

3. Accreditation of Major Changes (November 2014)

Definition of a major change

ANZPAC requires an education provider to lodge in writing notification of changes to an accredited program of study.

ANZPAC defines a major change as:

“Substantive matters that will affect the policy or practices of an education provider and that could impact upon the delivery of a program of study, including modification, alteration, addition, amendment, substitution or deletion of any aspect of the program or education provider, that causes the changes to the substance, structure, form, delivery or outcomes of the program such that students are completing a program of study that is different to the program that was accredited.”

ANZPAC should be consulted if there is doubt as to whether a proposed change may constitute a major change. Education providers contemplating such changes are required to consult ANZPAC at least 12 months prior to any changes being introduced. ANZPAC must also be kept informed of significant steps in the change process. Failure to do so may result in insufficient time for ANZPAC to assess the program changes resulting in a change of accreditation status.

Changes to an accredited program considered to be a major change are detailed in Table 1.

Assessment of proposed major changes

The education provider is required to submit an outline of actual or proposed changes to the program of study at least 12 months prior to any change being introduced. The submission should specify what impact these changes will have on the ability of the program of study to continue to meet the accreditation standards. The submission should also address the capacity of the education provider to manage the change process, including any students completing the currently accredited program of study.

The assessment of the impact of the changes will be undertaken by the Accreditation Committee in consultation with the Assessment Team Leader who led the most recent accreditation to review the submission, conduct a site visit if necessary and provide advice either that the changes:

- Comply with the standards and the education provider has demonstrated the capacity to manage the change process
- Does not comply with the standards and/or the education provider has not demonstrated a capacity to manage the change process

Options for accreditation of major changes

- Accreditation of modified program for the remainder of the current period of accreditation
- Accreditation of the modified program until completed by one cohort of graduates. Before expiry of the current period of accreditation, a date for re-accreditation of the whole program will be negotiated
- Accreditation of modified program, with conditions until completed by one cohort of graduates
- Accreditation refused

Accreditation will be refused when there are significant deficiencies and the ANZPAC Board of Directors judges, on the advice of the Accreditation Committee, that the education provider does not have the capacity to remedy them or does not accept the need to do so.

In accordance with the National Law, if ANZPAC decided to refuse to accredit a program of study it must give written notice of the decision to the school that provides the program. The notice will state the reasons for the decision and that, within 30 days after receiving the notice, the school may apply to ANZPAC for an internal review of the decision. The notice must also state how the school may apply for an internal review.

Table 1: Modifications considered a major program change

- Merger with another entity
 - Contracting with another body to deliver a significant proportion of a course or services
 - Significant organisational changes such as those which have a major impact on governance, quality assurance and staffing (such as restructuring of academic governance arrangements, or changes involving senior academic or administrative staff)
 - A decline in financial position
 - Changes to delivery location by moving to a new site, adding an additional site (including any offshore sites) or withdrawing from an existing site
 - Changes to the mode of delivery of a course, such as from face-to-face to distance education or online
 - Increase or decrease in duration of a program
 - Changes to course entry requirements
 - A substantive change in enrolments numbers
 - Changes to learning outcomes for a course, or core subjects within the course
 - Changes to core subjects within a course
 - Changes to course structure, such as to the proportion of core to elective subjects
 - Changes to elective subjects, including addition, substitution or deletion of subjects in a course, where such changes affect more than 25% of the total number of subjects in the course, measured over the duration of the course accreditation period
 - Change to the composition of staffing such as substitution of full time staff by sessional staff, or change in academic level of teaching staff
 - Major alterations to teaching premises
 - A reduction or increase in student contact hours in a course
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