



## CONTENTS

1	PRELIMINARIES.....	1
	Commencement .....	1
	Purpose .....	1
	Application .....	1
2	DEFINITIONS.....	1
3	POLICY .....	1
4	RESPONSIBILITIES.....	2
	4.1 The Dean .....	2
	4.2 Course Advisory Committee .....	2
5	PROCEDURES .....	2
	5.1 Course Development .....	2
	5.2 Course Evaluation .....	5
	5.3 Continuous Evaluation of Delivery and Assessment Methods .....	7
	5.4 Course Review Guidelines .....	8
	5.5 Course Changes Process.....	9
6	RELATED LEGISLATION AND DOCUMENTS .....	11
	Institute Documents.....	11
	Applicable External Standards and Codes.....	11
7	FEEDBACK .....	11
8	POLICY MANAGEMENT .....	12
	Document History .....	12

## 1 PRELIMINARIES

### Commencement

This policy and procedure commenced on 4 December 2017.

### Purpose

This policy and procedure aim to provide a framework for designing, developing, and evaluating courses within the Polytechnic Institute Australia ('PIA') in the context of maintaining academic standards and continuous quality improvement.

### Application

This policy and procedure apply to all PIA courses and to all staff involved in designing, developing, and evaluating courses.

## 2 DEFINITIONS

Terms not defined in this document may be in the PIA glossary.

## 3 POLICY

- 3.1 Course development is grounded in an educational philosophy that emphasises the centrality of the learner within the learning process and supports each student's personal and professional development to foster innovation, critical thinking, and ethical and professional practice. PIA's courses are structured to enable students to expand their professional interests across various related disciplines and enhance their future employment prospects.



3.2 In designing courses, PIA adheres to the professional development standards indicated by academic research in its fields of expertise and the standards and guidelines established by peer higher education providers, professional bodies and peak industry associations. In line with these principles, courses are designed to:

- provide students with accredited qualifications in their chosen field of study,
- provide a critically reflective theoretical and experiential learning context,
- extend students' abilities to apply for and engage in a range of career options,
- integrate theory and practice in a dynamic learning environment and
- provide support to promote and foster personal and professional development.

## 4 RESPONSIBILITIES

### 4.1 The Dean

The Dean is responsible for facilitating the course design and development process. To ensure quality in course design and content, courses are developed in consultation with a Course Advisory Committee, which will be comprised of members from the following constituencies:

- professional bodies and peak industry associations,
- employer groups,
- academic staff from other higher education providers,
- academic staff of PIA, and
- graduates and enrolled students of PIA.

### 4.2 Course Advisory Committee

A Course Advisory Committee is responsible for

- contributing advice and expertise to the initial development of a course and supporting its ongoing review and monitoring.
- assisting in identifying the need and demand for a course and
- Assist academic staff with industry—and content-specific advice and guidance in developing PIA's courses.

## 5 PROCEDURES

### 5.1 Course Development

Courses will be developed by PIA using the process outlined below. A flow chart of the process is shown in Appendix 1.

#### 5.1.1 Phase 1: Development of a Business and Academic Case

Where an opportunity is identified for the development of new course, the Chief Executive Office may authorise the development of a business case for a new course.

The proposal must address:

- how the development of the proposed course help achieve the strategic objectives of PIA,



- the demand and need for the course in industry and the broader community;
- the academic basis for the proposed course;
- how the proposed course complements the present range of courses offered by PIA;
- forecast enrolments in the proposed course;
- the capacity of PIA to deliver the proposed course;
- the cost to develop the course and, where necessary, the cost to develop the capability of PIA to deliver the course; and
- the financial case for the proposed development.

On completion of this phase, the Board of Directors will consider the business case for the proposal and if approved, grant permission to proceed to Phase 2.

## 5.1.2 Phase 2: **Academic Structure**

In order to develop the academic structures, a Course Advisory Committee will be established to aid the course development. An existing Course Advisory Committee (where one exists) may be utilised or a new Course Advisory Committee created.

The Course Advisory Committee, in consultation with the Dean, will consider and document the following key elements of the course design:

- the course's aims and objectives;
- the graduate attributes required to be successful;
- the body of knowledge that the course will draw upon;
- the appropriate course structure and delivery mode(s);
- the course regulations;
- the equivalence to, or difference with, similar courses delivered in Australia; and

On completion of this phase, the Academic Board will consider the proposed structure of the proposal and if approved, grant permission to proceed to Phase 3.

## 5.1.3 Phase 3 **Detailed Course Development**

The Course Advisory Committee, in consultation with the Dean, will consider and document the following detailed elements of the course design:

- the approved course structure and delivery mode(s);
- the learning outcomes, content, resources and assessment for each unit;
- mapping of unit details to demonstrate compliance with the requirements of the HESF and any external accreditation agencies.



Academic Board will consider the proposed structure that has been produced with the aid of the Course Advisory Committee. In considering the proposal, the Academic Board must confirm that the proposal complies with:

- the approval of the Board of Directors for the development of the course;
- the requirements of this policy;
- the appropriate HESF standards; and
- any requirements of any external accrediting agencies.

On completion of this phase, the Academic Board will consider the detailed proposal, and, if approved, grant permission to proceed to external expert review and Phase 4.

#### 5.1.4 Phase 4 – **Academic Approval**

Following approval from Academic Board, the proposal will be reviewed by one or more external experts. Their report should specifically address their view on

- the compliance with the appropriate HESF standards;
- the appropriateness of consistency or otherwise of the course design and content compared to other available courses and the broader discipline requirement and expectations; and
- areas of risk that are unaddressed in the proposal.

A final proposal will be submitted to Academic Board for consideration. The proposal will include:

- the revised completed proposal noting any suggested modifications from the proposal approved for expert review;
- any external expert report(s) and the management response; and
- any other issues of substance which may impact of the risks associated with the course, on students or the Institute.

On completion of this phase, the Academic Board will consider the proposed structure of the proposal and if approved, grant permission to proceed to Phase 6.

#### 5.1.5 Phase 5 – **Approval to Submit for Course Accreditation**

Following approval from Academic Board, the final proposal will be reviewed by the Board of Directors.

The report should specifically address:

- the demand and need for the course in industry and the broader community;
- how the proposed course complements the present range of courses offered by PIA;
- the financial case for the proposed development; and



- the recommendations of the Academic Board.

On completion of this phase, the Academic Board will consider the proposed structure of the proposal and if approved, grant permission to proceed to Phase 6.

## 5.1.6 Phase 6 – **Completion of Development**

Following the accreditation of the course by the relevant authorities, the remaining detailed unit development will be completed.

## 5.2 Course Evaluation

All courses offered by PIA are subject to ongoing monitoring and evaluation of content and course delivery mechanisms.

### 5.2.1 Evaluation of Units of Study

5.2.1.1 PIA will review annually each unit of study offered in accredited courses. The Academic Board requires the Learning and Teaching Committee to implement feedback mechanisms to evaluate the content, learning and assessment methodologies, and the quality and adequacy of information provided to students, teachers, and resources for each unit of study. The review should also consider the clarity of purpose of the unit of study within the course, and data related to grade distributions and student progress.

5.2.1.2 Units of study will be evaluated at least once each year according to the following procedure:

- student and teacher feedback will be collated on each unit of study annually;
- feedback results will be collated and analysed by the relevant Course Coordinator who will generate unit-specific reports which will be presented to the Learning and Teaching Committee;
- the Learning and Teaching Committee makes recommendations to the Academic Board for endorsement; and
- endorsed recommendations will be implemented by the Dean in liaison with the Course Coordinator.

### 5.2.2 Annual Review of Courses

5.2.2.1 PIA is committed to an annual process of monitoring and reviewing courses. The relevant course coordinator will conduct this review under the direction of the Dean.

5.2.2.2 The annual review will generate a course-specific report for the relevant Course Advisory Committee. The annual review will address the following criteria:



- student demand for the course (based on student enrolment statistics, market research and analysis),
  - student progression, completion, and attrition,
  - the range, depth, and currency of units of study available within the course,
  - the quality, scope and adequacy of course-related information provided to students and prospective students,
  - the appropriateness and flexibility of the course's methods of delivery in relation to student needs and demands, and
  - analysis of significant trends drawn from student and teacher evaluation and feedback data.
- 5.2.2.3 The Dean is responsible for implementing annual course reviews in concert with the relevant Course Coordinator. Based on student and teacher feedback, the Course Coordinator will write an evaluation report for review by the relevant Course Advisory Committee. The Course Advisory Committee will decide on recommendations to be endorsed by the Academic Board.
- 5.2.2.4 Endorsed recommendations will be implemented by the Dean in liaison with the Course Coordinator.
- 5.2.3 Three-Yearly Review of Courses and Constituent Units of Study
- 5.2.3.1 PIA is committed to a cyclical review of its courses by its discipline-specific Course Advisory Committees. These reviews aim to ensure that a particular course's aim, structure, units of study, learning objectives, assessment activities, resources, study modes and delivery methods are monitored, evaluated, and changed when and where necessary.
- 5.2.3.2 Each Course Advisory Committee and an appropriate industry representative triennially review PIA courses in accordance with the course review schedule established by the Academic Board.
- 5.2.3.3 Course review processes will focus on the following criteria:
- review of course aims, structure, units of study, learning objectives, assessment activities, resources, study modes and delivery methods with reference to the AQF level for the course;
  - adequacy, currency, and appropriateness of assessment practices and criteria;
  - accountability for the conduct and delivery of the course;
  - quality of student and teacher support services;
  - role of the course within PIA's educational profile and its ongoing contribution to the mission and goals of the Institute;
  - the impact of similar courses on PIA's course offerings by competitor higher education providers, and



- the systematic collection and analysis of data relating to admission and enrolment statistics, deferral, withdrawal, progression, completion and retention rates, student results per unit, graduate employability, feedback from professional bodies and peer review processes.

5.2.3.4 The Course Advisory Committee will present recommendations arising from the review process to the Academic Board for endorsement. The Dean, in liaison with the Course Coordinator, will implement endorsed recommendations.

## 5.3 Continuous Evaluation of Delivery and Assessment Methods

5.3.1 Continuous monitoring and reviewing of course delivery and assessment enable PIA to do the following:

- evaluate the quality of delivery methods;
- monitor and review the assessment system, instruments and academic integrity;
- identify areas of strength and areas for improvement and strategies to address these; and
- document improvements over time.

5.3.2 PIA is committed to ensuring that the processes for course delivery and the monitoring of assessment systems lead to continuous improvement.

5.3.3 Processes for continuously monitoring and evaluating courses are set out below.

### 5.3.3.1 Student Feedback

Students provide continuous feedback throughout the duration of a course.

Anonymous feedback forms are distributed during selected units of study and at the conclusion of a course. The course coordinator reads and evaluates the forms, in turn providing a comprehensive summary of student feedback to the Learning and Teaching Committee.

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

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

### 5.3.3.3 Teaching Staff Feedback

Teaching staff are provided with opportunities to evaluate units of study as well as the learning and teaching environment. Teaching staff have direct and frequent access to their peers and their Course 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.

### 5.3.3.4 Moderation of Assessment



Moderation of assessment is conducted to ensure consistency, equity and fairness in assessment practices (Refer section 8 of *Quality Assurance Framework* and the *Assessment Moderation Policy and Procedure*).

#### 5.3.3.5 Learning and Teaching Committee

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

#### 5.3.3.6 Course Advisory Committees

Each Course Advisory Committee reviews, monitors and assesses the achievement of the course's aims and learning outcomes and ensures the ongoing currency and relevance of curriculum and course objectives.

#### 5.3.3.7 Academic Board

The Academic Board is responsible for achieving educational objectives, developing and implementing academic policy, and monitoring the learning and teaching environment.

### 5.4 Course Review Guidelines

5.4.1 Reviewing courses and their constituent units of study, reviewers ( - nominated Committee members, independent experts and relevant academic staff) are provided with the following guidelines to assist in monitoring and evaluation processes. The guidelines provide a standardised format to facilitate the analysis of data and the generation of critical issues for reporting purposes.

5.4.2 Reviewers should begin evaluation processes by asking the following questions:

- what are the intended outcomes of the course?
- how do course outcomes relate to external benchmarking standards, the AQF, and professional and industry body requirements?
- how do the units of study contribute to the overall aim of the course?

5.4.3 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 PIA ensure that course content enables students to achieve the intended learning outcomes?
- how does PIA ensure that the design and organisation of the course are effective in promoting student learning and achievement of the intended learning outcomes?

5.4.4 Reviewers should consider the information available to students, teachers and staff.

They should consider how unit specifications are used to promote understanding of the





unit outcomes and the other strategies used to communicate information. Reviewers should ask:

- how are the intended outcomes for a unit of study and its constituent parts (e.g.; assessment methodology) communicated to students and teaching staff?
- do students know what is expected of them?

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

- does the assessment process enable learners to demonstrate achievement of the specified learning outcomes?
- are there criteria that enable examiners to distinguish between different achievement categories?
- is the reviewer confident in the security and integrity of the assessment procedures employed?
- does the assessment strategy have an adequate formative function in developing student abilities?

5.4.6 In the final report, reviewers should provide a critical evaluation of the course and its units of study backed by supporting documentation. Reviewers should address the following questions:

- Does the design and content of the course encourage achievement of the intended learning outcomes in terms of: knowledge and understanding, cognitive skills, unit-specific skills (including practical/professional skills), transferable skills, progression to employment and/or further study, and personal development?
- Is there documentation that the course content and design is informed by recent developments in techniques of learning and teaching, by current research and scholarship, and by any changes in relevant occupational and professional requirements?

## 5.5 Course Changes Process

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

### 5.5.1 Step 1: Reviewer Consultation

Reviewers consult stakeholders regarding the proposed changes. Stakeholders include:

- Students,
- academic staff,
- administrative staff,
- student support staff,
- professionals in the discipline,
- industry representatives,



- the Course Advisory Committee, and
- the Academic Board.

## 5.5.2 Step 2: Proposal to Working Committees

Reviewers submit a proposal to the PIA working committees for input. Depending on the nature of the change, these committees include the following:

- the Learning and Teaching Committee; and
- the Course Advisory Committee.



## 5.5.3 Step 3: Formal Endorsement

Reviewers submit proposals to the appropriate committee for formal endorsement and approval. This requires a submission to the Course Advisory Committee for advice, a report to the Learning and Teaching Committee for endorsement, and final approval by the Academic Board.

## 5.5.4 Step 4: Documenting Changes

Reviewers liaise with the Dean to ensure that all administrative processes and requirements are completed to implement changes. This includes changes to student information, the website and marketing and promotional materials. All changes must comply with PIA's policies and Academic Board directives.

## 5.5.5 Step 5: Communication and Notification

The Dean ensures that appropriate notification is communicated to students prior to implementation. The minimum information that is communicated includes the following: a rationale for the changes, details of the specific changes, and changes to students' database records if required.

## 5.5.6 Step 6: Risk Management

Throughout the change process, the Dean monitors risk management implications, including the following: the relationship of the changes to PIA's mission and goals; issues related to course resourcing; the impact on compliance with regulatory requirements; consistency with PIA's policies; the impact of changes on academic staff and students, and the provision of sufficient notification and support.

## 6 RELATED LEGISLATION AND DOCUMENTS

### Institute Documents

- Assessment Moderation Policy and Procedure
- Quality Assurance Framework

### Applicable External Standards and Codes

This policy and procedure support compliance with the following:

Standards/Code	Standards/Clauses
Higher Education Standards Framework (Threshold Standards) 2021	6.1
	6.2
	6.3
	6.4

## 7 FEEDBACK

PIA staff and students may provide feedback about this document by emailing [policy@pia.edu.au](mailto:policy@pia.edu.au) for such feedback to be incorporated into a future review.



## 8 POLICY MANAGEMENT

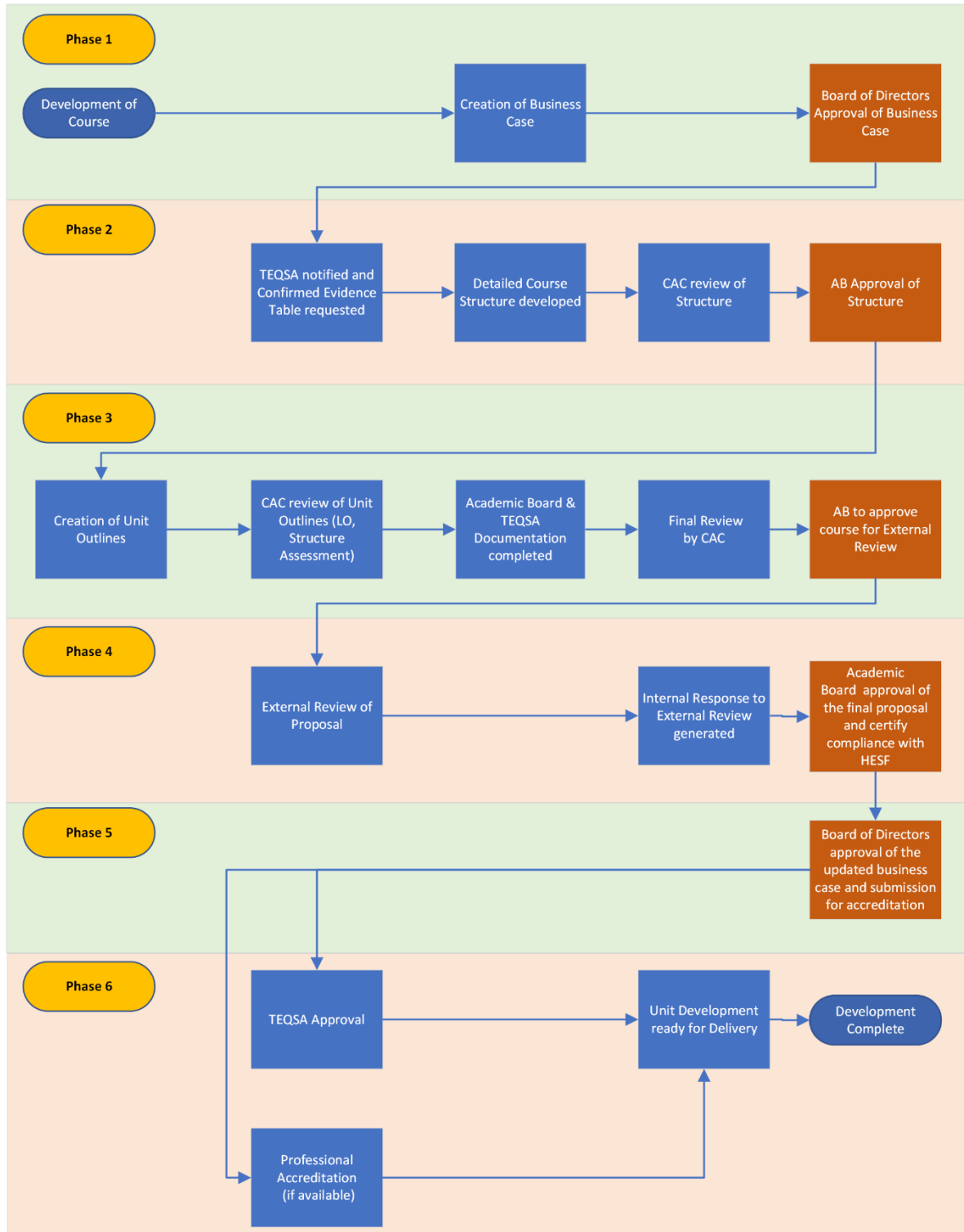
Approval and Review	Details
Approval Authority / Owner (Role)	Academic Board
Administrator / Responsible for Implementing	Dean
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### Document History

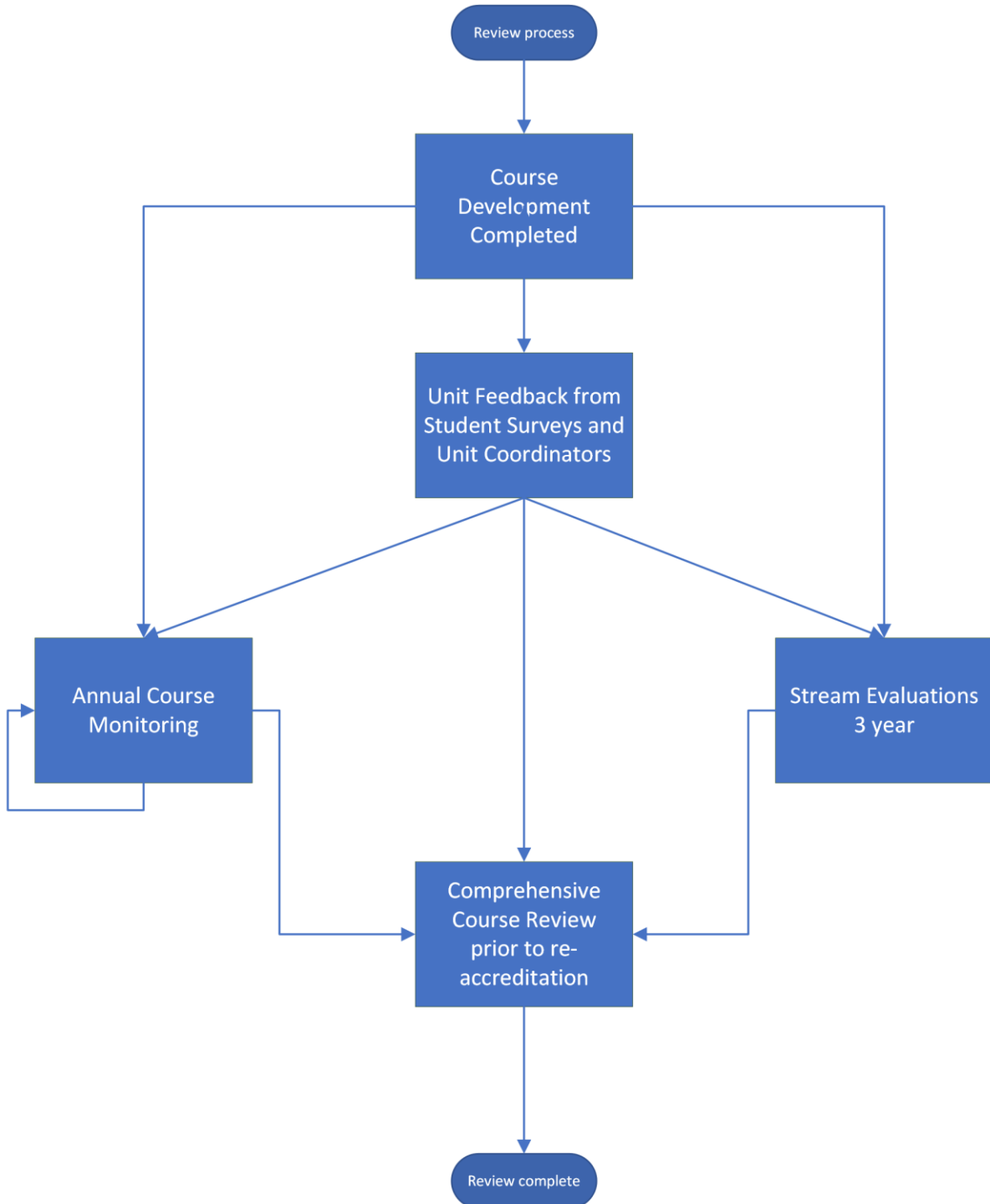
Month and Year	Version	Amendments
December 2017	1.0	Policy created and endorsed by the Academic Board
July 2018	2.0	The formatting was updated.
July 2024	3.3	Development process updated to reflect the workflows. The formatting was updated, including the addition of the document history

## APPENDIX 1 – Workflows

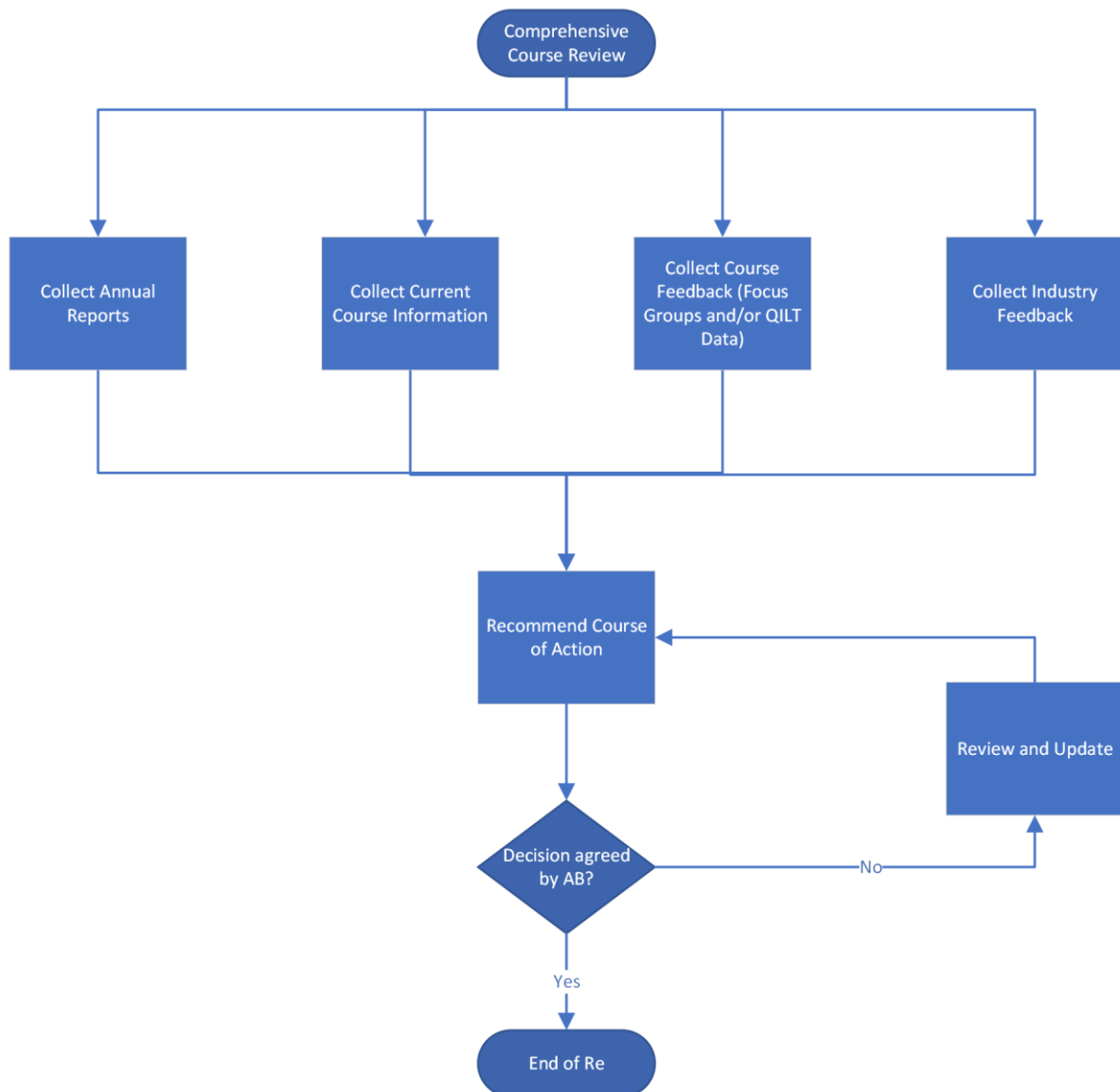
### Course Development Process



## Course Review Process



# Course Design, Development and Evaluation Policy and Procedure



# Course Design, Development and Evaluation Policy and Procedure



## Course Redevelopment Process

