



Policy and Procedures –

# Course Review and Improvement

APPROVED

THE INSTITUTE OF INTERNATIONAL STUDIES



## 1. Overview

The objective of this *Policy and Procedures* is to provide a framework for review and evaluation of accredited courses within The Institute of International Studies (“TIIS”) in the context of maintaining academic standards and continuous quality improvement.

## 2. Continuous Evaluation of Delivery and Assessment

Continuous monitoring and reviewing of course delivery and assessment enables TIIS to:

- a. evaluate the quality of delivery methods;
- b. evaluate assessment methodology and instruments;
- c. identify areas of strength and areas for improvement, and strategies to address these; and
- d. document improvements over time.

TIIS is committed to ensuring that these processes lead to continuous improvement.

Processes for continuously monitoring and evaluating courses include:

### 2.1 Lecturer Responsibilities

Lecturers are expected to update their lecture materials and assignments each trimester to ensure that their subject/s remain current and topical. The Program Coordinator will periodically review the content being provided to students on Moodle to ensure that this process is being done and provides a summary report to the Teaching and Learning committee.

### 2.2 Student Feedback

Students provide continuous feedback throughout the duration of a course. Evaluation questionnaires distributed for all subjects are developed by the Teaching and Learning Committee (T&L) to cover subject content, learning-and-assessment methodologies, and quality and adequacy of information provided to students. The evaluation questionnaires are analysed by the Program Coordinator who, in turn, provides a summary on student feedback as part of course reviews and in a report to the T&L. The questionnaires are presented to, and gathered from, students by Student Support staff.

### 2.3 Student Representation on the Teaching and Learning Committee

TIIS fosters input and feedback on course content and delivery mechanisms, and administrative and support systems via student representation on the Teaching and Learning Committee.

### 2.4 Teaching Staff Feedback

In addition to the specific subject feedback provided through student evaluations, teaching staff are provided with the opportunity for specific evaluation of given subjects. Teaching staff have direct and frequent access to their peers and their Program Coordinator to facilitate the exchange of information and to maximise communication. Meetings of teaching staff are opportunities to review policy and procedure in relation to course delivery and assessment.

### 2.5 Moderation of Assessment

Moderation of assessment is conducted to ensure consistency, equity, and fairness in assessment practices (Refer section 8 of the *Quality Assurance Framework*). Final exams represent 50% of the final mark and are invigilated. Where a subject’s final exam must be written (in whole or in part) online, the exam will be provided by Moodle or a similar service and the invigilation will be done via Zoom or a similar service with a span of control by the invigilator of 8 or less students.

## **2.6 Teaching and Learning Committee**

The Teaching and Learning Committee is responsible for monitoring student progress; reviewing outcomes of student feedback; reviewing student results and reporting to the Academic Board. The Teaching and Learning Committee makes recommendations to the Academic Board on changes to existing courses, including matters pertaining to delivery.

## **2.7 Course Advisory Committee**

The Course Advisory Committee reviews, monitors and assesses the achievement of the courses' aims and learning outcomes and ensures the ongoing currency and relevance of curriculum, course objectives and subjects that make up the course.

## **2.8 Academic Board**

The Academic Board is responsible for the achievement of educational objectives, the development and implementation of academic policy and monitoring of the teaching and learning environment and receives reports from the Course Advisory Committee and Teaching and Learning Committee.

## **3. Periodic Reviews of Courses and Subjects**

All courses (and their constituent subjects) offered by TIIS are subject to periodic evaluation of content and course delivery mechanisms.

### **3.1 Trimester Review**

TIIS lecturers review and update the teaching materials and assignments of their subject/s each trimester to ensure that they are current and appropriate. Where a major update of the materials is indicated a lecturer will inform the Program Coordinator.

### **3.2 Annual Review**

TIIS will conduct an annual review for each accredited course and its constituent subjects. This review process will be conducted by the relevant Program Coordinator under the direction of the Dean. The annual review generates a course-specific report for the Teaching and Learning Committee. The annual review will address the following criteria:

- a. student demand for the course (based on student enrolment statistics and market research and analysis);
- b. range, depth, and currency of subjects available within the course;
- c. quality, scope and adequacy of course-related information provided to students and prospective students;
- d. appropriateness and flexibility of the course's methods of delivery in relation to student need and demand;
- e. analysis of significant trends drawn from student and teacher evaluation and feedback data; and
- f. summary data and analysis related to grade distributions and student progress.

The Dean is responsible for implementing annual course reviews in concert with the relevant Program Coordinator. The Program Coordinator will write a report for review by the Teaching and Learning Committee (T&L), on which the T&L will make recommendations to be presented to the Academic Board. The Dean, in liaison with the Program Coordinator, is responsible for implementing the recommendations and for ensuring that the courses and their subjects continue to fit for purpose—including meeting accreditation requirements of the relevant professional bodies.

### **3.3 Three-yearly Review**

The Course Advisory Committee undertakes a triennial review of courses. The objective of that review

is to ensure that a given course's aim, structure, subjects, learning objectives, study modes, assessment activities, resources, and delivery methods are monitored, evaluated, and updated in a systematic way. The triennial review will place three years from the most recent of the course's latest re-accreditation/accreditation or its prior triennial review.

Course review processes will focus on the following criteria:

- a. review of course aims, structure, subjects, learning objectives, assessment activities, resources, study modes, and delivery methods (per the AQF level of the course);
- b. adequacy/currency of the texts, recommended reading, and learning centre resources;
- c. adequacy/currency and appropriateness of assessment practices and criteria;
- d. accountability for the conduct and delivery of the course;
- e. quality of student and teacher support services;
- f. role of the course within TIIS's educational profile and its ongoing contribution to the mission and goals of TIIS;
- g. the impact of similar courses on TIIS's course offerings by competitor higher education providers; and
- h. the systematic collection and analysis of data relating to admission and enrolment statistics, deferral, withdrawal and retention rates, student results per subject, graduate employability, feedback from professional bodies and peer review processes.

A review of the course/s by external academic should be arranged at the same time as the triennial review. Where a re-accreditation/accreditation pre-empts the triennial review, the external review is done by the external reviewer of the re-accreditation/accreditation.

The Course Advisory Committee will present recommendations arising from the review process to the Academic Board for review and endorsement. The Dean, in liaison with the Program Coordinator, will have responsibility for implementing the recommendations.

#### **4. Course Review Guidelines**

In reviewing courses and their constituent subjects, the Course Advisory Committee will be provided with the following guidelines to assist in the monitoring and evaluation processes. The guidelines provide a standardised format to facilitate analysis of data and the generation of critical issues for reporting purposes.

Reviewers should begin evaluation processes by asking the following questions:

- a. What are the intended outcomes of the course?
- b. How do course outcomes relate to external benchmarking standards, the AQF, and professional and industry body requirements?
- c. How do the subjects contribute to the overall aim of the course?

Reviewers should assess the planning and deliberative processes through which course outcomes were originally determined and how the course was designed to enable outcomes to be achieved. To this extent, reviewers should ask – How does TIIS ensure that course:

- a. Content enables students to achieve the intended learning outcomes?
- b. Design and organisation are effective in promoting student learning and achievement of the intended learning outcomes?
- c. Reviewers should consider the information available to students, teachers and staff. They should consider how subject specifications are used to promote understanding about the subject outcomes and the other strategies used to communicate information. Reviewers should ask:

- d. How are the intended outcomes for a subject and its constituent parts (e.g. assessment methodology) communicated to students and teaching staff?
- e. Do students know what is expected of them?

Reviewers should evaluate how the assessment process enables the subject outcomes to be demonstrated and assessed objectively. Reviewers should ask:

- a. Does the assessment process enable learners to demonstrate achievement of the specified learning outcomes?
- b. Are there criteria that enable examiners to distinguish between different categories of achievement?
- c. Is the reviewer confident in the security and integrity of the assessment procedures employed?
- d. Does the assessment strategy have an adequate formative function in developing student abilities?
- e. In the Final Report, reviewers should provide a critical evaluation of the course and its subjects backed by supporting documentation. Reviewers should address the following questions:
- f. Does the design and content of the course encourage achievement of the intended learning outcomes in terms of: knowledge and understanding, cognitive skills, subject-specific skills (including practical/professional skills), transferable skills, progression to employment and/or further study, and personal development?
- g. Is there documentation that the course content and design is informed by recent developments in techniques of teaching and learning, by current research and scholarship, and by any changes in relevant occupational and professional requirements?

## 5. Course Change Process

The following procedures are in place to effect changes to the course and delivery system. The Dean drives the change process:

- a. The report of the review of courses and subjects (including recommended changes) are presented to the Academic Board for endorsement. Depending on the nature of the change, these may flow from deliberations by either the Teaching and Learning Committee or Course Advisory Committee. The Dean's report to the Academic Board will determine and define whether changes to a given course during the years are major (> 20 percent)—which trigger a need to report the change and its expected effects and risks to TEQSA.
- b. The Dean will ensure that all administrative processes and requirements are in readiness for endorsement by the Academic Board. This includes changes to student information, the website and marketing and promotional materials. All changes must comply with TIIS's policies and Academic Board directives.
- c. The Dean ensures that appropriate notification is communicated to students prior to implementation of any changes, including details of the specific changes, a rationale for the changes and the impact of the changes on students.
- d. Throughout the change process, the Dean monitors risk management implications, including: the relationship of the changes to TIIS's mission and goals; issues related to course resourcing; the impact on compliance with regulatory requirements; consistency with TIIS's policies; impact of changes on academic staff and students and the provision of sufficient notification and support.

## 6. Version History

Version	Approved by	Approval date	Details
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1.0	Academic Board	25 February 2016	
1.1	Academic Board	7 October 2020	Minor changes

Document owner: Dean

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