

Course Advisory Committees Policy

Section 1 - Background and Purpose

- (1) To provide guidance to the Colleges on the establishment, scope and conduct of Course Advisory Committees.
- (2) Each coursework program of the University should be supported by a Course Advisory Committee (CAC). These Committees are to be established or identified during the course planning stage and will remain operative for the life-time of the course.
- In the interest of cost-effectiveness, Colleges may choose to group courses to be served by a CAC. Suggestions for more efficient operations include:
- establishing a CAC for each School, rather than for each course;
 - establishing CAC's by discipline;
 - establishing CAC's for groupings such as 'postgraduate courses' and 'undergraduate courses';
- (3) Where existing courses do not already have a CAC, one should be established or identified to include coverage of these courses.
- (4) La Trobe University recognises that course quality is maintained by ongoing quality appraisal by all stakeholders. CAC's, by virtue of their composition, provide both external and internal expertise to monitor the currency and future readiness of courses at La Trobe and ensure their alignment with directions of the profession, industry, research and discipline.

Section 2 - Scope

- (5) This Policy applies to:
- All coursework programs (undergraduate and postgraduate)
 - All campuses
 - All Colleges

Section 3 - Policy Statement

- (6) Colleges are responsible for ensuring that all coursework programs have a Course Advisory Committee to:
- provide advice on the currency and future readiness of courses, with particular focus on industry/profession and community needs;
 - monitor the continued appropriateness and relevance of the content and delivery of courses;
 - provide input into design for new courses in the remit of the CAC;
 - advise the College on directions in the related discipline, research and industry/profession that have an impact

- on the design and objectives of courses;
- e. provide input into the strategic and academic course reviews.

(7) Course Advisory Committees may be established for an individual course or a grouping of courses as deemed appropriate by the College.

Section 4 - Procedure

Part A - Establishment of Course Advisory Committee (CAC)

(8) It is the responsibility of the College Pro Vice-Chancellor, in collaboration with Associate Pro Vice-Chancellors (Coursework) and Heads of School, to ensure that all coursework programs offered by the College are overseen by a Course Advisory Committee during their complete life-cycle, from planning to closure.

(9) CAC's will be formally established by the College Pro Vice-Chancellors after consultation with Associate Pro Vice-Chancellors (Coursework), Heads of Schools and other disciplinary staff.

(10) These will be formally approved via a resolution of the College Academic Committee.

Part B - Composition

(11) The membership of CAC's will include:

- a. One nominee of the Pro Vice-Chancellor of the relevant College, who will act as Chair of the CAC;
- b. At least three (3) external representatives:
 - i. For vocationally oriented courses or those subject to external accreditation, the external representatives should comprise:
 - at least two (2) from professional associations, accrediting bodies, allied industries/professions or potential employer groups; and
 - at least one (1) with a post-secondary education background, drawn from an institution, agency, private provider or other relevant setting
 - ii. For courses/disciplines/Schools not specifically vocationally oriented the external representatives should comprise:
 - at least three (3) with expertise in relevant discipline areas or from potential employment areas
- c. Typically the Head of School(s) or nominee for each School in which courses are included in the CAC;
- d. Typically the Course coordinators for each course included in the CCAC;
- e. At least one (1) student enrolled in the course or discipline. The CAC chair, in seeking to identify an appropriate student representative to a Course Advisory Committee, is encouraged to discuss their particular requirements with the relevant college society head and/or the Student Union President, who may assist in suggesting possible candidates;
- f. One (1) recent graduate of the course or relevant discipline.

(12) External members of the CAC shall not include adjunct members of La Trobe staff.

(13) The Executive Officer for each Course Advisory Committee will be appointed by the College Pro Vice-Chancellor from the College's general staff.

(14) The Course Advisory Committee should have a majority of members external to La Trobe. Depending on the ways in which courses are grouped for the CAC's, each Head of School and Course Coordinator may or may not be a

member.

Part C - Observers

(15) La Trobe staff other than members may be invited to attend as observers.

Part D - Length of Service

(16) External members of Course Advisory Committees will be normally appointed to a two year term, with the opportunity to serve for a maximum of 3 consecutive terms.

Part E - Terms of Reference

(17) The Terms of Reference of the CAC are:

- a. To provide advice to the College on new course proposals regarding:
 - i. future directions in the discipline and industry/profession that may have an impact on the skill needs and employment opportunities of graduates;
 - ii. professional and practice matters that impact on course design and delivery;
 - iii. likely market demand from students and employers for new course proposals;
 - iv. specialist resources, equipment and library holdings required for new course developments;
- b. To consider and advise on opportunities in the discipline area that align with current strategic directions and the Teaching and Learning Plan;
- c. To consider and advise on features of course design that draw upon new educational and research technology consistent with the Teaching and Learning Plan;
- d. To provide annual reports to the College Academic Committee on the course's(s') alignment to professional, industry and disciplinary directions and collaborative and applied research opportunities for inclusion in the annual strategic course review undertaken by the Course Portfolio and Scholarships Committee;
- e. To provide input into the five yearly academic review of relevant courses;
- f. Where applicable, to provide input as required for external course accreditation processes;
- g. To assist with the development of continuing education and professional development programs and such other activities to meet the needs of industry/the profession, and to assist academic staff with their continuing professional development through professional and industry networks;
- h. To respond to matters referred to it by the College Academic Committee, Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Academic) or the College Pro Vice-Chancellor.

(18) CAC's will convene at least twice annually; the first meeting of the year to provide input into future course products and the second meeting to review the courses within their remit.

(19) Quorum is at least 50% with at least two (2) external members present.

Part F - Reporting Requirements

(20) CAC's must report to the College Academic Committee after each meeting. Advice from these meetings will form part of the College Academic Committee's report to the AAcademic Board as necessary.

(21) Annual Summary Reports of CAC's activities will be provided by Colleges as part of Strategic Course Review documentation for CPSC each year.

Part G - Record Keeping

(22) All meetings of each CAC will be formally minuted and minutes will be made available to the College Academic Committee after each meeting.

(23) All papers and reports will be registered in the University's official records keeping system (currently TRIM) after each meeting.

Part H - Responsibilities of the Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Academic)

(24) In consultation with the College Pro Vice-Chancellors, oversee the conduct of CACs.

Part I - Responsibilities of the College Pro Vice-Chancellor

(25) In consultation with the Head of School(s) and Associate PVCs(Coursework), determine and establish CACs.

(26) Nominate the Chair for each CAC from La Trobe academic staff.

(27) Approve the appointment of members to the CACs.

(28) Receive annual reports of the CACs and refer any systemic matters to the DVCA or CPSC via annual strategic reviews for consideration.

(29) Annually appoint the Executive Officer to each CAC from general staff of the College.

Part J - Responsibilities of Head of School

(30) Ensure that every course is represented by a CAC.

(31) Ensure that composition of the CAC is configured appropriately and recommend appointments to the College Pro Vice-Chancellor (in consultation with other Heads of School if required).

(32) Monitor the frequency of CAC meetings and ensure reports are published in timely fashion.

(33) Address any issues arising from the operations and functioning of the CACs.

(34) Expeditiously suggest replacement members for consequential vacancies on CACs(in consultation with other Heads of School if required).

Part K - Responsibilities of Chair of CAC

(35) Chair all meetings of the CAC.

(36) Clear agenda and minutes of meetings.

(37) Authorise follow up actions emanating from meetings.

(38) Where appropriate, refer matters to the College Academic Committee, College PVC or the Head of School.

Part L - Responsibilities of Executive Officer to CAC

(39) Circulate agenda and papers in a timely fashion.

(40) Record the meetings in formal minutes.

(41) Follow up actions arising from the meetings.

(42) Ensure that all documentation is recorded and registered through the University's record keeping system (TRIM).

Part M - Responsibilities of CAC Members

(43) Attend and participate in all meetings.

(44) Ensure that the responsibilities as enunciated in the Terms of Reference are discharged.

Section 5 - Definitions

(45) For the purpose of this Policy and Procedure:

- a. Strategic Review: Considers the strategic fit, financial sustainability and demand for courses
- b. Academic Review: Considers the academic merit of each course, alignment to principles of good course design and course performance indicators
- c. Course Advisory Committee: Advisory body for a course or suites of courses

Section 6 - Stakeholders

Responsibility for implementation – College Pro Vice-Chancellors; Heads of School.

Responsibility for monitoring implementation and compliance – Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Academic); Course Portfolio and Scholarships Committee; Coursework Committee.

Status and Details

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