



TIIS
THE INSTITUTE
OF INTERNATIONAL
STUDIES



Course Review Policy and Procedure

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Purpose

This policy establishes the principles, responsibilities, and procedures for the periodic review and continuous improvement of academic courses at TIIS. It ensures that all courses maintain academic quality, relevance, regulatory compliance, and alignment with the Higher Education Standards Framework (Threshold Standards) 2021.

Rationale

This policy establishes a rigorous, quality-assured framework for the systematic review of all TIIS courses. It ensures that each course remains aligned with the relevant level descriptors of the Australian Qualifications Framework (AQF) and undergoes regular, including external, review to maintain ongoing compliance and relevance. Recognising the importance of continuous improvement and academic excellence, all TIIS courses are subject to scheduled, comprehensive evaluation through either Major or Minor Course Reviews.

Scope

This policy applies to all accredited coursework and higher degree by research (HDR) courses delivered by TIIS. It covers:

- Major Course Reviews (every five years),
- Minor Course Reviews (mid-cycle),
- Ongoing course monitoring and continuous improvement

Definitions

Term	Definition
Academic Board	The principal academic governance body at TIIS responsible for academic quality assurance, including approval of course reviews and related policies.
AQF (Australian Qualifications Framework)	The national policy for regulated qualifications in Australian education and training. It defines qualification levels and learning outcomes.
Benchmarking	A process of comparing academic processes, standards, and outcomes with those of other higher education institutions to ensure quality and continuous improvement.
Course	A formally approved program of study leading to an accredited qualification, including both coursework and higher degree by research programs.
Course Review Committee	A formally appointed group responsible for conducting either Major or Minor reviews of TIIS courses in line with this policy.
Dean	The senior academic officer at TIIS responsible for overseeing course quality, academic leadership, and coordination of review processes.
External Academic	An academic expert not employed by TIIS, providing independent input into course reviews to ensure impartiality and academic standards.
Higher Degree by Research (HDR)	A postgraduate research qualification, such as a Master by Research or Doctoral degree.

Implementation Action Plan	A structured plan developed after a course review to address recommendations and improve course quality.
Learning & Teaching Committee	A standing committee of the Academic Board overseeing coursework programs and advising on learning and teaching matters.
Major Course Review	A comprehensive and formal evaluation of a course conducted every five years, including external participation and benchmarking.
Minor Course Review	An internal mid-cycle review that monitors course quality and the implementation of Major Review recommendations.
Online Learning Team	A specialist team supporting the design, delivery, and quality assurance of online and blended learning experiences.
Peer-to-Peer Unit Review	An annual internal review process where academic staff assess each other's units for quality and continuous improvement.
Research & Higher Degrees Committee (RHDC)	A standing committee responsible for governance of HDR programs and research training.
Specialisation Subcommittee	A working group formed to review a course specialisation in detail and report findings to the Major Course Review Committee.
TEQSA (Tertiary Education Quality and Standards Agency)	The national regulatory and quality assurance agency for higher education in Australia.
Threshold Standards	The minimum acceptable standards required of higher education providers, as defined in the Higher Education Standards Framework (Threshold Standards) 2021.

Principles

TIIS is committed to providing engaging, industry-relevant, and contemporary courses at the appropriate Australian Qualifications Framework (AQF) level. The principles guiding Course reviews are that TIIS courses should enable students to demonstrate their learning at the appropriate level and are of a high standard in compliance with regulations.

- **Quality Assurance:** Reviews are conducted against internal policies and external benchmarks, including TEQSA standards.
- **Stakeholder Engagement:** Input from students, staff, alumni, industry, and professional bodies informs the review process.
- **Transparency and Accountability:** Review processes, decisions, and follow-up actions are documented, monitored, and reported.
- **Continuous Improvement:** Recommendations arising from reviews are actioned through formal implementation plans.

Roles and Responsibilities

Role	Responsibility
Academic Board	Endorses Terms of Reference; reviews and approves course review reports and monitors action plans.
Dean	Oversees all review processes; appoints review committees and ensures implementation of recommendations.
Associate Deans	Support evidence gathering; ensure industry engagement and academic input.

Course Review Committees	Conduct major and minor course reviews in accordance with approved Terms of Reference.
Learning & Teaching Committee / Research & Higher Degrees Committee	Review reports and recommend course improvements to Academic Board.

Major Course Review

A comprehensive Major Review of each accredited course offered by TIIS shall be undertaken every five years from the date of the previous major review. These reviews are conducted in accordance with the TIIS Course Review Policy and Procedure and the Learning and Teaching Plan, ensuring alignment with regulatory standards, institutional goals, and academic quality assurance principles.

- Conducted every five years from the previous major review.
- Initiated by the Dean and endorsed by the Academic Board.
- Aligned with TIIS Course Review Policy, Learning and Teaching Plan, and TEQSA standards.

Review Scope:

- Academic design, assessment, outcomes
- Emerging trends, risks, delivery modes
- Benchmarking and peer review data
- Student feedback and performance trends
- Implementation of previous recommendations

Minor Course Review

A Minor Course Review will be conducted at the mid-point between Major Course Reviews. These serve as a checkpoint to assess implementation of prior recommendations and course performance. The process is overseen by the Dean and chaired by a senior internal academic.

- Conducted midway between major reviews.
- Overseen by the Dean; chaired by a senior internal academic.

Review Scope:

- Progress on Major Review Implementation Plan
- Regulatory and reaccreditation responses
- Student and alumni feedback
- Staff and industry input
- Student performance data and benchmarking

Ongoing Course Improvement

The Dean, Associate Deans, Academic Board, and relevant committees will continuously monitor course performance using:

- Student and stakeholder feedback;
- Course-level performance metrics;
- Annual Peer-to-Peer Unit Reviews.

Review Reporting Mechanism

The Academic Dean will draft a review report including commendations, recommendations, and affirmations to

- **Learning & Teaching Committee** and/or
- **Research & Higher Degrees Committee**, then
- **Academic Board**, along with an Implementation Action Plan for approval.

Each Review Report must include:

- Summary of findings and evidence collected.
- Recommendations for improvement.
- A detailed action plan with responsible parties and timelines.
- Mechanisms for monitoring and evaluating implementation

The Academic Board may approve, modify, or reject the report and recommendations. Accepted actions will be recorded on the TIIS Action Plan register. The Dean is responsible for reporting implementation progress to the Academic Board until all approved recommendations have been actioned.

TIIS Course Review and Improvement Procedure

1. Major Course Review

1.1 Review Cycle and Alignment

A comprehensive Major Review of each accredited course offered by TIIS shall be undertaken every five years from the date of the previous major review. These reviews are conducted in accordance with the TIIS Course Review Policy and Procedure and the Learning and Teaching Plan, ensuring alignment with regulatory standards, institutional goals, and academic quality assurance principles.

1.2 Major Course Review Committee

The Major Course Review Committee (MCRC) is convened by the Academic Board upon nomination by the Dean. The Committee composition will differ based on the course type:

Coursework Courses:

The Committee will include:

- **Chair:** A senior academic external and independent to TIIS;
- **Discipline Expert:** An academic with a PhD in a relevant field, external and independent.
- **Industry Representative:** A member representing a relevant employer, professional body, or member from the TIIS Alumni;
- **TIIS Academic Staff:** At least one Discipline Leader familiar with the course(s);
- **Student or Graduate:** One current student or recent graduate from a relevant course;
- **Additional Members:** As determined by the Dean, based on expertise or course needs.

Higher Degree by Research (HDR) Courses

The Committee will include:

- **Chair:** A senior academic with demonstrated research leadership, external and independent.

- **HDR Supervisor:** An external academic with a PhD in a relevant field and research supervisory experience.

1.3 Scope and Evidence Base

The MCRC will evaluate a portfolio of evidence, including course documentation, performance data, and stakeholder feedback. The review will be guided by the Terms of Reference (Appendix A), focusing on:

- Academic design, content, and learning outcomes;
- Assessment integrity and student achievement;
- Cohesion and progression across units;
- Emerging trends, delivery modes, and risks;
- Teaching quality and research supervision;
- Feedback from students, alumni, employers, and staff;
- Peer reviews, benchmarking, and regulatory compliance;
- Course viability, enrolment trends, and resource adequacy;
- Implementation and impact of previous review recommendations.

1.4 Evidence Collection and Committee Support

The Associate Dean (or nominee) and the Quality and Accreditation Manager will compile the relevant materials. The Dean must endorse the final evidence portfolio prior to submission to the Committee.

1.5 Specialisation Subcommittees

For courses with distinct specialisations, the Dean may establish Specialisation Subcommittees to report into the MCRC:

- **Function:** Review curriculum and assessment quality within the discipline;
- **Membership:** Associate Dean (Chair), Discipline Leader, TIIS academic, Online Learning Team representative, and one external academic;
- **Timing:** Held within 6 months prior to the Major Course Review;
- **Output:** A detailed report for integration into the overall course review.

1.6 Additional Working Groups

Other working groups may be appointed by the Dean to address specific components of the review process.

1.7 Reporting and Endorsement

Upon completion, the Chair of the MCRC will submit a report outlining findings, commendations, affirmations, and recommendations. The Dean will review the report and identify whether any proposed changes require reaccreditation under TEQSA guidelines.

1.8 Implementation and Academic Oversight

The Dean will convene a working group to develop an Implementation Action Plan, which, along with the review report, will be submitted to:

- Learning & Teaching Committee (for coursework courses);
- Research & Higher Degrees Committee (for HDR courses); and
- Academic Board for review, discussion, and approval.

The Academic Board may accept, amend, or reject any recommendation, and approved actions will be entered into the TIIS Action Plan register.

1.9 Monitoring Implementation

The Dean will report to the AB on the progress of approved recommendations until full implementation is achieved.

2. Minor Course Review

2.1 Review Cycle and Purpose

A Minor Course Review will be conducted at the mid-point between Major Course Reviews. These serve as a checkpoint to assess implementation of prior recommendations and course performance. The process is overseen by the Dean and chaired by a senior internal academic.

2.2 Committee Composition

The Minor Course Review Committee is appointed by the Dean and comprises:

- **Chair:** Senior internal academic.
- **Academic Staff:** At least one relevant discipline expert;
- **Student Central Representative** (for coursework courses only);
- **Other Members:** As appropriate.

2.3 Scope and Evaluation

The Committee reviews progress on prior recommendations and assesses course performance based on:

- Approved Implementation Plan from previous Major Course Review;
- Regulatory or accreditation outcomes;
- Formal and informal student feedback;
- Academic staff input;
- Alumni Industry Panel feedback (for coursework);
- Student outcomes and benchmarking data.

2.4 Evidence Collection and Review

Relevant data will be gathered by the Chair, one academic staff member, and the Quality and Accreditation Manager. The Dean must review and endorse the documentation prior to the Committee's Deliberations.

2.5 Reporting and Academic Board Submission

The Committee Chair will draft a review report including commendations, recommendations, and affirmations. This will be presented by the Dean to the:

- **Learning & Teaching Committee** and/or
- **Research & Higher Degrees Committee**, then
- **Academic Board**, along with an Implementation Action Plan for approval.

Recommendations requiring new course accreditation will be identified in accordance with TEQSA advice.

2.6 Academic Board Decision

The Academic Board may approve, modify, or reject the report and recommendations. Accepted actions will be recorded on the TIIS Action Plan register.

2.7 Monitoring Implementation

The Dean is responsible for reporting implementation progress until all approved recommendations have been actioned.

3. Ongoing Course Improvement

3.1 Continuous Monitoring

The Dean, Associate Deans, Academic Board, and relevant committees will continuously monitor course performance using:

- Student and stakeholder feedback;
- Course-level performance metrics;
- Annual Unit Reviews.

3.2 Industry Engagement

Associate Deans are responsible for maintaining regular engagement with industry and professions related to their discipline areas. Engagements must occur at least biennially. The Industry Engagement Manager will submit reports from the TIIS Alumni Industry Panel to the relevant committees for review.

3.3 Committee Recommendations

The Learning & Teaching Committee and/or the Research & Higher Degrees Committee may recommend course enhancements to the Academic Board based on monitoring and engagement activities.

3.4 Compliance and Regulatory Oversight

The Dean will ensure that any course modifications are assessed for compliance with TEQSA regulatory requirements, including whether they constitute a new course requiring re-accreditation.

Policy Review

This policy will be reviewed every three years or sooner if significant changes occur in regulatory requirements, institutional operations, or the higher education environment.

Related Policies

- Academic Quality Assurance Framework
- Assessment Policy
- Conflict of Interest Policy and Procedure
- Course Development, Delivery and Review Policy
- Course Review Policy
- Course of Study Termination Policy
- HESF
- 1.4, 2.1, 3.1, 3.2, 3.3, 5.1, 5.3, 6.3

Related Documents

- TIIS Learning and Teaching Plan
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- TIIS Benchmarking Policy
- Higher Education Standards Framework (Threshold Standards) 2021
- TEQSA Guidance Notes on Course Accreditation

Version History

Policy title	Course Review Policy and Procedure
Current version	2.0
Previous versions	A6 Course Review & Improvement Policy
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1.0	Academic Board	25 February 2016	
1.1	Academic Board	7 October 2020	Minor changes
2.0	Academic Board	25 February 2026	Policy Name: Course Review Policy and Procedure

*****END OF POLICY and PROCEDURE*****

Appendix A - Terms of Reference for Major Course Reviews

Terms of Reference for Course Reviews will draw upon the Higher Education Standards Framework (Threshold Standards) 2021, notably:

1. For all Courses, focusing on the design and delivery of fully online courses:
 - a. Section 1.4 Learning Outcomes and Assessment, Standards 1.4.1 to 1.4.4 which outline requirements of design of learning outcomes, constructive alignment including with AQF levels and of assessments with learning outcomes, and demonstration of achievement of learning outcomes.
 - b. Section 3.1 Course Design, Standards 3.1.1 to 3.1.4, which outline requirements of Course specifications, engagement with advanced knowledge and inquiry, and relationship between Teaching and learning activities designed for the achievement of learning outcomes, regardless of place or study or mode of delivery.
 - c. Section 5.3 Monitoring, Review and Improvement, Standards 5.1 to 5.3 which advise the scope and types of evidence to be considered in Course Reviews.
2. In addition to point 1 above, Research by Higher Degree Course Reviews will also incorporate Section 1.4 Learning Outcomes and Assessment, Standards 1.4.5 to 1.4.7 which are specific to research training.
3. Section 3.1 Course Design, Standard 3.1.5 must be considered for any TIIS Course that requires professional accreditation for 'graduates to be eligible to practice'.
4. Section 3.3 Educational Support and Learning Resources (with the perspective of fully online courses).
5. Further, each Course Review must consider the amount of change since the Course was last accredited.

Appendix B - Terms of Reference for Minor Course Reviews

Terms of Reference for Minor Course Reviews will draw upon the Higher Education Standards Framework (Threshold Standards) 2021 to guide the members of the Review in ascertaining the effectiveness of the implementation of outcomes from the previous Major Course Review.

1. For all Courses, focusing on the design and delivery of fully online courses:
 - a. Section 1.4 Learning Outcomes and Assessment, Standards 1.4.1 to 1.4.4 which outline requirements of design of learning outcomes, constructive alignment including with AQF levels and of assessments with learning outcomes, and demonstration of achievement of learning outcomes.
 - b. Section 3.1 Course Design, Standards 3.1.1 to 3.1.4, which outline requirements of Course specifications, engagement with advanced knowledge and inquiry, and relationship between learning activities designed for the achievement of learning outcomes, regardless of place or study or mode of delivery.
2. In addition to point 1 above, Research by Higher Degree Course Reviews will incorporate Section 1.4 Learning Outcomes and Assessment, Standards 1.4.5 to 1.4.7 which are specific to research training.
3. Further, each Course Review must consider:
 - a. any TIIS Course that requires professional accreditation for 'graduates to be eligible to practice' as per Standard 3.1.5
 - b. the amount of change since the Course was last accredited.

Appendix C - Terms of Reference for Specialisations Subcommittees:

Terms of Reference for Specialisations Subcommittees will draw upon the Higher Education Standards Framework (Threshold Standards) 2021, notably:

1. For all specialisations relevant to each award:
 - a. Section 1.4 Learning Outcomes and Assessment, Standards 1.4.1 to 1.4.4 which outline requirements of design of learning outcomes, constructive alignment including with AQF levels and of assessments with learning outcomes, and demonstration of achievement of learning outcomes.
 - b. Section 3.1 Course Design, Standards 3.1.1 to 3.1.4, which outline requirements of award specifications, engagement with advanced knowledge and inquiry, and relationship between Teaching and learning activities designed for the achievement of learning outcomes, regardless of place or study or mode of delivery.
2. Further, each Specialisation Subcommittee must consider:
 - a. any TIIS award that requires professional accreditation for 'graduates to be eligible to practice' as per Standard 3.1.5,
 - b. the amount of change since the award was last accredited.