



POLICY

Quality Assurance

1. Purpose and Objective

- 1.1. This policy outlines the principles which guides UNE Partnership's (UNEP) approach to internal quality assurance and continual improvement of Vocational Education (VET) delivery and operational activities.
- 1.2. The objective of the policy is to ensure that UNEP retains a whole-of-institution approach to planning and quality which informs strategic and operational planning, risk, student recruitment and admission standards, course approvals and review, teaching and learning, student support and resource allocation.

2. Scope

- 2.1. This policy applies to all accredited and non-accredited courses of study delivered by UNEP, operational units of UNEP, and generic improvement and innovation activity.

3. Policy

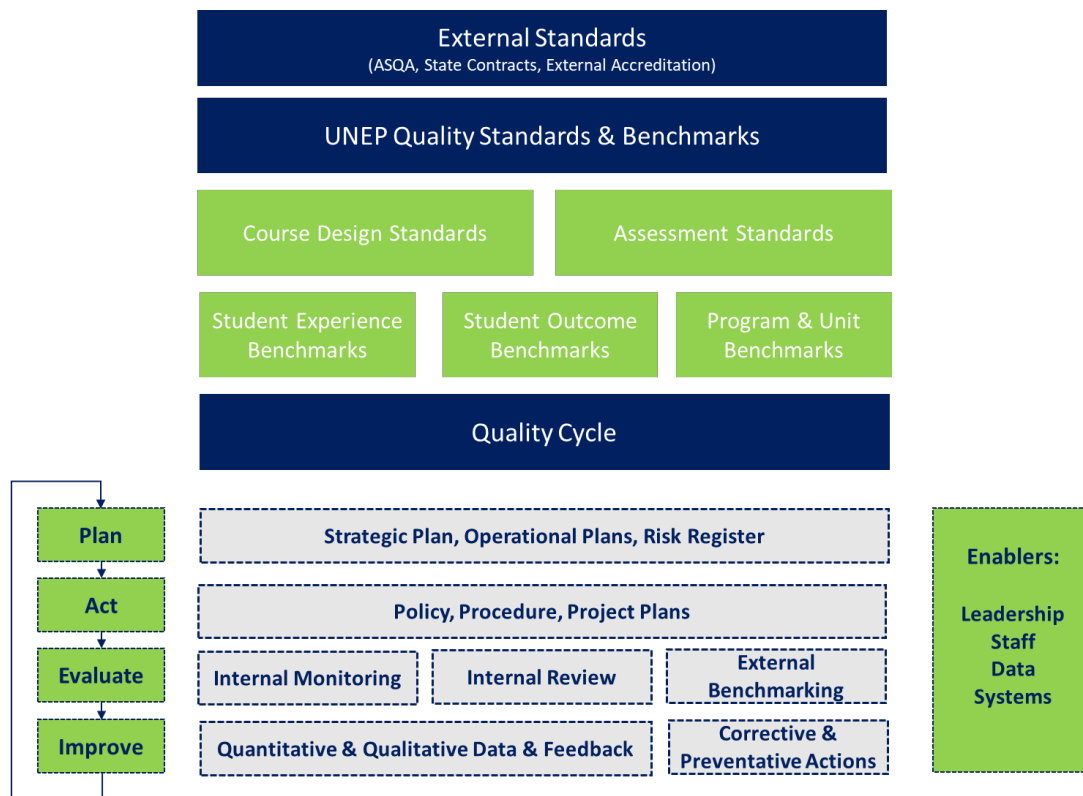
Principles

- 3.1. UNEP is committed to ensuring that all students receive an outstanding learning experience by providing the courses, learning resources, assessment and academic, pastoral and literacy and numeracy support required to provide all students with the capability of achieving set learning outcomes, graduate attributes and their own academic and professional ambitions.
- 3.2. This aim is achieved through a common commitment to providing a quality experience for all students through:
 - a) an obligation to managing, assuring and enhancing the quality of all academic and operational functions via the Plan-Act-Evaluate-Improve quality cycle which includes an ongoing cycle of monitoring and review;
 - b) a focus on benchmarking and external referencing (including peer review) to inform inputs (e.g. admission criteria, course structure and resourcing, assessment and delivery, policy and procedure, learning resources) and the delineation of quality indicators or benchmarks;
 - c) an understanding that quality processes need to inform academic, financial and organisational risk to ensure that risk assessment is adequately informed by quality outcomes and assessment;
 - d) the provision of courses that are academically rigorous and align with the Australian Qualifications Framework and UNEP's strategic direction;
 - e) regular application of internal performance indicators with reference to external benchmarking activities;
 - f) a commitment to open and transparent communication of quality outcomes and engagement with key stakeholders in relation to improvement plans;
 - g) policies that address equity and diversity in admission, curriculum delivery and assessment;
 - h) a commitment to academic innovation;
 - i) clear delineation between governance and management responsibilities and specified delegations of authority;
 - j) compliance with the Commonwealth and State law and regulation, UNEP's policies and procedures, and professional/statutory accreditation standards.

Integrated approach to quality

- 3.3. UNEP’s integrated approach to internal quality assurance incorporates key inputs and outputs which inform planning and change management practices (as outlined in figure 1. NB: benchmarks outlined are exemplars) and academic, operational and financial risk via an annual report to the UNEP Board of Directors, consolidating the findings from the annual quality cycle.

Figure 1: UNEP Integrated Quality



Plan and Act

- 3.4. The outcomes of the quality cycle inform the strategic and operational plans of UNEP and the subsidiary plans for VET delivery, admissions standards and individual project plans linked to VET delivery and student support.

Evaluate

- 3.5. Internal quality benchmarks are set and reviewed regularly to inform the quality of academic delivery, student outcomes and the student experience.
- 3.6. All courses and units of study are monitored against internal benchmarks following each teaching period in which they are delivered.
- 3.7. Quantitative and qualitative feedback surveys are distributed following each teaching period in which the course is delivered seeking feedback from students and trainers.
- 3.8. UNEP also completes all formal survey requirements for the submission of the annual ASQA Quality Indicator Report.

- 3.9. Data on student progress and success is reviewed by the Board of Studies and the Board of Directors annually to inform admission criteria and approaches to course design, teaching, and learning and academic support and reported externally as required.
- 3.10. All courses are validated on a rolling five- year plan, with at least 50% of courses validated in the first three years of the plan.
- 3.11. Courses may be validated more often based on a proportionate risk approach.
- 3.12. Industry feedback is key to effective evaluation of courses and their delivery with UNEP seeking industry feedback on a regular basis in relation to:
 - a) validation and moderation activities culminating in improvements to training and assessment strategies, practice and resources;
 - b) employer satisfaction;
 - c) work placement;
 - d) professional development opportunities for staff including the current industry skills of its trainers and assessors;
 - e) business development opportunities.
- 3.13. Moderation of assessment is undertaken at least once per year per Unit of Competency or Module and includes:
 - a) Pre-Delivery Moderation: reaffirms the fairness, clarity and standards of the assessment tasks before they are used.
 - b) Moderation During Delivery: includes checking the consistency of marking of the assessment tasks and grading process against the assessment/marketing criteria and related standards in order to ensure consistency across groups of students in the same subject, as well as reviewing all grades before approval and communication to students.
 - c) Post-Delivery Moderation: an examination of the effectiveness of the moderation process and includes a formal reflection on moderation methods used.
- 3.14. Other forms of external benchmarking such as desk top audits are undertaken to supplement formal validation and feedback from industry where deemed necessary by the Board of Studies and/or the Board of Directors.
- 3.15. At the direction of the Board of Directors, the performance of all business functions is reviewed on a needs basis, with a particular focus on those activities that contribute to the student's academic experience, including but not limited to:
 - a) teaching and learning;
 - b) assessment practices;
 - c) deployment of learning resources;
 - d) student recruitment and admission;
 - e) information to students;
 - f) academic support;
 - g) literacy support;
 - h) numeracy support;
 - i) pastoral support;
 - j) complaint and grievance procedures; and
 - k) appeals mechanisms.

Improve

- 3.16. Recommendations from the evaluate phase of the quality cycle inform immediate corrective and preventive action and the annual planning cycle.
- 3.17. Actions for improvement are monitored during their implementation to assess the efficacy of these actions and identify any required modification to their execution.

Academic Innovation: Evaluate and Improve

- 3.18. While ideas and initiatives may be initiated at any level of UNEP and through a variety of processes, the Evaluate and Improve phase of the quality cycle provides an environment for positive change and innovation. Thus, academic initiatives or proposals for change are evaluated as an integral part of this phase of the quality cycle with a focus on proposals that improve academic outcomes and student satisfaction.
- 3.19. Innovation and improvements identified are disseminated to key stakeholders, with staff encouraged to share good practice and improvement plans as part of UNEP's professional development program.

Communication

- 3.20. The outcomes of all quality processes will be disseminated to stakeholders in line with UNEP's commitment to transparency and accountability.

4. Definitions

ACADEMIC INNOVATION	an idea or initiative that intended to improve the quality of academic delivery, programs and support leading to an improvement in student satisfaction and outcomes, increases program sustainability and/or reduces the organisational academic risk profile
ACADEMIC RISK	the risk of any decline in academic integrity, academic outcomes, academic accountability and quality, and risk to academic operations
ASSURING QUALITY	ensuring that UNEP-AHE practice is implemented in a consistent manner that complies with relevant policy, procedure and guidelines
CAPA	Corrective and Preventive Action identified through the quality monitoring and review, the student appeals and grievance process, and/or corporate risk assessment
ENHANCING QUALITY	ensuring that continuous improvement of internal planning, policy, procedure and practice are informed by outputs from the quality cycle
EXTERNAL REFERNCING	a comparable assessment of courses, units, assessment, grading, policy and and student achievement standards against comparable reference points external to UNEP
FINANCIAL RISK	potential financial loss to UNEP
INDUSTRY	the bodies that have a stake in the services provided by UNEP. These can include, but are not limited to: a) enterprise/industry clients, e.g. employers; b) group training organisations;

	<p>c) industry organisations; d) industry regulators; e) industry skills councils or similar bodies; f) industry training advisory bodies; and g) unions.</p>
INTERNAL BENCHMARKS	<p>An internally-set measurable standard against which to monitor and review quality outcomes. Internal benchmarks may involve external reference points.</p>
MANAGING QUALITY	<p>ensuring that UNEP's corporate and academic inputs and outputs meet internal and industry benchmarks and comply with all external legislative, regulatory and where applicable, professional accreditation requirements, prior to implementation</p>
MONITORING	<p>tracking academic outcomes against internally-set benchmarks to enable adjustments to be made to academic and operational processes and systems on a regular basis</p>
OPERATIONAL RISK	<p>the risk of loss resulting from inadequate or failed internal processes, people and systems, or from external events. As such, operational risk captures business continuity plans, environmental risk, crisis management, process systems and operations risk, people related risks and health and safety, and information technology risks</p>
PROPORTIONATE RISK	<p>a decision based on a risk assessment of both consequence and likelihood of negative impact</p>
REVIEW	<p>an evaluation or appraisal of a course, unit, policy, process, system or organisational unit, based largely on time-series quantitative data and qualitative feedback that provides a 'snapshot' of its quality, effectiveness and sustainability</p>
VALIDATION	<p>is the quality review of the assessment process. Validation involves checking that the assessment tool/s produce/s valid, reliable, sufficient, current and authentic evidence to enable reasonable judgements to be made as to whether the requirements of the training package or VET accredited courses are met. It includes reviewing a statistically valid sample of the assessments and making recommendations for future improvements to the assessment tool, process and/or outcomes and acting upon such recommendations</p>
VET	<p>Vocational Education and Training</p>

5. Associated Information

Related Legislation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • National Vocational Education and Training Regulator Act 2011 • Standards for RTO's 2015 • National Code of Practice for Providers of Education and Training to Overseas Students 2018 • National ELICOS Standards 2018
Date Endorsed	12 th July 2019
Date of Effect	12 th July 2019
Date of Review	
Endorser Authority	UNEP Board of Directors
Approval Authority	CEO – UNE Partnerships
Document Administrator	Director of Education

Change History

Version Control	Version 1
Approving Body	
Change Summary	



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