Continuous Improvement of Teaching & Learning Policy and Procedure

1.   PURPOSE:

The purpose of this policy is to outline the governance, processes and implementation, and feedback mechanisms that will be undertaken to assure continuous improvement in the quality of teaching and learning as well as improvement in the academic and administration framework that supports Higher Education teaching and learning at North Metropolitan TAFE (NMTAFE).

3.   POLICY STATEMENT

This **Continuous Improvement Policy and Procedure** is authorised by the Academic Board and aims to engage every member of academic and administrative staff in the process of quality assurance and improvement. Quality within this policy addresses the quality of Higher Education.

This policy is to be read in conjunction with the *Higher Education Unit Strategic Plan*. Adherence to the TEQSA Standards, professional bodies and industry benchmarks will also serve to guide and continuously improve the performance of Higher Education.

4.   GOVERNANCE

4.1 The Academic Board has ultimate responsibility for the quality of teaching and learning and will review both the procedures and performance indicators at the end of each semester, with a formal review of teaching and learning biennially, and a formal review of each course triennially.

4.2 The Manager of Higher Education, the Higher Education Standing Committee, and the Higher Education Course Committees will be accountable to the Academic Board for continuous improvement of the processes associated with teaching and learning and, will be accountable to the Academic Board for the continuous review of curriculum to maintain relevance and quality.

4.3 The Academic Services Committee will be accountable to the Academic Board for the continuous improvement of the processes associated with Higher Education student services and support and, will be accountable to the Academic Board for the continuous review of those services and support.

4.4 The Higher Education Standing Committee has responsibility for the quality of the operations of the higher education courses of study, compliance with the regulatory framework and will review procedures and performance each semester with a formal review of facilities and services annually. This is to be done with a view to implementing performance improvements strategies for students and staff where required.

4.5 Governing Council has ultimate responsibility for the business performance and compliance with the regulatory framework. Reports on quality improvements are provided to Governing Council by the Academic Board. These reports provide the basis for informing and /or changing the current Strategic Plan for Higher Education programs at NMTAFE with a view of improving upon the current processes and procedures.

4.6 The explanation below illustrates how the PIER (planning, implementation, evaluation and review) framework works between the various governance committees. The NMTAFE Business Plan should be consulted for the Governance structure of NMTAFE.

- The Higher Education Standing Committee is responsible for approval of the planning each course. The Portfolio Director is responsible for implementing the courses, and then providing performance and benchmarking data back to the Higher Education Standing Committee concerning the course.
- Data pertaining to academic issues from the Higher Education Standing Committee are provided to the Academic Board which evaluates and reviews the information. If necessary, the Governing Council is notified. Data pertaining to administrative matters from the Executive Management is provided to the Academic Board and, where relevant, the Governing Council. Depending on the issue, Governing Council and/ or the Academic Board will evaluate and review the data with a view to providing recommendations for quality improvement. These recommendations will be passed down to the standing Committees for implementation.

5. IMPLEMENTATION

5.1. The Academic Board, the Higher Education Standing Committee, the Learning and Teaching Standing Committee and the Academic Services Standing Committee may direct that particular issues be addressed and that specific data be gathered to inform these issues pertinent to quality management, monitoring, and continuous improvement.

5.2. Upon receiving a report, the Academic Board in consultation with the Higher Education Standing Committee, will if necessary, alter a policy or practice within the academic environment of Higher Education.

5.3. Organisational development processes will be led by fostering collaboration and be based on the assumption that all staff members have a desire and a capacity to contribute to improvement in teaching and learning. Typically initiatives will be conceived, planned, executed and reviewed by teams.

6. KEY SOURCES OF DATA

The Academic Board and its subordinate committees have an interest in both formative and summative evaluation. Formative evaluation informs the design of measures for improvement, while summative evaluation provides a scorecard against which to judge past performance.

Key sources of data will include, but are not limited to:

6.1 FEEDBACK ON TEACHING AND LEARNING BY STUDENTS

a) Student evaluation (surveys) pertaining to facilities, student services and resources
b) Student evaluation (surveys) of the academic experience
c) Focus groups for collecting information of subjective experience of students from time to time to investigate particular themes, including the social life of the campus, student relations with staff and the use of support services
d) Data collected on graduate satisfaction and the attainment of employment
e) Exit interviews conducted with students who leave the higher education course prior to the completion of their course.

Policies pertaining to the area of teaching and learning by students include:

- *Course Approval*
- *Student Feedback*
- *Provision of Academic Learning Support*

6.2 STUDENT PROGRESS

a) Grade distributions, course completions and graduation rate
b) Database of student grievances, appeals, and academic misconduct
c) Student attrition rate and progress each semester and annually
d) Relevant feedback from university partners, and alumni

Policies pertaining to the area of monitoring and improving on student progress include:

- *Academic Misconduct Policy*
- *Student Assessment Policy*
- *Student Progress, Graduation Policy and Procedure*
- *Student Admission Policy*

6.3 STAFF PERFORMANCE AND REVIEW

a) Performance review information of academic and support staff collected by the Portfolio Director and when relevant , the Manager of Higher Education
b) Performance review information of administration staff collected by the Portfolio Director and when relevant , the Manager of Higher Education
c) Scholarship output and professional activities of academic staff

Policies and plans pertaining to the area of performance and review include:

- *Scholarly Activity Policy*
- *Staff Development Policy*
- *Management of Personal Information Policy*
- *Personnel Policy*

6.4 QUALITY OF ACADEMIC AND SUPPORT SERVICES

a) Welfare and counselling support
b) Library services, quality of software, and information technology support
c) Career advising and support
d) Literacy support services
e) Transitional program services

Policies and plans pertaining to the area of quality of academic and support services include:

- *Student Grievance Handling and Resolution Policy and Procedure*
- *Credit Transfer Policy and Procedure*
- *Student Consultation Policy*
- *Critical Incident Management Plan*

- *Facilities Review and Improvement Policy*
- *Student Refund Policy*
- *International Student Refund Policy*

7. SCHOLARLY ACTIVITY AND QUALITY MANAGEMENT

7.1 The development of performance information, its review in the light of educational theory and its contribution to the development of education theory is a legitimate form of scholarship within the terms of the Higher Education policy on scholarly activity. Moreover it is a form of scholarship to be encouraged for its contribution to the development of NMTAFE as a quality provider of Higher Education.

8. ARTICULATION

8.1 NMTAFE is committed to pursuing a range of articulation options that enhances student progression between AQF levels.

8.2 In accordance with the AQF Qualifications Pathway Policy, the pathways should be clear and transparent to students; facilitate credit into, as well as credit towards, AQF qualifications; and eliminate unfair or unnecessary barriers for student access to AQF qualifications.

8.3 NMTAFE will only develop an articulation agreement with another institution after its courses have been shown to offer a genuine articulation with NMTAFE's courses.

8.4 The agreements will be regularly reviewed to maximise applicability to new and updated qualifications and to student and industry needs.

9. SPECIFIC PROCEDURES

9.1 The Higher Education Standing Committee, in consultation with the Research and Analysis team, will develop the forms for evaluation and feedback by students of each unit of study and its delivery, and the form for lecturer evaluations and feedback.

9.2 Student feedback forms will be completed by students at the end of delivery of each unit of study. The unit lecturer must leave the room while students are filling out the form, and a student will be delegated to collect forms and seal them in an envelope before signing and printing his/her name across the sealed flap.

9.3 Quantitative data will be collated and returned to both the lecturer and the lecturer's supervisors after the results for the students in that unit of study have been published.

9.4 The data will be given to staff as a means of informing their own identification of target areas for individual improvement.

9.5 Data drawn from the student evaluations on all unit deliveries will be aggregated and de-identified for use in institutional development.

9.6 Variances in the data should be investigated to identify benchmarks of best practice and the means to enable wider adoption of best practice.

10. CROSS INSTITUTIONAL BENCHMARKING

10.1 A formal benchmarking process must be conducted biennially with a similar higher education institution or institutions.

10.2 Portfolios of student work will be exchanged; assessment practices will be benchmarked to assure their rigour. Students' performance will be compared across institutions to provide assurance that student achievement is within educational industry norms.

10.3   Where common assessment tasks can be agreed with other institutions, these will be used as a basis for comparison.

10.4   Terms of reference and benchmarking partners will be determined by the Academic Board. The specific arrangements and agreements will be developed by the Manager of Higher Education.

10.5   The methodology will be reviewed by the Academic Board and endorsed prior to implementation. The benchmarking task will be undertaken by the Learning and Teaching Standing Committee with the results reviewed by the Academic Board.

10.6   Of particular interest will be the following items:

- pass/fail rates, retention rates and graduation rates;
- performance on any assessment tasks common to participating institutions;
- student need and demand for course offerings based on student enrolment statistics, market research and analysis;
- critical review and assessment of the range and diversity of units of study within a course;
- the adequacy and appropriateness of course-related information provided to students;
- ongoing evaluation of the modes of study and the course delivery method;
- comprehensive data analysis (based on unit and course feedback / evaluation data) to indicate significant trends.

11. OTHER RELEVANT POLICIES

This policy operates in conjunction with the Academic and Administrative Policies, Procedures and Plans of Higher Education Unit and NMTAFE.

12. OWNERSHIP and CONTACTS

Policy Owner	General Manager Training Services 1
Contact	Manager of Higher Education
	Phone 9202 4792
	Email: susan.jacobs@nmtafe.wa.edu.au
Approval Authority	Academic Board
Review Date	Maximum 3 years following approval

14. REVISION HISTORY

Version No.	Approved/ Amended/ Rescinded	Date	Approval Authority	
4.1	Approved	19 Aug 2016	HE Standing Committee	Changes to reporting reflect new structure

Continuous Improvement Course/ Unit of Study Review Cycle (Higher Education)

Planning:
Manager Higher Education
Course & Unit Cordinator

Approval:
Higher Education Standing Committee
Academic Board

Implementation:
Course & Unit Cordinator
Lecturers

Evaluation:
Student Feedback; Consultation with University partners; Benchmarking

Review:
Manager Higher Education
Course & Unit Cordinator
Higher Education Course Committee
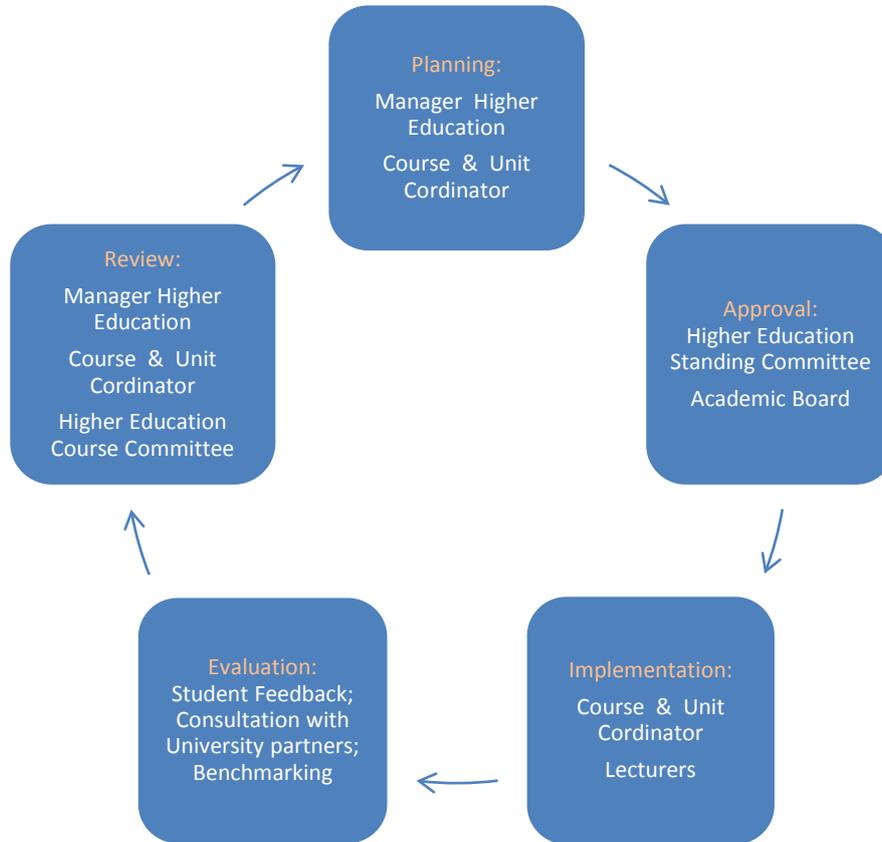
Continuous Improvement Academic Support Services (Higher Education)

Planning:
Manager Higher Education

Director Client Services

Approval:
Higher Education Standing Committee

Academic Services Standing Committee

Academic Board

Implementation:
Client Services

Evaluation:
Student Feedback; Benchmarking

Review:
Manager Higher Education

Higher Education Course Committee

Director Client Services
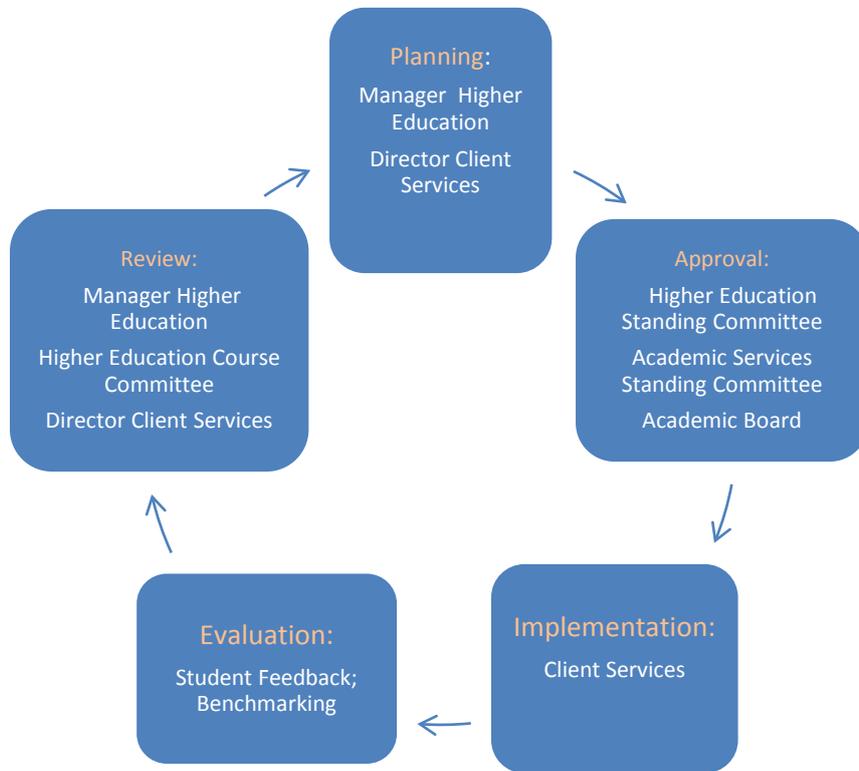
Continuous Improvement Advocacy and Personal Support Services (Higher Education)

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                    Planning:

              Manager  Higher
                 Education
              Director Client
                  Services
                                              Approval:

    Review:                              Higher Education
                                        Standing Committee
   Manager Higher
     Education                          Academic Services
                                        Standing Committee
 Higher Education Course
     Committee                           Academic Board

   Director Client
     Services


        Evaluation:                     Implementation:

     Student Feedback;                   Client Services
       Benchmarking
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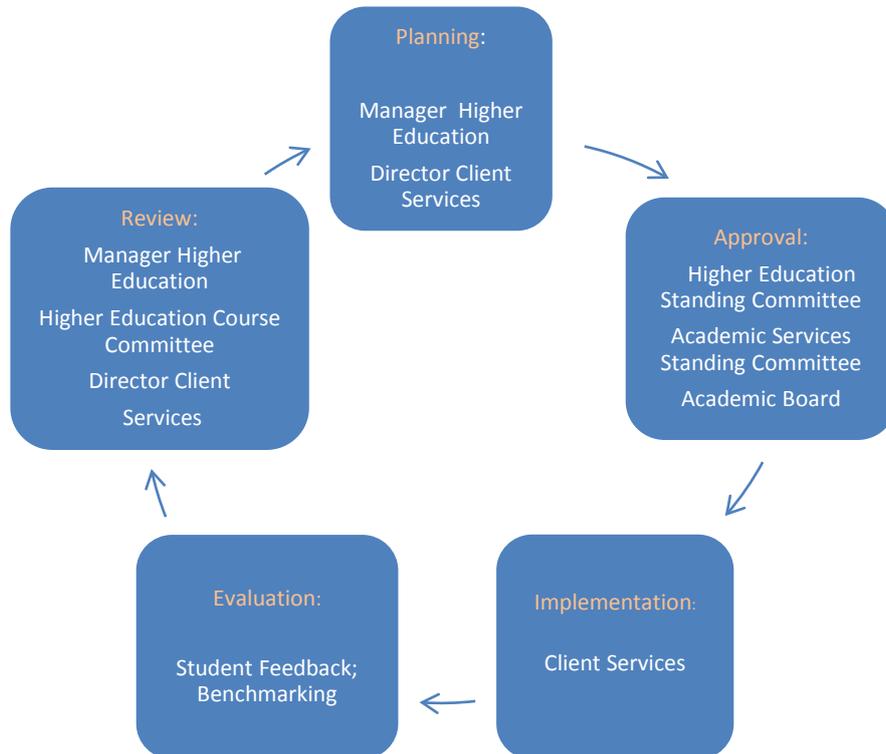
Planning

- Decide the objectives
- Determine how to meet the objectives
- Consider timelines and resources

Approval

- Present plan to Higher Education Committee and/ or Academic Board

Implementation

- Organise resources
- Organise professional development if required
- Put plan into action
- Document the progress
- Note problems and solutions

Evaluation

- Consider the problems and solutions noted during the implementation
- Seek feedback from key stakeholders (Research and Analysis Team)

Review

- Analyse the feedback data
- Determine if the objectives been met

- Consider changes that can be made for further improvement
- Make recommendations