

# Review of Academic Board and its Committees - Procedures



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## Definitions

Please refer to the University's Glossary of Terms for policies and procedures. Terms and definitions identified below are specific to these procedures and are critical to its effectiveness:

Portfolio Manager means the Vice-Chancellor and President.

Review Leader means the Chairperson of the Academic Board.

Review Officer is the Director, Governance and Risk Management

## 1. Purpose of procedures

These procedures specify requirements and processes associated with external reviews of the Academic Board (the Board) and its Standing Committees (Committees), required under the Committee/Board Reviews and Self-Reviews - Operational Policy, and should be read in association with that policy.

## 2. Procedures

### 2.1 Coordination of review

The Office of the Pro Vice-Chancellor (International and Quality) has overall responsibility for coordinating reviews, including:

- drafting schedules for reviews for approval by the Vice-Chancellor and President.
- providing timely notice to the Portfolio Manager and Review Leader of a forthcoming review.
- appointing a Review Support Officer for the review who will liaise with the Portfolio Manager, Review Leader and Review Officer and the appointed review panel in order to progress and coordinate the review.
- providing advice and information on the conduct of reviews.

### 2.2 Scheduling of reviews

2.2.1 Reviews of Academic Board and its Committees will be held at least every five years and the schedule for these reviews, as approved by the Vice-Chancellor and President, will include milestone dates for each major activity.

2.2.2 Any changes to scheduled dates for reviews require the approval of the Vice-Chancellor and President.

2.2.3 The Vice-Chancellor and President may approve the conduct of a review of the Board and its Committees at a time other than a scheduled five-yearly review or in addition to a scheduled review.

2.2.4 The schedule of reviews will be updated by the Office of the Pro Vice-Chancellor (International and Quality) as required by the Vice-Chancellor and President, and on conclusion of a review of Academic Board and its Standing Committees will be automatically updated to include the next five-yearly review.

2.2.5 The Office of the Pro Vice-Chancellor (International and Quality) will provide the latest approved schedule to the Quality and Standards Committee and also publish it on MyUSC.

### 2.3 Advance notice and reminders of review

2.3.1 At least 12 months prior to the first milestone date for the review, the Office of the Pro Vice-Chancellor (International and Quality) will provide the Portfolio Manager, Review Leader and Review Officer with:

- written advice of a forthcoming review of the Board and its Committees, together with details of the relevant University review personnel and milestone dates.
- copies of the Committee/Board Reviews and Self-Reviews - Operational Policy, associated procedures, and other relevant review support materials.
- a proposal for convening an initial meeting of the relevant University review personnel to plan for and progress the review.

2.3.2 At least six months prior to the first milestone date for a review of the Board and its Committees, the Office of the Pro Vice-Chancellor (International and Quality) will consult the Review Leader to ascertain progress with review preparations and, if necessary, remind all review personnel of the milestone dates for the review and initiate appropriate action to expedite review preparations.

#### APPROVAL AUTHORITY

Vice-Chancellor and President

#### RESPONSIBLE OFFICER

Vice-Chancellor and President

#### DESIGNATED OFFICER

Pro Vice-Chancellor (International and Quality)

#### FIRST APPROVED

24 June 2019

#### LAST AMENDED

26 June 2019

#### REVIEW DATE

24 June 2024

#### STATUS

Active

[usc.edu.au/policy](https://usc.edu.au/policy)

## 2.4 Review planning meetings

Review planning meetings involving the relevant Portfolio Manager (as appropriate), Review Leader, Review Officer and the Review Support Officer should be held well in advance of the first milestone date for the review, and thereafter as needed, in order to:

- develop a common understanding of the review's purpose, nature, scope, processes and stages.
- clarify the roles and responsibilities of review personnel.
- identify and discuss possible members and a possible Chairperson of the review panel.
- determine the overall structure and contents of the review portfolio.
- develop a timeline of key events and activities for the review, including the proposed dates for a review panel site visit.
- agree on a broad indicative program for the site visit that, among other things, identifies likely interviewee groups and potential interviewees, including external stakeholders.
- identify any specific groups or organisations to be invited to make confidential submissions to the review panel.
- clarify responsibility for funding of all review-related expenditure.
- reach agreement on the amount of any honoraria to be offered to external panel members and the panel Chairperson.

## 2. Terms of reference for review of Academic Board and its Standing Committees

2.5.1 There is no standard set of terms of reference for the review of Academic Board and its Standing Committees. They should however, be framed with the Higher Education Standards Framework standards on academic governance as a guide.

2.5.2 The terms of reference will be developed by the Review Leader, in consultation with the Portfolio Manager, and will provide clear guidance to the review panel on the specific matters that are to be addressed in the review.

2.5.3 The final set of terms of reference for the review will be as approved in writing by the Portfolio Manager at least six months prior to the site visit.

2.5.4 Information and forms for approval of terms of reference produced by the Office of the Pro Vice-Chancellor (International and Quality), will be provided to review personnel at the first review planning meeting, and will also be available on MyUSC.

## 2. Appointment of review panel

2.6.1 After the terms of reference for a review have been finalised and approved, the Review Leader will initiate action for recommending appointment of a panel to undertake the review.

2.6.2 The panel membership should:

- be sufficiently broad to allow for a range of perspectives and expertise amongst the reviewers.
- include persons with the understanding, skill, experience or capability needed to undertake the review.
- comprise two to three persons external to the University who have no current or past formal association with the University and who have no close professional or personal association with any member of the Board or its Committees.

2.6.3 The panel Chairperson will have recent high level leadership and management experience in or of Academic Governance elsewhere that has a similar focus or orientation.

2.6.4 The Review Leader or nominee will:

- document a short list of persons considered appropriate to be appointed as members or as the Chairperson of the review panel, including full contact details and information on why each person would be an appropriate appointment, and including a statement that – none of the persons on the list has a current or past formal association with the University and has no close professional or personal association with any member of the Board or its Committees.
- seek approval from the Portfolio Manager to contact persons on the short-list to ascertain their interest in becoming members or the Chairperson of the review panel
- following contact with potential panel members, use the standard panel appointment form to recommend to the Portfolio Manager the appointment of the Chairperson and other members of the review panel.

2.6.5 The Portfolio Manager will determine and appoint the review panel members and Chairperson, and provide the Review Support Officer with a copy of the signed review panel appointment form.

2.6.6 Members and the Chairperson of the review panel will be:

- required to accept membership of the panel in writing and enter into an agreement to protect University intellectual property and maintain the confidentiality of any corporate or personal information made known to them during the review process.
- reimbursed for all out-of-pocket expenses and may receive an honorarium for their contribution to the review.

## 2. Review portfolio

2.7.1 The Review Officer, under the direction of the Review Leader, will arrange for the production of a review portfolio for submission to the review panel by the relevant milestone date in the review schedule.

2.7.2 If thought appropriate, the Review Leader or the Review Officer may establish a working party for preparation of the Review Portfolio.

2.7.3 The portfolio is the starting point for the formal review, should be structured to reflect the terms of reference for the review, and will contain sufficient information about the Academic Board and its Committees, with supporting evidence, to enable the review panel to address each of the terms of reference.

2.7.4 Separate evidence that supplements or substantiates information and statements made in the portfolio may be provided to the review panel in appendix documents.

2.7.5 Any confidential information should be provided as separate appendix documents, marked “Confidential”, and should not be included in the main body of the portfolio.

2.7.6 The Review Officer should ensure that the Review Leader and Chairpersons of relevant committees, have been given opportunity to provide input to the structure and contents of the portfolio, and may also seek input from any other appropriate source.

2.7.7 The Review Leader is responsible for approving the final text of the Review Portfolio, with endorsement of the review portfolio from the Portfolio Manager.

2.7.8 The final draft of the review portfolio must be submitted to the Review Support Officer no later than six weeks prior to the scheduled site visit.

2.7.9 The Review Support Officer will provide feedback as required to facilitate finalisation of the review portfolio.

2.7.10 The final portfolio must be:

- approved by the Review Leader.
- submitted to the Portfolio Manager for endorsement no later than five weeks prior to the site visit (where this is required by the Portfolio Manager).
- provided by the Review Officer to each member of the review panel, in the requested format, no later than four weeks prior to the site visit.
- forwarded simultaneously to the Review Support Officer – in print form if requested, and in e-copy.
- provided in print or e-copy by the Review Officer to relevant review personnel and to the Portfolio Manager.

2.7.11 Once the portfolio is submitted to the review panel, the Review Support Officer becomes the primary conduit for communications between the University and the review panel concerning the substance of the review.

2.7.12 The Review Support Officer will:

- provide the Review Officer with guidance to assist in production of a review portfolio.
- make the portfolio and appendices, excluding any confidential material, available to the University community via MyUSC by no later than two working days after their submission to the review panel.
- advise persons invited to participate in interviews with the review panel of the availability of the review portfolio on MyUSC.
- provide the review portfolio to any external interviewees.

## 2. Confidential submissions to review panel

2.8.1 As soon as practicable after submission of the review portfolio to the panel, the Review Support Officer arranges for an announcement about the review to be made to the University community and calling for confidential submissions to the panel.

2.8.2 The Review Leader arranges for the Review Support Officer to be provided with names and contact details for any external stakeholders who should be specifically invited to make a confidential submission to the review panel.

2.8.3 All submissions are confidential to the review panel members and the Review Support Officer and are disposed of appropriately by the Review Support Officer upon receipt of the final review report.

## 2. Site visit by review panel

2.9.1 The Review Officer, in consultation with the Review Support Officer, will develop the site visit schedule, which will be submitted to the Review Leader for consideration and approval no later than six weeks prior to the site visit.

2.9.2 A review of the Board and its Committees will normally include a two-to-three day site visit by the review panel to the University.

2.9.3 During the site visit, the review panel:

- will interview a range of persons with a stake in the Academic Board and its Committees.
- will identify key findings and indicative recommendations to make in relation to the terms of reference for the review.

2.9.4 The Review Support Officer, in consultation with the Review Officer, is responsible for organising the arrangements for the participation of persons identified to be interviewed by the review panel.

## 2.1 Review report

2.10.1 The review panel Chairperson will submit a draft report (through the Review Support Officer) to the Portfolio Manager on the panel's findings in relation to the terms of reference, including any recommendations, usually by no later than six weeks after conclusion of the site visit.

2.10.2 If the draft report identifies, or the review panel has separately identified, matters that potentially pose significant risk to the University, the Review Support Officer should bring those matters to the attention of the Portfolio Manager. As soon as practicable after receipt of a draft review report, the Portfolio Manager (through the Review Support Officer) will advise the panel in writing of any matters in the report that appear to be in need of correction or reconsideration.

2.10.3 Where a draft report is regarded as containing matters significantly beyond the terms of reference for the review or to pose serious risk to the University if made public, the Portfolio Manager may request the panel in writing (through the Review Support Officer) to remove reference to those matters from the review report and advise that, if the panel wishes, it may present a separate issues paper to the Portfolio Manager in relation to those matters.

2.10.4 The review panel Chairperson will submit a final report (through the Review Support Officer) to the Portfolio Manager as soon as practicable after submission of the draft report.

2.10.5 After consideration of the report, the Portfolio Manager discuss the findings with the Review Leader.

2.10.6 When advised by the Portfolio Manager that the final report may be released to the wider university community, the Review Support Officer will arrange for the final report to be made available via MyUSC and for advice to be given to the University community of its availability.

2.10.7 The Review Leader may provide a copy of the final report to external stakeholders if thought appropriate.

## 2.1 Response to review report and action plan

2.11.1 Guides and templates for development and documentation of the response and action plan will be produced by the Office of the Pro Vice-Chancellor (International and Quality), provided to the Review Leader and made available on MyUSC.

2.11.2 The Review Leader will:

- initiate discussion of the review report by the Board and its Committees, and senior members of other University entities upon which recommendations or findings contained in the report may impinge.
- develop a draft review response and action plan addressing the recommendations and other matters of significance in the review report
- within eight weeks of receipt of the review report, submit the draft review response and action plan to the Portfolio Manager for consideration.

2.11.3 To obtain appropriate feedback, the Portfolio Manager (or delegate) will present the draft response and action plan to the USC Executive and Council.

2.11.4 On the basis of feedback from the USC Executive and Council, the Review Leader will finalise the review response and action plan for approval by the Portfolio Manager.

2.11.5 The Review Leader will subsequently provide the review report and approved review response and action plan for noting to the University Council, the Academic Board, the Quality and Standards Committee and any other committee as considered appropriate.

2.11.6 The Review Support Officer will arrange for the approved response and action plan to be made available via MyUSC.

## 2.1 Reporting and monitoring progress with action plan

2.12.1 The Review Leader will present six-monthly written reports to the Portfolio Manager for the monitoring of progress in implementing the action plan, until such time as the Portfolio Manager is satisfied that all matters in the plan have been addressed appropriately. All actions must be completed within two years.

2.12.2 After each progress report has been considered by the Portfolio Manager, the progress report will be submitted by the Portfolio Manager (or delegate) to the University Council, University Executive and other relevant committees, including the Board and Quality and Standards Committee, for information.

2.12.3 When the Review Leader is satisfied that all recommendations have been satisfactorily addressed, they will present to the Portfolio Manager, a final progress report for approval.

2.12.4 The Review Support Officer will arrange for a copy of each progress report to be registered in the relevant file in the University's corporate records system and made available on MyUSC.

## 2.1 Review support materials

The Office of the Pro Vice-Chancellor (International and Quality) will develop and make available review support materials such as guidelines, forms, and templates to assist personnel involved with external reviews of Academic Board and its Standing committees.

## 2.1 Official review records

2.14.1 The Office of the Pro Vice-Chancellor (International and Quality) will arrange for the creation of a discrete University file in the corporate records system for each review.

2.14.2 Records of key review documents will be registered in the appropriate review file by the Office of the Pro Vice-Chancellor (International and Quality).

END

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#### RELATED DOCUMENTS

Committee/Board Reviews and Self-Reviews - Operational Policy  
Enterprise Risk Management - Governing Policy  
Governance Framework - Governing Policy  
Planning and Reporting Framework - Governing Policy  
Policy Framework - Governing Policy  
Program Accreditation and Course Approval - Governing Policy

#### LINKED DOCUMENTS

Committee/Board Reviews and Self-Reviews - Operational Policy

#### RELATED LEGISLATION / STANDARDS

Tertiary Education Quality and Standards Agency (TEQSA) Act 2011  
Higher Education Standards Framework (Threshold Standards) 2015