# Course Delivery by Third Party Providers Policy

# Section 1 - Purpose

(1) This Policy sets out the principles and requirements for University of Canberra (University) third party provider delivery arrangements, in Australia and offshore.

(2) This policy should be read with the Course Delivery by Third Party Providers Procedure.

# Section 2 - Scope

(3) This Policy applies to:

a. students admitted to an award course delivered by a third party provider;
b. participants enrolled in a non-award course or other non-formal learning delivered by a third party provider;
c. staff and affiliates of the University involved in the delivery or administration of third party provider arrangements; and
d. third party partner staff.

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

a. award courses;
b. non-award courses (including individual accredited units offered as non-award study); and
c. other non-formal learning.

(5) 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, for example, where a third party will be engaged in ongoing and scaled delivery of non-award programs.

# Section 3 - Principles

(6) All third party provider courses are designed, monitored, delivered and quality assured in a manner compliant with the Higher Education Standards Framework (Threshold Standards) 2021, as articulated in the University's Course Policy.

### Students

(7) Students enrolled in a University unit or course delivered by a third party provider will have access to the same or equivalent educational services, support and facilities as on-partner students, or as specified in the partner agreement and unless prohibited by laws and policies of the third party provider's jurisdiction.

### Staff

(8) 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.

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

(10) If the provider agreement states that certain University rules, polices and procedures apply to the course or study, all staff employed by a third party provider must abide by the terms of the provider agreement as to the application of any rules, polices and procedures to the course and its students.

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

(12) The University has the right to approve academic staff employed by third party providers to teach University accredited study.

## Quality Assurance

(13) 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.

(14) 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.

(15) 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.

(16) Awards of the University delivered by a third party or in collaboration with a third party are subject to the same approval, reaccreditation and performance monitoring requirements as any other award of the University; but there will be additional oversight of the academic quality of partnered deliveries, as follows:

a. Faculty Boards oversee academic quality assurance of third party delivery of courses and report on this as part of the annual partner review process.
b. Academic Quality and Standards Committee (AQSC) will be provided with an annual consolidated report on academic quality of partnered deliveries.
c. Student cohort performance reporting - involving comprehensive analysis, action setting and evaluation of completed actions, will be reported by Faculty Boards to the Academic Quality and Standards Committee.

## 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) Contracts with third party providers 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 |
|---|---|
| Academic Quality and Standards Committee | In accordance with its terms of reference and this Policy the AQSC will:<br>• support the faculties in the management of quality assurance for units and courses delivered by third party providers;<br>• support the faculties in ensuring that third party arrangements comply with the Threshold Standards, TEQSA, ESOS, 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;<br>• monitor scholarly activity between the University and third party providers;<br>• advise on new partnership proposals as requested and review course developments in accordance with course approval procedures, and these procedures;<br>• note the establishment of operations groups for new third party arrangements;<br>• regularly review performance and benchmarking data (including survey results, student progress, retention and success by cohort), advise and report to AQSC on the quality of the course delivery by third party providers, any issues arising, and actions to be taken;<br>• in the event of course closure or contract termination or expiry, review transition plans for students and monitor their implementation;<br>• review Third Party Providers Operation Manuals and Student Information Manuals to ensure the accuracy of the information provided;<br>• monitor the provision of orientation and induction to staff employed by third party providers to manage or teach University accredited units and courses;<br>• oversee the implementation of the University's Quality and Standards Framework for courses delivered by third party providers;<br>• provide academic oversight of the University of Canberra College, in particular, as a third party and subsidiary of the University, and advise Academic Board as required; and<br>• oversee the implementation of the Course Delivery by Third Party Providers Policy and Procedures and refer any academic issues to Academic Board. |
| Associate Dean, Education in a faculty responsible for the delivery of a course by a third party provider<br>[or, where determined by the Dean, the relevant Head of Discipline or Associate Dean, International or other nominated staff member/s] | • Provide main point of contact in their faculty for third party provider staff delivering University accredited courses that are the responsibility of their faculty.<br>• Collaborate with Heads of Discipline or school, Program Director or equivalent, 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.<br>• 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.<br>• Maintain oversight of student feedback in courses and units delivered at third party providers.<br>• Collaborate with Education Partnerships and 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 guide respectively.<br>• 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.<br>• Approve third party provider teaching staff and keep a register of teaching staff, including CV and certified copies of relevant documents. |

| Who | Responsibility |
|---|---|
| Associate Dean, International[or, where determined by the Executive Dean, the relevant Head of School or other nominated staff member/s] | Where the third party provider is outside Australia, the Associate Dean, International (or nominee) may exercise the responsibilities of the Associate Dean, Education , as determined by the faculty. 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.<br>Where the following duties are shared between the University and the third party, the responsibilities of each should be set out in the Operations Manual approved by both parties and endorsed by the owning faculty. The University remains accountable for the academic quality of the course and its delivery.<br>• Assist the Head of Discipline with the management, conduct, teaching and assessment of the course or courses<br>• Allocate course resources, including overseeing the selection of the teaching team including sessional staff (may be done by the Head of Discipline)<br>• Manage course scheduling and mapping of student pathways<br>• Assist colleagues with course content, skills and learning experiences to meet learning outcomes of the course<br>• Review student issues escalated by unit conveners<br>• Conduct and contribute to course evaluation and review and provide advice to the faculty and third party provider as necessary<br>• Liaise with students on such matters as enrolment, credit, reasonable adjustments and examinations<br>• Ensure that any health and safety risks associated with the delivery of a course have been assessed, and appropriate control measures put in place<br>• Ensure scholarly teaching practices by providing leadership and demonstrating scholarly activity to the teaching team<br>• Ensure that University policies and procedures are applied<br>• Monitor academic integrity as per the staff responsibilities outlined in the Academic Integrity Policy and Academic Integrity Procedure and the Operations Manual<br>• 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<br>Where relevant duties are shared between the University and the third party, the responsibilities of each should be set out in the Operations Manual approved by both parties and endorsed by the owning faculty. The University remains accountable for the academic quality of the course and its delivery.<br>• Assist colleagues with course content, skills and learning experiences to meet learning outcomes of the course/s<br>• Review escalated student issues from third party provider Unit Convener<br>• Liaise with students and Course Convener on escalated matters such as enrolment, credit, special circumstances and examinations<br>• Ensure scholarly teaching practices by providing leadership to the teaching team.<br>• Ensure that any health and safety risks associated with the delivery of a course have been assessed, and appropriate control measures put in place<br>• Ensure that University of Canberra policies and procedures are applied<br>• Monitor academic integrity as per the staff responsibilities outlined in the Academic Integrity Policy and Academic Integrity Procedure and the Operations Manual<br>• Ensure operational and reporting deadlines are met. |
| Data Analytics | • Provide all relevant institutional data<br>• Ensure that cohorts studying University courses with third party providers are included and can be identified in the University's student and graduate surveys<br>• 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. |
| Digital, Information and Technology Management | • Work with third party providers to identify roles and responsibilities for management and provision of relevant services<br>• Ensure students receive information, services and support and that services provided to staff and students are comparable regardless of location or mode of delivery. |

| Who | Responsibility |
|---|---|
| Education Partnerships | • Manage third party provider contracts assigned to Education Partnerships<br>• Facilitate coordination and communication between the provider and the University and within the University<br>• Ensure that the University meets its contractual obligations and any internal or external compliance<br>• Implement the Third Party Provider Quality Assurance Framework<br>• Prepare and update annually the schedule of Annual Partner Reviews, and prepare all regular scheduled review reports<br>• Provide guidance on initial third party provider proposals, whether for a new course or new partnership<br>• Maximise benefits and minimise any risks to the University<br>• Provide support and advice to third party providers on the interpretation and implementation of the University's policies and procedures<br>• Monitor the implementation and associated training for third party provider staff on relevant academic policies and procedures<br>• Coordinate staff induction activities and resources for third party provider partner staff<br>• Develop Operations Manuals and Student Information pages<br>• Advise and refer issues as needed. |
| Executive Dean of a faculty responsible for delivery of a course by a third party provider<br>[or the Associate Dean, Education under delegation from the Executive Dean] | • Nominate an academic staff member as the faculty contact for each course and unit delivered by a third party provider<br>• 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 course reporting to Curriculum Committee (CC), and that staff of the third party provider delivering University courses and units are involved in relevant faculty activities<br>• 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. |
| Faculties and business units (where relevant) | • Provide orientation and induction resources on the University's rules, policies and procedures for staff of third party providers<br>• Provide staff development activities of the University, or of the third party provider, to staff at the partner institution as specified in the contract<br>• Monitor requirements for new support processes, systems and technologies needed to facilitate third party delivery (as applicable) to ensure successful implementation of partnership. |
| Future Student Services and 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<br>• Provide students with clear information about their rights and responsibilities in relation to relevant matters<br>• Manage student services including admissions, enrolments, academic progression, fees, scholarships, examinations and graduations<br>• Provide students and staff with information about census dates for withdrawal or admission to units<br>• Collaborate with third party providers to ensure their staff understand University admission, enrolment and other relevant procedures<br>• Contribute to recruitment activities if specified in the contract. |
| 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. |
| Learning & Teaching | • Provide advice and guidance on initial third party provider proposals, whether for a new course or new partnership<br>• Provide support and advice to third party providers on the interpretation and implementation of the University's policies and procedures<br>• Monitor the implementation and associated training for third party provider staff on relevant academic policies and procedures<br>• 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<br>• Coordinate and support scholarly activity at third party providers. |

| Who | Responsibility |
|---|---|
| Study Skills | • 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<br>• 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. |
| Marketing | • Contribute to the development of a Marketing and Recruitment Plan for each third party Provider<br>• Contribute to marketing activities if specified in the contract<br>• Approval of all third party provider's marketing material<br>• Provide Marketing Style Guide and Protocols to each third party provider. |
| Deputy Vice-Chancellor or delegate | • Undertake an evaluation of services related to student welfare and wellbeing available to University students through third party providers to ensure services are comparable regardless of where or in what mode students are studying<br>• Ensure there are appropriate mechanisms for reporting incidents of sexual harm and students are aware of these reporting mechanisms<br>• Collaborate with the third party provider in enabling University student access to University support services and comparable services available from the third party provider<br>• Work with third party providers to identify roles and responsibilities for management and provision of academic skills services including English language support<br>• Ensure that services meet the needs of students and are comparable to services provided in other locations and modes of delivery<br>• Provide information about University services to students through appropriate means<br>• Monitor and manage implementation of the Student Grievance Resolution Policy and the University of Canberra (Student Conduct) Rules 2023.<br>• Ensure that the University's policies and procedures relating to student equity and student experiences, orientation, staff induction and staff development are applied by third party providers. |
| Institutional Quality Assurance | • Liaise with TEQSA on matters related to third party provider arrangements as required<br>• Provide advice on compliance matters related to third party provider arrangements. |
| Unit Convener | A Unit Convener will be identified for every unit. The Unit Convener is responsible for their nominated unit at all delivery locations.<br>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.The University remains accountable for the academic quality of the course and its delivery.<br>A Unit Convener responsible for the delivery of a unit in a course delivered by a third party provider will:<br>• Lead the delivery of the unit<br>• Support students in their learning with assistance as appropriate from the relevant academic learning support unit<br>• Employ scholarly teaching practices that influence, motivate and inspire students to learn<br>• Manage and supervise the teaching team and sessional staff<br>• Develop and maintain unit curricula, unit outlines and resources (ensuring that learning outcomes are the same and all offerings of the unit are consistent)<br>• Liaise with students on such matters as enrolment, credit, special circumstances and examinations<br>• Engage in scholarly collaboration with the third party provider unit convener<br>• Maintain and improve on quality benchmarks as per student feedback data<br>• Provide access to student feedback data to third party provider unit conveners, monitor student feedback and discuss remedial actions with third party provider unit conveners regarding issues raised in the data, where applicable<br>• Ensure University of Canberra policies and procedures are applied<br>• Ensure operational and reporting deadlines are met<br>• Monitor academic integrity as per the staff responsibilities outlined in the Academic Integrity Policy and Academic Integrity Procedure and the Operations Manual<br>• Consult with the unit committee and/or other staff as necessary to ensure the successful conduct of the unit. |

# 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 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 as outlined in the University Assessment Procedure. |
| Third Party Provider | A separate legal entity to the University (though the entity may be a controlled or related entity of the University) that the University enters into a provider agreement with for the purposes of delivering University accredited units and courses to students. |

## Status and Details

| | |
|---|---|
| **Status** | Historic |
| **Effective Date** | 8th March 2024 |
| **Review Date** | 17th December 2026 |
| **Approval Authority** | Manager, Policy and Compliance |
| **Approval Date** | 25th October 2023 |
| **Expiry Date** | 13th April 2025 |
| **Custodian** | Michelle Lincoln<br>Deputy Vice-Chancellor |
| **Responsible Manager** | Meegan Fitzharris<br>Director, Partnerships & Engagement |
| **Author** | Meaghan Butler<br>Deputy Director, Educational Partnerships |
| **Enquiries Contact** | Nick Markesinis<br>Policy Manager<br><br>Enterprise Partnerships |