

COURSES AND AWARDS POLICY

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| Policy Category | Academic | | |
| Document Owner | Dean | | |
| Responsible Officer | Dean | | |
| Review Date | June 2020 | | |
| References and Legislation | Tertiary Education Quality and Standards (TEQSA) Act 2011 (Cth); Higher Education Standards Framework (Threshold Standards) 2015; Education Services for Overseas Students Act 2000 (Cth); Education Services for Overseas Students Regulations 2001; The National Code of Practice for Providers of Education and Training to Overseas Students 2018 (The National Code); and the Higher Education Support Act 2003 (Cth). | | |
| Related Documents | APIC Constitution, APIC Governance Charter | | |
| Version | Change description | Approved | Effective Date |
| 1.1 | | Academic Board 12 May 2017 | 19 May 2017 |
| 2.0 | Review and updated | Academic Board 14 June 2018 | 30 June 2018 |
| 2.1 | Inserted Section 10: Credit Points and Student Workload. Definitions: Credit Point and Learning Activities rewritten to specify key terms better. Removed Table in Section 6 – not applicable | Academic Board 16 August 2018 | 30 August 2018 |

1. Purpose

This policy describes the guiding principles and requirements governing all the College's award courses. The policy is designed to:

- provide a framework to assist and support decision making regarding the College's course development and review.
- ensure that academic course structures, rules and development processes are consistent and transparent.
- Identify roles, responsibilities and approval processes

2. Scope

This policy applies to all award courses offered by the College.

3. Definitions

| Item | Definition |
|---------------------------|---|
| <i>Academic Integrity</i> | Actions aligned with values of honesty, trust, fairness, respect and responsibility in learning, teaching and research. |
| <i>AQF</i> | The Australian Qualifications Framework, which describes the minimum standards and levels of Australian qualifications and award courses. |
| <i>Award course</i> | A course leading to a qualification that is granted or conferred by the College. |
| <i>Core unit</i> | A mandatory unit in an award course. |
| <i>Course</i> | A structured sequence of study leading to the award of an AQF recognised higher education award. |

| Item | Definition |
|-----------------------------------|--|
| <i>Course Learning Outcome</i> | A statement of the knowledge, skills, and application of knowledge and skills that students are expected to have achieved upon completion of the course. |
| <i>Credit Point</i> | A measure of student workload for a unit. Credit points are gained by students enrolled in award courses when units are successfully completed. When accumulated, credit points form one measure of the total requirements of a course. |
| <i>Elective unit</i> | A non-compulsory unit in an award course, that does not contribute towards the assurance of Course Learning Outcomes for the award course. |
| <i>Graduate Attributes</i> | A set of characteristics that each graduate, regardless of the level of award, should have developed by the time they have completed their course. |
| <i>Learning Activities</i> | Learning activities are all activities that contribute to student workload in a unit and are designed to ensure that the unit learning outcomes are met. Learning activities include: participation in scheduled classes; preparation for scheduled classes; online learning activities; research; work on individual and team projects; writing essays; independent and library study; individual consultation; preparation for assessments; completion of examinations, tests and quizzes. |
| <i>Major</i> | A specified sequence of units that makes up an area of special focus in a field of study within a degree. |
| <i>Maximum time to completion</i> | The maximum period (expressed in calendar years) that a student may take to complete an award course. |
| <i>Minimum time to completion</i> | The minimum period (expressed in calendar years) that a student may take to complete an award course. |
| <i>Moderation</i> | A quality control process that aligns assessment judgements. |
| <i>Nested Qualifications</i> | A set of courses of study offered sequentially that can lead to qualifications at different AQF levels (e.g., Graduate Certificate [AQF Level 8], Graduate Diploma [AQF Level 8], Master [AQF Level 9]), where the lower qualification levels are described as 'nested' within the higher-level qualifications. |
| <i>TEQSA</i> | Tertiary Education Quality and Standards Agency who regulate the Australian higher education sector. |
| <i>Unit</i> | A component of an award course with specified assessment requirements for which a final grade is awarded upon completion. |
| <i>Unit Learning Outcome</i> | A statement of what students are expected to learn and/or skills they are expected to acquire in the unit and be able to demonstrate upon completion of the unit. |
| <i>Unit of Study Guide</i> | A document that defines the content, learning objectives, learning and teaching approaches, assessment requirements and texts for a unit of study. |
| <i>Volume of Learning</i> | The notional duration (expressed in equivalent full-time years) of all activities required for the achievement of the learning outcomes specified for an AQF qualification type. |

4. Course and Unit Design Principles and Practice

The following principles and practice inform the design, development and delivery of all award courses and units at APIC:

- Alignment with the College's Vision, Mission and Values;
- Decision-making informed by scholarship, industry requirements, and compliance with legislation, national standards, regulatory requirements and, where relevant, requirements of professional accrediting bodies;

- Awareness of diversity to ensure equity of access;
- Entry requirements and student support services ensure the maximum chance of success for students;
- Course structures and progression rules make clear the completion requirements;
- Academic and research integrity;
- Regular review, benchmarking and continuous improvement;
- Scope: there is a clear, overarching statement of the aims and objectives of the course that informs decision making about individual unit content, teaching methods and assessment strategies;
- Alignment and Coherence: the units included in all courses 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 are aligned;
- Sequence, continuity and integration: learning experiences are designed to introduce content areas in units presented earlier and build on these with more complex, integrated material presented in later units with major curriculum themes visible throughout the curriculum as the student progresses through the course (vertical organisation) and integrated across units at the same level, reinforcing key principles through application (horizontal organisation).

5. Nomenclature

All award courses will have an award title that unambiguously represents the qualification type, level and field of study of the qualification and meets the AQF requirements.

The name of an award will be as listed in the TEQSA National Registrar: <https://www.teqsa.gov.au/national-register> and will be accurately displayed on all documentation. Award abbreviations will be aligned with accepted conventions with the higher education sector.

6. Duration of study

All award courses may be studied in full-time and/or part-time modes, with the approved accreditation and CRICOS-registered duration of study for an award course being the minimum time to complete the specific award course.

7. Postgraduate course requirements

The following postgraduate course requirements are in accordance with the provision of the [Australian Qualifications Framework, Second Edition, January 2013](#).

7.1 Masters degree (AQF Level 9)

Graduates of a Masters degree will have a body of knowledge that includes the understanding of recent developments in a discipline and/or area of professional practice, and knowledge of research principles and methods applicable to a field of work and/or learning.

Masters degree award courses at APIC will usually be comprised of at least 12 units of 6 credit points (72 credit points in total).

7.2 Graduate Diploma (AQF Level 8)

Graduates of a Graduate Diploma award course will have advanced knowledge within a systematic and coherent body of knowledge that may include the acquisition and application of knowledge and skills in a new or existing discipline or professional area.

Graduate Diploma award courses will usually be comprised of at least 8 units of 6 credit points (48 credit points in total) at AQF Level 8 or above.

7.3 Graduate Certificate (AQF Level 8)

Graduates of a Graduate Certificate award course will have specialised knowledge within a systematic and coherent body of knowledge that may include the acquisition and application of knowledge and skills in a new or existing discipline or professional area.

Graduate Certificate award courses will usually be comprised of at least 4 AQF Level 8 units of 6 credit points (24 credit points in total). Graduate Certificate award courses will not normally include elective units.

8. Undergraduate course requirements

The following undergraduate course requirements are in accordance with the provision of the [Australian Qualifications Framework, Second Edition, January 2013](#).

8.1 Bachelor degrees (AQF Level 7)

Graduates of a Bachelor degree will have a broad and coherent body of knowledge, with depth in the underlying principles and concepts in one or more disciplines as a basis for independent lifelong learning.

Bachelor degree award courses will normally be comprised of 24 units of 6 credit points (144 credit points in total).

8.2 Diploma (AQF Level 5)

Graduates of a Diploma will have technical and theoretical knowledge and concepts, with depth in some areas within a field of work and learning.

Diploma award courses will usually be comprised of 8 units of 6 credit points (48 credit points in total) at AQF Level 5 or above. Diploma award courses will not normally include elective units.

9. Unit

A unit is a component of an award course with specified assessment requirements for which a final grade is awarded upon completion. All units are defined by a unique set of not more than eight (8) Unit Learning Outcomes that describe what students are expected to learn and/or the skills they are expected to acquire in the unit and to be able to demonstrate upon its completion.

Elective units are not compulsory in an award course thereby providing students with a choice. Where a degree has been professionally accredited, students will be advised of any elective units they must complete to meet academic requirements for professional accreditation.

Pre-requisite units are used to provide vertical scaffolding within a course that determines units are undertaken in a sequence that ensures fundamental skills and knowledge necessary for undertaking more advanced learning are acquired first. A statement of 'Assumed Knowledge' identifying the knowledge required to complete a unit may be used in place of a formal pre-requisite.

10. Credit Points and Student Workload

The College uses a credit point model to provide an explicit measure of the relative volume of learning that units of study contribute to an award program. The College credit point model serves as an additional tool to complement other measures of learning and to provide a uniform measure of the volume of learning to:

- support and inform the awarding, accumulation and transferability of general credit;
- facilitate articulation arrangements between qualifications and institutions;
- assist staff in providing academic advice to students, and for students to identify optimal pathways in training and education.

10.1 Principles of the Credit Point Model

- For undergraduate and postgraduate coursework programs 6 credit points will be the base weighting per unit and 8 units (48 credit points) will comprise one AQF fulltime equivalent (1 AQF FTE) year.
- A unit of study may contribute to more than one course (normally of the same AQF level) but it will carry the same number of credit points.
- The Credit Point Model allows transparency and consistency concerning (a) the relative contribution of each unit to all College awards; (b) the expected student workload for each unit;
- The credit point value reflects expected student workload for an average student to achieve a passing grade in the unit. The normal workload expectations of a student are approximately 20 hours per teaching term per credit point. This workload includes class contact hours and all other learning activities designed to ensure that the unit learning outcomes are met. Thus, for a standard unit of six credit points a student should expect to undertake about 120 hours of work. For a full-time student in an undergraduate or postgraduate coursework program undertaking four units of six credit points each (24 credit points), the normal workload, averaged across the 12 weeks of teaching, study and examinations are about 40 hours per week.
- The APIC Credit Point Model applies to all College units regardless of the mode of delivery (e.g., on campus, online, block mode).
- Units of study shared across courses (normally of the same AQF level) are required to have the same credit point value in every course.
- While the usual credit point value of a unit of study at APIC will be 6 credit points, the credit point value of a unit may be varied providing that the workload implications of such variation are reflected in the delivery of the unit. Such variations may be made in cases where, for example, varying the credit point value is consistent with the requirements of professional bodies, for example, in the case where a professional regulator requires that accredited courses include work integrated learning equivalent to a specified number of hours of student workload. In such situations, credit point values cannot exceed 24 credit points.

11. Learning Resources

The College's courses will be delivered in a learning environment that provides all students with equitable access to facilities, infrastructure, resources and support to assist their progression, regardless of their mode of study or location.

Unit of Study Guides are provided for all scheduled units in each teaching study period and these provide key information about the content, assessment, Learning and Teaching and resource requirements for each unit. These are made available to enrolled students through the College's Online Learning System before the start of teaching in each study period.

12. Course and Unit Approvals

The following processes apply to all proposals for new award courses, and units, major and minor course changes, and unit variations.

12.1 New award course(s)

The process for approval of new award courses is as follows:

1. An initial course proposal is presented to the Academic Board for discussion and review.
2. The Academic Board then recommends that the course proposal and business case are submitted to the Governing Board for consideration and final approval.
3. Following approval by the Governing Board the proposal is referred to the Course Advisory Committee for development. This Committee is an ad hoc Standing Committee of the Academic Board.

4. The Course Advisory Committee comprises of internal and external academics with discipline specific expertise who oversee the development of the full course proposal.
5. The full course proposal is reviewed by the Academic Board.
6. Once satisfied that the course proposal meets requirements, the Academic Board recommends the final course submission to be presented to the Governing Board for consideration and approval.
7. The Governing Board approves the course submission to be submitted to TEQSA.

12.2 Course and unit changes

Table 1 below summarises the process to be followed for making changes to a course or unit. All course/unit changes are recorded in a Course/Unit Change Register which is maintained, reviewed and monitored on an ongoing basis by the Learning and Teaching Committee.

Table 1: Course and Unit Changes

| Proposed Changes | Need to Consider | Governing Board | Academic Board | Dean | L&T ¹ | CAC ² | TEQSA |
|-----------------------------------|---|-----------------|----------------|------|------------------|------------------|---|
| Course Title | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Marketing and enrolment impact L&T, Website and marketing collateral changes Student management system changes Changes to all course and L&T materials | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | X | ✓ Communication via a Material Change notification |
| Course Learning objectives | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> LMS updated Changes to the course and L&T material Unit outlines updated Course mapping documents updated Professional accreditation impacts | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ Communication via a Material Change notification |
| Course duration | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Changes to marketing collateral Student management system changes Course materials updated Professional accreditation impacts International student impact enrolment (ESOS/National Code implications) | X | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | X | ✓ Where there is a notable reduction or increase in a student's workload, a material change notification needs to be provided to TEQSA |
| Mode of delivery of course | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Changes to marketing collateral Student management system changes Course materials updated Professional accreditation impacts International student impact enrolment (ESOS/ National Code implications) Student management system changes Update unit outlines Update course materials Review assessments to ensure suitability of a new mode Impact on students | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ Communication via a Material Change notification |

¹ L&T: Learning and Teaching Committee

² CAC: Course Advisory Committee

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| Unit learning outcomes | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Changes to marketing collateral • Changes to unit/subject outlines • Changes to L&T materials & learning management system • Changes to course mapping documentation • Changes to assessment strategy • Professional accreditation impacts | X | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | CAC convened if the changes are across multiple units within an award | X |
| Introduction of a new major or specialisation | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Changes to marketing collateral • Marketing communication • Student management systems updates • Updates to course materials • Course mapping documentation updated • Professional accreditation impacts | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ Communication via a Material Change notification |
| Introduction of a new unit | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Changes to marketing collateral • Student management systems updates • Updates to course materials • Course mapping documentation updated • Professional accreditation impacts | X | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | X | ✓ Communication via a Material Change notification |
| Changes to Core or elective units | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Changes to marketing collateral • Student management systems updates • Updates to course materials • Course mapping documentation updated • Teach-out/transition implications • Professional accreditation impacts | X | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | | ✓ Communication via a Material Change notification |
| Changes to Pre-requisites | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Changes to marketing collateral • Student management systems update • Update unit outlines/learning management system | X | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | X | X |
| Assessment | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Update unit outlines/learning management system • Update course mapping documentation | X | X | ✓ | ✓ | X | X |
| Prescribed Texts | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Update L&T materials • Ensure students are notified of the changes | X | X | ✓ | ✓ | X | X |

(Source: Kaplan.edu.au)

13. Transition and Teach-Out

If an approved award course is discontinued, and enrolments ceased for any reason, the course will go into “teach-out”. The teach-out period will be long enough to ensure that all students have an opportunity to complete the course and students will be notified and provided with detailed information including arrangements for enrolled students to:

- transfer to a new course version if available;
- transfer to a suitable replacement course if available;
- complete the existing discontinued course; or
- transfer to another higher education provider.

Where a new or replacement course has been identified, students may elect to continue in the discontinued course, or transfer to the new/replacement course. If a student elects to transfer, their existing marks and grades for all units will be transferred to their academic record for the new/replacement course. Individual student transition plans will be advised by the Registrar.

Students who elect to remain enrolled in a discontinued course for which there is a new /replacement course will be allowed to complete the discontinued course within a specified teach-out period not longer than the minimum time to completion for the course.

Where a discontinued award course has no new course version or suitable replacement course, students will be allowed to complete the discontinued course within a specified teach-out period not longer than the minimum time to completion for the course.

If for any reason, the College, through the Learning and Teaching Committee and Academic Board, determines that an approved unit(s) will no longer be delivered, timely and appropriate communication must be provided to all enrolled and prospective students to ensure that students are not disadvantaged by this decision.

14. Course and Unit Review Cycle

A regular cycle of course and unit review will be provided within the College Learning and Teaching Plan and will involve both internal and external benchmarking activities to ensure all courses/units are current, aligned to professional requirements, meet industry and employability requirements whilst supporting all areas of learning and teaching.

14.1 Courses

All courses will be subject to annual internal review and findings will be reported to the Learning and Teaching Committee and Academic Board. In addition, there will be at least one external review per accreditation cycle, and at least every three years.

The Annual Course Reports will be completed by Directors of Study and submitted for consideration by the May meeting of the Learning and Teaching Committee in the following year in accordance with a template approved by the Dean.

14.2 Units

All units are subject to regular student evaluation through the Unit Evaluation Questionnaire (UEQ). The data is collected, analysed and presented to the Learning and Teaching Committee for review and identification and monitoring of action items. UEQ results, analysis and actions are regularly presented for discussion at the Academic Board.

Appendix 1: APIC Graduate Attributes

For enhanced clarity, explicit definitions for each Graduate Attribute have been framed as follows:

GA1: Collaborator

Works constructively with others in the creation of a shared goal, product or outcome.

GA2: Excellent Communicator

Expresses complex ideas orally, in writing, and by various digital means.

GA3: Analyst

Determines robust, logical and transferable information from a variety of sources.

GA4: Problem Solver

Finds novel and effective solutions for both anticipated and unexpected challenges.

GA5: Decision Maker

Selects an appropriate, timely and logical choice when presented with available options.

GA6: Leader

Directs and motivates individuals and teams.

GA7: Planner

Identifies the necessary steps, timing and resources used in the creation of a goal, product or outcome.

GA8: Manager of Change

Develops and directs processes to support the adoption of the changes required by a project or initiative.

GA9: Inquirer, Innovative and Creative

Seeks information by questioning, and combines their discoveries with novel thinking to inform the development of new ideas or products.

GA10: Resilient and Adaptable

Adjusts quickly and positively to new conditions and/or circumstances.

GA11: Culturally Aware

Is sensitive to and respectful of the similarities and differences between cultural groups.

GA12: Researcher

Evaluates questions, ideas or processes and forms conclusions based on qualitative and/or quantitative evidence.