Course and Subject Quality Assurance and Review Procedure

Section 1 - Purpose

(1) This procedure supports the Course and Subject Policy by stating detailed requirements for quality assurance and review of courses and subjects.

Scope

(2) This procedure applies to all academic staff, and to any non-academic staff involved in the design, delivery and review of courses and subjects.

(3) The Course and Subject Life Cycle Procedure states requirements in relation to external advisory committees, which play a part in comprehensive course reviews and may advise on improvements to courses following optimisation framework the decisions and annual course health checks.

(4) The Assessment Policy and Assessment - Conduct of Coursework Assessment and Examinations Procedure state requirements for moderation of assessment in subjects and other arrangements to ensure consistency and fairness of assessment.

(5) The Assessment - Research Components of Coursework Courses Procedure lists practices to ensure a high quality of supervision of students in research component subjects.

Section 2 - Policy

(6) This procedure supports the Course and Subject Policy and should be read alongside that policy.

Section 3 - Procedure

Annual course report

(7) The Course and Subject Policy states that the Executive Dean of the faculty that manages a course must ensure it undergoes an annual course health check (annual course report).

(8) Annual course reports ensure regular monitoring of course quality, viability and relevance between comprehensive course reviews and the quadrant result from the optimisation framework. These health checks will identify course improvement actions needed, and records of these health checks will inform comprehensive reviews and Institution Student Performance Report.

(9) For each course, the Office of Planning and Analytics will provide an online data pack with performance criteria, data measures and performance tags against the measures.

(10) Courses will be assigned a depth of annual review based on their performance in the diagnostic data measures compared to benchmarks. The measures will include data from the past five years on:

a. student load,
b. first year attrition,
c. progress rate (first year and total),
d. completion rates,
e. student feedback,
f. financial viability data, and
g. marketing data.

Where possible, sector-wide benchmarks will be included.

(11) Each data measure will receive a favourable performance (green) or unfavourable performance (red) tag depending on whether they meet or fall below specified thresholds. The proportion of green to red tags will be used to decide the depth of review.

(12) The Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Academic) will decide the thresholds and favourable/unfavourable (green/red) proportion ranges for a given year, in consultation with faculties and relevant central divisions.

(13) The Division of Learning and Teaching will support faculties in:

a. interpreting the data,
b. compiling the review report, and
c. developing solutions to issues identified in review.

(14) The Executive Dean or the Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Academic) may change the initially assigned level of depth of health check of any course.

(15) The Executive Dean or the Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Academic) will provide strategic insights and direction following the course quadrant result in the optimisation framework.

(16) The Associate Dean, Academic will coordinate the faculty's annual course performance review work in synchronisation with the student performance reporting, optimisation framework and load planning activities, which the Course Directors will carry out, in collaboration with Heads of School and others.

(17) Each annual course report will be submitted for endorsement to the relevant school and faculty committees before it is brought for approval to the Faculty Board.

(18) Once the report has been approved, any identified improvements will be added to the faculty improvement plan and student performance report(s) and actions.

(19) Where the outcome of an annual course report is that the course must make a case for continuing to be offered, one or more workshops will be held with the course's external advisory committee to identify how it can better meet the needs of its market.

(20) The faculty will report to University Courses Committee (for coursework courses) or University Research Committee (for higher degree by research courses) on progress with the improvement actions arising from annual course report, by providing the updated faculty improvement plan.

(21) The Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Academic) will each year review the process for the annual course report, and criteria for depth of health check, in consultation with faculties.

Other course quality assurance activities

(22) Academic staff are expected to undertake other course quality assurance activities beyond the requirements of

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the annual course report, including:

a. assessment moderation (see the [Assessment - Conduct of Coursework Assessment and Examinations Procedure](#)),
b. checking of subject outlines before each subject delivery (see the 'Quality assurance of subjects' heading below),
c. student performance metrics comprehensive analysis and reporting (see student performance reporting),
d. optimisation framework analysis and decisions (see optimisation framework),
e. benchmarking (see the benchmarking section below),
f. activities related to student feedback and course data analysis, and
g. activities related to the external advisory committee (see the [Course and Subject Life Cycle Procedure](#)).

(23) Where such activities lead to findings that the course needs improving, the Course Director is expected to lead development of and propose improvements, to ensure that the course:

a. maintains a high standard and delivers an excellent learning experience, and
b. is well positioned for its next comprehensive review.

Comprehensive course review

(24) The [Course and Subject Policy](#) requires the Executive Dean of the faculty that manages a course to ensure it undergoes a comprehensive course review (CCR) within seven years following its initial approval or the most recent CCR and reaccreditation of the course. To achieve this:

a. the CCR will begin within five calendar years after the previous University Courses Committee reaccreditation decision, and
b. the faculty will provide the CCR report to University Courses Committee (for a coursework course) or University Research Committee (for a higher degree by research course) within six calendar years after the previous reaccreditation decision.

(25) The faculty that manages the course will facilitate its CCR, ensure it is appropriately resourced, and cover any costs associated with it.

(26) The Course Director, or another senior academic staff member (e.g. Head of Discipline) nominated by the Executive Dean, will lead preparation of the CCR report for endorsement to (as relevant) the Faculty Courses Committee or Faculty Research Committee which will consider and endorse the CCR recommendation to (as relevant) University Courses Committee or University Research Committee.

(27) The University Courses Committee or University Research Committee will make a final recommendation to the Academic Senate, who has the delegation to approve or reject the reaccreditation of the course.

(28) CCR will incorporate all the business case elements into their considerations and documentation, including consideration of emerging developments in the field of education, mode of delivery, the changing needs of students and identify risks to the quality of the course.

(29) CCR will assess the course's viability (optimisation quadrant result), load planning/outcomes, strategic alignment (University and Faculty), research, scholarships strengths, potential commercial interest and how well it is competing with similar courses at other institutions.

(30) To gain a detailed understanding of students' experience of the course and ideas on how the course can be improved, CCRs will be informed by consultation with current students in the course in the form of:

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a. focus groups or individual student interviews, and/or

b. a survey designed for the purpose.

(31) CCRs will be informed by, at a minimum, the following external sources of information about the course:

    a. results of benchmarking with similar courses at other Australian universities of:

        i. student performance (including attrition, progression, completions) by sessions, entry pathways, location of study including third party deliveries, study mode and student achievement, and

        ii. the assessment methods and grading of students' achievement of learning outcomes for selected subjects in the course,

    b. a review by a senior academic leading or teaching in a similar course at another tertiary education institution, of the curriculum and the course's annual course performance review reports since its previous reaccreditation, and

    c. a workshop of the external advisory committee.

    d. Where a course has undergone an external professional reaccreditation process within two years before the date of submission of the CCR report to University Courses Committee, this meets the requirements in subclauses b. and c. above, but not the requirement in subclause a.

(32) CCR will include developing an action plan to address any issues with the course identified by the review and data may be used to inform admissions criteria and approaches to course design, teaching, supervision, learning and academic support.

(33) In finalising the CCR, must demonstrate in documentation:

    a. consideration of all planning issues that may have an impact on quality, risk management and successful delivery and management of a course must be addressed, and

    b. evidence of the staffing complement ensuring educational, academic support and administrative needs has been included.

(34) When the CCR report has been endorsed by (as relevant) the Faculty Courses Committee or Faculty Research Committee, the Deputy Dean or Executive Dean will submit the CCR report to (as relevant) University Courses Committee or University Research Committee, (and subsequently reported to Faculty Board to provide governing assurances). The report will make one of the following recommendations to the committee:

    a. renew accreditation of the course without conditions,

    b. renew accreditation of the course with recommended changes,

    c. renew accreditation with required changes,

    d. suspend intakes to the course for [specified period], or

    e. discontinue the course after [specified period] during which intakes will be suspended from admissions intakes to phase-out the course, following which a teach-out period may occur.

(35) The relevant committee (University Courses Committee or University Research Committee) will endorse and recommend approval of recommendations to Academic Senate.

(36) Academic Senate approves or rejects the reaccreditation or discontinuance of the course.

(37) The faculty and (as relevant) University Courses Committee or University Research Committee will receive reports of progress with any required actions and/or recommended actions as part of the updated faculty improvement report. The relevant committee will report outcomes to Academic Senate.

(38) The Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Academic) will maintain a schedule of all courses and their due dates for comprehensive course review, in collaboration with Executive Deans.

Extensions of accreditation

(39) Requests for an extension of accreditation period for all coursework courses and provides for extensions of course accreditation in exceptional circumstances. The Higher Education Standards require Charles Sturt University, as a self-accrediting university, to conduct periodic comprehensive reviews of all courses (at least every seven years), as such extensions of accreditation are to be approved by our peak governing body, Academic Senate.

(40) Requests for an extension of accreditation period should include:

a. the proposed duration of the extension,
b. whether an extension of accreditation period has previously been applied for and approved or rejected,
c. the course performance data (annual course report and optimisation quadrant) for the course for which the extension of accreditation period applies,
d. whether the extension should also apply to all active external articulation arrangements associated with the course,
e. the rationale to request the extension of accreditation period, and
f. the reaccreditation action plan and timeline.

(41) Requests for extension of accreditation period are approved as follows:

a. The Associate Dean, Academic submits the business case proposal to the Faculty Board.
b. The Faculty Board endorses (with or without conditions) or rejects the business case.
c. The Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Academic) approves or rejects the business case request for extension and makes a recommendation to University Courses Committee.
d. Following approval of the business case, the University Courses Committee endorses (with or without conditions) or rejects the requested extension and makes a recommendation to Academic Senate.
e. Academic Senate approves or rejects the request for extension of accreditation.
f. Upon approval of the extension by the Academic Senate, the course record and, where applicable, the external articulation arrangement records in the curriculum management system to reflect the new accreditation end date.

Academic quality assurance of courses involving third parties

(42) Faculty Board oversee academic quality assurance and report annually to University Courses Committee. Faculty Board coordinates faculties' quality assurance of courses delivered with third parties. Third parties are subject to the same compliance and assurance requirements with standards of the [Higher Education Standards Framework](#) and the University is responsible for ensuring third party providers are compliant.

(43) For these courses, faculties, in collaboration with administrative divisions and the Division of Learning and Teaching, will have mechanisms to ensure the ongoing:

a. effectiveness of teaching materials and strategies to achieve the subject and course learning outcomes,
b. quality of teaching,
c. quality and integrity of assessment including all processes involved in assessment,
d. provision of support services, availability of learning resources (IT, library), and quality of facilities, and
e. effectiveness of processes for student feedback and responsiveness to student feedback.

(44) The teaching faculty or (as relevant) the Office of Global Engagement will ensure that any issue with any of the above is addressed promptly usually via the Academic Management Committee, with effectiveness monitored by Faculty Courses Committee, Faculty Assessment Committee and Faculty Board.

(45) The formal agreement between the University and the third party will detail:

a. the expectations of all parties concerning course provisions,

b. the responsibilities of the third party, faculty and administrative and support areas for operation of the course, and

c. the minimum requirements for quality assurance of the course on the part of the third party, the faculty, relevant academic committees and, where appropriate, other units of the University.

(46) Faculty Boards will report annually to Academic Quality and Standards Committee on academic quality in partnered deliveries. The teaching faculty or (as relevant) the Office of Global Engagement will ensure that any issue with any of the above is addressed promptly Faculty Boards will report annually to Academic Quality and Standards Committee on academic quality in partnered deliveries. Reporting includes ensuring the academic quality of the courses considers the academic standards and student experience in comparison with other offerings of the course at Charles Sturt University.

(47) Academic Quality and Standards Committee will provide a consolidated annual report on academic quality in partnered deliveries to Academic Senate.

Academic Management Committee	Management committee responsible for management and quality assurance activities and operates for each third party arrangement. They are required for both international and domestic arrangements and the relevant Executive Dean (or delegate) chairs the committee as the delivery arrangements require engagement of multiple Schools and sometimes faculties. The committee reports to the relevant Faculty Board. In addition to academic governance, key activities to assure partnership arrangements must be completed: - Annual engagement plan - Annual review of partnership - Annual credit audit - Maintenance of Partnership Manual

Academic quality assurance of courses managed by divisions

(48) Where it is necessary for a course to be managed by an administrative division of the University rather than by a faculty, academic governance and academic management of the course will be as follows:

a. For academic governance committee approvals and oversight, the course will be aligned with a faculty. The faculty's academic governance committees will make decisions and oversee quality of the course in the same way as they do for courses managed by the faculty.

b. Academic decisions will be made by a position approximately equivalent in level to the position stated as the decision maker in the relevant academic policy or procedure. That is:

    i. a decision allocated to a Head of School, Associate Dean (Academic) or Sub Dean will be made by a Director, Associate Director, Deputy Pro Vice-Chancellor or Sub Dean who reports directly to the head of the division,

    ii. a decision allocated to a Deputy Dean or Chair of Faculty Assessment Committee, Faculty Courses Committee or Faculty Research Committee will be made by the head of the division (an Executive Director or Pro Vice-Chancellor), and

    iii. a decision allocated to an Executive Dean will be made by the head of the division (an Executive Director or Pro Vice-Chancellor).

Student performance reporting

(49) The [Course and Subject Policy](#) states that the Executive Dean must ensure an annual comprehensive review of student performance metrics and improvement actions are completed and evaluated.

(50) The Executive Leadership Team will decide the benchmarks and University targets and the Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Academic) ensures that the report aligns with the integrated functional approach.

(51) The Executive Dean and the Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Academic) will provide strategic insights and direction on the focus areas and improvements to ensure alignment with the annual TEQSA risk assessment, load planning and principles, benchmarks, University targets and strategic, portfolio and faculty plans.

(52) The Associate Dean, Academic will coordinate the faculty's comprehensive analysis and production of the student performance report in synchronisation with the annual course reports, optimisation framework and load planning activities, in collaboration with Heads of School, third party providers and others.

(53) Annual comprehensive analysis of student performance metrics is viewed by:

- a. Faculty
- b. Cohort (including higher degree by research, third party providers and pathways)
- c. Agent
- d. Basis of admissions
- e. Campus type
- f. Credit package
- g. Domesticity
- h. Field of education
- i. First Nations
- j. Home location
- k. Socio-economic status.

(54) For each faculty, the Office of Planning and Analytics will provide data packs with performance criteria, data measures and performance against the measures.

(55) Performance in the diagnostic data measures are compared to benchmarks and targets. The measures will include data from the past five years on:

- a. student load,
- b. first year attrition,
- c. progress rate (first year and total),
- d. completion rates,
- e. student feedback, and
- f. graduate outcomes.

Where possible, sector-wide benchmarks will be included.

(56) Each data measure will receive a favourable performance or unfavourable performance indicator depending on whether they meet or fall below specified benchmark.

(57) The Office of Planning and Analytics will support faculties in:

- a. interpreting the data,

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b. compiling the Faculty Student Performance Report, and

c. developing solutions to issues identified in analysis.

(58) Each Faculty Student Performance Report will be submitted for endorsement to the relevant school and faculty committees before it is brought for approval to the Faculty Board.

(59) Once the report has been approved, any improvements that it identifies as needed will be linked to the faculty improvement plan.

(60) The Faculty Student Performance Report will incorporate the Annual Course Report actions and be provided to the Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Academic) to form part of the Institution Student Performance Report.

(61) The Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Academic) will subsequently consolidate and provide these reports to Academic Quality and Standards Committee, University Courses Committee (for coursework courses) or University Research Committee (for higher degree by research courses) with each committee providing insights and improvements, where needed, and endorsement for submission to Academic Senate.

(62) The Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Academic) will submit the Institution Student Performance Report to Academic Senate.

(63) The Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Academic) will coordinate the monitoring of actions and reporting of actions to the Executive Leadership Team and Academic Senate, ensuring the evaluation of actions occurs annually and is included in the Institution Student Performance Report, in alignment with the action reporting framework.

(64) The Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Academic) will each year review the process and timeframes for student performance reporting, ensuring annual governing committee and management committee annual work plans are updated, in consultation with faculties and others.

Optimisation framework

(65) The [Course and Subject Policy](#) states that the Executive Dean of the faculty that manages a course must ensure it undergoes an evaluation against the optimisation framework including courses involving third party providers.

(66) The underlying rationale of the optimisation framework is to contribute to a sustainable University with the following key focus areas:

a. Reduce unviable course and subject offerings.

b. Consolidate similar degrees.

c. Implement a leaner course delivery model.

d. Revenue diversification.

(67) The Executive Leadership Team will decide the benchmarks and University targets.

(68) The Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Academic) and Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Research) ensure that the report aligns with the integrated functional approach and strategic course profile.

(69) The Executive Dean will provide strategic insights and direction on the focus courses for improvements and ensure alignment with:

a. the optimisation framework underlying rationale,

b. University targets and strategic portfolio and faculty plans,

c. annual course reports,

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d. student Performance focus areas for improvements,

e. load planning principles, and

f. strategic course profile.

(70) The Associate Dean, Academic will coordinate the faculty's course results review in synchronisation with the annual course reports, student performance reporting and load planning activities, in collaboration with Heads of School, third party providers and others.

(71) Evaluation against the optimisation framework ensure regular monitoring of courses across four domains:

a. Quality – overall student satisfaction, teaching quality, accreditation/course review outcomes and student performance data.

b. Profitability – subject viability, Pilbara course profitability data, net profit margin percental (including per EFTSL percentage) and course size.

c. Strategic fit – relevant University strategy and performance (e.g. education, research strategy, ERA strengths, international strategy, campus futures).

d. Market orientation – equivalent full-time study load (EFTSL), market share and trajectory, domestic and international demand, graduate employment and appeal to market segments.

Each domain reviews the data and a number of performance criteria.

(72) Application of the data will result in each course being categorised into an optimisation quadrant with an associated guide to the decision and action needed:

Matrix Quadrant	Decision Guide	Action
Meets Threshold Note: Annual Course Report = Medium/Weak Renew	Business as usual	No action is required.
Review Fit and Purpose Reconsider Note: Annual Course Report = Medium/Weak	Course Review Strategic Review Phase Out	Action decided at annual Faculty workshop. Course Director will look at the work linked to a decision and capture in either Annual Course Report or Student Performance Report Action.

(73) The Office of Planning and Analytics will provide a course matrix dashboard, linked to annual course reports (health data) and load planning reports and underlying detailed matrix data.

(74) Course decisions and high-level actions will be recorded and included in the load planning reports. Final outcomes for load planning are endorsed by the chair of the load planning steering committee (Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Academic) and reported to the Executive Leadership Team for approval.

(75) Any improvement actions to the course that it identifies as needed will be added/linked to the faculty improvement plan.

(76) The Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Academic) will each year review the process for the optimisation framework evaluation, and criteria for depth of check, in consultation with the Load Planning Steering Committee.

Benchmarking

(77) Faculties, in collaboration with the divisions, will benchmark courses against similar courses offered by other higher education providers, in order to improve them and ensure course learning outcomes are equivalent.

(78) Comprehensive course review must include benchmarking of student cohorts' success against comparable

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courses of study; the section on comprehensive course review above specifies the aspects that this benchmarking must include.

(79) The Executive Dean or their nominee (such as a Head of School or Course Director) will oversee any benchmarking activity; the Division of Learning and Teaching provides advice on these activities.

(80) Benchmarking involves:

    a. comparing similar learning and teaching tasks, processes and their outcomes, and

    b. setting goals for improvement, and prioritising areas for change and resources for these, based on the evidence.

(81) Each benchmarking activity will be funded by the area responsible for the course (the faculty) or subject (the school).

(82) In arranging benchmarking, faculties will define the expected outcomes in consultation with the benchmarking partner.

Planning benchmarking

(83) For each benchmarking activity, the relevant Executive Dean will submit a plan to the Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Academic) for approval. The plan will include:

    a. purpose/aims of the activity and expected outcomes,

    b. scope of the project (what will be benchmarked/measured, what performance indicators will be compared),

    c. how data will be validated to ensure data from both partners is comparable,

    d. timeline of the project,

    e. who will coordinate the project and liaise with the partner, who else will be involved in the project and what the responsibilities of each participant will be,

    f. methods to be used (e.g. questionnaire, interviews, workshops),

    g. communication plan, and

    h. processes for approval, reporting and follow-up.

Selecting benchmarking partners

(84) In selecting benchmarking partners, faculties should prefer partners who:

    a. are recognised leaders in the area to be benchmarked, and/or

    b. share similar problems, outcomes or practices, so that both institutions learn from the exercise, and/or

    c. are similar in at least some of: size, disciplines taught, research/teaching emphasis, age of institution, multi-campus operation.

(85) Faculties will ensure there is a written agreement with the benchmarking partner to document understandings about confidentiality, use of information, intellectual property rights, and the scope of the benchmarking exercise.

(86) The written agreement must be reviewed by Legal Services and signed by a school or faculty leader at Associate Head of School level or above.

Information sharing in benchmarking

(87) Faculties should ensure, in planning the benchmarking activity with the partner, that each will share a similar set of information in terms of type, level and quantity.

(88) Faculties will ensure that they and the benchmarking partner treat information shared with one another for the benchmarking activities as follows:

a. The information is confidential and can only be published with the express consent of all parties to the benchmarking exercise.
b. The information will only be used for the purpose for which it was shared, unless all parties to the benchmarking exercise agree to it being used for another purpose.

Reporting benchmarking

(89) Faculties will report all benchmarking activities to Academic Senate via Academic Quality and Standards Committee and via the relevant school and faculty committees, namely:

a. School and Faculty Assessment Committees, for benchmarking of assessment, or
b. the relevant School Board and the Faculty Board, for benchmarking of subjects or courses.

(90) The content of benchmarking reports will vary depending on the scale and focus of the activity, but should at a minimum include:

a. an overview of the activity and expected outcomes,
b. discussion of examples of good practice,
c. an overview of findings,
d. recommendations for improving practices, processes and/or outcomes in the area benchmarked,
e. a cost-benefit analysis of any significant changes proposed (such as changes to delivery mode, entry requirements; or to assessment practices, such as introducing workplace learning components), and
f. an action plan for implementing recommendations with timelines.

Quality assurance of subjects

(91) The Assessment - Conduct of Coursework Assessment and Examinations Procedure states requirements for moderation of assessment in each delivery of each subject.

Pre-session check of subject outlines

(92) The school will ensure that subject outlines are checked for completeness and correctness before each teaching session. The subject outline tool is used for this purpose. See the Course and Subject Information Procedure for what information a subject outline must provide.

Subject improvement

(93) The subject convenor will lead the subject teaching team in reflection on the subject performance after each session in which it is offered. This subject reflection will consider, at a minimum:

a. the grades distribution and pass rate for each offering of the subject during the session, and a comparison of these,
b. student feedback on the subject for the session, including subject experience survey data,
c. the subject team's performance in returning students' submitted assessment work by the expected dates,
d. whether the subject outline was published on time, and
e. identify any actions that will lead to improvement of subject performance including liaising with the Division of Learning and Teaching to update teaching content and resources.

(94) All teachers and their relevant supervisors have the opportunity to review feedback on their teaching and are supported in enhancing these activities.

(95) The subject team will provide a report, following such opportunity, of the subject reflection and planned improvements to the School Assessment Committee via the Quality Assurance and Reflection System (QUASAR).

(96) The School Assessment Committee will review each report within QUASAR as well as checking on progress of improvements planned from previous offerings of the subject. A report generated by the QUASAR system which shows the outcome of each review will be added to the minutes.

(97) The School Assessment Committee will provide a sessional report to School Board on the school's subject improvements.

(98) School Boards will discuss active actions remaining including the implications for the school, deadlines and any potential issues. School Boards will provide a report to Faculty Board with a summary of actions and any issues requiring decisions at the Faculty Board level.

(99) Faculty Board will provide a high-level sessional report to Academic Quality and Standards Committee including a summary of subject improvements, impacts and achievements on subject quality, highlighting examples of good practice, assuring monitoring and closure of actions via the actions reporting summary in QUASAR and raising critical risks.

(100) The Academic Quality and Standards Committee will discuss critical risks raised to seek assurance that appropriate quality assurance and reflection is taking place and there is good governance and compliance with Higher Education Standards.

Subject offering viability review

(101) Heads of School, in consultation with Course Directors, will review regularly the campus offerings of each subject in order to keep to a minimum the number of uneconomical offerings of the same subject over the teaching year in alignment with the optimisation framework.

(102) Refer to the [Course and Subject Delivery and Management Procedure](#) for details on the school schedule of subjects for details on requirements.

Course and subject surveys

(103) The University uses students' feedback on courses and subjects gathered by surveys to improve the curriculum, teaching and the student learning experience.

(104) The University administers the subject experience survey (SuES) to gather student feedback on each offering of each subject.

(105) The Pro Vice-Chancellor (Learning and Teaching) or their nominee will manage and annually review the subject experience survey, in consultation with faculty academic leaders, Office of Planning and Analytics, Division of Library Services, Division of Student Success, and the Pro Vice-Chancellor (Research and Innovation).

  a. The Office of Planning and Analytics administers the survey, in consultation with the Division of Information Technology.

(106) All teachers and their relevant supervisors have the opportunity to review feedback on their teaching and are supported in enhancing these activities.

(107) Where a partner delivers subjects on behalf of Charles Sturt University:

a. the University will share SuES data for these subjects with the partner, and

b. the partner may administer additional surveys to students to collect data relevant to the partner's operations where this is provided for in the individual partnership agreement.

(108) Subject Coordinators are encouraged, and may be directed by their faculty or school, to conduct their own surveys to understand students' learning needs in each session their subject is offered.

(109) The University provides the Commonwealth government department responsible for education with student details necessary for the department to administer the following surveys to Charles Sturt University students each year:

a. the Graduate Outcomes Survey,

b. the Student Experience Survey, and

c. the Postgraduate Research Experience Questionnaire.

(110) The University receives data from these nationally administered surveys and uses it to identify improvements.

(111) Other surveys of students' learning and teaching experience may be used if the Pro Vice-Chancellor (Learning and Teaching) has approved their use.

Management of the subject experience survey

(112) The Office of Planning and Analytics will publish a schedule of SuES administration dates for all sessions in each calendar year, at the start of that year.

(113) The SuES will open for Subject Coordinators to select optional questions at least one week after the census date of the relevant session. Staff can add optional questions until the survey is opened for students to respond.

(114) The SuES will open for students to respond three weeks before the end date of the relevant session, and the SuES system will notify students of this by email.

(115) To ensure student grade release does not influence survey outcomes, the SuES will be closed to student responses:

a. for workplace learning placement subjects, 26 weeks after the end date of the relevant session, or

b. for all other subjects, one week after the end date of the relevant session.

Core and optional questions

(116) The subject experience survey (SuES) comprises:

a. core questions that must be asked for each subject offering, and

b. optional questions, which Subject Coordinators or other authorised staff can select to be asked in a subject offering.

(117) There are two sets of standard core questions:

a. one for workplace learning (WPL) placement subjects, and

b. one for all other subjects.

(118) No more than five optional questions may be selected for a subject offering, unless the Pro Vice-Chancellor (Learning and Teaching), or nominee, permits an exception.

(119) Subject Coordinators can ask for questions to be added to the optional questions bank by the following process:

a. The Subject Coordinator member submits the request to their Head of School for endorsement. The request should:

    i. explain why the questions are needed, and

    ii. indicate that the requester has searched the optional questions bank but has not found questions that would meet this need.

b. If the Head of School endorses the request, they forward it to the Director, Planning and Analytics.

c. The Director, Planning and Analytics, in consultation with the Pro Vice-Chancellor (Learning and Teaching), decides whether the requested questions will be added. The criteria for this decision are:

    i. whether the questions are distinct from existing questions, and

    ii. whether the questions will be sufficiently relevant to other subjects.

Survey participation

(120) Students are encouraged to complete the subject experience survey but are not required to complete it.

(121) Academic staff will encourage students in their classes to participate in the subject experience survey but must not apply pressure to students to complete it or offer incentives for them to complete it.

(122) The Subject Coordinator will have access during the survey open period to view the number of student responses to date, but not to identify students who have or have not responded.

Student de-identification and exceptions to this

(123) The Office of Planning and Analytics will de-identify students' responses before providing the data for survey users set out further below.

(124) Identified students' responses will, however, be provided in the following exceptional circumstances:

a. Where the law requires the University to provide the identified data to an external authority, it will do so.

b. Where a student's comments indicate a risk to the student's safety or wellbeing, or to the safety of another person, the identified response will be shared with staff of the University who need to know in order to reduce the risk.

c. Where a student's comments may constitute misconduct as defined by the Student Misconduct Rule (for example, where they may constitute harassment or discrimination), the identified comments may be included in a report of alleged student misconduct by the process set out in the Student Misconduct Rule.

Use of data and minimum response threshold for publication

(125) SuES data may be used:

a. for evaluation and review of course and subject design, teaching practices and student support,

b. as a factor in decisions on whether to promote academic staff (the Academic Promotion Procedure states how this may occur),

c. as a factor in performance management of academic staff, and

d. for internal and external benchmarking.

(126) The Subject Coordinator and head of the teaching school will be provided with the subject experience survey response data for each subject offering through the subject evaluation software platform.

a. This data will include aggregated question response data for all core questions (including those on individual teaching staff) and students' comments for the subject offering, even where the response rate is below the minimum number for publication.

(127) The Subject Coordinator will normally share the response data and comments with the subject teaching team.

a. Where, however, students' comments on a staff member are potentially embarrassing to the staff member or otherwise sensitive, the Subject Coordinator should seek the advice of the Head of School before sharing those comments with the teaching team or only with the staff member in question.

(128) The Office of Planning and Analytics may, where the Executive Dean of the relevant faculty approves the request, provide:

a. aggregated question response data for optional questions, and/or students' comments on any questions, to other staff, and/or
b. SuES data reports outside the normal reporting dates.

(129) Where five or more students in a subject offering respond to the SuES, the aggregated core question response data for the subject will be published to all students and staff via the student portal.

a. This data will be published after grades have been uploaded to Banner for the relevant session.
b. Students' comments will not be published.

(130) The Office of Planning and Analytics will make aggregated question response data for all questions available to University staff involved with design and teaching of courses and subjects, including course directors, associate deans, sub-deans, school executive support officers, librarians, course review panels, academic skills advisors and educational designers.

Percentage positive result measure

(131) The percentage positive result is used as a key indicator when reporting and interpreting subject experience survey data. This figure is the percentage of the total responses to core questions for which students select a rating of 4 or 5 on the five-point response scale.

Information for students on improvements

(132) For each subject, the Subject Coordinator will in the subject outline:

a. acknowledge and summarise student feedback received to date, and
b. indicate what actions have been taken to address students' concerns or explain why no action was considered necessary.

Section 4 - Guidelines and other supporting documents

(133) Detailed work instructions are maintained in the [Knowledge Base](#) (in Confluence, under Faculty Admin) by the functional area supporting the specific task.

Staff who require access to the Confluence pages above should log an [IT Service Desk](#)

Section 5 - Glossary

(134) Most terms used in this procedure are defined in the glossary section of the Course and Subject Policy.

(135) For the purposes of this procedure, the term 'progression' means students' academic performance as determined by their successful completion of subjects.

Status and Details

Status	Current
Effective Date	8th September 2022
Review Date	8th September 2025
Approval Authority	Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Academic)
Approval Date	7th September 2022
Expiry Date	Not Applicable
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