Quality Assurance and Improvement Policy

Purpose:	To highlight and advance quality assurance and improvement activities across the University		
Audience:	Staff, Students		
Supporting Procedures:	*Curriculum Diagnostic Procedure* *Thematic Quality Review Procedure* *Management Review Procedure* *Review of Academic Council and its Subordinate Bodies Policy*		
Contact Officer:	Manager, Quality Assurance	Phone:	See Campus Directory

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Preamble:

As part of the University's approach to self-regulation, the University seeks to assure it meets expected standards of quality in its teaching and learning, research and professional service delivery. A process for regular review provides a foundation for quality assurance efforts. This process needs to be sufficiently flexible to meet the different contexts within academic and professional service areas, needs to take the overarching strategic objectives of the University into account, and should include a forward planning element with a view to enhancement and improvement of quality where appropriate. The process also needs to be grounded in a set of clear principles, which this policy aims to articulate. It should be noted that the internal audit function, while often considering performance against objectives and developing recommendations for improvement, plays a separate and distinct role from quality assurance in this context.

Objectives:

1. Articulate the University's principles of quality assurance and improvement.

2. Outline the current mechanisms through which quality is reviewed and assured.

3. Develop and promote a culture of quality across the University that permeates all core and strategic activities.

Policy:

1. Continuous quality improvement is the responsibility of all University staff.

    1.1 The Vice Chancellor and the Senior Leadership Group are responsible for providing clear and consistent leadership in quality improvement and management and fostering a culture of continuous quality improvement across the University.

    1.2 All staff members are responsible for considering ways in which they can improve outcomes in areas for which they are accountable.

2. University governance and management bodies take continuous quality improvement into consideration in their decision making.

2.1 The University has a formal committee with responsibility for advising, monitoring and reporting on quality assurance and improvement.

2.2 Members of Senate and Academic Council and their respective sub-committees, as well as College Boards and other formal University committees, take continuous quality improvement into consideration in their decision making.

3. Quality assurance and improvement are embedded in University strategic and operational planning processes.

3.1 The aspiration to improve quality is a key factor in the development of the University's five year Strategic Plan.

3.2 Performance indicators form part of the University Strategic Plan and its sub-plans and reports on achieving them are presented to relevant governing bodies at least annually.

3.3 The requirement for setting performance indicators and reporting on them is incorporated into college, discipline group and office annual operational planning activities.

4. Quality assurance and improvement is operationalised through regular and ad hoc reviews.

4.1 The quality of each academic course is externally reviewed on a five yearly basis (see *Curriculum Diagnostic Procedure*).

4.2 There will be a regular, annual program of thematic reviews, themes of which can cross multiple colleges, discipline groups and/or offices of the University and transnational and domestic locations. Themes will be selected based on perceived risk to quality (see *Thematic Quality Review Procedure*).

4.3 University research output is reviewed during the collection of [Excellence in Research for Australia](#) data as required by the Federal Government.

4.4 University and college research centres are reviewed on a regular basis in accordance with a plan agreed by the Deputy Vice Chancellor (Research and Innovation).

4.5 The Vice Chancellor, Provost and/or Deputy Vice Chancellors may call a management review of any college, discipline group, office or research centre at any time in accordance with the *Management Review Procedure.*

4.6 Internal management reviews of professional services offices take place as required and are managed in adherence with the *Management Review Procedure.*

4.7 College PVCs may elect to undertake a management review of their college or discipline groups at any time, subject to adherence to the *Management Review Procedure.*

4.8 Progress on the implementation of all review recommendations is recorded, monitored by a formal committee or appropriate senior leadership group member and reported to the appropriate governance body.

4.9 University policies and procedures are subject to ongoing review in accordance with the *Policy on Policies.*

4.10 Senate and Academic Council are subject to regular reviews in accordance with their respective *Statement of Governance Principles* and the *Review of Academic Council and its Subordinate Bodies Policy.*

5. Quality assurance and improvement are based on a process of collecting and analyzing appropriate data.

5.1 Where practical, the review process commences with a self-evaluation followed by assessment by an independent reviewer(s).

5.2 Office of Strategy, Quality and Analytics staff oversee a process of bringing together and warehousing appropriate data over time.

5.3 Colleges and offices have ready access to a variety of relevant data for analysis as part of regular operational planning, reporting and review processes.

6. Quality assurance and improvement mechanisms make use of stakeholder feedback.

6.1 Feedback from stakeholders is sought as part of all quality review processes.

6.2 Surveys of student satisfaction provide valuable information to the University.

6.2.1 Student evaluations of units are conducted after offerings of a unit.

6.2.2 Student evaluations of teaching are undertaken regularly.

6.2.3 The University participates in a variety of surveys of its students and graduates undertaken by external agencies in order to inform quality improvement.

6.3 University staff climate surveys are conducted on at least every two to three years.

6.4 Professional service offices regularly undertake stakeholder satisfaction surveys where appropriate.

6.5 Results of surveys are reported to staff and senior management as appropriate, and strategies for improvement are put into place where required.

7. Quality assurance and improvement use internal and external reference points for benchmarking of performance.

7.1 The University maintains a register of all regular benchmarking activities undertaken by colleges and offices.

7.2 The University's committee responsible for quality assurance regularly reviews external benchmarking tools and benchmarking partnerships used across the University and makes recommendations on their value as quality enhancement mechanisms.

7.3 Where practical, professional service offices participate in external benchmarking activities, assessing themselves against best practice standards in other universities and their industry.

7.4 Where possible, colleges utilise a range of national and international teaching and research benchmarking measures as quality indicators.

8. Quality assurance and improvement is monitored through the documentation of outcomes and other evidence.

8.1 Where results of reviews and surveys highlight the need for improvement, action plans for implementing change are developed by responsible officers and approved by appropriate committees or Senior Executive Group and incorporated in operational plans.

8.2 Progress in implementing change is documented and reported on a regular basis, at least annually.

8.3 Progress is identified through the collection and documentation of evidence that shows improvements in outcomes over time.

9. Quality Assurance undertaken by external bodies can be of value to the enhancement of quality across the University.

9.1 The University seeks professional accreditation and/or recognition by professional bodies as appropriate.

9.2 The University seeks to maintain or better required regulatory standards.

9.3 The University's committee responsible for quality assurance provides advice to colleges and offices about the value of undertaking non-compulsory quality assurance activities offered by external bodies.

Supporting Procedures:

The procedures supporting this policy and the Committee or Title of Officer(s) authorised to approve them are indicated in the table below:

Supporting Procedure	Approval Authority
Curriculum Diagnostic Procedure	Director of Academic Quality, Curriculum Management and Policy
Thematic Quality Review Procedure	Director of Academic Quality, Curriculum Management and Policy
Management Review Procedure	Chief Operating Officer

Supporting Guidelines:

There are no supporting guidelines.

Supporting Standards:

There are no supporting standards.

Performance Indicators:

1. Quality assurance and improvement activities are routinely undertaken.

Definitions:

There are no key terms.

Related Documents:

Management Review Procedure

How to Write a Policy

Review of Academic Council and its Subordinate Committees Policy

Statement of Governance Principles of Academic Council

Statement of Governance Principles of Senate

References:

Baird, J (2004), Quality Frameworks: An Overview from AUQA Audit Reports, in J. Baird (ed), Quality Frameworks: Reflections from Australian Universities, AUQA Occasional Publication Number 9

European Association for Quality Assurance in Higher Education (2005), Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in the European Higher Education Area, Helsinki

Asia-Pacific Quality Network (2008), Higher Education Quality Assurance Principles in the Asia Pacific Region, Asia-Pacific Quality Network Annual Conference, Chiba

Griffith University (2009), Framework for Quality Assurance

LaTrobe University (2009), Continuous Quality Improvement Framework

Macquarie University (2009, Quality Enhancement Policy

McTaggart, R, Quality Assurance: Imposition of a Discourse or Sound Academic Practice, in J. Baird (ed), Quality Frameworks: Reflections from Australian Universities, AUQA Occasional Publication Number 9

Swinburne University of Technology (2007), Quality Management Policy and Procedure

The University of Sydney (2003), Quality Assurance and Continuous Improvement Policy

University of Ballarat (2011), Quality Policy

University of Tasmania (2010), Quality Management Policy

Victoria University (2005), Quality and Planning Policy

Woodhouse, D (2004), Quality Frameworks for Institutions, in J. Baird (ed), Quality Frameworks: Reflections from Australian Universities, AUQA Occasional Publication Number 9

Approval and Implementation:

Approval Authority:	Academic Council
Responsible Officer(s):	President of Academic Council
	Deputy Vice Chancellor (Academic)
	Deputy Vice Chancellor (Research)
	Deputy Vice Chancellor (Professional Services)
	Manager Quality Assurance

Revision History:

Version	Date Approved	Effective Date (if later than 'Date Approved')	Next Review Date	Resolution No. (if applicable)
Administrative Amendment	11/08/2020			
Approved by AC	12/3/2019		12/03/2022	AC/16/2019(ii)
Approved	22/05/2013		22/05/2016	AC/93/2013