Programme Consultation Networks

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Applies From:	Immediately		

Major changes/additions since the last version was approved are indicated by a vertical line in the left hand margin.

1   Introduction

1.1   Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to: encourage meaningful consultation with industry, professional bodies, relevant community groups, and internal stakeholders in the development and review of Ara Institute of Canterbury[1] programmes; and give flexibility to Departments as to how to achieve this.

1.2   Scope and Application

This policy applies to all programmes at Ara that lead to a qualification, and any others that Directors of Divisions, Heads of Department and/or Academic Board or Te Kāhui Manukura consider would benefit from a consultation process.

1.3   Formal Delegations

a   On 17 May 2006 the Ara Council endorsed the existing schedule of Council delegations to the Chief Executive. The delegation also includes responsibility for the operation of the Academic Board, and further empowers the Chief Executive to sub-delegate to staff members/other bodies as he/she sees fit.

b   The Academic Board Terms of Reference are updated on a regular basis and submitted to Council for ratification. The current terms of reference include the following responsibilities most relevant to this policy:

i   The Academic Board delegates to the Director of the Education and Applied Research Division the authority for the *'operation of Departmental Boards of Study, including…approving appropriate consultation networks for ensuring meaningful input into programme development, delivery and review'.*

ii   Each Head of Department is responsible for ensuring an appropriate consultation network, meeting the requirements of this policy, is set up to support each programme or cluster of related programmes. The Head of Department also is responsible for ensuring records are kept in such a way that themes can be identified and appropriate action(s) taken.

iii   Each Head of Department is responsible for ensuring that input from the approved consultation network(s) is sought in a timely way and is taken into

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[1] From herein referred to as Ara

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account during programme development, delivery, and review. This includes consultation when changes are being considered.

1.4 Definitions

a   **Programme:** A group of one or more courses, usually leading to a qualification.

b   **Qualification:** The official recognition of successful study and training in an approved programme (refer *APP503 Naming and Awarding Qualifications* for details).

c   **Consultation:**   Processes/activities by which input from relevant stakeholders (internal and external) is sought and taken into account.

d   **Programme Advisory Committee:** One form of consultation, consisting of a formally established advisory group, whose main function is to provide an effective communication link between relevant stakeholders and the Division of Education and Applied Research, Programme and/or programme or cluster of programmes.

Related Ara Procedures and Forms	**Related Ara Policies**
• APP604a Terms of Reference Guidelines for Programme Advisory Committees • APP604b List of current Consultation Network/Programme Advisory Committees	• APP303 Department Boards of Studies – Membership and TOR • APP503 Naming and Awarding Qualifications and Recognising Achievement • APP603 Design, Development and Approval of Programmes [Re-approval, accreditation and related aspects] • CPP112 Quality Management at Ara
Related Legislation or Other Documentation • NZQA regulations and guidelines • TEC regulations and guidelines	**Good Practice Guidelines**(indicate if attached to policy or where they can be found) •
References •	
Notes • Policy updated (May 2012) to align with organisational restructure: Faculties to Departments/Schools and Faculty Boards to Boards of Studies.	

2   Principles

2.1   Ara acknowledges the critical role of consultation with its stakeholders and industry partners in the design, implementation and outcomes of its programmes.

2.2   Both formal and informal consultation with stakeholders provides a key mechanism regarding industry needs, wants, feedback and concern in relation to our portfolio of delivery.

2.3   Consultation with industry and stakeholders more generally requires real engagement and be flexible and fit for specific purpose to be effective

2.4   Consultation should ensure that the diversity and breadth of stakeholders is covered, including industry, Ara internal stakeholders and government bodies such as the TEC and NZQA.

2.5   There is an expectation of frequent engagement both formally and informally and an established and formalized way of reporting the outcomes of this engagement through, Annual Programme Evaluation and Review and via Departmental and Academic Boards.

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2.6   There are times when consultation is particularly required, including portfolio analysis, programme development and redevelopment.

2.7   Programme areas need to identify their formal consultation networks and advisory boards and provide terms of reference for such (see attached template).

3   Associated procedures for Ara Academic Policy on: Programme Consultation Networks

Contents: 3.1   Consultation Networks
3.2   Formal Reporting Requirements
3.3   Programme Advisory Committees
3.4   Liability

3.1   Consultation Networks

a   All programmes or clusters of programmes leading to a qualification are expected to be supported by appropriate stakeholder/industry consultation processes, established to provide input at various stages of programme development, delivery and review.

b   Stakeholder and industry consultation may include formally constituted Programme Advisory Committees (see 3.3, below) or other processes/activities such as focus groups brought together for a specific purpose; 'virtual committee' based on electronic or other communication that can be recorded; formal, documented industry links; membership on relevant external bodies if agenda items include ones related specifically to the delivery of the Ara programme.

Informal discussions or encounters may constitute consultation but need appropriate reporting structures through, for instance, notes or logs.

c   Consultation Networks
The following principles are provided as guidelines for the formation of any type of consultation network:

i   The purpose of a network is to facilitate communication between a specific programme/cluster of related programmes and the relevant industry, profession, or community it serves. Recognised bodies/other official stakeholders need to be contacted for advice on who should be included in the network.

ii   The goal is to ensure Ara programmes meet the needs of the group(s) they serve. Consultation, therefore, is required during the development stage of a programme (including the market research phase), during the delivery cycle of the programme, and when the programme is being reviewed or substantially changed.

iii   Market research is one way of consulting with potential stakeholders, including likely student groups, during the development or review phase of a programme.

iv   In cases where a programme or component(s) of a programme is set up to meet internally identified needs (e.g. mathematics, communication, ESOL modules), the appropriate consultation network may consist entirely or principally of other Ara staff.

v   Accurate, useful records of the following contact details need to be kept so themes and actions can be identified and followed up: times, dates, venues, who was present/contacted, their role, summary of feedback received or recommendations made, results of any actions taken. In some cases, the records will be formal minutes; in other cases, they may be copies of e-mails or informal notes.

vi   Records must be accessible on request to the Academic Board, Senior Leaders, external reviewers or bodies as relevant.

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d   Advice/input is expected to be sought on at least the following items, regardless of the type of consultation undertaken:

   i   Current and future training needs, both locally and nationally; changes in the external environment which impact on the courses offered.

   ii   Suitability of existing courses and programmes to meet employment and/or community needs.

   iii   New programme and course developments.

   iv   Work placements and employment opportunities for students.

   v   Criteria for student selection and profiles for staff recruitment, taking into account Ara policies and procedures.

   vi   Improvements to the structure, content and administration/management of the relevant programmes(s).

   vii   Matters affecting the quality of the programme.

   viii   Specific issues identified by the Director, Education and Applied Research Division, Departmental Head, programme leader or relevant committee(s).

e   In the programme approval and development process, internal consultation with other Ara stakeholders is critical. Programme developers in association with the Academic Division need to ensure that all relevant academic and non-academic departments are consulted. This includes consultation to ensure regulations around compliance are met and worked through, including compliance for funding.

f   Departmental Boards of Study are responsible for endorsing the consultation network process for each programme/cluster of programmes and for setting the specific Departmental-level reporting requirements (see 2.2 for other reporting requirements). Academic Board approval is required, usually as part of the normal programme approval/re-approval process.

3.2 Formal Reporting Requirements

a   Details of the consultation processes (including summaries of relevant informal or formal discussions or input from stakeholders, consultation networks and advisory committees) are to be included in each Programme Document, Accreditation Review, and Annual Programme Evaluation and Review.

b   Records need to be accessible for internal and external monitoring/audit as required. External Evaluators/Auditors/monitors may wish to contact individual stakeholders, including members of consultation networks or advisory committees to confirm their involvement and perspective on Ara consultation processes.

c   A summary of how consultation is carried out, including a list of names and title/affiliation of Programme Advisory Committee members, is included in the Ara Annual Report each year. Departments are responsible for requesting permission to include this information. Some details on other forms of consultation may also be included. This provides public evidence that Ara takes its mission seriously, and that the Key Strategies, particularly 'work relevance', underpin our qualifications.

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3.3 Programme Advisory Committees

The following are relevant when the most appropriate form of consultation is via a formally constituted Programme Advisory Committee.

a   Membership should be set so that representative(s) of the relevant professional or industry organisation(s), community group(s) and external academics are involved and are endorsed by the relevant body. Student representatives should be included where at all possible. The balance of internal (i.e. staff) and external members should be such that the number of members involved in delivery is no more than one-third of the total membership. Others may attend at the invitation of the Chair.

b   Each member is appointed for a specified term, in most cases three years, with at least one half of the external members retained each year if possible. Members can be re-nominated for consecutive terms.

c   A Chairperson is to be elected from among the external members on an annual basis, although a Ara staff member is likely to be designated to carry out administrative tasks on the Chair's behalf. The Chair will sign formal correspondence to outside bodies. He/she may contact the Director, Education and Applied Research Division, Chair of Academic Board or Chief Executive about any matter relevant to the Advisory Committee.

d   Operational guidelines

    i   At least two meetings held each year.

    ii   Administration support provided by the Department, unless the committee makes other arrangements.

    iii   Minutes of each meeting formally recorded, received and confirmed by members of the committee.

    iv   The accepted practice of confidentiality is expected, including formally moving "into committee" and producing confidential minutes if the situation warrants it.

    v   The Director, Education and Applied Research Division/Head of Department and/or the Chair is responsible for ensuring that all new members are inducted, including being given relevant information regarding the committee and its operation.

    vi   Although an honorarium is not usually paid to members, the Director, Education and Applied Research Division/Head of Department may decide that one is appropriate to external members. All costs related to advisory committees, including honoraria, are borne by the Department.

    vii   All other operational procedures, including the formation of any subcommittees, are at the discretion of the committee. No limitations or requirements are set by Ara.

    viii   See section 3.4 on Liability.

e   Ara will consult with Chairs of Programme Advisory Committees when reviewing policy/procedures related to the operation of advisory committees.

f   The committee will review its terms of reference on a three-year cycle or as required, and recommend changes to the Departmental Board of Study for ratification before they are sent to the Academic Board for formal approval.

3.4 Liability

Ara confirms that no member of an Ara Advisory Committee or Consultation Network is personally liable for any act done or omitted by him/herself or the Committee, providing the

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action or omission was in good faith and in the course of the work/role undertaken by the Committee.

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