

POLICY TITLE: Course Quality Control & Review

Purpose

Course quality control and review is a requirement of the *Higher Education Standards Framework* (HESF) 2015. The purpose of this policy is to describe the course quality control and review practices employed by Photography Studies College (Melbourne) to ensure the integrity and quality of its higher education courses and the procedures for ensuring regular and rigorous course review.

Policy

Photography Studies College (Melbourne) is committed to a program of quality control and regular review and improvement in the design, content, delivery and assessment of all its courses of study.

Policy Statement

Photography Studies College (Melbourne) is committed to providing students with a quality, transformational learning experience and professional environment through their engagement with their studies. As part of that commitment the College has developed this policy to outline the development, accreditation and review of Higher Education courses of study.

This policy is designed to ensure the College's courses:

- advance the College's mission and strategic goals;
- are consistent with the College's Strategic Plan;
- are supported by resources which facilitate the offering of quality learning experiences and educational outcomes;
- produce graduates who are equipped with knowledge and skills which will specifically contribute to the wider community and society in general and which promote life-long learning;
- are planned with advice from internal and external experts;
- are consistent with internal policy;
- take account of current best practice; and
- are aligned to the needs of the national and international Photographic industries.

Procedures

The procedures for Course Quality Control and Review are divided into eight key categories as follows:

1. Process and procedures for ensuring the adequate management and delivery of teaching

- 1.1 Photography Studies College (Melbourne) will continually evaluate the delivery of its courses to ensure that the specified outcomes of the courses are being achieved.

- 1.2 Subject/unit evaluations will be conducted at the completion of each subject/unit in their respective courses, and these evaluations will be used to ensure that the teaching is effective and remains relevant to the needs of the students.
- 1.3 Teaching procedures and materials will be reviewed and adjusted in order to ensure a continuous improvement approach to academic standards and student requirements and/or recommendations.
- 1.4 Professional development and scholarly activity will be encouraged and supported for all teaching staff. This development will be in accordance with the guidelines in the *PSC Professional Development Policy*.
- 1.5 Photography Studies College (Melbourne) will foster an environment of academic integrity and ensure the principles described in the *PSC Academic Integrity Policy* are utilised to underpin all approaches in relation to Course Quality Control and Review.
- 1.6 Photography Studies College (Melbourne) will ensure that procedural materials and/or manuals in relation to Course Control and Review are disseminated throughout the organisation and that the procedures are applied consistently across the organisation.

2. Subject/Unit Evaluations and Feedback

- 2.1 Student evaluations will be completed and collected following the completion of every subject/unit.
- 2.2 Students will be provided with feedback on the outcome of subject/unit evaluations.
- 2.3 All student feedback will inform the review of subject/unit guides.
- 2.4 All student feedback will inform the annual internal course review.
- 2.5 Teaching staff will be provided with feedback on the outcome of subject/unit evaluations.
- 2.6 The Course Convenors' and the teaching staff will review and renew the subject/unit guides throughout the course life cycle.
- 2.7 Any recommended changes to subject/unit guides arising from the subject/unit evaluations and reviews must be approved by the Leadership Group.

3. Course Review & Feedback

- 3.1 Courses of study will be reviewed on an annual basis.
- 3.2 The performance indicators for each of the course reviews are determined by the Academic Board.

- 3.3 All student feedback, as well as teacher feedback and feedback from any photographic professional associations must be included in every course review process.
- 3.4 The Director, Communications and Students and the Academic Director will ensure the integrity of the course review and feedback process and prepare an annual report on behalf of the Leadership Group for the Academic Board.

4. Curriculum and Learning Outcomes

- 4.1 If as a result of subject/unit evaluations and course review and feedback, changes to learning outcomes are identified and recommended for subjects/units, the Academic Board will determine whether the changes are to be approved and whether any such changes necessitate notification of Material Change as per the TEQSA Material Change Policy and Process (Version 3.5). Where major course changes are proposed (as outlined in the TEQSA Policy), the Academic Board will advise the Higher Education Council which, if endorsed, will forward the recommended changes to the Board of Photography Holdings Pty. Ltd for their approval and forwarding to TEQSA.
- 4.2 The Academic Board will determine and monitor the procedures for recording and implementing changes to curriculum design, content and/or learning outcomes.
- 4.3 The Academic Board will determine and monitor the procedures for version control of any courses under its purview.

5. Process and procedures for ensuring the quality control of assessment, moderation and validation of student outcomes

- 5.1 Methods of assessment must be consistent with the learning outcomes being assessed and capable of confirming that all specified learning outcomes are achieved and grades awarded reflect the level of student attainment (Standard 1.4.3 HESF 2015).
- 5.2 The policy and procedures for ensuring the quality control of assessment of all subjects/units is described in the *Assessment Policy* and the *Plagiarism Policy*.
- 5.2 Teaching staff are required to at all times to ensure the integrity of assessment and utilise methods of assessment that uphold this integrity.
- 5.3 Regular assessment moderation and validation sessions are conducted internally to ensure that methods of assessment adequately and consistently measure learning outcomes for each of the subjects/units of study and that appropriate and adequate teaching and learning methods are used to prepare students for assessment against the learning outcomes.

- 5.4 External validation of assessment is conducted where 'capstone' assessments are being undertaken to ensure credible evidence that grades awarded reflect the level of student attainment and demonstrate achievement of overall course learning outcomes.

External validation is conducted by an external examiner who will:

- review the learning outcomes of the subjects/units that form part of the review;
- review the appropriateness of the methods of assessment for measuring those outcomes;
- review and validate the assessment practices that have occurred in the capstone assessments;
- report to the Academic Board on the findings.

6. Course Record Keeping

- 6.1 The policy and procedures for ensuring quality control of all records relating to courses and subjects/units delivered by teaching staff and undertaken by students is described in the *Records Management Policy* and other related records management policies.
- 6.2 Photography Studies College (Melbourne) will be responsible for issuing the appropriate qualification when participants have successfully completed all of the requirements of a course of study. The policy and procedures for ensuring quality control of such issuance is described in the *Assessment Policy* and the *Course Completion and Graduation Policy*.
- 6.3 Records of qualifications granted and subjects/units completed/not completed will be stored for a period of thirty years.

7. Course Benchmarking

- 7.1 Photography Studies College (Melbourne) maintains a Course Benchmarking Register for the purposes of ensuring the courses of study developed and approved by the Academic Board are comparable to equivalent courses of study by field of education and Australian Qualification Framework level. The Academic Board has oversight of the Course Benchmarking Register, which lists Australian and International courses and institutions. Each course of study is also appraised by national benchmarking exercises, which utilise student evaluation surveys, student cohort data and graduate outcome data.
- 7.2 Course benchmarking is also undertaken by the external moderation and validation of achievements of learning outcomes against capstone projects in courses of study.

8. Continuous Improvement

- 8.1 All evaluation and review processes are conducted to ensure quality and integrity in courses of study. These processes provide opportunities for learning, reflection and improvement which all contribute to a cycle of continuous improvement.
- 8.2 The Leadership Group maintains a Continuous Improvement Action List, which records and monitors the continuous improvement plans, implementations and achievements.
- 8.3 Findings and actions arising from the Academic Course Review cycle are also recorded and monitored utilising the Continuous Improvement Action List.

Responsibility

Academic Board
Academic Director
Course Convenors
Director Communications and Students
Teaching Staff
Leadership Group

Definitions

Nil

Related Documentation

Policies

Professional Development
Academic Integrity
Assessment
Plagiarism
Records Management
Course Completion and Graduation
Academic Quality Assurance
Material Change

Procedures Forms & Documents

Academic Board Charter
Course Accreditation Documents
Subject Evaluation Forms
Subject Guides and Assignments
Course Benchmarking Register
External Examiner Guide
Academic Board Reporting Schedule
PSC Continuous Improvement Register
TEQSA Material Change Policy & Process (December 2013)

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Julie Moss - Managing Director

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APPENDIX A:

Academic Course Review Cycle

There are four levels in the Academic Course Review Cycle for higher education courses of study:

1. **Subject/Unit Evaluation and Review**
2. **Internal Annual Course Review**
3. **Strategic Course Review**
4. **External Course Review**

1. **Subject/Unit Evaluation and Review**

- 1.1 Every subject/unit that is delivered in the course is evaluated upon its conclusion. Students are given the opportunity and are encouraged to complete a subject/unit evaluation. Students provide feedback on: learning outcomes; subject/unit content; subject/unit delivery and resources and on their teaching, learning and assessment experiences.
- 1.2 The Director Communications and Students collates the data and reports the findings to the Leadership Group and the Academic Board.
- 1.3 The Academic Director provides feedback to teaching staff on the outcomes of the subject/unit evaluations. The Academic Director will discuss any relevant matters concerning teacher performance one on one and report the outcomes of this discussion to the Leadership Group.

- 1.4 Recommendations for change to the content or delivery of a subject/unit or the assessment modes or practices arising from the evaluation process will be discussed with teaching staff at Year Level meetings.
- 1.5 Subject/unit evaluation outcomes are reported to the Academic Board biannually. Recommendations for changes to subject/unit guides as a result of the evaluations must be approved by the Academic Board.

2. Internal Annual Course Review

- 2.1 Photography Studies College (Melbourne) courses are reviewed as a whole and at a subject/unit level annually.
- 2.2 The performance indicators considered in the review include:
 - Teaching and Learning:
 - adherence to Teaching and Learning Plans;
 - student feedback on subjects/units and quality of teaching and assessment;
 - student commencements;
 - attrition, progression, completion rates;
 - teacher feedback on course;
 - grievance / complaints.
 - Benchmarking:
 - external recognition;
 - external stakeholder feedback.
 - Physical and electronic resources and infrastructure:
 - student learning resources;
 - OH&S;
 - adequacy of equipment.
 - Management and Human Resources: Staffing - ratios and skills and experience.
- 2.3 The Leadership Group will conduct the internal review and provide a formal report to the Academic Board.
- 2.4 The Academic Board will review the findings and provide a formal report of findings and recommendations to the Higher Education Council.

3. Strategic Course Review

The strategic value and sustainability of all higher education courses of study will be reviewed every three years by the Higher Education Council.

- 3.1 The Higher Education Council will initiate a strategic review of the higher education course and identify the data for consideration in the review meeting. The Higher Education Council will liaise with the Leadership Group and its committees – Academic Board, Regulatory Compliance Committee, regarding their particular role in the review process to be undertaken.
- 3.2 Information that might be considered in Higher Education Council deliberations include:
 - enrolments and completions;
 - popularity polls and performance in VTAC preferences;
 - distribution of Student Fee Types;
 - contribution of the course to the College strategic direction;
 - adequacy of relevant resources.
- 3.3 The outcome of the strategic course review, as determined by the Higher Education Council may be:
 - no change;
 - major, minor or substantial revision;
 - suspension or closure.

In the event of either of the first two outcomes, changes are to be processed via the Leadership Group and Academic Board. Where the outcome is a recommendation for suspension or closure, the Higher Education Council will make a recommendation to the Board of Photography Holdings Pty Ltd.

4. External Course Review

- 4.1 An external course review will be conducted according to the re-accreditation cycle of the courses of study and in accordance with the requirements of the HESF 2015.
- 4.2 Administration support will be provided to the external review panel to coordinate and collect data from the relevant sources and provide support to the review team.
- 4.3 The external review panel will provide a report to the Higher Education Council for review and will make recommendations on the teaching and learning, facilities, strategic fit and market viability of the course.
- 4.4 At the discretion of the Higher Education Council, an out of cycle course review may also be requested.

PSC Continuous Improvement Cycle

