

Replaces (please remove) Section 4.2 Issued 08/08

## 4.2 THE PLANNING, ACCREDITATION AND REVIEW PROCESS FOR ACADEMIC PROGRAMS

### 1. POLICY - APPROACH

The University is concerned to enhance the rigour of its academic programs through: (i) stringent standards in the independent accreditation of its academic programs, (ii) close integration between business and academic planning (iii) regular and rigorous review. USQ considers that program level review and analysis is the cornerstone of achieving rigour in and efficacy of academic offerings. This policy envisages:

- the preparation of a program plan by each Faculty (covering a three year period) and an annual assessment of that plan
- review of programs at the mid term and end of the accreditation term
- accreditation of programs
- a comprehensive analysis of new programs as well as changes to programs.

This policy anticipates that:

- each Faculty will manage its portfolio of programs to enable the University to achieve its goals and objectives
- the University Program Management Committee (UPMC) will develop a strategic perspective on the optimum set of portfolios which will enable the University to achieve its goals and objectives and will provide guidance and assistance to Faculties in shaping their portfolios
- University support services (including Planning and Quality Office, Division of University Services, Global Learning Services, Learning and Teaching Support Unit and Marketing and Public Relations) will provide information and services to support UPMC and the Faculties in academic planning, accreditation and review of programs.

To achieve the objectives of this policy in the manner indicated above, the University has established a corporate capability in undertaking comprehensive academic portfolio management. This corporate capability requires substantial contributions from many sections of the University and requires individuals to improve their knowledge of and increase their contribution to academic portfolio management. The UPMC has prime responsibility for developing this capability and will use all opportunities to increase personal and corporate capability in regard to academic portfolio management.

### 2 OVERVIEW-DEPLOYMENT

The process for the planning, accreditation and review of academic programs can be broken into the following procedures:

1. Portfolio plan and annual assessment
2. Proposals for New Programs
3. Accreditation
4. Changes to Programs
5. Discontinuation of a Program
6. Courses
7. Mid-Term Report
8. End of Term Review (Reaccreditation)

Each of these procedures is able to operate discretely but all represent an integrated package directed towards achieving improved academic rigour. UPMC has a key role in developing and guiding the composition of the University's portfolio of programs. The shape and mix of the academic portfolio is critical in assisting the University to achieve its strategic goals and objectives. Each year UPMC will provide clear guidance to the Faculties regarding the preferred shape and mix of the University's portfolio of academic programs. As well, UPMC will work with the support areas to establish the criteria for

analysing and assessing the business performance of all academic programs at the University. Each Faculty will undertake its own review and develop its own plan for its suite of programs. Each program must be directed towards contributing to the University's goals and it is expected that each year each Faculty will review the performance of each of its programs and work towards improving the overall performance of its suite of programs.

As a result of the integrated academic planning accreditation and review process it is expected that the university will improve its:

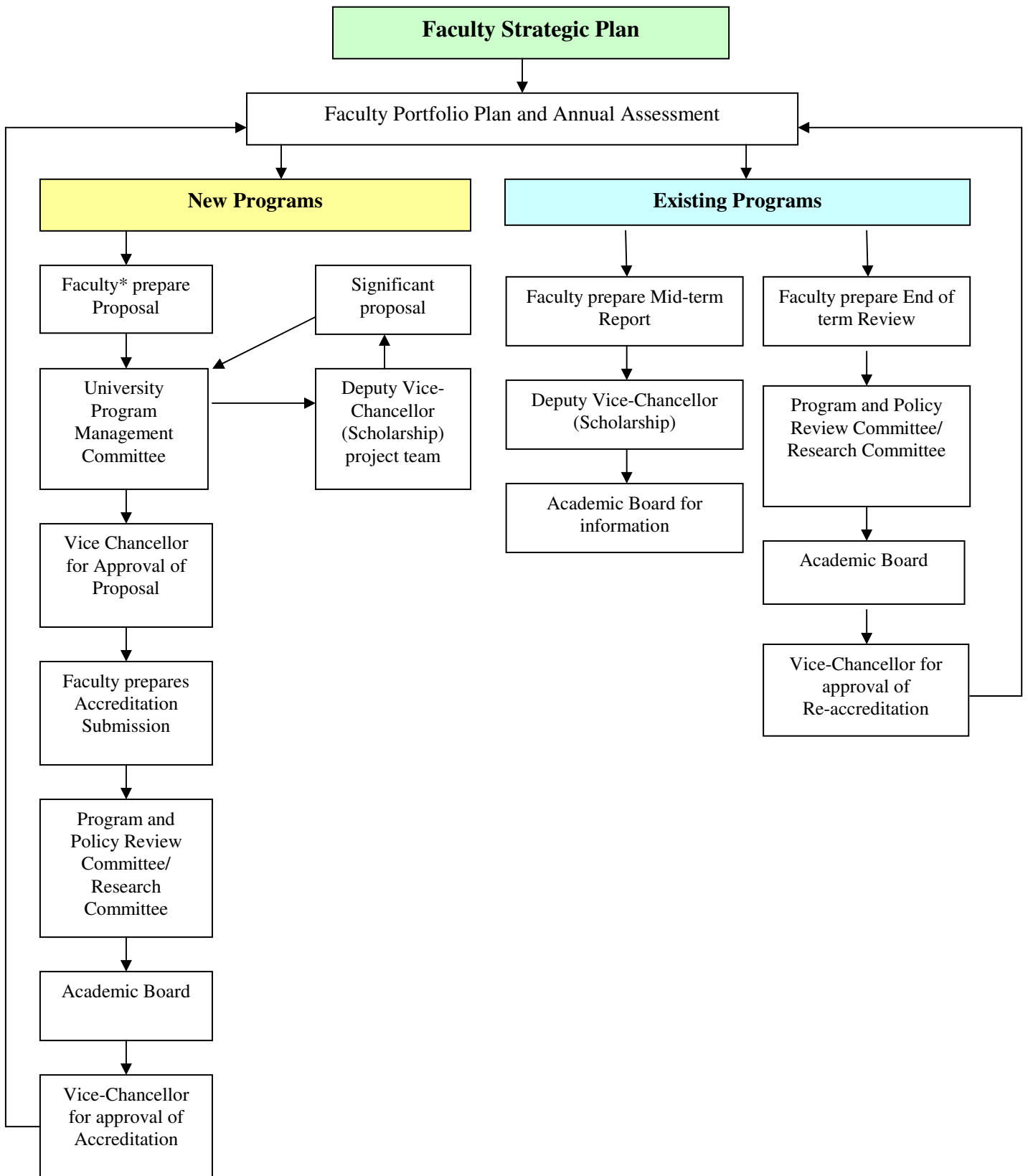
- Progression and retention results
- Market share of first preferences for the state
- Results in relation to graduate employment and student experience questionnaires
- Capability to deliver programs
- Profitability.

The integrated planning accreditation and review process is illustrated in the diagram below. Each procedure is then set out in detail.

Abbreviations used in this document:

Academic Board	AB
Faculty Portfolio Plan	FPP
Operational and Resource Management Plan	ORMP
Program and Policy Review Committee	PPRC
Research Committee	RC
University Program Management Committee	UPMC

Diagram One: The planning, accreditation and review process.



\*Campuses and other sections of the University may also prepare proposals.

### 3 PORTFOLIO PLAN

- 3.1 Each Faculty shall prepare a three year Portfolio Plan (FPP) which will form part of the Faculty's strategic plan under the USQ planning process.
- 3.2 The FPP will be updated annually along with its strategic plan and when this is approved the actions flowing from it will be incorporated into the Faculty's operational and resource management plan (ORMP). Any agreements arising from the USQ planning processes do not preclude the need for all programs to comply with this policy.
- 3.3 The FPP will set out the targets, strategies, actions and target dates across the three year planning horizon.
- 3.4 It is expected that a Faculty will foreshadow proposals for new programs in the Faculty's Portfolio Plan as the first indication of the Faculty's intention to alter its academic profile.

### 4 ANNUAL ASSESSMENT

- 4.1 As part of the planning process, each Faculty shall undertake an annual assessment (AA) of all its programs.
- 4.2 The AA will list all programs and provide an assessment of each program over a three year period and will show the contribution by each program against the following criteria:
  - Enrolments,
  - Student satisfaction and performance, and
  - Financial (based on the activity based costing data for the Faculty's programs).
- 4.3 The assessment will include commentary in relation to:
  - underperforming areas, the reasons for this and strategies to address underperforming programs
  - identification of programs due for review in the current year
  - identification of proposed new programs and how they will contribute to targets
  - variations on the previous year's plan, the reasons for that and outcomes.
- 4.4 The AA shall be completed using the **Template** (to be developed and include link here) available on the Planning and Quality website and submitted to the Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Scholarship) by the end of September in each year. The Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Scholarship) will negotiate the final content of the AA with the Faculty as part of the planning process. Agreed actions for the following year will be incorporated into the Faculty's ORMP.

### 5 PROPOSALS FOR (1) SIGNIFICANT NEW PROGRAMS AND (2) NEW PROGRAMS<sup>1</sup>

- 5.1 Proposals for new programs are required to address the Strategic Plan and Academic Profile of the University and the budget implications. Proposals may be initiated by Faculties, other organisational units including campuses, or by UPMC.
- 5.2 Introducing a new program is one way of improving a Faculty's suite of programs. For this policy there are two types of new programs. These are (1) significant new programs and (2) new programs. A significant new program may involve one or more of the following characteristics:
  - a new discipline,
  - new infrastructure,
  - substantial investment or risk, or
  - a new capability which will involve significant impact on staff, programs or infrastructure.
- 5.3 The determination of whether a program is a 'significant new program' will rest with the Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Scholarship) on advice from UPMC.

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<sup>1</sup> All proposals that come before UPMC must include written comment from the Dean of the submitting Faculty.

5.4 In circumstances where rapid approval of a new program is required, the Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Scholarship) in consultation with the Chairperson, Program and Policy Review Committee (or Chairperson Research & Higher Degrees Committee as appropriate) may, on request from the Faculty or campus, bypass the Committee approval process and recommend approval of a new program to the Vice-Chancellor. Any such decisions will be reported to UPMC and Academic Board.

### 5.5 NEW PROGRAMS

- 5.5.1 The program proposal will be developed using **Template A (up to and including item 8 of the template) attached.**
- 5.5.2 Preparation of the proposal will involve consultation with and statement from the Liaison Librarian and, where applicable, non-host Faculties providing courses in the program, the ICT Division, the Distance and e-Learning Centre, the Learning and Teaching Support Unit and the campus Director or Provost.
- 5.5.3 If the Committee is satisfied, it shall forward the program proposal to the Vice-Chancellor for approval. If the Committee is not satisfied with the program proposal, it shall so advise the Faculty.

### 5.6 SIGNIFICANT NEW PROGRAM

- 5.6.1 The draft program proposal will be developed using **Template A (up to and including item 8 of the template) attached.**
- 5.6.2 If satisfied that the proposed program represents a desirable objective for USQ, UPMC will establish a specific working group including a representative(s) from the sponsoring Faculties to prepare the significant new program proposal.
- 5.6.3 The significant new program proposal will be prepared in accordance with Template A and will require a more rigorous analysis of the market demand and business case for the program along with an analysis of the forecast revenues and costs up to the program break-even point – additional items 9 and 10 in Template A refer.
- 5.6.4 The significant new program proposal will be submitted to UPMC for a recommendation to the Vice-Chancellor for approval.

## 6 ACCREDITATION<sup>2</sup>

- 6.1 Once a new program proposal or a significant new program proposal is approved, the Dean shall establish a program development team consisting of not fewer than five persons, with at least two being drawn from a related industry or professional field or from another university.
- 6.2 Program development teams should, at an early stage of deliberation, involve consultation with, where applicable, non-host Faculties providing courses in the program.
- 6.3 The accreditation submission is to be written in a complete and concise manner. The submission will be divided into two parts: Part 1. the proposed Handbook entry, and Part 2. Other information required by the University, and will be prepared in accordance with the attached Templates B and C.
- 6.4 The accreditation submission will address the Qualities of a USQ Graduate<sup>3</sup> and must demonstrate consultation with employers and the relevant profession.
- 6.5 Upon completion, the accreditation submission will be forwarded to the Secretary, Program and Policy Review Committee or Secretary, Research Committee for formal consideration by the appropriate University committee.
- 6.6 Following consideration of an accreditation submission, the Program and Policy Review Committee or Research Committee may refer the submission back to the Faculty for

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<sup>2</sup> All accreditation submissions that come before PPRC or RC must include written comment from the Dean of the submitting Faculty.

<sup>3</sup> Stage 1 – Graduate Qualities alignment to be included. Stage 2 – skills alignment included in course specifications to be signed off by Associate Dean (Academic) and copied to LTSU

consideration of any amendments it considers necessary, prior to making an appropriate recommendation to the Academic Board.

- 6.7 The Academic Board shall consider the recommendations of the Program and Policy Review Committee or Research Committee and make an appropriate recommendation to the Vice-Chancellor on accreditation of the program or major not later than the August meeting of Academic Board where accreditation is sought for the following academic year. If the Vice-Chancellor accepts the recommendation of the Academic Board to accredit the program, the relevant details will be entered in a Program Accreditation Register maintained by the Secretary, Academic Board.

## 7 CHANGES TO PROGRAMS

- 7.1 Changes to an existing program require approval by the Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Scholarship) through submission of documentation as indicated below.
- 7.1.1 A new major (no new courses) in an existing program requires a Proposal (Template A) and Handbook entry
- 7.1.2 A new mode of offer (no new courses) of an existing program requires a Proposal (Template A) and Handbook entry
- 7.1.3 A new place of offer (no new courses) of an existing program requires a Proposal (Template A) and Handbook entry
- 7.2 The Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Scholarship) will report all approvals to the UPMC.
- 7.3 A new major or mode or place of offer (involving new courses) requires a Proposal (Template A) to be submitted to UPMC followed by an accreditation submission to the relevant Board Committee
- 7.4 Delivery or assessment of a program in a language other than English requires a Proposal (Template A) to be submitted to UPMC followed by an accreditation submission to the relevant Board Committee.
- 7.5 The approval of major changes to a program shall not affect the period of accreditation of the program.

## 8 COURSES

- 8.1 New courses may be approved during the program accreditation process.
- 8.2 New courses proposed for inclusion in existing programs must be submitted for approval to the Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Scholarship).
- 8.3 Changes to an existing course may be approved by the Dean, except where the changes to the objectives or topics are of such magnitude that the course is deemed to be a new course requiring a new course number and approval by the Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Scholarship).
- 8.4 Discontinuation of a course will be approved by the Dean with advice to the Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Scholarship) and any Faculties using that course in their programs.

## 9 MID TERM REPORT

- 9.1 Faculties are required to report on the academic performance of all programs at the mid-point of the term of accreditation.
- 9.2 The report will be prepared in accordance with the **Template** (to be developed and include link here) available on the Planning and Quality website and will utilize readily available data drawn from SMIS, SETL, CEQ and GDS.
- 9.3 Completed reports will be forwarded to the Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Scholarship) for endorsement and advice to the Academic Board.

**10 END OF TERM REVIEW/REACCREDITATION**

- 10.1 Not later than the commencement of the year in which the accreditation of a program expires, the Dean shall initiate the end of term review leading to reaccreditation (unless it is proposed that the program be discontinued).
- 10.2 The review will be prepared in accordance with the Template (to be developed and include link here) available on the Planning and Quality website and will be accompanied by:
- (i) an updated Handbook entry (Template B) if minor or no change proposed,
  - or
  - (ii) a full accreditation submission (Templates B and C) if major change proposed.
- 10.3 In either case the review will re-address the Qualities of a USQ Graduate (University Calendar section 4.2.5) and must demonstrate consultation with graduates, employers and the relevant profession.
- 10.4 The review and accreditation submission will be forwarded to the Secretary, Program and Policy Review Committee or Secretary, Research Committee for formal consideration by the appropriate University committee and advice to the Academic Board.
- 10.5 The normal period of reaccreditation of a program shall be seven calendar years.
- 10.6 A Faculty may bring forward the date of the reaccreditation of a program.

**11 DISCONTINUATION OF A PROGRAM**

- 11.1 As a consequence of the Portfolio Plan, the Annual Assessment, the mid-term report or end of term review, a program may need to be discontinued. Grounds for the discontinuation or suspension of a program may include insufficient demand to maintain specified minimum class sizes; changes in Faculty or University objectives; and financial constraints.
- 11.2 A proposal to discontinue the offering of a program shall require the approval of the Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Scholarship).
- 11.3 A proposal to discontinue a program shall detail all arrangements for the phasing out of that program, including timelines for implementation, that are consistent with the lead times necessary for international applicants. In addition, the proposal must address the impact on enrolled students and should aim to maintain quality and integrity of the student experience during the phase out stage. All modes of delivery shall be assessed when planning discontinuance.

**11.3.1 Transition Arrangements for Enrolled Students in programs flagged for discontinuation**

Where a program is to be replaced by a program with equivalent or related outcomes, enrolled students are to be transferred to that new program ("Equivalent Program"). Equivalent Program means a program that has the same/similar objectives and enables the same professional accreditation. The faculty shall be responsible for coordinating the transfer of the enrolled student's enrolment to the Equivalent Program.

If no Equivalent Program exists e.g. where professional accreditation cannot be attained through a similar or related program, students will be taught out and this may occur under restricted course offerings and pathways. Teaching out means providing a defined pathway to completion of a program in the specified minimum time. Teach out of an enrolled student is subject to that student making satisfactory progress in all courses.

- 11.4 The Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Scholarship) will report all approvals to the UPMC.

**NOTES:**

- 1 Academic Board, at its meeting on 14 October 1992, resolved that the following policy on the purchase of courses be approved:

- (a) where a Faculty undertakes the teaching and assessment of any course offered, the origin of the instructional material used in that course is the responsibility of the Dean of the Faculty;
- (b) where a Faculty wishes to purchase a course from elsewhere, and include that course as part of the approved program structure, the details of the course proposed to be purchased shall be referred to the Program and Policy Review Committee of the Academic Board for approval.
- 2 The Academic Board, at its meeting of 2/8/2000 resolved: that, where a program is to be jointly offered and awarded (colloquially known as jointly badged) by USQ and other institutions, the minimum number of USQ units to be successfully completed to meet the requirements of that program will be in a proportion to be approved by the Academic Board.
- 3 Specialisations within postgraduate programs shall be treated as equivalent to majors for the purposes of the Program Accreditation Procedures.
- 4 Academic Board, at its meeting of 31 July 2002, resolved:
- 4.1 *that award nomenclature distinguish between postgraduate certificates or diplomas in time and in content by using the following nomenclature for the two types of programs:*
- *awards in content to be defined as postgraduate diplomas or postgraduate certificates*
  - *awards in time to be defined as graduate diplomas or graduate certificates.*
- 4.2 *Postgraduate Certificates or Diplomas are required to contain postgraduate-levelled courses equivalent to at least 50% of the total units in the program*
- 4.3 *Masters programs are required to contain a minimum of four units of level 8 or 9 courses within the program*

### Template A

1. Program Accreditation/Major Change (Form 1) **or** Program Minor Change (Form 2) (attachment to this document)
2. Rationale for the program, including how the program contributes to the University's academic profile
3. Evidence of demand
4. Projected enrolments for the first five year period\*
5. Contribution of the program to the Faculty's enrolment targets (including the source of any additional SCC places)
6. Draft program structure
7. Resource implications:
  - a. Does the program involve new courses, and, if so expected number
  - b. Additional staffing and equipment required
  - c. Statements from the Distance and e-Learning Centre, the Library and Division of ICT
  - d. Additional Faculty# and University-based resources, including space and accommodation requirements
  - e. Where a program proposal is put forward by an organisational unit other than a Faculty, the full program proposal shall be provided by the organisational unit to any participating Faculty(s) for comment and written indication of support.
8. Financial predictions
 

The financial analysis will encompass\*:

  - a. An estimate of the financial contribution of the program using Activity Based Costing (ABC) data for existing courses and estimates of the likely ABC outcomes for new courses,
  - b. The impact of the program on the Faculty ORMP,
  - c. Start up and development costs, and

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\* to include separate identification of CGS and fee-paying students

- d. An estimate of the time to reach a positive contribution
- e. How a program will be marketed.

The following items are to be included for significant new program proposals.

- 9. Portfolio Impact: include an assessment of the impact of the new proposal on the load and financial performance of:
  - a. The University
  - b. The Campus ( if relevant to a particular campus)
  - c. Field of Education
  - d. Faculty

in line with the perspective of portfolio management shown in **Diagram One** attached.

- 10. Market Research: include a clear and timely assessment of the international and/or domestic market research gathered for this proposal in line with **Diagram Two** attached.

Diagram One

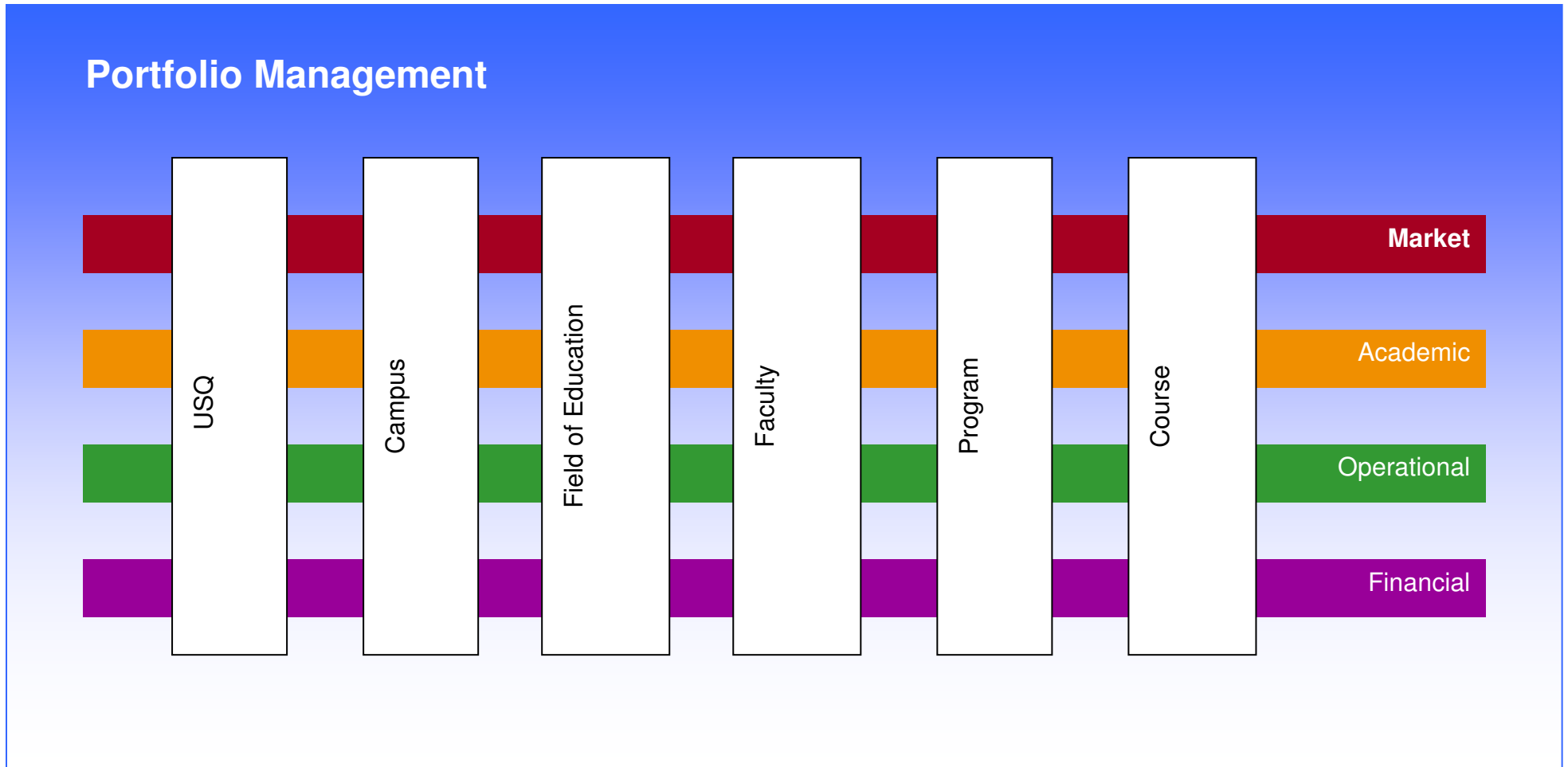
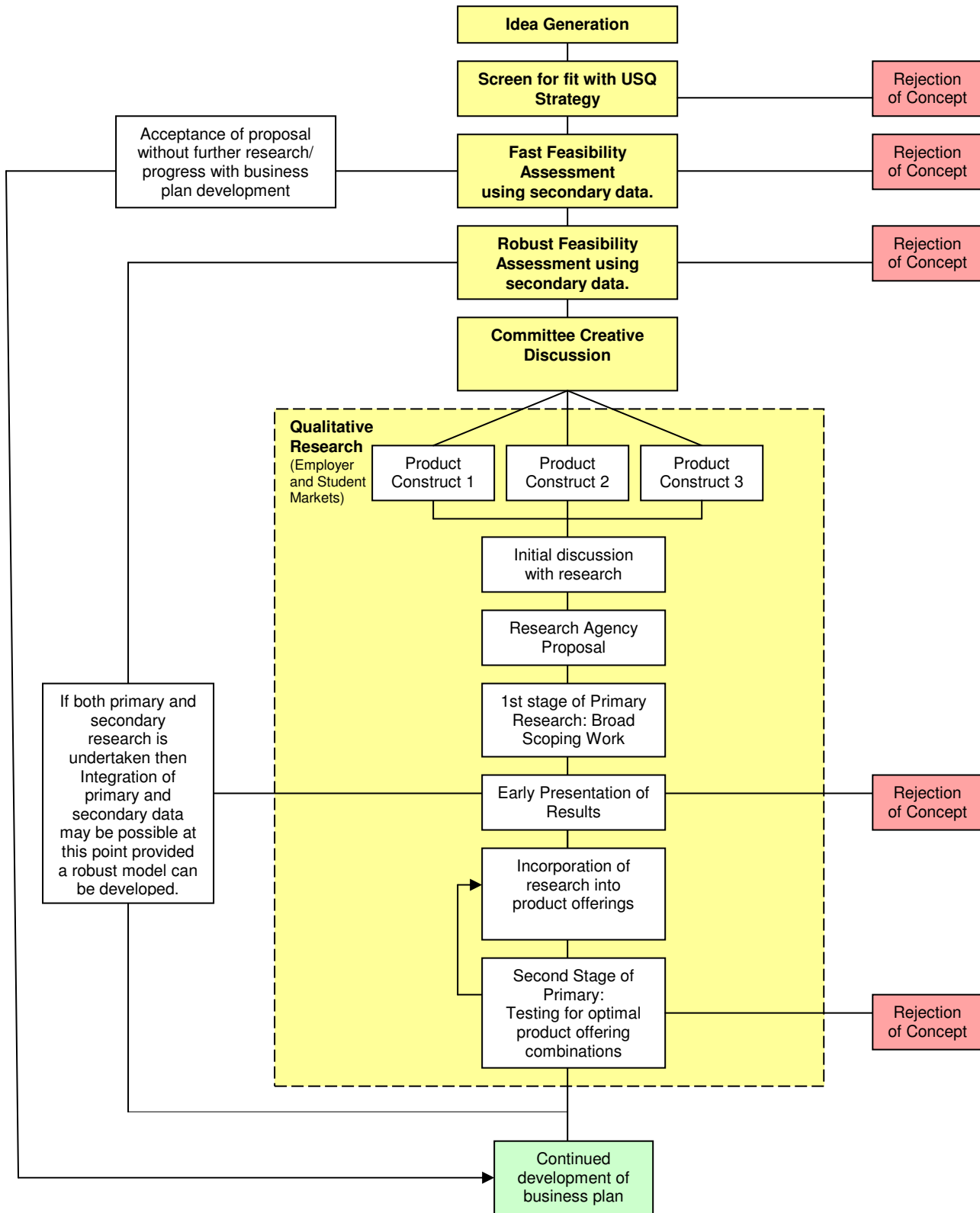


Diagram Two

Market Research



## Template B - Template for the Proposed Handbook Entry

### 1. The USQ Handbook is structured as follows:

- headings shaded in **red are mandatory**
- where pairs of elements appear **green it means that one or both** must be included
- **all other headings are optional.**

### 2. The following information is provided on the Program homepage (fact page):

#### Program Name (Program Code) – Program Short Title

- Program Name - The official name of the award eg Bachelor of Business
- (Program Code) - The official PeopleSoft code for the program eg BBUS
- Program Short Title - The official abbreviation (post-nominal) for the program eg BBus

#### Program Offering

- if a program is only offered for continuing students state “this program is offered only to continuing students. No new admissions will be accepted.”
- If the program has been accredited but is not yet offered state “This program is offered from (semester, year)”

#### QTAC codes

#### CRICOS codes

#### Program Summary

- A table which summarises key details about the program

[this is an example and does not reflect an actual program summary]

	<b>On-campus</b>	<b>Distance education</b>	<b>Online</b>
<b>Semester intake</b>	Semester 1 (March) Semester 2 (July)	Semester 1 (March) Semester 2 (July) Semester 3 (November)	Semester 1 (March) Semester 2 (July) Semester 3 (November)
<b>Campus:</b>	Toowoomba Springfield Fraser Coast	-	-
<b>Fees:</b>	Student contribution amount International fee	Student contribution amount International fee	Student contribution amount International fee
<b>Residential school</b>	-	Toowoomba campus (compulsory)	Toowoomba campus (compulsory)
<b>Standard duration:</b>	4 years full-time; 8 years part-time		
<b>Articulation:</b>	From: <u>Associate Degree in Engineering</u> To: <u>Bachelor of Engineering</u>		

Only those fields which are populated will display. For example, only those programs offered online would display the online column.

To ensure the accuracy of program information published within the USQ Handbook the following fields will be sourced from Student Administration PeopleSoft:

- Program name
- Program code
- Mode of study
- Campus

- QTAC code
- CRICOS code<sup>4</sup>
- Program keywords<sup>5</sup>.

### Enquiries

**Program focus** (a brief description of the focus of the program or major)

**Career opportunities** (Information about the career opportunities and positions available to graduates as per program or major)

### Professional Accreditation

#### 3. Other pages

The remaining information about the program will be found via primary navigation links placed in the left-hand menu. Each major program heading will have a separate page for information. Global navigation will provide users with a link to return to the 'Programs and courses' homepage.

**Program Aims** (The general goals of the program in terms of professional and vocational outcomes for graduates.)

**Program Objectives** (The knowledge, qualities, skills and abilities that graduates of the program, through successful completion of course objectives, will exhibit.)

**Admission Requirements** (The criteria which each candidate must satisfy to be admitted to a program of study.)

**How to apply** (Links to appropriate entry methods. For example, QTAC; direct entry form – online and pdf; international)

### Program Fees

**Program Structure** (Structure: The number level and specified courses and units which must be completed to be eligible for the award.)

**Requirements to Complete the Program** (Requirements for candidates to be eligible to graduate with the appropriate award.)

**Required Time Limit** (Information on the maximum and minimum duration to complete the program)

**Core Courses** (Details of an element of an award program, consisting of subject matter central to the achievement of the objectives of the program, which must be completed by all students in the program.)

**Major Studies/Specialisations** (Details of an element of an award program consisting of a set of designated courses, from a recognised discipline area and, if appropriate, supporting units from other discipline areas, which form a significant part of an award course.)

**Major Study/Specialisation Objectives** (Specific information about the objectives of individual majors/specialisations.)

**Minor Studies** (Information about a set of designated courses which may be drawn from a recognised discipline area or may transcend traditional discipline boundaries.)

**Option Studies** (Information about a set of designated courses which may be drawn from a recognised discipline area or may transcend traditional discipline boundaries.)

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<sup>4</sup> Epic editors will have the ability to add additional CRICOS codes manually for those programs which have more than one CRICOS code. This is currently, Master of Information Technology (Professional), Master of Professional Accounting and Bachelor of Nursing (Pre-Registration).

<sup>5</sup> The program keywords will form part of the program keyword search.

**Elective Courses** (Information about a course or courses which students may choose to study as part of a program)

**Coursework** (For honours and postgraduate courses. Information about the coursework component of a program also involving a research component required to be undertaken for successful completion of the program.)

**Research** (For honours and postgraduate courses. Information about the research component of a program required to be undertaken, also may include matters such as discipline speciality areas within the faculty and availability of supervision.)

**Practice Courses** (Usually for Engineering and Surveying programs. Information about courses which are based on laboratory sessions, workshops, seminars, field trips and group activities.)

**Practical Experience** (Information about practical experience required for progression within and completion of a program. Particularly relevant to education and engineering-based vocational courses.)

**Clinical Requirements** (Information about clinical experience required for progression within and completion of a program. Particularly relevant to science-based vocational courses.)

**IT Requirements** (Information about the minimum IT-related requirements necessary for the successful completion of the program.)

**Other Program Requirements** (Information about non-IT requirements essential for successful completion of the program, which may include access to specialist equipment, libraries etc.)

## **Residential Schools**

### **Articulation**

### **Related Programs**

### **Exit Points**

### **Exemptions**

### **Course Transfers**

### **Honours**

### **Other Information**

### **Enrolment**

### **Recommended Enrolment Pattern**

[All recommended enrolment patterns to be displayed on the same page with anchor links.]

### **Template C**

The following information should be included in part 2 of the accreditation submission:

- 1 Program type as defined by DEST;
- 2 First year and semester of offering in each mode and year of first graduates from each mode;
- 3 List of new courses ( specifications of all new courses to be included in an appendix);
- 4 Relationship of courses to program objectives;
- 5 Means by which program satisfies University Calendar section 4.2.5 Qualities of a USQ Graduate (applies to Bachelor degree programs only);
- 6 Impact on other Faculties' offerings including any duplication with other programs. Where a (re-)accreditation submission involves the inclusion or deletion of courses which are delivered by Faculties other than the host Faculty, the submission shall contain written advice from the non-host Faculty on the impact of the proposed inclusion/deletion of their courses. ;
- 7 Arrangements to be made for the quality control of courses offered by other Faculties, and those not provided by USQ;
- 8 Teaching methods to be employed including where appropriate any arrangements for practical training and experience;
- 9 Names and qualifications of the Program Development Team.