

# Course and Subject Development and Review Policy

## Scope

This policy applies to Kaplan Business School Pty Ltd (hereby referred to as “Kaplan”). It applies to course and subject development, evaluation and review and is guided by the Higher Education Standards Framework 2021 (‘the Threshold Standards’) and English Language Intensive Courses for Overseas Students (ELICOS) Standards 2018.

## Purpose

This policy outlines the required standards to be met when developing and reviewing all award and non-award courses and subjects within Kaplan. The development and review process is guided by the Threshold Standards and the Tertiary Education Quality and Standards Agency (TEQSA) Guidance Notes as well as the ELICOS Standards 2018.

The objective of the development and review process is to ensure that Kaplan’s course offerings:

- meet professional, regulatory and legislative requirements
- are delivered at the appropriate levels
- are consistent with current employment outcomes
- are aligned with good academic practice with improvements documented and actioned

## Definitions

**Award** courses are the Australian Qualifications Framework (AQF) qualifications, specifically diplomas, associate degrees, bachelor degrees, graduate certificates, graduate diplomas or master degrees at Kaplan.

**Curricula Management Documentation** – refers to the course documentation which outlines information about how award courses will be delivered and managed, such as the course rationale and analysis, course learning outcomes, associated mapping to the subject learning outcomes and assessments, relationship with the graduate attributes, the underpinning course content, course structure, subject outlines, assessment information and course-related transition arrangements and/or implementation reports.

**Development** – the design and creation of new award subjects and/or courses.

**Moderation** – a quality control process in ELICOS courses by a panel of internal and/or external professionals which normally includes the Academic Director, Academic Manager, teachers, compliance staff and industry experts. The panel reviews and checks for consistency and/or inconsistencies in the assessment decisions and methods used between different assessors in respect to relevant course curriculum of the same course subjects.

**Non-award** courses are the non-AQF qualifications at Kaplan. Examples of non-award courses at Kaplan include ELICOS courses, Non-award Single Subject Enrolment, Postgraduate Qualifying Program, and Undergraduate Qualifying Program.

**Review** – the formal evaluation and assessment of an existing award subject and/or course taking into consideration feedback from stakeholders inclusive of employers, staff and students, and informed by cohort-based analyses, academic data, benchmarking and contemporary knowledge regarding subject matter, pedagogies and assessment strategies.

**Validation** – a quality review process in ELICOS courses by a panel of internal and/or external professionals which normally includes the Academic Director, Academic Manager, teachers, and industry experts. The panel checks the assessment tools to ensure they meet the requirements of relevant curriculum aspects as well as the industry.

## Policy Principles

This policy is based on the following principles of course and subject development and review to:

- meet regulatory requirements and standards including the Threshold Standards and AQF and the ELICOS Standards 2018
- be developed and reviewed in a systematic approach which is a Kaplan wide, quality assured, collaborative approach with aligned student learning experiences, assessments and learning outcomes
- include an evaluation that encompasses external and/or internal benchmarking, student and staff feedback, and data on metrics including but not limited to progression, retention, attrition and completion
- identify any need to develop new materials or to revise existing materials
- analyse market and industry trends
- review the staffing related requirements of the subject or course
- identify any need for updated pedagogies and/or assessment strategies
- be designed, where relevant, to include opportunities for work integrated learning throughout award courses with a range of subjects that support student learning and experience in this regard
- offer students a range of learning opportunities including diverse experience and insights relating to their future employment
- reflect principles of good practice in design and review
- reflect best teaching and learning practices
- align to Kaplan's Graduate Attributes and relevant learning outcomes
- be supported by appropriate academic, administrative, staffing, physical and technological resources (e.g., *ELT Journal*)
- be aligned with Kaplan's Teaching and Learning Plan for award courses
- meet relevant accreditation requirements including that of relevant industry and professional bodies

## Development Standards: Award Courses and Subjects

All Kaplan award course and subject development projects will:

- complete the applicable Curricula Management Documentation in full
- be monitored regularly with records maintained to ensure Kaplan meets all regulatory obligations and professional accreditation requirements, as required  
engage external academic and industry experts to review and provide feedback in relation to substantial course level development

Subjects are the building blocks of courses with the Course Learning Outcomes achieved by completing a defined number of subjects at specified levels.

To facilitate AQF alignment, the correlation between subject levels and AQF levels (Table 1) enables clear demonstration that subject learning outcomes are at the appropriate level and that the relationship between subject and course learning outcomes is transparent.

Table 1. Correspondence between KBS Subject Levels and AQF Levels

KBS Subject Level	AQF Level
100	5 - Diploma
200	6 - Advanced Diploma
300	7 - Bachelor
400	8 - Graduate Certificate
500	8 – Graduate Diploma
600	9 - Masters

## Course Approval and Development

The Accreditation and Review Committees (ARC), Course Advisory Committees (CAC) and Course Development Panels (CDP) will undertake their functions as outlined in the *Academic Quality and Governance Framework* available on the website, currently at: <https://www.kbs.edu.au/about-us/school-policies>.

As illustrated in the Course Review and Accreditation Workflow, the approval process encompasses numerous stages at which external members of the Academic Board are required to provide approval in order for the process to progress from one stage to the next. This begins at the initial point of idea conceptualisation when the ARC (staffed exclusively by external members of the Academic Board) convenes to review the business case and to determine whether the course design can commence. The periodic requirement for the ARC's review and approval continues throughout each stage of the internal and external consultations and then culminates in the final stage with the ARC's endorsement that the entirety of the documentation for (re)accreditation that would ordinarily be required by TEQSA can now be submitted to the Academic Board for approval.

The ARC's involvement then continues throughout the course development process during which they oversee the implementation of the project management plan with updates provided accordingly at every meeting of the Academic Board.

## Subject Approval and Development

Where a single subject is developed separate to the course development process, the following must occur:

- The subject must be developed holistically with regard to the relevant course learning outcomes and course structure(s).
- The proposed new subject outline is reviewed and endorsed by the Teaching and Learning Committee (T&L) and approved by the Academic Board.
- The relevant Curricula Management Documentation is updated to reflect the proposed subject's integration to the course(s).

## Review Standards: Award Courses and Subjects

The following standards will be applied when reviewing award courses and subjects:

- Changes to a course or subject during an accreditation period must be monitored with records maintained by Kaplan to ensure regulatory obligations and professional accreditation requirements are met, as required.
- Course and/or subject delivery data must be used to inform decisions and changes made.
- Kaplan must develop, maintain and provide an annual course review schedule to the Academic Board on an annual basis.
- Kaplan must maintain a register of all course and subject changes.

## Course Review

- All Kaplan accredited courses are subject to a mid-cycle comprehensive review during the course accreditation period, overseen by peak academic governance processes and including external referencing and/or other benchmarking activities.
- A comprehensive review is led by the Kaplan Academic Dean (or delegate), overseen by the ARC, steered by a CDP, and informed by an external and independent CAC consisting of academic experts and industry representatives. Staff and students may also be invited to provide feedback.
- The review encompasses the following elements:
  - design and content of each course of study
  - the expected learning outcomes
  - the methods for assessment of those outcomes
  - the extent of students' achievement of the learning outcomes
  - emerging developments in the field of education, employer expectations, modes of delivery, the changing needs of students and identified risks to the quality of the course

- Comprehensive reviews of courses are informed and supported by regular interim monitoring of the quality of teaching, learning and assessment, student progress and the overall delivery of subjects within the course under review.
- Kaplan review and improvement activities include regular external referencing of the success of student cohorts against comparable courses of study, including but not limited to:
  - analyses of progression rates, attrition rates, completion durations and rates and, where applicable, a comparison of the different locations of delivery
  - the assessment methods and grading of students' achievement of learning outcomes for selected subjects within courses
- Records of the course review process must be maintained by Kaplan, together with evidence such as the Curricula Management Documentation.

### **Subject Review**

- Kaplan's subjects are reviewed at least every two years.
- Subject review documentation is maintained by Kaplan and reported to the T&L.
- Where a single subject is reviewed separate to the course review process, the subject must be reviewed holistically with the relevant course(s).

## **Validation and Moderation Sessions: ELICOS Courses**

Validation sessions are completed twice each year with both internal and external panel members as part of a systematic review or when changes to the non-award course curriculum have occurred or prior to a new non-award course being placed on scope.

Moderation sessions are completed twice each year by teachers and assessing staff under the guidance of the Academic Manager. Moderation sessions are also completed twice each year with external parties and/or when changes to the non-award course curriculum have occurred.

Records of validation and moderation sessions with associated actions must be retained for at least 5 years from the time they take place using the Course Validation/Moderation Schedule.

The Academic Director in collaboration with the Academic Manager are responsible for maintaining the Course Validation/Moderation Schedule and scheduling the validation and moderation sessions.

### **Validation Sessions**

- (i) The Academic Director will notify the external panel members via email of the purpose of the session, what will be required, and how to prepare for the session;
- (ii) The Academic Manager will notify the internal panel members via email the purpose of the session, what will be required, and how to prepare for the session. The Academic Manager will provide further details to teachers and assessing staff on the exact type of materials to be collected for the validation session.
- The panel members must be provided with the following documents a week prior to the session:
  - Agenda of the session
  - Minutes of the previous session
  - Items for discussion, length of discussion per item, principles to be adhered to
  - Course curriculum
  - Mapping document
  - Assessment tools
  - Study outline
  - Course subjects
  - Exemplar assessments
  - Pre-enrolment Placement Test
  - Validation Report form
- The validation session will include discussing the:

- Associated documents provided earlier and purpose of validation
- Suggested changes to assessments to meet changes to industry and policy
- Assessment methods and whether they are clear and meet current practices
- Evidence of achievement and if it is sufficient to meet course requirements
- Verification of consistency of judgement between trainer/assessors in respect of the same course subject assessed
- Suggestions for improving assessment tools and assessment judgements
- Assessment methods and whether the tasks are clear to assessors and students
- Verification of whether the marking criteria meets the learning outcomes in the course curriculum, reviewing the exemplars for alignment with industry
- Where the ELICOS course are provided under a direct entry arrangement to a tertiary course, measures will be taken to ensure that assessment outcomes are aligned to the other criteria used for admission to the tertiary course,
- The panel must ensure assessment methods and tasks are mapped to learning outcomes, skills, and knowledge as detailed in the course curriculum.
- A detailed report of the validation is to be recorded in the Validation Report and then the outcome recorded on the Validation Feedback Summary.
- A final report is presented to the Academic Director.

### **Moderation Sessions**

- (i) The Academic Director will notify the external panel members via email the purpose of the session, what will be required, and how to prepare for the session;
- (ii) The Academic Manager will notify the internal panel members via email the purpose of the session, what will be required, and how to prepare for the session. The Academic Manager will provide further details to teachers and assessing staff on the exact type of materials to be collected for the moderation session.
- The panel members must be provided with the items for discussion, length of discussion per item, and principles to be adhered to.
- The moderation session will include discussing the:
  - Assessment methods and tasks used
  - Students' assessment outcomes against the learning outcomes
  - The review of course subjects against assessor's marking guide and sample exemplars
  - Verification of consistency of judgement between teachers and assessing staff in respect of same course subject assessed
  - How assessment methods and tasks are mapped to the course curriculum, skills, and knowledge and learning outcomes
  - Findings and recommendations for improvement from students and staff
- A detailed report of the moderation is to be recorded in the Moderation Report and then the outcome recorded on the Moderation Feedback Summary.
- Agreed improvements are documented in the Continuous Improvement Register. The Academic Manager is responsible for ensuring corrective actions are completed within defined timelines, tabled at the management meetings, and feedback provided to the panel members.
- A final report is presented to the Academic Director.

### **Relevant Legislation**

As a registered education provider, Kaplan operates under strict laws and regulations. Policies and procedures are in place to ensure compliance with such laws. Below lists the most relevant legislation that apply to this policy:

- Australian Qualifications Framework
- Disability Standards for Education 2005
- Education Services for Overseas Students Act (ESOS Act)
- Education Services for Overseas Students Regulations 2019
- ELICOS Standards 2018

- Higher Education Standards Framework 2021 (Threshold Standards)
- National Code of Practice for Providers of Education and Training to Overseas Students 2018
- Tertiary Education Quality and Standards Agency Act 2011 (TEQSA Act)

## **Related Policies and Documents**

This policy should be read in conjunction with the following:

- Academic Integrity and Conduct Policy
- Academic Quality and Governance Framework
- Academic Success Policy
- Assessment Policy
- Benchmarking Policy
- Continuous Improvement Register
- Course and Subject Surveys Policy
- Course Validation/Moderation Schedule
- Diversity, Inclusion and Equity Policy
- Graduate Attributes
- Learning Facilities and Resources Policy
- Moderation Feedback Summary
- Moderation Report
- Validation Feedback Summary
- Validation Report

## Version Control and Accountable Officers

It is the joint responsibility of the Responsible Officer and Implementation Officer(s) to ensure compliance with this policy.

<b>Policy Category</b>		Academic		
<b>Responsible Officer</b>		Vice President, Academic		
<b>Implementation Officer(s)</b>		Academic Dean or equivalent		
<b>Review Date</b>		October 2025		
<b>Approved by</b>		Vice President, Academic under a standing delegation from the Academic Board		
<b>Version</b>	<b>Authored by</b>	<b>Brief Description of the changes</b>	<b>Date Approved</b>	<b>Effective Date</b>
2.1	Quality, Regulations and Standards Team	<p>Added information to the 'Scope' of the policy for more clarity.</p> <p>Expanded on 'Policy Principles' to align with the HES Framework 5.3.2 – 5.3.4.</p> <p>All new information on 'Course Review'.</p> <p>Added sections on 'Relevant Legislation' and 'Relevant Policies'.</p>	25.03.2020	20.05.2020
2.2	Quality, Regulations and Standards Team	<p>Amended to align with the academic governance framework inclusion of a new committee (ARC).</p> <p>Inclusion of recommendations from external review.</p> <p>Minor edits to wording throughout for clarity.</p>	02.12.2021	09.12.2021
2.3	Quality, Regulations and Standards Team	Incorporation of ELICOS provisions	01.12.2022	08.12.2022