

Academic Governance Policy

1. Background

Academic governance is part of Gateway Business College's (GBC) governance framework which also includes corporate governance. An established academic governance framework of policies, processes and arrangements ensures strong and effective leadership and oversight of academic activities at GBC, including teaching and learning, research, scholarship, course development and course review. The Academic Board is responsible for academic governance at GBC and is charged with providing informed, expert advice on academic matters to the Corporate Governance Board to support the achievement of high academic standards in course delivery and quality outcomes for students. While working interdependently with the Corporate Governance Board, the Academic Board functions separately to the Corporate Governance Board and GBC Senior Management in order to exercise independent judgement and scrutiny, academic monitoring and quality assurance.

2. Purpose

This policy establishes the framework for academic governance at GBC, including the accountabilities and functions of the Academic Board and academic committees such as the Teaching and Learning Committee, Course Advisory Committee, and Course Monitoring Committee.

3. Scope

This policy applies to GBC staff and students, especially staff involved in academic governance and academic committees, external members of the Academic Board and Corporate Governance Board, and GBC Senior Management.

4. Definitions

Academic Board: The board responsible for academic governance at GBC. The Academic Board reports to and advises the Corporate Governance Board on academic activity. This board oversees academic activities such as teaching, learning, scholarship, research, course approval, student outcomes, academic standards and academic policy.

Academic governance: The framework of policies, processes and arrangements that provide leadership to and oversight of GBC's academic activities, including teaching and learning, research, scholarship, course development, approval and review.

Academic staff: Staff engaged in higher education teaching, learning and research as employees of GBC.

Australian Qualifications Framework (AQF): The national framework that regulates Australian education and training qualifications.

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Corporate governance: The framework of structures, rules, relationships, systems and processes through which GBC's corporate directions and targets are set, authority is delegated, organisational performance is monitored, risks are identified, managed and controlled, organisational accountability is maintained, and corporate culture is developed and influenced.

Corporate Governance Board: The formally constituted governing body accountable for the governance and performance of GBC as a higher education operation.

Course Advisory Committee: The academic committee responsible for collecting information from students, academic staff and industry regarding course content, structure, learning outcomes, and assessment strategies, teaching and learning modes and facilities. This committee advises on courses for benchmarking and is responsible for reviewing and advising on initial proposals for subjects and courses, and proposals for major course changes. It is specifically designed to seek external/industry input into proposals for new courses to be developed at GBC, and industry feedback on courses undergoing 5-yearly major reviews. Prior to the introduction of a new course, the Course Advisory Committee reviews the course structure, content and teaching and learning materials providing advice to the Academic Board on recommendations for revision or approval.

Course Monitoring Committee: The academic committee responsible for reviewing student complaints, grievances and appeals. This committee collates and reports on data on student retention and attrition, performance, progression, completion, moderation, academic and non-academic misconduct in all courses delivered at GBC.

Dean: The most senior academic staff member at GBC responsible for academic matters, and the main point of contact between the Corporate Governance Board, the Academic Board, academic committees and teaching and learning staff.

Higher Education Standards Framework (Threshold Standards) 2015 (HES Framework): The regulatory standards that represent the minimum acceptable requirements for the provision of higher education in or from Australia by higher education providers registered under the *TEQSA Act 2011*.

Teaching and Learning Committee: The academic committee responsible for planning for, monitoring, reviewing and improving, the quality of teaching and learning at GBC. This committee advises and reports to the Academic Board on the teaching and learning operations of GBC, and works in collaboration with the Course Advisory Committee and Course Coordinators to review and develop new course and subject proposals. They lead and manage the development and review of the Teaching and Learning Plan for approval by the Academic Board; and monitor and improve teaching and learning practices, learning resources, and the standard of academic support services to ensure student needs are met.

Tertiary Education Quality Standards Agency (TEQSA): Australia's national independent regulator of the higher education sector.

5. Principles

Within the GBC governance structure, corporate governance and academic governance are separate bodies but operate interdependently. See the *GBC Governance Charter*.

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The Academic Board is the highest authority responsible for the oversight of academic matters and activities, as delegated by the Corporate Governance Board.

In its relationship with the Corporate Governance Board, the Academic Board is responsible for providing academically-informed advice to the Corporate Governance Board to assist in corporate decision-making and monitoring.

The Academic Board is responsible for ensuring that GBC complies with the academic standards established by the Tertiary Education Quality Standards Agency (TEQSA), *Higher Education Standards Framework (Threshold Standards) 2015 (HES Framework)*, and the Australian Qualifications Framework (AQF).

Academic Board members must be familiar with relevant higher education legislation and will remain up-to-date with any changes to legislation and/or regulatory requirements.

Any breaches to the academic integrity and academic standards of GBC must be reported to the Academic Board, which is responsible for responding to and rectifying the breach.

The Academic Board includes members that are internal and external to GBC, with higher education experience and expertise sufficient to provide strong academic leadership, oversight, judgement and scrutiny.

The Student Representative Committee (SRC) President (or nominee) is a member of the Academic Board to ensure students are involved in academic governance, decision-making and direction setting at GBC.

6. Procedures

6.1 Responsibilities and delegations

The Academic Board is responsible for:

- Supervising and approving academic course development
- Reviewing and approving new course proposals, including curriculum (learning outcomes, subjects, course content, assessment strategies)
- Approving and overseeing the implementation of academic processes and practices
- Reviewing and approving academic policies and procedures for compliance and best practice
- Benchmarking courses and academic practices internally and against other higher education providers
- Monitoring, reviewing and improving academic courses of study in response to student, staff and stakeholder feedback
- Monitoring, reviewing and improving student attrition, retention, teaching and learning resources, teaching and learning practices, student support services, admissions processes, academic skills support in line with best practice, benchmarking and stakeholder feedback. Reporting on this to the Corporate Governance Board and making recommendations accordingly.
- Engaging in Higher Education Workforce Planning (recommending workforce positions and candidates)

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- Approving the Higher Education Workforce Plan in consultation with the Corporate Governance Board
- Reviewing and approving the Teaching and Learning Plan
- Establishing committees to provide support and advice to the Academic Board and reviewing the reports provided by these committees
- Overseeing student grievances and appeals processes
- Ensuring that academic staff are supported in the development of their discipline research and teaching and learning scholarship
- Ensuring that high standards of academic integrity are maintained at GBC.
- Keeping true and accurate records of all Academic Board processes and decisions.

The framework for delegations of academic authority by the Academic Board is outlined below. For detailed information consult the *GBC Governance Charter*.

The Teaching and Learning Committee is responsible for:

- Reviewing and developing new course and subject proposals
- Leading and managing the development of the GBC Teaching and Learning Plan
- Monitoring, reviewing and improving the effectiveness of student support services
- Maintaining best practice in teaching and learning throughout all courses of study at GBC
- Monitoring infrastructure and resources available to students to ensure adequacy
- Monitoring the implementation of academic policies and procedures
- Providing advice to the Academic Board as requested
- Reporting to the Academic Board on teaching and learning activities and outcomes.

The Course Advisory Committee is responsible for:

- Reviewing new course and subject proposals
- Ensuring that new courses are compliant with the HES Framework and meet AQF level requirements
- Seeking external/industry feedback on new course proposals and courses undergoing 5-yearly major reviews
- Develops working relationships with relevant external industry partners to ensure course development at GBC integrates an approach that will ensure industry relevance and address professional needs
- Liaising with industry regarding professional practice requirements for graduate knowledge and skills
- Building industry connections to ensure that course development is relevant to professional pursuits
- Conducting course benchmarking projects, and reporting the findings of these activities to the Academic Board
- Reviewing the disciplinary and professional focus of the course, content, graduate attributes, learning outcomes, assessment strategies, course entry requirements, teaching and learning methods, resources and facilities requirements
- Providing advice to the Academic Board as requested.

The Course Monitoring Committee is responsible for:

- Investigating specific cases, courses, subjects, staff members, external staff members, and third parties in response to complaints, grievances, and appeals.

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- Collecting and analysing data on course enrolment rates, completion rates, attrition and retention rates, student feedback survey data, assessment outcomes, moderation, academic misconduct, academic appeals, grievances, and outcomes.
- Providing advice to the Academic Board as requested
- Reporting to the Academic Board on student data.

The Dean is responsible for:

- Liaising between the Academic and Corporate Governance Boards, committees and academic staff
- Overseeing procedures to ensure the quality and effectiveness of teaching and learning
- Managing resource allocation in relation to academic programs
- Ensuring ongoing monitoring and analysis of academic performance and student data
- Ensuring compliance with external regulatory requirements.

Course Coordinators are responsible for:

- Overseeing an academic program in a specific discipline
- Developing course content and material to ensure a high standard of course delivery
- Ensuring high standards in teaching and learning quality
- Developing programs to support student transition and student learning for strong academic achievement outcomes
- Complying with academic policies and procedures.

Teaching and learning staff are responsible for:

- Developing course content and material to ensure a high standard of course delivery
- Ensuring high standards in teaching and learning activities and practice
- Maintaining current disciplinary and professional knowledge
- Supporting students in the achievement of strong academic outcomes
- Complying with academic policies and procedures.

The Academic Board is responsible for implementing and monitoring delegations of academic authority to ensure their effectiveness. Thus, it will receive and review periodic reports on the activities of each position or committee under delegated authority.

6.2 Membership and Composition of the Academic Board

The Corporate Governance Board is responsible for the initial establishment of the Academic Board, after which the Academic Board will regulate itself.

The Academic Board will have five (5) to seven (7) members at any given time.

The Academic Board will include internal and external members with higher education experience and expertise. (Internal members are employees of GBC; external members are not employees of GBC).

The Dean is a member of the Academic Board at all times.

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Members will be appointed after submitting an application to the Academic Board. Senior academic experience, skills in academic board membership and industry expertise will all be considered when selecting members for the Academic Board.

The composition of the Academic Board is:

- The Independent External Chairperson
- The Deputy Chairperson
- The Dean
- 2 External Academic Advisors
- 2-3 Internal GBC Academic Staff Members
- Student Representative (SRC President or nominee)

6.3 Terms of Office

Members will serve two (2) year terms. The exception to this rule is the Dean who will serve for the length of their employment; and the student representative, who will serve an annual term. Members may be nominated to serve additional terms, but may serve no more than two (2) consecutive terms.

6.4 Removal of Academic Board members

Failure to comply with the conditions of membership outlined in the *GBC Governance Charter*, or for other alleged breaches of GBC policies, procedures and frameworks, may result in dismissal from the Academic Board.

To be dismissed from the Academic Board, a motion of no confidence must be introduced by another member of the board. The Academic Board will then vote on the motion.

For further information about academic governance arrangements and the rules that govern Academic Board membership, consult the *GBC Governance Charter*.

6.5 Review of academic governance arrangements

The processes and effectiveness of the Academic Board will be independently reviewed once every five years at minimum, and will take into account a range of evidence including records of discussions and decisions kept by the Academic Board.

7. Review

This policy will be reviewed by the Academic Board every three years, or more frequently should the Board deem it necessary.

Document History			
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