

Approval and Accreditation of New Awards Policy

Approved by	Academic Board
Approval date	24 April 2023
Previous approval date(s)	05/12/2022, 01/11/2021
Date for Review	2028
Responsible Officer(s) and Committee(s)	Director of Academic Strategy Discipline Coordinators Committee
Related documents	Higher Education Standards Framework (2021) Credit Policy Curriculum Policy Consultant Report on New Awards New Award Proposal template
Higher Education Standards (2021)	5.1. Course Approval and Accreditation 5.3. Monitoring, Review and Improvement 5.4. Delivery with Other Parties 6.3. Academic Governance
National Code (2018)	Standard 11.1

1. Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to demonstrate Sydney College of Divinity currently has self-accrediting authority for awards in AQF levels 5-10, and in ASCED Narrow Code 0917: Philosophy and Religious Studies. This means that SCD is able to develop new courses, and undertake significant revisions of existing courses, without seeking approval from TEQSA. This also means that SCD assumes full responsibility for quality assurance in such developments and revisions, particularly that they comply with the requirements of the Higher Education Standards Framework (2021).

This policy provides guidance for the development and introduction of new awards, to ensure that they are consistent with SCD's mission and goals, and with its established policies.

2. Scope

This policy applies to all awards which are accredited by SCD.

3. Definitions

The Policy Document Glossary applies to this policy.

4. Statements and Objectives

Principles

- 4.1 SCD will continue to identify and develop new awards as part of SCD's mission and strategic plan.
- 4.2 SCD's primary purpose is to offer a broad theological education to those seeking to prepare for Christian service. SCD will however, investigate the potential for offering awards in areas of specialisation, which may address the needs of certain niches within the Christian community.
- 4.3 Approvals of new awards are given to make use of new opportunities for theological education, in response to identified needs, or to proactively further the Christian mission according to innovative strategies.
- 4.4 Approvals of new awards are based on a thorough assessment of their value in the context of theological education, and of possible risks associated with their introduction.
- 4.5 Awards offered by the Sydney College of Divinity will be of high educational quality, be sustainable, and be in line with SCD's mission, values, and goals.
- 4.6 Awards offered by the SCD will be based on sound curriculum design in line with current educational theory and practice and be consistent with SCD's Curriculum Policy.
- 4.7 Awards offered by the SCD will be subject to ongoing review as part of quality assurance and compliance with the Higher Education Standards.

Proposals for new awards

- 4.8 A proposal for a new award may be made by any SCD stakeholder who identifies the strategic importance and/or the need for a new area of theological education to be developed within the scope of the SCD, and the opportunity to do so. Such stakeholders typically include:
 - a. Approved representatives of the SCD's teaching bodies
 - b. Members of the Office of the Dean, such as the Dean, Director of Academic Strategy, Research Director
 - c. Members of the Academic Board, SCD Council or relevant committees
 - d. Others within the broader SCD network who have the position and capacity to make such proposals
- 4.9 Proposals for new awards will set out a case for acceptance that includes:
 - a. A statement of the rationale for the award, including strategic significance or need
 - b. A statement of how the proposed award will meet that rationale
 - c. A statement of how the award supports SCD's mission, goals and values
 - d. A description of the award's design (see 4.11 below)
 - e. Evidence that all possible planning issues have been, or are being, considered

- f. Evidence for the viability and sustainability of the award (e.g. Accredited Faculty; Student Numbers: Administrative Capacity)
- 4.10 Proposals for new awards will be addressed through the Director of Academic Strategy to the SCD Dean and the Discipline Coordinators Committee for consideration, endorsement and further development.
- 4.11 Proposals for new awards will include draft regulations according to the SCD's New Award Proposal template
- 4.12 Proposals for new awards related to fields that do not have an obvious connection with the ASCED Code 0197: Philosophy and Religious Studies need to demonstrate that connection.
- 4.13 New awards related to areas of professional specialisation should aim to provide candidates already qualified in those areas with theological studies that help them apply their professional training in a Christian context. These should also include scope for recognition of prior learning in the area of professional training, consistent with SCD's Credit Policy.

Approval of new awards

- 4.14 The Discipline Coordinators Committee will oversee the development of new awards towards a form suitable for presentation to the Academic Board.
- 4.15 Upon recommendation from the Discipline Coordinators Committee the Academic Board will have responsibility for the approval of new awards.

Accreditation of new awards

- 4.16 Once final approval has been given by the Academic Board and notified to Council, the new award will be an accredited SCD award.
- 4.17 Accreditation will be for a period of 7 years.

Commencement of new awards

- 4.18 A new award will commence when the teaching body/bodies intending to deliver the award have been approved to do so
- 4.19 A new award cannot commence until sufficient time has been given for information about the new award to be made public, and for new students to enrol.

Non-award course Units

- 4.20 Non-award course units that may lead to admission to an award require approval by the Academic Board.

5. Related Procedures and Forms

Procedure	
Appendix 1	Approval and Accreditation Procedure
Templates/Forms	
Appendix 2	New Award Proposal Template
Appendix 3	Consultant Report on New Awards

Approval and Accreditation of New Awards Procedure

1. Purpose

The purpose of this procedure is to outline the implementation of the Approval and Accreditation of New Awards Policy.

2. Procedure

Revision or Development Process

- 2.1 The proposer prepares a draft set of regulations using the Award Regulations template and submits these regulations to the Director of Academic Strategy
- 2.2 The Director of Academic Strategy informs the Academic Dean of each SCD Teaching Body of the proposed new award and invites expressions of interest in its development
- 2.3 The Director of Academic Strategy appoints a consultant to review the draft award. The Consultant will
 - a. be external to the SCD;
 - b. normally be qualified at doctoral level or equivalent;
 - c. have recognised academic and/or professional expertise in Course Design;
 - d. complete the SCD form 'Consultant's Report on New Awards'.
- 2.4 The Director of Academic Strategy will provide the appointed Consultant(s) with the following documents:
 - a. the SCD form 'Consultant's Report on New Awards';
 - b. an overview of other SCD awards;
 - c. the SCD Curriculum Policy;
 - d. a rationale for the proposed award;
 - e. draft regulations for the proposed award;
 - f. a Schedule listing all approved SCD course units to be utilised by the proposed award, AND new units to be designed and accredited
 - g. an indication of how the Unit Learning Outcomes of any prescribed units for the award contribute to the attainment of the Discipline Learning Outcomes and the Generic Learning Outcomes of the AQF level, as well as the Graduate Attributes of the Award.
- 2.5 Upon receipt of the completed Consultant(s) Report form, the SCD Director of Academic Strategy will forward to the Discipline Coordinators Committee:
 - a. the original draft of the regulations for the proposed new award together with the rationale sent to the Consultant(s);
 - b. a copy of the completed Consultant report;
 - c. a response to the Consultant Report recommendations;

- d. and the final (draft) regulations.
- 2.6 The Director of Academic Strategy will report to the Discipline Coordinators Committee, offering a series of recommendations graded in the following manner, together with notes, that the award be:
- a. A = Approved as is
 - b. B = Approved with minor alterations
 - c. C = Reviewed and clarified by the Discipline Coordinators Committee
 - d. D = Returned to teaching body with comments for further development
- 2.7 The Discipline Coordinators Committee, upon consideration of the report of the Director of Academic Strategy, will make a recommendation to the Academic Board when it is satisfied that the proposed new award meets the standard for accreditation.



Appendix 2

New Award Proposal Form

Course Name: *(Insert)*

Date:

PROPOSAL INFORMATION

Rationale for Introducing the Course:

Identify the main reason(s) for introducing this course

Consultation:

Internal and External Consultation

Demand:

Demand for the course

Student Load:

Expected student load for the first three years: Include details of year-by-year expectation

COURSE INFORMATION

1. Course details - HES 3.1 Course Design	
1.1 Course Name	
1.2 Nomenclature/Post nominals	
1.3 AQF level <u>AQF LEVELS</u>	
2.	
2.1 Course duration	
2.2 Attendance type	Fulltime Part-time
2.3 Delivery mode	Online Face to face Multi-modal

2.4 Which teaching period will the course be offered for the first time (State study period and year)	
2.5 Member Institution/s intending to offer this course	
2.6 Is the course available to international students?	
3. Educational Outcomes - HES 1.4 Learning Outcomes	
3.1 Rationale	
3.2 Graduate Profile	
3.3 Course Outcomes	Knowledge: Skill: Application of knowledge of skill and knowledge:
3.4 Unit Learning Outcomes	Indicate how the Unit Learning Outcomes of any prescribed units for the award contribute to the attainment of the Discipline Learning Outcomes and the Generic Learning Outcomes of the AQF level, as well as the Graduate Attributes of the Award.
4 Admissions Criteria - HES 1.1 Admissions and HES 3.1 Course Design	
4.1 Entry requirements and Pathways	<i>Note: English language proficiency, Special Entry and Professional Entry criteria will apply as per SCD policy.</i>
4.2 Articulation arrangements (if applicable)	
4.3 Academic Credit	
4.4 Transition arrangements Provide details of transition arrangements for students currently enrolled in the existing course. Include a table to clearly map the existing course structure against the new course structure to indicate equivalence and non-equivalence.	<i>Include a statement to indicate this course replaces an existing course if applicable and state whether this course is equivalent, or not equivalent, to the replaced course.</i>

5. Career Pathways	
5.1 Career opportunities	
5.2 Professional registration or requirements <i>(if applicable)</i>	
6. Course Regulation - HES 3.1 Course Design	
6.1 Course structure Course completion requirements	
6.2 Exit Awards	
7. Majors, Submajors, Specialisations, Concentrations	
8. Assessment - HES 1.4 Learning Outcomes and Assessment	
8.1 Assessment	
9 Review - HES 5.3 (within 7 years from when course is first introduced)	
9.1 Date for review	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • End of first year (DATE): Internal • DATE (as per regular cycle): External
10. Saving Clause	
	Notwithstanding anything to the contrary contained herein, the Academic Board of the Sydney College of Divinity may, in any case in which it may deem appropriate, vary, dispense with or suspend any requirement or prescription by these regulations, and report forthwith to the Council of the Sydney College of Divinity



Consultant Report on New Award Form

Name of Award under review
Name of Consultant
Qualifications of Consultant/Experience in subject area
Current position of Consultant
Date of Consultancy
Guidelines Supporting documents: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Accreditation of New Awards Procedure;• A rationale for the proposed Award;• Regulations for the proposed Award;• SCD Curriculum Policy;• Course Unit Outlines for the compulsory units of the Award;• A stakeholder engagement report, with individual support letters;• An explanation of all SCD's existing Awards: see https://scd.edu.au/study-at-scd/• Regulations for the SCD's existing Awards, suitable for possible comparative reference: see relevant sections in https://scd.edu.au/handbook/• [other documents as required]
REPORT
Were you provided with sufficient information to allow for comparison and evaluation of the proposed new award? <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No Any Comment/Query:

Does the rationale make a convincing and adequate case for the new award?

- Yes
- No

Any Comment/Query:

Does there appear to be adequate stakeholder support for the new award?

- Yes
- No

Any Comment/Query:

How well does the proposed award fit within the suite of awards already offered by SCD?

- Makes a distinct and worthwhile addition
- Appears to duplicate, or overlap with other awards

Any Comment/Query:

How well does the proposed award compare to any similar awards from other institutions known to you?

- Superior
- Comparable
- Inferior

Any Comment/Query:

How well does the proposed award comply with the Australian Qualifications Framework (2013)?

- Compliant
- Not compliant

Any Comment/Query:

In general, how well does the proposed award comply with the Higher Education Standards Framework (Threshold Standards) (2021)?

- Fully compliant
- Mostly compliant
- Partly compliant
- Not compliant

Any Comment/Query:

When evaluated against the following Higher Education Standards:

1. Student Participation and Attainment

1.1 Admission

1.2 Credit and RPL

1.3 Orientation and Progression

1.5 Qualifications and Certification

the award is:

- Fully compliant
- Mostly compliant
- Partly compliant
- Not compliant

Any Comment/Query:

When evaluated against the following Higher Education Standards:

1. Student Participation and Attainment

1.4 Learning Outcomes and Assessment

the CUOs (if supplied) are:

- Fully compliant
- Mostly compliant
- Partly compliant
- Not compliant

Any Comment/Query:

When evaluated against the following Higher Education Standards:

3. Teaching

3.1 Course Design

The design for each course of study is specified and the specification includes:

- 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, methods of assessment and indicative student workload
- f. compulsory requirements for completion
- g. exit pathways, articulation arrangements, pathways to further learning, and
- h. for a course of study leading to a Bachelor Honours, Masters or Doctoral qualification, includes the proportion and nature of research or research-related study in the course.

the award is:

- Fully compliant
- Mostly compliant
- Partly compliant
- Not compliant

Any Comment/Query:

When evaluated against the following Higher Education Standards:

3. Teaching

3.1 Course Design

The content and learning activities of each course of study engage with advanced knowledge and inquiry consistent with the level of study and the expected learning outcomes, including:

- a. current knowledge and scholarship in relevant academic disciplines
- b. study of the underlying theoretical and conceptual frameworks of the academic disciplines or fields of education or research represented in the course, and
- c. emerging concepts that are informed by recent scholarship, current research findings and, where applicable, advances in practice.

the CUOs (if supplied) are:

- Fully compliant
- Mostly compliant
- Partly compliant
- Not compliant

Any Comment/Query:

When evaluated against the following Higher Education Standards:

3. Teaching

3.1 Course Design

Each course of study is designed to enable achievement of expected learning outcomes regardless of a student's place of study or the mode of delivery.

the award is:

- Fully compliant
- Mostly compliant
- Partly compliant
- Not compliant

Any Comment/Query:

After consideration of the Learning Outcomes of the Course Unit Outlines supplied, in relation to the graduate outcomes for the proposed award, the Discipline Learning Outcomes, and the generic outcomes for the AQF Level, the CUOs appear to be

- Fully suitable
- Mostly suitable
- Partly suitable
- Not suitable

Any Comment/Query:

The Units suggested by the Schedule (if CUOs not supplied) appear to be

- Fully suitable
- Mostly suitable
- Partly suitable
- Not suitable

Any Comment/Query:

Do you have any other comments that would improve the proposed award?

Recommendations:

- The proposed award is recommended as is
- The proposed award is recommended with minor changes
- The proposed award requires further development

Comments:

Signed:

Date: