

POLICY TITLE: Academic Quality Assurance
Framework

Purpose

Academic governance and the oversight of quality assurance in teaching and learning is a requirement of the *Higher Education Standards Framework 2015* established by section 58 of the *Tertiary Education Quality and Standards Agency Act 2011*. The purpose of this policy is to describe the Academic Quality Assurance framework utilised by Photography Studies College (Melbourne) to ensure the integrity and quality of its status as a higher education provider.

Policy

Photography Studies College (Melbourne) has an Academic Quality Assurance Framework of structures and processes that collectively achieve effective academic oversight of the academic quality of teaching and learning and regular review and improvement of the content, delivery and assessment of all its Higher Education courses.

This framework is underpinned by policies and procedures and a regular cycle of planning, implementation and monitoring, reporting and reviewing & performance enhancement.

The Academic Quality Assurance Framework

1. Corporate Governance

The Board of Photography Holdings Pty. Ltd “**Board**” is the formally constituted governing body in accordance with Standard 6 of the *Higher Education Standards Framework 2015*. A Board Charter outlines its roles and responsibilities on corporate governance and the oversight and accountability for the award of higher education qualifications.

The Board of Photography Holdings Pty. Ltd has established two specialist committees for its higher education functions; the Higher Education Council and the Academic Board.

The Higher Education Council which provides advice on the direction for, and oversight of, all the College’s higher education courses and the membership and operations generally of the Academic Board. The Higher Education Council is also responsible for advising on the development and content of the PSC Strategic Plan as it relates to higher education and its monitoring. The Strategic Plan, when approved by the Board of Photography Holdings Pty. Ltd, ensures the College’s future directions in higher education have been determined, that realistic targets are set and that progress against these targets are monitored and reviewed on a regular basis. The Higher Education Council advises the Board of Photography Holdings Pty. Ltd on the plan’s implementation in relation to higher education.

The Academic Board provides direct and ongoing oversight of the College’s higher educational processes and courses including overseeing and monitoring academic quality assurance processes, monitoring and approving student results and scholarships and the development, implementation and monitoring of academic policies and procedures for use in the College’s accredited higher education courses.

The Board of Photography Holdings Pty. Ltd remains ultimately responsible for the exercise of these advisory and delegated powers at all times, and may review and override any advice of the Higher Education Council, or decision of the Academic Board within the area of its delegated powers or advice provided under its 'additional functions'.

2. Academic Governance

The Academic Board provides oversight and responsibility for all academic decision-making processes to assure the quality of each course of study leading to a higher education award. An Academic Board Charter outlines its role and responsibilities on Academic Governance. The *Higher Education Standards Framework 2015* specifies academic governance requirements and expectations and the Regulatory Compliance Committee of the Board of Photography Holdings Pty Ltd monitors the evidence required to ensure adequacy of academic governance and quality assurance of academic standards against the *Framework* requirements.

3. Quality Control & Review

(a) Academic Standards

Photography Studies College (Melbourne) has developed many policies and procedures and methods in the assessment of Academic Standards. The Teaching and Learning Plan covers many elements of learner, teacher and College outcomes that are measured and reviewed on an annual basis. The College participates in benchmarking activities to ensure ongoing comparability with other higher education courses where applicable and to compare the Colleges performance and standards on teaching, student learning outcomes and engagement and graduate outcomes.

(b) Curriculum Development and Course Monitoring

The Academic Board determines and monitors the procedures for developing, recording and implementing changes to curriculum content, design and/or learning outcomes. The Academic Board ensures that the design of the learning outcomes for higher education course of study are specified, consistent with the level and field of education for the qualification awarded and informed by national and international comparators. This includes monitoring of the delivery of higher education courses to ensure learning activities are aligned with intended learning outcomes and provide students opportunities to develop and demonstrate their learning for each course of study.

The *Course Quality Control and Review Policy* specifies the mechanisms and cycles for reviewing and reporting on courses and subjects and for ensuring adequate benchmarking processes and procedures are in place.

Data relating to student outcomes and student performance is collected, monitored and benchmarked to ensure ongoing comparability with other higher education courses, and for the purposes of review, reflection and improvement.

The *Assessment Policy* specifies the quality control mechanisms for ensuring that methods of assessment are consistent with the learning outcomes being assessed, are capable of confirming that all specified learning outcomes are achieved and that

grades awarded reflect the level of student attainment. (*Higher Education Standards Framework 2015 Standard 1.4.3*)

(c) External Examiner and External Benchmarking

Assessment processes are moderated and validated annually by an External Examiner to provide assurance that methods of assessment are appropriate to the learning outcomes specified for the course of study, and are benchmarked against comparable courses.

The Academic Board will appoint a senior academic (who has not taught at the College in the preceding two years) as the External Examiner. Amongst other matters, the External Examiner must be able to assess the relativity and appropriateness of the College's grading and student assessment outcomes against comparable courses offered by other tertiary institutions.

To provide an external benchmark, the External Examiner will review a representative sample of graded student work from both folio and theory/coursework units within the College's degree programs. The precise selection of work for review will be determined by the Higher Education Course Director in consultation with the External Examiner, with the overarching objective being to provide a sufficient spread of graded student work in order for the External Examiner to provide a meaningful benchmark of the grading approach undertaken by the College's teaching staff across the College's degree programs.

The External Examiner will provide a report on the how the College's assessment outcomes compare to external benchmarks. This report will be considered by the Academic Board, and such action taken in response to it as considered necessary and appropriate by the Academic Board.

4. Academic Board Reporting Schedule

An Academic Board Reporting Schedule ensures regular reporting on Academic progress activity to the Academic Board. This reporting cycle enables the Academic Board to regulate the integrity and quality of outcomes to ensure academic standards are maintained and continuous improvement is occurring. Responsibility for the reports is to assigned members of the Leadership Group.

Academic Reporting Activity	Reporting Frequency
Student Numbers and Withdrawals	Quarterly
Student Attrition, Progression and Completions	Annually (prepared by College Accountant)
Student Success and Grade Distribution – by subject	end of Each Semester
Course Completion – by cohort	End of course cycle (3 year Full Degree cohort, 1 year pathway cohort)
Student Selection / Admission	Annually
Eligibility to Graduate	Annually
Student Progress	Quarterly
RPL / Credit Transfer arrangements	Annually
Scholarship and Community Engagement	end of Each Semester
Staff Qualifications	Bi-annually (prior to commencement of each semester)
Scholarship and Professional Development Activity	Bi-annually

Internal Annual Course Review	Annually
Individual Teaching and Learning Plan (staff reviews)	Bi-annually
Activities and Outcomes Report – Teaching and Learning Plan	Annually
Student Consultative Forum	Bi-annually

5. Scholarship/Teaching and Learning

The College has a Scholarship Framework, which demonstrates the integral nature of scholarship and its application across the College. The Strategic Plan sits at the centre of this Framework and is supported by 6 sectors: Institutional support; teaching and learning; business and strategic asset plans; teacher engagement; student engagement and workforce development. The Teaching and Learning Plan, the Student Engagement Strategy and the Workforce Development Plan set the targets for success in these key areas.

The quality of teaching and learning is measured through the Individual Teaching and Learning Plan and through a number of benchmarking activities including student evaluation data and student cohort data.

The Teaching and Learning Plan is reviewed on an annual basis. Student evaluation data informs this review. Teaching staff undertake a self-review process using an Individual Teaching and Learning Plan each semester and meet with the Academic Director to discuss their achievements of targets against the Teaching and Learning Plan and against student satisfaction with the subjects they teach. Outcomes and achievements against key performance targets are reported to the Academic Board through the Internal Annual Course Review process.

Scholarship activity is recorded and reported to the Academic Board on a half yearly cycle.

Scholarship and Teaching and Learning is also underpinned by a range of policies that support teaching and learning including but not limited to:

- Recruitment
- Professional Development Policy
- Performance Planning and Review
- Teacher Salary Structure
- Course Quality Control and Review
- Student Consultation and Support
- Student Progress and Exclusion
- Staff Code of Conduct
- Assessment
- RPL and Credit Transfer
- Intellectual and Academic Freedom

Related Documentation

Policies

Academic Policies
 Student Policies
 Staff Policies

Procedures, Forms & Documents

PSC Strategic Plan

PSC Teaching and Learning Plan
PSC Scholarship Framework
PSC Student Engagement Strategy
Individual Teaching and Learning Plan Review
Student Evaluation Forms
Benchmarking Reports

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Julie Moss - Managing Director

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