Melbourne Institute of Technology

Quality Assurance Framework

MELBOURNE
INSTITUTE OF TECHNOLOGY

PRACTICAL EXCELLENCE

Table of Contents

1. Overview

The Institute supports a Quality Assurance system designed to improve performance, reduce risk and achieve sustainable growth. A quality assured organisation, operating in accordance with industry and regulatory standards, will satisfy student and stakeholder needs and expectations thereby protecting the reputation and standing of the Institute with present and future students and stakeholders.

The Institute (otherwise known as MIT) is committed to ensuring effective corporate and academic governance and quality assurance across the organisation.

The Institute meets legislative and regulative procedures with quality systems, using rigorous internal auditing and regular external audits. The Institute's Quality Assurance Framework is structured to ensure the Institute conducts all of its activities efficiently and effectively, with appropriate corporate governance, enterprise risk management and quality internal controls, while complying with all relevant government legislation and statutory regulations.

To maintain high quality standards at the Institute, regular reviews of Institute practice are performed, using feedback from Institute students, stakeholders, partners and staff, to help with the continual improvement of Institute business processes. Suggestions or feedback, may be forwarded to: admin@mit.edu.au

The governance arrangements are based on:

- The development, implementation and review of policies and procedures.
- The maintenance of quality standards, with appropriate mechanisms for external input.
- Systematic monitoring and review of quality assurance arrangements, which prompt action to drive continuous improvement for MIT's operations.

Effective governance process and robust internal capability to monitor and improve its operations include:

- Regular, valid and reliable feedback from internal and external stakeholders.
- Communication of feedback to academic and professional staff to provide opportunity for improvement in their performance.
- Systematic review and updating of policies and procedures.
- Maintenance and monitoring of comparative data on operational performance.
- Comparison of standards expected to be achieved with actual outcomes, benchmarked with similar institutes of higher education.

The various activities associated with quality assurance are distributed across the operations of different committees and the Academic Board, ultimately under the auspices of the Board of Directors. They occur throughout the year, with appropriate reporting to the Board of Directors and its subcommittees according to a pre-determined schedule.

Warning: uncontrolled when printed.

Original Issue: Academic Quality Assurance Framework	April 2016
Original Issue: Quality Assurance Framework	5th March 2018
Reviewed and Merged by the Policy Committee:	31st May 2023
Approved by the Academic Board:	27 July 2023
Endorsed by the Board of Directors:	4 August 2023
Review Date	3 August 2028
Current Version	4 August 2023
	Page 1 of 18

2. Purpose

This Quality Assurance Framework will contribute to development of an Institute-wide culture of ongoing quality assurance and quality improvement.

This will be achieved through a whole-of-organisation approach to linking strategic principles and direction with planning and quality management, supported by a compliance process (detailed in the Compliance Policy and Procedure) and regular auditing.

Quality Assurance of all Institute operations is an essential part of the governance of the organisation, whose function is assumed by the Board of Directors, the Academic Board and their sub-committees.

The Board of Directors have the responsibility of providing oversight of the development and implementation of policies and procedures, including those relating to quality assurance. The processes for the development, implementation and maintenance of these policies and procedures are overseen by the Board of Directors and the Policy Committee.

Responsibility for the development and implementation of academic policy and procedures is delegated to the Academic Board and its various subcommittees.

TEQSA in its Corporate Governance Guidance Note specifies that the Board of Directors has responsibility for compliance and quality assurance, including with the Higher Education Standards Framework as follows:

- internal audit reports or the like, showing that the entity is meeting its obligations for legislative compliance (Standard 6.2.1a)
- performance reports that demonstrate that the provider is meeting its planning targets as set out in its strategic plan (or equivalent) (Standard 6.2.1b)
- financial reports and audited statements, internal audit reports and reports from the audit committee (or equivalent) that show that the provider's financial position and projection are sustainable and controls are in place (Standards 6.2.1c, d)
- risk management plans showing that risks have been identified tenably and credible mitigation strategies have been implemented (Standard 6.2.1e)
- academic governance reports demonstrating that the provider's higher education operations are operating as planned at the level of quality intended (Standard 6.2.1f)
- equity/diversity reports that are relevant to the provider's operations (Standard 6.2.1g)
  - evidence that effective controls for the secure issue of qualifications are in place (Standard 6.2.1h)
- evidence that tenable contingency plans are available to deal with unexpected events (Standard 6.2.1j)
- records of incidents and complaints that are maintained and used to inform risk management and prevent recurrences (Standard 6.2.1j, see also Standard 7.3.3)

Warning: uncontrolled when printed.

Original Issue: Academic Quality Assurance Framework	April 2016
Original Issue: Quality Assurance Framework	5th March 2018
Reviewed and Merged by the Policy Committee:	31st May 2023
Approved by the Academic Board:	27 July 2023
Endorsed by the Board of Directors:	4 August 2023
Review Date	3 August 2028
Current Version	4 August 2023
	Page 2 of 18

- evidence that mechanisms for identifying and managing lapses in meeting the requirements of the HES Framework are effective (Standard 6.2.1k, see also Standard 7.3.3).

Accordingly, this Quality Assurance Framework incorporates academic quality assurance and links governance practices, comprising quality assurance policies and procedures, with the TEQSA Guidance Note, pursuing an increasingly robust and holistic approach to quality assurance, responsive as relevant to the Higher Education Standards Framework (HESF).

3. Scope

This Quality Assurance Framework will apply to all organisational units, all staff and all functions of the Institute.

4. Definitions

Term	Definition
Quality assurance	means the management and organisational processes in place for checking that the standards and quality of higher education provision by the Institute meet higher education sector requirements and norms.
Quality improvement	means the management and organisational processes in place for ongoing improvement of higher education provision by the Institute.
Higher education standards	means Higher Education Standards made under the Tertiary Education Quality and Standards Higher Education Standards Framework 2015.
PIRI and ADRI	are acronyms used interchangeably.

5. The Framework

The following principles, together with the PIRI Quality System (Plan, Implement, Review, Improve), form the Institute's encompassing framework for quality assurance, quality improvement and alignment with higher education quality standards:

1. The Institute has a governance structure in which the Board of Directors, the Institute Executive management and the Academic Board contribute to decision-making, within the context of the

Original Issue: Academic Quality Assurance Framework	April 2016
Original Issue: Quality Assurance Framework	5th March 2018
Reviewed and Merged by the Policy Committee:	31st May 2023
Approved by the Academic Board:	27 July 2023
Endorsed by the Board of Directors:	4 August 2023
Review Date	3 August 2028
Current Version	4 August 2023
	Page 3 of 18

overall responsibility of the Board of Directors. This governance structure allows for a clear distinction between governance and management, and corporate and academic governance.

2. Strategic oversight of quality and compliance with higher education and corporate governance standards is a responsibility at the highest levels of Institute governance.

3. Quality assurance and improvement and risk management are coordinated by the Board of Directors, Academic Board and Executive management of the Institute.

4. Legislation and higher education sector benchmarks inform the development and review of plans, systems, policies, procedures, guidelines, courses and units.

5. Clear and transparent plans, systems, policies and procedures relating to higher education and the Institute's related services are in place, accessible, implemented and regularly monitored, reviewed and improved.

6. All policies and procedures of the Institute contribute to quality assurance, quality improvement or compliance with relevant external standards or requirements.

7. Processes are in place and implemented for regular monitoring, evaluation and reporting of higher education outcomes and the internal control environment, including benchmarking and performance measurement against targets, indicators and external standards.

8. Opportunity is provided for appropriate internal and external involvement in the maintenance of quality and standards, including through use of feedback from students, graduates, employers, staff and other stakeholders.

9. Students and staff are supported in the pursuit of quality and the maintenance of standards.

10. All students and prospective students are treated fairly and equitably and provided with timely and accurate information relevant to their current or future studies with the Institute.
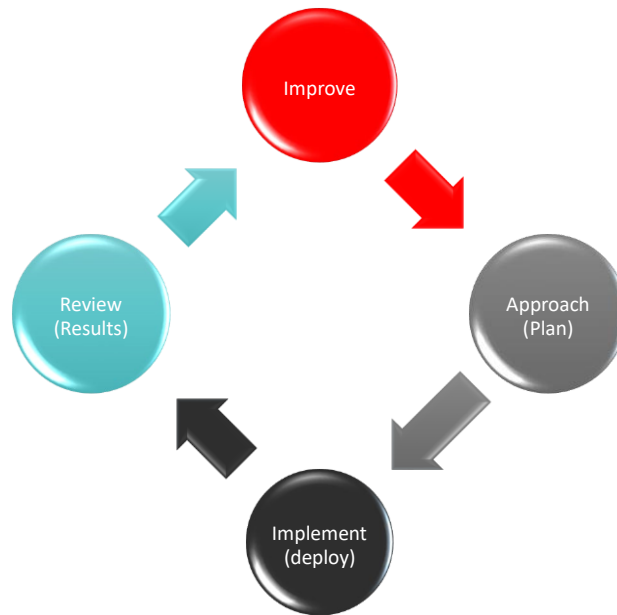
6. Quality System

The Institute's Quality System – Adopt (Plan), Deploy (Implement), Review, Improve (ADRI) – a cyclical system for ongoing quality improvement, as described below, is the process by which the principles of the Quality Assurance Framework are embedded in all Institute activity.

ADRI approach to Planning

Plan (Approach)	Formulation of plans, policy, procedures, timelines and responsibilities for achieving outcomes intended to maintain or improve quality, including performance standards, measures, targets; and methods and frequency for performance monitoring and reporting.
Implement (Deploy)	Implementation and delivery of the planned arrangements, including data collection and regular monitoring and reporting on progress / effectiveness.
Review (Results)	Ongoing and summative review and audit, based on evidence, of the extent to which planned arrangements and delivery are having/have had the desired effect in bringing about intended outcomes, including evaluation and impact of the planned arrangements.
Improve	Ongoing evidence-based identification of improvements and changes to be incorporated in new or reformulated plans, policy and processes in order to contribute to enhanced or improved outcomes.

7. Academic Quality Assurance

The Institute has chosen to base its academic approach to quality assurance on a model by Schindler et al1 which synthesised literature on defining quality generically in the context of higher education. The model identifies three concentric layers, as depicted in Figure 1:

- The core reflects the fundamental importance of stakeholder perspectives.
- The next layer depicts four broad constructs of "quality", reported in a higher education context: accountable, purposeful, transformative, and exceptional.
- The outer layer contains examples of quality indicators that might be used to assess each of the broad constructs.

This model directs the various activities undertaken to assure quality. It requires alignment between:

- A broad quality strategy targeting central goals and outcomes.
- A specific strategy identifying quality indicators to assess whether specifically identified goals and outcomes have been achieved.

1 Laura Schindler, Sarah Puls-Elvidge, Heather Welzant and Linda Crawford, "Definitions of Quality in Higher Education: A Synthesis of the Literature", High. Learn. Res. Commun. Volume 5, Num. 3 | September 2015

Figure 1 The Schindler et al. (2015) Generic QA Model

Original Issue: Academic Quality Assurance Framework	April 2016
Original Issue: Quality Assurance Framework	5th March 2018
Reviewed and Merged by the Policy Committee:	31st May 2023
Approved by the Academic Board:	27 July 2023
Endorsed by the Board of Directors:	4 August 2023
Review Date	3 August 2028
Current Version	4 August 2023
	Page 6 of 18

The Institute is subject to the Higher Education Standards Framework (HESF) which reflects the need for evidenced alignment between these broad and specific approaches, and which provides explicit interpretation of some of the outer layer indicators as a strong external influence.

The HESF includes 7 domains of interest. Each Domain represents a dimension of integrated quality governance, infrastructure, policy, process, and resourcing that:

- Supports an acceptable student experience.
- Protects the reputation of the sector; and
- Can be benchmarked domestically and internationally.

Guidelines help TEQSA review the consistency between mission, vision, strategies, business model and plan and alignment with standards. The HESF domains are:

Domain 1: Covers the education-related experiences of students from admission to graduation. The remainder cover actions taken by the Higher Education Provider to achieve these educational outcomes-

Domain 2: The Learning Environment

Domains 3 & 4: Teaching and Research

Domains 5 & 6: Institutional governance structures and processes for effective corporate & academic governance and quality assurance.

Domain 7: Accurate representation of HE business to stakeholders.

Evaluation of quality across these domains may be mapped on to the Schindler model as suggested by Figure 2 below, where performance in each domain is assessed according to the accountable, purposeful, transformative and exceptional classifications, as appropriate to the institution's definition of quality and strategic priorities.

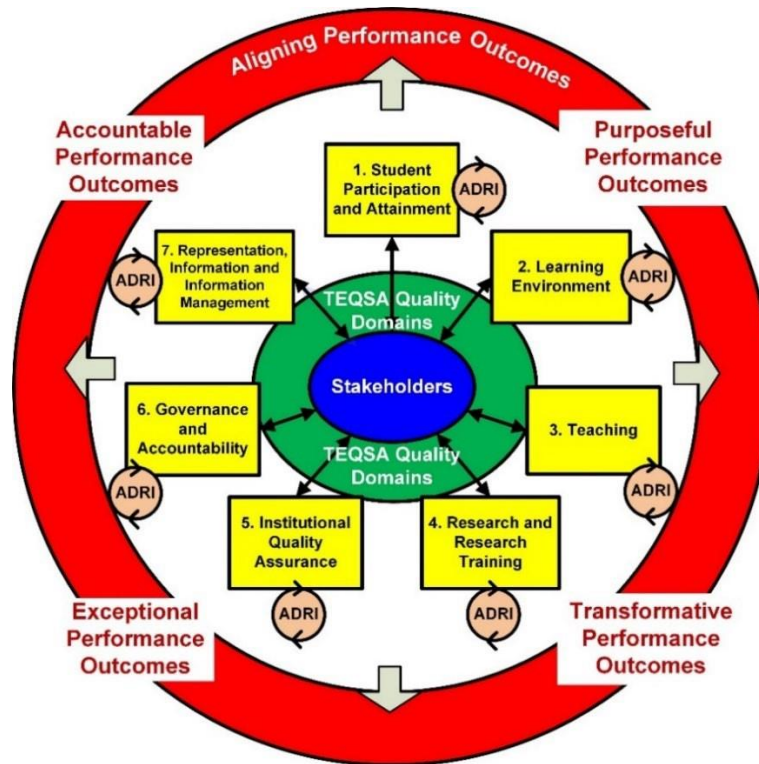|	
Original Issue: Academic Quality Assurance Framework	April 2016
Original Issue: Quality Assurance Framework	5th March 2018
Reviewed and Merged by the Policy Committee:	31st May 2023
Approved by the Academic Board:	27 July 2023
Endorsed by the Board of Directors:	4 August 2023
Review Date	3 August 2028
Current Version	4 August 2023
	Page 7 of 18

Figure 2 An adaptation of the Schindler et al. (2015) Model to align HESF standards and performance.

The model as specified above indicates what will be assessed. It also identifies that, as specified above the Institute's quality system uses the "ADRI" approach to its assessment of quality assurance in and across the domains of the HESF:

Plan (Approach)	What processes have been developed and why have they been chosen? Have they been benchmarked against best practice? What are the performance indicators?
Implement (Deploy)	Have the processes been implemented, accepted, and integrated into normal operations?
Review (Results)	What are the performance trends? How do the results compare with best practice and have the results been communicated?
Improve	What is the process for reviewing the appropriateness and effectiveness of the
	Plan and its implementation. How will the review be used to improve?

This ADRI cycle is reflected in the reporting to Academic Board in respect of the various aspects of the Institute's academic operations, such as the annual report on student performance (attrition,

Warning: uncontrolled when printed.

Original Issue: Academic Quality Assurance Framework	April 2016
Original Issue: Quality Assurance Framework	5th March 2018
Reviewed and Merged by the Policy Committee:	31st May 2023
Approved by the Academic Board:	27 July 2023
Endorsed by the Board of Directors:	4 August 2023
Review Date	3 August 2028
Current Version	4 August 2023
	Page 8 of 18

progression, completion), where there is a requirement to "complete the loop" in respect of implementing and reporting on recommendations in periodic reports.

The model above at Figure 2 demonstrates a more holistic approach as a basis for mitigating risks that can occur through inconsistent interpretation and application of standards. A key criterion is stakeholder engagement and shared understanding of purpose, goals, actions and accountability in achieving transformative student and institutional outcomes aligned with values, mission and strategic goals.
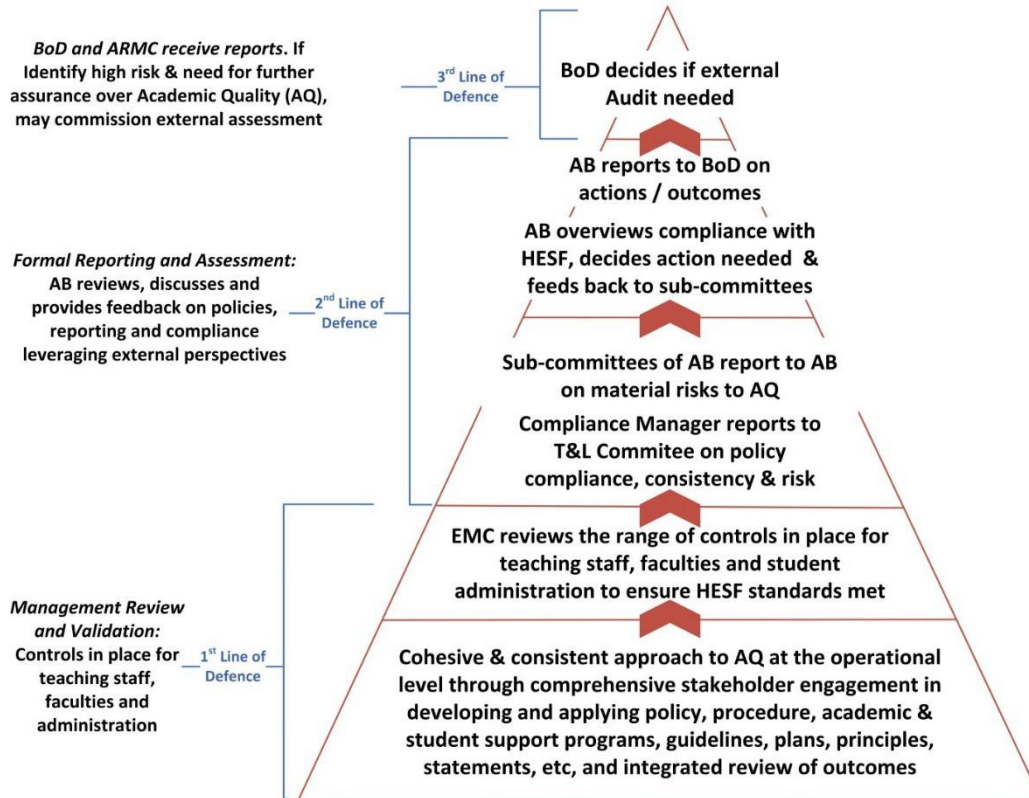
Figure 3 below employs principles of internal audit practice, i.e., the '3 Lines of Defence' Combined Assurance Model of the Institute of Internal Auditors Australia, to demonstrate how governance boards and their sub-committees as well as senior management can develop and share an understanding of, and engage in, consistent action to mitigate risks concerning academic quality. This is achieved through reporting and assessment processes that allocate responsibility to all salient stakeholders engaged in quality assurance practice.

Holistic approach to implementing Academic Quality Assurance Framework (AQAF) to mitigate risk

BoD and ARMC receive reports. If Identify high risk & need for further assurance over Academic Quality (AQ), may commission external assessment

3rd Line of Defence

BoD decides if external Audit needed

AB reports to BoD on actions / outcomes

AB overviews compliance with HESF, decides action needed & feeds back to sub-committees

Formal Reporting and Assessment: AB reviews, discusses and provides feedback on policies, reporting and compliance leveraging external perspectives

2nd Line of Defence

Sub-committees of AB report to AB on material risks to AQ

Compliance Manager reports to T&L Commitee on policy compliance, consistency & risk

EMC reviews the range of controls in place for teaching staff, faculties and student administration to ensure HESF standards met

Management Review and Validation: Controls in place for teaching staff, faculties and administration

1st Line of Defence

Cohesive & consistent approach to AQ at the operational level through comprehensive stakeholder engagement in developing and applying policy, procedure, academic & student support programs, guidelines, plans, principles, statements, etc, and integrated review of outcomes

Adaptation of Institute of Internal Auditors' 3 Lines of Defence model

Figure 3 Holistic approach to implementing QAF to mitigate risk

8. The Institutes' Quality Environment

The Institute Quality Environment puts the individual (staff, student other stakeholders) at the core of its activities.

Individual stakeholders – our staff, students, external members of boards and committees, customers and other stakeholders – are at the core of MIT's commitment to a quality environment. They belong to or are serviced through departments, which provide the organizational envelope for the stakeholders to engage in quality practices, guided by MIT's Governance Framework consisting of its governance charter, policies, procedures and guidelines. External entities such as the Department of Education, TEQSA and Professional Associations, as well as external acts, laws and frameworks such as the HES Framework, ESOS Act, Australian Qualifications Framework and accreditation guidelines of professional bodies guide MIT's quality framework.

Warning: uncontrolled when printed.

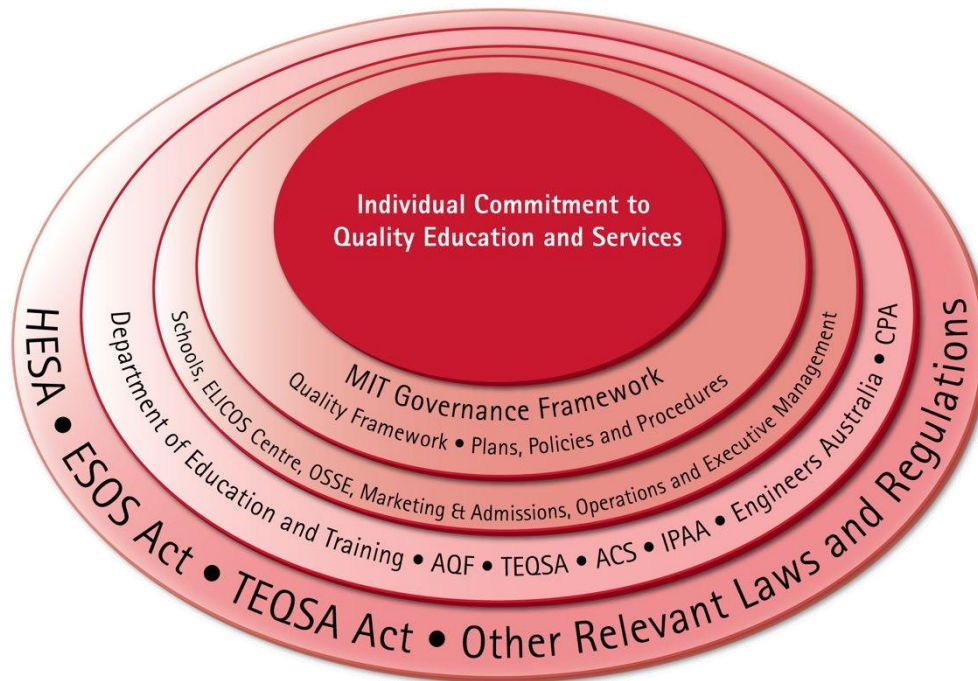|	
Original Issue: Academic Quality Assurance Framework	April 2016
Original Issue: Quality Assurance Framework	5th March 2018
Reviewed and Merged by the Policy Committee:	31st May 2023
Approved by the Academic Board:	27 July 2023
Endorsed by the Board of Directors:	4 August 2023
Review Date	3 August 2028
Current Version	4 August 2023
	Page 10 of 18

*Figure 4 MIT Quality Environment*

9. Governance

The Board of Directors is the governing authority of the Institute and is responsible for overseeing the higher education operations and the general direction and superintendence of the Institute. The Board includes a majority of independent members along with representatives of the owners of the company and the executive management. External and internal members play a significant role in the Board with the external members bringing expertise and experience not represented within the Institute which is balanced by the internal members who are the key internal stakeholders. The Board ensures that the Institute fulfils its responsibilities as detailed in its Vision and Goals and continues to meet its obligations and responsibilities as a higher education provider.

Standing committees of the Board have been established to provide the Board with advice and recommendations or to exercise specific powers delegated to them by the Board.

Warning: uncontrolled when printed.

Original Issue: Academic Quality Assurance Framework	April 2016
Original Issue: Quality Assurance Framework	5th March 2018
Reviewed and Merged by the Policy Committee:	31st May 2023
Approved by the Academic Board:	27 July 2023
Endorsed by the Board of Directors:	4 August 2023
Review Date	3 August 2028
Current Version	4 August 2023
	Page 11 of 18
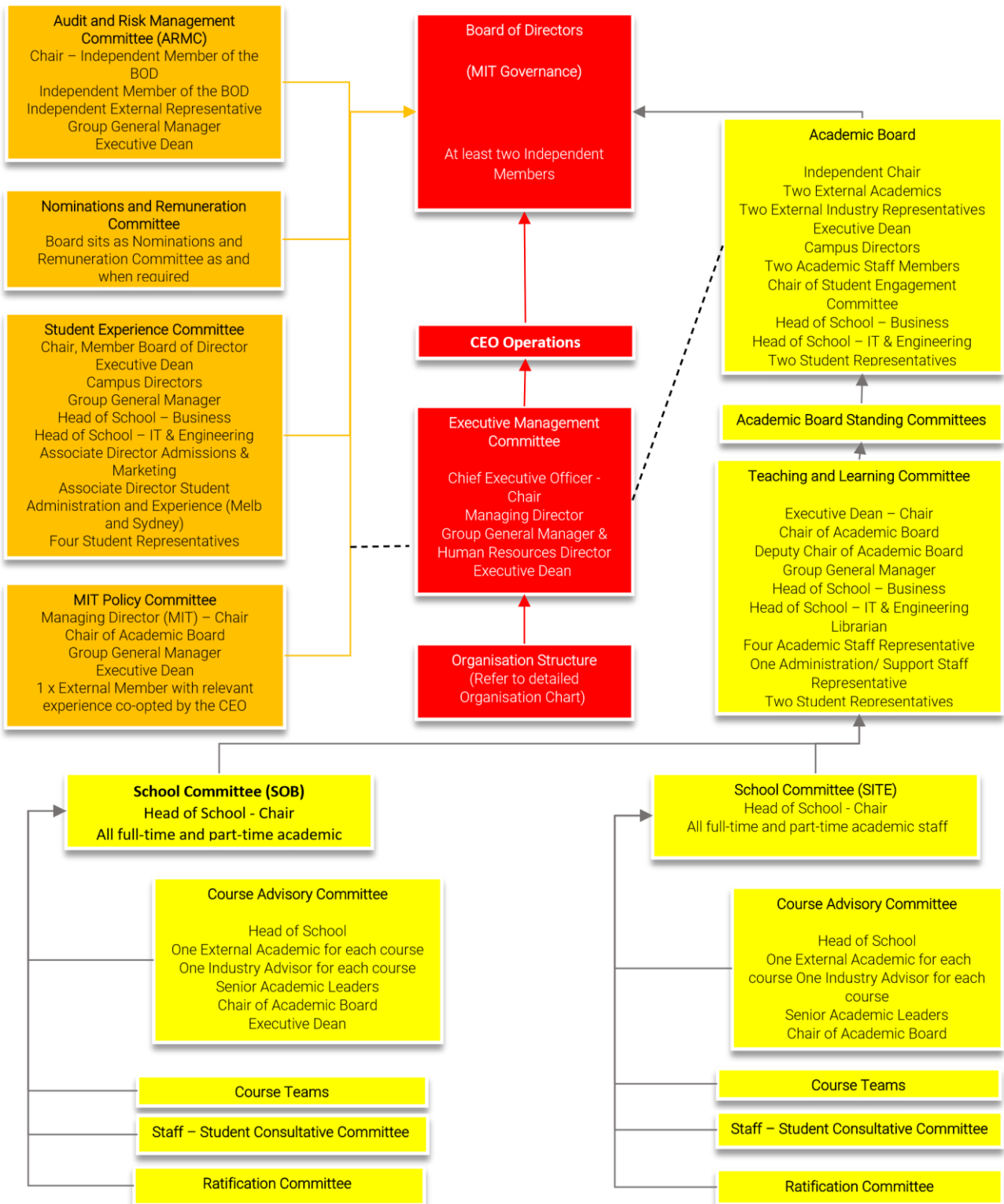
Warning: uncontrolled when printed.

Original Issue: Academic Quality Assurance Framework	April 2016
Original Issue: Quality Assurance Framework	5th March 2018
Reviewed and Merged by the Policy Committee:	31st May 2023
Approved by the Academic Board:	27 July 2023
Endorsed by the Board of Directors:	4 August 2023
Review Date	3 August 2028
Current Version	4 August 2023
	Page 12 of 18

10. Responsibilities

Academic Compliance

- The Board of Directors is accountable to the Tertiary Education Quality and Standards Agency for quality assurance and compliance with higher education standards by the Institute.
- The Academic Board is responsible and accountable to the Board of Directors for quality assurance, quality improvement and compliance with relevant higher education standards in the areas of academic governance, learning and teaching, academic support, and student support (in conjunction with the Student Experience Committee), research, research training and innovation.

General Quality Assurance

The CEO is responsible and accountable to the Board of Directors for quality assurance, quality improvement and compliance with relevant higher education standards related to corporate governance, financial management, planning, information and communications technology, student recruitment and marketing, human resources, safety and security, and facilities.

The Governance Charter of the Institute makes provision in respect of the functions of the Board and its Standing Committees, the Academic Board and its Committees and the Executive Management Team, including any delegated responsibilities.

The Accountability Calendar is a key quality assurance document. It lists the reports due to each meeting of the governance bodies and assigns responsibility for preparing and presenting those reports.

The Policy Committee is a standing committee of the Board of Directors. Policies, and attendant procedures, and guidelines provide a framework for the organisation, management, and good governance of the Institute. All policies and procedures are available at: https://www.mit.edu.au/about-us/governance.

11. Implementation and communication

This Framework will be implemented and communicated through the Institute via:

- the Institute's website;
- as part of Staff professional development and meetings.

Warning: uncontrolled when printed.

Original Issue: Academic Quality Assurance Framework	April 2016
Original Issue: Quality Assurance Framework	5th March 2018
Reviewed and Merged by the Policy Committee:	31st May 2023
Approved by the Academic Board:	27 July 2023
Endorsed by the Board of Directors:	4 August 2023
Review Date	3 August 2028
Current Version	4 August 2023
	Page 13 of 18

12.   Relevant Legislation

Government legislation:

Commonwealth (applies to both NSW and Victoria):
- A New Tax System (Goods and Services Tax) Act 1999
- A New Tax System (Pay as You Go) Act 1999
- Age Discrimination Act 2004
- Australian Human Rights Commission Act 1986
- Competition and Consumer Act 2010
- Competition and Consumer Regulations 2010
- Copyright Act 1968
- Corporations Act 2001
- Disability Discrimination Act 1992
- Disability Standards for Education 2005
- Education Services for Overseas Students Regulations 2001
- Education Services for Overseas Students (Calculation of Refunds) Specifications 2014
- Education Services for Overseas Students Act 2000
- Education Services for Overseas Students (Registration Charges) Act 1997
- Fair Work Act 2009
- Fair Work Regulations 2009
- Freedom of Information Act 1982
- Fringe Benefits Tax Assessment Act 1986
- Fringe Benefits Tax Regulations 1992
- Income Tax Assessment Act 1997
- National Code of Practice for Registration Authorities and Providers of Education and   Training to Overseas Students 2007 (reference s.33 (1) ESOS Act 2000)
- National Standards for ELICOS Providers
- Privacy Act 1988
- Racial Discrimination Act 1975
- Sex Discrimination Act 1984
- Superannuation Guarantee Administration Act 1992
- Taxation Administration Act 1953
- Taxation Administration Act 1997
- Tertiary Education Quality & Standards Agency Act 2011
- Tertiary Education Quality & Standards Agency Act 2011 Higher Education Standards Framework (Threshold Standards) 2015

NSW:
- Anti-Discrimination Act 1977
- Fair Trading Act 1987

Warning: uncontrolled when printed.

Original Issue: Academic Quality Assurance Framework	April 2016
Original Issue: Quality Assurance Framework	5th March 2018
Reviewed and Merged by the Policy Committee:	31st May 2023
Approved by the Academic Board:	27 July 2023
Endorsed by the Board of Directors:	4 August 2023
Review Date	3 August 2028
Current Version	4 August 2023
	Page 14 of 18

Fair Trading Regulation 2012
Payroll Tax Act 2007
Protection of the Environment Operations Act 1997
Surveillance Devices Act 2007 (NSW)
Work Health and Safety Act 2011
Work Health and Safety Regulations 2011
Workers Compensation Act 1987
Workers Compensation Regulations 2010
Workplace Injury Management and Workers Compensation Act 1998

Victoria:
Accident Compensation Act 1985
Crimes Act 1958 (re bullying)
Dangerous Goods Act 1985
Environment Protection Act 1970
Equal Opportunity Act 2010
Occupational Health and Safety Act 2004
Occupational Health and Safety Regulations 2007
Payroll Tax Act 2007
Racial and Religious Tolerance Act 2001
Surveillance Devices Act 1999
Workers Compensation Act 1958
Workplace Injury Rehabilitation and Compensation Act 2013
Any other applicable legislation

Institute documents:
MIT Policies and Procedures
Student Handbook
Terms and Conditions of Enrolment
Teaching and Learning Plans
Strategic Plans

Other regulatory bodies:
ACPET
Australian Skills Qualification Authority http://www.asqa.gov.au/
Department of Home Affairs https://prisms.education.gov.au
Overseas Students' Ombudsman