

UNIT DEVELOPMENT AND REVIEW POLICY

Current version in effect from: 1 Jan 2026

Approved by Academic Board: 15 Sep 2017

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Policy Steward: Dean of Academic Programs

**Related documents**

Australian Qualifications Framework

Higher Education Standards Framework sections 1.3, 1.4, 3.1, 7.2

Higher Education Support Act 2003

Assessment Policy and Assessment Procedure

Academic Integrity Policy and Procedure

Unit Development and Review Procedure

Regulation 2 *Academic Board*

Regulation 11 *Awards Courses and Units*

1. Rationale and Objectives

1.1 This Policy establishes a set of principles and guidelines for the design, development, accreditation, modification, review and archiving of units of study at the University of Divinity.

1.2 The policy seeks to ensure that:

- a) units are constructively aligned to support the integrity and quality of the courses provided by the University
- b) units of study contribute to student learning, professional practice or both
- c) units are based on an appropriate body of scholarship, theory, practice or combination thereof
- d) principles of unit design are consistent
- e) all unit records are available for use across the university unless otherwise stated.

1.3 Together with the Assessment Policy, Academic Integrity Policy, Support for Students Policy, and associated Procedures, this Policy forms the Education Framework at the University of Divinity.

2. Scope

2.1 This Policy applies to all units of study intended to be used as part of an award or single subject (non-award) delivery at the University of Divinity.

3. Definitions

3.1 **Unit:** a coherent body of knowledge with defined and assessable Unit Learning Outcomes that contribute to the Course Learning Outcomes. A unit has a specific volume of learning linked to an AQF level or year in the sequence of a course.

3.2 **Course Learning Outcome:** what the learner is expected to know, understand, do or apply at the end of the course of study.

3.3 **Unit Learning Outcome:** what the learner is expected to know, understand, do or apply at the end of the unit of study.

3.4 **Constructive alignment:** an approach to teaching where desired student Learning Outcomes are defined before teaching takes place. Teaching activities and assessment methods are then designed to best support those outcomes and to assess the standard at which they have been achieved.¹ This approach also recognises that students learn more deeply when they construct meaning through relevant activities aligned to learning outcomes.

3.5 **Assessment Tasks:** activities which require students to demonstrate their academic capabilities against specific unit learning outcome(s).

3.6 **Unit Record:** a set of information about a unit of study required for the purposes of approval, compliance and communication.

3.7 **Unit Guide:** a document that details how a unit is delivered based on the Unit Record, detailing the contents and pedagogy to be used, the learning activities, assessment methodologies and types, as well as timing, mode of delivery, and extensive bibliography.

3.8 **Marking Rubric:** a set of descriptors, usually in a grid, of the expected levels of performance for each criterion being considered in awarding marks for an assessment task to ensure reliable, valid and consistent judgments about the student's achievement of the learning outcomes being measured.

3.9 **Pedagogy:** a philosophy about teaching and learning that guides how units are designed and delivered. This also includes andragogy which refers to methods and principles used in adult education.

4. Principles

4.1 A unit is a discrete entity designed to complement other units within a particular discipline and when combined with other units within and across other disciplines, form a coherent course of study ensuring attainment of the Course

¹ Biggs, J. (2014) Constructive alignment in university teaching, HERDSA Review of Higher Education, 1, 5-22 <http://taw.fi/HRHE1-5-22> as quoted by Hillier, M, <https://teche.mq.edu.au/2022/06/constructive-alignment-in-a-nutshell-identifying-what-we-want-students-to-learn/>.

Learning Outcomes as well as the Graduate Attributes and eligibility for graduation.

- 4.2 A new Unit Record is created to introduce curriculum and learning outcomes that cannot be effectively covered by an existing Unit Record.
- 4.3 Unit Learning Outcomes and assessment tasks in every unit are informed by the appropriate AQF level criteria.
- 4.4 Each unit is informed by one or more disciplines that are part of a course of study.
- 4.5 Each Unit Record is designed to allow for both fixed and flexible elements catering for multiple perspectives.
- 4.6 Unit Records are reviewed externally to the proposing College or School by academics with relevant discipline knowledge and expertise before approval.
- 4.7 The Academic Board delegates authority for the approval of Unit Records to the Dean of Academic Programs.
- 4.8 An approved Unit Record contains the fixed elements related to the subject matter of the unit.
- 4.9 A Unit Guide(s) expands on the Unit Record to include all the flexible elements nuanced for delivery.
- 4.10 A unit may be approved for a maximum period of six years, after which it may be extended, withdrawn or renewed.
- 4.11 All approved unit records are reported to the Academic Board.

5. Date of Next Review

- 5.1 This policy must be reviewed no later than 31 December 2028.