

UNIVERSITY OF MELBOURNE
ACADEMIC PROGRAMS COMMITTEE
GUIDELINES FOR SHEPHERDS

DEFINITION

A shepherd is a member of the Academic Programs Committee with designated responsibility for one or more faculties or graduate schools. A shepherd's role is to:

- provide curriculum advice in the design of new subjects and new course proposals;
- provide guidance on the approval processes to be followed for new course proposals and major changes to existing courses;
- ensure that the faculties/graduate schools use the correct pathway for approvals and the appropriate forms and assist with liaison between the faculty/graduate school and the committees, as requested;
- provide comments on proposed changes to legislation of an academic nature and;
- provide advice to the committee on submissions coming from the faculties on matters detailed above.

NEW DEGREE (UNDERGRADUATE & POSTGRADUATE) COURSE PROPOSALS

Shepherds must be very familiar with the course approval process. Their role is to work with faculty/graduate school staff in the development of subject and course proposals and give advice in accordance with policies approved by the Academic Board. They should provide advice to the faculty/graduate school/course standing committee on the completion of the appropriate form(s) and ensure that it is referred to the appropriate approving authority as detailed in the pathway approved by Academic Board.

For new course proposals **the following forms must be completed:**

- Strategic and business plan forms
- New undergraduate or new postgraduate course proposal form

And, as required:

- Subject description forms
- Distance education form
- Shared programs form
- Fieldwork/work experience in industry subjects form

The Shepherd should provide advice regarding the completion of the new undergraduate/postgraduate course proposal form which contains the academic components of the proposal. The strategic statement and business plan must be submitted at the same time as the new course proposal form but is not generally a matter of concern for the shepherd.

Once the proposal proceeds along the approval pathway and reaches the Academic Programs Committee the shepherd will be required to complete an advice form making a recommendation and providing comments to the committee on whether the proposal should be endorsed by the committee.

The strategic statement and business plan and the new course proposal form should be submitted to the Academic Secretary as the first step along the approval pathway.

Where there are matters requiring clarification arising from the contents of the new course proposal form the Academic Secretary may seek the advice of the shepherd in resolving these queries or request the shepherd to liaise with the appropriate body (Faculty/Graduate School/Course Standing Committee) to assist with this process.

CHANGES TO COURSES

1. Major Changes to Existing Undergraduate & Postgraduate Course Proposals

For major changes the following form must be completed:

- New undergraduate or new postgraduate course proposal form

The following form must be completed where there are resource implications or the course is delivered by more than one faculty:

- Strategic statement and business plan.

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And, as required:

- Subject description forms
- Distance education form
- Shared programs form
- Fieldwork/work experience in industry subjects form

Where major changes to a course are proposed, the above forms (as required) are submitted are submitted to the Academic Secretary, who will forward them to the appropriate committee(s).

Major Changes

Major changes include:

- change affecting the requirements for completion of a course, including: alterations to the overall structure and/or total duration of a course or a program/stream within a course;
- introduction or deletion of compulsory subjects;
- amendments affecting points values or the level of study of compulsory subjects;
- changes in honours requirements, including to year of entry into honours;
- major changes in mode of offering, e.g. introduction of distance delivery, introduction of intensive teaching,
- changes to transfer of EFTSL or changes to the involvement of another faculty, etc.
- change to the title of a program.

1.1 Faculties develop proposals and are required to complete **the forms listed above, as required**. The shepherd should advise and assist the faculty with the completion of the major change form and ensure that it is referred to the Academic Secretary as the first step in the approval pathway. Shepherds should also advise the faculty if they consider that the proposed change requires the submission of a strategic statement and business plan, where the faculty has not already done so.

1.2 The shepherd will examine the proposal in detail both in respect of the requirements set out in the 'Guidelines for submission of course proposals' and on more general academic grounds (for appropriate depth etc). The shepherd will discuss any concerns with the relevant faculty/ graduate school/course standing committee before the forms are submitted and attempt resolve any difficulties.

1.3 Shepherds are required to make a recommendation using the shepherd's form on whether the committee should:

- endorse the proposal without change;
- endorse the proposal with major/minor amendments as negotiated between the shepherd and faculty/graduate school; or
- be returned to the proponent(s) without approval.

2. Changes Made by the Faculty under Delegated Authority

Quarterly Reports

Quarterly Reports are submitted directly to the secretary of the APC. Shepherds are required to make a recommendation on the quarterly report to APC using the shepherd's report form.

As there can sometimes be doubt about where to draw the line between what must come to the committee and what faculties may approve under delegated authority, the Shepherd keeps an eye out for changes that ought to have been submitted to the Committee for approval but were not.

Only a summary of the changes approved by faculties/graduate schools is circulated to the committee members.

3. Urgent & Late Changes

This process is conducted entirely by email in order to expedite matters.

Urgent or late changes which may include minor matters that ordinarily would be handled by a faculty under delegated authority (eg assessment changes made during a semester for that semester) are also sent directly to the Secretary of APC. Late changes in new-generation undergraduate degrees need to be sent via the Chair of the relevant course standing committee.

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The Secretary will forward the proposal to the shepherd, who makes a recommendation directly to the President of the Academic Board, copied to the Committee Secretary. The change is reported to APC at the subsequent meeting. Shepherds need to be assured that the changes are justified. It is essential that wherever possible students are not disadvantaged by late changes and in reviewing the request shepherds are required to ensure that this is the case.