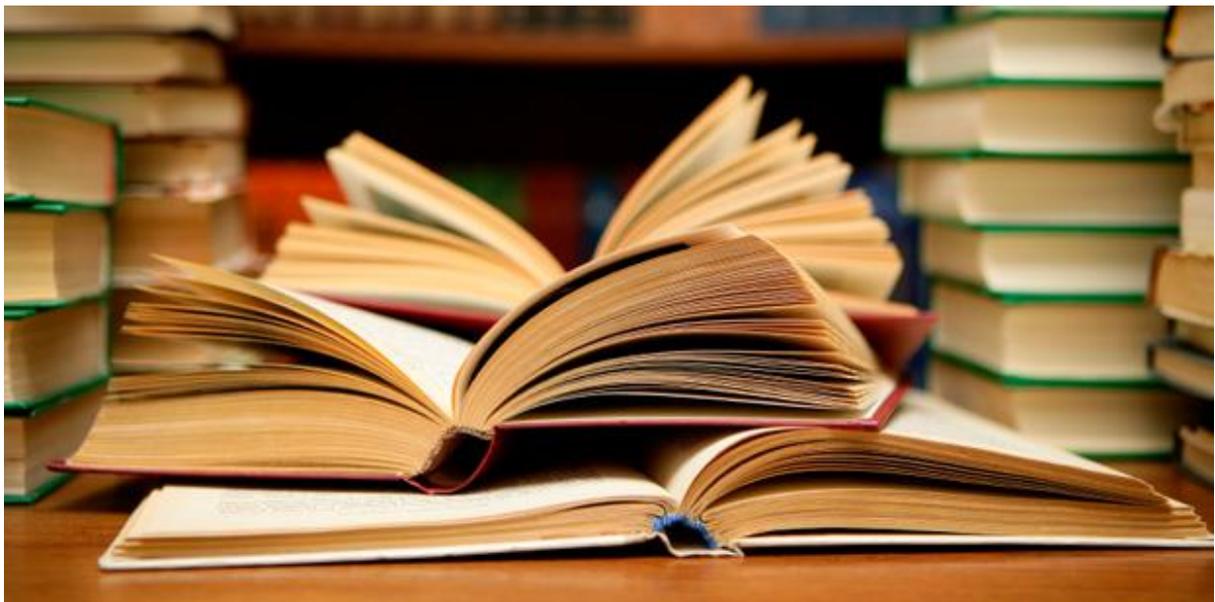


Research and Scholarship Plan 2021 – 2023



VERSION CONTROL

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A: Positioning

1. Context

The Asia Pacific International College (APIC) has been delivering higher education courses since 2007. Commencing with postgraduate project management qualifications, the College has expanded its offerings to related fields of business and business information systems and has plans for further expansion into other applied disciplines that prepare students for the workplace. APIC has a stated goal of providing transformational learning experiences for students which are student-centred and where learning and teaching is collaborative, active, reflective and applied.

It is essential that APIC students graduate with the discipline-specific and generic attributes, skills and knowledge needed to work in their chosen career, and that articulation pathways and continuing professional development opportunities are available so that the College can support graduates throughout their careers, whether to increase their expertise within a professional discipline or to expand their skills and knowledge to new fields.

APIC is not a research intensive institution. However, research and scholarship are essential components of an effective higher education provider. It is vital that research and scholarship leads and informs our teaching. It is in this context that this plan is framed.

The capacity to locate, select and evaluate information from a range of sources to ensure the currency of their knowledge base, and the ability to find novel and effective solutions for anticipated and unexpected challenges, are key attributes of APIC graduates. These graduate attributes are aligned with the key overarching APIC curriculum themes of evidence-based decision making and real-world applications.

Our goal is to support high quality applied research that addresses current, real-world issues and scholarship of learning and teaching by promoting a culture where research and scholarship are valued. This plan sets out the College priorities for the next three years. The plan will be reviewed and updated annually so that it remains a dynamic document that is responsive to the broader context and to College priorities.

This plan rests on the three APIC Strategic Aims outlined in the APIC Strategic Plan 2020 – 2022 approved by the Governing Board in October 2020. viz:

- Enhanced student experience
- Reputation for quality; and
- Commercial growth

While the focus of this plan is on the student experience and our reputation for quality, it is expected that commercial growth will follow.

2. Foundation Principles

The following principles and practices inform the design, development and delivery of the APIC research and scholarship plan:

- Alignment with APIC Values and Graduate Attributes;
- Key overarching themes of ethical practice, sustainability, evidence-based decision making, and real world application;
- Curriculum enhanced by research and scholarship which ensures:
 - Alignment and Coherence.

Units are guided by contemporary research and scholarship activities ensuring units are constructed to reflect the aims and objectives of the course in a way that is logically consistent and learning outcomes, assessment and graduate attributes;
 - Sequencing, continuity and integration

Research and scholarship activities drive learning experiences which progress through the course (vertical organisation) and integrated across units, reinforcing key principles through application (horizontal organisation).
- Student study pathways are not only guided by contemporary research and scholarship but introduce students to the roles of research and scholarship and how it can be applied to their future business life.

3. Alignment with the Higher Education Standards

The Australian Higher Education Standards provide a framework to guide this plan and the implementation of research and scholarship initiatives across APIC. The plan also provides a framework for planning, implementing and evaluating continuous improvement in research and scholarship in a similar vein to the approach taken with the Learning and Teaching Plan. This is to ensure that the College meets or exceeds the Standards, in particular the standards relating to Learning Outcomes and Assessment, Course Design, Staffing, Learning Resources and Educational Support and Monitoring, Review and Improvement

In framing this plan, the College has endorsed an inclusive and broad definition of research and scholarship aligned with the Boyer Model¹. Boyer conceptualized research and scholarship in higher education in the following areas: (i) discovery, (ii) integration, (iii) application or (iv) teaching. The Boyer's model provides a flexible and dynamic definition of research and scholarship that is appropriate to a range of higher education settings. This model has been adopted by the Tertiary Education Quality and Standards Agency (TEQSA) in its Guidance Note on Scholarship (TEQSA, 2018)².

¹ Boyer, E. L. (1990). *Scholarship reconsidered: Priorities of the professoriate*. New York: The Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching.

² Tertiary Education Quality and Standards Agency (TEQSA) 2018. *Guidance Note: Scholarship*. Version 2.5 (12 December 2018).

In early 2020 TEQSA called for comments on the Scholarship guidance note from providers. The focus was on a more specific definition of what activities constitute scholarship. While the current note endorses the Boyer model the call for comments anticipates the acceptance of other constructs. It is expected that after the conclusion of the current revision of the guidance note this plan may require further amendment.

B: Action Orientation

Each of the strategic objectives set out in the Strategic Plan and their measures are below. In each case the supporting initiatives and areas of focus which form the action orientation heart of this plan are indicated.

Strategic Objective 1

Enhanced student experience

The centrality of the student experience is beyond question in contemporary higher education institutions. While the student experience can be defined and constructed around numerous factors, it is preferable to view this theme through the lens of a student life cycle approach.

Outcomes to indicate success against this aim are:

- Decrease in formal grievances
- Diversity of student choice in curriculum delivery
- QILT industry benchmarks exceeded
- Improved response time to student applications and enquiries
- Growth in alumni engagement
- Improved UEQ outcomes

Deployment through the Research and Scholarship Plan

Goals		Strategies
1	Distinctive graduates and the Signature Learning Experience	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure graduates emerge with business oriented research and scholarship skills
2	Knowledgeable graduates	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure the curriculum is informed by latest industry research and developments • Embed research and scholarship skills for applied research and scholarship to units.
3	Engaged graduates	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Engage industry experts to promote new technologies, provide exposure to the latest industry trends and engage students into solving real-life problems.

Outcome focused measures

- Diversity of student choice in curriculum delivery
- QILT industry benchmarks exceeded
- Growth in alumni engagement

Strategic Objective 2

Reputation for Quality

Within the academic function of the College (both governance and operations)

APIC will work towards positioning itself to obtain self-accreditation. This outcome encompasses all college operations, but gives particular focus to: contemporary curriculum; benchmarked quality assurance processes; fit for purpose governance; scholarship; and, stakeholder reputation.

Outcomes to indicate success against this aim are:

- Reduction in TEQSA risk measures rated as high risk
- Improved length of course accreditation outcomes
- No conditions placed on courses course accreditations
- Enhanced rates of retention, progression and completions
- Academic outcomes superior to those of benchmarking partners
- Professional body endorsement for relevant courses
- No residual concerns noted by TEQSA
- Employment of professorial academic staff

Deployment through the Research and Scholarship Plan

Goals		Strategies
1	A valued and shared culture of best-practice in research imbedded in learning and teaching	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Embed evidence-based research and scholarship in teaching practices.
2	Supported academic staff	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Enhance the research and scholarship culture that embeds commitment and accountability for high quality performance. • Promote the Small Research Grant initiative. • Implement a program to disseminate research and scholarship products and initiatives throughout the College. • Incorporate staff research and scholarship activities into yearly performance planning and monitoring.
3	Supported students	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Create opportunities for engagement with industry, professional bodies and broader community • Mentor students in collaborative research and scholarship activities.

Outcome focused measures

- Reduction in TEQSA risk measures rated as high risk
- Improved length of course accreditation outcomes
- No conditions placed on courses course accreditations
- Enhanced rates of retention, progression and completions
- Academic outcomes superior to those of benchmarking partners
- Professional body endorsement for relevant courses
- No residual concerns noted by TEQSA
- Employment of professorial academic staff

Strategic Objective 3

Commercial Growth

It is desirable for any for-profit institution to pursue commercial growth. Growth is anticipated to occur through several mechanisms including, but not exclusive to, the following: diversity of delivery modes; course expansion; campus expansion; partnerships; and market diversification. Outcomes to indicate success against this aim are:

- Courses offered in diversified delivery modes
- Increase in diversity of and number of international and domestic student
- Increase in domestic student numbers
- Introduction of short courses and micro credentials
- Decrease in costs per EFTSL

As mentioned in A: Positioning - Context, there are no specific strategies in this plan that are targeted towards the commercial growth strategic objective. Rather, it is anticipated that commercial growth will be enhanced by the strategies set out in this plan.

C: Reporting

As with the Learning & Teaching Plan, this plan is focused on research and scholarship strategies and their relationship to the APIC Strategic Plan. It is not intended as an action list against each objective but rather a set of strategic initiatives or point of focus.

Consistent with the approach of the Corporate Reporting Framework approved by the Board of Directors, periodic reporting against this plan will focus on the measures indicated under each of the strategic objectives rather than reporting the completion of specific actions and/or tasks.