularly where there are accreditation requirements.

6.2 Where another school has an interest in the course to which changes are proposed, endorsement from that school must be sought as part of the approval process as follows:

- 6.2.1 for combined degrees, a School Committee resolution supporting the responsible school's proposal to change the course (possibly subject to changes and/or amendments to minimise the impact of the proposal); or
- 6.2.2 for non-combined degrees, a written confirmation from the Head of School acknowledging that the impact of the course proposal on the school's activities has been discussed and assessed and, where relevant, action has been and/or will be taken to manage the impact.

7. APPROVAL

7.1 Using the Avondale Guidelines regarding the HESF Standards, the Deputy Vice Chancellor/Academic Board will affirm that the guiding principles of the policy have been met. Specifically, that the course continues to:

- reflect Avondale's Purpose and Values;
- develop and facilitate student achievement of Avondale's Graduate Attributes;
- comply with the relevant provisions of the Higher Education Standards Framework (Threshold Standards) 2021 and the Australian Qualifications Framework (AQF); and
- be designed to educate, support and encourage academic integrity.

- 7.2 Any change to a course must first be considered by all relevant School Committees or the HDR Committee.

Minor amendments

- 7.3 Minor amendments to a course are to be approved by the Deputy Vice Chancellor after the endorsement of the School Committee.
- 7.4 Approved minor course amendments are to be forwarded by the Deputy Vice Chancellor to Academic Board for noting.

Major amendments & Transition Plan

- 7.5 Major amendments to courses and, if relevant the Transition Plan, are to be endorsed by the Learning and Teaching/Research Committee after the endorsement of the School Committee/HDR Committee.
- 7.6 In addition, any proposal that in the view of the Deputy Vice Chancellor, may have funding and or resource implications must be endorsed by the Executive Committee.
- 7.7 The submission is then considered by Academic Board for approval.
- 7.8 Implementation of the Transition Plan is the responsibility of the Course Convenor.

8. PROFESSIONAL ACCREDITATION

- 8.1 The Academic Quality Office seeks to support the alignment of professional accreditation and internal re-accreditation processes so that major changes to a course in response to professional accreditation are captured in an internal re-accreditation within 12 months of the major change.
- 8.2 If a course loses or withdraws its Professional Accreditation:
- 8.2.1 the Course Convenor shall immediately notify the Head of School and Deputy Vice Chancellor; and
 - 8.2.2 the Deputy Vice Chancellor will inform the Vice Chancellor, the Director Student Administration Services, the School Committee, the Academic Quality Committee, and the Chair of Academic Board.

9. COMMUNICATION

- 9.1 Course Convenors are responsible for communicating transition details to affected students.

10. MONITORING

- 10.1 The Academic Quality Office will monitor progress against the Transition Plan and potential risks, and report to Academic Board on an annual basis.

11. RECORDING

- 11.1 Upon approval, the Academic Quality Office will action updates to the Master Course Information.

- 11.2 The Academic Quality Officer will share a summary of the course amendment decision with the Academic Office, Admissions, Advancement, Business Office, Library, and IT Services.
- 11.3 All approved course changes (school or university-level approval) must be implemented by the relevant Course Convenor in the CMS in time for the admission of new students or re-enrolment of existing students in the next semester.

SUPPORTING DOCUMENTS (located with this procedure in the Policy Repository)

- Course Amendment Application
- Endorsement and Approval Responsibilities: Summary Table
- Guidelines regarding the HESF Standards

Table of Amendments

Version Number	1.0	Replaces Version	NA
Implementation Date	1 February 2024	Scheduled Review Date	August 2028
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Short description of amendment	New Procedure		