Third Party Arrangements - VU Online Partnership Procedure

Section 1 - Summary

(1) The purpose of this Procedure is to provide detailed direction regarding the delivery of Victoria University Higher Education award and non-award courses and micro-credentials by VU Online.

Section 2 - Scope

(2) This Procedure applies to all online delivery arrangements offered by VU Online with domestic and international partners involving award and non-award courses and units offered by Victoria University (VU) to:

a. domestic onshore students
b. offshore students

(3) This Procedure does not apply to commercial training activity that does not involve an award or non-award course.

Section 3 - Policy/Regulation

(4) [Third Party Arrangements Policy](#)

Section 4 - Procedures

Part A - Summary of Roles and Responsibilities

Role	Responsibilities
VU Online Board of Directors	Provides business and fiduciary oversight of the operations of VU Online. Responsible for the strategic plan and approach of VU Online.
VU Online Chief Academic Officer and Dean	Ensures all VU Online staff are aware of, and abide by, all VU academic policies and regulations. Manages risks to the University and to students arising from online delivery and stages interventions where necessary. Reports to Academic Board and other governance bodies as required.

Role	Responsibilities
VU Online Associate Deans of Learning and Teaching (ADLT)	Develop and promote processes and practices for quality online learning and teaching. In collaboration with the VU Online Chief Academic Officer and Dean, develop quality improvement plans in response to student feedback and other quality indicators. Work in collaboration with College Associate Deans as required. Assist and advise VU Online Chief Academic Officer and Dean on learning and teaching matters as part of the VU Online leadership team. Manage academic risks to the University and to students arising from online delivery and where necessary stages interventions. Promote the scholarship of learning and teaching within VU Online. Undertake all duties and responsibilities of a College Associate Dean Learning and Teaching as outlined in VU's policies and procedures.
VU Online CEO	Manages the overall operations of VU Online. Manages business relationships with partner organisation.
Subject Matter Experts	Provides content expertise and advice to facilitate the building of online units, materials and assessments.
Course Coordinator (VU Online Course)	Develops and promotes processes and practices for quality course delivery, design and monitoring to ensure ongoing alignment with AQF standards and professional accreditation requirements. Implements and drives course improvement strategies in response to student feedback, University priorities and professional or industry developments. Liaises with Colleges regarding shared units and supervises Online Unit Coordinators. Undertakes all duties and responsibilities of a Course Chair as outlined in VU's policies and procedure for courses offered by VU Online.
Unit Coordinator (VU Online Unit)	Oversees unit delivery. Moderates assessment outcomes and, in instances where units are offered across delivery modes, provides input into VU's quality assurance processes. Validates assessment tasks. Works collaboratively with VU Online ADLTS and ACCs to provide support to staff and students via online on-demand and webinar contact.
Unit Facilitator (VU Online supplied)	Supports student groups (1:25 ratio) for a minimum of 15 hours per week. Assesses student work. Provides online academic student support for student learning seven days a week and in the evenings. Under supervision of Unit Coordinator, delivers online academic student support.
Student Success Advisors (VU Online supplied)	Provide first contact point for non-academic student advice Assist with IT, technical and learning queries. Provide one-on-one personalised assistance with non-academic matters throughout the course.
VU Online	Provides all services under the contract, ensuring all VU policies and processes are followed unless a specific exemption exists. Approves all marketing conducted by partners in the University's name. Ensures that appropriate student support services are provided to online students.
Chief Student Officer and Registrar via the VU Admissions team	Assesses applications for admission for online courses or units. Advises applicants of the outcome of their application, including the outcome of any credit or advanced standing request.
Business Intelligence	Conducts student surveys. Provides data and analysis to Partnerships, the Colleges, Academic Board, and VU Online as required.
College Executive Deans	Ensure that a new online course delivery: - complies with all aspects of VU's course approval process as specified in the Courses Lifecycle Policy and its Procedures, and - is Australian Qualification Framework (AQF) compliant.

Role	Responsibilities
Senior Deputy Vice-Chancellor and Chief Academic Officer	If required, approves any exemptions to policies and procedures in relation to VU Online delivery. Oversight of ongoing quality assurance and improvements and equivalence of learning. Approves VU Online course cessations.
Academic Quality and Standards	Oversight of ongoing academic quality assurance and improvement, including annual and comprehensive course monitoring, review and improvement processes.

Part B - Establishment of Online Delivery and Content Arrangement

(5) All courses and units to be delivered online will comply with all external and internal regulatory requirements.

(6) All award and non-award online courses and units proposed for VU Online development or delivery will go through the prescribed stages for assessing new VU courses and units or new ways of delivering courses and units (refer clause 21 [Courses Lifecycle - Concept Proposal and Business Case (HE) Procedure](#)):

   a. Concept Proposal
   b. Business Case
   c. Course Approval

(7) No VU online delivery arrangement will be entered into without the completion of due diligence checks, approval by the VU Online Board, and the development and signature of a formal contract/service agreement between VU Online and all partners.

(8) No extensions of existing contracts will occur without passing through the prescribed stages at (6) above.

(9) All contracts will be developed in accordance with the [Contracts Policy](#) and [Contracts Procedure](#).

(10) VU and its partners will remain the owners of, and responsible for, all intellectual property they bring into the arrangement. Where new intellectual property is created through the arrangement, ownership will be determined under the particular terms and conditions of the relevant contract.

(11) All VU online courses and units must be delivered via VU Collaborate. This will be a condition of all online partnership agreements.

Application of VU policies and procedures

(12) All VU policies, procedures and processes will apply to students and staff in online delivery arrangement.

(13) In rare instances, explicit exceptions to University policies in relation to online delivery must be approved by the Senior Deputy Vice-Chancellor and Chief Academic Officer.

(14) Exceptions are not permissible if they will compromise VU's standards, reputation or assets.

(15) Current versions of all VU [policies and procedures](#) are available via VU's Policy Library.

Part C - Student Selection and Support

Admissions and Enrolment

(16) Admission requirements will align with the admission requirements established through the University's course approval process. This includes English language requirements and any approved pathway arrangements.

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(17) Admission requirements are identical to those imposed for other modes of delivery of the same unit or course.

(18) Applications for admission are assessed and determined by the VU Admissions team using the same process and criteria as those used for face to face delivery of the same or similar unit or course. (See the [Admissions Procedure](#) for details).

(19) Applicants who have been made and accepted offers can enrol using MyVU.

(20) Letters of offer issued to students will include the following information:

   a. confirmation that applicants will be enrolled as VU students should they accept the offer;
   b. courses or units in which students are to be enrolled;
   c. minimum IT requirements for participation in the unit or course; and
   d. Credit or Recognition of Prior Learning assessment result (if applicable).

(21) Applicants who are not made an offer of admission may request reasons for the admission decision and may subsequently request a review of the decision if they have grounds as specified in the University's [Admissions Procedure](#).

Credit, Pathways and Advanced Standing

(22) All arrangements for course credit and advanced standing, and any pathway arrangements for students will be managed in accordance with the [Credit Policy](#), the [Credit - Academic Credit Procedure (HE)](#) and the [Credit - Pathways Procedure](#).

(23) Advanced Standing results are included in letters of offer issued to applicants.

Orientation and Induction

(24) A Flipbook and/or brochure for students, with associated Introduction module on VU Collaborate, is produced and promulgated by VU Online.

Student Assessment and Progress

(25) The academic progress of students will be monitored and addressed by VU in accordance with the [Academic Progress Regulations 2016](#) and its associated Procedures.

(26) VU Online will deliver assessment tasks to students as approved, in accordance with the [Courses Lifecycle Policy](#).

(27) Marking of assessment tasks will be performed by VU Online staff against agreed assessment criteria in accordance with the [Assessment for Learning Policy](#) and its associated Procedures.

(28) Where a unit is only delivered by VU Online, VU Online will be responsible for arranging auditing and moderation of results in accordance with the [Assessment for Learning - Moderation and Validation Procedure (HE)](#).

(29) Where a unit is delivered by VU and VU Online moderation and validation will be conducted in accordance with the [Assessment for Learning - Moderation and Validation Procedure (HE)](#).

(30) Review of Assessment is conducted in accordance with the [Assessment for Learning - Review of Individual Assessment Outcomes Procedure (HE)](#).

Student Evaluations

(31) Student Evaluations of Teaching (SET) and Student Evaluations of Units (SEU) are conducted by Business

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Intelligence (VU).

(32) Business Intelligence undertakes the processing of survey forms, the analysis of responses and the creation of reports.

(33) Business Intelligence provides access to SEU and SET reports to the VU Online Chief Academic Officer and Dean, Associate Deans, Learning and Teaching and Academic Course Coordinators.

(34) The Chief Academic Officer and Dean, and Associate Deans, Learning and Teaching, VU Online, and the College are responsible for relevant actions arising out of these reports.

(35) VU Online may administer its own additional survey instruments. If they do so, student feedback is provided to the Chief Academic Officer and Dean, Associate Deans of Learning and Teaching and Academic Course Coordinators, VU Online.

Student Support, Wellbeing and Safety

(36) Academic and administrative support for students in online units or courses is provided by VU Online or VU as appropriate and possible.

(37) All students engaging in online study are provided with specific advice and resources regarding expected online behaviour, ensuring wellbeing and safety in online study, and avenues for seeking support.

(38) VU will ensure that general support services are available to online students, including:

- a. ongoing academic language and learning support, including an appropriate range of generic and discipline specific support services and development activities;
- b. access to the VU Library and online support from the Library;
- c. administrative, enrolment and course information services;
- d. disability and accessibility services, including advice, support and access to reasonable adjustments to study and assessment tasks;
- e. as appropriate and possible, personal support such as counselling, health, welfare, accommodation and WIL/career services.

Student Complaints Resolution

(39) Students in VU Online courses and units will have access to VU's Student Complaints Resolution and Student Appeals processes, as specified in the Complaints Policy and Complaints Procedure (Student and Public), the Student Appeals Regulations 2019 and Student Appeals Procedure, and Student Conduct Policy.

(40) Students are provided with access to all VU policies and procedures and are required to comply with all behavioural standards established in them, including, but not limited to, the:

- a. Discrimination and Harassment Prevention and Management Policy
- b. Bullying Prevention and Management Policy
- c. Gender-based Violence Policy
- d. Student Equity and Social Inclusion Policy
- e. Student Charter
- f. Student Conduct Policy

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Part D - Quality Assurance and Equivalence of Learning

(41) The relevant Course Chair is responsible for ensuring the achievement of approved learning outcomes in course and unit levels.

(42) The Courses Committee of Academic Board endorses curriculum arrangements prior to course delivery, including any adaptations of curriculum or assessment for online delivery.

(43) The Senior Deputy Vice-Chancellor and Chief Academic Officer is responsible for oversight of ongoing academic quality assurance and improvement.

Academic Integrity

(44) The Chief Academic Officer and Dean, VU Online is responsible for ensuring that all online staff and students are aware of the University's requirements regarding academic integrity, and what this entails. These can be found in the [Academic Integrity Policy](#) and [Academic Integrity Guidelines](#).

(45) Consistent with the [Academic Integrity Policy](#) and [Academic Integrity Guidelines](#), VU and Partner teaching staff are responsible for:

 a. including information on citation requirements and preferred referencing style on the unit guide;
 b. equipping students with language and writing skills to prevent them from committing plagiarism;
 c. providing samples of past students' work that demonstrates academic integrity;
 d. introducing tools to help students learn about proper citation techniques;
 e. referring students to the resources available on the VU Library website;
 f. educating students on the definitions of plagiarism, contract cheating and collusion, and the consequences of engaging in these activities, and
 g. using strategies in detecting plagiarism in checking assessments.

(46) Unit facilitators must report instances of academic integrity breaches or concerns to the Unit Coordinator, who will register this information in the University Academic Integrity Register and in wider University reporting:

 a. marking and moderation reports indicating plagiarism issue;
 b. annual reports on investigated cases.

Course Approval

(47) The Chief Academic Officer and Dean, VU Online is responsible for ensuring that a new course delivery:

 a. complies with all aspects of VU's course approval process as specified in the [Courses Lifecycle Policy](#) and its Procedures, and
 b. is Australian Qualification Framework (AQF) compliant.

Periodic reviews

(48) Courses and units within the scope of these Procedures are subject to Annual Course Monitoring (ACM) and Comprehensive Course Review (CCR) processes as set out in the [Courses Lifecycle Policy](#) and Procedures.

(49) Academic Quality and Standards is responsible for oversight of ongoing academic quality assurance and improvement, including annual and comprehensive course monitoring, review and improvement processes.

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Part E - Staffing

Qualifications and requirements of teaching staff

(50) The Chief Academic Officer and Dean, VU Online is responsible for ensuring that VU Online staff:

a. are appropriately qualified in the relevant discipline for their level of teaching; and
b. have a standard of English proficiency (IELTS) at least one level higher than that required for students in the course.

(51) VU Online staff must be qualified to at least one AQF or equivalent qualification level higher than the course of study being taught or possess equivalent professional experience according to VU's established criteria. Requirements are outlined in detail in the [Learning and Teaching Quality and Standards - Equivalence of Professional Experience to Qualifications (Staff) Procedure](#).

(52) Staff must have the capacity to deliver the course in the English language to an adequate level of proficiency.

(53) The Chief Academic Officer and Dean, VU online will be responsible for providing opportunities that support professional development and career advancement of staff aligned with VU's [Higher Education Academic Promotions Policy](#).

Teaching Staff Induction

(54) VU Online teaching and support contractors (Unit Coordinators and Unit Facilitators) have access to mandatory online orientation modules they must pass to prepare them to teach VU Online units online.

(55) Other resources provided include:

a. VU Online Teaching Team Guidelines
b. VU Online Unit Coordinator Induction session
c. VU Online mandatory 'Getting Started with VU Online' Unit in VU Collaborate
d. Mandatory VU Develop Modules for Unit Facilitators and Unit Coordinators

Staff Complaints

(56) Should disputes arise during course delivery, VU Online staff should in the first instance with the Unit Coordinator or Course Coordinator as relevant complaint resolution will be guided by the principles outlined in the [Complaints Policy](#).

(57) If the matter remains unresolved, the staff member is able to raise and, if preferred, formalise their concerns with the Associate Deans, Learning and Teaching or the Chief Academic Officer and Dean, VU Online.

(58) If still unresolved, VU Online will consult with People and Culture (P&C) (as appropriate).

(59) P&C will maintain statistics on nature and number of complaints, and statistics on outcomes of complaints.

Part F - Monitoring and Ending Online Delivery and Content Arrangements

(60) If a course or unit is discontinued for online delivery, effective teach out or transition plans for all enrolled students must be developed to ensure that students are not disadvantaged.

(61) The cessation of a course will be conducted in accordance with the [Courses Lifecycle - Course Cessation and Student Transition (HE) Procedure](). The Academic Board will provide endorsement of the Teach Out Plan.

(62) The exact terms of teach-out arrangements are dependent on circumstances that are spelt out in relevant Master Services Agreement (MSA) with VU Online.

Section 5 - HESF/ASQA/ESOS Alignment

(63) Higher Education Standards Framework: Standards 1.3 Orientation and Progression (specifically 1.3.6); 1.5 Qualifications and Certification; 3.1 Course Design (specifically 3.1.4); 3.2 Staffing (specifically 3.2.3 b); 3.3 Learning Resources and Educational Support (specifically 3.3.4); 5.1 Course Approval and Accreditation (specifically 5.2.2-3); 5.2 Academic and Research Integrity (specifically 5.2.4); 5.4 Delivery with Other Parties (specifically 5.4.2), 6.2 Corporate monitoring and accountability (specifically 1a,h-i); 7.1 Representation; 7.2 Information for Prospective and Current Students and 7.3.3 Information management.

(64) Outcome Standards for NVR Registered Training Organisations 2025: 4.2 Leadership and Accountability; 4.4 Continuous Improvement.

(65) This Procedure also complies with the recommendations of the TEQSA Guidance Note on Technology-Enhanced Learning (April 2019), in particular:

a. access to electronic information (Standard 2.1.2)
b. supporting interactions among students outside of formal teaching (Standard 2.1.3) such as group work
c. safety and support services (Section 2.3)
d. access to learning resources and educational support, and for maintaining contact with off-campus students (Section 3.3).
e. https://www.teqsa.gov.au/sites/default/files/2023-07/guidance-note-delivery-with-other-parties-v3-0.pdf

Section 6 - Definitions

(66) Online Delivery

(67) Third Party Arrangements: A third-party arrangement is a formal agreement between VU and one or more educational institutions, including a wholly owned subsidiary of VU, to deliver some or all of VU courses or units on VU's behalf. Students undertaking these courses or units must be enrolled with VU.

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Status and Details

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Accountable Officer	John Germov Senior Deputy Vice-Chancellor and Chief Academic Officer +613 9919 5077
Responsible Officer	Deborah Tyler Director, Academic Quality and Standards +613 9919 4310
Enquiries Contact	Deborah Tyler Director, Academic Quality and Standards +613 9919 4310 Tertiary Education Portfolio

Glossary Terms and Definitions

"Online Delivery" - Study where the teacher and student primarily communicate through digital media, technological based tools and IT networks and does not require the student to attend scheduled classes or maintain contact hours