

Program and Course Review Processes

February 2019

Program and Course Review Processes

RMIT University

Objective

These processes support the [Program and course policy](#). They set detailed guidelines for program and course review and are intended for all staff with responsibility for these activities.

Scope

All programs and courses offered by RMIT Group institutions, except secondary education programs (VCE and VCAL) which are designed and delivered in accordance with the requirements of the relevant secondary education authority, and non-award programs including Foundation Studies and ELICOS which are delivered in accordance with the relevant national standards.

Unless specified otherwise, all instructions in this document apply to both higher education and vocational education programs.

Note: This document is not exhaustive and advice should be sought from the relevant University groups when required.

Contents

—	Chapter 1	
	Program review and improvement.....	5
—	Chapter 2	
	Program review (Higher Education).....	5
—	Chapter 3	
	Program review (Vocational Education)	6
—	Chapter 4	
	Course review and improvement.....	6
—	Chapter 5	
	Program and course academic management.....	7
—	Chapter 6	
	Course management teams (CMT).....	8
	Responsibilities	8
	Membership	8
	Meetings and agendas.....	8
	Evidencing equivalence and comparability of academic standards in multiple locations	9
—	Chapter 7	
	Student feedback: collecting, using and reporting feedback.....	10
	Course feedback.....	10
	Program feedback.....	11
	Student feedback coordinators.....	11
	Student feedback coordinator (SFC) responsibilities.....	11
	Using feedback	11
	Reporting feedback.....	12

Chapter 8

Student feedback administration for Course Experience Surveys (CES)13

Survey administration.....	13
Survey management	13
Conducting surveys	13
Reporting of survey outcomes	14

Chapter 9

Feedback for programs delivered in conjunction with partners.....14

Chapter 10

Terms of reference for industry advisory committees15

Functions.....	15
Membership	15
Chair	16
Secretary	16
Quorum	16
Meetings.....	16
Minutes of meetings.....	16

Chapter 11

Student-staff consultative committees (SSCC)17

Appendix

Appendix A19

Equivalence and comparability of courses offered in multiple locations	19
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Chapter 1

Program review and improvement

- 1.1 Program review and improvement is aligned with the Program and Course Quality Framework. For information on program review and improvement, see [Program Quality](#). The Program and Course Quality Framework is made up of two components: program review and course review. Program review includes higher education and vocational education review processes.

Chapter 1 & 2

Chapter 2

Program review (Higher Education)

- 2.1 Higher education programs undergo a comprehensive review cycle (the program review) and an annual program review cycle.
- 2.2 Each eligible program must undertake the program review (Higher Education) at least once within a seven year cycle to meet [Higher Education Standards Framework \(Threshold Standards\)](#).
- 2.2.1 Programs that are eligible to undertake the program review (Higher Education) include the following career levels: undergraduate, postgraduate, Higher Degrees by Research, and preparatory programs: English Language Intensive courses (ELICOS) and Foundation Studies.
- 2.2.2 Programs that are excluded from undertaking the program review (Higher Education) are those that are administrative in nature: non-award (NONA career), cross-institutional enrolment, exchange, Study Abroad, VCE and inactive programs.
- 2.3 The annual program review is a strategically targeted review that ensures continuous program monitoring.
- 2.3.1 Colleges and RMIT Vietnam manage the annual review process for their respective programs and provide an annual report to Quality Board.
- 2.3.2 The outcomes of the program review cycle are noted by the Academic Board.
- 2.4 For information on program review processes, see [Program Quality](#).

Chapter 3

Program review (Vocational Education)

- 3.1 The vocational education program review process will comprise a planning, implementation, monitoring and reporting cycle across four quality assurance templates:
 - 3.1.1 Training and Assessment Strategy
 - 3.1.2 Assessment Tool
 - 3.1.3 Validation Tool
 - 3.1.4 Staff Qualifications Matrix.
- 3.2 These activities will then lead to further development and enhancement activities and support compliance with the [Standards for RTOs 2015](#) and the Victorian VET Funding Contract.
 - 3.2.1 The Victorian VET Funding Contract is updated annually. Contact OEDVE for the current contract.

Chapter 3 & 4

Chapter 4

Course review and improvement

- 4.1 Course review includes the annual course review process.
- 4.2 The colleges and RMIT Vietnam manage the annual course review process for their respective courses.
- 4.3 The colleges and RMIT Vietnam will report the outcomes of the annual course review process to Quality Board.

Program and course academic management

- 5.1 Each program has a program manager. For research programs the manager is the senior academic with HDR responsibilities in the school.
- 5.2 Each coursework course has a course coordinator.
- 5.3 Each coursework course offering has a course offering coordinator.
- 5.4 In vocational education programs, a program coordinator or program manager may coordinate all courses.
- 5.5 Where the same course is offered at multiple locations or via multiple delivery modes in the same year, the school/college/centre that manages the course designates one of the course coordinators as the lead course coordinator.
 - 5.5.1 The lead course coordinator is responsible for convening the course management team to ensure equivalence and comparability of assessment in the various offerings.
- 5.6 Each school has a deputy dean/associate dean/head of school, learning and teaching/discipline (or equivalent) who is responsible for leading academic management and quality assurance of coursework programs and courses managed by the school.
- 5.7 Each school has a deputy dean/associate dean/head of school, research and innovation/discipline, who is responsible for leading academic management and quality assurance of research programs and courses managed by the school.
- 5.8 Each campus outside Australia has a vice-president (academic) who is responsible for leading academic management and quality assurance of coursework programs and courses managed by the campus.
- 5.9 Schools, colleges and campuses outside Australia may strengthen academic management and quality assurance of programs and courses with positions to lead disciplines, or to lead groups of programs across the college.

Course management teams (CMT)

- 6.1 A course management team (CMT) must be formed for all courses offered in multiple locations, through multiple delivery modes and where more than one person is responsible for teaching and/or assessing the students on the course.

Responsibilities

- 6.2 The responsibilities of the CMT are:
- 6.2.1 to assist the course coordinator deliver the course
 - 6.2.2 to evidence that the learning outcomes of the courses are met in all locations
 - 6.2.3 to foster collaboration in course design and assessment, collegiality, team building and inclusion
 - 6.2.4 to ensure the standards of the learning outcomes are equivalent and comparable for every offering.

Membership

- 6.3 The members of the course management team will be:
- 6.3.1 the course coordinator (convenor)
 - 6.3.2 those responsible to lead the delivery of the course in other locations
 - 6.3.3 other academic and teaching staff responsible for teaching and/or assessment in the course at the invitation of the course coordinator.

Meetings and agendas

- 6.4 The CMT will meet (virtually or face-to-face) at least twice a year.
- 6.5 All or part of the [reporting template](#) should be used by the course coordinator to request information from the course teams in each location.
- 6.6 The CMT discussion should include consideration of:
- 6.6.1 course content
 - 6.6.2 internationalisation
 - 6.6.3 learning resources
 - 6.6.4 course delivery
 - 6.6.5 assessment
 - 6.6.6 final results
 - 6.6.7 student satisfaction.

- 6.7 The agenda of the CMT meetings will include consideration at the appropriate time in the academic calendar of:
 - 6.7.1 CES data for all offerings of the course
 - 6.7.2 grade distributions for all offerings of the course
 - 6.7.3 feedback from Course Assessment Committee meetings
 - 6.7.4 SSCC feedback
 - 6.7.5 advice from the relevant Library liaison staff
 - 6.7.6 improvements to the courses as reflected in the content of the Part A Course Guide and all Part B Course Guides.
- 6.8 The outcome of the CMT meetings will be provided to the relevant deputy/executive dean/head of school and program managers, including:
 - 6.8.1 a brief report evidencing equivalence and comparability of learning outcomes of the course in all locations.
 - 6.8.2 an action sheet of improvements to be made to address any issues emerging from the CMT meeting.

Evidencing equivalence and comparability of academic standards in multiple locations

- 6.9 Programs and courses must be of an equivalent and comparable academic standard wherever and however they are delivered.
- 6.10 The equivalence and comparability framework (see [Appendix A](#)) comprises factors that define equivalence and comparability of different offerings of programs.
 - 6.10.1 The framework should be used to identify the factors to demonstrate equivalence and comparability of academic standards in different programs offerings.
- 6.11 The factors that ensure academic standards are equivalent are evidenced through compliance with relevant strategic directions, policies, procedures and guidelines and external QA frameworks including HESF and ASQA.
- 6.12 Comparability allows for contextualisation and customisation to take account of local factors and to meet the needs of specific student cohorts.
- 6.13 Customisation aligns the learning design of a course offering and the media used for presentation of materials with the students' profile to promote effective learning.
- 6.14 Further resources available:
 - 6.14.1 [Implementing and adapting a strategic framework to achieve equivalence and comparability in RMIT University transnational offerings.](#)
 - 6.14.2 [Equivalence and comparability.](#)
 - 6.14.3 [Future-proofing RMIT's global reach by promoting equivalence in onshore and offshore learning.](#)

Student feedback: collecting, using and reporting feedback

- 7.1 The student feedback processes described here are applicable to:
 - 7.1.1 all RMIT accredited coursework programs and courses
 - 7.1.2 nationally recognised training package qualifications, skill sets and accredited courses
 - 7.1.3 customised delivery of education and training for enterprises
 - 7.1.4 short courses and non-award courses
 - 7.1.5 micro-credentials
 - 7.1.6 VCE and VCAL programs
 - 7.1.7 HDR programs.
- 7.2 Student feedback is defined as any judgments and opinions formed by students regarding their experience of RMIT and expressed through formal mechanisms such as program and course level surveys, student-staff consultative committees, or informal mechanisms such as focus groups, other methods of local data collection and monitoring social media.
- 7.3 The following RMIT surveys are the standard internal instruments for capturing student feedback about course, program and broader University experience:
 - 7.3.1 Course Experience Survey (CES): designed to capture feedback about students' learning experiences within a particular course.
 - 7.3.2 Student Experience Survey (SES): designed to capture feedback from undergraduate and postgraduate by coursework and vocational education students regarding their program experience and broader University experience including services and facilities.
- 7.4 Other forms of feedback, including social media, may be collected or monitored to inform local improvement planning activities.
- 7.5 The systematic collection, use and reporting of student feedback is performed in order to monitor and improve the quality of the student experience.
- 7.6 Student feedback should be linked with the development of improvement plans for individuals, programs, schools and service groups.
- 7.7 The dean/head of school and relevant service area directors/managers are responsible for ensuring that relevant student feedback is systematically collected and used in their area.

Course feedback

- 7.8 Staff will seek student feedback in all locations in a form that can be captured, analysed and reported every time a course is delivered, where appropriate. The Learning Analytics team may approve clustering of courses or units for survey purposes. It is expected that the standard RMIT survey instruments will be used.
- 7.9 Where the standard survey instrument is inappropriate for specific delivery modes (e.g. non-classroom based) or the needs of specific student cohorts (e.g. ESL students) alternative student feedback mechanisms may be deployed.
- 7.10 Where a non-standard survey instrument is used to collect feedback, approval must be sought from the Learning Analytics team before it can be used.
- 7.11 Where appropriate, Learning Analytics will seek further consultation for ethical, compliance and privacy issues that may arise through use of non-standard survey instruments. Stakeholders for consultation may include Research Integrity, Governance and Systems and CRR.

Program feedback

- 7.12 All students will have the opportunity to provide program level feedback.
- 7.13 Formal program level surveying will be conducted in accordance with an annual schedule.
- 7.14 Program level surveying will include questions regarding students' experience of learning and teaching together with questions relating to the broader University experience.
- 7.15 All coursework programs will use student-staff consultative committees to discuss program level feedback on a regular basis.

Student feedback coordinators

- 7.16 Each school is to appoint a student feedback coordinator (SFC).
- 7.17 The Learning Analytics team will liaise with partners to identify a local contact for student feedback administration as the SFC equivalent.
- 7.18 SFCs work with the Learning Analytics team and their own school's support staff in the administration of the online CES and the online SES for all courses and programs in all locations.

Student feedback coordinator (SFC) responsibilities

- 7.19 The responsibilities of SFCs and relevant campus and partner equivalents are:
 - 7.19.1 promotion of RMIT student feedback processes and goals to staff in the school, including partners
 - 7.19.2 attendance at Learning Analytics forums as required
 - 7.19.3 completion and validation of a pre-populated data spreadsheet, distributed by Learning Analytics, of eligible courses to be surveyed within each school
 - 7.19.4 acting as the central point in communicating survey processes to school staff
 - 7.19.5 responding to queries from school staff regarding the surveying process
 - 7.19.6 communicating any reporting errors that are known after reports are distributed to teachers, maintaining a spreadsheet listing these errors and providing it to Learning Analytics when requested
- 7.20 The SFCs are required to provide the following information:
 - 7.20.1 confirmation of which courses are to be surveyed
 - 7.20.2 the names and e numbers of the teaching staff and the course coordinator, or equivalent position
 - 7.20.3 identification of courses that require optional questions added to the survey
 - 7.20.4 which courses within a cluster of courses are to be surveyed.

Using feedback

- 7.21 Student Feedback will be used to:
 - 7.21.1 Improve the quality of programs and courses through the development of annual improvement plans.
 - 7.21.2 Support the scholarship of learning and teaching.
 - 7.21.3 Inform professional development programs.
 - 7.21.4 Enhance program and course design and the connection between courses in a program.
 - 7.21.5 Improve the provision of learning resources, facilities, equipment and services through the development of annual improvement plans.

- 7.22 Student feedback will be used by:
- 7.22.1 course and program teams for improvement planning and the identification of professional development requirements to be incorporated into individual/team-based workplans
 - 7.22.2 staff to support applications for promotions, probation procedures, teaching awards, applications for professional development activities and conferences or other leave associated with teaching
 - 7.22.3 program managers and course coordinators to ensure that students receive timely feedback on the results of their student feedback, and any action taken to address issues raised in student evaluation results
 - 7.22.4 directors of central administrative units to set priorities for improvement of facilities and administrative and student services
 - 7.22.5 individual staff and staff with designated responsibility for improving the student experience and outcomes.

Reporting feedback

- 7.23 Students will be informed of the changes made in response to their feedback through appropriate communication channels.
- 7.24 Results of course and program level student surveys, aggregated to school, college and University level, will be made public for the purposes of benchmarking and quality assurance.
- 7.25 The Learning Analytics team will distribute relevant feedback reports to individual staff and to staff with designated responsibility for improving the student experience and outcomes such as course coordinators, program managers, school heads/deans, and deputy heads/deans, discipline deputy heads/deans, PVCs, deputy PVCs and Dean L&T (or equivalent).
- 7.26 Aggregated data by college, school and University is published to the [Learning Analytics team website](#).
- 7.27 Heads/deans of school receive all relevant individual course reports and aggregated reports within three weeks of the end of the relevant teaching period.

Student feedback administration for Course Experience Surveys (CES)

- 8.1 These instructions provide academic and teaching staff with processes for conducting the Course Experience Survey (CES).

Survey administration

- 8.2 Academic and teaching staff are advised that student feedback is to be captured and reported every time a course is delivered and that the standard CES is to be used.
- 8.3 Learning Analytics prepares a survey calendar in consultation with colleges and global campuses.
- 8.4 Learning Analytics develops and distributes in a timely manner via student feedback coordinators or the relevant campus office:
- 8.4.1 instructions for administration of the CES
 - 8.4.2 school/course/campus data indicating courses, class groups, enrolments and teaching allocations
 - 8.4.3 instructions for addition of local/additional items to the standard CES questions
 - 8.4.4 timelines for reporting of survey outcomes.
- 8.5 On request, the Director Learning Analytics will support University stakeholders to develop student feedback instruments suited to specific delivery modes (e.g. non-classroom based) or the needs of specific student cohorts (e.g. culturally and linguistically diverse students) that can be used across the University.

Survey management

- 8.6 All surveys are to be administered online where this is available and culturally appropriate. The administration will be conducted as per survey calendar.
- 8.7 Learning Analytics conducts data analysis, processes and disseminates results in July and December each year.

Conducting surveys

- 8.8 All students shall have the opportunity to complete the CES in class, where appropriate. Staff will promote the CES in their classes and will allocate time for students to complete the CES.
- 8.9 Staff should advise students of the opportunity to complete the CES using their mobile device e.g. smartphone or tablet.
- 8.10 The relevant staff member advises students that they can access the CES by logging into myRMIT and clicking on the prompt which will direct students to their relevant surveys (where implemented on campus).
- 8.10.1 Students can complete the survey on any mobile device.
- 8.11 Teaching staff will advise students to complete the CES for the class/es that they are attending as a priority.
- 8.12 Learning Analytics will provide advice and support to schools on increasing survey response rates.

Reporting of survey outcomes

- 8.13 The Learning Analytics team provides course reports to relevant staff with responsibility for improving the student experience.
- 8.14 Where reports require corrections, the relevant student feedback coordinator will maintain a spreadsheet of such corrections. Each semester the Learning Analytics team will call for these, obtain approval for amendments by the relevant deputy head/deputy dean, learning and teaching and will process the amendments in bulk.
- 8.15 Aggregated reports are published on the [website](#).

Chapter 9

Feedback for programs delivered in conjunction with partners

- 9.1 Appropriate feedback processes and calendars are endorsed by the D/PVCs L&T and appropriate personnel from partner organisations.
- 9.2 Student feedback instruments are negotiated with partners at the time of negotiating the contract, and amended during the contract term as agreed, to ensure that:
 - 9.2.1 contractual obligations in relation to student feedback are considered and met
 - 9.2.2 student feedback procedures already in place by partner institutions are considered
 - 9.2.3 the type and conduct of student feedback is appropriate given the cultural context of delivery
 - 9.2.4 the use of student feedback results is aligned with RMIT's and partner institutions' student feedback policies
 - 9.2.5 outcomes from student feedback are communicated to students and partners
 - 9.2.6 regular monitoring of improvements occurs.
- 9.3 Global Development and Performance and the school partner manager, in conjunction with the dean L&T, deputy PVCs L&T and Director, Learning Analytics are responsible for consultation, development and implementation of partner feedback processes.

Terms of reference for industry advisory committees

Functions

- 10.1 The committee considers and advises the University on matters associated with the development, delivery and assessment of vocational education and higher education programs.
- 10.2 Normally, the committee reports to the head of school responsible for the program. Where appropriate, formal reports are forwarded to EIQC or other relevant committees of the college or University.
- 10.3 The Industry Advisory Committee assists in the development of detailed program submissions for new and reviewed programs, in particular:
 - 10.3.1 recommendations on proposed program developments
 - 10.3.2 student demand and the community need for the program
 - 10.3.3 likely employment opportunities for graduates of the program
 - 10.3.4 the extent to which the program offered meets its stated aims and objectives
 - 10.3.5 advises on key relationships among RMIT, employers and the profession
 - 10.3.6 considers the resources required for program delivery
 - 10.3.7 supports the accreditation and re-accreditation of RMIT programs by external bodies
 - 10.3.8 advises on research and development activities and relevant consultation with external bodies.
- 10.4 For vocational education programs the committee reviews and approves the training and assessment strategy for each program cohort.

Note: this activity is not sufficient to cover 'industry engagement' as required by the standards.

Membership

- 10.5 Members are appointed on the basis of their knowledge and expertise in the area. Members are not formally appointed as representatives of professional bodies or other institutions.
- 10.6 Committee members are appointed by the college executive on the recommendation of the head of school.
- 10.7 The suggested minimum number of members is nine.
- 10.8 Two thirds of the members are external to the University.
- 10.9 The term of appointment is two years, for two terms only. Memberships exceeding the four year maximum are subject to approval by the DPVC L&T.
- 10.10 The head of school and program leaders are ex-officio members of the advisory committee.
- 10.11 The school maintains an accurate and current record of office of Industry Advisory Committee members.
 - 10.11.1 These records may from time to time need to be made available to the University for various purposes.

Chair

10.12 The chair and the deputy chair of the committee are external members appointed by the college executive on the recommendation of the head of school.

Secretary

10.13 The secretary of the committee is appointed by the college executive/head of school.

Quorum

10.14 The attendance of half the external members of the committee will constitute a quorum.

Meetings

10.15 The committee will meet at least once per semester.

Minutes of meetings

10.16 Minutes of the meetings will be provided to the college board.

Student-staff consultative committees (SSCC)

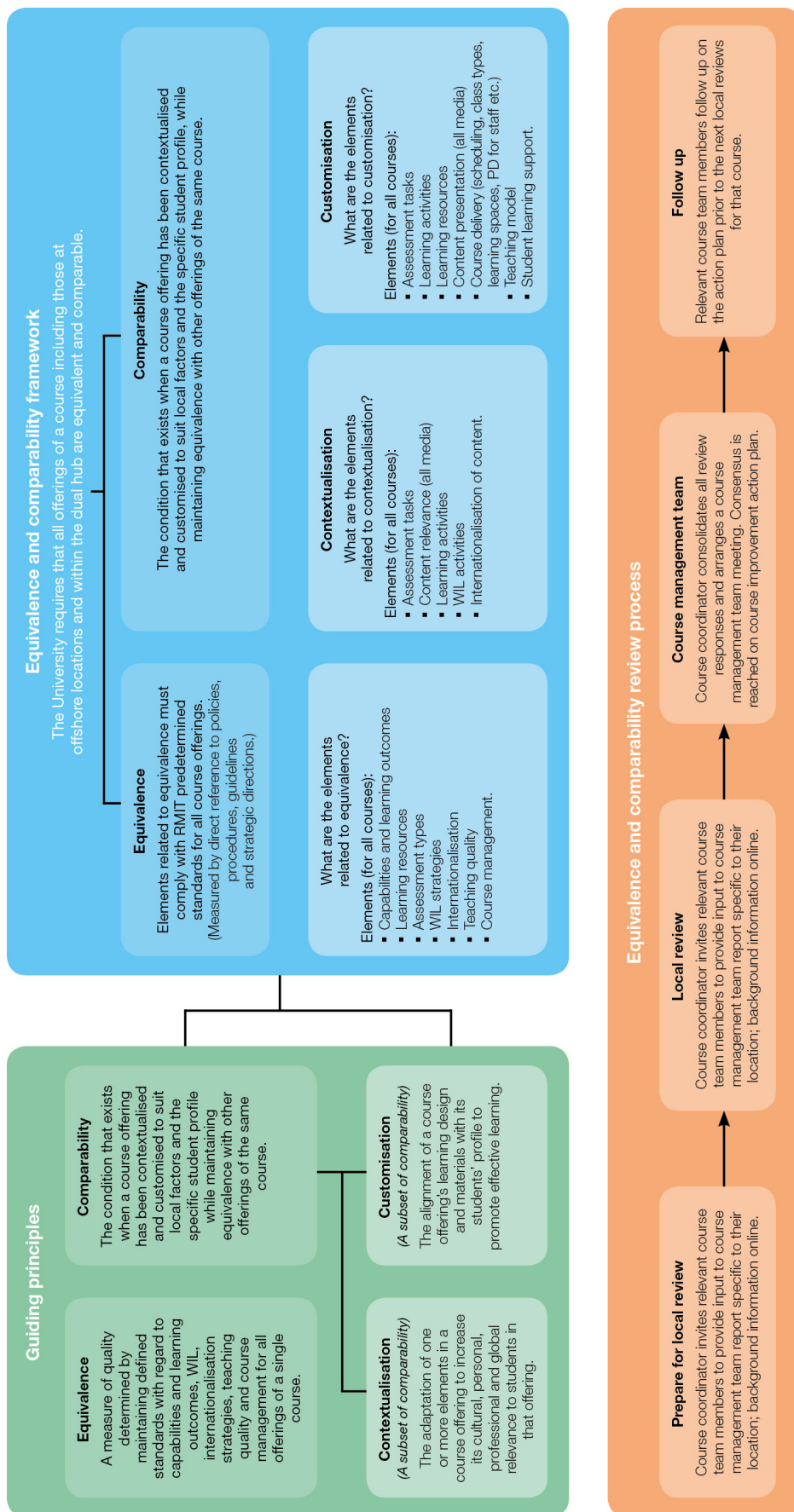
- 11.1 Students in coursework programs are invited to volunteer to be student representatives at the start of the teaching year. This invitation is given in the first session of a core course in each year level of the program.
 - 11.1.1 The program manager and course coordinator explain the purpose of student-staff consultative committees (SSCCs), the benefits for student representatives on SSCCs in building employability skills, the availability of the RMIT LEAD training for student representatives and that students other than the student representatives are welcome to attend SSCC meetings as observers.
 - 11.1.2 As far as possible, staff ensure that volunteers comprise a representative sample: for example, a mix of genders, domestic and international students. A sufficient number of students should be encouraged to volunteer to ensure that student numbers at least match those of staff at the student feedback meetings.
 - 11.1.3 If the program is delivered largely online, an electronic request for volunteers to be representative can be sent to students, explaining the purpose of SSCCs, benefits of serving as a student representative and availability of RMIT LEAD training for student representatives.
- 11.2 Where the program is delivered intensively, a single SSCC meeting should be held during the delivery.
- 11.3 If the program requires regular on-campus attendance, the SSCC will meet face-to-face. Where, however, delivery is mainly online, the meeting can be held as a real-time virtual meeting.
- 11.4 It is preferable that staff members of the SSCC do not outnumber student representatives and that staff participate in the meeting in such a way that student representatives feel supported to raise issues. If student representatives do not attend SSCC meetings, staff members of the SSCC may seek further student representative volunteers to fill their place.
- 11.5 The meeting follows formal meeting procedure as this supports development of students' employability skills by familiarising them with meeting procedure.
 - 11.5.1 An agenda is circulated to all students in the program at least three working days in advance of the meeting. The student feedback meeting issues/actions log is attached to the agenda.
 - 11.5.2 The SSCC meeting receives data from the most recent student surveys and graduate destination surveys, reports of issues raised via online student feedback mechanisms and actions taken to address these, and the minutes of the relevant industry advisory committee, as they become available.
- 11.6 The first SSCC meeting of the semester or teaching period elects a chair and deputy chair.
- 11.7 Students in the program other than those who have volunteered to be representatives are welcome to attend as observers, and may request and receive speaking rights.
- 11.8 SSCC meetings concentrate on suggesting improvements to the student experience of learning and teaching in programs including feedback on facilities, information technology and administration.
- 11.9 Student representatives and staff are expected to support one another to frame and respond to feedback respectfully and constructively.
- 11.10 To maximise the employability skills benefit for student representatives, staff participating in the meetings are encouraged to establish a mentoring relationship with student representatives, offering them constructive feedback on their participation in the meetings and performance in their role.

- 11.11 Issues raised by student representatives at the meeting are recorded in the SSCC issues/actions log template. The issues/actions log includes all issues raised in the SSCC to date and actions to resolve them. This enables the SSCC to be aware of issues raised previously and progress with resolving them.
- 11.12 Agendas and minutes of the meeting, using the SSCCs minutes template and the issues/actions log, are made available to all students and teaching staff in the program via Google Drive. Publication of agendas, minutes and the updated issues/actions log are announced to all students in the program, with the URL of the Drive folder.
- 11.13 Careers and Employability ensures that training for student representatives is provided, including face-to-face training at the start of each Melbourne semester.

Chapter 11

Appendix A

Equivalence and comparability of courses offered in multiple locations



Appendix

