



QUT Response to Potential Changes to the Foundation Program Standards

For over 30 years QUT, through its College, has offered a range of premium pathway programs that lead students directly to QUT undergraduate and postgraduate degrees. In 2019, just over 1250 students successfully transitioned from the College to the broader University. The College operates under the same CRICOS Code and is subject to all policies and procedures which govern the University.

Within the College's suite of courses sit two Foundation Programs – Standard and Extended which both operate within the Foundation Program Standards. The following provides feedback on the proposed amendments as outlined in the discussion paper *Foundation Program Standards: positioning for quality, success and competitiveness*.

Ensuring appropriate English language requirements

QUT agrees that the overall IELTS score (or equivalent) be increased from 5.0 to 5.5 for extended programs. QUT believes that no sub-scores for entry to extended programs should be below 5.0.

Academic preparedness

QUT would like confirmation that the first recommendation regarding a written agreement from 'receiving universities' does not apply to those universities such as QUT where the Foundation programs are operated under the auspices of the university.

QUT disagrees with the proposed amendment *Under 'overall results' providers must assess overall university readiness*. Due to their very nature, Foundation programs are constructed to transition students to the next level of education. Embedded within the content of the units are academic language and literacy skills development similar to senior years context. Successful completion of an approved Foundation program should be the indicator of readiness rather than the need for an additional layer of confirmation.

Quality Assurance and student support

QUT disagrees that references to "exams" be replaced with "significant formal assessment". The term *exam* is a well-known construct in the university and broader education sector. Changing the wording for an understood concept to the somewhat abstract and unknown concept of "significant formal assessment" is not in line with current university phrasing and therefore has the possibility to cause confusion amongst students and educators alike.

QUT suggests a nuanced approach to the proposal to limit exam weighting to 40% of overall assessment. For subjects within the Arts, Society and the Environment, Business etc, this is certainly a workable change. However, areas such as Mathematics, Physics and Chemistry often have regular online quizzes, coupled with mid-semester and end of semester exams and therefore reducing exams to \leq 40% of assessment would take away this discipline approach and be problematic to implement at course level.

QUT appreciates the opportunity to provide feedback on proposed changes and would welcome communication regarding any of the above.