



# Comprehensive Course Review Terms of Reference

Faculty of Business, Law and Arts

2023



**Southern Cross  
University**

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## 1. Justification for Comprehensive Course Review

As a self-accrediting Australian provider of higher education, Southern Cross University (SCU) is required to comply with a range of legislation and legislative instruments under the [Tertiary Education Quality and Standards Agency Act 2011](#) (TEQSA Act), including the [Higher Education Standards Framework \(Threshold Standards\) 2021](#) (HESF).

The HESF represent the minimum acceptable requirements for the provision of higher education in or from Australia by higher education providers registered under the TEQSA Act.

Clause 5.3 of the HESF requires that:

1. All accredited courses of study are subject to periodic (at least every seven years) comprehensive reviews that are overseen by peak academic governance processes and include external referencing or other benchmarking activities.
2. A comprehensive review includes the design and content of each course of study, the expected learning outcomes, the methods for assessment of those outcomes, the extent of students' achievement of learning outcomes, and also takes account of emerging developments in the field of education, modes of delivery, the changing needs of students and identified risks to the quality of the course of study.
3. Comprehensive reviews of courses of study are informed and supported by regular interim monitoring, of the quality of teaching and supervision of research students, student progress and the overall delivery of units within each course of study.
4. Review and improvement activities include regular external referencing of the success of student cohorts against comparable courses of study, including:
  - a. analyses of progression rates, attrition rates, completion times and rates and, where applicable, comparing different locations of delivery, and
  - b. the assessment methods and grading of students' achievement of learning outcomes for selected units of study within courses of study.
5. All students have opportunities to provide feedback on their educational experiences and student feedback informs institutional monitoring, review and improvement activities.
6. All teachers and supervisors have opportunities to review feedback on their teaching and research supervision and are supported in enhancing these activities.
7. The results of regular interim monitoring, comprehensive reviews, external referencing and student feedback are used to mitigate future risks to the quality of the education provided and to guide and evaluate improvements, including the use of data on student progress and success to inform admission criteria and approaches to course design, teaching, supervision, learning and academic support.

Southern Cross University undertakes a 5-year cycle of comprehensive reviews of each academic unit and their associated courses to ensure compliance with Clause 5.3.

## 2. Scope of Comprehensive Course Reviews

These Terms of Reference apply to the review of a single course or suite of courses within a discipline area under the [Academic Quality Standards and Integrity Policy](#) and [Course Review Procedures](#). They may be used for Comprehensive Course Reviews (Course Reviews) that form part of Academic Unit Review. Unless otherwise specified, the review should include assessment of the past seven years of the course both in its current form and in its previous iterations.

As per the [Academic Quality Standards and Integrity Policy](#), the Course Review Panel is required to consider each included course according to the following clauses:

- A. evaluate the suitability of course design in the context of the Curriculum Design Principles set out in the [Curriculum Design and Development Policy](#), including compliance with the Australian Qualifications Framework and any professional accreditation requirements;
- B. evaluate the effectiveness of the course in delivering intended student learning outcomes;
- C. evaluate the quality of the academic experience for students in the course, from pre-admission to post-graduation;
- D. evaluate the suitability and effectiveness of staffing and other resources for the course;
- E. evaluate the viability and strategic fit of the course in the University's overall academic profile; and
- F. make recommendations to Academic Board concerning any of the matters above, including a recommendation as to whether the course should be reaccredited with or without conditions.

### **3. Aim of Course Review**

The aim of a Course Review is to review the academic quality of a course, as well as its currency, viability, and performance over time. This is achieved by applying a process of overarching academic scrutiny to the course.

The Review Panel will be provided with access to the documents in Table 1, Blackboard (LMS) for the nominated focus units, and have the opportunity to interview representative teaching and learning, governance and support staff from the Faculty during a Review visit.

The Review Panel are requested to produce a Course Review Report making commendations, affirmations and recommendations about the courses under review, and assessing the alignment of the course with the standards specific to course development and delivery in the [Higher Education Standards Framework \(Threshold Standards\) 2021](#), and the SCU [Academic Quality Standards and Integrity Policy](#) and [Curriculum Design and Development Policy](#).

For each course under review, the Review Panel will also be requested to provide a justified recommendation regarding accreditation of the course, and the period of accreditation up to a maximum of seven years.

### **4. Role of the Review Panel**

Comprehensive course reviews will be conducted within seven years of the last accreditation or reaccreditation of the course by the University Council (or Academic Board as delegated) in accordance with the [Course Review Procedures](#) by one or more suitably qualified experts, appointed by the Chair, Academic Board in consultation with the Pro Vice-Chancellor (Academic Quality), including:

- at least one academic staff member of another university, who will be an independent expert;
- optionally, a representative from the relevant professional community; and
- optionally, an academic staff member of the University from a different Faculty or College to the Faculty or College that owns the course.

## **5. Conduct of the Course Review**

The Review will be conducted in line with Southern Cross University's [Academic Quality Standards and Integrity Policy](#) and [Course Review Procedures](#). The course review is conducted concurrently with a broader review of the Faculty/College (under separate terms of reference).

Throughout the review, Southern Cross University will make available a Secretary of the Review to provide administrative support to the academic unit and the Review Panel throughout the Review process.

### **5.1 Course Review Submission**

For each course under review, in consultation with the Associate Dean (Education), Faculty of Business, Law and Arts and teaching staff, the Course Coordinator will produce a Course Summary Report (template for report provided by BIQ). The Summary Report will provide information that addresses the criteria stated in clauses A-F in Section 2 of this document, Scope of Review. The main body of the Summary Report (not including the supporting documents) should be no more than 5000 words. Supporting documents to assist with the development and reading of the report will be collated and provided as detailed in Table 1.

The Executive Dean must consult with other relevant Faculties and Colleges when compiling the Course Review Submission to ensure that all the issues relevant to double degrees and combined degrees are appropriately considered.

All Course Summary Reports will be collated into a Course Review Submission from the Faculty.

### **5.2 Provision of the Course Review Submission**

At least four weeks prior to the commencement of the review, the Review Panel is provided with the Course Review Submission and supporting materials to assist the panel to conduct a desk top interrogation of the courses under review. The Panel reviews the Faculty's Submission and supporting information, including Blackboard sites for nominated units. The Review Panel may request additional information as required and the Faculty should make all reasonable efforts to respond prior to the review visit.

### **5.3 Review Visit**

The Review visit generally takes two-three days. During the visit, Review Panel engages with relevant Faculty members during the review visit interviews to probe additional information to make an informed recommendation for each course under review.

### **5.4 Course Review Report**

Within four weeks of the review visit, under the leadership of the Chair of the Review Panel, the Review Panel develops a Course Review Report (template provided by BIQ, see Appendix 1 for sample) to the University that includes:

- i. a recommendation whether the panel is 'satisfied' or 'not satisfied' that the course meets the criteria in Section 2 of this document, and provides supporting justification for the decision;
- ii. a recommendation that SCU Academic Board either reaccredits, reaccredits with conditions, or not reaccredit the course; and

- iii. commendations, affirmations and recommendations about the course, with rationale and examples where required.

The final Review Report will be submitted to the University by the Chair of the Review Panel, on behalf of the Review Panel.

## 5.5 Implementation of Review Outcomes

This Course Review Report will be presented to a number of stakeholders to action.

- i. Faculty - The Executive Dean, Faculty of Business, Law and Arts, in collaboration with the Associate Dean (Education) will consider the recommendations and commendations of the panel and develop a management response to the report including a 5-year implementation plans for actions, where required.
- ii. Pro Vice Chancellor, Academic Quality – The Course Review Report and the Faculty management response will provide a response and presented all documents to:
  - 1. The Vice Chancellor, for endorsement, and
  - 2. the Chair, Academic Board for action under clause (19) of the [Academic Quality, Standards and Integrity Policy](#) to consider the Review Panel recommendations and decide to either:
    - a. approve that the course be reaccredited;
    - b. require specific actions to be taken prior to, or as a condition of, approving that the course be reaccredited; or
    - c. advise University Council that the course should not remain accredited and be removed from the offerings of the University.

## 5.6 Faculty Progress Report

12 months after receipt of the Course Review Report, the Executive Dean, Faculty of Business, Law and Arts, will provide an update on the course delivery (or removal) and curriculum aspects of the Implementation Plan to the Faculty Board, which will then forward to Academic Board with any additional commentary.

## 6. Courses under Review

### 6.1 Included courses

#### Active courses with more than 12 months since commencement)

Course	Course Code	Additional
Associate Degree in Law (Paralegal Studies)	2206351	
Bachelor of Art and Design	3007160	
Bachelor of Arts	3007099	
Bachelor of Business	3002100	
Bachelor of Business Administration	3001145	

Course	Course Code	Additional
Bachelor of Business and Enterprise	3007150	
Bachelor of Contemporary Music	3003140	
Bachelor of Digital Media	3007084	
Bachelor of Legal and Justice Studies	3006110	
Bachelor of Psychological Science, Bachelor of Laws	3207007	
Graduate Certificate in Accounting	1007134	Nested
Graduate Certificate in Business	1007294	Nested
Graduate Certificate in Business (online)	1008100	Nested
Graduate Certificate in Business Law	1008120	Nested
Graduate Certificate in Project Management	1008400	Nested
Graduate Certificate in Information Technology Management	1008250	Nested
Graduate Diploma of Accounting	1107135	Nested
Graduate Diploma of Business	1107295	Nested
Graduate Diploma of Business (online)	1108100	Nested
Graduate Diploma of Project Management	1108400	Nested
Graduate Diploma of Information Technology Management	1108250	Nested
Master of Business Administration	1207290	
Master of Business Administration (online)	1208100	
Master of Business Law	1209121	
Master of Laws (Business Law)	1209120	
Master of Professional Accounting	1207045	
Master of Project Management	1208400	
Master of Information Technology Management	1208250	

## 6.2 Reduced scope

### Courses in teach out with more than 12 months until removal OR exit only awards

Course	Course Code	
Associate Degree of Business Administration	2207116	Exit only
Associate Degree of Business and Enterprise	2207150	Exit only
Associate Degree of Digital Media	2207282	Exit only
Bachelor of Accounting	3002107	Teach out > 12 months
Bachelor of Arts, Bachelor of Laws	3206101	Teach out > 12 months
Bachelor of Business in Tourism and Hospitality Management	3007314	Teach out > 12 months
Bachelor of Business, Bachelor of Laws	3206102	Teach out > 12 months
Bachelor of Laws	3007083	Teach out > 12 months
Bachelor of Laws	3706100	Teach out > 12 months
Bachelor of Laws and Creative Writing	3207008	Teach out > 12 months
Bachelor of Legal and Justice Studies, Bachelor of Laws	3206107	Teach out > 12 months
Bachelor of Social Science	3001150	Teach out > 12 months

## 6.3 Excluded courses

### In teach out with less than 12 months until removal

Course	Course Code
Associate Degree of Business (Exit only)	2207057

### Out of scope: new course with less than 12 months since commencement

Course	Course Code
Bachelor of Business and Enterprise, Bachelor of Arts	3207009
Bachelor of Laws, Bachelor of Business and Enterprise	3207100
Bachelor of Arts, Bachelor of Laws	3207011
Bachelor of Laws	3007001

### Clarifying notes

1. *Nested courses*: a single Course Report will be provided for the parent award, with sections included in the report to identify the points of difference of each lower award. The Review Panel is requested to comment on each of the awards, including the appropriateness of the course design and learning outcomes for each qualification. The Review Panel is also requested to make recommendations to the Academic Board whether to re-accredit each level of the nested award.
2. *Courses in teach out*: Courses that are in teach out with no further admissions and pending removal within 12 months are not included in the course review process.

Courses in teach out with no further admissions but with more than 12 months of teaching for enrolled students to complete have limited scope but are included to ensure course remains accredited until removal.

All courses in teach out are included in other quality assurance and review processes undertaken by the University including IQILT (unit evaluation), annual reporting, QILT and SES, to assure the ongoing quality and currency of the course while students remain enrolled.

3. *Exit only awards*: course providing a lower level exit pathway must be accredited and are included with a limited scope to demonstrate course learning outcomes that are appropriate and discrete from the parent award.
4. *Combined and double degrees*: where required, the Executive Dean and the Course Coordinator will liaise with the partnering faculty or college to ensure that all relevant to issues are reviewed.



**Table 1: Supporting documents provided to Review Panel**

Document	Detail	Source – saved into Sharepoint folders
<b>Course Review Report</b>	<p>The Course Coordinator will develop a Course Review Report in the provided Course Review Template aligned with clauses A-F of this document, as per the <a href="#">Course Review Procedures</a>.</p> <p>Each Course Review Report will be collated to form the Faculty’s Course Review Submission.</p>	Faculty
<b>Course performance data</b>	Available course data including previous annual course reports and course performance metrics including location and split	Office of Business Intelligence and Quality
<b>Course Structure Documents</b>	<p>Unit and Course Management System (UCMS) Course Report and Unit Reports demonstrating:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Overview of course structure</li> <li>- Brief description of each unit in the course</li> <li>- Graduate Attribute Report (including assessment tasks)</li> <li>- Levels of Learning</li> </ul>	Office of Business Intelligence and Quality
<b>Constructive Alignment Mapping (CAM)</b>	Spreadsheet demonstrating alignment of course learning outcomes to AQF and Graduate Attributes	Faculty
<b>Nominated focus units</b>	For each course under review, Faculty to nominate a core unit at each level of learning (i.e. for Bachelor courses, a 1000, 2000 and 3000 level unit) that demonstrates scaffolded learning, that the Review Panel can interrogate via the unit Blackboard site (including learning resources, assessments, marking rubrics and unit learning outcomes mapping).	<p>Office of Business Intelligence and Quality to facilitate Blackboard access to unit for Review Panel.</p> <p>Faculty to provide unit outlines and any unit information not accessible via Blackboard</p>
<b>Evidence of Benchmarking</b>	Evidence of benchmarking including submissions to Accreditation Committee, or more recent benchmarking.	Faculty
<b>Student Experience Surveys</b>	<p>Graduates Outcomes Survey</p> <p>Student Experience Survey</p>	Office of Business Intelligence and Quality
<b>Staff Profiles</b>	List of staff including qualifications and workload allocations	Executive Dean /HR
<b>External accreditation reports</b>	Where a course is externally accredited, the accreditation report will be provided to supplement the faculty’s course report	Faculty
<b>Any other documents requested by the Review Panel</b>	As required	Office of Business Intelligence and Quality / Faculty

## Appendix 1: Sample Course Review Report template

The Review Panel will assess each course under review and collate their recommendations and commendations about the course\* in the Course Review Report using the format below:

<Course> <(Course Code)>

The Review Panel have assessed this course and make the following recommendations:

Terms of Reference: A	Review Panel Assessment			
The suitability of course design to meet the principles of the <a href="#">Curriculum Policy</a> ;	Satisfied <input type="checkbox"/>	Satisfied, but <input type="checkbox"/>	Not Satisfied <input type="checkbox"/>	Unable to assess <input type="checkbox"/>
1. Course Learning Outcomes and Graduate Attributes are aligned with AQF	Satisfied <input type="checkbox"/>	Satisfied, but <input type="checkbox"/>	Not Satisfied <input type="checkbox"/>	Unable to assess <input type="checkbox"/>
2. Clear and flexible course and unit requirements, including admission standards and requirements of the award	Satisfied <input type="checkbox"/>	Satisfied, but <input type="checkbox"/>	Not Satisfied <input type="checkbox"/>	Unable to assess <input type="checkbox"/>
3. Constructive alignment of learning outcomes with content, learning activities and assessment	Satisfied <input type="checkbox"/>	Satisfied, but <input type="checkbox"/>	Not Satisfied <input type="checkbox"/>	Unable to assess <input type="checkbox"/>
4. Advanced knowledge and inquiry	Satisfied <input type="checkbox"/>	Satisfied, but <input type="checkbox"/>	Not Satisfied <input type="checkbox"/>	Unable to assess <input type="checkbox"/>
5. Relevance to industry, the professions or other graduate destinations	Satisfied <input type="checkbox"/>	Satisfied, but <input type="checkbox"/>	Not Satisfied <input type="checkbox"/>	Unable to assess <input type="checkbox"/>
6. Opportunities for Community Engaged Learning	Satisfied <input type="checkbox"/>	Satisfied, but <input type="checkbox"/>	Not Satisfied <input type="checkbox"/>	Unable to assess <input type="checkbox"/>
7. Relevant and equitable learning experiences for the University's student profile	Satisfied <input type="checkbox"/>	Satisfied, but <input type="checkbox"/>	Not Satisfied <input type="checkbox"/>	Unable to assess <input type="checkbox"/>
8. Externally referenced against similar courses and units	Satisfied <input type="checkbox"/>	Satisfied, but <input type="checkbox"/>	Not Satisfied <input type="checkbox"/>	Unable to assess <input type="checkbox"/>
Supporting rationale; details of concerns:				

Terms of Reference: B	Review Panel Assessment			
The effectiveness of the course in delivering intended student learning outcomes	Satisfied <input type="checkbox"/>	Satisfied, but <input type="checkbox"/>	Not Satisfied <input type="checkbox"/>	Unable to assess <input type="checkbox"/>
Supporting rationale; details of concerns:				

Terms of Reference: C	Review Panel Assessment			
The quality of the academic experience for students in the course, from pre-admission to post-graduation	Satisfied <input type="checkbox"/>	Satisfied, but <input type="checkbox"/>	Not Satisfied <input type="checkbox"/>	Unable to assess <input type="checkbox"/>
Supporting rationale; details of concerns:				

Terms of Reference: D	Review Panel Assessment			
The suitability and effectiveness of staffing and other resources for the course	Satisfied <input type="checkbox"/>	Satisfied, but <input type="checkbox"/>	Not Satisfied <input type="checkbox"/>	Unable to assess <input type="checkbox"/>
Supporting rationale; details of concerns:				

Terms of Reference: E	Review Panel Assessment			
The viability and strategic fit of the course in the University's overall academic profile	Satisfied <input type="checkbox"/>	Satisfied, but <input type="checkbox"/>	Not Satisfied <input type="checkbox"/>	Unable to assess <input type="checkbox"/>
Supporting rationale; details of concerns:				

Terms of Reference: F	Review Panel Assessment			
The Review Panel recommends to the Academic Board that the course be	Reaccredited <input type="checkbox"/>	Reaccredited with conditions* <input type="checkbox"/>	Not reaccredited <input type="checkbox"/>	Unable to assess <input type="checkbox"/>
*Details of recommended conditions, if applicable:				
Supporting rationale for recommendation:				

#### Commendations

- XYZ

#### Affirmations

- XYZ

#### Other recommendations or comments

- XZY

\*Report template is for a standard included course. Reduced scope courses will have an amended report according to the reporting requirements.