IEFT QUALITY ASSURANCE FRAMEWORK

1. **PURPOSE**

    1.1 The Quality Assurance Framework provides the policy basis for IEFT's approach to continuous review and improvement in 'all education related experiences of students from admission through to attainment of qualifications', and the actions taken by IEFT to 'achieve the educational outcomes expected for students'.[1]

    1.2 This document formalises IEFT's commitment to:

    - the principles that underpin this Framework;

    - 'the organisational arrangements required for its implementation, including accountabilities, resources and processes'.[2.]

2. **PRINCIPLES**

    IEFT is committed to:

    - 'Operational quality and integrity'[3] in the provision of higher education courses.

    - A robust and efficient corporate and academic governance 'framework of structures, rules, relationships, systems and processes' [4] consistent with IEFT's legal, regulatory and corporate social responsibility. This specifically includes meeting its obligations under all relevant regulatory and legislative requirements including:

        o The Higher Education Standards Framework (2015);

        o The TEQSA Act (2011);

        o The ESOS Framework (including the National Code);

        o The Australian Qualifications Framework;

        o All relevant State and Commonwealth legislation.

    - A continuous improvement and quality assurance system based on the 'Plan – Implement - Review – Improve' model.

3. **ORGANISATIONAL ARRANGEMENTS**

    3.1 IEFT applies the 'Plan – Implement - Review – Improve' model to:

    - Corporate Governance ;

    - Academic Governance;

    - Operations Management;

    - Risk Management;

    - Financial Management;

    - Course Development, Evaluation and Review;

    - People Management;

    - Stakeholder Surveys; and

    - Benchmarking.

    3.2 This process informs:

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1 TEQSA Higher Education Standards Framework (Threshold Standards) 2015 p. 6
http://www.teqsa.gov.au/sites/default/files/HESF2015TEQSAContextualOverview310316_1.pdf
2 Ibid p 8
3 Ibid
[4] TEQSA Guidance Note – Corporate Governance
http://www.teqsa.gov.au/sites/default/files/CorporateGovernanceGNFinal.pdf

- the IEFT Strategic Plan;

- the IEFT Academic Governance Framework;

- the IEFT Risk Framework;

- the IEFT Teaching and Learning Plan;

- all other policies and procedures by which IEFT's governing and academic boards and committees 'maintain oversight of IEFT's higher education operations in order to ensure that in the normal course of its governance activities IEFT meets the requirements of the Standards for Higher Education'. This Framework and Procedure is specifically contextualised to IEFT's operations.

4. CORPORATE GOVERNANCE AND ACCOUNTABILITY [5]

4.1 The Board of Directors

In summary, the Board of Directors has oversight of the funding, strategic direction and management of IEFT. The Board is accountable for IEFT's higher education operations including meeting the Higher Education Standards Framework (2015). The functions of the Board are to:

- Set IEFT's Mission, Vision and strategic goals;

- Approve and monitor the implementation of the IEFT's strategic and business plans and financial forecasts;

- Ensure IEFT maintains financial viability and has sufficient funds for its ongoing operations.

- Monitor the assessment and management of risk across the institution, and ensure IEFT has strategies to mitigate risks as they arise;

- Oversee and review IEFT's management and performance;

- Establish and maintain the Academic Board to oversee IEFT's academic governance, determine membership, appoint members and the Chair, and monitor its activities.

- Determine the quality assurance framework to guide IEFT and approve policies and procedures for the quality assurance of its operations, consistent with legal and regulatory requirements and corporate social responsibility.

- Award qualifications on recommendation of the Academic Board.

- Appoint the CEO of IEFT and monitor her/his performance.

- Appoint the Secretary of IEFT (if applicable).

- Recommend to the shareholders the appointment of the external auditor for IEFT's accounts and processes.

- Ensure IEFT meets its statutory obligations under the Corporations Act 2001.

- Implement an appropriate, documented, observed and regularly reviewed system of delegation to ensure the effective discharge of these functions.

4.2 The Academic Board

The Board of Directors delegates the academic governance of IEFT to the Academic Board. This includes academic policy development, academic administration and oversight of the educational delivery of IEFT's courses. The Academic Board determines academic policy and has responsibility for the achievement of the educational objectives of IEFT's accredited higher education courses. The Academic Board is responsible for fostering and enhancing a culture of scholarship within IEFT.

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[5] The IEFT Governance Charter outlines the corporate and academic governance responsibilities in detail

The functions of the Academic Board are to:

- Promote excellence in teaching and learning.
- Oversee the quality assurance of the academic functions of IEFT.
- Facilitate free intellectual enquiry and ensure academic integrity.
- Ensure a culture of scholarship is developed and nurtured throughout IEFT.
- Approve an annual Scholarly Activity Plan for academic staff to ensure that professional and discipline based expertise is current, that teaching skills are maintained and updated and that appropriate scholarly activity is undertaken.
- Consider and make decisions on all aspects of the development and accreditation or re-accreditation of courses, the admission of students, teaching, assessment and requirements for graduation, prizes, awards and scholarships.
- Formulate, coordinate, approve and review academic policy.
- Advise on the academic aspects of IEFT's plans and foster discussion on issues related to higher education and the Mission and Goals of IEFT.
- Refer certain matters to such standing committees as the Board of Directors or Academic Board may establish from time to time.
- Receive reports from standing committees or working groups and ensure that their referred responsibilities are discharged.
- Consider and recommend on any matter referred to the Academic Board by the Board of Directors.
- In addition to such matters as are specifically referred to the Academic Board, the Academic Board may generate reports and recommendations to the Board of Directors, including recommending new courses for development.

4.3 The Executive Management Committee

The Board of Directors delegates responsibility for the efficient conduct of IEFT's business to the CEO and Executive Management Committee. The CEO is responsible for the efficient and effective management of IEFT's business. To assist in this regard, the CEO convenes the Executive Management Committee. The Executive Management Committee ensures a high level of management coordination to support the CEO in achieving IEFT's strategic and business plans and strategic objectives.

It is the role of the CEO and the Executive Management Committee to manage the Company in accordance with the directions of the Board of Directors, including without limitation to:

- Exercise a coordination role in relation to IEFT's business.
- Provide advice regarding the overall operations of IEFT from a strategic perspective.
- Implement policies and procedures to enable the efficient and effective operations of IEFT.
- Implement IEFT's plans, ensuring that IEFT maintains a quality assured teaching and learning environment for all stakeholders, including students and academic teaching and professional staff.
- Develop strategy for consideration by the Board of Directors.

This Committee is the primary operational decision-making body of the Institution. It oversees operations and directs IEFT in the implementation of its Business Plan.

4.4 The Teaching and Learning Committee

The Board of Directors delegates authority to the Academic Board to convene a Teaching and Learning Committee to monitor and report on quality assurance processes for teaching

and learning within IEFT, to ensure that day-to-day academic operations meet quality higher education standards. The Teaching and Learning Committee also has responsibility for advising on policy and practice related to teaching and learning in IEFT's accredited higher education courses. The Teaching and Learning Committee will also investigate any issues raised by the Academic Board.

The functions of the Learning and Teaching Committee are to:

- Implement academic policies relating to all learning and teaching processes, including admissions, student progress, attrition and completion, assessment, and academic appeals.
- Assess the impact of teaching on students' learning experiences.
- Coordinate the conduct of, and monitor the outcomes from admission processes.
- Oversee the process by which students are assessed, including assessment moderation practices.
- Approve recommendations from the Assessment Committee to approve all student results prior to publication.
- Monitor student progress, attrition and completion rates, and outcomes of graduate surveys.
- Make recommendations to the Academic Board on changes to existing courses, including matters pertaining to delivery.
- Review and advise on learning and teaching facilities and resources to ensure the physical environment is conducive to higher education study.
- Receive reports and review statistics relating to the granting of credit, student appeals against assessment decisions, grievances, discipline and misconduct.
- Undertake benchmarking of course outcomes according to this Framework.
- Take steps to improve the quality of teaching through regular use and review of unit and course evaluations as a basis for continuous improvement.
- Encourage a culture of scholarship throughout IEFT.
- Act on any other actions delegated by the Academic Board.

4.5 Assessment Committee

The primary role of the Assessment Committee is to oversight the reporting of student results at the end of each semester.

The functions of the Assessment Committee are to:

- Confirm there is no error in the aggregation of individual students' performance in required assessment tasks for units of study.
- Recommend the overall reporting of student results for approval by the Teaching and Learning Committee, prior to the release of results to students.

4.6 Course Advisory Committees

The primary role of discipline-based Course Advisory Committees is to ensure the currency and relevance of new or existing courses, and to consider and respond to advice drawn from a range of sources, including teaching staff, employers, and external academic peers.

The functions of Course Advisory Committees are to:

- Consider and give advice to the Academic Board on the development of new courses, seeking independent expert opinion where necessary to address specific issues.
- Receive and review new course proposals (including evidence of their need and demand), units of study, assessment schedules, and admission and progression requirements.

- Review course development and renewal of course accreditation documentation to ensure that courses meet standards of rigour and depth appropriate to the AQF award level.
- Ensure course structure and content of existing courses continue to provide a coherent learning experience for students, and that course rationale, aims and content are consistent and reflect best practice within the discipline.
- Receive and comment upon outlines for units of study within new and existing courses.
- Consider major changes to existing courses and units of study and seek additional expert advice where necessary.
- Make recommendations regarding texts and learning resources in IEFT's higher education courses.
- Draw to the attention of the Academic Board recent developments and trends in specific fields of study, and directions in course development.
- Ensure that innovative practices in teaching and learning are considered for application in IEFT's proposed and current courses.
- Provide advice and guidance on the implications of changing government higher education policy and procedures within the higher education sector and how these may relate to, or impact upon, IEFT's higher education courses.
- Review quality assurance mechanisms in teaching and learning, paying particular attention to assessment procedures, stakeholder feedback and benchmarking with other higher education providers.
- In addition to such tasks and activities as are specifically referred to Course Advisory Committees by the Academic Board, consider other matters as deemed relevant by Committees, and generate reports and recommendations to the Academic Board.
- Draft formal recommendations on issues arising from Committee meetings and submit these recommendations to the Academic Board for consideration and implementation.

NOTE: Given the small scale of IEFT's current operations at this time, the functions of the Teaching and Learning Committee and Course Advisory Committee are performed by the same group of people.

4.7 Faculty Committee
The primary role of Faculty Committees is to provide discipline-based forums for academic staff to support the institution's culture of scholarship, and facilitate staff participation in the ongoing monitoring and review of courses and student outcomes.

The functions of Faculty Committees are to:
- Discuss and document student welfare concerns and students at risk, and plan follow up actions.
- Provide feedback on the adequacy of the teaching and learning environment.
- Facilitate ongoing reflection on teaching and learning in IEFT's accredited courses by academic teaching staff.

Further information about IEFT's Corporate and Academic Governance arrangements is detailed in the Governance Charter.

5. PLANNING FRAMEWORK
The IEFT Planning Framework is built around four key areas of strategic focus:
- Governance and Risk;
- Student Participation and Outcomes;

- Financial Viability and Growth; and
- Academic Leadership.

IEFT's Strategic and Business Plans are approved by the Board of Directors. The planning framework is made up of these plans and the policies and procedures that guide the implementation of the plan priorities[6]. The strategic focus of these plans gives substance and definition to IEFT's mission and values, and the development of annual corporate goals and objectives. These in turn underpin the annual business plan. The business plan articulates clear and measurable targets, according to which the performance of the business is reviewed. This cascading model ensures that the key areas of strategic focus underpin IEFT's operational plans and performance review.

6. A REGULAR, METHODICAL AND ORGANISED PLANNING AND REVIEW CYCLE

6.1 IEFT undertakes regular and systemic reviews of all operations.

6.2 The planning cycle begins with an annual review of IEFT's performance against the plan indicators.

6.3 Where required, Strategic, Business and Teaching and Learning Plans are updated to address gaps in performance or where there is need for improvement (commencing November).

6.4 Budget Proposal. The following year's operational plan is drafted and any budget implications identified. Revised performance indicators are set (commencing December).

6.5 Business Performance Review (each Semester). Review of the business performance against measurable key indicators.

6.6 Teaching and Learning Plan Performance Review (each Semester).
Review of student performance against measurable key performance indicators in the plan (Teaching and Learning Committee).
Monthly reviews of enrolments and financial performance

6.7 Annual Performance reviews of the Board of Directors and the Academic Board.

7. RISK MANAGEMENT

IEFT monitors potential risks to its operations and has strategies to mitigate risks that may eventuate (refer to the *Risk Management Framework*). This process involves an assessment of the higher education institution's exposure to specific risks, and an analysis of the likelihood and impact of each risk enables an assessment of the overall risk rating. The Risk Register is reviewed and updated at Executive Management Committee meetings. This Committee reports on risk to both the Board of Directors and the Academic Board.

8. FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT

The Planning and Review Cycle underpins IEFT's financial model and the development of the annual operating budget. This process of cyclic review also supports implementation of higher education institution priorities. It aligns resource allocation with gaps in performance or where there is need for improvement.

9. COURSE EVALUATION AND REVIEW

IEFT undertakes regular reviews of programs, courses and teaching through:

9.1 End of Semester Course Reviews

The performance of the student cohort in each subject is collated and analysed againstthe Teaching and Learning Plan objectives and performance indicators. This information is summarised into a report and then forwarded to the Teaching and Learning Committee for review and recommendations.

9.2 Student Experience Questionnaires
At the end of each semester, IEFT collects feedback on courses and teaching from students using standardised survey instruments. Specific questions relate to unit delivery and assessment arrangements. The data is collated into a report for consideration and analysis by the Teaching and Learning Committee.

9.3 Annual Reviews and Evaluation of Units of Study
- The Teaching and Learning Committee reports to the Academic Board on cohort performance against the indicators in the Teaching and Learning Plan.
- The Course Advisory Committee reviews and evaluates one of IEFT's units of study and reports to the Academic Board.

9.4 Triennial Benchmarking Review of courses
The Teaching and Learning Committee conducts a Benchmarking Review of a course and reports its findings to the Academic Board, every three years.

9.5 Full Course Review (every four years).
The Academic Board initiates and oversights a full review of an IEFT course and its units of study every four years. This review is delegated to the Course Advisory Committee.

More information about the review and evaluation of units of study is detailed in the *Course Evaluation and Review Policy* and *Procedure*.

10. STAKEHOLDER SURVEYS
IEFT surveys students, staff, graduates and employers in order to identify areas in need of improvement. More information about processes for collecting Stakeholder Feedback can be found in the *Course Evaluation and Review Policy* and *Procedure*.

11. ANNUAL PERFORMANCE REVIEW OF ACADEMIC STAFF
IEFT has an integrated and coherent system of performance management that establishes a direct link from the corporate vision to individual accountability. The Business Plan and Teaching and Learning Plan performance indicators inform each employee's accountabilities and specific work objectives, and the measures for regular review of the individual's performance of his/her accountabilities. This process culminates in an annual appraisal.

More information about the Annual Performance Review is detailed in the *Staff Performance Management Policy.*

12. BENCHMARKING
Benchmarking involves strategic collaboration with other higher education institutions for the purposes of benchmarking '*its performance on teaching, student learning outcomes, and graduate outcomes (which includes both graduate employment and further study)'*. [7] A Benchmarking Review will be conducted every three years.

More information about benchmarking is detailed in the *Benchmarking Policy* and *Procedure*.

13. COMMUNICATION AND CONSULTATION
Reporting requirements between the various Committees and Boards are built into the academic governance and quality assurance framework. These are detailed in IEFT's *Governance Charter*, and given further substance and definition in the various policies and procedures by which IEFT's governing and academic boards and committees maintain oversight of the institution's higher education operations.

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[7] http://www.teqsa.gov.au/teqsa-contextual-overview-hes-framework and
http://teqsa.gov.au/sites/default/files/GuidanceNote_ExternalReferencing2.1.pdf

Furthermore, all staff and students are aware of the IEFT's commitment and approach to quality assurance through induction and orientation procedures, all promotional information, the official IEFT website and student handbook, and are given the opportunity to provide feedback.

REVIEW

This framework will be reviewed by the Board of Directors every two (2) years, or more frequently as appropriate.

RELATED

Strategic Plan
Risk Management Framework
Course Design Development and Approval Policy
Course Design Development and Approval Procedure
Course Evaluation and Review Policy
Course Evaluation and Review Procedure
Quality Assurance Procedure
Benchmarking Policy
Benchmarking Procedure
Staff Performance Management Policy
Governance Charter

Version Control

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