

## QUALITY ASSURANCE POLICY

<b>Policy owner</b>	Executive Management Committee
<b>Policy category</b>	Governance
<b>Policy status</b>	Approved
<b>Approval body</b>	MIECAT Council
<b>Last amended</b>	20 <sup>th</sup> June 2023

### PURPOSE:

This policy seeks to ensure the quality of MIECAT's operations and its academic outcomes. It sets the standards to guide, monitor, measure and improve operational and academic activities at MIECAT and outlines various systems and processes used to implement continuous quality assurance in a systematic and consistent manner.

### SCOPE:

This policy applies to all staff and contractors across all areas of MIECAT.

### POLICY AND PROCEDURES

#### 1. Principles

- 1.1 Quality assurance processes support MIECAT's strategic direction and legislative requirements.
- 1.2 Staff, students, and stakeholders will be involved as partners in enhancing and assuring education quality.
- 1.3 Processes and practices will be systematic, sustainable, and transparent.

- 1.4 Roles and accountabilities for implementation of quality assurance procedures and processes will be assigned and clearly communicated to assist in developing a culture of continuous improvement.
- 1.5 Decision-making will be evidence-based and externally referenced.
- 1.6 Findings will be used to identify future improvements.
- 1.7 Outcomes from quality assurance processes will be disseminated.

## 2. Framework

Quality assurance at MIECAT is underpinned by a 4-stage cycle of inquiry: Plan, Do, Review, Improve. This cycle embodies continuous improvement and will be applied to the following:

- 2.1 achievement of mission / vision and institutional goals including corporate and academic governance and as defined in MIECAT's strategic planning and business plan;
- 2.2 alignment with the Higher Education Standards including course design and evaluation; academic and research integrity;
- 2.3 transparent processes including development and dissemination of policies and procedures;
- 2.4 achieving transformative quality in the teaching and learning environment and meeting the needs of all stakeholders including
  - students of accredited courses
  - academic and administrative staff
  - partner organisations from industry & community

This cycle will be underpinned by systems of review involving the collection and use of feedback from stakeholders; collation and analysis of quantitative and qualitative data, and external referencing. These mechanisms are detailed in the MIECAT QA conceptual framework.

## 3. Achievement of mission/vision and institutional goals

- 3.1 The MIECAT governance arrangements are developed to ensure that MIECAT has access to expertise that enables the organization to achieve high

standards of quality assurance comparable with other providers of higher education in Australia and internationally.

3.2 The MIECAT Council includes independent members with the MIECAT Director present as an ex-officio member. The MIECAT Human Research Ethics Committee has members who are independent to MIECAT and experienced in the delivery of higher education programs, or who have specific expertise required for their committee role.

3.3 The MIECAT governance arrangements (see Governance Charter including the Committees' terms of reference, and lines of reporting) ensure the following:

- that all relevant data (student evaluations of teaching and learning; staff evaluations of teaching and learning, progress and completion of enrolled students; student attrition; feedback through grievances and complaints, student and graduate experience data and any other feedback from stakeholders) is acted upon to ensure high quality academic programs are delivered and quality assurance procedures are adhered to;
- that mechanisms for external referencing including benchmarking academic performance are instigated, and that reports on all external referencing and benchmarking activities are received with any areas that require attention being acted upon;
- that consistent standards across all courses in different teaching formats are delivered;
- that best practice in management and administrative systems, policies and practices are implemented;
- that mechanisms for commissioning and undertaking independent academic and corporate governance reviews are in place, and that reports on such reviews are received by the academic and corporate governing bodies and any areas that require attention are acted upon.

3.4 Performance against the Strategic Plan and Business Goals will be reviewed annually by MIECAT Council and on an ongoing basis by the Executive Management Committee.

3.5 MIECAT is also required to report annually to the MIECAT members at the Annual General Meeting.

#### 4. Alignment with the Higher Education Standards

4.1 Quality assurance for MIECAT's teaching program is carried out through a system of internal and external review and reporting. In accordance with the MIECAT Course monitoring and review policy, the components of this system are:

- Interim reports: these will be provided to Education Committee by the coordinators of each subject. The Subject Coordinator reports include information on the make-up of the cohort enrolled in this subject, the academic performance, a review of subject administration and teaching and learning, and where applicable, subject-specific feedback from industry or community. Each subject report makes recommendations based on data from student experience surveys as well as qualitative feedback (from students in-class and MIECAT staff). The Course Coordinator will collate them into an interim Course Coordinator Report provided to Education Committee.
- An annual Course Coordinator's report: this is based on the subject coordinator reports is made to the Education Committee and tabled at Academic Board. It is consistent with the structure of subject coordinator reports and includes a review of the course's financial performance. This annual Course Coordinator report includes recommended changes to be considered by either Education Committee or Academic Board according to the type of change required.
- A comprehensive review of the Masters and Professional Doctorate courses: this review, with external input, is carried out once during each reaccreditation period to inform the next TEQSA accreditation application in accordance with the MIECAT Course monitoring and review policy.

4.2 Data sources and contributors for interim, annual and comprehensive course reviews comprise:

- student experience surveys conducted throughout the year, in line with the teaching timetable. They cover: selections and admissions, compulsory subjects, Masters subjects, Professional Doctorate subjects, graduate experience, and

- annual formal external referencing and benchmarking with external institution/s initiated and overseen by Education Committee. The institution to be involved, and the focus for benchmarking discussion, is approved each year by Academic Board. Education Committee reports on benchmarking to Academic Board. MIECAT also participates in the IHEA QILT which enables it to compare data with like organisations to identify areas for ongoing improvement and measure equivalence and sector standards. MIECAT shares a memorandum of understanding with a number of institutes that guides benchmarking approaches and processes in order to strengthen quality assurance across both institutions.

## 5. Transparent processes, policies and procedures

MIECAT recognises that a coherent and integrated policy framework is critical for effective and consistent governance and management. MIECAT progressively reviews policies and procedures (as outlined in the Policy development policy), at least every 5 years to ensure currency in practice and to maintain effective and consistent processes that are integrated across all areas of MIECAT. Reviews and updates also ensure compliance with the Higher Education Standards.

The Academic Board approves and monitors the implementation of policy on academic matters. These policies and procedures are developed by the Education Committee.

The Executive Management Committee performs the same functions in relation to the administrative and financial policies and processes of MIECAT.

Policies and procedures are communicated to staff and students through MIECAT's website, Sharepoint and during staff inductions and through email.

## 6. Achieving transformative quality

Various stakeholder feedback mechanisms are used to gather data to review institutional performance and identify areas for remedial action and continuous improvement. These include:

- Students, graduates, alums

- Student experience: internal student experience surveys and qualitative student feedback
- External student experience surveys in form of QILT SES
- Australian Graduate Surveys – through Quality Indicators for Learning and Teaching (QILT).
- Industry & Community
  - Annual Practicum Feedback Survey from practicum organisations will inform the Masters course
  - Examiner reports will inform the Professional Doctorate course
- Staff: Staff feedback as captured in Subject and Course Coordinator Reports.

Other Institutional performance indicators are considered to build on the performance of service delivery to ensure high quality educational outputs. These include retention and completion rates, student grievance and complaints, student and subject pass rates.

## **RESPONSIBILITY FOR IMPLEMENTATION**

The MIECAT Council has responsibility for MIECAT's:

- strategic direction
- academic and general reputation
- financial viability
- maintenance of high standards of conduct and probity

It therefore has ultimate responsibility for quality management. Sub-committees of Council play important roles in quality management as set out in their terms of reference.

The Academic Board has responsibility for the quality of academic programs and outcomes. Sub-committees of Academic Board play important roles in quality management as set out in their terms of reference.

## **KEY STAKEHOLDERS**

The MIECAT Council and all its governing committees which hold delegated authority; the Academic Board and all its committees which hold delegated authority, and all MIECAT staff both academic and administrative.

## **SUPPORTING DOCUMENTS**

Higher Education Standards Framework (Threshold Standards) 2021

Australian Qualifications Framework (AQF)

MIECAT QA Conceptual Framework

MIECAT Strategic Plan

MIECAT Business Plan

MIECAT Policy Development and Review Policy

MIECAT Suite of Student Experience Surveys

MIECAT External Referencing Policy

MIECAT Course Monitoring and Review policy

MIECAT Student Orientation Handbook

MIECAT Student Conduct Policy

MIECAT Grievance Handling and Resolution Policy

MIECAT Staff Handbook & Code of Conduct

MIECAT Student Assessment Policy

MIECAT Delegations Policy

## **VERSION HISTORY**

<b>Date of Issue</b>	<b>Version</b>	<b>Author</b>	<b>Summary of changes</b>
9 <sup>th</sup> June 2023	1.0	J. Mitchell	Draft for approval

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