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1 ESTABLISHMENT

External review panels (hereafter ‘the Panel’) are established to review and quality assure the activities of, and performance and outcomes achieved by, schools in the Tertiary Education Division. These Panels will provide a report based on their review findings to Academic Board.

2 FUNCTIONS AND RESPONSIBILITIES

The Panel’s functions and responsibilities are to undertake comprehensive reviews of schools in accordance with these terms of reference. These reviews will:

- 2.1 Be undertaken in the context of the University as a whole, with a focus on the school’s current performance and capacity to meet the University’s strategic and future needs.
- 2.2 Be undertaken in relation to each school every five years or at the discretion of the Vice-President (Academic).
- 2.3 Seek to:
 - a) examine the performance and future plans of the school, and any improvements made since its previous review
 - b) benchmark the school’s current structures, activities, data and performance, nationally and internationally wherever possible
 - c) identify potential opportunities and make recommendations on the school’s future direction including but not limited to strategic alignment and compliance with the University’s requirements, and
 - d) review the school’s leadership and planning, including budget, people, culture and overall management.
- 2.4 Focus on the following areas, in the context of current and anticipated future developments in the school’s constituent disciplines where relevant:

- a) management and governance, including academic leadership, structure, staffing profiles, professional accreditation requirements, planning and budget management, space and facilities, practices and processes such as compliance with relevant legislation, and the use of feedback from employees and students for continuous improvement
 - b) learning and teaching, including:
 - student success: enrolment trends, attrition rates, completion rates and times, pass rates and student grades, and student satisfaction, by delivery location
 - the efficacy of the school's activities promoting, monitoring and assuring academic employee learning and teaching and discipline scholarship
 - the management of professional accreditation activities, and
 - other learning and teaching related expectations (e.g. course alignment with the [Curriculum Blueprint](#) where relevant, minimal exams)
 - c) research, including publications, income, research higher degree student load and completions, collaborations and ERA¹ outcomes
 - d) engagement and social innovation, including employee awards, education and research partnerships including global connections, engagement with relevant external organisations, alumni-related activities, promotional and outreach activities, and externally funded scholarships and prizes
 - e) scholarship and scholarly activity, and vocational currency assurance systems/processes, including school strategies and activities to promote and support participation, and systems and processes to monitor and maintain compliance, and
 - f) implementation of recommendations arising from previous reviews of the school.
- 2.5 Consider school self-review reports, which are expected to include data and information as outlined in [Appendix A – Self-review report](#), be informed by interviews with relevant stakeholders, and take into account the University's resources, vision and strategic goals.
- 2.6 Adopt a review methodology that includes:
- a) focus on standards, evidence and outcomes
 - b) benchmarking of current structures, activities and performance of the school against appropriate comparable organisations
 - c) external referencing of student success in each school's courses against comparable courses and/or fields of education,
 - d) identifying areas of excellence, potential, and initiatives in progress, and
 - e) evaluation of future opportunities in the context of the University's strategic goals, resources and planning activities, and internal and external opportunities.
- 2.7 Result in a [draft review panel report](#) based on the Panel's review findings that will include commendations, recommendations, and affirmations.

The Panel will submit its report to the Dean of School and Vice-President (Academic) within one month of completing the review to allow for comment on errors of fact or emphasis. Following this, the Dean of School will submit the [response to recommendations and work plan](#) to address the panel recommendations to Academic Board within one month, or a timeframe as approved by the Vice-President (Academic).

3 REFERRAL OF MATTERS

The Panel may refer any item to the Vice-President (Academic) for discussion, consideration and/or action, and may refer relevant matters for action or noting to other committees or officers as appropriate.

¹ 'ERA' means Excellence in Research Australia (Australia's national research evaluation framework).

4 MEMBERSHIP AND TERMS OF OFFICE

The overall composition of the Panel should aim to provide as broad a coverage as possible of all major disciplines in the school.

The Panel's membership will comprise:

- at least three, not more than four, external members with nationally/internationally recognised expertise from relevant disciplines or professional fields
- one CQUniversity Dean of School from a different discipline, and
- where applicable, at least one, not more than two, representatives of the relevant professions or employer groups.

Panel membership will include vocational education and training (VET) representation where relevant.

The term of office for Panel members will be the duration of the review process, concluding with the Panel's submission of its final report of review findings.

5 RIGHTS OF AUDIENCE AND DEBATE

The Panel may extend rights of audience and debate on either a standing or ad hoc basis. Attendees with rights of audience and debate may participate in meetings, but have no voting rights.

6 CHAIR

The Vice-President (Academic) will appoint the Chair, who will be one of the Panel members.

7 SECRETARY

The Vice-President (Academic) (or nominee) shall nominate the Secretary.

8 QUORUM

The quorum for a panel meeting will be 100 per cent of the membership.

Where a loss of quorum is identified, the meeting may be adjourned until a time the Chair determines.

9 CONFLICT OF INTEREST

Members are required to declare to the Chair any real, perceived or potential conflict of interest they may have with any item on the agenda.

If the Chair or Panel deems a member to have a conflict of interest in a matter before the Panel, the member will be excused from Panel discussions and deliberations on that matter.

Further details on identifying and dealing with a conflict of interest are provided in the [Conflict of Interest Policy and Procedure](#).

10 MEETINGS

Panel meetings may be held face-to face, by telephone, videoconference, or other electronic means.

Panel members are required to fully prepare for each meeting, read the documentation in advance, and to make every reasonable effort to attend each meeting.

11 ACCESS TO RESOURCES

Panel members will be provided with access to any resources reasonably required to fulfil their duties as a Panel member.

12 REVIEW DOCUMENTATION

Documentation will be distributed to Panel members at least two, preferably three weeks before the review, via email.

Panel records are subject to the Queensland [Public Records Act 2002](#) and must be retained by the Secretary in accordance with the University's [Records Management Policy and Procedure](#). Responsibility for ensuring appropriate records management for the Panel rests with the Secretary under the direction of the Panel's Chair.

13 FEEDBACK

Feedback about this document can be emailed to policy@cqu.edu.au.

14 APPROVAL AND REVIEW DETAILS

Approval and Review	Details
Approval Authority	Academic Board
Delegated Approval Authority	N/A
Advisory Committee	N/A
Required consultation	N/A
Administrator	Director Educational Quality and Integrity
Next Review Date	20/07/2024

Approval and Amendment History	Details
Original Approval Authority and Date	Academic Board 29/03/2017
Amendment Authority and Date	Learning and Teaching Committee 14/11/2018; Acting Provost 17/01/2019; Editorial amendment 04/01/2021; Director Educational Quality and Integrity 20/07/2021.
Notes	This document replaced the External Review Panel Membership for the Review of Schools and Academic Units Terms of Reference (12/08/2015). This document was formerly known as the Review of Schools by External Review Panel Terms of Reference (29/03/2017) and the School Review External Panel Terms of Reference (14/11/2018).

15 Appendix A – Self-review report

It is recommended that the self-review report includes data and information on the following areas, as well as information about the implementation of recommendations arising from previous reviews of the school, as applicable):

1. Executive Summary

2. Management and Governance

The overview of the school's management and governance will include comment on the following aspects in relation to the previous 12 months and into the future:

- the school's academic governance arrangements, including committee roles, student participation on committees, internal quality assurance, risk management, and compliance measures
- suitability of the school/college structure and academic leadership profile
- suitability of the school's staffing profile (level, qualifications, employee workload) and for units taught and student to employee ratios
- workforce matters including employee recruitment planning and retention, culture, and an overview of the school's performance review process
- professional accreditation requirements of courses offered by the school, including details of the oversight, management and current status of courses with professional accreditation, with particular regard to professional practice accreditation
- planning and budget management in relation to the past 12 months and into the future
- suitability of the school's physical resources (e.g. space, information technology infrastructure)
- the school's contribution to Indigenous engagement in curriculum and employment
- feedback from students, employees and other stakeholders; the management of complaints or grievances from students or employees; and the effectiveness of student and employee support mechanisms
- effectiveness of VET–higher education integration operations
- review and improvement activities aligned with the [Higher Education Standards Framework \(Threshold Standards\) 2021](#) (HESF) and the [Standards for Registered Training Organisations 2015](#) requirements.

3. Learning and Teaching

Analysis of the school's learning and teaching performance will include:

- a brief overview of the strategic context of learning and teaching within the school
- effectiveness of learning and teaching governance, including consideration of course committee, course reference committee and discipline meeting minutes
- reviewing learning and teaching leadership, including the school's planning and priorities, and course and unit management
- reviewing learning and teaching outcomes, including previous school reviews, course reviews, unit feedback, professional accreditation of courses, student experience, graduate outcomes, QILT² data, and employee feedback
- reviewing learning and teaching performance, including enrolments, retention/attrition, completions and completion times, pass rates and student grades, student experience, graduate outcomes, employee feedback and Learning and Teaching Grant outcomes
- comparing learning and teaching performance across campuses and study centres/hubs
- alignment with the HESF and RTO Standards' requirements, and
- compliance with other learning and teaching related expectations (e.g. alignment of courses with the Curriculum Blueprint, minimal exams).

² 'QILT' means Quality Indicators in Learning and Teaching ([QILT website](#)).

Data on enrolment trends, attrition rates, pass rates and grades, completion rates and times, student and graduate satisfaction by course can be included at the end of the report as appendices. The appendices will not count towards the 50-page report limit.

4. Research

Analysis of the school's research performance will include, but not necessarily be limited to:

- the strategic planning to decide support the school's research focus areas
- the school's research governance
- the school's support of its research institutes and centres, and their engagement with the school's research focus areas
- research output achievements and their contribution to the University's research key performance indicators in the following areas:
 - research publications, including citation data
 - research excellence (e.g. ERA outcomes)
 - research income generated by the school, by HERDC³ category
 - research higher degree student load and completions, by course (separated into high-cost and low-cost), domestic or fee-paying and Indigenous candidates
 - research collaborations locally, nationally, and internationally
- Research outcome achievements including:
 - evidence of research impact (social, economic, environmental, cultural changes beyond academia)
 - research awards, prizes, other achievements, and
- alignment with HESF requirements, including Category Standards' requirements regarding research and scholarly activity.

5. Engagement and Social Innovation

Engagement and social innovation should be evident throughout the school's learning and teaching, research and innovation, and service activities, with a clear link to their strategic or operational objectives. These activities should also align with HESF requirements for universities (see Category Standards).

Engagement activities included in the report should involve mutually beneficial partnerships or collaborations between school employees and internal as well as external stakeholders, including global connections. These activities may be evidenced through a report produced from the University's engagement database, E-DNA, and may include, as an example:

- an employee serving on an external organisation's board or committee
- personnel from an external organisation being involved in the school or unit's activities, including serving on advisory committees
- mutually beneficial relationships with professional accrediting organisations and government agencies, business, or industry
- social innovation projects
- alumni-related activities, and
- outreach activities.

6. Scholarship, scholarly activity, and vocational currency assurance systems/processes:

- school activities to promote and support teaching skills in contemporary teaching, learning and assessment principles and practices in tertiary education
- school activities to promote and support employee scholarly activity within the discipline in which they teach

³ HERDC means Higher Education Research Data Collection

- school strategies for ensuring that employees are skilled in contemporary teaching, learning and assessment principles relevant to their discipline, their tertiary education sector, their role, the modes of delivery in which they teach and the needs of particular student cohorts within their courses
- school strategies, systems, and processes for monitoring employee outcomes and maintaining compliance regarding the scholarship of learning and teaching/vocational education currency, and disciplinary scholarship /industry currency (applicable to VET or higher education teaching), and
- alignment with HESF requirements, including Category Standards' requirements regarding research and scholarly activity, and RTO Standards' requirements.