



# Quality Assurance and Academic Development Policy

## DOCUMENT INFORMATION

<b>Status</b>	Approved by AIC Senior Management Committee
<b>Policy Owner</b>	Director - Academics and Quality Assurance
<b>Implementation</b>	AIC Academic Team and Quality Assurance Committee
<b>Effective Date</b>	October 2025
<b>Review Cycle</b>	Annually (October each year)
<b>Next Review Date</b>	October 2026
<b>Compliance Framework</b>	This policy aligns with the UK Quality Assurance Agency (QAA) Quality Code for Higher Education 2024 and the European Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance (ESG), ensuring international recognition and adherence to sector-agreed principles for securing academic standards and enhancing quality.

*The management of AIC Campus reserves the right to amend this document when requirements arise. All appropriate staff will be informed of changes through official communication channels.*

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## Summary

This Quality Assurance and Academic Development Policy establishes a comprehensive framework to ensure academic excellence, maintain international standards, and foster continuous improvement across all programs and services at AIC Campus. The policy aligns with the regulatory requirements of the University of St Mark & St John (Marjon) and adheres to internationally recognised quality frameworks including the UK Quality Assurance Agency Quality Code and the European Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance. This policy demonstrates AIC Campus's commitment to providing a high-quality educational experience that prepares students for successful careers and lifelong learning. It establishes clear governance structures, systematic quality assurance processes, and robust mechanisms for monitoring, evaluation, and enhancement of academic standards.

## **1. POLICY STATEMENT**

### **1.1 Commitment to Quality**

AIC Campus is committed to providing students with an exceptional educational experience in a supportive learning environment that meets the highest international standards. Academic quality is fundamental to institutional success, reputation, and the achievement of our mission and strategic objectives.

### **1.2 Purpose and Scope**

This policy applies to all academic programs, services, and operations across AIC Campus. It establishes a systematic approach to quality assurance and academic development that:

- Ensures compliance with partner university requirements and regulatory frameworks
- Maintains academic standards consistent with international benchmarks
- Promotes continuous enhancement of teaching, learning, and assessment practices
- Embeds quality assurance in institutional culture and daily operations
- Engages students as partners in quality assurance and enhancement

### **1.3 Alignment with International Standards**

This policy aligns with the UK Quality Assurance Agency Quality Code for Higher Education (2024 edition) and the European Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in the European Higher Education Area. It also adheres to the standards of the Tertiary and Vocational Education Commission (TVEC), Sri Lanka, and the requirements of the University Grants Commission (UGC), Sri Lanka. This alignment ensures that AIC Campus maintains internationally recognized quality standards while meeting local regulatory requirements.

## 2. STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES

### 2.1 Primary Objectives

The quality assurance framework at AIC Campus aims to:

1. Achieve and maintain academic standards consistent with partner university requirements and international benchmarks
2. Systematically monitor, review, and enhance all aspects of teaching, learning, and assessment
3. Foster a culture of continuous improvement and innovation in education
4. Support student success through high-quality academic programs and comprehensive support services
5. Maintain transparent and accountable quality assurance processes
6. Engage all stakeholders including students, staff, employers, and partner institutions in quality enhancement
7. Ensure equity, diversity, inclusion, and environmental sustainability are embedded in all quality processes
8. Build capacity among academic staff through professional development and collaborative partnerships

### 2.2 Enhancement Focus Areas

AIC Campus prioritizes enhancement in the following areas:

- **Student-Centered Learning:** Promoting active learning pedagogies and student engagement
- **Digital Learning:** Integrating technology-enhanced learning and digital literacy
- **Assessment for Learning:** Developing inclusive assessment practices with timely, constructive feedback
- **Academic Integrity:** Maintaining rigorous standards and addressing challenges including AI-assisted work
- **Employability and Career Readiness:** Ensuring programs develop graduate attributes valued by employers
- **Research-Informed Teaching:** Connecting teaching with current research and industry practice
- **Internationalization:** Developing global perspectives and cross-cultural competencies

### 3. GOVERNANCE AND ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE

#### 3.1 Quality Assurance Committee

The Quality Assurance Committee is the primary body responsible for overseeing quality assurance and academic development across AIC Campus. The committee ensures alignment with partner university requirements and international standards.

##### 3.1.1 Membership

- **Chair:** Director - Academics and Quality Assurance
- Chief Academic and Academic Administration Officer
- Head of Department - Academic and Student Support
- Program Leaders from each academic department
- Academic staff representatives
- Student representatives (minimum two)
- Quality Assurance Officer (Secretary)
- External advisors as required

##### 3.1.2 Terms of Reference

The Quality Assurance Committee shall:

1. Develop, implement, and review quality assurance policies and procedures
2. Monitor academic standards and program quality across all departments
3. Oversee program approval, monitoring, and review processes
4. Review external examiner reports and ensure appropriate action is taken
5. Monitor student feedback and satisfaction data
6. Coordinate internal and external quality audits
7. Identify good practices and areas for enhancement
8. Report to Senior Management on quality matters
9. Ensure compliance with partner university and regulatory body requirements
10. Promote staff development in quality assurance

##### 3.1.3 Meeting Schedule

The Quality Assurance Committee meets formally at least four times per academic year, with additional meetings convened as necessary. Minutes are maintained and circulated to all stakeholders.

#### 3.2 Academic Board

The Academic Board provides strategic oversight of academic matters and receives regular reports from the Quality Assurance Committee. The Board has ultimate responsibility for maintaining academic standards and ensuring quality across all programs.

#### 3.3 Module Assessment Boards

Module Assessment Boards (MABs) operate in accordance with partner university regulations and are responsible for confirming module marks and grades, reviewing the quality of assessment, considering extenuating circumstances, making decisions on progression and resit requirements, and reviewing external examiner feedback. MABs ensure consistency and fairness in assessment decisions across all programs.

#### 3.4 Progression and Award Boards

Progression and Award Boards (PABs) operate in accordance with partner university regulations to determine student progression between levels, recommend awards and classifications, apply condonement regulations where appropriate, and consider exceptional circumstances. These boards ensure that academic standards are maintained and that students receive fair and consistent treatment in progression and award decisions.



## 4. PROGRAM APPROVAL, MONITORING, AND REVIEW

The program approval, monitoring, and review framework ensures that all academic programs at AIC Campus are rigorously designed, systematically evaluated, and continuously enhanced to maintain high academic standards and meet the evolving needs of students, employers, and society. This comprehensive framework encompasses the entire program lifecycle from initial design through to periodic review and revalidation.

### 4.1 Program Approval Process

All new programs and significant program modifications undergo rigorous multi-stage approval processes designed to ensure academic quality, market relevance, resource adequacy, and alignment with institutional mission and strategic objectives. The approval process involves both internal scrutiny and external validation to guarantee that programs meet national and international standards.

#### 4.1.1 Initial Program Proposal

Program proposers must submit a comprehensive business case that includes market research demonstrating student demand, employer needs, and regional or national workforce requirements. The proposal must articulate how the program aligns with AIC Campus strategic priorities, identify the target student population, outline career pathways for graduates, and demonstrate financial viability. Market research should include competitor analysis, consultation with industry partners and professional bodies, analysis of employment trends and labor market data, and evidence of student demand through surveys or focus groups.

#### 4.1.2 Program Design and Development

Following approval of the initial proposal, program teams develop comprehensive program specifications that include clearly defined program learning outcomes aligned with relevant qualification frameworks, a coherent curriculum structure showing progression and achievement across levels, detailed module descriptors with learning outcomes and assessment strategies, mapping of how modules contribute to program learning outcomes, and identification of graduate attributes and employability skills. The curriculum design must demonstrate appropriate academic level and volume of learning, balance between theoretical knowledge and practical application, opportunities for formative and summative assessment, integration of research-informed teaching, and consideration of diverse learning needs and inclusive practice.

#### 4.1.3 Resource Planning and Verification

Program proposals must include detailed resource plans demonstrating that adequate provision exists for successful program delivery. This includes confirmation of qualified academic staff with appropriate subject expertise and teaching experience, availability of specialized facilities including laboratories, studios, or clinical spaces where relevant, adequate library resources and access to online databases and journals, appropriate technology infrastructure and software, and sufficient administrative and technical support. Resource planning must also address staff development needs, partnership arrangements for placements or work-based learning, and contingency plans for staff changes or resource constraints.

#### 4.1.4 Internal Scrutiny and Approval

The Quality Assurance Committee conducts thorough scrutiny of all program proposals, examining academic standards, curriculum coherence, assessment strategies, resource adequacy, and market viability. The committee may request revisions, additional information, or expert consultation before recommending approval. Following Quality Assurance Committee endorsement, proposals are submitted to the Academic Board for final institutional approval. The Academic Board considers strategic fit, resource implications, and alignment with institutional mission before granting approval to proceed to external validation.

#### 4.1.5 External Validation and Accreditation

Following internal approval, programs are submitted to partner universities for formal validation. The validation process typically includes submission of comprehensive program documentation, review by subject specialists and external experts, validation panels with institutional visits where appropriate, and formal approval with any conditions or recommendations. Programs must also obtain accreditation from relevant regulatory bodies including the Tertiary and Vocational Education Commission (TVEC) and registration with the University Grants Commission (UGC). Professional and statutory body accreditation is sought where required for graduate registration or practice. The validation process ensures that programs meet international academic standards and comply with all regulatory requirements.

### 4.2 Annual Program Monitoring

Annual program monitoring is a systematic process of reviewing program performance, identifying strengths and areas for enhancement, and implementing continuous improvements. This process ensures programs remain current, effective, and responsive to stakeholder needs while maintaining academic standards.

#### 4.2.1 Annual Monitoring Process

Each program prepares an annual monitoring report that provides critical reflection on program delivery and student outcomes. The report includes quantitative data analysis covering student recruitment, retention, and achievement rates; progression statistics between levels; module pass rates and grade distributions; completion rates and time to completion; and graduate destination data. Qualitative analysis includes review of student feedback from module and program evaluations, external examiner reports and commentary on standards, employability outcomes and feedback from employers, identification of good practices and innovations, and analysis of challenges encountered and actions taken.

#### 4.2.2 Action Planning and Enhancement

Annual monitoring reports must include specific action plans addressing identified areas for enhancement. Actions should be SMART (Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Relevant, Time-bound) with clear allocation of responsibilities and target completion dates. Common enhancement actions include curriculum updates to reflect subject developments, refinement of assessment strategies, enhancement of student support mechanisms, development of employability initiatives, updating of learning resources and materials, and staff development activities. The Quality Assurance Committee monitors implementation of action plans and may require progress reports or follow-up meetings for programs with significant concerns.

#### 4.2.3 External Examiner Integration

External examiner reports are integral to annual monitoring. Programs must provide formal responses to external examiner recommendations within specified timeframes, addressing each point raised and indicating actions taken or planned. Where external examiners identify concerns about academic standards or program delivery, immediate action must be taken with progress reported to the Quality Assurance Committee. External examiner feedback on good practices is disseminated across the institution to promote sharing of effective approaches.

### 4.3 Periodic Program Review

Periodic program review provides comprehensive evaluation of program effectiveness over a sustained period, typically five years or as specified by partner university requirements. This in-depth review process examines all aspects of program design, delivery, and outcomes to ensure programs remain current, relevant, and effective in achieving their stated objectives.

#### 4.3.1 Self-Evaluation and Documentation

Programs prepare comprehensive self-evaluation documents that provide critical reflection on performance

over the review period. The self-evaluation includes analysis of achievement of program aims and learning outcomes, trends in student recruitment, retention, and achievement, evaluation of curriculum currency and relevance, assessment of teaching quality and learning resources, review of student satisfaction and feedback, analysis of graduate outcomes and employability, consideration of equality, diversity, and inclusion, and evaluation of partnership arrangements and external engagement. The self-evaluation should demonstrate evidence-based reflection, identify both strengths and areas for development, and show how the program has responded to previous review recommendations and annual monitoring actions.

### 4.3.2 Stakeholder Consultation

Periodic review includes extensive stakeholder consultation to gather diverse perspectives on program effectiveness. This includes focus groups and surveys with current students to assess their learning experience, consultation with recent graduates and alumni to evaluate program outcomes and career preparation, meetings with employers and industry representatives to review program relevance and graduate preparedness, engagement with professional bodies regarding accreditation requirements and sector developments, and input from partner university representatives on standards and quality. Stakeholder feedback provides valuable external perspectives that inform program enhancement and strategic development.

### 4.3.3 Benchmarking and Comparative Analysis

Periodic review includes benchmarking against comparable programs nationally and internationally. This involves comparison of curriculum content and structure with similar programs at other institutions, analysis of student performance and outcomes relative to sector norms, review of teaching and assessment practices against published good practice guidance, and consideration of innovative approaches adopted elsewhere that might enhance program delivery. Benchmarking helps ensure programs remain competitive and aligned with sector standards while identifying opportunities for innovation and enhancement.

### 4.3.4 External Panel Review

An independent review panel examines the self-evaluation document and supporting evidence, conducts site visits including meetings with staff, students, and stakeholders, observes teaching and learning activities where appropriate, reviews facilities and learning resources, and produces a formal report with commendations and recommendations. The panel typically includes subject specialists from other institutions, professional or industry representatives, student representatives, and quality assurance experts. Panel membership is approved by the Quality Assurance Committee ensuring appropriate expertise and independence.

### 4.3.5 Enhancement Action Planning

Following periodic review, programs develop detailed action plans addressing panel recommendations and self-identified enhancement priorities. Action plans include curriculum revisions to enhance currency and relevance, development of new teaching and assessment approaches, enhancement of learning resources and facilities, strengthening of employability and skills development, improvement of student support provision, and development of staff expertise through training and development. Implementation of action plans is monitored by the Quality Assurance Committee with progress reported at specified intervals. Programs may be required to submit interim reports or undergo follow-up reviews where significant concerns have been identified.

## 4.4 Program Modification and Revalidation

Program modifications are carefully managed to ensure changes enhance quality while maintaining academic standards and coherence. Modifications are classified as minor or major based on their scope and impact on program learning outcomes, structure, or delivery.

## 4.4.1 Minor Modifications

Minor modifications include changes to module content or reading lists that do not affect learning outcomes, minor adjustments to assessment weightings or timing, updates to teaching methods or learning resources, changes to module titles or codes, and minor amendments to module prerequisites or corequisites. Minor modifications are approved through streamlined internal processes overseen by the Quality Assurance Committee and reported to partner universities through annual monitoring. These changes must maintain alignment with program learning outcomes and academic standards.

## 4.4.2 Major Modifications

Major modifications require full revalidation through partner university processes. These include changes to program learning outcomes or graduate attributes, significant restructuring of curriculum or program architecture, introduction or removal of pathways or specializations, changes to credit requirements or program duration, modifications to entry requirements or target student groups, and changes to delivery mode or location. Major modifications undergo the same rigorous approval process as new programs including internal scrutiny, resource verification, and external validation. This ensures that modified programs continue to meet quality standards and regulatory requirements.

## 4.4.3 Revalidation Process

Programs typically undergo revalidation every five to six years or following major modifications. Revalidation provides opportunity for comprehensive program refresh incorporating curriculum developments, pedagogical innovations, changes in professional requirements, technological advances, and enhancement recommendations from previous reviews. The revalidation process includes comprehensive program redesign and documentation, internal approval through Quality Assurance Committee and Academic Board, external validation by partner university, regulatory reaccreditation where required, and communication of changes to current and prospective students. Revalidation timelines are carefully managed to minimize disruption to current students while ensuring new cohorts benefit from enhanced program design.

## 4.5 Program Closure and Teach-Out

When programs are discontinued due to low enrollment, strategic priorities, or resource constraints, AIC Campus follows rigorous procedures to protect student interests. Program closure decisions require approval from the Academic Board and partner university, with adequate notice provided to enable orderly teach-out. The teach-out plan ensures continuing students can complete their programs with minimal disruption, maintains quality of teaching and resources throughout the teach-out period, provides clear information about transfer options where completion is not possible, ensures fair treatment of students including fee arrangements, and maintains academic standards and assessment processes until the final cohort graduates. Program closures are communicated transparently to students, staff, and external stakeholders with appropriate support provided during the transition period.

## 5. ASSESSMENT AND ACADEMIC STANDARDS

Assessment is fundamental to the educational experience at AIC Campus, serving multiple purposes including measuring student achievement, supporting learning and development, providing feedback for improvement, maintaining academic standards, and assuring stakeholders of graduate capabilities. This comprehensive assessment framework ensures that all assessments are valid, reliable, fair, and aligned with program learning outcomes while supporting student success.

### 5.1 Assessment Policy and Principles

Assessment at AIC Campus is underpinned by core principles that ensure quality and fairness. Assessment is designed to support student learning through formative feedback and opportunities for practice before summative assessment. All assessments are valid and aligned with module and program learning outcomes, measuring what they are intended to measure. Reliability is ensured through clear assessment criteria, standardized marking procedures, and moderation processes that ensure consistency across different assessors and cohorts. Assessment practices are inclusive and accessible, providing all students with equitable opportunities to demonstrate their learning while accommodating diverse learning needs through reasonable adjustments where appropriate.

Assessments are authentic and relevant, reflecting real-world applications and professional practice requirements. They promote academic integrity by designing assessment tasks that require original thinking and application rather than reproduction of existing work. Transparency is maintained through clear communication of assessment requirements, criteria, and procedures to students well in advance of submission deadlines. Timely and constructive feedback is provided to support student development and inform future learning. Assessment workload is distributed appropriately across modules and levels, avoiding bunching of submission deadlines and ensuring manageable workload for both students and staff.

### 5.2 Assessment Design and Implementation

#### 5.2.1 Alignment with Learning Outcomes

All assessments are explicitly aligned with module learning outcomes, which in turn contribute to program-level learning outcomes. Assessment mapping ensures that all learning outcomes are adequately assessed across the program and that students have multiple opportunities to develop and demonstrate their achievement of key competencies. The level and complexity of assessment tasks are appropriate to the academic level, with clear progression in cognitive demand and independence from lower to higher levels of study. Assessment design considers both the breadth of learning outcomes to be assessed and the depth of understanding required, ensuring comprehensive evaluation of student achievement.

#### 5.2.2 Diversity of Assessment Methods

AIC Campus employs diverse assessment methods to accommodate different learning styles, develop varied competencies, and provide multiple ways for students to demonstrate achievement. Assessment methods include examinations (written, practical, oral) for testing knowledge recall and application under controlled conditions, essays and written assignments for developing critical analysis and written communication, research projects and dissertations for developing independent research and inquiry skills, presentations and group work for building communication and collaboration skills, portfolios for demonstrating progressive development and reflection, practical assessments and skills demonstrations for vocational and professional competencies, case studies and problem-solving exercises for application of knowledge to real-world scenarios, and digital assessments including online tests, wikis, blogs, and multimedia presentations.

The choice of assessment methods is pedagogically appropriate to the learning outcomes, discipline conventions, and professional requirements. Programs ensure a balanced diet of assessment across modules, avoiding over-reliance on any single method and providing opportunities for students to develop diverse skills. Innovative assessment approaches are encouraged where they enhance learning and better

prepare students for employment or further study.

### 5.2.3 Formative and Summative Assessment

Assessment strategies incorporate both formative and summative elements to support learning while measuring achievement. Formative assessment provides opportunities for practice, feedback, and development without contributing to final grades. These may include draft submissions with feedback, peer and self-assessment activities, in-class quizzes and exercises, mock examinations, and preliminary presentations or proposals. Formative assessment is integrated throughout modules to support progressive development and prepare students for summative assessments.

Summative assessment measures achievement of learning outcomes and contributes to module grades and program awards. Summative assessments are scheduled to allow adequate preparation time and are designed to enable students to demonstrate the full range of their learning. Clear deadlines are set with appropriate notice, and assessment schedules are coordinated across modules to avoid excessive bunching. Students receive guidance on summative assessment requirements including task descriptions, assessment criteria, word limits or duration, submission procedures, and deadlines.

### 5.2.4 Assessment Criteria and Rubrics

All assessments are accompanied by clear assessment criteria that specify the standards expected at different grade bands. Criteria are expressed in language that students can understand and use to guide their work. Detailed marking rubrics are developed for complex assessments, providing transparent and consistent guidance for both students and assessors. Rubrics typically identify key dimensions of performance, describe characteristics of work at different quality levels, and may include weighting or point allocations for different elements. Generic assessment criteria are adapted for specific assessment tasks, ensuring relevance while maintaining consistency with institutional and partner university standards. Exemplar work at different grade levels may be provided to students to illustrate expectations, particularly for novel or complex assessment tasks.

## 5.3 Marking, Moderation, and External Examining

### 5.3.1 Marking Procedures

All academic staff involved in marking receive training and guidance on assessment standards, use of assessment criteria, providing constructive feedback, and marking procedures. Marking is conducted systematically using published criteria and rubrics to ensure consistency and fairness. Markers provide written feedback that identifies strengths in student work, areas for improvement, and guidance for future development. Feedback is developmental rather than simply justifying grades, helping students understand how to improve their performance. Anonymous marking is used for examinations and written assignments where feasible to eliminate potential bias and ensure objectivity. Student identification numbers rather than names are used on submitted work, with identity revealed only after marking is complete.

### 5.3.2 Internal Moderation

Internal moderation is a systematic process for assuring consistency and standards in marking. All assessments undergo moderation before marks are confirmed and released to students. The moderation process includes verification of assessment instrument quality and alignment with learning outcomes before assessments are released to students, sampling of marked work across the grade range to verify consistency and standards, identification of any discrepancies or marking issues requiring attention, and confirmation that feedback is appropriate and helpful. The extent of moderation sampling depends on the size of the cohort and nature of assessment, with minimum sampling requirements specified in assessment procedures.

For assessments with multiple markers, standardization meetings are held before marking commences to ensure common understanding of criteria and standards. Sample work may be marked collectively to

calibrate standards and identify any discrepancies in interpretation. Second marking is applied to all borderline cases, failures, and work at the top of the grade range to ensure accuracy and consistency. Double marking with independent assessment by two markers is required for all dissertations, major projects, and final-year capstone assessments. Any significant discrepancies between markers are resolved through discussion or third-party adjudication.

### 5.3.3 External Examining

External examiners are appointed according to partner university criteria to provide independent scrutiny of academic standards and assessment processes. External examiners must have appropriate academic or professional qualifications and experience, current knowledge of the discipline and pedagogical practices, understanding of quality assurance processes, and no conflicts of interest with AIC Campus or the partner university. External examiners are typically appointed for three to four year terms with clear terms of reference.

External examiners review draft assessment instruments before use to verify appropriateness and standards, examine samples of assessed student work across the grade range including all failures and borderline cases, attend Module Assessment Boards to participate in decisions on student progression and awards, meet with students and staff to gather feedback on program quality, observe teaching or assessment activities where appropriate, and provide annual reports commenting on academic standards, assessment quality, and good practice. External examiner reports are analyzed carefully by program teams and the Quality Assurance Committee, with formal responses prepared addressing all recommendations and identifying actions to be taken.

## 5.4 Feedback and Assessment Turnaround

Effective and timely feedback is essential for student learning and development. AIC Campus is committed to returning marked work with comprehensive feedback within three weeks of submission, or as specified by partner university requirements. Where circumstances prevent meeting this deadline, students are informed of reasons for delay and expected return dates. Priority is given to formative assessments earlier in modules to maximize learning benefit from feedback.

Feedback quality is monitored through student evaluations, external examiner review, and internal quality processes. Effective feedback identifies strengths in student work, specifies areas for improvement with clear guidance, relates performance to assessment criteria and learning outcomes, is expressed constructively and respectfully, and includes forward-looking advice for future assessments. Students are provided with opportunities to discuss feedback with their tutors through office hours, feedback sessions, or individual meetings. This dialogue helps students understand feedback and apply it effectively to improve future performance.

## 5.5 Academic Integrity and Misconduct

### 5.5.1 Promoting Academic Integrity

AIC Campus promotes a culture of academic integrity where honesty, trust, fairness, respect, and responsibility are core values. All students receive induction on academic integrity covering expectations for original work, appropriate citation and referencing practices, collaborative work boundaries, and consequences of academic misconduct. Academic integrity is reinforced throughout programs through curriculum design that emphasizes authentic assessment and critical thinking, regular reminders about good academic practice, resources and support for academic writing and referencing, and positive messaging about the value of integrity in academic and professional contexts.

### 5.5.2 Plagiarism Detection

All written assignments are submitted through plagiarism detection software (Turnitin or equivalent) which

compares submissions against extensive databases of published sources, internet content, and previous student work. Similarity reports are generated highlighting matched text and providing similarity percentages. These reports are used formatively to help students understand citation requirements and improve their work before final submission, and summatively to identify potential plagiarism for investigation. Students have access to similarity reports for draft submissions, enabling them to learn from feedback and make corrections before final submission. Academic staff are trained in interpreting similarity reports and distinguishing acceptable similarity from potential misconduct.

### 5.5.3 Managing Use of AI Tools

With the emergence of generative AI tools, AIC Campus has developed clear guidance on appropriate use in academic work. The default position is that students must produce original work representing their own thinking and understanding. Where AI tools are permitted for specific tasks such as brainstorming, editing, or data analysis, this is explicitly stated in assessment briefs with clear boundaries specified. Students must acknowledge any AI tool use and describe how tools were employed. Assessment design increasingly emphasizes authentic tasks requiring application, critical analysis, and synthesis that cannot be completed effectively by AI alone. This includes oral examinations, practical demonstrations, reflective portfolios, and contextualized problem-solving. Staff receive guidance on AI tool capabilities, detection methods, and designing AI-resistant assessments while maintaining pedagogical appropriateness.

### 5.5.4 Academic Misconduct Procedures

Academic misconduct encompasses plagiarism and insufficient acknowledgment of sources, collusion where students work together inappropriately, contract cheating where students submit work completed by others, falsification of data or references, personation in examinations, and unauthorized use of AI tools or other prohibited aids. When potential misconduct is identified, fair and transparent procedures are followed that include preliminary investigation to gather evidence, notification to the student with opportunity to respond, formal investigation meeting where the student can present their case, consideration of intent, severity, and any mitigating circumstances, and determination of outcome with appropriate sanctions if misconduct is confirmed.

Sanctions for academic misconduct are applied proportionately based on severity and whether it is a first or repeat offense. Sanctions may include requirement to resubmit work with capped marks for minor first offenses, mark penalties or module failure for more serious cases, program-level sanctions including suspension or expulsion for severe or repeated misconduct, and notation on transcripts in serious cases. Students have the right to appeal decisions through established appeals procedures. The focus is on education and deterrence rather than purely punitive responses, with support provided to help students understand and avoid future misconduct.

## 5.6 Special Assessment Arrangements

Students with disabilities, specific learning difficulties, or temporary impairments may be entitled to special assessment arrangements to provide equitable access to assessment. These reasonable adjustments are determined through assessment by the Disability Support Service and may include additional time in examinations, use of assistive technology, rest breaks during examinations, alternative formats for examination papers or submission, use of scribes or readers, separate examination venues, or extensions to submission deadlines for coursework. Special arrangements are implemented to level the playing field without compromising academic standards or giving unfair advantage. Students must apply for special arrangements with appropriate supporting evidence, typically at the start of their program or when needs arise.

## 6. TEACHING AND LEARNING QUALITY

High-quality teaching and learning are at the heart of the educational experience at AIC Campus. This section outlines the comprehensive framework for ensuring, monitoring, and enhancing teaching quality through strategic recruitment, continuous professional development, systematic observation and feedback, and provision of excellent learning resources. The teaching and learning framework is student-centered, evidence-based, and aligned with contemporary pedagogical research and sector best practices.

### 6.1 Teaching Excellence Framework

#### 6.1.1 Strategic Recruitment and Selection

AIC Campus recruits highly qualified academic staff through rigorous selection processes that assess both subject expertise and teaching capability. All academic positions require minimum qualifications of a master's degree in the relevant discipline, with doctoral qualifications preferred for senior positions. Subject expertise is evaluated through review of academic credentials, research or professional practice record, currency of knowledge in the field, and understanding of contemporary developments in the discipline. Teaching capability is assessed through demonstration teaching sessions observed by selection panels, review of teaching portfolios including evidence of student feedback and teaching innovations, discussion of teaching philosophy and pedagogical approaches, and references from previous employers regarding teaching effectiveness.

The recruitment process also evaluates commitment to student-centered learning, ability to work effectively with diverse student populations, willingness to engage in continuous professional development, collaborative working skills, and alignment with AIC Campus values and mission. International recruiting efforts target experienced educators from partner universities and reputable institutions worldwide, enhancing diversity of perspectives and pedagogical approaches within the academic team.

#### 6.1.2 Comprehensive Induction Program

All new academic staff participate in a structured induction program covering institutional policies, procedures, and culture, quality assurance expectations and processes, assessment regulations and good practice, use of the Virtual Learning Environment and educational technologies, student support services and referral procedures, academic integrity and plagiarism detection, equality, diversity, and inclusion requirements, and health, safety, and wellbeing policies. The induction program extends over the first semester of employment, combining formal training sessions, shadowing experienced colleagues, mentoring relationships, and gradual assumption of teaching responsibilities. New staff are assigned experienced mentors who provide guidance, answer questions, and support integration into the academic community.

#### 6.1.3 Professional Development and Scholarly Activity

Ongoing professional development is essential for maintaining and enhancing teaching quality. AIC Campus provides regular workshops and training on contemporary pedagogical approaches including active learning, flipped classrooms, and problem-based learning, effective use of educational technology and digital tools, inclusive teaching practices and supporting diverse learners, assessment design and effective feedback strategies, research-informed teaching and curriculum development, classroom management and student engagement techniques, and innovations in discipline-specific pedagogy. Professional development opportunities are informed by student feedback, observation outcomes, external examiner recommendations, and sector developments.

Academic staff are encouraged to engage in scholarly activity that enhances teaching quality and currency. This includes discipline-based research or professional practice, pedagogical research and scholarship of teaching and learning, curriculum innovation and development projects, publication in academic or professional journals, presentation at conferences and professional meetings, engagement with

professional bodies and networks, and collaboration with partner universities on research or teaching initiatives. Time and resources are allocated to support scholarly activity, with sabbatical opportunities available for sustained research or professional development projects.

## 6.2 Observation and Evaluation of Teaching

### 6.2.1 Formal Teaching Observations

All teaching staff are formally observed at least once per academic year using standardized observation frameworks aligned with professional teaching standards. The observation process is developmental and supportive, focusing on identifying strengths and areas for enhancement rather than punitive judgment. Observations assess multiple dimensions of teaching effectiveness including clarity of learning objectives and alignment with module outcomes, effectiveness of teaching methods and student engagement strategies, use of resources and technology to support learning, classroom management and creation of inclusive learning environment, quality of questioning and facilitation of discussion, assessment of student understanding and responsive teaching, time management and pacing, and rapport with students and responsiveness to their needs.

Observations are conducted by experienced academic staff or senior managers trained in observation procedures. Pre-observation meetings discuss the session context, learning objectives, and any specific areas the teacher wishes observers to focus on. Post-observation feedback meetings provide constructive discussion of strengths and development areas, identification of good practices for wider sharing, and agreement on action points for enhancement. Written feedback is provided summarizing observations and recommendations. Teachers are graded using institutional criteria, with those requiring additional support receiving more frequent observations and targeted development interventions.

### 6.2.2 Learning Walks

Learning walks provide snapshot observations of teaching and learning across the institution during designated weeks each semester. These brief, unannounced visits to teaching sessions focus on the student learning experience rather than detailed evaluation of individual teachers. Learning walks are conducted by senior academic leaders and may include institutional governors, providing institution-wide perspective on teaching quality. Observers note evidence of student engagement and active learning, effective use of learning resources and technology, inclusive practices and student participation, clarity of learning objectives and session structure, and alignment with institutional teaching and learning strategy.

Learning walks are developmental and non-graded. Brief verbal feedback is provided to teachers immediately after the session, highlighting strengths and any immediate concerns. Aggregated findings from learning walks are analyzed to identify institution-wide patterns, good practices for dissemination, and areas requiring strategic intervention or support. Summary reports are presented to the Quality Assurance Committee and Academic Board, informing quality enhancement planning and staff development priorities.

### 6.2.3 Peer Observation and Collaborative Development

In addition to formal observations, peer observation schemes enable teachers to learn from colleagues and share effective practices. Peer observation is voluntary and confidential, with observers and observed teachers collaborating to enhance teaching practice. Peer observation partnerships may be formed within or across disciplines, enabling teachers to explore different pedagogical approaches and broaden their teaching repertoire. Observers provide constructive feedback focusing on agreed areas of interest, and both parties reflect on insights gained. Peer observation outcomes are not reported to management but teachers may choose to share learning with wider communities of practice.

## 6.3 Student-Centered Learning and Engagement

AIC Campus is committed to student-centered learning approaches that actively engage students in their

education, develop critical thinking and independent learning skills, and prepare students for lifelong learning. Student-centered pedagogy places students at the center of the learning process, with teachers facilitating learning rather than simply transmitting knowledge. This approach recognizes diverse learning styles and needs, encourages active participation and collaboration, connects learning to real-world applications and professional contexts, and develops metacognitive skills through reflection and self-directed learning.

Teaching strategies employed include problem-based and inquiry-based learning where students investigate authentic problems and questions, collaborative learning through group projects and peer teaching, experiential learning including simulations, role-plays, and practical applications, flipped classroom approaches with pre-class preparation and active in-class application, case-based learning using real or realistic scenarios, technology-enhanced learning through interactive tools and online resources, and reflective practice encouraging students to evaluate their learning and development. These varied approaches accommodate different learning preferences while developing transferable skills valued by employers and essential for graduate success.

## **6.4 Learning Resources and Environment**

### **6.4.1 Library and Information Resources**

The AIC Campus library provides comprehensive resources supporting all programs including extensive print collections of textbooks, reference works, and periodicals, subscriptions to electronic databases and journals covering all disciplines, e-books and digital resources accessible remotely, specialized collections supporting research and advanced study, and inter-library loan services for materials not held locally. Library staff provide information literacy training helping students develop research skills, evaluate sources, and use resources effectively. Subject librarians work with program teams to ensure collections remain current and aligned with curriculum needs. The library environment includes individual and group study spaces, computer workstations, and quiet study areas. Extended opening hours including evenings and weekends accommodate diverse student schedules.

### **6.4.2 Virtual Learning Environment**

All programs utilize a comprehensive Virtual Learning Environment (VLE) that provides centralized access to course materials, assignments, and communications. The VLE includes module pages containing syllabi, learning resources, and announcements, assignment submission and feedback systems, discussion forums for student interaction, grade books providing transparent access to assessment results, multimedia resources including recorded lectures and demonstrations, collaborative tools for group work, and integration with external tools and resources. The VLE supports flexible learning, enabling students to access materials at times convenient to them, engage with content at their own pace, and maintain connection with courses during absences or remote study. Staff receive training in effective VLE use, and student feedback informs ongoing enhancement of digital learning resources.

### **6.4.3 Specialized Facilities and Equipment**

AIC Campus provides specialized facilities appropriate to program requirements including computer laboratories with current software and hardware, science laboratories with necessary equipment and safety provisions, specialized spaces for creative and practical work such as studios or workshops, facilities for health and social care programs meeting professional requirements, and spaces for presentations, exhibitions, and performances. All facilities are maintained to high standards with regular equipment updates and safety inspections. Accessibility considerations ensure facilities can be used by students with diverse needs. Investment in facilities is guided by program requirements, student feedback, professional body standards, and benchmarking against comparable institutions.

## 6.4.4 Technology and Digital Infrastructure

Robust technology infrastructure supports teaching, learning, and administration including reliable wireless and wired network access throughout campus, sufficient computers for student use with access to required software, video conferencing facilities for remote teaching and collaboration, assistive technologies for students with disabilities, lecture capture systems where appropriate to program delivery, and technical support services for staff and students. Digital infrastructure is regularly reviewed and upgraded to ensure reliability, security, and alignment with pedagogical needs. Investment priorities are informed by academic requirements, student feedback, and sector developments in educational technology.

## 6.5 Inclusive Practice and Accessibility

AIC Campus is committed to inclusive practice that enables all students to achieve their potential regardless of background, characteristics, or circumstances. Inclusive teaching involves anticipating and removing barriers to learning, providing multiple means of engagement, representation, and expression, respecting and valuing diversity, and creating welcoming and supportive learning environments. Staff receive training in inclusive practice covering awareness of diverse learning needs, understanding of disabilities and specific learning difficulties, strategies for differentiation and scaffolding, use of inclusive language and examples, creation of psychologically safe learning spaces, and implementation of Universal Design for Learning principles.

Materials and resources are accessible to students with diverse needs through provision of materials in alternative formats where required, captioning of videos and multimedia content, use of accessible document formatting, clear navigation and organization of VLE content, and consideration of color contrast and readability. Physical spaces are accessible with appropriate facilities for students with mobility impairments, hearing loops and visual aids in teaching spaces, and alternative arrangements available where standard provision creates barriers. Inclusive assessment practices ensure all students can demonstrate their learning through reasonable adjustments, alternative assessment arrangements where appropriate, and flexible submission methods accommodating different needs.

## **7. STUDENT ENGAGEMENT AND SUPPORT**

### **7.1 Student Voice and Partnership**

Students are engaged as partners in quality assurance through:

- Representation on Quality Assurance Committee and Academic Board
- Student-Staff Liaison Committees for each program
- Regular module and program evaluations
- Annual Student Satisfaction Survey
- Student involvement in program design and review
- Student participation in staff recruitment processes
- Regular focus groups and consultations

### **7.2 Student Support Services**

Comprehensive support services are provided:

#### **7.2.1 Academic Support**

- Personal tutoring system with assigned academic advisor
- Study skills workshops and resources
- Academic writing support
- Mathematics and statistics support
- English language support for international students

#### **7.2.2 Personal and Wellbeing Support**

- Counseling services for mental health and wellbeing
- Disability support and reasonable adjustments
- Financial advice and support
- Careers guidance and employability support

### **7.3 Student Feedback Mechanisms**

Student feedback is systematically collected through:

- End-of-module evaluations (minimum response rate targets set)
- Mid-semester feedback for continuous improvement
- Annual program-level surveys
- Graduate exit surveys
- Alumni surveys at 6 months and 3 years post-graduation

All feedback is analyzed, and actions are communicated back to students through 'you said, we did' reports.

## **8. STAFF DEVELOPMENT AND CAPACITY BUILDING**

### **8.1 Academic Staff Criteria and Competencies**

Academic staff are selected based on:

- Relevant academic qualifications (minimum master's degree in field)
- Teaching experience and pedagogical skills
- Research or professional practice in discipline
- Communication and interpersonal skills
- Commitment to quality and continuous improvement
- Understanding of diversity and inclusive practice

### **8.2 Professional Development Program**

AIC Campus provides:

#### **8.2.1 Mandatory Training**

- Induction program for all new staff
- Safeguarding and student welfare training
- Equality, diversity, and inclusion training
- Data protection and information security
- Health and safety

#### **8.2.2 Continuing Professional Development**

- Regular workshops on teaching and learning innovation
- Training on assessment design and feedback
- Educational technology training
- Research methods and scholarly activity support
- Leadership and management development
- Opportunities to attend external conferences and training

### **8.3 Collaboration with Partner Universities**

AIC Campus promotes capacity building through:

- Staff exchanges and visits to partner institutions
- Joint research projects and scholarly activities
- Participation in partner university training programs
- Joint workshops and seminars
- Mentoring relationships between AIC and partner university staff

## **9. EXTERNAL QUALITY ASSURANCE AND ACCREDITATION**

### **9.1 Program Accreditation**

All programs at AIC Campus are:

- Approved and accredited by the Tertiary and Vocational Education Commission (TVEC), Sri Lanka
- Registered with the University Grants Commission (UGC), Sri Lanka
- Validated by internationally recognized partner universities
- Subject to relevant professional body accreditation where applicable

### **9.2 External Examining**

External examiners play a critical role in assuring academic standards:

#### **9.2.1 Appointment and Responsibilities**

- External examiners are appointed according to partner university criteria
- Must have relevant expertise and experience in the discipline
- Review assessment standards, processes, and student work
- Attend examination boards
- Provide annual reports on program quality

#### **9.2.2 Response to External Examiner Reports**

All external examiner reports are:

- Reviewed by program teams and Quality Assurance Committee
- Responded to within required timeframes
- Action plans developed to address recommendations
- Shared with students (with confidential sections redacted)
- Monitored for implementation of recommendations

### **9.3 Partner University Audits**

AIC Campus undergoes regular audits by partner universities to:

- Review compliance with partnership agreements
- Assess quality of program delivery
- Verify academic standards
- Review resources and facilities
- Identify good practice and areas for development

### **9.4 Regulatory Body Reviews**

AIC Campus responds to periodic reviews by TVEC and UGC, ensuring full cooperation and timely provision of information and evidence. Action plans are developed to address any recommendations or conditions.

## **10. DATA MANAGEMENT AND PERFORMANCE MONITORING**

### **10.1 Key Performance Indicators**

AIC Campus monitors performance through comprehensive KPIs:

#### **10.1.1 Student Outcomes**

- Retention rates by program and level
- Progression rates between levels
- Completion and graduation rates
- Classification profiles and grade distributions
- Graduate employment and further study statistics

#### **10.1.2 Quality Indicators**

- Student satisfaction scores by module and program
- Teaching observation grades
- External examiner feedback ratings
- Complaints and appeals data
- Partner university audit outcomes

### **10.2 Data Quality and Governance**

AIC Campus ensures:

- Accurate and reliable data collection systems
- Regular data validation and quality checks
- Secure storage and compliance with data protection regulations
- Appropriate access controls and confidentiality
- Regular reporting to governance committees

### **10.3 Use of Data for Enhancement**

Performance data is used to:

- Identify trends and patterns requiring attention
- Benchmark against sector standards and partner institutions
- Inform strategic planning and resource allocation
- Support continuous improvement initiatives
- Demonstrate accountability to stakeholders

## **11. ENHANCEMENT AND INNOVATION**

### **11.1 Culture of Enhancement**

AIC Campus fosters a culture where:

- Quality enhancement is everyone's responsibility
- Innovation in teaching and learning is encouraged and rewarded
- Good practice is identified, shared, and disseminated
- Staff and students collaborate on enhancement initiatives
- Evidence-based decision making is prioritized

### **11.2 Enhancement Activities**

- Annual enhancement themes with institution-wide focus
- Enhancement grants for innovative teaching projects
- Teaching and learning symposia and conferences
- Communities of practice for pedagogical development
- Action research projects on teaching effectiveness
- Pilot programs for new teaching methods and technologies

### **11.3 Learning from Best Practice**

AIC Campus learns from:

- Partner university practices and standards
- QAA good practice guidance
- International benchmarking studies
- Educational research and literature
- Professional networks and associations
- Sector conferences and events

## **12. COMPLAINTS, APPEALS, AND ACADEMIC MISCONDUCT**

### **12.1 Student Complaints**

AIC Campus maintains transparent and fair complaints procedures:

- Clear information on how to make a complaint
- Informal resolution encouraged as first step
- Formal procedures with defined timescales
- Independent review stage
- Right to escalate to partner university and external bodies

### **12.2 Academic Appeals**

Students may appeal assessment decisions on grounds of:

- Procedural irregularities
- Extenuating circumstances not previously disclosed
- Evidence of bias or unfair treatment

Appeals are handled in accordance with partner university regulations, with clear timelines and independent review mechanisms.

### **12.3 Academic Misconduct**

Academic misconduct procedures cover:

- Plagiarism and collusion
- Falsification of data or references
- Contract cheating and personation
- Inappropriate use of AI tools

Procedures ensure fair investigation, right to respond, and appropriate sanctions aligned with partner university policies.

## **13. POLICY IMPLEMENTATION AND REVIEW**

### **13.1 Implementation Plan**

This policy is implemented through:

- Communication to all staff and students via multiple channels
- Staff training and development sessions
- Integration into induction programs
- Development of supporting procedures and guidance
- Publication on institutional website and VLE
- Regular monitoring of compliance

### **13.2 Monitoring and Evaluation**

Policy effectiveness is monitored through:

- Annual review by Quality Assurance Committee
- Analysis of quality performance indicators
- Stakeholder feedback
- Internal audit findings
- External examiner and partner university feedback

### **13.3 Policy Review Cycle**

This policy is formally reviewed annually, with major revisions every three years. Reviews consider:

- Changes in partner university requirements
- Updates to QAA Quality Code and regulatory frameworks
- Sector developments and best practices
- Internal evaluation of policy effectiveness
- Stakeholder consultation

### **13.4 Related Policies and Procedures**

This policy should be read in conjunction with:

- Assessment Policy and Regulations
- Academic Integrity Policy
- Student Complaints and Appeals Procedures
- Teaching and Learning Strategy
- Student Support and Wellbeing Policy
- Equality, Diversity, and Inclusion Policy
- Staff Development Policy
- Partner university regulations and requirements

## 14. APPENDICES

### 14.1 Quality Assurance Calendar

An annual quality assurance calendar is published at the start of each academic year, specifying key dates for:

- Module and program evaluations
- Assessment board meetings
- External examiner visits
- Annual program monitoring
- Quality Assurance Committee meetings
- Teaching observations and learning walks
- Partner university audits

### 14.2 Alignment with QAA Quality Code Principles

This policy aligns with all 12 QAA Quality Code principles:

9. Strategic approach to quality and standards management
10. Student engagement as partners
11. Design and approval of qualifications and programs
12. Monitoring, evaluation, and review of provision
13. Academic and pastoral support for students
14. Teaching and learning for a high-quality student experience
15. Assessment for enhancing learning and measuring achievement
16. Engagement with stakeholders in enhancement of quality
17. Partnerships with other organizations
18. Admissions, recognition, and certification
19. Complaints and appeals
20. Academic integrity and freedom

### 14.3 Glossary of Terms

Key terms used in this policy:

- **Academic Standards:** The level of achievement that a student must reach to gain academic credit or an award
- **Quality Assurance:** Systematic processes to maintain and enhance academic standards and quality
- **Enhancement:** Taking deliberate steps to improve the quality of learning opportunities
- **Validation:** Process by which partner university approves a program
- **Accreditation:** Formal recognition by regulatory or professional body
- **External Examiner:** Independent expert who reviews assessment standards
- **Programme Learning Outcomes:** Statements of what students should know and be able to do on completion
- **Module Assessment Board:** Board responsible for confirming module marks and progression decisions
- **Progression and Award Board:** Board responsible for recommending awards and classifications