

Program Approval and Review Policy

Document Name	Program Approval and Review Policy
Brief Description	Outlines the principles, governance and processes for program approval, monitoring, review, change management, and discontinuation.
Responsibility	Academic Director
Initial Issue Date	23/11/2011
Authorising Body	Academic Board

Version Control

Date	Version No.	Summary of Changes	Reviewer Name and Office
25/3/2026	V4.0	Policy Name changed from Program Review Policy. Comprehensive update to align with HESF 2021; clarified material change thresholds; added external referencing, risk, teach-out and records retention requirements.	Academic Policy Working Group

Related Documents

Name	Location
Program Approval and Review Procedure	Curtin College website
Governance Structure	Curtin College website
Major Program Review Form	H Drive
Quality and Continuous Improvement Policy	Curtin College website

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1 Purpose and Scope

1.1 Introduction

Curtin College is registered with the Tertiary Education Quality Standards Agency (TEQSA) as an Institute of Higher Education, without self-accrediting authority. This policy operationalises the requirements of the Higher Education Standards Framework (Threshold Standards) 2021 for curriculum design, approval, monitoring, review, improvement and discontinuation.

Curtin College is committed to ongoing program improvement informed by academic outcomes, industry needs and emerging teaching approaches, with program approval and review serving as its core quality assurance mechanism to ensure effective curriculum design and delivery.

1.2 Purpose

This policy outlines the college's approach to program development, monitoring and review. The purpose of this policy is to ensure the continuous improvement of Curtin College programs in response to factors such as academic outcomes, industry needs and new approaches to teaching and learning.

1.3 Scope

This policy applies to all Curtin College academic programs delivered in Perth and by Partner Providers.

2 Policy Contents

2.1 Curriculum Design

2.1.1 Curtin College is committed to ensuring that its programs are focused on enabling and enhancing learning for all students.

2.1.2 Curriculum design at Curtin College will take a whole-of-program approach informed by the following reference points:

- a) the design and content of associated award programs at Curtin University;
- b) *Australian Qualifications Framework (AQF)*;
- c) external comparators and benchmarking;
- d) *Higher Education Standards Framework (Threshold Standards) 2021*; and
- e) the *Curtin College Strategic Priorities*.

2.1.3 Curriculum design will:

- a) align teaching and learning activities, learning resources, support, assessment strategies, and feedback mechanisms in order to support student achievement of program and unit learning outcomes;
- b) scaffold learning and support students in their transition into, progression through and transition out of their program of study, including fostering progressive and coherent achievement of learning outcomes across the program;
- c) actively consider the needs and preparedness of students including embedding early assessment that provides feedback to students, and ensure students receive timely feedback that assists in their achievement of learning outcomes;
- d) ensure that all students, regardless of location, educational background or entry pathway, have access to equivalent opportunities to learn and succeed; and
- e) be evidence-based and draw on substantial, coherent and contemporary knowledge and scholarship; and

2.1.4 Curtin College is an Embedded University Pathway Provider (EUPP), meaning that it:

- a) prepares students for entry into degree programs at an affiliated university;
- b) delivers programs which are principally intended as a pathway to degree programs at the affiliated university, are developed in conjunction with the affiliated university and are drawn from programs accredited by the university; and

- c) has an enforceable, established agreement in place with the affiliated university which demonstrates a shared commitment to high quality delivery and the close integration of the pathway programs with the university's operations.

2.1.5 Curriculum at Curtin College will be governed by the following pathway education principles, which collectively ensure equitable access, academic excellence and holistic student development:

- a) **Holistic Student Support**
Comprehensive support services encompassing administrative, social, academic, personal, and technological dimensions.
- b) **Individualised Support**
Tailored assistance that responds to the diverse needs and circumstances of individual learners.
- c) **Proactive Intervention**
Early identification of student needs, timely referral, and coordinated linking to appropriate services shall be embedded within pathway provision.
- d) **Transition to Higher Education**
Preparation of students for progression into higher education, ensuring readiness for academic rigour.
- e) **Adult Learning and Independent Learners**
Cultivation of reflection, responsibility, strategic study skills, and self-awareness, to enable students to become autonomous learners.
- f) **Engagement with Peers and Staff**
Promotion of meaningful engagement with peers and teaching staff, to foster collaborative learning communities.
- g) **Engaging Learning Activities**
Prioritisation of interactive, stimulating, and relevant learning experiences.
- h) **Integrated Language Development**
Embedding of English and academic language development across the curriculum to strengthen communication skills and support students to develop advanced academic language and communication skills integral to scholarly participation.
- i) **Curtin University Context**
Delivery of programs as an embedded, on-campus program aligned with Curtin University's curricula, mission and values.
- j) **Intercultural Competence**
Promotion of intercultural understanding to prepare students for participation in diverse global contexts.
- k) **Inclusivity, Accessibility, and Equity**
Upholding the principles of inclusivity, accessibility, and equity, ensuring fair opportunities for all learners.
- l) **Integrity**
Practices conducted with integrity, transparency, and accountability.
- m) **Digital Literacy**
Programs embed digital literacy, artificial intelligence literacy to equip students with the skills needed to responsibly, ethically and effectively navigate contemporary technological environments.
- n) **Social Belonging**
Fostering social connections, cultivating a sense of belonging to the institution, friendships, and wider learning communities.

- o) **Academic Content and Curriculum**
Curriculum that is rigorous, relevant, and aligned with higher education standards.

2.1.6 When evaluating new or existing programs, Curtin College will consider the following factors:

- a) the program is relevant, fit-for-purpose and current;
- b) there is a clear educational philosophy underpinning the curriculum;
- c) there is a clear purpose and curricula goals aligned with learning outcomes of the program and the college's generic skills strategy;
- d) the learning activities, delivery mode and student experience in the program are consistent with the intended learning outcomes;
- e) the program structure and unit sequencing provide a coherent learning experience;
- f) assessment types and processes are appropriate to evaluate the students' learning outcomes in alignment with the AQF level; and
- g) academic support and advising arrangements for the program are suited to the intended student cohort and for their achievement of the learning outcomes.

2.2 New Program Approval

2.2.1 New program proposals may be initiated by Curtin University, Navitas, Curtin Singapore or Curtin College.

2.2.2 A *New Program Proposal* will be created that covers all program aspects identified in this policy and will be submitted to academic and corporate governance bodies for approval. Each proposal must include at minimum:

- purpose and rationale;
- market and student demand;
- program learning outcomes mapped to AQF;
- curriculum structure and assessment plan;
- resourcing (staffing, facilities, library, digital);
- risk assessment (academic, cohort-specific, delivery mode);
- evidence of industry consultation; and
- external referencing against at least two comparable programs.

Proposals are endorsed by the Program Advisory Committee (PAC), Learning and Teaching Committee (LTC) and approved by Academic Board.

2.3 Program Monitoring, Review and Improvement

2.3.1 Curtin College is committed to ensuring the continuous improvement of its programs in response to the ongoing monitoring of academic outcomes, industry needs and new approaches to teaching and learning and will engage in regular monitoring, review and improvement cycles for all programs.

2.3.2 All units and programs will be subjected to 'minor' ongoing internal review processes that are applied consistently and involve competent academic oversight and scrutiny.

2.3.3 Minor reviews must analyse achievement of learning outcomes, progression/attrition, student feedback and cohort subgroup trends, per TEQSA academic monitoring guidance.

2.3.4 Curtin College will review its programs against internal and external comparators and benchmark.

2.3.5 Every study period, Curtin College will present student and program performance data, improvement plans and analysis of outcomes of previous improvement plans to the Program Advisory Committees, Learning and Teaching Committee and Academic Board.

2.3.6 All programs will be subjected to a comprehensive, 'major' review once every 5 (five) to 7 (seven) years to ensure quality, relevancy and currency. Usually, a major review will be conducted and completed mid-way through the accreditation period.

2.4 Minor and Major Changes to Programs

2.4.1. A 'minor' program change is a relatively small change in curriculum that is usually identified during ongoing monitoring, improvement and review activities and/or academic governance meetings.

2.4.2. The Higher Education Standards Framework (which governs Curtin College) list a range of changes which constitute a major change. Curtin College in consultation with the TEQSA material change team will seek further clarification on the evidence documents required for submission.

A 'major' program change can consist of any of the following:

- a) changes which impact on multiple units in a program over the period of accreditation;
- b) contracting with another entity to deliver a proportion (no more than 25%) of the program;
- c) significant alterations to teaching premises or changes in location;
- d) changes to titles of programs;
- e) a notable change in overall program duration; and/or
- f) the introduction of new specialisations* that require new units or results in changes to program learning outcomes.

*Where specialisations are created using existing approved units and do not affect learning outcomes, this is not considered a major change and does not require TEQSA notification.

2.4.3. A major program change is usually initiated following:

- a) changes which impact on the majority of the subjects within the program, over the 7 years of the accreditation, are to be decided upon in consultation with the relevant stakeholders and governance committees;
- b) changes to the related degree offered by Curtin University;
- c) outcomes of ongoing monitoring, review and improvement processes;
- d) external benchmarking; and/or
- e) industry feedback received via the academic governance structure.

Program changes will be endorsed by the College Leadership Team, Program Advisory Committee, Learning and Teaching Committee and approved by the Academic Board; major program changes will also be submitted to TEQSA via a Material Change Notification

2.4.4. Material Change Notifications to TEQSA

Curtin College will notify TEQSA of material changes no later than 14 days after becoming aware of an event likely to significantly affect our ability to meet the HESF 2021 and/or that requires an update to the National Register (e.g., program title changes, discontinuations). Notifications will include: a description of the change, risk assessment, and mitigation actions. *Notifications do not constitute TEQSA approval.*

2.4.5. ESOS/CRICOS and Offshore Delivery Notices

If any changes affect CRICOS programs or offshore delivery, Curtin College will follow all ESOS/National Code requirements and once formally approved by Academic Board, submit the required TEQSA notification at least 90 days before the change.

2.4.6. When changes require accreditation as a *new program*

If proposed changes fundamentally alter a program (e.g., qualification type/level; field/discipline and learning outcomes; major shifts in structure/duration/mode or delivery arrangements; professional accreditation implications), Curtin College will apply to accredit a new program to TEQSA (for non-SAA program), rather than relying on a material change notification. We will consult TEQSA early if significance is uncertain

2.5 Discontinuation or Suspension of a Program

- 2.5.1 A proposal to suspend or discontinue a program may be influenced by a range of factors that could include:
- a) changes in government policy;
 - b) changes in industry;
 - c) changes in degrees at Curtin University into which college graduates articulate;
 - d) professional occupational changes; and/or
 - e) global, national or local economic conditions that impact enrolments at the college.
- 2.5.2 When suspending or discontinuing a program, the college will prioritise the educational interests and wellbeing of its students and will provide timely and considered advice to students on how it will impact the study options available to them.
- 2.5.3 The Academic Director, in consultation with key stakeholders, will consider timing of the program suspension or termination and all relevant student cohorts likely to be impacted by the decision.
- 2.5.4 All discontinuation/suspension proposals must include a formal Teach-Out Plan with CRICOS/ESOS notifications where applicable.

3 Responsibilities

3.1 The Curtin College Academic Board has oversight of all academic programs offered by the college and approves new programs and major changes to existing programs.

3.2 **College Director and Principal** is responsible for:

- a) gaining approval from Curtin University/Curtin Global;
- b) gaining approval from the Curtin College Board of Directors;
- c) arrange for the Agreement between Curtin College and Curtin University to be amended to reflect the approved changes; and
- d) amend the Service level Agreement with any partner provider, if relevant.

3.3 **Academic Director** is responsible for:

- a) developing new program proposals and presenting them to academic and corporate governance bodies;
- b) determining when major program reviews will occur;
- c) seeking Curtin University endorsement for new programs and changes to existing programs, particularly Deans of Learning and Teaching, Heads of Schools, and Curtin Global; and
- d) seeking external partners for benchmarking of design, assessment and student achievement.

3.4 **Program Managers** are responsible for:

- a) seeking University endorsement of new program proposals via the relevant Program Advisory Committee;
- b) making recommendations on new programs and changes to existing programs to the Program Advisory Committee, Learning and Teaching Committee and Academic Board;
- c) conducting a Major Program Review according to the program review schedule.

3.5 Unit **Coordinators** are responsible for

- a) conducting Minor Reviews of their units each study period.

3.6 **Quality and Compliance Manager** is responsible for:

- a) publishing the schedule for Major Program Reviews;
- b) providing information regarding regulatory and compliance obligations and considerations relating to program quality, approval, review, discontinuation and suspension;

- c) communicating with TEQSA regarding information about Curtin College and its programs listed on the National Register and CRICOS Register.

3.7 **Director Marketing and Admissions** is responsible for:

- a) identifying need and market demand for new and existing programs;
- b) ensuring that appropriate systems reflect current offerings;
- c) advise Education Agents of any programs discontinued and/or suspended;
- d) ensure all marketing collateral including the website it updated; and
- e) holding discussions with relevant university personnel including Curtin Global about proposed and/or existing programs.

3.8 **Student and Academic Services Manager** is responsible for:

- a) supporting the quality assurance of programs through the provision of student and program performance data.; and
- b) Ensuring study plans reflect any new, amended, discontinued or suspended program.

4 Compliance

This policy has **been** written with reference to:

- a) [Higher Education Standards Framework 2021](#);
- b) [Australian Qualifications Framework](#);
- c) [Tertiary Education and Quality Agency Act 2011](#);
- d) [Education Services for Overseas Students Act 2000](#); and
- e) [National Code of Practice for Providers of Education and Training to Overseas Students 2018](#).

5 Review

5.1 This Policy is reviewed as part of the Quality Assurance Framework for any changes to; operational, procedural and regulatory compliance requirements to ensure alignment to appropriate strategic direction and continued relevance to Curtin College's current and planned operations.

6 Records Management

6.1 All records in relation to this document will be managed as follows:

Record type	Owner	Location	Retention	Disposal
Policy	Academic Director	Share Drive and Website	Permanent until updated, then archived	Archived