

Health Education and Training Institute Higher Education Academic Governance Policy

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Issued under the authority of the Health Education and Training Institute Higher Education Governing Council

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Health Education and Training Institute Higher Education Academic Governance Policy

Policy Statement

1. The HETI Higher Education Governing Council has ultimate responsibility for the governance of all aspects of HETI Higher Education. In relation to academic governance matters, it delegates authority and responsibility to the HETI Higher Education Academic Board to provide advice to the HETI Higher Education Governing Council and to oversee and manage academic operations. The Academic Board oversees academic policy making, academic management and the quality of teaching and learning in order to ensure that the higher education objectives of HETI are met. The Academic Board is assisted in implementation of academic governance functions by various sub-committees and delegates authority to them in such matters.

Aims and Objectives

2. This policy specifies the academic governance arrangements for the Health Education and Training Institute (HETI) Higher Education.
3. This policy establishes academic governance structures and operations in accordance with the regulatory obligations laid down in the Higher Education Standards Framework (HESF) (2015).

Overview

4. This policy outlines the HETI Higher Education academic governance framework in accordance with the contemporary best practice and tradition in Australian higher education, especially in relation to the guidelines laid down by the Tertiary Education Quality and Standards Agency (TEQSA)¹ in which it is asserted that 'the standing of a provider's academic governance practices is seen by many as key to maintaining and sustaining a provider's educational reputation.'
5. The HETI Higher Education academic governance framework is characterised by a system that provides 'rigorous scrutiny and peer review of academic activities, carried out independently and separately from the staff who are directly involved in those activities'; 'academically-informed advice to assist corporate decision making and monitoring, e.g. for institutional approval of a course of study or analyses of the progress of student cohorts'; 'academic expertise and experience sufficient to provide leadership, judgement and scrutiny at the level of academic activity concerned'; and to set and monitor academic benchmarks ('academic standards')².
6. Academic governance is overseen by the HETI Higher Education Academic Board, which is assisted by the following sub-committees:

¹ TEQSA, 2017, Guidance Note: *Academic Governance*, Version 2.3, retrieved from <https://www.tegsa.gov.au/latest-news/publications/guidance-note-academic-governance> on February 7, 2019.

² Ibid, page 1.

- a. The Teaching and Learning Committee
 - b. The Examiners Committee
 - c. External Advisory Committee(s).
7. The HETI Higher Education Governing Council is responsible for ‘undertaking periodic (at least every seven years) independent reviews of the effectiveness of the governing body and academic governance processes and ensuring that the findings of such reviews are considered by a competent body or officer(s) and that agreed actions are implemented³.’ It approves the conferring of the academic awards for all courses offered by HETI Higher Education at post graduate degree at AQF Level 8 and 9 on the recommendation of the HETI Higher Education Academic Board.
 8. The HETI Higher Education Executive Group supports the functions of the Governing Council and will approve corporate procedures on behalf of the Governing Council that are considered to be low risk. Any procedures that could be contentious will be referred to the HETI Governing Council for review and approval.

Definitions

9. Academic Governance: ‘A subset of the overall governance of a higher education provider. Academic governance deals with the framework that regulates providers’ academic decisions and quality assurance. Academic governance includes the policies, processes, definitions of roles, relationships, systems, strategies and resources that ensure academic standards and continuous improvement in academic activities. It is concerned with the integrity and quality of the core higher education activities of teaching, research and scholarship⁴.’
10. Academic Standards (or benchmarks): ‘An agreed specification (such as a defined benchmark or indicator) that is used as a definition of a level of performance or achievement, rule or guideline. Standards may apply to academic outcomes, such as student or graduate achievement of core discipline knowledge and core discipline skills (known as learning outcomes), or to academic processes such as student selection, teaching, research supervision, and assessment⁵.’

Regulatory Framework

11. Part A, Section 6.3 of the HESF (2015) deals explicitly with academic governance. According to TEQSA, the ‘overall intent of the Standards (as reflected in 6.3.1) is to establish a system of academic governance that will provide competent academic oversight and monitoring of all academic activities at the institutional level⁶.’ Section 6.3 outlines the required processes and structures (Standard 6.3.1) underpinning academic oversight

³ See Commonwealth of Australia, HESF, 2015, Section 6.1 Corporate Governance, Standard 6.1.3d, page 12.

⁴ See TEQSA Glossary, retrieved on February 6, 2019, from <https://www.teqsa.gov.au/glossary-terms>

⁵ Ibid.

⁶ TEQSA, 2017, Guidance Note: *Academic Governance*, Version 2.3, retrieved from <https://www.teqsa.gov.au/latest-news/publications/guidance-note-academic-governance> on February 7, 2019, page 2.

of the quality of teaching, learning, research and research training (Standard 6.3.2), including the provision of opportunities for student participation in academic governance (Standard 6.3.3). The terms of reference of the Academic Board and its subcommittees in this policy reflect the areas outlined in these Standards.

The Academic Board

12. The HETI Higher Education Academic Board is accountable to the HETI Higher Education Governing Council for Academic Policy making, academic management and the quality of teaching and learning in order to ensure that the HETI Higher Education strategic objectives are met.

Terms of Reference

Role

13. The Health Education and Training Institute (HETI) Higher Education Academic Board is responsible for setting and overseeing the policies and processes necessary to achieve the intended academic outcomes (quality and integrity) consistent with the HETI's Higher Education strategic directions. It is also responsible for setting and reviewing academic standards, monitoring academic outcomes and supporting application to practice. The HETI Higher Education Academic Board represents a major forum within HETI for discussion and resolution of academic matters. The HETI Higher Education Academic Board provides advice to the HETI Higher Education Governing Council in academic matters.

Functions

14. The HETI Higher Education Academic Board will:
 - a. Develop and oversee strong academic quality assurance processes which support the HETI higher education teaching and learning agenda. This includes meeting external requirements such as professional accreditation, professional standards, Higher Education Standards Framework (2015) and the Australian Qualifications Framework.
 - b. Ensure that appropriate academic standards are set and upheld.
 - c. Develop and provide oversight of the HETI Higher Education academic policies, procedures and regulations that are reviewed for currency and adequacy.
 - d. Develop and provide oversight of a teaching and learning plan which provides a road map for scholarship and pedagogical approaches for the HETI higher education activities.
 - e. Provide support and oversight of scholarly activities to support academic staff scholarship and relevant professional development
 - f. Ensure effective course design and approval processes are in place and that established courses are monitored, reviewed and updated on a regular basis.
 - g. Consider and make decisions on all aspects of the development and accreditation or re-accreditation of higher education courses, the admission of students, teaching, and assessment and requirements for graduation, prizes, awards and scholarships.

- h. Monitor student performance and learning outcomes in relation to quality teaching and learning processes. Ensure that poor outcomes are appropriately addressed and that student performance and outcomes are advised to the Higher Education Governing Council.
- i. Review and endorse the list of graduands provided by the Examiners Committee for approval of award conferrals by the Governing Council.
- j. Provide oversight of appropriate academic and student support services.
- k. Advise the HETI Higher Education Governing Council on the academic aspects of HETI's strategic and operational planning.
- l. Establish such committees or working groups as are required and delegate implementation or other matters to these or senior staff. These committees may be standing committees or for specific timeframes and may include (but not be limited to) a Course Advisory Committee, and a Teaching and Learning Committee.
- m. Generate reports and make recommendations to the HETI Higher Education Governing Council.

Membership of the HETI Higher Education Academic Board

15. The composition of the HETI Higher Education Academic Board will be:
- a. Three external academics, at least one with higher education governance experience and at least one with academic expertise in the area of mental health.
 - i. The three external academics are appointed in the first instance by the HETI Chief Executive until 31 December 2017.
 - ii. Thereafter by the HETI Higher Education Governing Council for a two year renewable term.
 - iii. One of these external academics will be selected in the first instance by the HETI Chief Executive and thereafter by the HETI Higher Education Governing Council as the Chair of the Academic Board.
 - b. Consumer Representative appointed in the first instance by the HETI Chief Executive until 31 December 2017 and thereafter by the Health Education and Training Institute Higher Education Governing Council for a two year renewable term.
 - c. One internal academic staff representative for a two-year.
 - d. Two current students undertaking a HETI Higher Education course nominated from the student body for a two-year term.
 - e. The HETI Executive Director Leadership, Management Development and Educational Design (ex officio.)
 - f. The HETI Executive Director Mental Health (ex officio).
 - g. The HETI Director Education and Training (ex officio).
 - h. The HETI Director Psychiatry and Mental Health Programs (ex officio).

- i. The Learning Pathways Manager (ex officio)

Membership Requirements

16. All members are required to comply with the completion of the following documentation where appropriate which will accompany their invitation to join the body:
 - a. Fit and Proper Person Declaration;
 - b. Higher Education Academic Board and Committees – Member Details and documentation;
 - c. Confidentiality Agreement.

Induction of new Academic Board members

17. New members of Academic Board are provided with an Induction Process that includes:
 - a. An Orientation meeting with the Chair of the Academic Board or the Chair's Nominee, the Executive Director and the Directors
 - b. An Induction manual that describes
 - i. An overview of higher education in Australia
 - ii. Regulatory requirements for academic governance - The HESF (2015) Standards
 - iii. Regulatory requirements associated with NSW Health
 - iv. Academic Governance structures at HETI Higher Education
 - v. Academic Board Terms of Reference
 - vi. Policies and procedures relevant to an Academic Board member
 - vii. Roles and responsibilities of an Academic Board member
 - viii. Meeting procedure.

Vacancies and Leave

18. The position of an appointed or elected member of the HETI Higher Education Academic Board becomes vacant where the member:
 - a. ceases to be qualified to hold the position to which they have been appointed or elected; or
 - b. resigns by notice in writing to the Chair of the HETI Higher Education Academic Board; or
 - c. is absent from three consecutive meetings of the HETI Higher Education Academic Board, without leave having been granted by the HETI Higher Education Academic Board; or
 - d. a student representative whose enrolment is not maintained;
 - e. in the case of an appointed member, is removed from office by the

Casual Vacancies

19. If there is a casual vacancy in the office of an appointed or elected member the following provisions apply:
 - a. in the case of an appointed member another person may be appointed to the position; and
 - b. in the case of an elected member another person is to be elected to fill that position;
 - c. where a person is appointed or elected to fill a casual vacancy they hold office for the remainder of the term of office of the original member.

Leave

20. If a member requires a period of leave, a temporary replacement can be approved by the HETI Chief Executive.

Meetings of the HETI Higher Education Academic Board

21. The HETI Higher Education Academic Board will meet at least three times per year. Urgent matters can be dealt with in between meetings by means approved by the HETI Higher Education Academic Board. At the discretion of the Chair, meetings may be conducted and members may participate with the aid of electronic communication technologies.
22. A quorum consists of 50% of the membership plus one (including at least one external academic).
23. In voting to determine a matter, an absolute majority is required. In the event of a tied vote, the matter can be further discussed, at the discretion of the Chair. If a further vote is also tied, the Chair has a casting vote.

Reporting

24. The HETI Higher Education Academic Board will report to the HETI Higher Education Governing Council by generating reports and making recommendations.

Review of performance

25. The HETI Higher Education Academic Board will review its membership and performance against its roles and responsibilities as set out herein on a bi-annual basis and report the results of its reviews to the HETI Higher Education Governing Council.
26. In accordance with Clause 7, the HETI Higher Education Academic Board will take part in periodic (at least every seven years) independent reviews of its effectiveness and academic governance processes and will ensure that the findings of such reviews and agreed actions will be implemented.

Sub-Committees of the Academic Board

The Teaching and Learning Committee

27. The Teaching and Learning Committee is accountable to the HETI Higher Education Academic Board for the quality assurance processes which underpin the teaching and learning standards for all higher education courses and awards.

Terms of Reference

28. The functions of the Teaching and Learning Committee are to:

- a. Make recommendations to the Health Education and Training Institute Higher Education Academic Board on changes to existing courses, curriculum review and renewal.
- b. Implement academic policies relating to all teaching and learning processes, including admissions, student progress, examinations and assessment, and academic appeals.
- c. Take steps to improve the quality of teaching and learning through regular use and review of unit and course evaluations as a basis for continuous improvement.
- d. Actively facilitate improvement initiatives in teaching and learning, encouraging collaborative activities and support for inter-professional teaching opportunities.
- e. Monitor student progress, attrition and completion rates, and graduate destinations.
- f. Oversee the processes by which students are assessed including assessment moderation.
- g. Take into account student feedback to facilitate enhanced teaching and learning performance; provide infrastructure to support a high quality learning environment through the Health Education and Training Institute Higher Education libraries, systems, equipment and teaching and learning spaces such as classrooms and other facilities.
- h. Make recommendations regarding resourcing of courses including facilities, textbooks and other learning resources for higher education courses.
- i. Receive reports and review statistics relating to student appeals against assessment, grievances, discipline and misconduct.
- j. Undertake benchmarking of course outcomes, teaching and learning practices, and relevance of program offerings according to the Health Education and Training Institute Higher Education Academic Quality Assurance Framework, and the Health Education and Training Institute Higher Education Teaching & Learning Plan 2015 - 2018.
- k. Ensure systematic monitoring and review of the academic management of courses, teaching and performance.

- l. Approve an annual Academic and Professional Development Day.
- m. Act on any matters delegated to it from the Health Education and Training Institute Higher Education Academic Board.

Membership of the HETI Higher Education Teaching and Learning Committee

29. The composition of the Teaching and Learning Committee will be:
- a. Director Education and Training (Chair)
 - b. Director Psychiatry and Mental Health Programs
 - c. Learning Pathways Manager
 - d. Manager Training and Performance and Quality
 - e. Higher Education Librarian
 - f. Cohort Convenor representative
 - g. Student representative Applied Mental Health Studies Framework
 - h. Student representative Psychiatric Medicine Framework.

Meetings of the HETI Higher Teaching and Learning Committee

30. The Teaching and Learning Committee must meet at a minimum three times per year.
31. The Chair may convene additional Teaching and Learning Committee meetings at any time with reasonable notice.
32. A quorum consists of 50% of the membership.
33. In voting to determine a matter an absolute majority is required. In the event of a tied vote, the matter can be further discussed, at the discretion of the Chair. If a further vote is also tied, the Chair has the casting vote.

Reporting:

34. The Teaching and Learning Committee will report/make recommendations to the Health Education and Training Institute Higher Education Academic Board.

Review:

35. The performance of the Teaching and Learning Committee and its Terms of Reference will be reviewed by the HETI Higher Education Academic Board every two years.
36. In accordance with Clause 7, the HETI Higher Teaching and Learning Committee will take part in periodic (at least every seven years) independent reviews of its effectiveness and academic governance processes and will ensure that the findings of such reviews and agreed actions will be implemented

The Examiners Committee

37. The HETI Higher Education Academic Board has delegated responsibility to the Examiners Committee to determine and recommend ratification of assessment results and final grades for student academic performance to the Academic Board.

Terms of Reference

38. The Examiners Committee has the following delegated authority and associated responsibilities:
- a. Review and evaluate assessment results and final grades for student academic performance
 - b. Seek explanations from Unit Facilitators if assessment results and final grades are anomalous or inconsistent with the HETI Higher Education Assessment Policy – Criteria and Standards-Based Assessment
 - c. Approve adjustment and moderation of assessment results and final grades in the event of unsatisfactory explanations of anomalies
 - d. Report and recommend approval and release of final grades to the Academic Board
 - e. Review and endorse conferral of degrees for students who have met the completion requirements of their courses.

Membership of the Examiners Committee

39. The membership of the Examiners Committee consists of:
- Chair: an external member of the Academic Board
 - The Director of Education and Training
 - The Director Psychiatry and Mental Health Programs
 - The Learning Pathways Manager
 - ESO representative
 - A minimum of one External Academic.

Meetings of the Examiners Committee

40. The Examiners Committee will meet at the end of every period of study to review and approve assessment results and final grades for student academic performance.
41. At the Examiners Committee meeting, at the end of each period of study, the Learning Pathways Manager will report on:
- a. Students who have met the completion requirements of their courses and who can be endorsed to the Academic Board as eligible for conferral of their degrees
 - b. Student academic performance, including grade distributions and comparisons with results from previous years where applicable

- c. The progress of students at Stage 2 of the At Risk Process
- d. Students who require to be formally notified that they have reached Stage 2 of the At Risk Process either because they have not successfully completed their unit(s) after having been identified as potentially at risk or because they have triggered one or more of the following:
 - i. fail 50% or more of the units attempted in a period of study; and/or
 - ii. fail the same or equivalent unit twice; and/or
 - iii. fail a mandatory program component.⁷

42. A quorum will consist of the Chair and three other members of the Examiners Committee.

43. Meetings of the Assessment Committee will be conducted according to standard meeting procedure. Minutes of each meeting must be taken by the Committee Secretary, signed by the Chair as a true and accurate record and distributed to each member of the Committee before the Academic Board meeting at which ratification of final grades is sought.

Report to Academic Board

44. After each period of study, the Chair of the Committee will provide a Report to the next meeting of the Academic Board based on the minutes of the Examiners Committee meeting, including:

- a. Students who have met the completion requirements of their courses and who are endorsed as eligible for conferral of their degrees
- b. An account of the results of any explanations for anomalous results sought by the Committee
- c. A description and rationale of any adjustment or moderation of results
- d. A recommendation that the results and final grades be ratified.

Review

45. The performance of the Examiners Committee and its Terms of Reference will be reviewed by the HETI Higher Education Academic Board every two years.

46. In accordance with Clause 7, the HETI Higher Education Academic Board will take part in periodic (at least every seven years) independent reviews of its effectiveness and academic governance processes and will ensure that the findings of such reviews and agreed actions will be implemented.

⁷ See HETI Higher Education Progression and Unsatisfactory Academic Progress Policy, Clause 14.

External Advisory Committee(s)

47. An External Advisory Committee's principal function is to provide advice on the relevance of courses and proposed courses to prospective students, the health sector, professional bodies and to the community, adopting open and transparent processes. A Committee may also facilitate networking with the health sector and the community generally to leverage collaborative ventures, foster support for Health Education and Training Institute (HETI) Higher Education, attract donations for scholarships, and provide opportunities for research collaborations. With appropriate membership, the Committee may provide expert advice about curriculum design standards for current or proposed courses.

Terms of Reference

48. An External Advisory Committee (or committees) may be established to provide advice over an extended period of time - from inception of a particular course or courses, through to their being offered to students. Alternatively, the Committee might be commissioned for a limited duration, to undertake a particular task - for example, to review a particular course that is due for re-accreditation.

49. In establishing an External Advisory Committee, or committees, the Director Education and Training will, in consultation with the HETI Higher Education Executive Group, determine the Committee's terms of reference.

Membership

50. The Director Education and Training will, in consultation with the HETI Higher Education Executive Group will:

- a. appoint an external chair; that is, an individual *who is not* employed by HETI
- b. propose the appointment of the members of the Committee (including, if considered necessary a deputy chair). A majority of members must be external to HETI Higher Education, for example, graduates, relevant professionals, academic staff at other institutions
- c. decide how often the Committee should meet, and whether meetings are face-to-face or electronic, taking into account the wishes of the Committee.

Reporting

51. The External Advisory Committee's reports will be referred to the HETI Higher Education Academic Board via the Teaching and Learning Committee.

Related Documents

- Governance Model Higher Education
- The Health Education and Training Institute Higher Education Governing Council - Terms of Reference
- HETI Higher Education Course Review Policy and Procedures
- HETI Higher Education New Courses Approval Policy and Procedure
- HETI Higher Education Quality Assurance Policy
- HETI Higher Education Quality Assurance Framework.

DOCUMENT HISTORY

Version	Issued	Status	Author	Reason for Change
v0.1	27 August 2015	Draft	Geoff Murphy	Draft document
v0.2	23 November 2015	Draft	Geoff Murphy	Feedback Director Education and Training
v0.2	7 December 2015	Draft	Mark Wilbourn	Consolidated Feedback
v0.3	9 December 2015	Draft	Geoff Murphy / Mark Wilbourn	The policy has been re-drafted in line with the Health Education and Training Institute Higher Education Academic Board Terms of Reference approved by the Health Education and Training Institute Chief Executive effective 3 December 2015
v0.4	20 January 2016	Draft	Mark Wilbourn	Incorporating feedback from the Policy Review Workshop
v0.5	25 January 2016	Draft	Geoff Murphy	Post review amendment
v0.6	28 January 2016	Draft	Mark Wilbourn	Incorporating feedback from the Policy Review Workshop 28 January 2016
v0.7	4 February 2016	Draft	Valerie Rhodes	Amend reference to the Teaching and Learning Committee Terms of Reference in line with Academic Board approval 3 February 2016
v1.0	24 February 2016	Final	Mark Wilbourn	As approved by Health Education and Training Institute Higher Education Governing Council
v1.0	21 August 2018	Final	Valerie Rhodes	Updated logos, template and new TRIM Reference
v1.1	16 August 2017	Draft	Valerie Rhodes	Review due
v1.2	10 January 2018	Draft	Rhonda Loftus	Review and Comment
v1.3	17 May 2018	Draft	Valerie Rhodes	Document amended for presentation to

				Teaching and Learning Committee
v1.4	October 2018	Draft	Rhonda Loftus	Document amended for presentation to Teaching and Learning Committee
v1.4	22 October 2018	Draft	Silke O'Callaghan	Endorsed by the Higher Education Academic Board
v1.4	21 November 2018	Draft	Rhonda Loftus	Approved by the Higher Education Governing Council
v3.0	16 January 2019	Final	Jana Chadid	Updated Logos, template
v3.1	December 2018	Draft	David Baxter	Review and edit document
v3.1	4 February 2019	Draft	Silke O'Callaghan	Endorsed by the Teaching and Learning Committee
v3.1	28 February 2019	Draft	Rhonda Loftus	Academic Board review on 28.02.2019 amendments requested.
v3.2	8-14 March 2019	Draft	David Baxter	Review and amendments as per Academic Board
V3.2	18 March 2019	Draft	Leila Sara	Academic Board out of session endorsement on 18 March 2019
v3.3	03 February 2020	Noted	Susan Grimes	Organisational changes; new position title, and responsibilities. Noted by the T&L Committee.
v3.3	14 February 2020	Final	-	Published