

Curriculum Policy

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1. Purpose

- 1.1. This policy ensures AFTRS' compliance with the legislative requirements¹ of an Australian Higher Education Provider that govern award course and curriculum establishment, administration, teaching, learning, and delivery; Those acts are:
 - 1.1.1. The Higher Education Support Act (HESA) 2003.
 - 1.1.2. The Education Services for Overseas Students Act (ESOS) 2000.
 - 1.1.3. The Tertiary Education Quality and Standards Agency Act (TEQSA) 2011.
- 1.2. This policy supports AFTRS to deliver its functions stated under 5(1) the *Australian Film, Television and Radio School Act (AFTRS) 1973*.
- 1.3. This policy identifies AFTRS organisational context and principles, and the impact of these concepts in undertaking course and curriculum management.

2. Scope

- 2.1. This policy applies to current award courses and towards the development of future award courses².
- 2.2. This policy applies to students of those courses, and the staff that teach, manage and administer any aspect of those courses.
- 2.3. All other teaching and learning corporate documents are guided by this Policy.

3. Policy Statement

Organisational Context

- 3.1. AFTRS is Australia's national screen arts and broadcast school.
- 3.2. It is enabled by the AFTRS Act, and as such:
 - 3.2.1. It is a body corporate.
 - 3.2.2. It shall be governed by a Council.
- 3.3. Is it a Commonwealth statutory authority that operates under the Public Governance, Performance and Accountability Act (PGPA) 2013, and as such:
 - 3.3.1. It will be subject to performance reporting requirements in *Portfolio Budget Statements (PBS)*, as established by the PGPA Act, and
 - 3.3.2. it will have a Corporate Plan, and it will have Annual Reports, and
 - 3.3.3. these will align with the outcomes published in the PBS'.
- 3.4. It is a self-accrediting higher education provider, and as such:
 - 3.4.1. The Academic Board is recognised as the accrediting authority with delegation to oversee and approve matters relating to award courses and academic governance.
 - 3.4.2. The Academic Board delegate procedural oversight of award course and academic governance matters to the Academic Quality and Standards Committee (ASQC).
 - 3.4.3. The ASQC delegate admission and progression functions to sub-committees that are identified within the Governance Framework.
- 3.5. It is a *University College* category provider on the National Register of Higher Education Providers.
- 3.6. It is A CRICOS registered provider.

¹ The three key acts of higher education legislation and their respective instruments: the *Provider Guidelines (2023)*, the *Threshold Standards (2021)*, and the *National Code (2018)*.

² Current approved operational courses are only required to conform to requirements of the Suite to the extent that undertaking a change will not cause an unreasonable or additionally burden on the effective operations of that course.

- 3.7. The AFTRS Executive are responsible for endorsing the operational decisions that relate to award courses and curriculum.
- 3.8. The CEO and the Academic Board are responsible for approving the decisions that relate to award courses and curriculum.
- 3.9. AFTRS has established a five-year *Corporate Strategy* to further define its mission, purpose, vision and values.
- 3.10. AFTRS has established a suite of *Strategic Plans* that identify priority areas and specific actions to meet their various outcomes.

Principles

Strategic Alignment and Oversight

- 3.11. AFTRS decision-making will be undertaken in alignment with its operating context³.
- 3.12. Teaching and Learning at AFTRS will:
 - 3.12.a. support divisional strategic plans and cross-divisional strategic plans and
 - 3.12.b. support AFTRS to deliver its corporate strategy and corporate plan⁴, and
 - 3.12.c. support AFTRS to deliver its legislative functions “with a view to enabling and encouraging the production of programs of a high degree of creativeness and of high technical and artistic standards”⁵, and

Constructive Alignment and Curriculum Coherence

- 3.13. AFTRS courses and curriculum will:
 - 3.13.a. reflect real-world practice and support the development of both discipline-specific and transferable skills, and
 - 3.13.b. demonstrate constructive alignment between learning outcomes, teaching activities and assessment tasks, and
 - 3.13.c. scaffold learning from foundational to advanced levels, ensuring coherence and progression in alignment with the AQF, and
 - 3.13.d. facilitate the fulfilment of the Graduate Attributes in all AFTRS graduates through the achievement of the Graduate Capabilities of their courses.

Experiential and Inclusive Learning

- 3.14. AFTRS mandates experiential learning as a core pedagogical approach.
- 3.15. AFTRS fosters future-oriented, industry-aligned learning experiences that provide pathways to life-long careers in the evolving screen and broadcast industries, through the prioritisation of:
 - 3.15.a. embedding First Nations knowledges, voices, values and pedagogies, and
 - 3.15.b. supporting under-represented talent across Australia, and
 - 3.15.c. creating a flexible and responsive model of delivery.
- 3.16. Universal Design for Learning (UDL) principles should be embedded to ensure accessibility, flexibility and engagement for all learners.

³ The operating context includes both fixed legislative and corporate factors, alongside dynamic industry, economic, environmental and risk factors. The Corporate Plan provides an annual overview of the operating context.

⁴ Creating the Future: AFTRS Corporate Strategy 2022-26 (20222). ‘*National Reach- Flexible Delivery*’

⁵ Australian Film, Television and Radio School Act (1973), s.5(2).

- 3.17. AFTRS courses and curriculum will seek to ensure that students are supported to be successful in their studies, and that they are:
 - 3.17.a. treated fairly⁶, and
 - 3.17.b. provided with equivalent opportunities for academic success⁷
- 3.18. Inherent course requirements will be publicly available and AFTRS will engage with students that require reasonable adjustments to meet the inherent requirements.

Engagement, Feedback and Benchmarking

- 3.19. AFTRS will undertake continuous engagement with internal and external stakeholders—including students, alumni, academic staff, other higher education institutions, industry professionals and professional bodies.
- 3.20. AFTRS will undertake national and international academic quality assurance benchmarking.

Capacity Building, Documentation and Transparency

- 3.21. Course and curriculum activities are supported through clear documentation and collaborative engagement,
- 3.22. Documentation must be current, transparent, and compliant with internal and external requirements.
- 3.23. Decision making concerning course and curriculum will be informed by evidence, transparent, supported by informed participation and the effective use of collective expertise.
- 3.24. Decision making concerning students and progression will be consistent, transparent, and based on evidence, fairness and merit⁸.

4. AFTRS Graduate Attributes & Capabilities

- 4.1. Graduate attributes are broad, institution-wide qualities that are aspirational and mission-led.
 - 4.1.a. They describe who a graduate is rather than what they can do.
 - 4.1.b. They express the values and identity of the institution
 - 4.1.c. They set the overarching vision for graduates.
- 4.2. Graduate capabilities are specific, actionable qualities, skills, and knowledge developed within a course.
 - 4.2.a. They express the capabilities of what a graduate can do.
 - 4.2.b. They translate the graduate attributes into measurable, course-level expectations that reflect disciplinary and industry relevance.
 - 4.2.c. They are aligned with the AQF level descriptors.

⁶ HESA (2003), Subdivision 19-D, ss. (19-30) (a)– “Basic requirement; A higher education provider must treat fairly: (a) all of its students”

⁷ Threshold Standards (2021), ss. 2.2 (1)– “Institutional policies, practices and approaches to teaching and learning are designed to accommodate student diversity, including the under-representation and/or disadvantage experienced by identified groups, and create equivalent opportunities for academic success regardless of students’ background”

⁸ HESA (2003), ss. 19-35 (4) (b)– “A higher education provider that receives any [FEE-HELP] payment assistance for a unit of study must have open, fair and transparent procedures that, in the provider’s reasonable view, are based on merit for making decisions about the treatment of students undertaking that unit of study”

5. Curriculum Policy Suite

- 5.1. The Curriculum Policy Suite ensures that AFTRS has a holistic, purposive and consistent methodology that informs course and curriculum management.
- 5.2. All documents are subordinate to the Curriculum Policy, which sets the overarching Policy Statement.
- 5.3. Policy statements are situated within subordinate documents where relevant, and as such, each document is an authority on its respective subject matter.

Subordinate Documents

Document	Purpose	Key Content
Academic Progression Procedure	- Establishes academic concepts that impact student enrolment - Identifies legislative concepts that impact student enrolment	- Faculty-initiated enrolment actions - Student-initiated enrolment actions - Student enrolment, progression and completion process
Course Management Procedure	- Establishes the procedures for the administrative management of courses - Establishes controls that ensure the quality assurance of course management	- New course development and approval - Course content change management - Course status change management - Annual course offering management
Course Design Procedure	- Identifies the legislative requirements for course and curriculum design - Establishes the decisions and variables required in course and curriculum design - Provides the tools for use in course and curriculum design	- Structural course design requirements. - Course pathway arrangements. - AFTRS Course Standards - AFTRS Subject Standards - Learning activity tables
Curriculum Improvement Procedure	- Identifies the key iterative feedback and review mechanisms. - Establishes the grounds for course change and improvement.	- The AFTRS Quality Cycle - Comprehensive Review of Curriculum requirements

Table 1: Curriculum Policy Suite Documents

Review Cycle

- 5.4. Annual review of each document is not mandatory; however, it may occur where necessary (i.e. Legislative, operation, strategic).
- 5.5. Periodic review of each document will occur at a defined intervals identified in table 2.
- 5.6. A comparative review of all documents will occur every six-years.
- 5.7. The comparative review is in addition to, and will not alter, the periodic review cycle.
- 5.8. The comparative review may require the updating of individual documents, or it may forecast updates for implementation at their next review, it may also
- 5.9. The comparative review will not require a document to be updated if remains fit for purpose.
- 5.10. The ASQC will be provided opportunities to peer review all documents throughout periodic review.
- 5.11. All documents within the suite must be endorsed by the Executive and approved by the CEO and the Academic Board.

Periodic Document Review Cycles

Document	20XX	20XX+1	20XX+2	20XX+3	20XX+4	20XX+5
Curriculum Policy	6 years					
Course Design Procedure	3 years					
Academic Progression Procedure			3 years			
Curriculum Improvement Procedure			3 years			
Course Management Procedure				3 years		
						Comparative Review

Table 2: Periodic document review cycles

6. Responsibilities

Compliance, monitoring, and review

- 6.1. The Director of Teaching and Learning is responsible for ensuring the policy:
 - 6.1.1. is implemented and monitored; and
 - 6.1.2. is periodically reviewed to evaluate its continuing effectiveness; and
 - 6.1.3. aligns with relevant legislation, government policy and/or AFTRS strategies.
- 6.2. The Head of Curriculum is responsible for ensuring that the Curriculum Policy Suite is implemented and monitored in accordance with this policy.
- 6.3. The Academic Board and its' delegate, the Academic Standards and Quality Committee, are responsible for ensuring this policy effectively reflects current curriculum practice, and effectively fulfils its purposes.

Reporting

- 6.4. No additional reporting is required

Records management

- 6.5. All records relevant to administering this policy and procedure will be maintained by the Policy and Governance Officer.

7. Definitions

- 7.1. Refer to the AFTRS Award Course Glossary (Located on Base Camp)

8. Related Legislation and Documents

- Australian Film, Television and Radio School Act 1973 (AFTRS Act)
- Australian Qualifications Framework (AQF)
- Education Services for Overseas Students Act 2000 (ESOS Act)
- Higher Education Provider Guidelines 2023 (Provider Guidelines)
- Higher Education Support Act 2003 (HESA Act)
- Higher Education Standards Framework 2021 (Threshold Standards)
- National Code of Practice for Providers of Education and Training to Overseas Students (2018) (National Code)
- Tertiary Education Quality and Standards Agency Act 2011 (TEQSA Act)

9. Approval and Review Details

Approval and Review	Details
Approval Authority	CEO
Responsible Officer	Director of Teaching and Learning
Contact Officer	Head of Curriculum
Distribution	Base Camp and AFTRS website Staff and Public facing
Next Review Date	01/12/2032

Approval and Amendment History	Details
Original Approval Authority and Date and relevant amendments details	CEO 8 December 2025 (Effective Date 1 July 2026) Approval sought prior to implementation. Pending further approvals of supporting documents that all become effective as a suite from 1 July 2026. Curriculum Policy v4.0: A comprehensive update to align the policy with current practice and to establish the remit of a defined suite of corporate documents that will each also undergo comprehensive updates to conform with this policy.
Amendments History and Dates	Curriculum Policy v3.0, 21 October 2019; Curriculum Policy v2.1, 9 February 2019; Curriculum Policy v.2.0, 11 October 2017
Notes	N/A
Minor Amendment Approval and History	N/A