Course Delivery by Third Party Providers Policy

Section 1 - Purpose

(1) This Policy provides the guiding principles for the delivery of University of Canberra (University) units and courses by third party providers, in Australia and in other countries.

Section 2 - Scope

(2) This Policy applies to:

a. all students enrolled in a University accredited unit or course wherever the course is delivered by a third party provider and whatever the mode of delivery;

b. all persons teaching students enrolled in a University accredited unit or course whether employed by the University or by a third party provider; and

c. all third party providers whether delivering a unit, group of units, or whole course.

(3) This Policy covers both award and non-award courses and units of study, including, but not restricted to:

a. accredited units and courses;

b. non-accredited units, courses and other education packages that are provided to learners for a nominal fee or at no cost;

c. non-accredited units of knowledge delivered as applications for mobile devices which are made available to the public for a nominal fee or at no cost; or

d. accredited units offered on a non-award basis for a specific purpose.

(4) For non-accredited and non-award offerings, this policy should be applied to the extent the context requires and is deemed reasonable given the circumstances of delivery.

Section 3 - Principles

Students

(5) This policy applies to all students enrolled in a University accredited or non-accredited unit or course wherever that unit or course is delivered and whatever the mode of delivery (unless otherwise described in the legal agreement for the course).

Services

(6) Unless prohibited by laws and policies of the third party provider's jurisdiction, the University will ensure third party providers provide students with services comparable to those that the University provides.

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Staff

(7) Academic staff teaching University accredited units or courses will be appropriately qualified and experienced in accordance with the [Higher Education Standards Framework (Threshold Standards) 2021](#).

(8) The University will ensure staff engaged with third party provider units or courses are appropriately prepared for the cultural context in which they work.

(9) All staff employed by a third party provider to manage or teach University accredited units or courses will apply the University's rules, policies, and procedures deemed applicable to that course.

(10) The University will provide all staff employed by a third party provider to manage or teach University accredited units or courses, or provide administrative support for University students, with appropriate orientation and induction into the relevant University rules, policies and procedures.

(11) The University has the right to approve academic staff employed by third party providers to teach University accredited units or courses.

Quality Assurance

(12) The responsibilities of the University and the third party provider for delivering a unit or course will be set out in legal documentation developed according to University legal process and procedures.

(13) University accredited units and courses delivered by a third party provider will be of equivalent academic standard and lead to the same learning outcomes as accredited units and courses provided by the University. Equivalence of learning outcomes are only to be utilised when approved by Academic Board.

(14) University non-award units and non-award courses delivered by a third party provider will be of the same academic standard (or equivalent where localisation is required) as units and courses provided by the University.

(15) The University will monitor academic standards and the quality of unit and course delivery by third party providers through:

   a. the Third Party Providers Committee (TPP), a sub-committee of the University Education Committee (UEC);
   b. the University Quality and Standards Framework; and
   c. University policy and procedures.

University

(16) The University is responsible for compliance with the relevant legislation and standards, the quality of its accredited units and courses, and student experience.

Governance

(17) The University will enter into a contract with each third party provider. The terms of a contract for course delivery with a third party provider will support the University's mission and the achievement of the goals of its Strategic Plan.

(18) The University will undertake due diligence prior to entering into third party provider contracts and will identify, manage and monitor risks associated with its third party provider contracts.

(19) The University will maintain a database of the details of its third party provider contracts and will appropriately resource the management and monitoring of its third party provider contracts.

(20) Third party provider contracts will provide for exit strategies that enable the University to meet its obligations to

students.

Section 4 - Responsibilities

(21) Responsibilities of each party will be set out in the contract for a third party arrangement. Where the contract provides for specific services to be managed or delivered by the third party, the responsibility of the relevant University support unit may be limited to overseeing service provision and ensuring that academic standards, learning and teaching, facilities or services meet the needs of students and are equivalent to those provided by the University in other locations and delivery modes. Responsibilities in this section must be considered in this context.

Who	Responsibility
Third Party Providers Committee (TPP)	In accordance with its terms of reference and these Procedures the TPP will: • Support the faculties in the management of quality assurance for units and courses delivered by third party providers • Support the faculties in ensuring that third party arrangements comply with the Threshold Standards, Tertiary Education Quality and Standards Agency, and Australian Qualifications Framework requirements in relation to academic programs and standards, service provision and staff qualifications, in particular equivalence and comparability to University standards and services in other locations or modes of delivery • Advise on new partnership proposals as requested and review course developments in accordance with course approval procedures, and these procedures • Note the establishment of operations groups for new third party arrangements • Regularly review performance and benchmarking data (including survey results, student progress, retention and success by cohort), advise and report to UEC on the quality of the course delivery by third party providers, any issues arising, and actions to be taken • In the event of course closure or contract termination or expiry, review transition plans for students and monitor their implementation • Review Third Party Providers Operation Manuals and Student Information Manuals to ensure the accuracy of the information provided • Monitor the provision of orientation and induction to staff employed by third party providers to manage or teach University accredited units and courses • Oversee the implementation of the University's Quality and Standards Framework for courses delivered by third party providers • Provide academic oversight of the University of Canberra College, in particular, as a third party and subsidiary of the University, and advise UEC and Academic Board as required • Oversee the implementation of the Course Delivery by Third Party Providers Policy and Procedures and refer any academic issues to UEC.
University contact for third party provider arrangements	• Facilitate coordination and communication between the provider and the University and within the University • Advise and refer issues as needed.
Dean of a faculty responsible for delivery of a course by a third party provider [or the Associate Dean, Education under delegation from the Dean]	• Appoint academic staff from the faculty to TPP • Nominate an academic staff member as the faculty contact for each course and unit delivered by a third party provider • Ensure that courses delivered by third party providers are integrated with University courses in other locations and modes of delivery (including, for example, consideration by Faculty Assessment Boards and inclusion in CATEI reporting to UEC), and that staff of the third party provider delivering University courses and units are involved in relevant faculty activities • Ensure that the faculty's courses which are delivered by third party providers, and learning and teaching, are of equivalent academic standard and lead to learning outcomes equivalent to accredited units and courses provided in other locations and delivery modes.

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Who	Responsibility
Associate Dean, Education in a faculty responsible for the delivery of a course by a third party provider [or, where determined by the Dean, the relevant Head of Discipline or Associate Dean (international) or other nominated staff member/s]	• Provide the main point of contact in their faculty for third party provider staff delivering University accredited courses that are the responsibility of their faculty • Collaborate with Heads of Discipline or Heads of School, Course Conveners and Unit Conveners within their faculty and with the third party provider to ensure equivalence of academic standards (in teaching including academic staff qualifications, assessment practices, moderation and validation of assessment) and learning outcomes for University courses delivered by third parties • Ensure that the University's learning and teaching policies and procedures, particularly assessment (including development and approval of unit outlines, and moderation) and credit, are applied by the third party provider • Collaborate with the third party provider to ensure that accurate information is provided to staff and students in the Third Party Providers Operation Manual and Student Information Manual respectively • Collaborate with Heads of Discipline to evaluate and monitor the third party provider's equipment, facilities and learning and teaching support materials to ensure they are comparable with those offered by the University.
Associate Dean, International	Where the third party provider is outside Australia, the Associate Dean, International may exercise the responsibilities of the Associate Dean, Education, as determined by the faculty. Allocation of responsibilities should be documented.
Head of Discipline or Head of School	As determined by the faculty. This position may exercise or share relevant responsibilities of the Associate Dean, Education or Course Convener. Allocation of responsibilities should be documented.
Course Convener/ University academic course contact	• The University will nominate an academic contact for each course delivered by a third party provider. Where the following duties are shared between the University and the third party, the responsibilities of each should be set out in a document approved by both parties and endorsed by the owning faculty. • Assist the Head of Discipline with the management, conduct, teaching and assessment of the course or courses • Allocate course resources, including overseeing the selection of the teaching team including sessional staff (may be done by the Head of Discipline) • Manage course scheduling and mapping of student pathways • Assist colleagues with course content, skills and learning experiences to meet learning outcomes of the course • Conduct and contribute to course evaluation and review and provide advice to the faculty and TPP as necessary • Liaise with students on such matters as enrolment, credit, special circumstances and examinations • Ensure that any health and safety risks associated with the delivery of a course have been assessed, and appropriate control measures put in place • Ensure scholarly teaching practices by providing leadership to the teaching team • Ensure that University of Canberra policies and procedures are applied • Ensure operational and reporting deadlines are met.
Course Coordinator at the third party provider	• The third party provider will nominate a contact person to manage, coordinate and liaise with the University on delivery of each course. • Where relevant duties are shared between the University and the third party, the responsibilities of each should be set out in a document approved by both parties and endorsed by the owning faculty.

Who	Responsibility
Unit Convener	A Unit Convener will be identified for every unit. The Unit Convener is responsible for their nominated unit at all delivery locations. Where the following duties are shared between the University and the third party provider, the responsibilities of each institution should be set out in a document approved by both parties and endorsed by the owning faculty. A Unit Convener responsible for the delivery of a unit in a course delivered by a third party provider will: • Lead the delivery of the unit • Support students in their learning with assistance as appropriate from the relevant academic learning support unit • Employ scholarly teaching practices that influence, motivate and inspire students to learn • Manage and supervise the teaching team and sessional staff • Develop and maintain unit curricula, unit outlines and resources (ensuring that learning outcomes are the same and all offerings of the unit are consistent) • Maintain and improve on quality benchmarks as per the Unit Satisfaction Survey Quality Cycle • Ensure University of Canberra policies and procedures are applied • Ensure operational and reporting deadlines are met • Consult with the unit committee and/or other staff as necessary to ensure the successful conduct of the unit.
Office of Chief Operating Officer and Vice-President Operations	Prepare and update annually the Schedule of Evaluation Reports, and prepare all regular scheduled quality assurance reports.
People and Diversity, Faculties, Dean of Students, Student Connect, and Learning and Teaching	• Provide orientation and induction resources on the University's rules, policy and procedures for staff of third party providers delivering University accredited courses. • Provide staff development activities of the University, or of the third party provider, to staff at the partner institution as specified in the contract.
Academic Quality and Development	• Provide guidance on initial third party provider proposals, whether for a new course or new partnership • Provide support and advice to third party providers on the interpretation and implementation of the University's policies and procedures • Monitor the implementation and associated training for third party provider staff on relevant academic policies and procedures.
Learning and Teaching	Where necessary, provide academic advice and resources and services to support students and staff at third party providers in the use of centrally-supported educational technologies, such as the learning management system.
Student Connect	• Collaborate with third party providers to identify roles and responsibilities for administration and management of student data, admissions and enrolment procedures, articulation and credit, grades and marks • Provide students with clear information about their rights and responsibilities in relation to relevant matters • Manage student services including admissions, enrolments, academic progression, fees, scholarships, examinations and graduations • Provide students and staff with information about census dates for withdrawal or admission to units • Collaborate with third party providers to ensure their staff understand University admission, enrolment and other relevant procedures • Provide all relevant institutional data • Ensure that cohorts studying University courses with third party providers are included and can be identified in the University's student and graduate surveys • Ensure that data on student progress, retention and success from third party providers is provided to Faculty Assessment Boards, Faculty Board and other committees or groups as necessary.
Library	• Work with third party providers to identify roles and responsibilities for the provision of core library services including access to an appropriate range of print and electronic information resources, information literacy training programs and services providing assistance with using information resources, and advice for third party academic staff on available library services and information resources • Ensure students, and relevant staff of the third party provider, receive appropriate information, services and support, and that services provided to staff and students are comparable regardless of location or mode of delivery.

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Who	Responsibility
Digital, Information and Technology Management	• Work with third party providers to identify roles and responsibilities for management and provision of relevant services • Ensure students receive information, services and support and that services provided to staff and students are comparable regardless of location or mode of delivery.
Dean of Students	• Undertake an evaluation of services related to student welfare and wellbeing available to University of Canberra students through third party providers to ensure services are comparable regardless of where or in what mode students are studying • Collaborate with the third party provider in enabling University student access to University support services and comparable services available from the third party provider • Work with third party providers to identify roles and responsibilities for management and provision of academic skills services including English language support • Ensure that services meet the needs of students and are comparable to services provided in other locations and modes of delivery • Provide information about University services to University students through appropriate means • Monitor and manage implementation of the Student Grievance Resolution Policy and the University of Canberra (Student Conduct) Rules 2023. • Ensure that the University's policies and procedures relating to student equity and student experiences, orientation, staff induction and staff development as they relate to the responsibilities of the Dean of Students are applied by third party providers.

Section 5 - Procedures

(22) Refer to Course Delivery by Third Party Providers Procedure.

Section 6 - Definitions

Terms	Definitions
Academic staff	Staff of the University or a third party provider employed to conduct and/or manage teaching and/or research.
Accredited unit	An accredited unit is a single component of a qualification, or a stand-alone unit, that has been accredited by the same process as for a whole Australian Qualifications Framework qualification. In Australia an accredited unit may be called a 'module', 'subject', 'unit of competency' or 'unit'.
Contract	Legal and enforceable agreement between the University of Canberra and a third party provider. This may take the form of a Memorandum of Agreement, an Affiliation Agreement, or a contract.
Course	A course of study and instruction, leading to an award, provided under rule 5 of the University of Canberra Courses and Awards (Courses of Study) Rules 2023. A course is the total program of studies in which a student is enrolled. Successful completion of all the requirements of a course is the normal prerequisite for the granting of a University award.
Mode of delivery	Modes of delivery may be face to face, distance education, blended/flexible learning, online, intensive or some combination of one or all of these.
Moderation	Moderation is a process whereby academic staff responsible for assessment in a unit reach consensus about levels of student performance in relation to a set of agreed standards.
Third Party Provider	A legally established entity separate from the University (although it may be a controlled entity of the University) with which the University has a legal relationship for the purposes of delivering University accredited units and courses to students.

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