

1. POLICY STATUS AND DETAILS

Policy Number	AC12
Approving Authority	Board of Directors
Date Implemented	September 2012
Current Version	December 2024
Date of Review	July 2026
Contact Officer	Director Learning and Innovation
Related Policies, Procedures and Documents	Assessment Policy Course Regulations Credit Point and Workload Policy NIDA Strategic Plan Course Review Schedule Re-accreditation Calendar Learner Engagement Questionnaires (LEQ)

2. DEFINITIONS

Term	Definition
Academic Board	A standing committee of NIDA's Board of Directors it is the principal academic authority in the governance structure. Its purpose is to provide oversight of the educational and scholarly activities of NIDA
Accreditation	This is the process by which NIDA plans and develops a course and assigns credit to named awards in accordance with the Australian Qualifications Framework (AQF).
Re-Accreditation	This is the process by which NIDA undertakes a full review of a current course and makes improvements and changes to ensure it continues to deliver quality and valid learning opportunities for students and meets regulatory requirements.
Accreditation Cycle	The period for which a course is accredited for delivery by NIDA and the associated review cycle as set out in relevant regulatory requirements stipulated by TEQSA (NIDA's HE Programs) and ASQA (NIDA's Diploma and Certificate Programs) .

Assessment	A process to determine a student's achievement of identified learning outcomes and may include a range of written and oral methods and practice or demonstration.
Australian Qualifications Framework (AQF)	The AQF is the national policy for regulated qualifications in Australian education and training.
Benchmarking	A means by which an entity can: • demonstrate accountability to stakeholders, • improve networking and collaborative relationship, • generate management information, • develop an increased understanding of practice, process or performance, • garner insights into how improvements might be made.
Course Business Case	A document outlining the market, describes the value to NIDA and industry and provides a budget and scope for the development and delivery of the course or the change being proposed for consideration by NIDA's Board of Directors.
Closure	An administrative response when all students have exited a terminated program.
Course	An approved and structured accredited program of study leading to a named award
Course Modification	These are changes that are proposed to be made to a current course. They can be major or minor in nature.
Course Development	A process of iterative and collaborative construction of course Learning and Teaching Strategies and learning resources based on approved course designs for accredited courses, and in preparation for subject delivery
Course Review	The process of reviewing the structure, course aims, subject outcomes, content and assessments in the context of data available about student progress, student satisfaction, needs of the profession and best practice in teaching and learning, in order to ensure that the course meets Higher Education Standards, NIDA Graduate Attributes and industry requirements where relevant
Course Structure	The choice of topics, organization, and sequencing of course content as well as the mode of delivery.
Course Advisory Groups	A body formed by the Director of Learning and Innovation approved by NIDA's Education Committee to ensure that courses have current relevancy considering, perspectives from academic/teaching staff, employers, academic peers and current practitioners and industry representatives.
Credit Point	A measure of the relative quantitative contribution of each subject to a course.
Disestablishment	The closure of a course, a process which is divided into three stages: suspension, termination, and closure.
Education Committee	A standing committee of the NIDA Academic Board its purpose is to develop academic initiatives in support of NIDA's Strategic Plan and direct, guide and monitor the educational, research and scholarly activities; devise education policy and procedures; and support academic governance processes of NIDA.

Graduate Attributes	A predefined set of skills and knowledge that a student graduating from a particular AQF level program at NIDA is expected to have gained through the course of their studies.
Major Modification (to a course)	Generally, changes made at the course level, including but not limited to credit points, assessment weightings, learning outcomes and course length, requiring approval by the Academic Board.
Minor Modification (to a course)	A minor change, approved by the Director of Learning and Innovation to a course that does not significantly affect the course or student outcomes.
Suspension	A decision that there be no intake into a course for a specified period.
Teach-out	A Teach-out Plan is the means by which currently enrolled students are able to complete their studies in a course that is being discontinued. A Teach-out Plan must be offered to currently enrolled students who have not opted to be transitioned to another course.
Termination	A permanent decision to enrol no new students in a course.
Transition Plan	A Transition Plan is the means by which currently enrolled students may be transferred to another course or course component to complete their studies.

3. SCOPE OF POLICY

This policy applies to the approval, accreditation, monitoring and review and improvement of all accredited NIDA courses.

Undergraduate Courses (BFAs)	Postgraduate Courses (MFAs)	Vocational Studies
		

The NIDA Board of Directors has the responsibility to approve that courses:

- should be developed,
- should be suspended,
- discontinued,
- re-accredited,
- The NIDA Board of Directors delegates to the Academic Board the authority to approve course accreditation, reaccreditation, course reviews and amendments pursuant to the business decisions made by the Board of Directors with regards to the courses.

The Director of Learning and Innovation is responsible for presenting the Business Case component of any New Course Proposal to the Board of Directors, taking into account any financial considerations that the Board of Directors need to consider when approving course development.

The Academic Board:

- oversees all academic quality assurance and continuous improvement processes related to courses including reviews and amendments such as major modifications,
- Oversees and approves course accreditation,
- Oversees and makes recommendation to the Board of Directors on re-accreditation,
- Oversees and approves Transition and Teach-out plans as required,
- The Academic Board reviews relevant reports on course delivery and outcomes.

Course Advisory Groups, and the Education Committee are utilised for consultation purposes, including endorsement to the Academic Board.

4. PURPOSE

This policy sets out the framework for the course life cycle of NIDA's accredited courses in alignment with the Higher Education Standards Framework (Threshold Standards) 2021, including course:

- development,
- design,
- review,
- approval,
- quality and viability evaluation, and disestablishment.

5. PRINCIPLES

All courses will:

- a. reflect NIDA's strategic intent and values,
- b. reflect NIDA's education and training profile and education philosophy and aims
- c. develop and support student achievement of NIDA's Graduate attributes,
- d. comply with the relevant standards of the Higher Education Standards Framework (Threshold Standards) 2021 and the Australian Qualifications Framework (AQF); and
- e. be designed to educate, support and encourage academic integrity,

Course design will be informed by benchmarking and be responsive to student and industry needs.

NIDA is committed to a cycle of monitoring, evaluation and improvement, in order to facilitate quality assurance and continuous improvement of clear and demonstrable learning outcomes for all courses.

6. POLICY

Course Development

NIDA will develop higher education and vocational programs where there is:

- a. documented evidence of clear demand (either established or emerging) from Australian industry or the community, or
- b. the course supports NIDA's strategic plan, and
- c. where there is evidence of each of the following:
 - NIDA has or can demonstrate that it can resource the course with the teaching staff with the academic and professional expertise, the overall academic leadership, the facilities, the student academic support, pastoral care and appropriate, up-to-date and accessible learning resources and information systems required to deliver the course.
 - Alignment of the course proposal with the Higher Education Quality Framework, Higher Education Benchmarking Framework 2021, and/or the AQF.

Each new course of study proposal will be developed and presented for in principle approval by the Board of Directors. The proposal will include:

- a. an overview of the proposed course, including the level and discipline,
- b. rationale for the proposal, and
- c. case study supporting the viability of the course.

If given in principle approval by the Board of Directors, the Head of Academic Development and Research (HE) or the Deputy Director of Learning and Innovation (VET) will work with Course Leaders to develop a detailed course proposal outlining:

- a. The qualification(s) to be awarded on completion,
- b. Structure, duration and modes of delivery,
- c. The units of study (or equivalent) that comprise the course of study,
- d. Entry requirements and pathways,
- e. Expected learning outcomes, aligned with methods of assessment, methods of teaching and indicative student workload,
- f. Learning outcomes sequence of attainment mapping, including how:

- subject learning outcomes align with course learning outcomes,
 - course learning outcomes align with the relevant NIDA Graduate Attributes, and
 - course Learning outcomes align with the AQF level of the course.
- g. Benchmarking of the course against national and international comparator including discipline-related, generic, employment related and lifelong learning outcomes.
 - h. Exit pathways, articulation arrangements, pathways to further learning,
 - i. In the case of 'nested' course designs, clear entry and exit pathways, clear learning outcomes for each exit point and appropriate course design for each level,
 - j. Sample marketing material being, accurate and relevant information about the proposed course (clearly identifying qualification type, level and field of discipline) to be made available to prospective students,
 - k. Description of how the course content and learning activities evidence a level of advanced knowledge and enquiry consistent with the level of study and expected learning outcomes, including current and emerging knowledge and concepts, the theoretical framework behind the relevant academic discipline,
 - l. Feedback on the course design from industry,
 - m. Student feedback and recent graduates and alumni feedback, and
 - n. availability of the course to international students.

In developing a new course, NIDA will consult with external stakeholders such as comparable national and international education providers, industry partners and other relevant stakeholders.

Course Review and /Re-accreditation

An annual Course Review and Reaccreditation Schedule will be approved and may be varied from time to time, by the Board of Directors, on recommendation by Academic Board.

Course review requirements include the review of:

- a. content of each course of study,
- b. the expected learning outcomes,
- c. the methods for assessment of those outcomes,
- d. the extent of students' achievement of learning outcomes,
- e. modes of delivery,
- f. relevant national and international benchmarking data
- g. emerging developments in the field of education,
- h. industry needs and expectations,
- i. the changing needs of students,
- j. identified risks to the quality of the course of study, and
- k. the resources available to deliver the course as approved or accredited

Given Board of Director approval for a course to be re-accredited, responsibility for overseeing course re-accreditation approval sits with the Academic Board

Academic Board will confirm the renewed course accreditation cycle and expiry date. The period of re-accreditation is typically five years, however, may be shorter. The period of accreditation may be up to six years at the discretion of the Academic Board.

Monitoring and Continual Improvement

Mid-cycle quality assurance processes of NIDA courses will include but are not limited to Annual Course Reports, student evaluations (LEQs), external benchmarking and/or External Advisory Committee reports.

The Head of Academic Development and Research will assess the annual course reports, identifying any common themes and areas and consider actions with the Education Committee. The Education Committee will make recommendations to the Academic Board as appropriate on actions and annual thematic studies to improve course quality and the student experience. The Chair of the Academic Board, supported by the Director of Learning and Innovation will report improvements to the Board of Directors in their Board reports.

These processes may identify course modifications (both major and minor) to ensure ongoing quality improvement to the course, student experience and success of the program. Any modifications to programs will be undertaken in accordance with the Course Modification process.

Course Modifications

The Head of Academic Development and Research (HE) or the Deputy Director Learning and Innovation (VET) is responsible for working with Course Leaders to manage course modifications.

Minor Modifications to a course are to be approved by the Director Learning and Innovation. The decision is then noted by the Academic Board.

Major Modifications to a course are to be approved by the Academic Board on the recommendation of the Education Committee.

Applications for any course modification which has an impact on students must be accompanied by a Transition Plan for Continuing Students. This is to be approved by the Academic Board on the recommendation of the Education Committee.

Any Major Modifications that have a financial implication must be approved by the Board of Directors on the recommendation of the Academic Board.

Suspension and Disestablishment

The Head of Academic Development and Research (HE) or the Deputy Director of Learning and Innovation (VET) will manage the process for course suspension and disestablishment, reporting to the Education Committee. The Education Committee will make recommendations to the Academic Board including advising on any financial implications of the proposed action. Academic Board will recommend suspension or disestablishment of a course or a component of a course to the Board of Directors.

Suspension

Suspension of intake into a course or course component including any financial impacts will be approved by the Board of Directors:

- a. When NIDA plans to cease the admission of new students in a course flagged to be discontinued, but approval for discontinuation has not yet been finalised; or
- b. When NIDA does not plan to admit new students to a course for a specific or indeterminate period of time, but it plans to maintain the course as 'active' in order that it can be offered again at a later stage.

Disestablishment

The disestablishment of a course or a component must be approved by the Board of Directors on the recommendation of the Academic Board. A course or course component may be proposed for disestablishment because it has been replaced by a new course or course component, or because it is no longer viable or able to meet industry or NIDA's expectations for an accredited course.

The proposal to disestablish a course must provide details of any financial impacts arising from the propose to disestablish the course.

A proposal to disestablish a course may be initiated with or without a prior suspension stage.

The proposal to disestablish a course must be accompanied by both a Teach Out Plan and, where relevant, a Transition Plan.

A Teach-out Plan must be offered to currently enrolled students who have not opted to be transitioned to another course.

Reporting

The Director Learning and Innovation will use their report to the Board of Directors and Academic Board on changes to courses and the course life cycle.

7.CHANGE HISTORY

Date	Change Description	Reason for Change	Author	Version
January 2025	Minor Modification following Feedback from Board of Directors	To ensure that the financial implications relating to course development, suspension and disestablishment were made more explicit in the Policy	Director of Learning and Innovation	3.0
February 2024	Expansion of explanations to more closely align with the Higher Education Threshold Standards 2024 Expansion of definitions Revised template Written to include VET Courses	Policy Review and feedback from an external review Decision to update policy to cover both HE and VET Changes in	Director Learning and Innovation	3.0
	New template Minor text changes No substantive change in	Policy Review		
June 2018			Manager, Learning & Teaching	2.0
2012	New Policy			RM8 Record No.

8. CONSULTATION/BENCHMARKING

Benchmarked against policies and practice from a number of higher education providers and other sources
Relevant policy documents and statements from the following are gratefully acknowledged:

- ☐ Avondale University
- ☐ University of Wollongong
- ☐ UNSW
- ☐ Canberra Institute of Technology (CIT)

