Program Accreditation, Change and Discontinuation - Procedures

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Definitions

Please refer to the University's Glossary of Terms for policies and procedures.

The Curriculum Support Unit (CSU) refers to the relevant staff within the Centre for Support and Advancement of Learning and Teaching (CSALT) who are responsible for supporting the University's Curriculum Information Repository (USC CIR), and facilitating the program accreditation and course approval process.

The Academic Support Unit (ASU) refers the relevant staff within the Accreditation and Curriculum team of the ASU, who support Schools with program accreditation and course approval processes and documentation.

Jointly conferred award program is a program of study which is arranged and delivered by two or more institutions. Typically a program leads to the award of a single qualification. The student may receive either a single award testamur conferred and jointly badged by those institutions, or may receive award testamurs from each of the participating institutions on which the contribution of the other institution(s) is acknowledged on the testamur by way of note or inclusion of a logo. In the case of a jointly conferred dual award, the program leads to the award of two separate qualifications. A dual award may be a double degree, with both qualifications at the same AQF level, or may be qualifications at two sequential AQF levels. The student would typically receive a testamur for each qualification, acknowledging the contribution of each institution by way of note or inclusion of a logo. Articulation agreements which give students from other institutions advanced standing into USC programs are not considered jointly conferred award programs; these are managed under credit transfer arrangements.

Vice-Chancellor and President or delegate refers to the Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Academic) unless otherwise specified.

Contents

Part A: Purpose and Timelines

A1 Purpose of procedures

These procedures detail the steps that must be undertaken to approve and accredit a new program, change an existing program, or discontinue or suspend intakes for a program at the University of the Sunshine Coast. The procedures must be read in conjunction with the Program Accreditation and Course Approval – Governing Policy. The procedures do not apply to higher degrees by research.

A2 Timelines

A2.1 Schools should plan and progress all new program developments and changes to existing programs so that sufficient time is allowed for informed consideration of, and decision-making based on, the merit and academic integrity of program developments and their associated resource and other implications.

A2.2 The following deadlines have been established for the accreditation of programs and the approval of changes to existing programs:

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PROGRAM	REQUIRED APPROVAL DATE(S)
New program	Approved by 31 August for implementation in the following academic year
Changes to existing programs*	Approved by 31 August for implementation in the following academic year
Discontinuation of an existing program	Approved by 31 August for implementation in the following academic year

*Refer to section C6 for restriction on program changes.

A2.3 The CSU in collaboration with ASU, establishes timelines annually, to ensure timely progression of proposals through program accreditation or approval to meet the approval dates identified in A2.2.

A2.4 Expedited Pathway

A2.4.1 In exceptional circumstances, approval to expedite the accreditation/approval of a program can be given by the Deputy Vice Chancellor (Academic).

A2.4.2 An expedited option allows for the Chairperson of Academic Board or the Program and Course Committee, to act on behalf of the relevant Committee in considering a proposal for program accreditation or program change. The Chairperson has the option to consult with members of the committee before making a decision on an expedited proposal.

A2.4.3 An application to expedite can be made by the Head of School to the Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Academic), through ASU to the CSU, CSALT, for approval to expedite. The written request outlines:

· the reasons for requesting expedition;
· the consequences if the expedited process were not followed; and
· the anticipated accreditation/approval date.

A2.4.4 The CSU, CSALT informs the ASU, who then informs the School of the decision of the Deputy Vice Chancellor (Academic).

A2.4.5 The Chairperson of the relevant committee reports to the ensuing meeting of the committee on any actions taken on the committee's behalf.

Part B: Program Accreditation

B1 Scope of application

This part applies to all new programs, including:

· proposals to change an existing accredited program which would result in the assignment of a different Field of Education (FOE) code;
· proposals to create a double degree, constructed from two existing accredited programs; and
· proposal to establish a jointly conferred award program, by arrangement with one or more partner institutions.

B2 Program accreditation approval authority

Accreditation of a new program is the responsibility of Academic Board.

B3 Approval to develop a new program

B3.1 Approval to develop a new program proposal, and to offer a new program at nominated locations, is the responsibility of the Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Academic) as delegated by the Vice-Chancellor and President.

B3.2 For a new program (other than a new double degree using existing programs), the business case for a new program is the resource and planning component of the program accreditation process.

B3.2.1 The Business Case template is completed by the program development team to provide the case for the proposed new program's contribution to the University's strategic direction, financial viability, and all its resourcing requirements. In the case of a proposal to develop a jointly conferred award, in-principle approval, additionally addressing the Partner Institution Selection (Jointly Conferred Award) Guidelines, must be obtained before detailed planning and negotiations about collaboration arrangements with the potential partner institution/s occur and before any binding commitments are made.

B3.2.2 The program development team forwards the proposals to the relevant Head of School who considers the documentation.

B3.2.3 Before endorsement, the Head of School requests that the documentation is considered by the School Board or equivalent, providing advice on the following:

The academic and financial merit of the proposed program and benefit to the School; and

whether the proposed program meets the requirements of relevant policies and procedures.

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B3.2.4 The Head of School considers the merit of the proposed program on the basis of the documentation and advice of the School Board or equivalent and recommends to the Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Academic) that the proposed program as documented be considered for development.

B3.2.5 The request to the Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Academic) is made through the ASU to the CSU, CSALT.

B3.2.6 The Deputy Vice Chancellor (Academic) endorses the Business Case prior to consideration and comment by the Chief Financial Officer. Following the provision of comments by the Chief Financial Officer, the Deputy Vice Chancellor (Academic) arranges through the CSU, CSALT, for the Business Case to be scheduled on the University Executive agenda and provides the relevant documentation to the Secretary, University Executive.

B3.2.7 The University Executive considers the Business Case and makes a recommendation to the Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Academic) (as delegate of the Vice-Chancellor and President) who decides whether to approve or not approve the new program for development and to determine its offering at the nominated locations.

B3.2.8 The secretary, University Executive will advise the CSU, CSALT of the decision of the Deputy Vice Chancellor (Academic).

B3.3 Double degree proposal

B3.3.1 Where a new double degree using existing programs is proposed, the Head of School investigates the proposed double degree's contribution to the University's strategic direction and financial sustainability, and the Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Academic) (as delegate of the Vice- Chancellor and President) must be satisfied that the proposed combination will not compromise the academic integrity of either University program.

B3.3.2 The Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Academic) (as delegate of the Vice-Chancellor and President) considers the Program Brief (New Double Degree) and decides to approve or not approve the new double degree program for development and for offering at the nominated locations.

B3.3.3 The ASU, informs the relevant School of the decision of the Deputy Vice Chancellor (Academic).

B4 Post-approval matters

The ASU arranges:

(a) for a copy of the approved documentation to be captured in the relevant program file in the University's records management system; and

(b) the creation of a Curriculum Bulletin (New Program).

B5 Curriculum Bulletin for a new program

B5.1 Following the approval to develop a new program, as set out in section B3, the ASU prepares a Curriculum Bulletin (New Program) and CSU, CSALT releases it to the University community.

B5.1.1 A period of normally two weeks is allowed for feedback by the University community to the program development team. Any feedback received during this consultation period must be addressed by the program development team in the subsequent program proposal documentation.

B5.2 Following the approval to develop a new double degree using two existing programs, as set out in section B3.3, the ASU prepares a Curriculum Bulletin Notification (New Double Degree) and releases it to the University community.

B6 Approval to market a proposed program subject to final approval

B6.1 Following consultation with the Director, Marketing, the Head of School can make a case to the Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Academic) to market a proposed new program prior to it being accredited by the University.

B6.2. The Head of School completes a request to market a proposed program subject to final approval and submits it to the Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Academic) through the CSU, CSALT.

B6.3 The Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Academic) considers the request and decides to approve or not approve the proposal to market a new program "subject to final approval".

B6.4 When making the decision to market a new program "subject to final approval", the Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Academic) takes into consideration the potential risk and benefits to the University in advertising the program. To minimise risk, the decision of the Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Academic) may be based on the stage the program proposal has reached in the accreditation approval process.

B6.5 Following approval to market a new program "subject to final approval", the ASU informs the relevant School of the Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Academic) decision.

B7 Program Development

B7.1 The program development team develops the proposed program ensuring that:

(a) consultations are held with all relevant parties:

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(i) with a legitimate interest in the proposed program, including for example other Schools and service areas of the University, potential employers, professional and registration bodies, and the relevant advisory committee;

(ii) for whom there may be resource, legal or administrative implications with the proposed program, including for example International Office, Information Technology, Information Services, Student Services and Engagement, and Marketing; and

(b) input is sought from other appropriate sources with expertise relevant to development of the program, for example, the school's curriculum body, academic developers within the Centre for Support and Advancement of Learning and Teaching (CSALT), Governance and Risk Management and the CSU for alignment with University policies and procedures and the external requirements listed in B7.2;

B7.2 The program is designed and developed consistent with:

the Australian Qualifications Framework and associated guidelines and principles;

the Higher Education Standards Framework;

any standards for external recognition, registration or accreditation of the proposed program or for potential graduates.

B7.3 The program is in line with the University's values and relevant policies, procedures and good practice in program design and learning and teaching.

B7.4 The program development team documents the proposed new program using templates identified in the next section.

B7.5 In the case of a proposal to develop a jointly conferred award, the development of the legal agreement with the partner institution(s) should occur in parallel with the program development and accreditation process, but the formal legal agreement cannot be signed until the program itself has been approved by both the University's Academic Board and an appropriate authority at the partner institution(s). The legal agreement is, in effect, the implementation plan specifying how the jointly conferred coursework program is to be delivered, administered, completed and reviewed. This agreement documents the understandings and obligations of all parties, to ensure that the academic aspirations and standards embodied in the jointly conferred coursework program are met.

B8 Accreditation Documentation

B8.1 The program development team documents the proposed new program using:

- · Proposal for a New Program template; and
- · CIR New Entity Request – Program template; and
- · USC CIR to detail the program and any new courses and study components; and
- · if required:
    - · CIR New Entity Request – Course template (for each new proposed course)
    - · CIR New Entity Request – Study Component template (for each new proposed study component)
    - · USC Course Impact Statement template (for each proposed new course): and

B8.2 Program Proposal

The Program Proposal provides information on the academic rationale for the introduction of the program and the design and development process, including the consultation undertaken in support of the proposed program.

B8.3 USC CIR

USC CIR captures the details of the proposed new program, study components and courses, is used to assess the academic integrity of that program and forms the basis for provision of information to students, prospective students, the University community and the broader community concerning the program.

B8.3.3 Course Synopses

In some circumstances, full development and documentation of new courses to be undertaken in the second or subsequent years of offer of a proposed new program may not be possible. In these cases, the courses are identified in USC CIR as a Course Synopsis with a limited number of data fields completed. Refer to Section B4.5 of the Course Approval, Change and Discontinuation – Procedures for details.

B8.3.4 USC Course Impact Statement

The USC Course Impact Statement identifies the physical resources and services needed to implement and support a new course in the proposed program by Information Technology.

B9 Consideration of the accreditation documentation by the Head of School

B9.1 Before consideration by the Head of School, the documentation is deliberated by the School Board or equivalent, which would provide advice to the Head of School on the merit and quality of the proposed program and required documentation.

B9.2 Following endorsement from the School Board or equivalent and before consideration of the proposal by the Head of School, the ASU notifies CSU that the completed CIR New Entity Request form/s are available for creation of each new entity in USC CIR. CSU creates the new entities and advises ASU that these are now available in USC CIR.

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B9.3 The CSU requests the creation of any new files required for the University's records management system.

B9.4 The ASU updates the accreditation documentation and Course Impact Statements to include program and course codes and file numbers.

B9.5 The Head of School considers the merit of the proposed program on the basis of the accreditation documentation, USC CIR data and the advice of the School Board or equivalent and approves the proposal.

B9.6 The CSU checks USC CIR data for completeness and clarity, accuracy, internal consistency and compliance with relevant University policies and procedures and liaises with the ASU so that action and/or amended documentation and USC CIR data can be submitted to the Secretary, Program and Course Committee.

B9.7 The ASU arranges for the signed accreditation documentation to be submitted to the Secretary, Program and Course Committee.

B10 Consideration of the accreditation documentation by Program and Course Committee

B10.1 The Chairperson, Program and Course Committee can determine that the accreditation documentation is incomplete or under-developed and delay the consideration of the proposal by the Program and Course Committee until such time as the School has responded to the Chairperson's concerns regarding the completeness of the accreditation documentation.

B10.2 The Program and Course Committee considers the academic merit of the program on the basis of the accreditation and related documentation and:

(a) resolves to recommend to Academic Board that the proposed new program as documented be accredited; or

(b) resolves to recommend to Academic Board that the proposed new program as documented be accredited, subject to identified amendments being made; or

(c) makes such other resolutions as may be appropriate.

B10.3 If (a), the resolution is to recommend unqualified accreditation, then the Secretary, Program and Course Committee refers the accreditation documentation to the Academic Board for consideration.

B10.4 If (b), the resolution is to recommend accreditation subject to amendments, then:

(i) the relevant parties are advised to make the amendments and resubmit to the Chairperson of the Program and Course Committee, through the committee secretary via the ASU, the amended documentation together with a written response to the matters identified, including a statement detailing the changes made to the documentation (with page references);

(ii) the School resubmits the amended accreditation documentation for reconsideration via the ASU to the Secretary, Program and Course Committee; and

(ii) the Chairperson of the Committee reviews the amended documentation and if satisfied that the required amendments have been made, the Secretary, Program and Course Committee forwards the revised accreditation documentation to the Secretary, Academic Board.

B10.5 Courses and Study Components

B10.5.1 The Program and Course Committee considers the academic merit of the proposed new courses and study components on the basis of the accreditation and related documentation; and

(a) resolves to approve the proposed new courses and study components as documented; or

(b) resolves to approve that the proposed new courses and study components as documented be approved subject to identified amendments being made; or

(c) makes such other resolutions as may be appropriate.

B10.5.2 If approval is recommended subject to amendments being made then:

(i) the relevant School is advised to make the amendments and submit to the Chair of the Committee, through the Secretary, Program and Course Committee via the ASU, the amended documentation together with a written response to the matters identified, including a statement detailing the changes made to the documentation;

(ii) the School resubmits the amended accreditation documentation for reconsideration via the ASU to the Secretary, Program and Course Committee; and

(iii) the Chairperson, Program and Course Committee, reviews the amended documentation and if satisfied that the required amendments have been made approves the proposal.

B10.5.3 The Secretary, Program and Course Committee sends the ASU and relevant School/s the Committee minutes when they have been approved by the Chairperson. Any queries in relation to the accreditation documentation will be referred to the ASU.

B11 Consideration of the accreditation documentation by Academic Board

B11.1 Academic Board considers academic merit of the proposed program on the basis of the accreditation documentation, and:

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(a) resolves to accredit the program subject to the standard conditions of accreditation as specified in the parent policy and any other conditions that the Academic Board may impose, confirming when the program will be offered for the first time; or

(b) resolves to accredit the program subject to identified amendments being made; or

(c) makes such other resolutions as may be appropriate, for example, for the proposal to be revised and brought back to a future meeting of Academic Board.

B11.2 Where accreditation is subject to any required amendments being made:

(i) the relevant School is advised to make the amendments and submit to the Chair of the Academic Board, through the Secretary, Academic Board via the ASU, the amended documentation together with a written response to the matters identified, including a statement detailing the changes made to the documentation;

(ii) the School resubmits the amended accreditation documentation for reconsideration via the ASU to the Secretary, Academic Board; and

(iii) the Chairperson, Academic Board, reviews the amended documentation and if satisfied that the required amendments have been made approves the proposal.

B11.3 The Secretary, Academic Board sends ASU and the relevant School/s the Committee minutes when they have been approved by the Chairperson. Any queries in relation to the accreditation documentation will be referred to the ASU.

B12. Post approval matters

B12.1 Following notification of approval, the ASU is responsible for making arrangements for the appropriate changes to University webpages and informing relevant parties (internally and externally) of the implementation of the approved new program (including new courses and study components approved by Program and Course Committee/Academic Board) by:

(a) notifying the relevant Program Coordinator/program development team;

(b) recording and registering the approved documentation in the University's records management system;

(c) notifying and requesting actions from relevant administrative units;

(d) adding any approved Course Outlines included in the program documentation to the repository; and

(e) implementing in collaboration with Student Service and Engagement the approved transitional/teach-out arrangements (if required).

B13 Reporting

An annual summary report of all programs accredited by Academic Board compiled by the CSU, CSALT, is to be provided to Council. The report will be submitted to the first meeting each year and includes all programs accredited in the previous year.

Part C: Program Changes

C1 Program change approval authorities

C1.1 Approval of changes to existing programs is the responsibility of either Academic Board, the Program and Course Committee or the Vice-Chancellor and President depending on the nature of the proposed changes.

C1.2 Any proposals for program changes that proceed to Program and Course Committee, or Academic Board or Vice-Chancellor and President (or delegate) for approval, would first be endorsed by the Head of School, giving due regard to resourcing and the program's continued financial viability.

C2 Changes approved by Program and Course Committee

C2.1 Following endorsement by the Head of School, Program and Course Committee will consider and approve the following minor program changes:

(a) a program title (requiring a new program code), where

 · no other changes or
 · all other proposed changes are limited to the minor changes described in C2.1 (b) to (e) below;

(b) alterations to the requirements for completion of a program, including

 · the addition or removal of exit awards; and/or
 · the creation, alteration and removal of study components; and/or
 · changes to the number of required courses.

(c) minor changes to the learning outcomes of the program;

(d) minor alterations to the entry requirements (including English language requirements); and

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(e) any other program changes not requiring Academic Board or Vice-Chancellor and President approval.

C2.2 Refer to section C8 for details of the process.

C3 Changes approved by Academic Board

C3.1 Following consideration by Program and Course Committee, Academic Board will consider and approve the following major program changes:

(a) a program title (requiring a new program code), where other proposed changes include any of the major changes described in C3.1 (b) to (e) below;

(b) a significant re-visioning of the learning outcomes and any consequential structural changes;

(c) a change to the total unit value of a currently accredited program (requires a new program code).

(d) a change to the duration (standard completion time) of an accredited program; and

(e) a significant alteration to the entry requirements.

C3.2 Refer to section C8 for details of the process.

C4 Program management changes approved by the Vice-Chancellor and President or delegate

C4.1 The following types of proposed program changes will be documented by the Head of School, for the approval of the Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Academic) (as delegate of the Vice-Chancellor and President):

(a) the addition or removal of a program offering at a location;

(b) changing the funding arrangement (for example changing from CGS funded to full-fee) for an existing program;

(c) the addition and removal of a program teaching period entry point; and

(d) a change to a program that has significant resource impact outside the proposing school or for the University.

Note: if the program is to be discontinued at all locations, the process identified in Part D should be followed.

C4.2 Refer to section C9 for details of the process.

C5 Clarification of approval authority

The authority to approve changes to programs varies, depending on the nature of the proposed changes. If the approval authority is unclear in these procedures, the Chairperson, Program and Course Committee will make a determination of the appropriate level of approval authority required.

C6 Restrictions on program change

C6.1 A program (including study components "owned" by a program) may only be changed once in a three-year period (Program Period). The commencement date of the Program Period is determined from the date that any previous program changes were approved or from the date that the program was introduced by the University.

C6.2 Notwithstanding C6.1, a program may be changed independently of a Program Period as follows:

(a) The Head of School may request that the Chair, Program and Courses Committee via the ASU to the Secretary, Program and Course Committee, consider a program change within the Program Period. The grounds for approving consideration of a program change within the Program Period include changes:

 · in response to recommendations related to program structural change from professional accreditation reviews;
 · in response to significant issues raised in curriculum evaluations, including University program reviews;
 · that would demonstrably increase student demand for the program, for example introduction of a new topical study component; and
 · resulting from changes approved to another program that impact directly on the program's structure.

For the avoidance of doubt, if the Chair, Program and Courses Committee, approves a program change within the Program Period, a new Program Period commences from the date of the approval of the program change.

(b) The Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Academic) may determine that there are changes to the University's curriculum that result in a program change. Such changes may be implemented independently of the Program Period and will not affect the commencement date of the Program Period.

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C7 Program change proposal

C7.1 Program redesign

C7.1.1 All proposed changes to a program must be designed to ensure that the program continues to meet all criteria for accreditation of a program as provided in the Program Accreditation and Course Approval - Governing Policy.

C7.1.2 The Program Coordinator in association with all relevant staff finalises the redesign of the changed program, ensuring that:

(a) consultations are held with all parties:

(i) with a legitimate interest in the program, including for example other schools and service areas of the University, potential employers, student groups, graduates, advisory groups, professional and registration bodies

(ii) for whom there may be resource, legal or administrative implications with the proposed changes, including for example International Office, Information Technology, Information Services, Student Services and Engagement, Marketing

(b) input is sought from other appropriate sources with expertise relevant to redesign of the program, for example the School Board, academic developers within the Centre for Support and Advancement of Learning and Teaching (CSALT)

(c) the program is designed and developed consistent with:

· the Australian Qualifications Framework and associated guidelines and principles
· the Higher Education Standards Framework
· any standards for external recognition, registration or accreditation of the proposed program or potential graduates
· relevant policy, procedures and good practice in program design and development for programs of that level

(d) the requirements for transition and teach-out as identified in Section G of these procedures are met.

C7.1.3 The Program Coordinator documents the proposed changes using the template appropriate for the nature of the change and revises the program data in USC CIR, incorporating the proposed changes. Any new courses or study components associated with the proposed change are set-up as a new entity in USC CIR and the details completed in the system.

C7.1.4 The proposal is the case made for making changes to the program.

C7.1.5 The Program Coordinator submits the Proposal and associated documents to the relevant Head of School. The completed details in USC CIR are submitted to the relevant Head of School through the system's workflow.

C7.2. Changes to Double Degrees

A structural change to a program that is also a component degree in a double degree, requires the School owner to consult with the other School involved in the double degree to ensure that requirements of both degrees are met in the revised structure. The consultation and outcomes should be included as part of the approval documentation.

C8 Changes requiring Program and Course Committee or Academic Board approval

C8.1 Consideration by the Head of School

C8.1.1. The Head of School considers the information provided by the Program Coordinator in Stage 1: Pre-approval – Cost and Impact Assessment, of the Program Change proposal. Based on this information, the Head of School decides whether the program change will be progressed.

C8.1.2 Following the Head of School's approval for the change to proceed, the ASU sends any required completed CIR New Entity Request forms to CSU, for set-up of the new entity in USC CIR and the automated allocation of codes for:

· new courses; and/or
· new study component; and/or

(b) new program if the program title is being changed under C2 (a).

C8.1.3 Before final consideration by the Head of School, the documentation is considered by the School Board or equivalent, who would provide advice to the Head of School on the merit and quality of the proposed program changes.

C8.1.4 The CSU requests Information Management Services to create any new University files required for the University's records management system.

C8.1.5 The ASU updates the accreditation documentation and Course Impact Statements to include program and course codes and file numbers, and then provides the Course Impact Statements to Information Technology and Technical Services.

C8.1.6 The Head of School considers the academic merit of the proposed changes to the program on the basis of the documentation and the advice of the School Board or equivalent. The Head of School signs the relevant section of the Proposal and endorses the program changes in USC CIR.

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C8.1.7 The CSU checks USC CIR data for completeness and clarity, accuracy, internal consistency and compliance with relevant University policies and procedures and liaises with the ASU so that action and/or amended documentation and USC CIR data can be submitted to the Secretary, Program and Course Committee.

C8.1.8 The ASU checks the documentation for completeness and clarity, accuracy and internal consistency, then generates the Program Approval document from USC CIR, adding this to the accreditation documentation for the Committees.

C8.1.9 The ASU arranges for the signed accreditation documentation to be submitted to the Secretary, Program and Course Committee and the capture of the accreditation documentation in the relevant program and course files in the University's records management system.

C8.2 Program and Course Committee

C8.2.1 Program and Course Committee considers the academic merit of the proposed changes to the program on the basis of the documentation, taking into particular account any associated discontinuation of course and study components which must demonstrate comprehensive transition plans, and in the case of changes that the Program and Course Committee:

(a) resolves that the proposed changes to the program as documented be approved, identifying when the changes will take effect; or

(b) resolves to approve the proposed changes to the program as documented, subject to identified amendments being made to the associated documentation; or

(c) makes such other resolutions as may be appropriate.

C8.2.2 If (b), the resolution is to recommend approval subject to amendments, then:

(i) the relevant parties are advised to make the amendments and resubmit to the Chairperson of the Program and Course Committee, through the committee Secretary via the ASU, the amended documentation together with a written response to the matters identified, including a statement detailing the changes made to the documentation (with page references);

(ii) the School resubmits the amended accreditation documentation for reconsideration via the ASU to the Secretary, Program and Course Committee; and

(ii) the Chairperson of the Committee reviews the amended documentation and if satisfied that the required amendments have been made, approves the revised documentation.

C8.2.3 The Secretary, Program and Course Committee sends the ASU and relevant School/s the Committee minutes when they have been approved by the Chairperson. Any queries in relation to the accreditation documentation will be referred to the ASU.

C8.3 Academic Board

C8.3.1 For changes requiring Academic Board approval, the Secretary, Program and Course Committee forwards the latest version of the documentation to the Academic Board.

C8.3.2 Academic Board considers academic merit of the proposed program on the basis of the accreditation documentation, and:

(a) resolves to accredit the program subject to the standard conditions of accreditation as specified in the parent policy and any other conditions that the Academic Board may impose, confirming when the program will be offered for the first time; or

(b) resolves to accredit the program subject to identified amendments being made; or

(c) makes such other resolutions as may be appropriate, for example, for the proposal to be revised and brought back to a future meeting of Academic Board.

C8.3.3 Where accreditation is subject to any required amendments being made:

(i) the relevant School is advised to make the amendments and submit to the Chair of the Board, through the Secretary, Academic Board via the ASU, the amended documentation together with a written response to the matters identified, including a statement detailing the changes made to the documentation;

(ii) the School resubmits the amended accreditation documentation for reconsideration via the ASU to the Secretary, Academic Board; and

(iii) the Chairperson, Academic Board, reviews the amended documentation and if satisfied that the required amendments have been made approves the proposal.

C8.3.4 The Secretary, Academic Board sends the ASU and relevant School/s the Committee minutes when they have been approved by the Chairperson. Any queries in relation to the accreditation documentation will be referred to the ASU.

C8.4 Post-approval matters

C8.4.1 Following notification of approval, the ASU is responsible for arranging the appropriate changes to University webpages and informing relevant parties (internally and externally) of the implementation of the revised program by:

(a) notifying the relevant Program Coordinator/program development team;

(b) recording and registering the approved documentation in the University's records management system;

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(c) notifying and requesting actions from relevant administrative units;

(d) adding any approved new Course Outlines included in the program documentation to the repository; and

(e) implementing in collaboration with Student Service and Engagement the approved transition plans.

C9 Program Changes requiring Vice-Chancellor and President (or delegate) approval

C9.1 Design and consultations
C9.1.1 The Program Coordinator consults with all interested parties concerning the proposed changes, including relevant areas of the University for which the changes may have administrative or resource implications. If the changes also involve any changes to current courses, majors or minors offered in other programs consultations are held with the relevant Program Coordinators.

C9.1.2 The Program Coordinator writes a proposal using the relevant template and revises the existing program information in USC CIR, incorporating the proposed changes.

C9.2 Consideration by Head of School
C9.2.1 The ASU submits the Program Change Proposal to the Head of School and sets the USC CIR approval path to Head of School endorsement.

C9.2.2 Before consideration by the Head of School, the documentation is considered by the School Board or equivalent, which would provide advice to the Head of School on the merit and quality of the proposed program changes.

C9.2.3 The Head of School considers the documentation, taking into account any matters of relevance.

C9.2.4 If the Head of School decides that approval should be sought for the changes, they sign the relevant section of the proposal and arrange for the signed documentation to be submitted to the ASU.

C9.3 Approval by the Vice-Chancellor and President or delegate
C9.3.1 The CSU checks the USC CIR data for completeness and clarity. The Curriculum Quality Liaison Office, CSALT refers the proposal and Program Approval document to the Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Academic).

C9.3.2 The Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Academic) (as delegate of the Vice-Chancellor and President) decides whether to approve the proposed program changes and signs the relevant section of the proposal.

C10 Post-approval matters
C10.1 The ASU provides written advice to the relevant School of the Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Academic) decision.

C10.2 Following notification of approval, the ASU is responsible for making the appropriate changes to University webpages and informing relevant parties (internally and externally) of the implementation of the revised program by:

(a) notifying the relevant Program Coordinator/Program Development Team;

(b) recording and registering the approved documentation in the relevant records management system;

(c) notifying and requesting actions from relevant administrative units; and

(d) implementing in collaboration with Student Service and Engagement the approved transitional/teach-out arrangements (if required).

C11. Reporting
C11.1 A summary report of approved program changes is required to be submitted annually from the PACC to Academic Board.

C11.2 Annual reports should be submitted to the first meeting each year and include all program changes approved in the previous year.

C11.3 A report of all program change decisions approved by the Vice-Chancellor and President or delegate Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Academic) is noted at the next scheduled meeting of the Program and Courses Committee.

Part D: Discontinuation of a program

D1 Discontinuation of a program approval authority
D1.1 Discontinuation of a program means that:

(a) there can be no new intake of students into that program from a specified date;

(b) the program can no longer be advertised or marketed as available to students; and

(c) the program is to be eventually removed from the suite of programs available to students.

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D1.2 Approval of the discontinuation of a program is the responsibility of the Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Academic) (as delegate of the Vice-Chancellor and President).

D2 Timing of program discontinuation

D2.1 If it is proposed to discontinue a program, the School consults all interested parties and arranges for development of a timetable for the discontinuation from the proposed date from which there will be no new intake up to the proposed date of permanent removal of the program. The timetable and preliminary plan takes into account:

(a) the requirements for transition and teach-out as identified in Section G of these procedures;

(b) any courses or study components that are "owned" by the program also available in other programs;

(c) the date of the most recent intake into the program (base year/semester);

(d) prior offers of a place in the program that have been made to any international student (agreed commencement date for student plus maximum completion time);

(e) any obligation of the University to continue to offer the program to a student who is currently enrolled in the program, or a student or intending student relevant to 3.1.1(b) or 3.1.1(c);

(f) the need to provide timely information to the University community, relevant authorities, e.g. Queensland Tertiary Admissions Centre (QTAC), and the public concerning discontinuation of the program and any applicable transition arrangements; and

(g) University timeframes for progressing proposals for discontinuation as outlined in guidelines prepared by the CSU.

D3 Seeking approval to commence the discontinuation of a program

D3.1 To commence the approval of the discontinuation of a program the relevant Head of School submits a Curriculum Bulletin (Program Discontinuation) to the Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Academic) through the ASU and the Curriculum Quality Liaison Officer, CSALT.

D3.2 The CSU, CSALT forwards the Curriculum Bulletin to the Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Academic) for consideration, who discusses any issues related to the proposed discontinuation with the relevant parties and then advises the CSU, CSALT whether to release the Curriculum Bulletin.

D4 Proposal to Discontinue a Program

D4.1 Incorporating any submissions received or issues raised in response to the Curriculum Bulletin (Program Discontinuation), the Program Coordinator completes the Proposal to Discontinue a Program template. The document is forwarded to the Head of School for consideration.

D4.2 If the Head of School decides that approval for discontinuation should be sought, they sign the relevant section of the proposal and submit the proposal to ASU.

D5 Endorsement by the Program and Course Committee

D5.1 The Head of School completes a Proposal to Discontinue a Program, using the relevant template and forwards it to the ASU, who refers the proposal to the Secretary, Program and Course Committee.

D5.2 The Program and Course Committee considers the proposal, with particular attention to the impact on the student experience and the quality of the teach-out plan and decides whether to endorse the discontinuation of the program.

D5.3 The secretary, Program and Course Committee informs the ASU of the outcomes of the consideration of the proposal at the Program and Course Committee.

D6 Approval by the Vice-Chancellor and President or delegate

D6.1 The ASU refers the proposal to the Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Academic).

D6.2 The Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Academic) (as delegate of the Vice-Chancellor and President) decides whether to approve the proposed program discontinuation and signs the relevant section of the proposal.

D7 Post-approval matters

D7.1 The ASU provides written advice to the relevant School of the decision concerning the proposal for discontinuation of a program.

D7.2 Following notification of approval, the ASU arranges for:

(a) the notification of the relevant Program Coordinator;

(b) the approved documentation to be captured in the University records management systems; and

(c) requesting action from the relevant University's administration units in regard to admission (informing QTAC), updating curriculum Web pages, and system data changes (Peoplesoft).

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D8 Reporting

A report on any discontinuation of a program decisions approved by the Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Academic) is compiled by the CSU, CSALT for noting at the next scheduled meeting of the Program and Course Committee.

Part E: Suspension of intake into a program

E1 Suspension of intake approval authority

Suspension of intake is a management decision made by the Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Academic) that there will be no intake of students for a particular program in a specified period. A suspension of intake is temporary and may or may not lead to discontinuation of a program.

E2 Timeframes and consultations

If it is proposed that there be a temporary suspension of intake into a program, the Head of School initiates the process for approval to suspend intake and consults all interested parties as soon as possible.

E3 Curriculum Bulletin (Program Suspension)

E.3.1 The Head of School drafts a Curriculum Bulletin (Program Suspension) using the relevant template and submits it to the CSU, CSALT via the ASU.

E.3.2 CSU, CSALT forwards the Curriculum Bulletin (Program Suspension) to the Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Academic) for consideration, who discusses any issues related to the proposed suspension of intake with the relevant parties and then advises CSU, CSALT whether to release the Curriculum Bulletin.

E4 Proposal to Suspend an Intake

E.4.1 After the closing date for submissions in response to the Curriculum Bulletin (Program Suspension), the Head of School completes a Proposal to Suspend an Intake, using the relevant template and forwards it to CSU, C-SALT via the ASU. CSU, CSALT refers the proposal to the Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Academic).

E.4.2 The Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Academic) decides whether to approve the suspension of intake and signs the relevant section of the proposal.

E4.3 The ASU provides written advice to the School Administration of the Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Academic) decision concerning the proposal for suspension of intake.

E4.4 Following notification of approval, the ASU arranges for:

(a) the notification of the relevant Program Coordinator;

(b) the approved documentation to be recorded and registered in the University's records management system; and

(c) requesting action from the relevant University's administration units in regard to admission (informing QTAC), updating curriculum Web pages, and system data changes (Peoplesoft).

E5 Reporting

A report on any Suspension of Intake decisions approved by the Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Academic) is compiled by the CSU, CSALT for noting at the next scheduled meeting of the Program and Course Committee.

Part F: Programs and Study Components

F1 Programs and study Components

F1.1 Study Components are approved as part of the accreditation of the "owning" program. A Study Component can be a requirement in multiple programs but only one program is identified as its "owner".

F1.2 Study Components that have been identified as owned by a program in the accreditation process are modified or discontinued as a change to the owning program. The consultation process for any changes to a study component should ensure that all other programs requiring the study component are informed of the proposed changes.

F1.3 A program that proposes the inclusion of an existing study component as a new structural requirement will be required to make a program change to have that inclusion approved.

F1.4 The Program Coordinator may seek to have a study component offered at another institution recognised as part of their program's structural requirements, the process is identified in Section F3 of these procedures.

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F2 Discontinuation of a study component

The discontinuation of a study component requires the approval of the Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Academic) (as delegate of the Vice-Chancellor and President). Refer to Section C9.

F3 Structural requirements for a Study Component

A Study Component entity is required to be created and modified in USC's Curriculum Information Repository (USC CIR). The Study Component Approval document should be included in the program accreditation/approval documentation.

F4 Recognition of a Study Component completed at another institution

F4.1 A Program Coordinator may request the recognition of a study component completed at another institution as a required part of their program, and therefore recorded on a student's transcript. This is normally requested to support a formal articulation arrangement with another institution.

F4.2 The Program Coordinator is required to assess the studies in terms of:

· the number of hours or units (for example the equivalent of 96 units of study for a Major)
· the level of the studies; and
· in the case of Extended Major or Majors, evidence of Learning Outcomes.

F4.3 The Program Coordinator forwards the completed proposal to the relevant Head of School who considers the documentation.

F4.4 If the Head of School decides if the proposed recognition should be approved, they sign the relevant section of the proposal.

F4.5 Following approval by the Head of School, the ASU arranges for:

(a) written advice to interested parties, of the approval recognition of the study component; and

(b) all documentation related to the school's development, consideration and decision related to the recognition of the study component to be recorded and registered in the University's record management system.

Part G: Transition and Teach-out requirements

From time to time the University may determine that programs are to be discontinued, replaced or significantly amended. This document provides a framework for program transition resulting from such changes. It ensures that transition arrangements are planned and implemented, and that students who are currently enrolled in the program are able to complete the award or an equivalent award with minimal disruption, and that the proposed changes and the rationale for those changes are communicated to all students impacted.

G1 Professionally Accredited programs

In the case of programs that are professionally accredited, the relevant professional accreditation body must be contacted prior to making substantial changes to a program or changing the name of a program and follow any procedures stipulated by the professional accreditation body to maintain currency of accreditation. Schools may be required to bear the cost of maintaining professional accreditation for both the discontinued program and any replacement program during the teach-out period.

G2 Program Discontinuation

G2.1 When discontinuing a program with active student enrolments, the following principles should inform the approach adopted for the transition and teach-out period:

· proposed arrangements allow students to meet the learning outcomes of the program being discontinued;
· courses substituted for required courses are delivered and assessed at the appropriate level;
· assessment processes are comparable and call on the knowledge and skills requirements of the program being discontinued;
· proposed arrangement do not disadvantage transitioning students (e.g. arrangements allow balanced study loads, part-time or full-time study options, completion of their program without delay);
· the level of service, resources and support to students should not be reduced as part of any teach out process.

G2.2 The School has the following options available:

· teach-out arrangements with a time limit;
· transfer arrangements to new or similar program; or
· a combination of teach-out or transfer for different student cohorts.

G2.3 As part of the documentation for approval for a program discontinuation, the School is responsible for including:

(a) a recommended study sequence for each student cohort in the program and for all locations it is offered (or individual students); and

(b) a communication plan for all students enrolled in the program.

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G2.4 The development of (a) and (b) above should be done in consultation with the appropriate units in Student Services and Engagement and International Office with responsibility for providing student support and advice and communication with students. Student Services and Engagement and International Office must be supplied with the final full discontinuation documentation prior to delivery to students.

G2.5 The communication plan must ensure that all students including those that are currently on deferment, leave of absence and academic exclusion receive clear and accurate information regarding their options. Refer to the Admissions – Procedures and the Enrolments and Graduation – Procedures for the University's obligations regarding students in these situations, noting that readmission is not automatic following exclusion or where a student's enrolment was discontinued due to an absence without leave status.

G2.6 Students must be notified in writing within 21 days of the approval to discontinue a program so that they can gain advice as to the best course of action.

G2.7 International Students

G2.7.1 The School ensures that the transition arrangements enable international students to complete all requirements of the program within the duration of their existing student visa, providing the student is maintaining satisfactory progress.

G2.7.2 The impact of any transfer arrangements on international students must be determined in consultation with International Office.

G.3 Teach-out

A teach-out is an arrangement that has been put in place to provide a reasonable opportunity for students to complete a discontinued program without disadvantage.

G3.1 Length of the Teach-Out period

G3.1.1 Where the University is offering a replacement program and a transfer is an option, then the teach-out period is fixed at two years.

G3.1.2 Where the discipline is being discontinued entirely at the University, with no replacement program available, then the length of the teach-out period for a program is determined by the amount of remaining studies, expressed in years which is then doubled.

Example 1: a three year degree is approved for discontinuation and no alternative program in the discipline is available. The program had its last intake in the previous semester, therefore two and half year of the program is required to be offered – program length remaining = 2 ½ years, double this amount, the teach-out period would therefore be five years.

G3.1.3 The minimum teach-out period is two years regardless of the length of the program.

G3.1.4 The length of the teach-out is not extended for individual students who seek leave of absence during the teach-out period.

G3.1.5 At the end of the teach-out period, the School, based on the number of students remaining, makes a decision as to whether to extend the teach-out period or put into place other mechanisms to allow the remaining students to complete their studies.

G3.2 Courses and structure of the Teach-out

G3.2.1 The courses included in the teach-out arrangement, should be those that were included in the original structure. If different courses are offered, the School must ensure that all students completing the teach-out meet the identified learning outcomes of the discontinuing program on graduation. The level of service and support to students should not be reduced as part of any teach out process. Courses introduced in the new version of the program, that have the same content, learning outcomes and level (for example, a course code change) as existing courses can be substituted into the teach-out structure.

G3.2.2 A study plan should be developed for each entry cohort in the discontinued program to demonstrate the teach out arrangement for that cohort. Individualised study plans may be used to ensure that individual students are aware of the applicable study plan/enrolment pattern they need to follow to complete the program within the teach-out period.

G3.2.3 A student following a teach-out arrangement should not be required to complete more courses or units than was originally required (additional financial cost must not be incurred by the student) or be required to overload (undertake more than four 12 unit courses, or equivalent, in a teaching period).

G3.2.4 The teach-out arrangement must include details of:

· availability of study components (majors, minors, etc);
· changes to compulsory course requirements (if any);
· waiving or changing course prerequisite requirements; and
· changes to semester offerings or delivery mode(s) of courses.

G3.2.5 The teach-out arrangement should be continually available to students and must be updated by the School on an annual basis.

G3.3 Students not completing program requirements within the "teach-out" period

Students who do not complete the program requirements within the teach-out period will be managed on a case-by-case basis. Every effort will be made to accommodate such individuals, however the University cannot guarantee suitable options will be available and cross-institutional study may need to be considered to complete the original qualification from this University.

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G4 Transfer

G4.1 A transfer is an arrangement for student cohorts within a discontinued program to be transferred to a replacement, similar program.

G4.2 A student offered a transfer to a different program has the option not to accept that transfer. If a student wishes to remain in their original program, they are required to indicate this in writing at the time the offer of transfer was made.

G4.3 The School must develop a teach-out arrangement that can accommodate students who refuse to transfer.

G4.4 A student offered a transfer should not be disadvantaged financially by accepting such an offer.

G4.5 The School must develop a study plan for each transferred entry cohort in the discontinued program, identifying the course credit and remaining courses to be completed. Cohort or individual study plans may be used to ensure that students are aware of the enrolment pattern to complete the new program.

G5 Renaming of a Program

G5.1 Where a program is to be renamed but there are no substantive changes to the range of study components or to the program learning outcomes, there will be no teach-out and the discontinuation process does not apply.

G5.2 A communication plan should still be developed to ensure that all students including those that are currently on deferment, leave of absence and academic exclusion receive clear and accurate information regarding this development.

G6 Changes to a Program

G6.1 As part of the documentation for approval for a change to a program, the School is responsible for including:

(a) a recommended study sequence for each student cohort in the program and for all locations it is offered (or individual students); and

(b) a communication plan for all students enrolled in the program.

G6.2 The development of (a) and (b) above should be done in consultation with the appropriate units in Student Services and Engagement and International Office with responsibility for providing student support and advice and communication with students. Student Services and Engagement and International Office must be supplied with the final full documentation prior to delivery to students.

G6.3 The communication plan must ensure that all students including those that are currently on deferment, leave of absence and academic exclusion receive clear and accurate information regarding their options. Refer to the Admissions – Procedures and the Enrolments and Graduation – Procedures for the University's obligations regarding students in these situations, noting that readmission is not automatic following exclusion or where a student's enrolment was discontinued due to an absence without leave status.

G6.4 The transitional arrangements should be presented to make clear the impact on each student year cohort effected by the proposed changes and whether they have the option to:

· Continue to follow their commencing structure; or
· Change to the new structure.

G6.5 If the latter option is selected, consideration should be given to:

· structural variations to the new version to accommodate students moving from the old version;
· incompatibility between new and old courses (anti-requisites);
· the sequences and offering of new courses to accommodate students at various stages in their progression; and
· any waiving of prerequisites.

G6.6 These transitional arrangements must be considered if/when subsequent changes are made to relevant course offerings and requisites.

END

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RELATED DOCUMENTS

Course Approval, Change and Discontinuation - Procedures

Coursework Curriculum Design - Academic Policy

Coursework Curriculum Design - Procedures

Higher Degree by Research Program Accreditation - Academic Policy

Higher Degree by Research Program Accreditation - Procedures

Program Accreditation and Course Approval - Governing Policy

Program Review - Procedures

LINKED DOCUMENTS

Program Accreditation and Course Approval - Governing Policy

SUPERSEDED DOCUMENTS

Program Accreditation - Procedures|Program Changes - Procedures|Program Discontinuation and Suspension of Intake - Procedures

RELATED LEGISLATION / STANDARDS

Tertiary Education Quality and Standards Agency (TEQSA) Act 2011 (Cth)

Higher Education Standards Framework (Threshold Standards) 2015 (Cth)

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