

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. new mode of delivery of a HE award course;
- f. dual awards;
- g. joint awards;
- h. double degrees; and,
- i. double qualifications.

Section 2 - Scope

(2) This Procedure applies to all HE award (undergraduate and postgraduate) and HE non-award coursework courses at Victoria University (VU) offered to domestic and international onshore and offshore students.

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

(4) 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 and non-award courses.

Section 3 - Policy/Regulation

(5) [Courses Lifecycle Policy](#).

Section 4 - Procedures

Part A - Roles and Responsibilities

Roles	Responsibilities
College Executive Dean/Chief International Officer/VU Online Dean and Chief Academic Officer	Endorses the Concept Proposal and recommends to the Senior Deputy Vice-Chancellor and Chief Academic Officer for consideration. Endorses the Business Case and recommends to the Tertiary Education Executive Committee (TEEC) for consideration. Endorses the Non-Award Course Proposal and recommends to the SDVC for approval.
Course Proposer	Consults with key staff from within and across Colleges, VU Online, Academic Quality and Standards (AQS), Business Intelligence and Finance, in the development, progress and approval of the Course Proposal and Business Case. Responds to requests for clarification about proposals and business cases. If required, attends TEEC meetings.
College Finance Business Partner	Provides assistance to the proposer during the development of the Business Case. Conducts preliminary evaluation of the template for financial modelling.
Academic Quality and Standards	Provides advice to the proposer on course design, the creation of courses and units to assure appropriate academic quality, standards, regulations and guidelines. Monitors the course approval and implementation process from concept proposal through to final governance approvals. Annually reviews exiting courses to evaluate their ongoing sustainability.
Tertiary Education Executive Committee (TEEC)	Reviews the Business Case and either: - endorses the Business Case and recommends to the SDVC for approval, or - refers the Business Case back to the proposer for further development.
Senior Deputy Vice-Chancellor and Chief Academic Officer or nominee	Approves the development of Concept Proposals into a Business Case. Approves the Non-Award Course Proposals and refers to TEEC for noting. Approves the Business Case for all coursework courses.

Part B - Planning the Introduction of a New Course

(6) To ensure that future courses are innovative, sustainable and aligned with the University's strategic priorities, proponents should liaise with:

- a. the College Associate Dean, Teaching and Learning, VU Online, relevant colleges and TAFE departments across the University; and
- b. organisational units, such as AQS, Finance, Chief Transformation Office, VU Global and Marketing.

Part C - Non-Award Course Proposals (HE)

(7) For HE Non-Award courses, the [Non-Award Course Proposal Template \(HE\)](#) must be completed. Following endorsement from the Executive Dean (Proposing College) or VU Online Dean and Chief Academic Officer or the Chief International Officer (for offshore and partnered delivery, including VU Sydney/Brisbane), the proposal will be submitted to the SDVC for consideration.

(8) HE Non-Award course proposals are not required to be considered by TEEC at a formal meeting unless specified by the Chair. The approval of the non-award course will be forwarded to TEEC for noting.

(9) In line with the [Courses Lifecycle Policy](#) and Procedures, the relevant College Advisory Committee, the Courses Committee and Academic Board will also need to approve the non-award course before it can be launched in line with the existing [Courses Lifecycle Policy](#) and Procedures.

Part D - The Concept Proposal

(10) A [Concept Proposal Template \(HE\)](#) must be completed for new courses unless an exemption is received by the SDVC. This will entail a summary outline and brief program overview of the new HE award course or major. Detailed evidence is not required at this stage, but all sections of the template must be completed.

(11) The brief program overview will include: market demand, load consideration, competitor analysis, alignment with the University's strategic priorities, intended student cohorts and identification of high level details of the course such as work placements, graduate outcomes, new units required, staffing, delivery mode and relationship to existing courses.

(12) Completion of the Concept Proposal is not required for a new mode of delivery or new delivery location for an existing course (refer to Part E – Preparing the Business Case). For non-award courses refer to Part C – Non-Award Course Proposals (HE).

(13) VU Online's new and existing courses must follow the same governance approval processes as other self-accredited VU courses.

(14) Course proposals (at the concept and business case stages) can be presented as a portfolio – if there are suites of courses or offers that are interrelated. Separate concepts and business cases would not be required if the evidence of demand and competition were similar.

(15) Once completed, the proposer secures endorsement of the Concept Proposal from the Executive Dean (Proposing College) or VU Online Dean and Chief Academic Officer or Chief International Officer (for VU Sydney/Brisbane, offshore and partnered delivery) for submission to the SDVC.

(16) The SDVC evaluates the Concept Proposal against:

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

(17) Where the Concept Proposal involves partner delivery, the Chief International Officer must be engaged as part of this initial evaluation. In performing this evaluation, the SDVC may consult with whomever they see fit.

(18) After evaluation of the Concept Proposal, the SDVC:

- 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.

(19) If the SDVC approves the development of a Business Case, the proposer begins preparation of a Business Case in consultation with: the relevant Director, Learning and Teaching or Director, and/or Chief International Officer (for VU Sydney, offshore and partnered delivery); the College Finance Business Partner (for completion of the Business Intelligence analysis – market demand, competition and job/graduate outcomes); Performance Business Partnering (load planning); and any other relevant College or department.

Part E - Preparing the Business Case

(20) Multiple related courses can be combined within the one Business Case. However, separate Course Evaluation Templates for financial modelling would be expected.

(21) The Business Case must be presented within the specified [template](#) and address the following:

- a. Details of the HE Award Courses, Majors, Double Degrees, Double Qualifications and Dual Awards
- b. Evidence of Demand, Competition and Job/Graduate Outcomes (Note: detailed evidence of demand may not be required for this section if sufficient competition and demand detail has been previously provided and endorsed by TEEC).
- c. Interstate or Overseas Delivery (if relevant). This section relates only to the proposed delivery of an existing award course interstate or overseas. If the proposed award course or major is new, the requirements of the above section must be completed in addition to this section.
- d. Joint Awards (if relevant). The Business Case for Joint Awards must be prepared and presented to the University Council in the first instance, to obtain approval for use of dual badging on a VU testamur, or for VU to be dual-badged on a testamur issued by another institution. Refer to the [Courses Lifecycle - Dual and Joint Awards Procedure](#) for further details in relation to this process.
- e. Evidence of Demand, Competition and Job/Graduate Outcomes (Note: detailed evidence of demand may not be required for this section if sufficient competition and demand detail has been previously provided and endorsed by TEEC).
- f. Interstate or Overseas Delivery (if relevant). This section relates only to the proposed delivery of an existing award course interstate or overseas. If the proposed award course or major is new, the requirements of the above section must be completed in addition to this section.
- g. Financial Modelling, including the [Course Evaluation Template](#). This section should be completed after consultation with the relevant College Finance Business Partner. Note: If the suggested offering is not a course or a unit, and the University's Course Evaluation Template is not appropriate, proposers must work with their Finance Business Partner to develop the appropriate financials. Proposals must include financials for any capital and/or equipment requirements of the course, which must be communicated to relevant areas as part of the implementation plan (if approved).
- h. Implementation Plan which includes the anticipated dates for course development, approvals and commencement.
- i. An exit strategy that includes trigger points if mitigation activities are not met. The level of detail will be dependent on the level of resources and costs involved in its development.
- j. Consultation includes a list of all stakeholders consulted in the process of concept proposal and business case development.
- k. Where VU Online is the Course Proposer, the Business Case must clearly articulate the respective roles of VU Online and the partner College (if applicable), including responsibilities for academic governance, delivery, and resourcing.

Part F - Executive Endorsements and Course Approvals

(22) The Business Case with completed [Course Evaluation Template](#) must be endorsed by the Executive Dean (Proposing College) or VU Online Dean and Chief Academic Officer or the Chief International Officer (for VU Sydney, offshore and partnered delivery) and then presented to the TEEC.

(23) TEEC may invite the proposer or relevant nominee to a meeting. The nominee must be able to contribute to the evaluation.

(24) The Business Case is considered by the TEEC, who may:

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

(25) If the Proposal is recommended, it is presented to the SDVC for approval (all Proposals).

- a. The College will then work with the Associate Dean Learning and Teaching (or nominee) and an Academic Quality and Standards representative to ensure course design and units adhere to appropriate academic quality, standards, regulations and guidelines.
- b. The course is entered into the Course Approvals and Management System (CAMS).
- c. The course is considered by the College's Course Advisory Group.
- d. The Courses Committee considers the course and may recommend to Academic Board for consideration.
- e. Academic Board considers the course and may recommend to the Vice-Chancellor for final approval.

Section 5 - HESF/ASQA/ESOS Alignment

(26) HESF: Standards 2.1 Facilities and Infrastructure; 3.1 Course Design; 3.2 Staffing; 3.3 Learning Resources and Educational Support; 5.1 Course Approval and Accreditation; 5.3.7 Monitoring, Review and Improvement - Mitigating Future Risks; 6.2 Corporate Monitoring and Accountability; 6.3.2 Academic Governance.

Section 6 - Definitions

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

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

(29) Concept Proposal: Outline of the concept for proceeding to implement any of the items listed in Clause (1) above.

(30) 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).

(31) 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)).

(32) 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.

(33) 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.

(34) New Course: Usually, but not exclusively, a course that will lead to a new Award (if an Award course) or 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.

(35) 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.

(36) 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.

Status and Details

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Effective Date	16th July 2026
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