

Academic Course Review Procedure

Intent

JCU has a three-fold obligation to undertake routine course quality review for all academic programs:

1. Ensures the academic quality of its programs are of the highest calibre possible;
2. Assures the university's sustainability as a tertiary education provider; and
3. Meets its commitments under the Higher Education Standards Framework (Threshold Standards) 2015.

These Procedures provide the structure and process for the review of all academic programs delivered at JCU.

Scope

These procedures apply to all staff engaged in coursework courses leading to an award at all JCU campuses. Course approval activities are excluded from this procedure.

Definitions

Nil

Procedure

Principles

1. All JCU academic courses of study leading to an award are required to comply with TEQSA and AQF requirements.
2. All JCU courses of study are required to participate in the university's quality management activities, including but not limited to:
 - Annual course review (Course Performance Reporting);and
 - Internal review every 5-7 years (including those courses subject to Professional Accreditation)
3. Divisions are responsible to ensure all course review requirements (internal and external) are met. Division governance responsibility rests with the Division Board of Study.
4. Course reviews will be discipline focused across all AQF levels.

Overview

Every course is required to participate in two levels of course review:

Level 1 Annual Course Review. The regular review of course performance which is used to inform quality improvement activities. Known as Course Performance Reporting.

Level 2 Academic Course Review. Cyclical comprehensive course review to review each course's 'fit' and contribution to the university. Occurs at least every 7 years.

The flowchart at Figure 1 outlines the level 1 and Level 2 review processes.

Level 1 - Annual Course Review

1. The annual course performance reporting process provides the opportunity for academic staff to reflect on each course's design, assessment, delivery, student retention and progression in order to identify and implement course-specific quality improvement.
2. All courses of study are required to participate in the annual Course Performance Reporting (CPR) process. The exceptions to this requirement are those courses formally identified for exclusion by the relevant Director of Academic Quality and Strategy (DAQS), and generally include those courses identified as being in 'teach out'.

3. Academic staff are encouraged to undertake other course review activities in addition to CPRs that may include but not be limited to:
 - a) Unit/subject calibration
 - b) Moderation
 - c) Internal and external benchmarking
 - d) Course review required as part of an external accreditation recommendation or condition of accreditation.
 - e) Student feedback
 - f) Use of industry advisory boards
 - g) Course data analysis (e.g. Student Experience data) and subsequent improvement plans

Operational detail of Course Performance Reporting is provided in the Course Performance Report Procedures.

Level 2 –Academic Course Review

1. All courses of study or groups of associated courses are required to participate in a comprehensive course review at least every 7 years for the purposes of renewal (i.e. internal re-accreditation).
2. Academic Course Reviews are undertaken with reference to a set of Academic Course Review Quality Indicators. See Attachment 1.
3. All courses will participate in an initial or 'first pass' review. The 'First Pass' Course Profile is calculated using a sub-set of the Academic Course Review Quality Indicators. This assessment is drafted by Quality, Planning and Analytics, with review and approval by the relevant Division.
4. The courses and Approved Associated Courses (AAC) as determined in the most recent CPR cycle will be used to determine which courses will be profiled and whether they will be grouped. This structure can be adjusted by Directors of Academic Quality as required.
5. The resulting First Pass profile will inform the priority and type of course review to be undertaken by each course. The final selection of type of review activity and the timing will be determined by the Academic Course Review Committee.
6. Where a course is to be discontinued a review is recommended to inform future program development. This is not mandatory.
7. Where a course has undertaken an external accreditation review the course will still be required to participate in a Level 2 review. The course is likely to be assessed at Minimal or Low Risk with the results of the external accreditation informing the review of the course.
8. Whilst all courses are required to participate in the Academic Course Review process, those courses externally accredited shall be reviewed on the basis of any gaps between external accreditation requirements and the Quality Indicators.
9. Each Level 2 course review will include the review of all Academic Course Review Quality Indicators.
10. There are four types of academic course review (See Table 1):
 - Simple Review
 - Desktop Review
 - Panel Interview
 - Panel Visit
11. Courses undertaking a Level 2 review are not required to also undertake the annual Course Performance Reporting process that falls within a 12 month window prior to or following the annual Academic Course Review process.
12. New courses (first year offered \leq 3 years) are not required to participate in the Comprehensive Academic Course Review process.

'First Pass' Course Profile

1. The initial 'first pass' is an annual activity undertaken by QPA in consultation with Divisions responsible for oversight of individual courses.

2. First Pass profiling is undertaken mid-year (June-August) when access to all pertinent data is available i.e. Cognos data, completed Course Performance Reports and financial data. See attached First Pass' template at Attachment 2.
3. The 'first pass' methodology reviews Quality Indicators which have readily available data, being QI 1, 4,5,6,7,8,9. The First Pass template provides a profile of the academic course.
4. First Pass profiling results in an initial allocation of review type for each academic course, being:

Review Type	First Pass Profile result
Simple Review	7-14
Desktop Review	15-19
Panel Interview	20-22
Panel Visit	23-28

5. The initial Academic Course Profile prepared by QPA is reviewed and signed off by the respective Director of Academic Quality and Strategy. The results of this assessment will inform the priority and type of course review to be undertaken by each course. The final selection of type of review activity and the timing will be determined by the Academic Course Review Committee.
6. The Director of Academic Quality and Strategy reserves the right to amend the result of the First Pass profile.

Review Activity Types

Table 1. Academic Course Review Activity Types

Review activity	Simple	Desktop	Interview	Visit
Methodology notes	Standard documentation only. Does not require additional evidence, visits or meetings	Standard documentation + Simple Portfolio of Evidence is provided. Does not require visits or meetings	Standard documentation + Comprehensive Portfolio of Evidence is provided + 1-2 interviews	Standard documentation + Comprehensive Portfolio of Evidence + Panel visit (1-2 days). Panel may include external members.
Academic Course Review Application	✓	✓	✓	✓
Completed First Pass Course Review report (Signed by DAQS)	✓	✓	✓	✓
External accreditation report (most recent)	✓	If available	If available	If available
Portfolio of evidence (Simple or Comprehensive)		S	C	C
Focussed meetings (1-2 meetings with academic staff)			✓	✓
On-site visit by Panel to cover a comprehensive range of course matters				✓

A. Simple Review

1. The simple review is intended for those courses that undertake comprehensive accreditation with external agencies.
2. A Simple Review only requires the submission of the application and the final report (including any actions, requirements or conditions) from the external accrediting agency.
3. The application for renewal is provided directly to the Academic Course review Committee.
4. An academic course can only qualify for a Simple Review if it is still being delivered within the period of accreditation. If an academic course external accreditation lapses it will be required to be re-profiled to determine its type of review.

B. Desktop Review

1. The Desktop Review is primarily intended for those courses that further internal review of their academic quality. It may apply to some courses that undertake professional accreditation with external agencies.
2. In addition to the documentation required for a Simple Review a Desktop Review will require supporting evidence to address targeted/specific areas of review within the range of Quality Indicators that have been identified in the First Pass Profile. The additional evidence required will be identified by the Academic Course Review Committee. The additional evidence forms the Simple Portfolio of Evidence.

C. Panel Interview

1. Panel interviews will consist of 1-2 interviews with key academic staff. It does not require access to a greater range of stakeholders or resources and is intended to be administratively simpler than a full panel visit.
2. Panel interviews will be facilitated by the respective College or Division. These will be held with members of the senior academic management team for the course.
3. QPA will work with the respective College to ensure all requirements are met. Any costs associated with the review will be the responsibility of the College.
4. Panel interviews will be informed with sufficient evidence (portfolio) to enable informed recommendations.
5. Every review will result in a report to the Course Review Panel who will then report to the Academic Board. The report will focus on the Academic Course Review Quality Indicators (Attachment 1).

D. Panel Visit

1. Panel visits will include a range of interviews 'on site' with academic, external and student stakeholders.
2. Visits by a Panel will be organised and facilitated by the respective College or Division.
3. QPA will work with the respective College to ensure all requirements are met. Any costs associated with the review will be the responsibility of the College.
4. Review visits will be informed with sufficient evidence (portfolio) to enable informed recommendations. This is a Comprehensive Portfolio of Evidence.
5. Every review will result in a report to the Course Review Panel who will then report to the Academic Board. The report will focus on the Academic Course Review Quality Indicators (Attachment 1).

Academic Course Review Committee

Academic Board will convene a Committee consisting of:

Chair Academic Board

DVC - Academic

Directors of Academic Quality and Strategy – DTHM, DTES

Manager, Quality Standards and Policy

The Committee will meet annually. Its role is to:

- Develop and maintain a schedule of Level 2 review activities
- Oversight of the implementation of Level 2 course reviews
- Determine the type of Level 2 review required for each course
- Appoint Academic Course Review Panel members including the Panel Chair
- Identify the scope including specific areas of investigation for each course review. These are determined on analysis of the 'First Pass' profile and the course's application for renewal.

Academic Course Review Panel composition

Each year the Divisional DVC will appoint six academic staff with a high level of understanding of curriculum matters to be part of an Audit and Review Panel of expert reviewers.

According to the schedule of comprehensive course reviews, the Chair of the Academic Board will determine appropriate academic staff (from the Audit and Review Panel of expert reviewers) to undertake either desktop audits or review panel interviews.

- *Simple Review applications* will be reviewed by the Academic Course Review Committee. A panel is not required.
- *Desktop Reviews* will be undertaken by a team consisting of one academic staff member from another Division, one ADLT from the Division but not the College and a member of the Academic Board
- *Panel Interviews* will be undertaken by a team consisting of one academic from the other Division and one ADLT from the Division but not the College, and a member from the Academic Board.
- *Panel Visits* will be comprised of one ADLT from the Division but not the College, the Director of Quality and Strategy from the Division, a member from the Academic Board and an external expert either from Alumni, industry or another institution (determined by College Dean and approved by Academic Course Quality Review Panel).

The Quality, Standards and Policy unit provides secretariat services to the Committee.

Course Review Reporting

1. The outcome of every review will be a report to Academic Board with one clear recommendation to:
 - Renew the course of study without conditions; or
 - Renew the course of study with recommended (formative) improvements; or
 - Renew the course of study with required (summative) improvements (including a plan);or
 - Suspend the course for a period of time (timeframe identified); or
 - Disestablish the course.
2. Any reports containing required (summative) conditions must include:
 - Definition of the matter generating the issue;
 - Specific actions to address the issue;
 - Timeframe for completion; and
 - Required outcome.
3. All reports resulting from Level 2 course reviews will be provided to the Academic Board for consideration. Academic Board will determine:
 - The continuation or discontinuation of the course
 - Any conditions required for continuation
4. The decision to continue (renew) courses will be made by the appropriate delegate on recommendation of the Academic Course Review Committee.

Follow up reporting

All courses renewed under the Academic Course Review process will be required to:

- Meet any summative conditions of renewal as required by Academic Board; and
- Formally consider any formative improvements noted by Academic Board.

Seven Year Academic Course Review Cycle

1. The construction of the First Pass Academic Course Profiles informs the development of a seven year academic Course review schedule.
2. The Schedule of Academic Course Review is reviewed annually by the Academic Course Review Committee.

Roles and Responsibilities

Level 1 – Annual Course Reviews

Role	Responsible area/officer
Coordinate annual Course Performance Report cycle	Quality, Standards and Policy
Coordinate completion of Course Performance Reports	DAQS
Complete Course Performance Reports	Course Coordinators
Sign off/approve final CPRs	Dean

Level 2 –Comprehensive Academic Course Review

Role	Responsible area/officer
Grouping of courses undertaken/review schedule	DAQS
Co-ordinate schedule of reviews	Quality, Standards and Policy
Develop and maintain a draft schedule of Level 2 review activities	Quality, Standards and Policy
Approve schedule of reviews	Academic Board on recommendation of Committee
Oversight of the implementation of Level 2 course reviews	Academic Course Review Comm
Determine the type of Level 2 review required	Academic Course Review Comm
Appoint Course Review Panel members including Panel Chair	Academic Course Review Comm
Identify specific areas of investigation for each course review.	Academic Course Review Comm
Custodianship of Comprehensive Course Review documentation	Quality, Standards and Policy
Complete Course Review application	College
Undertake course review	Academic Course Review Panel
Coordinate Review activities (i.e. audit, interviews, visits)	College in consultation with QSP
Determine recommendation to Academic Board	Course Review Panel
Assure quality of academic courses	Division Board of Study
Governance of institutional quality assurance	Academic Board
Secretariat for Academic Board academic quality assurance	Quality, Standards and Policy

Related policies and documents

Course Performance Report Procedure - existing

Course Performance Report template - existing

Academic Course Review 'first pass' template – under development

Curriculum Approval, Monitoring, Review and Improvement Policy

Curriculum Approval, Monitoring, Review and Improvement Procedure

References

Higher Education Standards Framework (Threshold Standards) 2015

Deakin University: The Guide: Higher Education Courses Approval and Review Procedure

University of Tasmania Course Review Procedure

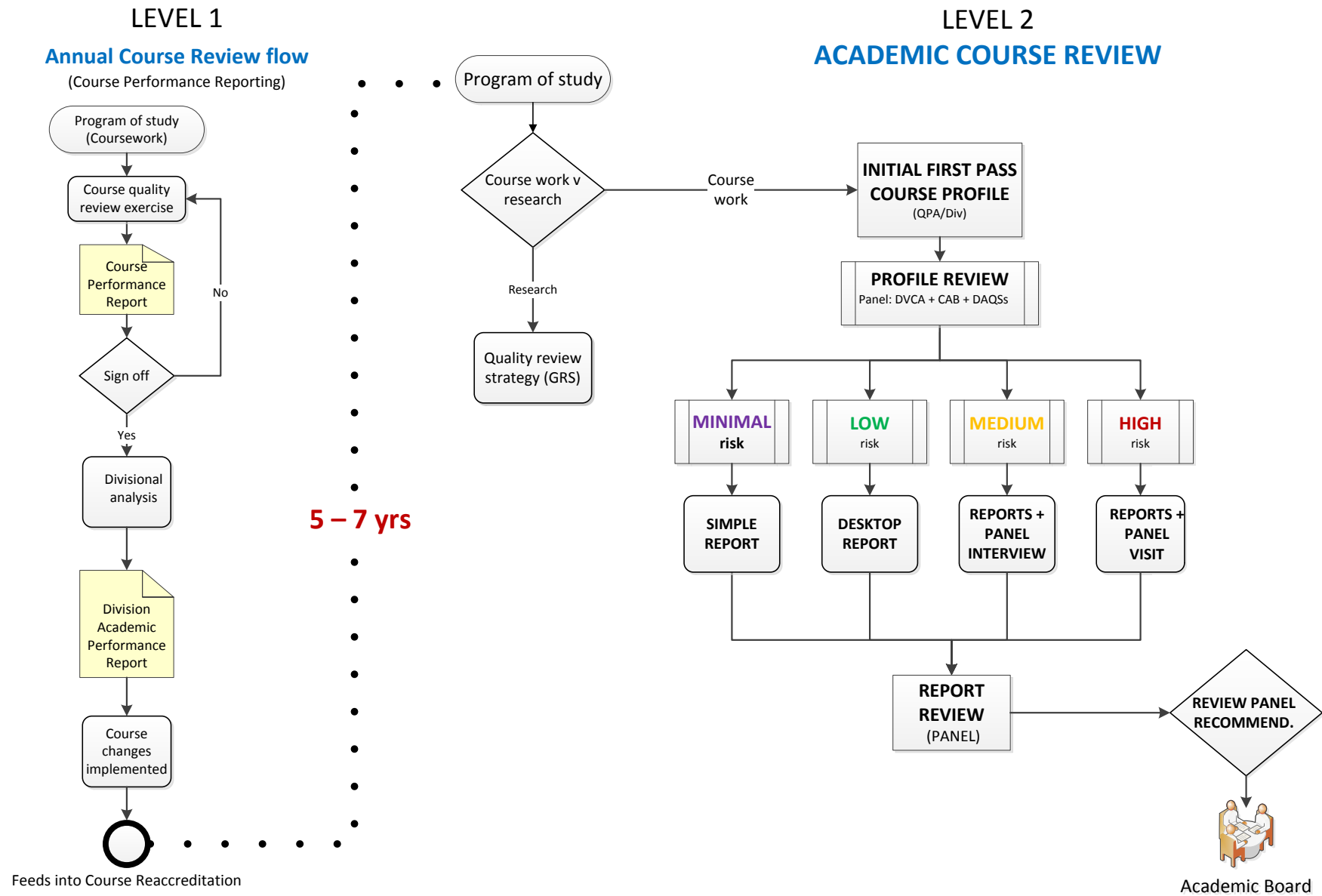
Monash University Coursework Course and Unit Accreditation Policy

University of Queensland Academic Program Review

Australian Catholic University Guidelines for Course Approval, Amendment and Review (Award Courses)

Griffith University Framework for Quality Assurance

Figure 1 – Course Review flow



Administration

Approval Details

Policy Sponsor and approver of procedure	Chair Academic Board
Approval Authority	Academic Board
Date for next review	March 2018

Revision History

Version	Approval date	Implementation date	Details	Author
17-1	15/05/2017	17/05/2017	Procedure established	Manager, Quality, Standards and Policy

Keywords	
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Academic Course Review Quality Indicators (v1.10)

Attachment 1

#	Indicator	Stds ref (HESF)	Description	Data source	Source	Review profile (Value=1)	Review profile (Value=2)	Review profile (Value=4)
1	Course accreditation profile	5.3	External accreditation or quality review provided by an external body. May be mandatory, optional or not available.	Annual Professional Accreditation Update.	Division QPA	External accreditation in place		Loss of external accreditation imminent; or No external accreditation
2	Course Learning Outcomes (valid, aligned, reliable, transparent)	1.4, 3.1, 5.3	Course Learning Outcomes (CLO) are articulated and accessible to staff and students. Meet quality principles – valid, aligned, reliable, transparent)	College/Division documents	College and Division	Clear and comprehensive mapping of CLOs to SLOs	Gaps in mapping of CLOs to SLOs	No mapping of CLOs to SLOs or ad hoc attempts at parts
3	Course Assessment – methodology, mapping to learning outcomes	3.1, 5.3	Assessments for subject and capstone units are clearly articulated, constructively aligned with CLOs and SLOs and accessible for staff and students	College/Division documents	College and Division	Clear and comprehensive mapping of CLOs to assessment	Gaps in mapping of CLOs to assessment	No mapping of CLOs to assessment or ad hoc attempts at parts
4	Student experience	5.3	Student satisfaction with Overall Course Satisfaction (CPR/Cognos). Most recent 3 yrs CPR/Cognos data	Student Experience (QILT) (CPR/Cognos) Int'l Student Baro.	QPA	Feedback ≥ 75% over past 3 yrs	Feedback 70-75% past 3 yrs	Feedback < 70% past 3 yrs
5	Industry linkage	5.3	Access and use of industry expertise (such as advisory boards) and benchmarking/referencing. May be at discipline or Academic Group level	Division records	College Division	Formal and regular industry collaboration	Limited/some recent (≤ 2 yrs) industry collaboration	No recent (≤ 2 yrs) industry collaboration
6	Scale: Overall size	6.2.1c, 6.2.1d	Total EFTSL: Most recent full academic year	CPR Cognos	QPA	≤ 20 EFTSL	21 – 80 EFTSL	≥ 80 EFTSL

7	Scale: Enrolment trend	6.2.1c, 6.2.1d	EFTSL Commencing Enrolments: Most recent 3 years	CPR Cognos	QPA	Increasing trend	Flat	Declining trend
8a	Student Completion Pathway studies	5.3	Completion rate trend over past 3 yrs	CPR Cognos	QPA	Completion ≥ 75% over past 3 yrs	Completion 70- 75% over past 3 yrs	Completion < 70% over past 3 yrs
8b	Student retention Undergraduate	5.3	% students re-enrolling in Yr 2 (based on TEQSA Risk Assessment definition) for the course Most recent 3 years Cognos data	CPR Cognos	QPA	Retention ≥ 75% over past 3 yrs	Retention 70-75% past 3 yrs OR <75% but improving over 3 yrs	Retention < 70% past 3 yrs
8c	Student retention Postgraduate	5.3	% students re-enrolling in Yr 2 (based on TEQSA Risk Assessment definition) for the course Most recent 3 yrs Cognos data	CPR Cognos	QPA	Retention ≥ 65% over past 3 yrs	Retention 60-65% past 3 yrs OR <65% but improving over 3 yrs	Retention < 60% past 3 yrs
9	Financial performance	6.2.1c, 6.2.1d	Sum of Total Margins/Total EFTSL. Most recent full year.	FaBS/Pilbara Cognos/CPR	FaBS Cognos	> \$5,000	\$4,999 - \$0	<\$0

'First Pass' Comprehensive Academic Course Review assessment

Introduction

James Cook University is registered as a Self-Accrediting Authority on the National Register of Higher Education Providers. The university has the requisite systems and processes in place to ensure all its programs and courses of study are reviewed on a regular basis, and this review cycle includes a major review every 5-7 years.

The review of its academic programs adheres to the principles of quality management outlined in the university's Quality Management Policy and Integrated Quality Framework.

This 'first pass' is to be completed jointly by QPA and the relevant Academic Division. The results will be used to inform the needs assessment for the course's Comprehensive Academic Course Review. For further information please refer to the [Comprehensive Academic Course Review Procedure](#).

Course details

Course Name			
Course Type	Pathway	Undergraduate	Postgraduate
Course Code	Owning Division	AQF Level	

External review

Qual. Indicator	Indicator	LOW (Value=1)	MEDIUM (Value=2)	HIGH (Value=4)
1	Course accreditation profile	External accreditation in place – no mandatory conditions		No external accreditation
2	Course Learning Outcomes (valid, aligned, reliable, transparent)	Clear and comprehensive mapping	Gaps in mapping	No mapping or ad hoc attempts at parts
3	Course Assessment – Methodology, mapping to learning outcomes	Clear and comprehensive mapping of learning outcomes to assessment	Gaps in mapping	No mapping or ad hoc attempts at parts
4	Student experience	Feedback stable ≥ 75% over past 3yrs	Feedback stable @ 70-75% over past 3yrs	Feedback declining and < 70% over the past 3 years
5	Industry Linkage	Formal and planned industry collaboration	Some industry collaboration	No industry collaboration
6	Scale: Overall size	≤ 20 EFTSL	21 – 79 EFTSL	≥ 80 EFTSL
7	Student Enrolment Trend	Increasing Trend	Flat	Declining Trend
8a	Student Completion (Pathway)	Completion ≥75% over past 3 yrs.	N/A	Completion <70% past 3 yrs.
8b	Student Retention (Undergraduate)	Retention ≥75% over past 3 yrs.	N/A	Retention <70% past 3 yrs.
8c	Student Retention (Postgraduate)	Retention ≥ 65% over past 3 yrs.	N/A	Retention < 60% past 3 yrs.
9	Financial Performance	>\$5000	\$4999 – 0	<\$0

Final Assessment Indicators

First Pass Assessment

7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28
Simple								Desktop					Panel Interview			Panel Visit					

Comment/Variation

Signed off by Office of Academic Quality and Strategy

Signature _____ Date _____