

Courses Lifecycle - Concept Proposal and Business Case (HE) Procedure

Section 1 - Summary

(1) This Procedure provides requirements for the development of the Concept Proposal and for the development of the Business Case for new:

- a. Higher Education (HE) Award courses;
- b. majors in a HE Award course;
- c. Non-Award courses (for HE Colleges only);
- d. interstate or overseas delivery of a HE Award course or major or Higher Degrees by Research course;
- e. online delivery of a HE Award course;
- f. dual Awards;
- g. joint Awards;
- h. double degrees;
- i. double qualifications.

(2) This Procedure ensures Victoria University's (VU) compliance with the Higher Education Standards Framework (Threshold Standards) 2015 (HESF), Standard 5 - Institutional Quality Assurance and Standard 6 - Governance and Accountability. In particular, this Procedure ensures compliance with:

- a. Standard 5.1: Course Approval and Accreditation.
- b. Standard 5.3.7: Monitoring, Review and Improvement - Mitigating Future Risks.
- c. Standard 6.2: Corporate Monitoring and Accountability.

Section 2 - Accountability

Accountable/Responsible Officer	Role
Accountable Officer	Deputy Vice-Chancellor, Academic and Students
Responsible Officer	Director, Academic Quality and Standards

Section 3 - Scope

(3) This Procedure applies to all HE Award and HE Non-Award coursework courses at VU.

(4) This Procedure applies to Higher Degrees by Research courses.

(5) This Procedure does not apply to:

- a. Courses that have completed a Comprehensive Course Review (CCR) as they are entering into the re-accreditation phase.
- b. New Vocational Education and Training (VET) Award courses.
- c. New VET-run Non-Award courses.

Section 4 - Definitions

(6) Award Course: A course of study that leads to an Award of the University in line with the Australian Qualifications Framework (AQF).

(7) Concept Proposal and Business Case: The business rationale for proceeding to implement any of the items listed in Clause (1) above.

(8) Double Degrees: A Double Degree comprises two individually approved VU courses at the same AQF level, undertaken at the same time, and resulting in two awards. Often these will take longer than either degree would take individually (eg Bachelor of Laws/Bachelor of Arts).

(9) Double Qualifications: A Double Qualification comprises two individually approved VU courses at different AQF levels in an integrated fashion (eg Bachelor of Arts/Master of Teaching (Secondary Education)).

(10) Dual Awards: Dual Awards involve a registered Higher Education Provider and another entity offering a course of study which results in two separate awards being conferred from two institutions. A dual award may involve one AQF level, or two sequential AQF levels - for example, two Masters degrees or a Bachelor and Diploma award. 'Collaborative double degree programs' are a form of dual award. Dual awards may provide students with the opportunity to complete two awards in a shorter timeframe than if completed separately.

(11) Joint Awards: These Awards involve the awarding of a single qualification which is jointly conferred by two or more providers and recognised within the Australian Qualifications Framework. Joint awards involve close cooperation among the providers in curriculum development, design, organisation, course delivery, and assessment of learning outcomes as well as requirements necessary for awarding the qualification.

(12) New Course

(13) Non-Award Course: A course of study that does not lead to the issuance of an Award of the University in line with the AQF.

(14) Major

Section 5 - Policy/Regulation

(15) See [Courses Lifecycle Policy](#).

Section 6 - Procedures

Part A - Roles and Responsibilities

Roles	Responsibilities
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Proposer	Presents Concept to College Director of Learning and Teaching (or equivalent), for initial feasibility assessment. Prepares Concept Proposal according to instructions and template. (For delivery at VU Sydney, offshore and partnered delivery, the Director Learning & Teaching, Partnerships and Innovation must be included in this process.)
Evaluation Panel (to include Vice-President, Learning & Teaching , Vice-President, Colleges , Chief Financial Officer, Marketing, AQS and Planning)	Evaluates Concept Proposal for feasibility and suitability. Approves the development of Concept Proposals into a Business Case.
Dean (Proposing College) or equivalent	Endorses the Concept Proposal. Endorses Business Case.
Director, Transnational Education (if required)	Recommends the Business Case.
Deputy Vice-Chancellor, Academic and Students, Vice-President, Colleges, Chief Financial Officer and any other relevant Senior Executive Group (SEG) members	Reviews the Business Case and either: - recommends endorsement, or - does not recommend endorsement (which may result in the Business Case being sent back to the Proposer for further development). For delivery at VU Sydney, offshore and partnered delivery, the Senior Vice-President, Future Students and Planning must also endorse the Business Case.
Senior Deputy Vice-Chancellor	Endorses the Business Case for all coursework courses.

Part B - Preparing the Concept Proposal

(16) Proposers:

- a. Prepare a short (two-page) outline of the concept for the proposed new Award course or major, Non-Award course, or new delivery location or mode. The Concept Proposal should cover:
 - i. the discipline or content area;
 - ii. some indication of potential market;
 - iii. graduate outcomes; and
 - iv. any identified synergies with existing courses or units.

Detailed evidence is not required at this stage, but the template must be followed.

- b. Secures endorsement of the Concept Proposal by the relevant College Dean.

(17) Deans:

- a. Present the Concept Proposal to the Evaluation Panel.

(18) The Evaluation Panel evaluates the Concept Proposal against:

- a. the University's goals and strategic direction;
- b. existing offerings by the College, VU Polytechnic or any other part of VU;
- c. competitive market conditions;
- d. feasibility for delivery within the College's existing parameters.

(19) Where the Concept Proposal involves partner delivery, the Director Learning & Teaching, Partnerships and Innovation must be engaged as part of this initial evaluation.

(20) In performing this evaluation, Panel may consult with whomever it sees fit.

(21) After evaluation of the Concept Proposal, the Panel:

- a. recommends the Concept Proposal is suitable for development of a Business Case; or
- b. indicates to the Proposer that the Concept Proposal is not suitable for further development; or
- c. indicates to the Proposer that the Concept Proposal may be reconsidered following further work.

(22) If the Panel approves the development of a Business Case, the Proposer begins preparation of a Business Case in consultation with the relevant Director Learning and Teaching.

Part C - General

(23) Preparation of a Business Case is mandatory for all items listed at Clause (1) above.

(24) The Concept Proposal and Business Case must be presented within the specified template.

Part D - Preparing the Business Case: Structure

(25) The Business Case consists of:

- a. a textual section; and
- b. financial modelling.

(26) All Business Cases must include both the textual section and the financial modelling.

Part E - Business Case: Text

New HE Award and Non-Award Courses, Majors, Double Degrees, Double Qualifications and Dual Awards

(27) The Business Case must include:

- a. A summary rationale for the introduction of the new offering, including relevance to the University's goals.
- b. A course outline.
- c. Details of proposed course structure (may be represented in an image if appropriate).
- d. Details of proposed cross-College units, including evidence of consultation with other Colleges.
- e. Summary evidence of demand:
 - i. Demand analysis must show new demand, rather than taking student numbers from existing VU courses.
 - ii. Evidence may include details of VTAC and other offers made for similar courses in Victoria; evidence of industry growth or change.
- f. Competitor analysis ie. who else delivers the same or similar courses in Victoria/Australia.
- g. Details of course profile and transition impact:
 - i. Summary of internal pathways and relationship to existing VU award or non-award courses.
 - ii. Summary of external pathways and relationships to existing off-shore and partner award or non-award courses.
- h. Details of any nested and exit qualifications (exit points) within the proposed new award or non-award course or

major.

- i. Evidence regarding the employment and other graduate outcomes expected from the new award or non-award course or major. Evidence may include:
 - i. Employment and job vacancy figures within the industry or professional discipline related to the proposed award or non-award course or major.
 - ii. Details of new industry expansions, initiatives or government policy and funded projects which are anticipated to generate new demand for skilled workers.
 - iii. Expert opinion from industry peak bodies or research bodies indicating employment trends or outcomes.
 - iv. Details of how the content and coverage of the proposed award or non-award course or major aligns with the needs and expectations of relevant industries or disciplines.
 - v. Professional accreditation or industry recognition, if relevant.
 - vi. Other information as directed.
- j. Risks and how these will be mitigated.

Interstate or Overseas Delivery

(28) This section relates only to the proposed delivery of an existing award or non-award course or major in an interstate or overseas location. If the proposed award or non-award course or major is new, the requirements of the first section must be completed in addition to this section.

(29) Business Cases must include:

- a. Details of the planned institutional partner/s, including:
 - i. alignment with the requirements of the [Third Party Arrangements Policy](#);
 - ii. a summary of the due diligence conducted;
 - iii. any existing Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) or contractual arrangements with the proposed partner/s and their current status. (Indicative schedules should be attached);
 - iv. background information for the partner institution, including the legislative status in the home country;
 - v. legislative requirements for offering a course/ non-award in the host country, if any;
 - vi. if the partner institution qualification constitutes part of the delivery (as pathway or dual awards), the AQF equivalent level as guided by the [Department of Education, Skills and Employment](#) Country Education Profiles.
- b. A summary rationale for the introduction of the new delivery location, including relevance to the College's goals.
- c. Summary evidence of demand (eg details of market analyses; evidence of industry growth or change).
- d. Professional accreditation or industry recognition (if relevant).
- e. Competitor analysis ie. who else delivers the same or similar award or non-award course or majors in the proposed location.
- f. Risks and how these will be mitigated
- g. Details of award or non-award course or major profile:
 - i. Summary of internal pathways and relationship to existing VU award or non-award course or majors.
 - ii. Summary of external pathways and relationships to existing off-shore and partner award or non-award course or majors.
- h. The proposed delivery mode and breakdown of responsibilities for delivery.

Online Delivery

(30) This section relates only to the proposed delivery of an existing award or non-award course online. If the

proposed award or non-award course is new, the requirements of the first section must be completed in addition to this section.

(31) The Business Case must include:

- a. A summary rationale for the introduction of the new delivery mode, including relevance to the University's and College's goals.
- b. Summary evidence of demand for the online mode (eg details of student or applicant queries; evidence of industry growth or change).
- c. Outcome of analysis by VU Online.
- d. Competitor analysis ie. who else delivers the same or similar award or non-award course online.
- e. Impact on other delivery modes. In particular, the Concept Proposal and Business Case must clearly indicate if it is intended that the online delivery be introduced in addition to, or as a replacement for, face-to-face delivery.

Joint Awards

(32) The Business Case for Joint Awards must be prepared and presented to University Council in the first instance, to obtain approval for the use of dual badging on a VU testamur, or for VU to be dual-badged on a testamur issued by another institution.

(33) Please see the [Credit - Dual and Joint Awards Procedure](#) for further details about this process.

Part F - Business Case: Financial Modelling

(34) Financial modelling must be included within the Business Case.

- a. Financial modelling must be performed using the University's Financial Modelling Tool.
- b. Modelling is required to cover:
 - i. Workload assessment and allocation (anticipated number of new units to be developed and the planned allocation of this work).
 - ii. Staffing required to develop, coordinate and deliver the new award or non-award course or major or new major.
 - iii. Availability of facilities, equipment and other required resources to deliver the award or non-award course or major / major.
 - iv. If specialist equipment is required, it must be identified and costed.
 - v. Costs associated with Professional Accreditation or Industry Recognition, if relevant.
 - vi. Enrolment targets for the first five years of proposed award or non-award course or major operation, broken down into domestic, international onshore, and international offshore students. (Financial modelling must show a minimum of break-even with the target numbers.)
 - vii. Summary of full financial model including costs/revenue and margin.

Part G - Consultation

(35) Evidence of consultation with all relevant stakeholders must be presented as part of the Business Case.

(36) In particular, consultation must occur with:

- a. any other College involved in delivering any units which form part of the proposed new award or non-award course or major;
- b. all other Colleges affected, or potentially affected, by the proposed new award or non-award course or major;

- c. VU Polytechnic;
- d. all relevant central support units (eg Learning Innovation and Quality, Student Services, Marketing, Finance, Library, IT, Facilities);
- e. VUI for international onshore;
- f. Partnerships and Innovation for VU Sydney, offshore and partnered delivery;
- g. any partner institutions within Australia or overseas who have any role in delivery of the proposed award or non-award course or major.

(37) For professionally accredited award or non-award courses or majors, accrediting body advice must be sought and included within the Concept Proposal and Business Case.

Part H - Endorsements and Approvals

(38) The Business Case must be recommended by the College Dean.

(39) Where the Business Case includes international offshore, VU Sydney or partner delivery, it must also be recommended by the Director, Transnational Education.

(40) Once recommended by the Dean and (if relevant) Director, Transnational Education, the Business Case is considered by the Deputy Vice-Chancellor, Academic and Students, Vice-President, Colleges, Chief Financial Officer and any other relevant Senior Executive Group (SEG) members, who may:

- a. recommend endorsement by the Senior Deputy Vice-Chancellor; or
- b. decline to recommend endorsement by the Senior Deputy Vice-Chancellor. This may or may not result in a Business Case being returned for further development.

(41) If the Proposal is recommended, it is presented to the Senior Deputy Vice-Chancellor for endorsement (all Proposals).

Section 7 - Guidelines

(42) Nil

Section 8 - Supporting Documents

(43) Concept Proposal Form (HE)

(44) Business Case - New HE Award course or major, Non-Award course, or new delivery location or mode

(45) Concept Proposal and Business Case Flow Chart

Status and Details

Status	Historic
Effective Date	17th October 2018
Review Date	17th October 2021
Approval Authority	Vice-President, Learning & Teaching
Approval Date	24th August 2018
Expiry Date	25th May 2020
Accountable Officer	John Germov Senior Deputy Vice-Chancellor and Chief Academic Officer +613 99195077
Responsible Officer	Deborah Tyler Director, Academic Quality and Standards +613 9919 4310
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Glossary Terms and Definitions

"New Course" - New Course: a. usually, but not exclusively, a course that will lead to a new Award (if an Award course). b. a course that has a new course code and a new title, even if some elements are retained or re-purposed from previous or existing courses.

"Major" - A major consists of 96 credit points of study within an undergraduate course that provides students with a depth of knowledge in a particular discipline. Majors may only be commenced after first year.