

Programme Advisory Committee (PAC) Policy and Procedures

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1.0 Policy Overview

The Fiji National University (FNU) recognizes the need to establish and maintain dynamic stakeholder engagement and feedback mechanisms that are responsive to industry needs as part of the development and review of the University's academic programmes. External stakeholder representation provides essential advice to FNU on matters that directly affect the success of students and graduates and help ensure that curricula remain up-to-date and relevant and meet employer and labour-market needs. The Programme Advisory Committee (PAC) provides feedback on the currency and content of existing programmes and advises on the demand for new programmes based on industry and labour market requirements. The committee thus assists in the overall development and enhancement of academic programmes at the University.

2.0 Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to outline the University's position on the Programme Advisory Committee (PAC) and describe the structure, function, and procedures for its effective operation. The PAC replaces the Industry Advisory Committee (IAC).

3.0 Objective

To enhance the voice of industry in the development and continuous enhancement of the University's programme portfolio.

4.0 Scope

This policy applies to all programmes of instruction for which FNU credentials are awarded, including micro-qualifications (short courses). The PAC is constituted at specific moments in the programme development cycle, namely when a programme is being developed, or when an existing programme is being revised.

5.0 Relevant Legislations and Authorities

5.1 University Academic & Student Regulations (UASR), Revised 2017

5.2 Academic Quality Assurance Manual (AQAM), 2020

5.3 Learning and Teaching Policy (LTP)

5.4 Fiji Higher Education Commission (FHEC) Regulations and Acts

This policy must be read in conjunction with the above documents.

6.0 Responsibilities

6.1 The College Dean is responsible for ensuring that Programme Advisory Committees are established to provide advice and guidance on curriculum content, pedagogy and assessment.

6.2 The College Dean must ensure compliance with University/ College policy and procedure in respect of Programme Advisory Committee recommendations.

6.3 The Pro-Vice-Chancellor (Learning and Teaching) has overall responsibility for ensuring active industry and stakeholder involvement in programme development and enhancement.

7.0 Definitions

Academic Programmes	Any combination of courses and/or requirements leading to a degree or certificate, or to a major, co-major, minor concentration.
Alumni	Former pupils or students at a particular school, college, or university.
College	Refers to a division of the University that provides education and grants awards such as certificates, Diploma, or degree.
Committee	A group of people appointed for a specific function by a larger group and typically consisting of members of that group.
Faculty	A group of university departments concerned with a major division of knowledge.
Graduate	A person who has successfully completed a course of study or training, especially a person who have been awarded an undergraduate or first academic degree.
Industrial Attachment	Refers to the requirement that a student be attached to a relevant industry as part of his/her study and training before graduation in any given programme.
Micro Qualifications	Certification-style qualifications that individuals choose to study to improve a skill found in a particular industry area or short, competency-based recognition that allows an educator to demonstrate mastery in a particular area.
Quality Assurance	Is the process for checking that the standards and quality of higher education provision meet agreed expectations.
Remuneration	Refers to the total amount an employee receives for performing a service or for being employed by a company or organization.
Student	Any person enrolled in any programme or course of study whether on a full- time or part – time basis.
University	A high-level educational institution in which students study for degrees and academic research is done.

8.0 Guiding Principles

- 8.1 University programmes shall be of high quality, relevant to labour market needs, and appropriate in their content, duration and evaluation.
- 8.2 University programmes will embed work-readiness core skills to enhance the employability of graduates.
- 8.3 Continuous, timely and agile input from industry and stakeholders is essential for maintaining relevance and standards of programmes.
- 8.4 The Programme Advisory Committees build a strong foundation of support by bringing a new direction of community contacts, resources, insights, and energy into the University's academic planning process.

9.0 Objectives of the Programme Advisory Committee (PAC)

- 9.1 To advise the University on the development of new programmes and continuous monitoring and enhancement of its existing programmes.
- 9.2 To assist the University in ensuring that the curriculum content, pedagogy and assessment strategy are aligned to industry needs.
- 9.3 To maintain effective lines of communication between education, business, and industry so that the University is informed regarding the changing labour market conditions and other outside factors which may impact the development, continuation or cancellation of programmes and courses.
- 9.4 To help University promote its programmes and keep stakeholders informed about programme development.
- 9.5 To assist University in incorporating employability skills in the curriculum to enhance employability for students and to provide assistance in obtaining feedback on the performance of graduates in the workplace.

10.0 Programme Advisory Committee (PAC) Membership and Structure

- 10.1 The Programme Advisory Committee (PAC) should be drawn from industry and other stakeholder groups, based on their knowledge, expertise, skills, competencies and attributes, and understanding in their area of specialization.
- 10.2 The following will be considered when choosing an external PAC member:
 - Current Position
 - Formal/ Academic Qualification
 - Relevant Experience
 - Professional Membership
- 10.3 A file with details of all external members (as listed in 10.2) must be kept by the College.
- 10.4 The PAC should be diverse in characteristics that includes gender, race, ethnicity, and age.
- 10.5 The members of a PAC will be identified through referrals, self-nomination or by the College Dean.
- 10.6 Appointment to a PAC will be by the Vice-Chancellor in consultation with the College Dean.
- 10.7 A letter of invitation and an appointment letter requesting acceptance to serve on PAC will be sent to potential members, in which brief goals and purpose of the committee shall be indicated. (**Refer to Appendix 1 – Sample Letter of Invitation and Appendix 2 – Sample Letter of Appointment**).
- 10.8 The PAC will be chaired by the College Dean. The College Dean may delegate this position occasionally to one of his/ her Associate Deans.
- 10.9 Each PAC will comprise no less than 6 and no more than 10 members from industry and other stakeholder groups.
- 10.10 The Associate Dean Learning & Teaching or Associate Dean TVET and the Head of School shall be bona-fide members of the PAC.

11.0 Responsibilities of the Programme Advisory Committee (PAC)

The PAC is an advisory committee; its recommendations will be considered by Senate, the highest academic decision-making body of the University. Its responsibilities include the following:

- 11.1 Support in evaluating the effectiveness of the University programmes and in the identification of future trends and changes in the industry to ensure programme currency and relevancy.
- 11.2 Provide advice to the University on development/ introduction of new courses/ programmes, recommend changes to the existing programmes and suggest the elimination of obsolete programmes.
- 11.3 Offer advice on the precise skills, competencies, attributes and behaviours needed by employers, and ensure that the curriculum content, pedagogy and assessment strategy are aligned to industry needs.
- 11.4 Assist in academic programme review and, if appropriate, programme accreditation.
- 11.5 Support in reviewing and recommending improvements to instructional materials and course delivery strategies to optimise students learning experiences and satisfaction.
- 11.6 Assist in identifying internship opportunities for students.
- 11.7 Provide assistance in reviewing technology standards in the curriculum and advise on new technology opportunities.
- 11.8 Receive advice from College External Advisory Board (CEAB) in a strategic level and recommend critical insights related to maintaining programme quality at a detailed, operational level at the University.
- 11.9 Provide assistance in identifying guest speakers for the course/ programme and appearing as guest speakers themselves when needed. (***Refer to Appendix 3 - Sample Letter of Invitation to be Guest Speaker***)

12.0 Meetings and Reporting

- 12.1 The Programme Advisory Committees will meet face-to-face or online, at least annually. Additional meetings will be scheduled as warranted by the purpose of the meeting (such as deliberations towards the development of new programme or review of an existing programme).
- 12.2 The College Dean will draft meeting agendas in consultation with members.
- 12.3 The PAC members must be well informed of the purpose and background information of the meeting and the meeting invitations shall be sent 2 weeks prior to a meeting to allow preparation time.
- 12.4 Meeting minutes will be taken by the Minute Secretary and approved by the Chair.
- 12.5 Approved meeting minutes shall be distributed to all PAC members within two weeks of each meeting.
- 12.6 Minutes shall be discussed at College Academic Board and then sent to Secretariat for submission to the Portfolio Oversight Group.
- 12.7 The Associate Dean Learning & Teaching or Associate Dean TVET will have the primary responsibility, in collaboration with the PAC Chair, to take forward recommendations arising from PAC meetings.

12.8 The College Dean will provide an annual report to Senate on Programme Advisory Committee (PAC) activity and membership.

13.0 Term Limits and Participation

The term limit for membership of a PAC is maximum of two (2) years, renewable for a further single period of a year by mutual agreement. Membership is for the particular duration of either the Programme Design or Programme Review. To remain active members on PAC, members must participate in at least one (1) meeting per year. (*Refer to Appendix 4 – Sample Letter of Renewal*)

14.0 Remuneration

The Programme Advisory Committee (PAC) members will not be remunerated for their participation. Colleges may consider travel allowance.

15.0 Implementation

The approved policy will be published on the FNU Website to communicate the key elements of this policy to all students and staff of FNU.

16.0 Compliance

The Pro-Vice-Chancellor (Learning and Teaching) is accountable for ensuring compliance to this policy.

17.0 Review of the Policy

The Pro-Vice-Chancellor (Learning and Teaching) is responsible for updating the policy as required.

18.0 Approving Authority

FNU Senate

Appendix 1

Sample Letter of Invitation to Join Programme Advisory Committee (PAC)

[Letterhead]

[Date]

[Name/ Address]

Dear [Name]

It is a pleasure to invite you to serve on the College (Name) Programme Advisory Committee. You have been identified to be in this committee because of your considerable expertise in this area. By accepting this letter, you will play a vital role in shaping curriculum development and review at the Fiji National University.

The ultimate purpose of the advisory committee is to provide assistance and recommendations for the continuous improvement of our academic programmes/ courses. You will be notified in advance of the committee meetings.

We are looking forward to working with you and the other advisory committee members. Please feel free to contact (appropriate contact person name) at (phone/email).

We wish you the very best for a productive and challenging experience on College [Name] PAC.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Appropriate signature (Dean)

Appendix 2

Sample Letter of Appointment to Programme Advisory Committee (PAC)

[Letterhead]

[Date]

[Name/ Address]

Dear [Name]

It is with great pleasure that I inform you of your appointment to the [College Name] Programme Advisory Committee. Your appointment to the [College Name] Programme Advisory Committee is effective beginning _____, 20__, and ending _____, 20__.

Meeting dates shall be announced at least a month in advance and the meeting agenda with other relevant details will be sent out at least 2 weeks prior to the meeting proper.

We wish to thank you for accepting this committee appointment and we look forward to your valuable contribution and support towards the university.

Sincerely,
Chair of Committee
cc: Appointee's Supervisor

Appendix 3

Sample Letter of Invitation to Business Partners to be Guest Speaker in the Classroom

[Letterhead]

[Date]

[Name/ Address]

Dear Sir/ Madam

One of my objectives this year is to furnish students with relevant lessons presented by professionals in [programme area]. Learning about [topic] from an expert in the field would be of great benefit to students.

On this note, I would like to invite you to be a guest speaker to my class as your expertise and experience will enhance the students' learning experience in this course.

We can mutually agree to a date and time that is convenient to you. I will call you to further discuss any other details for the class.

Thank you in advance for sharing your time and experience.

Sincerely,
Course Coordinators Name
Email Address
School Address
Phone Number

Appendix 4

Sample Letter of Renewal to Programme Advisory Committee (PAC)

[Letterhead]

[Date]

[Name/ Address]

Dear [Name]

I am pleased to inform you that [College Name] Programme Advisory Committee (PAC) has extended your membership on PAC for another academic year. The committee expresses its sincere appreciation to you for your invaluable contribution in our advisory committee activities in the past year(s).

Your re-appointment to the [College Name] Programme Advisory Committee is effective beginning _____, 20__, and ending _____, 20__.

Meeting dates shall be announced at least a month in advance and the meeting agenda with other relevant details will be sent out at least 2 weeks prior to the meeting proper.

We thank you for continuing your work as an active member of PAC and look forward to your continued support and service to the university.

Sincerely,
Chair of Committee
cc: Appointee's Supervisor