Guidelines for evaluating teaching and learning in coursework programs
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The University of Melbourne aims to provide and maintain a teaching and learning environment of excellent quality offering higher education at an international standard. To achieve this objective the University of Melbourne has well-defined and rigorous quality assurance processes for teaching and learning. These Guidelines for evaluation of teaching and learning focus on the University's approach to assessing the quality of its coursework teaching programs and graduate outcomes. The ultimate aim of evaluation of courses and teaching is to improve student learning outcomes.

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Principles of evaluation for teaching and learning

The University takes a collegial approach to evaluating teaching and learning, and believes that its evaluation processes should –

◊ recognise exemplary teaching and learning practices and seek ways to disseminate and encourage good practice;
◊ be transparent;
◊ serve both developmental and accountability purposes;
◊ involve critical feedback to those involved in course delivery;
◊ use external reference points wherever possible;
◊ draw on multiple stakeholders as appropriate;
◊ use multiple sources of information and data, including feedback from students;
◊ recognise the value of different approaches to teaching and learning within different contexts; and
◊ cover all aspects of the delivery of the curriculum.

Wherever possible, international and national reference points and benchmarks are used during evaluation and quality assurance. These also support capacity for collaborative and innovative changes in order to adapt to new challenges in the higher education arena.
Responsibilities for quality assurance in teaching and learning

This section is intended to provide an overview of the responsibilities of both university staff and students for quality assurance in teaching and learning.

The University believes that quality assurance in teaching and learning is a shared responsibility. Responsibilities for ensuring quality in teaching and learning in the University reside in structural and organisational entities as well as individual staff and students. The University’s Academic Board has broad oversight of standards, policy and processes surrounding University academic endeavour. Collectively, teaching staff and academic managers are responsible for ensuring that the design, development, management, teaching and assessment of courses and subjects facilitate effective learning, while students have responsibility to engage in the learning process.

Specific responsibilities are outlined below.

National regulatory framework

The University is subject to national regulatory and quality arrangements governing Australian higher education. There are four major components to the new arrangements being introduced by the Commonwealth Government in 2011:

- the Tertiary Education Quality and Standards Agency (TEQSA), which has been established as an independent body with powers to register higher education providers, monitor quality and ensure standards;
- a national Register of providers of higher education;
- a framework for standards in higher education, which sets out:
  - standards for registration (governance, management, financial viability, responsibilities and resources),
  - qualification standards through the Australian Qualification Framework
  - standards for information which providers will make available to TEQSA for regulatory purposes and to the market to support transparency;
  - standards for teaching and learning and for research, to be used by TEQSA for quality assurance and improvement purposes; and
- a My University website to assist prospective students to make choices about what and where to study.

Apart from its regulatory tasks, TEQSA will also have a quality assurance and improvement function, thus replacing the activities previously undertaken by the Australian Universities Quality Agency.

University structures

The University aims, through an outstanding curriculum and university experience, to enable its students to develop their full potential as globally-aware professionals, citizens and community leaders. To ensure the continuing high quality of its programs and that these programs meet their objectives, the University as an institution has in place structures, policies and processes to:

- review and evaluate teaching and learning processes and outcomes, including related supporting services;
- ensure systematic monitoring and review of the academic management of courses, teaching and performance;
- support individual staff development, performance improvement and opportunities for innovation in teaching;
- monitor staff performance in teaching and learning;
- recognise and reward teaching excellence;

1 The University Plan 2011-2014.
• monitor and evaluate student outcomes;
• take into account student feedback to facilitate enhanced teaching and learning performance;
• provide infrastructure to support a high quality learning environment through its libraries, systems, equipment and teaching and learning spaces such as classrooms and other facilities; and
• provide services to enrich and support students’ learning.

**Provost and Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Academic)**

The **Provost** coordinates and superintends the academic and related programs and student services across the University in accordance with the policies of Academic Board and Council. The Provost is the senior academic officer working with the Deans and Academic Board to achieve the academic vision embedded in the Melbourne Model (Regulation 2.5.R1) and has responsibility for staffing policies. The Provost leads and supports the development, delivery and excellence of the University’s curriculum, student experience and scholarly information services. The Provost has responsibility for the implementation and coordination of the Melbourne Model, the Melbourne Student Services Model and Melbourne’s Scholarly Information Future.

The Provost is supported in this role by the **Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Academic)**, who has responsibility for the development of academic policy, planning and management, for programs for improvement in teaching and learning. The Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Academic) is also responsible for major change in academic programs and/or the delivery of those programs.

The Provost is also supported by the Pro Vice-Chancellor (Participation and Engagement) who has accountabilities for student equity, staff equity and the student experience and the Provost Fellow who provides academic leadership in relation to embedding graduate attributes, particularly those of community leadership and active global citizenship, through curricular and co-curricular opportunities.

**Academic Board oversight and management**

**Academic Board**

**Academic Board** is responsible to **Council** for the supervision and development of all academic activities of the University, including the maintenance of high standards in teaching and research, as well as for communication with the academic community through the faculties and departments (Statute 4.1). Through its subcommittees, the Academic Board develops and promulgates academic and student-related policy and procedures, including academic quality assurance and standards, curriculum design, research training, knowledge transfer, teaching and learning, and all academic aspects of student management such as student entry and selection, enrolment, assessment, examination and progress, course and subject structure, awards and prizes, and graduate attributes. Academic Board achieves its work through a series of committees; of most relevance to coursework programs are:

- **Academic Programs Committee** which develops policies relating to all academic courses, including teaching and learning practices to ensure that academic programs are of the highest quality and standards;
- **Selection Procedures Committee** which develops procedures and policies relating to the admission of students into University courses, and the principles on which they are based;
- **Teaching and Learning Development Committee** which develops policies and programs to promote and encourage excellence, innovation and for the support and development of staff and facilities in order to enhance the quality of teaching and learning.

**Teaching and Learning Quality Assurance Committee**

Academic Board has vested its **Teaching and Learning Quality Assurance Committee** (TALQAC) with particular responsibility for quality assurance. TALQAC plays a key role in evaluating teaching and learning in the University by:

- providing advice to the Board and the University community on quality assurance policy and processes for teaching and learning in undergraduate and postgraduate award courses and subjects;
• having particular responsibilities in relation to quality assurance of award courses (including course structure and coherence), assessment and examination policies, processes for course management, learning support, student progress and student transition into courses and careers;
• developing, in collaboration with Faculties, Graduate Schools and related Academic Board committees, appropriate qualitative and quantitative measures of performance of teaching and learning, taking into account national and international recommended practices, and overseeing, monitoring and reviewing their use;
• advising the Provost and Academic Board on priority areas for evaluation and quality assurance of academic programs and associated student support programs, and making recommendations on areas of teaching and learning for evaluation;
• reviewing and evaluating quality in teaching and learning of all award courses and associated student support services and programs, and making recommendations to relevant authorities on actions to improve the quality of teaching and learning in those courses and programs;
• advising and making recommendations to the Academic Board and its committees, management committees, faculties, schools and departments on modifications to the structure, content, method of presentation and delivery of award courses in response to quality assessments received in the previous year in order to ensure that these programs are of the highest possible quality; and
• evaluating systems and structures for the effective interaction between faculties, graduate schools, the Melbourne School of Graduate Research, Research and Research Training Committee, relevant Academic Board committees, associated administrative supporting services and the Finance and Planning Group in the development and use of measures to encourage adoption of good practice in academic programs.

New Generation degree (NGD) program responsibilities

Special arrangements have been established by the University for the academic management of New Generation Melbourne Model degrees to ensure effective and collaborative partnerships among participating faculties as well as clear lines of accountability for program deliver and quality.

Course Steering Committees

Steering Committees have been established for each of the New Generation undergraduate degree courses. The Committees are chaired by the Provost or nominee, and membership includes the Custodial Dean, Deans of other participating faculties, and external representatives. The Steering Committee provides strategic review and direction for the degree program, and approves the program’s business plan.

Custodial Deans

Custodial Deans have oversight and formal accountability for program delivery, and have management responsibilities for ensuring that adequate resources are available to support the program and Program Director. Custodial Deans have responsibilities to ensure consultation and communication with contributing faculties, and fulfil decanal statutory responsibilities for the program.

Program Director

Program Directors provide a single point of accountability for the responsibilities shared by faculties participating in the New Generation degree. NGD Program Directors have responsibility, in relation to their respective degree program, for academic leadership, teaching quality, deployment of allocated resources, curriculum review, academic leadership for policy implementation and student services, and communication of information to current students and Student Advisors. Program Directors also chair the program Course Standing Committee.

Course Standing Committees

Course Standing Committees oversee the academic development of the NGD programs, and monitor their delivery to ensure they accord with University expectations and policy. Course Standing Committees also monitor the quality of teaching and learning and academic support for the Melbourne Model undergraduate courses and collaborate with TALQAC in the evaluation of course quality.
Faculty and graduate school responsibilities

Deans

Deans have responsibility for the educational and administrative business of the faculty and its departments. Accordingly, Deans are the primary accountable officer for management and delivery of teaching and learning in their faculty or graduate school. Deans have responsibilities for executing all policies of the faculty and University for the degrees and courses within their scope, and accountability for performance of individual teaching staff.

In relation to teaching and learning, Deans’ responsibilities include:
- the quality of courses and degrees and the quality of their delivery;
- ensuring the faculty has processes in place for continuing review, course evaluation and self-assessment of its academic offerings;
- consultation with TALQAC, Academic Board and other relevant committees on learning and teaching in relation to the courses in their faculty;
- all aspects of academic management for the courses offered through their faculty, including assessment, student progress, examination, graduation;
- supporting regular and systematic evaluation of courses and subjects, processes to facilitate feedback from and to students on those evaluations;
- management of physical and human resources and infrastructure to support the continuing high quality of course and subject delivery and outcomes.

Associate Deans (Academic)

Associate Deans with responsibility for learning and teaching operate in each faculty or graduate school under delegated authority from the Dean. Responsibilities will vary from faculty to faculty dependent on the level and scope of those delegations.

In addition to their delegated decanal responsibilities Associate Deans (Academic) have responsibilities for:
- providing advice to the Dean on all matters related to teaching and learning in the faculty; and
- communications within their faculty, and for interactions with other faculties and entities on academic and student management issues.

Committees or other entities with learning and teaching responsibilities

All University faculties have established structures within their faculty led by the Dean or Faculty Associate Dean (Academic) under delegation. Such committees normally have representation from the disciplines which make up the faculty as well as senior management and student representation. They have general responsibilities for advising faculty management on all aspects of the academic programs offered by the faculty and for the quality of learning and teaching within those programs, including selection, curriculum, assessment and examination. They also have oversight of the development of policy and review measures to improve learning and teaching. The structure and functions of such committees serve to ensure that all award courses are developed, reviewed and evaluated with the benefit of advice from relevant communities. In terms of curriculum design, input should be sought (where appropriate) from advisory committees that include relevant stakeholders such as prospective employers and professional accrediting bodies. Larger faculties also have separate discipline or course specific committees or committees with interests in a group of related courses which feed into faculty academic program committees.

Heads of academic units

Heads of academic units, as executive officers of the unit, have responsibilities for teaching and assessment offered through their unit. These responsibilities include quality assurance of all subjects, maintaining documentation relating to subjects, monitoring staff performance, appraisal of teaching staff, and providing opportunities for individual staff development. They are also responsible for providing appropriate resources to support all teaching undertaken by the academic unit.
**Teaching staff**

Teaching staff at all levels – including tutors, demonstrators and other instructional and supporting staff – have a responsibility to incorporate appropriate methods and processes to ensure high quality of learning and teaching.

**Lecturers and tutors**

Staff appointed to teach at undergraduate and postgraduate level have responsibilities to:

- collaborate with colleagues to ensure that subjects and courses in which they teach achieve agreed learning outcomes and graduate attributes;
- use approaches to teaching that influence, motivate and inspire students to learn;
- develop high quality curricula and resources in order to maximise students’ command of their discipline area;
- use approaches to timely assessment and feedback that foster independent, reflective learning;
- assist students to develop as individuals;
- ensure and demonstrate that their learning and teaching functions are informed by high quality research participation; and
- commit to their own learning through self-reflection, review and evaluation of their teaching, through a range of methods, including student feedback.

**Course and subject co-ordinators**

In addition to their responsibilities as members of teaching staff of the University, course and subject co-ordinators have responsibilities to ensure that:

- the design of the course or subject meets clearly defined learning and teaching objectives;
- processes are in place for achieving effective course or subject management and co-ordination, particularly where teaching is contributed across department and faculties or has an off-campus or off-shore component;
- these responsibilities include student and teaching staff management, including tutors, demonstrators and other instructional and supporting staff, in order to ensure the coherence and high quality of courses or subjects;
- a range of appropriate strategies are in place to facilitate the evaluation of learning and teaching outcomes;
- feedback on subject evaluations is provided to students; and
- course or subject objectives are reviewed and evaluated to take into account new knowledge and developments.

**Supporting services**

Students are supported by a range of services at central and faculty levels. Among these supporting services are:

- **Student Centres** which provide a first point of contact for advice on administrative and transactional services as well as course planning and graduate study;
- dedicated and specialist services to support students’ learning and academic skills development, and language development;
- dedicated services to facilitate enrichment of students’ academic and social experience through study abroad and exchange programs, volunteering and community engagement;
- careers advice and support;
- specialist services, such as health and counselling, financial and housing assistance, to support students’ well-being;
- Faculty Learning Units

**Students**

Students are expected to participate fully in their study, taking responsibility for their learning and for moving toward intellectual independence as a member of the learning community of the University. This includes:
• engagement in the learning process, through creating dynamic partnerships with peers, teachers and researchers;
• providing considered, honest and timely feedback to the University and its staff on the quality of teaching and University services; and
• full participation in the University community through their representatives on academic and student liaison committees at University, faculty and academic unit level.

A full statement setting out students’ and the University’s responsibilities is given in Student Expectations and Responsibilities (UOM0446)
Process for evaluation and review of quality in teaching and learning

**TALQAC**, the Academic Board’s Teaching and Learning Quality Assurance Committee, has particular responsibility for course evaluation on the Board’s behalf.

TALQAC normally defines its forward program of course evaluations annually. In setting this program, it takes advice from Academic Board officers and the Provost and Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Academic), and is informed by issues arising from the University's annual divisional planning and performance reviews, and past reviews.

**Types of reviews**

TALQAC has introduced the practice of reviews at different levels of intensity ranging, for example, from simple examination of documents to major reviews.

1. ‘Specific purpose’ reviews can be described as desk-top analyses of existing and documented processes and outcomes. They are likely to be conducted by one or two TALQAC members, and may be focussed on one or two particular issues identified as being of significance. An example is a focus on assessment practices, or exit pathways.

2. ‘Standard’ reviews are more comprehensive, and cover a range of topics and issues about a specified course or range of courses. Such reviews are likely to be conducted by a panel of four or five TALQAC members, and include student as well as academic and professional staff input.

3. ‘Major’ reviews are high level reviews of a course or faculty which will be chaired by an Academic Board officer. Panel members will include at least one person with international standing and expertise in the discipline under review, together with other TALQAC members.

Given their focus on particular topics, specific terms of reference for ‘specific purpose’ reviews would normally be drawn before each review.

**Definitions**

**Course evaluation**

Course evaluation refers to the whole process of evaluation described in this document.

**TALQAC Review Panel**

This is the panel of members appointed by TALQAC to review and evaluate a designated course.

**Course Assessment Panel**

A Course Assessment Panel is the group of staff appointed by the responsible entity or custodial Dean to conduct a self-assessment of quality assurance processes relating to a course.

**Course self-assessment**

This is the process undertaken by the Course Assessment Panel.

**Process for review**

Course evaluation considers practices of quality assurance: how teaching quality is encouraged and developed, and how academic standards are developed and maintained. The evaluations will focus on courses, or programs of closely-related courses, and thus may involve more than one Faculty\(^2\).

The conduct of course evaluations will be informed by relevant quality standards and practices. Agreed terms of reference will, in addition, closely align with the particular specialisations,

\(^2\) For New Generation Undergraduate degrees the course assessment is to be completed by the Program Director together with other staff appointed by the custodial Dean.
circumstances and demographics of courses being reviewed. Course evaluations will be undertaken by a Review Panel to be appointed by TALQAC.

Review panels
Membership of the Review Panel will be constituted in accordance with the priorities and characteristics of each course review, and may include, in addition to TALQAC members (including student members of the Committee), an appropriate senior academic, and co-opted members external to the University.

Process for course evaluation

Course evaluations normally consist of:

a. **Self assessment** by the responsible or relevant academic entity on quality assurance practices, teaching standards and student service standards relating to a particular course. This would normally be undertaken by a panel of staff involved in the course (“Course Assessment Panel”).

b. The responsible entity may be a faculty or group of faculties where a course may be taught across faculties or schools. For courses where more than one faculty or school is involved, the custodial Dean will have responsibility for the self-assessment process, and will advise the TALQAC of the composition of the panel undertaking self assessment.

c. The **evaluation questions to be addressed by the Course self-assessment Panel** are set out separately.

d. **Evaluation by the TALQAC Review Panel** of the course self-assessment and other relevant documentation relating to the course.

e. **Discussion** between the TALQAC Review Panel and the relevant academic entity and Course Assessment Panel to review the course self assessment (see following chapter for details of the self-assessment).

f. **Feedback from students** through focus group meetings, and from professional and industry groups.

g. **Feedback to the faculty** or other academic entity by TALQAC on outcomes and action.

h. **Reporting** by the Review Panel through TALQAC to Academic Board. Following discussion between the Review Panel and the Course Assessment Panel, a report on the evaluation, including recommendations on quality assurance standards and areas for improvement, will be provided to Academic Board. In addition the Review Panel will provide advice to the Provost regarding the standards and coherence of courses under review.

The strengths and weaknesses of the course’s quality assurance processes and outcomes, how these change over time, and the implications arising from these, should be presented and discussed directly in the course evaluation report.

The focus of the course evaluation should be on what is currently done by the faculty or faculties/schools and by those directly responsible for the quality of the course. Less emphasis should be given to detailed accounts of what needs to be done in the initial self-evaluation report. Recommendations should not be too ambitious and hence some attention should be given to prioritising the recommendations and a clear statement as to how these might be achieved.

At the conclusion of the review the responsible academic entity (or custodial Dean) should submit to TALQAC a plan of action to be undertaken for any improvements needed in its quality assurance
processes. Progress on this plan of action will be reviewed in the following year through the annual performance review of divisions or by TALQAC.

Course self-assessment

The Course Assessment Panel would be expected to prepare a self-assessment of processes and outcomes based on a range of information and evidence to support its conclusions, including:

- overall aims of the course;
- course objectives and how course structure and teaching arrangements meet those objectives;
- processes in place to ensure that students are aware of and understand course and unit objectives, and expected graduate attributes;
- processes to ensure the effective of assessment and assessment practices and how this contributes to student learning;
- processes in place for evaluating and monitoring course and student outcomes and how student feedback and other performance data are used to monitor and improve courses and outcomes;
- issues of course management, including processes in place for achieving effective course co-ordination, particularly where teaching is contributed across departments and faculties; and
- the level of evidence to hand to demonstrate that the standard of teaching and outcomes meets national and international benchmarks.

Evaluation questions for course self-assessment

This section outlines TALQAC’s general recommendations to faculties and schools on evaluating teaching and learning, and the evaluation questions recommended as part of the review process.

TALQAC’s approach to teaching and learning quality reviews is collegial; the reviews should be seen as collaborative and co-operative endeavours between the Committee as a delegate of Academic Board and the faculty or school (or other responsible entity). Quality reviews not only allow faculty processes to be critiqued and evaluated but also provide an opportunity for faculty and committee members to showcase and share examples of good practice. The ultimate aim is to improve student learning outcomes.

Scope and focus of TALQAC review

It is important to note what aspects a course evaluation is designed to cover and what it does not cover at this University.

A course review is an evaluation of the processes being undertaken to ensure the quality of the course in question, with the ultimate aim to improve student learning. Thus, a course evaluation is responding to the question: how do you know this course is of high quality, has coherence and is of a high national or international standard? Implicit in this, is the ability to answer the following questions:

- what evaluative processes are in place, and how are they used to ensure continuing high quality of the course or subject in question?;
- if a weakness in the course is identified, how does the quality assurance processes in place ensure that the weakness is remedied?; and
- what evidence and reference points are identifiable which can demonstrate the quality of student learning outcomes and standards?

The course evaluation is not concerned with the content of the course, except for content benchmarking purposes that have been carried out as part of a faculty’s quality assurance processes, including (in the case of professional degrees) the requirements of regulatory bodies for professional accreditation. While it is sometimes difficult to isolate discussion of course content from course
quality, it is important, when considering the material to be collected and the issues to be considered for a review, to remember that the review’s purpose is to evaluate faculty or discipline processes with respect to the course, and to assess the quality of expected outcomes of those processes.

The course self-assessment comprises an overall evaluation question and core questions which must be addressed. Each question lists a range of considerations which can be included in the response, but it is not necessary that all be addressed. Strengths and weaknesses in the course’s quality assurance processes should be revealed by the course self-assessment process, and should be listed and discussed in the report of the outcomes of the process.

The following general guidelines apply to the evaluation of teaching and learning in the University:

a. the University aspires to ensure that academic standards are appropriate for an international university of its standing,

b. academic standards for all University degree programs and courses are to accord with the Australian Qualification Framework

c. evidence and external references should be used to demonstrate how those standards are achieved,

d. an assessment should be made about the adequacy of quality assurance processes related to the course, and how improvements to the course result from the issues raised by these processes.

In shaping a response to the review, the following should be taken into account:

a. quality assurance processes for all aspects of the course should be considered, including subjects offered, major and minor sequences of subjects, work experience, thesis projects undertaken, and the way these are managed and coordinated in the course;

b. if the course has formal professional accreditation, reference should be made in the Course self-assessment to any relevant data and results from accreditation processes;

c. if the course is taught on multiple campuses or off-shore, an explanation should be given of any special provision and process to ensure quality, equity and consistency of offerings;

d. if the course involves clinical placement or field work, an explanation should be given of any special provision and process to ensure quality, equity and consistency of offerings;

e. if the course is taught at Masters level, an explanation should be given as to how it is distinctive from a Bachelors level program

f. the report of the course self-assessment should be no more than 15 pages. Additional data can be included in appendices if desired. The self-assessment report should aim to describe and evaluate major processes rather than describe comprehensive detail.

Course assessment and evaluation applies to all current coursework programs offered by the University.

**Quality and standards in courses being taught out**

Protocol has been developed by Academic Board for courses being phased out (http://www.unimelb.edu.au/abp/camp/index.html). The phasing out of courses raises a number of issues which can affect the quality of students’ learning experiences, including diminishing subject options, concerns over the currency of subject content, the cohort experience, and communications. TALQAC has developed separately questions which should be addressed in evaluating quality in courses being taught out. These questions are set out in.

**Overall evaluation question**

The Course Assessment Panel is asked to review and report on the quality assurance processes for the course. These processes should allow the faculty or school (or the relevant group of faculties and schools) to know that the course is of high standard.
Overall evaluation question:

What are the principal ways in which you ensure that your course is of high quality and that it leads students to demonstrate the attributes of a Melbourne graduate? How do you identify problems in course offerings and management, and how do you ensure these are resolved?

Specific questions for course evaluation

To reiterate: the overall evaluation questions and core questions must be addressed. The additional points for self-evaluation of the course and its quality assurance processes are listed as examples for consideration, but it is not a requirement that each self-evaluation point be addressed separately or in equal depth.

1 Quality of course design, integration and coherence

Core question:

In what ways do you ensure the quality and coherence of your course design?

In framing your response, consider how you –

◊ ensure alignment of the course with faculty and university strategic directions and plans, in particular –
  o the Nine principles of teaching and learning,
  o the University’s teaching and learning plans, and
  o cultural diversity issues
◊ identify course objectives and the alignment of teaching and assessment methods to achieve course objectives,
◊ ensure that teaching methods and assessment practices are effective in achieving course objectives and complementing generic skill statements,
◊ ensure proof of flexibility within the course including modes of entry, instruction and assessment,
◊ identify the process for reviewing the adequacy, relevance and appropriateness of course regulations,
◊ evaluate how overall coherence is monitored where the course under review is combined with other courses or taught across faculties,
◊ identify how research informs teaching in the course,
◊ in interdisciplinary subjects, ensure that modes of assessment reflect and are appropriate for integrated learning,
◊ ensure that the course content is consistent with the Australian Qualifications Framework at the necessary level,
◊ for Bachelors courses, ensuring that students have a clear understanding of the concept of breadth, and its place in their course, while ensuring some disciplinary depth is also achieved,
◊ at Masters level, ensuring that students gain an in depth understanding of their discipline and are ready for employment within their chosen profession
◊ ensure that the Masters level experience is distinctive from a graduate program, recognising the student in a professional, collegial manner
◊ evaluate how developments in other courses are monitored, thus avoiding undue overlap in subject offerings,
◊ monitor the relevance of subjects to industry and professional needs,
◊ monitor the appropriateness and range of specialisations to ensure that specialisations accurately reflect the objectives of the course,

5 http://www.provost.unimelb.edu.au/about_us/learningandteaching/
6 http://www.unimelb.edu.au/diversity/
identify the capstone experience for the course and how it exemplifies graduate attributes.

2 Quality of course management

Core question:

In what ways do you ensure the quality of your course management?

In framing your response, consider how you –

◊ ensure effective course co-ordination and monitoring across contributing departments and faculties,
◊ ensure equity and diversity objectives are met,
◊ ensure consistency in work requirements for students across departments, across campuses including off-shore, and different teaching modes,
◊ evaluate the appropriateness and effectiveness of course delivery,
◊ at Bachelor level, ensure that students receive adequate advice on the nature and range of breadth options, and how this is monitored,
◊ monitor the quality of student advising, with particular emphasis on course planning to enable reasonable flexibility of pathways to employment and further study,
◊ ensure, where the curriculum is delivered at multiple sites (such as through clinical placements), equivalent quality in teaching and assessment across those sites.

For courses being phased out, questions set out in hyperlink to should also be addressed. Additional questions evaluating pathways to graduate study are set out in.

3 Quality of student learning and experience

Core question:

In what ways does your approach to student engagement encourage strong learning outcomes?

In framing your response, consider how you –

◊ encourage and support innovative teaching and assessment methods in the course (please illustrate with examples of innovation),
◊ evaluate provision of learning support services for students,
◊ monitor the quality of subject websites,
◊ provide students with regular, effective and timely feedback (please illustrate the types of feedback provided),
◊ monitor student progress and achievement,
◊ encourage and develop a strong cohort experience, and the processes by which this is monitored and improved,
◊ ensure that students are trained in the norms for academic honesty in your discipline,
◊ recognise cultural diversity and define and provide appropriate internationalisation of curriculum,
◊ ensure that individual student needs are met, including issues related to equity, assessment and learning styles,
◊ identify and support students’ further development of English language competence,
◊ ensure conformance with the University’s assessment and grading policies,
◊ monitor assessment practices to ensure consistency and fairness,
◊ monitor student workload.

4 Academic staff development

Core question:

In what ways is a culture of teaching excellence being developed and supported?

In framing your response, consider how you –
encourage staff development, including provision of professional development and skills programs or peer mentoring
recognise and reward teaching contributions and incentives for innovation,
ensure an appropriate match of teaching staff in relation to course objectives, teaching methods and desired learning outcomes,
ensure that staff have adequate expertise to teach cohorts of mixed disciplinary backgrounds,
provide formal training and support for sessional staff, in accordance with University policy,
provide formal training and support for adjunct staff and pro bono appointments who teach and supervise in clinical placements and internships.

5 Learning resources and infrastructure

Core question:
In what ways do you ensure that the utility of learning resources and technologies, in particular the Learning Management System (LMS), is being maximised?

In framing your response, consider how you –

monitor the provision of appropriate teaching and laboratory accommodation and equipment,
ensure the provision of appropriate resources for clinical placements, internships and fieldwork activities,
ensure the effective provision of resources and services including IT, library and related services,
provide suitable infrastructure for coursework students,
ensure effective and efficient use of resources in teaching the course.

6 Learning outcomes and graduate attributes

Core question:
In what ways are student learning and graduate outcomes monitored, and post-course student pathways developed?

In framing your response, consider how you –

monitor student acquisition of graduate attributes, and achievement of course objectives,
monitor how capstone subjects contribute to the development of graduate attributes,
ensure how, in Bachelors programs, the concept of breadth enables graduate attributes,
ensure that an international experience and students' global mobility is encouraged and fostered,
monitor student destinations and career outcomes after graduation,
engage students in transition programs, focussing on both student entry to and exit from the course, and mapping the effectiveness of the programs,
guide and advise students concerning potential pathways to graduate training and career outcomes.

Questions set out in should also be addressed, where graduate and learning outcomes may be affected by course discontinuation. For pathways into graduate study questions on pathways set out in should also be considered.

7 Continuous Quality Improvement

Core question:
What mechanisms do you employ for making adjustments to the course based on stakeholder feedback (from students, graduates, professional bodies, employers and other interested parties), and national and international benchmarks?

In framing your response, consider how you –
monitor, benchmark and sustain excellent outcomes in teaching, learning and assessment in the course,

identify and respond to national and international performance indicators,

monitor how other higher education institutions in the sector perform in and set new standards for the sector,

identify and respond to new ideas in your discipline, learning how to improve from others,

identify, review and remedy problems, and respond to student feedback,

take into account comments from the Subject Experience Survey\(^7\) and Course Experience Questionnaires,\(^8\)

take into account comments from professional accreditation bodies, noting that the accreditation process is designed to satisfy the competency standards for the profession, but does not usually seek to identify excellence beyond this standard.

\(^7\) http://www.upo.unimelb.edu.au/Public/Qual_Eval/EC_QoT.html
\(^8\) http://www.upo.unimelb.edu.au/Public/Qual_Eval/EC_CEQ.html
Quality issues in determining pathways in the Melbourne Model degrees

TALQAC has identified a range of issues with the potential to affect quality in relation to Melbourne Model pathways. These include –

- the need for clear documentation
- the need to establish clear entry standards
- the need for consistency of practice and standards across faculties
- ensuring equitable and transparent standards of entry
- the importance of having readily available data to evaluate the success or otherwise of particular pathways
- ensuring that students have access to expert and time advice.

The evaluation questions fall into three broad areas as follows:

1. **Selection**
   - What policy and processes have been developed to provide clear and transparent standards of entry for prospective students graduating from undergraduate New Generation degrees or for lateral entry graduates of other universities?
   - How do you monitor their deployment and ensure they are applied consistently as well as fairly? What does that monitoring show?
   - If preferred or guaranteed pathways to graduate programs have been articulated how and when are these communicated to prospective internal and external students?
   - For graduate professional programs, how do you ensure equity and consistency of practice when there may be qualitatively different pathways to entry?
   - What processes are in place to ensure information is published, readily accessible and available in a timely fashion to enable informed choices to be made by prospective students and graduates?
   - How are selection principles evaluated for effectiveness? What data are recorded and tracked to facilitate this process?

2. **Student advising**
   - What processes are in place to ensure high quality student advising?
   - What mechanisms are in place to advise students of the range of options open to them while they are enrolled, the extent or limits of their flexibility, and articulation to graduate programs? What impediments exist, and how are they resolved?
   - What training and resources are provided to both academic and professional staff advisors? How is discipline specific academic expertise harnessed and used in student advising?
   - What mechanisms are in place to ensure that expert discipline specific academic expertise is available to students in planning their course?
   - What procedures are in place to ensure adequate advice and information to students during periods of high demand?
   - What steps are in place to ensure appropriate and timely pathways advice for students whose course enrolment is subject to particular conditions (for example, time conditions for students on scholarships or other assistance packages)?
   - What exit pathways are available, and how are students advised on appropriate exit points, including their implications?

3. **Consistency of practice**
   - What policy has developed around granting of exemptions and credit for prior study in cognate or unrelated disciplines?
   - How is such policy applied and how do you monitor consistent and fair application of policy, grounds of proof, and evidence of standards.
Maintaining quality and standards in courses being phased out

The phasing out of courses gives rise to a number of issues which require particular consideration. Some of these are known, while others may arise unexpectedly during the teach-out phase. Previous experience suggests that students enrolled in courses being phased out:
- are concerned about diminishing options with respect to subject selection and the reputation and standing of a course which is coming to an end. This is particularly so with reference to future employment prospects,
- are concerned that the currency of subject content is maintained,
- may have little sense of the student cohort experience, and have fewer opportunities to participate fully in a learning community, as their numbers diminish,
- may perceive that the course being phased out is being given less attention than new courses, and may be disgruntled as a result, and
- need to rely heavily on clear and timely communication from academic teaching staff during the teachout period.

Student disaffection needs to be recognised as a potential risk when courses are phased out. The objective of the questions set out below is to assist TALQAC and faculties to monitor issues which may affect the quality of courses. The expectation is that identifying and addressing these and related issues will help to ensure continuing high quality in students’ learning experience.

Academic Board has endorsed Special arrangements in phasing out courses, which require a formal application for approval to discontinue a course (see http://www.unimelb.edu.au/abp/camp/index.html). The evaluation questions set out below complement Board policy, as part of quality assurance process to ensure alignment with policy and an optimal student experience.

1. Quality of the learning experience
   How have you ensured that the special arrangements set out in your submission to Academic Board on phasing-out courses have been met?
   What steps have been taken to ensure quality and standards where there has been a deviation from the planned process?
   What mechanisms are in place to provide, as far as possible, a strong cohort learning experience, and to encourage students’ participation in a learning community?

2. Communication with students
   How do you ensure that clear policy and transparent processes relating to the phase out of the course are communicated to students, so that students can have high but realistic expectations of the standing and value of the course?
   What steps are taken to ensure students can be assured of the continuing high standing and value of the course being phased out?
   What mechanisms are in place for effective two-way communication between students and the faculty and course co-ordinator, so that student views are received and understood?

3. Course planning
   How is planning for a coherent course structure and content maintained? What mechanisms are in place to advise students of options open to them, and the extent or limits of their flexibility?
   What policy and processes have been developed to provide clear, transparent and timely information to students on available subject choices?
   What mechanisms have been built in to adjust course plans in response to changing circumstances? How is this flexibility monitored to ensure equitable treatment of students?