UON Program Convenor Handbook

The purpose of this document is to provide program convenors with key information and guidance on policies, resources, and support available to them to assist them in their role.

This document supports the Program Convenors web site which contains valuable information, including links to:

- Business Plans
- Mapping Courses
- Annual Program Reports
- Program Reviews
- Online Resources
- Committees
- Supporting Students
- Key Policies for Program Convenors

There are four sections to this resource:

- Policies and procedures
- Quality Assurance
- Program performance data
- Student services and support

Appendices include:

- Appendix 1: Program Convenor Role Description
- Appendix 2: Preparing Annual Program Report Guidelines
- Appendix 3: UON Survey Register
- Appendix 4: Student Feedback Communication Guidelines
1. Policies and Procedures

Program and Faculty Liaison Coordinator: Contact your Program and Faculty Liaison Coordinator in Student Central for clarification regarding processes, policies and procedures relevant to the program convenor role.

a) Program Convenors Website

This web site contains information that will be useful for program convenors, course coordinators and other academic and administrative staff across the University.

http://www.newcastle.edu.au/current-staff/teaching-and-research/program-and-course-management/program-administration/program-convenors

b) Degrees

UON’s Degrees web site provides information about programs offered at the UON across all levels (undergraduate, postgraduate coursework and research higher degree).

http://www.newcastle.edu.au/degrees

c) Program and Course Management System (PCMS)

The PCMS is sub-system within the University’s main student information system NUSTAR. It is an online system used for reporting new programs and revised programs as well as existing programs. It is used to track program versions, revisions and to populate the program handbook. It is administered by the Faculty Quality Assurance Teaching and Learning Officers to record revisions which have been approved by the relevant University committees. It is also used for reporting current, new and revised courses. Much of the information from the PCMS is made available to staff and students via the Program Handbook and course information available on the University’s website.

d) Course Coordinators Website

This website contains information and links that will be useful for course coordinators and other academic and professional staff across the university. It includes:

- Planning checklists and reflection documents
- Assessment checklists and guidelines
- Online resources
- Committees
- Supporting students

http://www.newcastle.edu.au/current-staff/teaching-and-research/program-and-course-management/program-administration/course-coordinators
2. Quality Assurance

Keys policies regarding the quality assurance of programs are located in the Program Convenor Toolkit; the responsibilities of the program convenor in regard to quality assurance are covered in the role description (Appendix 1).

a. Committees

*Program Management Group*: oversees the academic quality of a program. It is required to meet at least twice annually, and is usually chaired by the Program Convenor. A template for the Terms of Reference for the Program Management Groups is available from the Program Convenor Toolkit: http://www.newcastle.edu.au/current-staff/teaching-and-research/program-and-course-management/program-administration/program-convenors

*External Advisory Group*: provides an opportunity for a program to obtain input and advice from industry, the community and other external groups to ensure that it is and remains aligned with the current practices of the relevant sector. That is, in terms of the quality, knowledge and skill sets of its graduates. This committee should also meet at least twice per academic year. The Terms of Reference template is available from the Program Convenor Toolkit: http://www.newcastle.edu.au/current-staff/teaching-and-research/program-and-course-management/program-administration/program-convenors

b. Annual Program Reports

An important component of the program convenor role is the preparation of the Annual Program Report (APR). This report will usually be submitted to the first Faculty Teaching and Learning Committee meeting of the year following delivery; and will highlight successes, areas for improvement and potential development. It will also contain an action plan outlining actions to be undertaken to address the goals and issues identified within the report.

Guidelines to assist in the preparation of the APR are attached in Preparing Annual Program Report Guidelines (Appendix 2). Most of the data required for the preparation of an APR is provided in the Program and Core Courses Report (see Section 3b below).

c. External Program Reviews

Each program at the University must be externally reviewed within a seven year schedule. This process is facilitated by Strategy, Planning and Performance. Relevant resources, templates, policies and procedures can be found on the Program Convenors website.

For assistance or information on Annual Program Reports and External Program Reviews contact your Faculty’s Quality Assurance Teaching and Learning Officer or Mark Kirby in SPP: mark.kirby@newcastle.edu.au

d. University Surveys

Surveys and focus groups are an important component of quality assurance at UON. The University carries out several surveys over each academic year. Many of these are managed internally and some are mandated by external reporting requirements.

These surveys can gather data on individual programs, courses and teachers, as well particular cohorts such as international, commencing or graduating students. They provide information on the learning, social, research and administrative environments of the university. A full description of all University surveys and their purpose can be found in the UON Survey Register (Appendix 3).

Information on surveys and reports can be obtained from Strategy, Planning and Performance (SPP); reports from surveys on programs and courses can be found in the Faculty Quality Assurance Folder (see Section 3c below) and on the university website: https://www.newcastle.edu.au/current-staff/teaching-and-research/program-and-course-management/student-feedback
The key surveys for programs are:

- The Graduate Outcomes Survey (GOS) – externally administered to all completing students approximately four months after completion
- The Student Experience Survey (SES) – externally administered to all undergraduate students annually, and
- Student Feedback on Programs (SFP) – internally

SPP is available to undertake focus groups of students and staff about a program or specific courses taught within it.

Guidelines to assist developing a response to student feedback are attached in the Student Feedback Communication Guidelines (Appendix 4).
3. Program Performance Data

a. NINA and MIS Portal

Newcastle Information and Analytics (NINA) and the Management Information System (MIS) are powerful reporting tools used to present information contained within a data warehouse. Data in NINA and the MIS is refreshed daily from systems including NUSTAR, Research, HR, Finance, UAC and more.

Both NINA and the MIS Portal provide up to the minute information on student enrolments and load, student performance and research benchmarking, student feedback and program performance reports. Reports can be produced on a university, faculty, program, or course basis. Individual student cohorts or demographic groups can be tracked over several years. However, data is aggregated and access to individual student information is restricted due to privacy.

Reports available in the MIS Portal will be progressively migrated to NINA. After which time the MIS Portal will be decommissioned. To find NINA follow this link: http://nina.newcastle.edu.au

To obtain access to NINA, please send an email to NINA@newcastle.edu.au which includes managerial approval and your University number plate.

b. Program and Core Courses Report (PCCR)

The PCCR provides the data required for the preparation of Annual Program Report. It is prepared by Strategy, Planning and Performance in January each year. In this report, you will be given comprehensive time-series data on student enrolments and retention and success that is broken down to specific demographic cohorts. Course and program student feedback outcomes are also provided in this report.

c. Faculty Quality Assurance Folder

The Faculty Quality Assurance Folder contains reports, data and other information regarding a program’s performance. In this folder you will find: program accreditation reports, External Program Review reports, student feedback data for courses and programs (quantitative and qualitative), Annual Program Reports, Program and Course Reports, among other information. The address of this folder is: X:\Faculty_QA.

Contact Mark Kirby to obtain access to this folder: mark.kirby@newcastle.edu.au
4. Student Services and Support

The Role Description (Appendix 1) provides detail on the student support roles and responsibilities of the Program Convenor.

a. Program and Faculty Liaison Coordinators and Program Advisers

Program and Faculty Liaison Coordinators and Program Advisers are located in the Student Hubs across the University campuses. Each Program and Faculty Liaison Coordinator is responsible for a faculty. They provide strategic support and advice to the PVC and academic policy advice. They coordinate a small team of Program Advisers which support each Faculty. Program Advisers administer the admission and enrolment of students within a program, support Program Convenors and provide advice on a range of student matters. Program Advisers provide dedicated, specialised advice and support to undergraduate students throughout the student lifecycle and are responsible for administration of the program, from admission through to graduation. Program and Faculty Liaison Coordinators are the contact for Review of Progress and Appeal against a Final Result.

Postgraduate Program Advisors provide dedicated, specialised advice and support to postgraduate coursework students across the student lifecycle. Postgraduate Program Advisors have thorough knowledge of programs and can help students ensure they are following the requirements and structure of their degree program. Duties include providing detailed information and advice for students, assessing applications for cross-institutional study, as well as qualifying students when they are ready to graduate. You should contact your Program Advisor for any enquiries of an administrative manner regarding study at UON.

The Academic Registrar’s Toolkit provides access to useful resources and information about the Program Adviser role.

b. Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff and student support

Wollotuka Institute provides support for students and staff seeking advice regarding Indigenous matters.

The Wollotuka Institute acknowledges the traditional Aboriginal owners of the lands on which our offices are located:

- The Pambalong Clan of the Awabakal Nation - Callaghan Campus
- Darkinjung People - Ourimbah Campus
- Biripai People - Port Macquarie Campus

The Wollotuka Institute consolidates all Indigenous activities of the University into one operational and strategic body in order to provide high level advice and leadership to the University’s strategic priority and commitment to Indigenous Collaboration. The four functions of the Institute incorporate Academic, Research, Indigenous Student Engagement and Experience and Indigenous Staff Employment and Development.

For information email: wollotuka@newcastle.edu.au or telephone 4921 6863
http://www.newcastle.edu.au/current-students/support/indigenous-student-support

c. Access and Transition

The Access and Transition team provide a central coordination point for activities relating to three main stages of the student lifecycle: pre enrolment (which may include areas such as pathways and/or preparation programs), orientation and the first year experience.

Retention activities are also coordinated in this team. This includes phoning and connecting with students who are identified by areas of the University as being disadvantaged or as having difficulties during their study. The staff connect with students to offer support, advice and act as a triage to other services.

d. Student Advisors
Student advisors meet with students who require advice and support with any issues during their study. Student Advisors offer guidance on matters such as study planning, ESOS requirements and advising on the correct avenues for the student to access for the best outcomes. Academics should contact the Student Advice team or refer students to their service for added help.

**e. Campus Care Program**

The Campus Care program has been set up as a central point of enquiry for information, advice and support in managing inappropriate, concerning or threatening behaviours.

Campus Care staff will provide leadership and support at all stages of responding to complex and sensitive situations. Students and staff are encouraged to ask for assistance if they:

- Feel threatened or unsafe
- Have concerns about someone else’s behaviour or wellbeing
- Have received unwanted attention
- Are worried about someone harming themselves or someone else

Contact: 18600 or +612 4921 8600, campuscare@newcastle.edu.au

**f. Careers service information**

Our career services and resources have been designed to assist all current students and graduates in developing the capacity to make informed career and study choices to achieve their career goals. The service assists students to find both part time work while studying and graduate roles on the completion of their degree.

CareerHub is the site for delivering online careers services. Students will need to go to this site to book appointments, register to attend workshops and events, find job listings, and a range of other useful career information resources and links.

**Callaghan:**
Location: Level 2, Student Services Centre, Cnr Richardson & Design Roads
Postal: University Drive, Callaghan NSW 2308
Ph: +61 2 4921 5588
Fax: +61 2 4921 6926
Email: careers@newcastle.edu.au
Hours: 9am to 5pm, Monday to Friday

**Central Coast:**
A full range of professional services are available to current students and recent graduates of the University of Newcastle and TAFE (Ourimbah) and to employers.
Location: Student Support Unit
Postal: PO Box 127, Chittaway Road, Ourimbah 2258
Ph: +61 2 4348 4060
Fax: +61 2 4348 4065
Email: student-support-ourimbah@newcastle.edu.au
Hours: 10am to 4pm, Monday to Friday

**Port Macquarie:**
Students at the Port Macquarie campus can access support services through TAFE Careers and Counselling Service.
Ph: +61 2 6581 6200

g. Complaints

The University of Newcastle is committed to maintaining and enhancing fair, equitable and safe work practices and promoting positive relationships with its staff and students. It is also committed to the development and maintenance of an effective system of complaints management and to an organisational structure that responds to complaints and conflict in a positive way.

The University recognises an individual’s right to make a complaint about University operations, services, staff, students, or people associated with the University. The Complaints Resolution Policy provides a single system to deal with all types of complaints, ranging from minor administrative matters to more serious deeply held grievances concerning unfair, unjust or unreasonable behaviour. The policy aims to ensure that complaints are addressed quickly, fairly and resolved at the lowest possible level.

Contact: complaints@newcastle.edu.au
Web: http://www.newcastle.edu.au/current-students/support/solving-issues/complaints

h. Counselling

Student Support Advisors (Health and Welfare) and Counsellors provide a free and confidential service where students can discuss any issue whether personal or related to their studies. Issues may include - adjustment to University, personal and family difficulties, anxiety, depression, bereavement, relationship problems, situational stress and course-related problems such as examination anxiety, motivation etc. Students are generally first booked with a Student Support Advisor and can usually be seen on the same day or within one or two days. They will assess the student’s current situation and provide immediate assistance. This may include booking them in to see a psychologist or social worker or connecting them with other services that are better able to help them address whatever difficulties they are experiencing.

Contact Counselling
Callaghan:
By Phone: (02) 4921 6622
By Email: counselling@newcastle.edu.au (Please provide a phone number in the email so we can contact you to discuss available appointment times.)
In Person: Room HA209, Hunter Building, opposite the Griffith Duncan theatre stairs.

Central Coast:
By Phone: (02) 4348 4060
By Email: student-support-ourimbah@newcastle.edu.au
In Person: Room: Student Support Unit, adjacent to the Library.

Port Macquarie
By Phone: Call Student Support Services on 6581 6200.
In Person: Building A.


i. Adverse circumstances information

The University recognises that during a student’s program of study, illness or other serious circumstances beyond their control may affect their preparation for, or performance in, an end of term or end of year examination or assessment item. In this case, students should be directed to the UON website Adverse Circumstances page, located in MyUON, which contains the procedures, allowable circumstances, and application form and submission details.

j. Dean of Students

The Dean of Students works to ensure that all students receive fair and equitable treatment at the University of Newcastle across all courses and campuses. The Dean of Students role includes providing information and advice and helping students resolve problems of an academic nature. The Dean of Students may bring the students problem to the attention of the relevant staff member or help make contact with one of the other University Services.


The Dean of Students may also refer you to the Office of Student Advocacy. The Office of Student Advocacy provides free and confidential assistance in navigating the rules and regulations of the University. Student Advocates can help with a range of things including providing an understanding ear to hear your issues, providing information and advice about policies and procedures, assisting you with appeals, and support you with mediation, negotiation and advocacy to resolve your issues.


k. Support for Students with Disability

The Accessibility team offers practical assistance and advice to students with a permanent or temporary disability or medical condition. Students with a disability are encouraged to register for support. Students must provide appropriate documentation and may be eligible for a range of support and assistance. Accessibility Advisors prepare an Academic Integration Plan (AIP) for each student which outlines the reasonable adjustments needed to allow them to participate in the learning environment.

Newcastle campus (Callaghan)
Level 2, Student Services Centre, Callaghan Campus

Telephone: (02) 4921 6622
Fax: (02) 4921 7065
Email: student-disability@newcastle.edu.au

Central Coast campus (Ourimbah):
Student Support Unit. Ourimbah Campus

Telephone: (02) 4348 4060
Fax: (02) 4348 4065
Email: student-disability@newcastle.edu.au

Port Macquarie campus
Students with a disability studying at the Port Macquarie campus can contact the TAFE Counselling Service in Block C or on 6581 6212 to register and discuss their support requirements.

l. Adaptive Technology Centre – Callaghan Campus

The Adaptive Technology Centre is provided for students with a range of disabilities. Students are usually referred by an Accessibility Advisor as part of their Academic Integration Plan. Services include:

- An accessible format translation service for students with a print disability;
- Training and assistance in the use of adaptive technology to enable students with a disability to use mainstream software applications and to access University and course related information systems;
- Provision of assistance to students with a disability in accessing the services offered by the library (e.g. physical retrieval of library resources and photocopying);
- Provision of equipment for loan to assist students with a disability to access and record information;
• Informing students with a disability and staff about the access issues that may be experienced as well as the technological strategies for overcoming these access issues; and
• Provision of information and advice to students and staff regarding the purchase, installation and operation of adaptive equipment and software.

**Location:** The Centre is located in the Auchmuty Library, level three (main entrance level), behind the "Video Conferencing Room".

Callaghan Campus  
**Telephone:** (02) 4921 8684 or (02) 4921 7046  
**Fax:** (02) 4921 7410  
**Email:** student-disability@newcastle.edu.au

**m. Student Equity and Diversity**

The University values equity, diversity, and social justice and strives to create a learning and working environment that reflects and celebrates diversity, practises affirmative action, offers equal opportunity and is free from discrimination and harassment.

**Contacts:** Equity and Diversity  
Coordinator Phone: 49216622  
Level 2, Student Services Centre  
Callaghan Campus

**n. Financial assistance for students**

The Students Loans Scheme provides interest free emergency loans on a short term basis to students who demonstrate genuine need and whose continued study might be placed in jeopardy if assistance were not available. Loans may be approved for rent, bond, living expenses and textbooks. Loans are NOT available for the payment of HECS or to purchase capital items such as computers or cars.

Hardship grants and placement grants are available for eligible students. Details of these can be found at:


In emergencies grocery and fuel vouchers can also be provided.

**Callaghan:**  
Student Services Centre  
Telephone: (02) 49216626  
Email: student-loansandwelfare@newcastle.edu.au

**Ourimbah:**  
Student Support Unit  
Telephone: (02) 4348 4060  
Fax: (02) 4348 4065

**Port Macquarie:**  
Students based at the Port Macquarie campus can access financial assistance by either contacting the Counselling & Careers staff on:  
Telephone: (02) 6581 6200 or  
contacting staff at the Callaghan campus on:  
Telephone: (02) 4921 6622  
Email: student-loansandwelfare@newcastle.edu.au  
o. Health services

The University Health Services are staffed by doctors and nurses who understand the medical problems of students. They provide both emergency and routine medical care for students and staff. Appointments are usually necessary but urgent appointments are available most days. Students are bulk billed so there are usually no out of pocket costs for consultations but there may be charges for vaccinations and medications. Some of the areas the Health Services can help include:

- Treatment of illnesses and injuries.
- Women's health care including contraception, pap smears, pregnancy testing and advice, and antenatal care.
- Sexual health advice.
- Vaccinations, including travel immunisations and advice.
- Immunisations required for students in health related programs.
- Skin checks.
- Assistance with emotional and personal difficulties.
- Mental health services including psychologists, mental health nurse and specialist psychiatrist.
- Referral to specialists, imaging services, pathology, and physiotherapy.

Callaghan:
Hours: Monday to Friday 9:00am to 5:00pm
(02) 4921 6000.
Level 1, Student Services Centre, Callaghan Campus

Central Coast:
Hours: Tuesday, Wednesday and Friday 9:00am to 5:00pm (02) 4348 4060.
Student Support Unit on the Central Coast campus (adjacent to the Library).

After Hours: GPAccess After Hours Phone 1300 130 147 http://www.gpaccess.com.au/
Web: http://www.newcastle.edu.au/current---students/campus-environment/medical-services

p. Learning Development

Most students find that thinking, reading and writing for University is a new, and sometimes challenging, experience. Learning Development can help all students learn and write effectively at all stages of their degree program. We do this by teaching Academic Skills, English Language proficiency, and Maths skills relevant to most disciplines across the university.

On our Blackboard site you will find:
- details of workshop programs
- the registration process for workshops and consultations
- online resources
- up-to-date information about what we offer

Web: http://www.newcastle.edu.au/current---students/learning/study-skills

q. Security services

The University Security Service can provide a safe escort home, assist if something has been stolen, lost or are in trouble. All security staff can be identified by their security uniform and name badge.

Callaghan:
Emergency Calls/General Security Enquiries/Reports - (02) 4921 5888
Shuttle Bus - 0407 951 470

Central Coast:
Emergency Calls/General Security Enquiries/Reports - (02) 4348 4222 Shuttle Bus - 0414 411 799
**International student engagement**

The International Student Engagement team at UON Global is here to foster a sense of cultural exchange, inclusive community, and a global experience for both domestic and international students, through the development and administration of programs that engage students with industry and community, in Australia and abroad.

International Student Engagement Officers are trained to provide opportunities for students to engage with their classmates, University, and wider community, through a variety of programs and initiatives, to make their time at the University of Newcastle a rich and academically rewarding experience. To get in contact with an Engagement Officer contact:

**Callaghan**  
International-engagement@newcastle.edu.au

**Ourimbah**  
International-ourimbah@newcastle.edu.au

**Sydney**  
International-sydney@newcastle.edu.au

The team coordinate a number of programs and initiatives for international students to participate in throughout the year. These initiatives include Harmony Week, GOALSS (Games for Overseas and Local Staff and Students), Beach Soccer, Cheap Chewsdays, mentor programs, as well as leadership programs such as iLEAD Plus.

Web: [http://www.newcastle.edu.au/international/while-you-are-here/support](http://www.newcastle.edu.au/international/while-you-are-here/support)

**s. iLEAD Plus**

The University of Newcastle’s Leadership Experience and Development (iLEAD Plus) Program is an extra-curricular Leadership Program that enables students to participate in additional activities on top of their regular degree studies. It gives them the opportunity to gain experience and skills in the areas of leadership, build career-readiness and enhance a global awareness. As part of the program, students attend dynamic, interactive lectures to learn about global issues and build leadership experience. They meet with highly respected international figures – people who are famous in their fields of expertise, who have travelled the world, who have led and been part of significant international events and organisations. They will build new skills through their own international experiences which could include student exchange, international conferences, volunteering, internships or community work.

Why should students participate in iLead Plus?

- Looks great on a resume.
- Networking opportunities with students from around the world.
- Hear from talented national and international leaders across a range of fields.
- Get involved with the local community.
- International Exchange and volunteer experiences available.
- Free to participate and no exams.
- On completion, recognition on their Australian Higher Education Graduation Statement (AHEGS).

Web: [http://www.newcastle.edu.au/international/while-you-are-here/get-involved](http://www.newcastle.edu.au/international/while-you-are-here/get-involved)
Student Mobility

Study Overseas (Outbound from Newcastle)
The University of Newcastle has a student exchange program with over 120 partners in over 30 countries. Students can undertake a semester/year overseas or participate in an academic short course during the summer and winter breaks. Students are required to have a credit agreement signed off by their Program Convenor prior to leaving. It is the Convenors role to assess overseas course outlines and approve credit where deemed appropriate. For more details on what is involved please see: http://www.newcastle.edu.au/studyoverseas or email study-overseas@newcastle.edu.au

Study Abroad (Inbound to Newcastle)
The University of Newcastle receives around 600 study abroad/exchange students per year from across the world. Students coming to Newcastle do not need credit assessed by the Convenor, however, may on occasion require courses to be approved for enrolment. The courses requiring approval will have enrolment restrictions and/or requisites. Courses without an enrolment restriction is available to study abroad students (electives in course handbook). For more information email study-abroad@newcastle.edu.au

t. Peer Assisted Study Sessions (PASS)

PASS is an informal approach to learning that provides peer-led study sessions in which students can work together to better understand course content. PASS leaders are selected because of their high achievement in the same course they lead PASS Sessions. Data and research show that students who attend PASS on a regular basis record grades that are higher than those who do not attend at all. PASS assists students to mix with other students in the same discipline and to learn basic University study skills and concepts that are aligned with the specific course material. A limited number of courses are selected to participate in PASS based on high failure or withdrawal rates.

Contact: PASS@newcastle.edu.au
Web: http://www.newcastle.edu.au/current-students/learning/study-skills/peer-study-assistance
Appendix 1: Program Convenor Role Description  
*Extract from Section 7 of the Program Management Procedure Manual (Fourth edition effective from 1 January 2016)*

7. Management and Quality Assurance

7.1. Program Convenor

7.1.1. Definition and Appointment

A “Program Convenor” is the academic staff member of the University appointed by the Pro Vice-Chancellor of a Faculty with overall responsibility for the management and quality of a program (and the courses offered within that program) leading to an award of the University.

The Program Convenor may be a Head of School, Head of Discipline or an academic appointed specifically for the task, depending on the structure of the Faculty.

i. each program is required to have a duly appointed Program Convenor;

ii. where more than one Faculty is involved (for example, combined programs) the appointment of the Program Convenor should be based on decisions of the relevant Pro Vice-Chancellors;

iii. where a program is offered on a number of campuses or in conjunction with a third party provider the Pro Vice-Chancellor may appoint Assistant Program Convenors for each campus to assist the Program Convenor;

iv. a Program Convenor will typically be an academic at a Level C or above;

v. the Pro Vice-Chancellor will determine the term of office of a Program Convenor at the time of the appointment. The usual term of office for a Program Convenor will be two years;

vi. the Pro Vice-Chancellor may designate an alternate to act as Program Convenor in the absence of the appointed staff member;

vii. the Program Convenor must be appointed at least 6 weeks prior to the start of any teaching period; and

viii. each Pro Vice-Chancellor will maintain a list of Program Convenors within their Faculty as a quality assurance mechanism when managing programs.

7.1.2. Roles & Responsibilities

The management and quality of existing programs are primarily the responsibility of the Program Convenor with support from the relevant Pro Vice-Chancellor and Head(s) of School.
i. Program Management.

A Program Convenor as Chair of the Program Management Group is responsible for:

a. writing the Annual Report on Program(s) for submission to first Faculty Board in a year. Refer to Clause 7.4 Program – Annual Program Reports;

b. overseeing the development of the documentation required for an external review of the program. Refer to Section 8 External Program Review; and

c. any other program related activity as required by the Pro Vice-Chancellor of the Faculty in which the program exists or is the lead Faculty for a combined degree.

7.1.3. Program Quality

The Program Convenor is responsible to the Pro Vice-Chancellor for program conduct, quality and performance and thus will be responsible for:

i. assisting the Head(s) of School to ensure:

   a. the quality and accuracy of course outlines and other materials used in the program;

   b. adequate staffing and resourcing of courses within the program; and

   c. where a program is offered in conjunction with a third party provider, that they comply with any academic contractual agreements described in a memorandum of understanding.

ii. assisting Course Coordinators for core courses to ensure congruency of assessment tasks with the learning objectives, and that the instructions, requirements and criteria are clear, appropriately weighted and timed;

iii. supporting peer review of teaching into the program;

iv. ensuring that content meets the learning outcomes for the program, and that course objectives are consistent with Graduate Learning Outcomes (Profile Statements and Attribute) Mapping;

v. identifying possible issues in students’ timetables;

vi. monitoring the program and addressing issues which may affect student success;

vii. monitoring program performance including admission criteria, rates of attrition, progression, any articulation arrangements and professional or accreditation requirements; and

viii. regularly reviewing and evaluating the performance of the program in accordance with University policy.

7.1.4. Student Matters

Program Convenors are responsible for contributing to the experience of students in the program and thus for:

i. engaging with students and providing an approachable and supportive environment;
ii. endorsing aspects of a student’s program of study if an amended program is required;

iii. providing recommendations on matters pertaining to the progress of students through the program, in consultation with the relevant Course Coordinators;

iv. facilitating active engagement by relevant academic staff in student orientation and transition activities for the program;

v. developing effective means of communicating with students about the program and being responsive to their feedback. This should include meeting with students from the program at least once per teaching term in an environment enabling informal input and general group discussion (including face to face or online discussion forums);

vi. considering applications for credit and articulation in consultation with the Course Coordinator and in accordance with the University Policy; and

vii. making and keeping appropriate written or electronic records of advice provided to students.

7.2. Program Management Groups

7.2.1. All programs are required to have a Program Management Group. The generic Program Management Group Terms of Reference are available as Appendix 2 to this Manual.

7.3. External (Professional or Industry) Advisory Groups

7.3.1. Each program or suite of programs (i.e. cluster of coursework programs from the same discipline or program area) with professional accreditation will be required to have an External (Professional or Industry) Advisory Group. The generic External (Professional or Industry) Advisory Group Terms of Reference are available as Appendix 3 to this Manual.

7.4. Programs – Annual Program Reports

7.4.1. An annual program report on the performance of each academic program over the previous year will be prepared for the relevant Faculty Board by the Program Convenor. The annual program report for each program will usually be submitted to the first Faculty Board meeting of the year following delivery.

7.4.2. To promote efficiencies and to achieve the best outcome from the review process, programs that are similar in nature should be reported in a single document. (Programs are not required to produce an annual report in the year an external program review is scheduled).

i. Using the Annual Report template (Appendix 4, and supporting report templates: Appendices 5-8), the report will be produced by the Program Convenor in liaison with relevant academics and Faculty and School professional staff.

ii. The annual program report will highlight successes, areas for improvement and potential development. It will also contain an action plan outlining actions to be undertaken to address the goals and issues identified within the report (Appendix 5, Annual Action Plan Report template). Where an external accreditation has been completed within a 12 month period, the accreditation report can be used to supplement the annual program review.

iii. The annual program report will be evidenced based and include
supporting data. For example, data indicating student demand, success and satisfaction levels.

iv. Current student and graduate data can be obtained by the Faculty from the Program Performance Report (PPR) and in the Program and Core Course Reports which will be provided by Strategy, Planning and Performance (SPP) annually. Other relevant data not available in these reports may be requested from SPP.

v. Following the submission of each annual program report to the relevant Faculty Board, the Pro Vice-Chancellor of the relevant Faculty must submit a summary report for all programs offered by the Faculty including any action plans to the Program and Course Approval Committee, through the Teaching and Learning Committee, for consideration.

vi. A copy of each annual program report will be forwarded to SPP after submission to the relevant Faculty Board. SPP will monitor the implementation of any actions highlighted in the annual program reports for reporting to the Program and Course Approval Committee, through the Teaching and Learning Committee.

vii. Annual program reports will be retained by the University through Records Management Office for use in external program reviews.

viii. The Program and Course Approval Committee, together with the Teaching and Learning Committee:

   a. will provide an annual summary report on the annual program reports usually to the second meeting of the Academic Senate of the year; and

   b. may seek advice from the Pro Vice-Chancellor when a program has consistently performed poorly, as to whether it should be suspended or discontinued.
Appendix 2: Preparing Annual Program Report Guidelines

The aim of this document is to provide guidelines to help Program Convenors prepare Annual Program Reports.

Strategy, Planning and Performance Team will also assist you by providing feedback on the program report you have drafted, using this document as a guideline, after your report has been submitted.

Our aim is to let the authors (generally the Program Convenors) know their report does not just fall into a black hole; and to make sure they are addressing the issues evident in the various layers of data and information about their program.

Before you start writing your report: review the data that are available to help you prepare the Annual Report, particularly the Program and Core Courses Report; and AGS (GDS and CEQ) and SFP reports, if these exist. All of these reports provide trend data over a number of years.

If these are not there, check the share drives to see if they exist. If it is a small program they may not.

Consider the:
- trends in EFSLS over recent years (increases/decreases) Note that the size of changes over time should be considered in light of the absolute numbers involved and the impact, if any, on delivery of the program.
- trends within specific demographic groups. For example, the number of Indigenous students in this program, noting the University in total has 2.3% Indigenous students. How many low SES students are in the program, what is the proportion of mature age students? Are you considering their learning requirements and if so, what actions are you taking?

Are there very high/low or increasing/decreasing success rates overall or for specific demographic groups?
- in term of SPR, anything lower than .85 deserves comment; anything lower than .80 warrants an action:
- in terms of attrition, anything approaching .20 deserves comment and below that warrants an action
- very high/low or increasing/decreasing success rates for students from this program in specific core courses
  - anything more than 5% below the program average deserves comment
  - anything more than 10% below the program average deserves an action
  - a success rate any less than 80% deserves an explanation and action

What do current students say in the SFP and what do graduates report in the Australian Graduate Survey?
- Are you students getting employed, or are they mostly seeking employment?
- Are there high or low levels of student and graduate satisfaction in the SFP and AGS surveys, and what are the students are saying in those surveys (when comments are provided)
  - anything below 3.7 for Good Teaching Scale and/or Overall Satisfaction requires comment and action
  - high non-employment rates requires comment

When reading your draft Annual Report, ask yourself:
- Have I identified the program’s strengths and the issues evident in the data, as I understand them to be?
- Is there a link between the report/action plan and the data, or are there gaps in the report/action plan?
- Have I provided enough explanation, or does the report require further discussion?
## Appendix 3: UON Survey Register

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Student Surveys</th>
<th>Timing</th>
<th>Process</th>
<th>Reporting</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Student Feedback on Courses (SFC)</strong></td>
<td>All UON courses are surveyed <em>every time</em> they are offered.</td>
<td>SPP prepares an annual calendar of SFCs and forwards these to academics several times each year.</td>
<td>Quantitative reports are provided on the university website, through CAR and Faculty Quality Assurance Folders for individual courses.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>To gather student perceptions of their experiences of individual courses.</td>
<td>SPP notifies HoS, executive officers, course coordinators and program conveners of an impending SFC survey.</td>
<td>Comments reports for each course are provided to individual Course Coordinators* and placed in Faculty Quality Assurance Folders. All comments are read and edited to remove inappropriate language and references to other teachers. Access to the comments is restricted to selected faculty staff.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>This includes onshore and offshore semester, trimester and block courses.</td>
<td>SPP follows a prescribed series of promotional activities to encourage students to complete the survey, including email, blackboard, website, digital signage, social media and in class notifications.</td>
<td>Access to the comments is restricted to selected faculty staff.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>* An alternative version is offered to students in the JMP, including UNE students.</td>
<td><strong>Students can access their surveys via a link from an email, the MyUON student portal and from BlackBoard.</strong></td>
<td>Quantitative summary reports for Schools are prepared by SPP for each HoS, and placed on NINA, the university website and Faculty Quality Assurance Folders.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

| **Student Feedback on Teaching (SFT)** | Semester courses: to provide staff with flexibility SFTs are offered in 3 rounds: week 6, week 8 and week 10. Trimester courses: week 8 Trimester (Singapore) courses: week 8 Block courses: as per the SPP Calendar Academic staff are encouraged to undertake at least one SFT survey of their teaching each year. | In addition to a published annual calendar, SPP notifies HoS, program conveners, executive officers and course coordinators of an impending SFT survey. Academic staff submit requests to SPP, using an online request form, and supply a student list if they teach only a subset of students in a course. (e.g. a tutorial, lab etc) SPP and Schools collaborate to encourage students to complete the survey, through email, blackboard, website, and in-class notification. | Quantitative and Comments reports are produced and provided in PDF format via email to the staff member who requested it. |
| To gather feedback to assist individual teachers develop and improve their teaching. | **Quantitative reports are usually sent within 1 week of the survey closing.** | Quantitative reports are usually sent within 1 week of the survey closing. All comments are read and edited to remove inappropriate language and references to other teachers. |
| This includes onshore and offshore semester, trimester and block courses. | **All comments are read and edited to remove inappropriate language and references to other teachers.** | All comments are read and edited to remove inappropriate language and references to other teachers. |

* Course population and response minimum thresholds must be met. For courses below threshold, academic staff may contact their Head of School, Faculty QA Officer, Program Convener, Assistant Dean Teaching and Learning, or School Executive Officer to access SFC comments.

*Course population and response minimum thresholds must be met.* For courses below threshold, academic staff may contact their Head of School, Faculty QA Officer, Program Convener, Assistant Dean Teaching and Learning, or School Executive Officer to access SFC comments.
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</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Course Health Check (CHC)</strong></td>
<td>This survey is conducted annually during semester terms.</td>
<td>SPP, in collaboration with Schools, identify high risk courses which require additional data based on student numbers, previous pass rates, withdrawal rates and low satisfaction levels.</td>
<td>A report including quantitative and qualitative data is produced and provided in PDF format to individual course coordinators and HoS.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A snapshot of student perceptions of their experiences of individual courses early in the semester, enabling intervention and swift changes during the course to improve student experiences where needed.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Student Feedback on WiL (SFW)</strong></td>
<td>This survey is conducted annually. Timing to be confirmed.</td>
<td>SPP, in collaboration with Schools and individual course coordinators, develop a schedule based on placement times for individual courses.</td>
<td>Quantitative and Comments reports are produced and provided in PDF format via email to individual course coordinators and HoS.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>To gather student perceptions of their experiences during placement courses.</td>
<td></td>
<td>SPP notifies HoS, executive officers, course coordinators and program conveners of an impending survey.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>SPP follows a prescribed series of promotional activities to encourage students to complete the survey, including email, blackboard, and in class notifications when appropriate.</td>
<td>SPP notifies HoS, executive officers, course coordinators and program conveners of an impending survey.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Students can access their surveys via a link from an email or from the MyUON student portal and from BlackBoard.</td>
<td>SPP follows a prescribed series of promotional activities to encourage students to complete the survey, including email, blackboard, and in class notifications when appropriate.</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Student Experience Survey (SES) and Student Feedback on Programs (SFP)</strong></td>
<td>All undergraduate programs are surveyed each year in the national Student Experience Survey (SES).</td>
<td>SPP notifies HoS, program conveners, executive officers and course co-ordinators of an impending SFP.</td>
<td>Individual Program and a university summary report are prepared by SPP.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>To gather student feedback on perceived quality of individual programs.</td>
<td>Postgraduate coursework programs (bi-annually) and enabling programs are surveyed in the Student Feedback on Programs survey (SFP).</td>
<td>SPP and Faculties collaborate to encourage students to complete the survey, through email, blackboard, website, posters and in class notification.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>This survey is conducted every second year from 2010.</td>
<td>SPP and Faculties collaborate to encourage students to complete the survey, through email, blackboard, website, posters and in class notification.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Student Feedback on the University of Newcastle (SFUN)</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td>SPP design the survey content and format in consultation with stakeholders.</td>
<td>Reports are prepared by SPP according to the area of service provision, summarising quantitative and qualitative findings.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>To gather student feedback on university services, systems and facilities.</td>
<td></td>
<td>SPP design the survey content and format in consultation with stakeholders.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>SPP notifies service directors, HoS, course co-ordinators and program conveners of an impending SFUN survey.</td>
<td>SPP, Faculties and others collaborate to encourage students to complete the survey, through email, blackboard, website, posters and in class notification.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>SPP, Faculties and others collaborate to encourage students to complete the survey, through email, blackboard, website, posters and in class notification.</td>
<td>SPP, Faculties and others collaborate to encourage students to complete the survey, through email, blackboard, website, posters and in class notification.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Higher Degree Research (HDR)</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Survey Name</td>
<td>Conducted annually:</td>
<td>Content designed by:</td>
<td>Produced by:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>------------------------------------------------</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>HDR Programs Feedback Survey</td>
<td>by SPP.</td>
<td>Office of Graduate studies.</td>
<td>SPP produces aggregated tables for the Dean of Graduate Studies, to produce a report of findings.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student Services &amp; Amenities Fee (SSAF)</td>
<td>by SPP.</td>
<td>SPP design the survey content and format in consultation with stakeholders.</td>
<td>SPP produces aggregated tables for the SSAF committee to produce a report of findings.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SEAT Student Forum</td>
<td>by SPP.</td>
<td>SPP notifies all students.</td>
<td>SPP produces a report of findings for PVC (Academic).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Commencing Students Survey (CSS)</td>
<td>for Singapore, otherwise every second year from 2015.</td>
<td>All commencing students are invited to contribute - undergraduate and enabling students early in Semester 1, UON Singapore students in Trimester 3 (Singapore)</td>
<td>SPP produces report for Executive Committee and Student Experience Committee.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UON Prep Bridging</td>
<td>by SPP.</td>
<td>SPP design the survey content and format in consultation with stakeholders.</td>
<td>SPP produces report for the Centre for English Language and Foundation Studies.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>International Student Barometer (ISB)</td>
<td>since 2006.</td>
<td>Administered externally in collaboration with SPP, online survey</td>
<td>Report is produced by I-Graduate including comparative data to benchmark with other universities, which is distributed to International Office and Faculties.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Graduate Outcomes Survey (GOS)</td>
<td>in May and November each year.</td>
<td>Administered externally by the Social Research Centre (SRC).</td>
<td>National reports are produced and each university receives its own data and a sector (Universities Australia) national data set. Overall reports produced for DVC(A). GOS results are reported in the Program and Core Courses Report, on NINA and in the Faculty Quality Assurance Folder (by Program).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Survey Name</td>
<td>Timing</td>
<td>Process</td>
<td>Reporting</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>---------------------------------------------</td>
<td>------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>---------------------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>GOS Longitudinal Survey (GOS-L)</strong></td>
<td>Commenced in November 2015.</td>
<td>Externally administered online by SRC</td>
<td>Report produced by SRC</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Externally administered by SRC to graduates 3 years after completing the GOS.</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Library Survey</strong></td>
<td>Conducted biannually through an external provider, Insync Surveys, on behalf of the Council of Australian University Librarians (CAUL)</td>
<td>Externally administered</td>
<td>Reports available from the Library</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>External survey of library users.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Staff Surveys</strong></td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Staff Climate Survey (Your Voice)</strong></td>
<td>Every one to two years. Scheduled for May 2017.</td>
<td>Conducted online by the Your Voice Project, Macquarie University.</td>
<td>Report are prepared by the external group and distributed to faculties and units for discussion and response.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>To identify staff perceptions of the university.</td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Staff Onboarding Survey</strong></td>
<td>Monthly survey of new staff, seeking feedback on their onboarding experience.</td>
<td>The survey is distributed by SPP to those employees who have reached 30+ days since their commencement within a particular month.</td>
<td>Monthly and quarterly reports are prepared by SPP for distribution to HRS.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>To improve the experience of new employees at UON</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>UniForum</strong></td>
<td>Annually in February</td>
<td>The UniForum Professional Staff Activity Survey collects information on the activity and function of professional staff involved in administration and support services. This information is used to benchmark the UON against other universities.</td>
<td>The data will be analysed from a broad university wide perspective, ensuring holistic transformative change is implemented</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UniForum is a three-year benchmarking project conducted on an annual basis.</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Staff Exit Survey</strong></td>
<td>Monthly survey of exiting staff, seeking feedback on their reasons for leaving and their level of satisfaction with UON</td>
<td>The survey is distributed by SPP to exiting employees in the last 2 weeks of employment</td>
<td>Annual report produced for HRS.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>IT Survey</strong></td>
<td>Annually in June</td>
<td>Externally administered by Systems Thinking and sent to all university staff and students</td>
<td>IT</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Library Survey</strong></td>
<td>Conducted biannually through an external provider, Insync Surveys, on behalf of the Council of Australian University Librarians (CAUL)</td>
<td>Externally administered</td>
<td>Reports available from the Library</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Appendix 4: Student Feedback Communication Guidelines

Communicating results of student surveys back to staff and students, deciding on actions to take and reporting back on outcomes.

1. Overview

i. It is important that student feedback is presented to staff as a developmental tool for them to improve the programs and courses they coordinate and teach.

ii. The positive aspects of the survey should be emphasised; the negative aspects should be presented as opportunities for improvement.

iii. For feedback to be effective it needs to be responded to in a timely way, with the development of appropriate actions, and the closure of communication loops with all those involved, as soon as practical.

iv. Heads of Schools and/or Program Convenors are able to request a meeting with Strategy, Planning and Performance (SPP) staff to discuss the raw student comments for a course, on providing an appropriate rationale, and on the condition that student confidentiality is maintained.

v. All survey data, and mechanisms to feedback summary results to staff and students, must be handled discreetly and sensitively, whilst ensuring any issues raised are appropriately addressed.

2. Reporting to staff

i. Prepare a Departmental and or discipline/subject specific summary of the key themes of the survey for sharing with teaching staff, and to be delivered initially at a staff meeting rather than by email.

ii. Prepare Faculty wide summaries identifying recurring themes, to encourage Faculty wide discussion and collaboration, and where appropriate, to enable an integrated and holistic approach to addressing issues and sharing exemplary practices.

iii. Celebrate those courses that have rated highly, and note the positive aspects most commented on by students.

iv. Limit distribution of detailed course-specific information to those who need to see it, particularly where sensitive issues have been raised in a course.

v. Where there are genuine issues that need addressing organise a discreet conversation with the appropriate staff first, before any course specific comments are distributed. This will enable the talking through of issues, in a calm and safe manner, and assess their validity or otherwise.

vi. If appropriate, and should a significant issue have arisen, consider adjusting or rephrasing comments that might cause offense, anxiety or controversy, without undermining the meaning/intention of the comment.

vii. If a valid issue arises from the evaluations an action plan is put in place to ensure that the issue is resolved prior to the next delivery of that course.

This could be developed in consultation with SPP, and in liaison with other relevant support sections, such as Centre for Teaching and Learning, as appropriate.
3. Reporting to students

i. It is important that the feedback loop is closed by talking or communicating in other ways with students about their feedback and how this will be used to inform revisions to a program and or course in a timely manner.

ii. The closing of the ‘feedback loop’ needs to occur in ways that ensures the safety of any student who contributed to the survey.

iii. The feedback to students needs to emphasise the positive aspects as much as the negative aspects of any student evaluations.

iv. In the course outlines, in the next offering, record a summary of student feedback and a brief report on how the feedback has been considered and the actions taken in response.

v. Discuss, at the first lecture, what changes have been made to a course as a response to student feedback.

vi. Email students who have completed a course what changes have been made as a response to their feedback.

vii. Place on Blackboard what changes have been made to courses/programs as a result of previous student feedback.

viii. Faculty wide forums could be held with students and staff, on an annual basis, for the PVC or others to comment to students on any faculty wide actions/innovations that have arisen as part of this feedback.

ix. Program wide feedback sessions could be held with students and staff, on a semester basis, to feedback on actions arisen as a result of students’ feedback, as well as other developments within the program.

x. Student representatives should receive summaries of actions to give them the opportunity to feedback to the student groups.

xi. Posters could be distributed through a School and/or Faculty bullet-pointing how the Faculty/School is responding to student feedback, as well as other developments within the program. These could also be placed on Blackboard.

4. Reporting back on outcomes

i. Provide response to SPP for the purposes of developing a scope of University responses

This will enable opportunities for cross Faculty dialogue and collaboration, and the sharing of practices and resources.

ii. Consult with SPP as to the effectiveness or otherwise of the actions implemented.