



Academic Quality Assurance Committee

AQAC PAPER WRITING TIPS

This guide provides practical advice for preparing papers for AQAC meetings. It covers formatting, structure, tone, and content expectations to ensure clarity, consistency, and impact.

1.0 Structure and Formatting

Use the Correct Template

- Access updated templates via the AQAC SharePoint or request from the Secretary.
- Font: **10pt Arial** only.
- Refer to the ANU Style guide.

Key Sections

Section	Guidance
Purpose	Use “To consider” if AQAC will endorse; “To present” if AQAC will note.
Approved By	The responsible officer (ADE, Director, PVC, DVC) must approve and be prepared to speak to the paper.
Sponsor	A senior executive who supports the recommendation (e.g., VC, Provost, DVC, PVC or Chair of Committee).
Recommendation	Clear, actionable, and structured (1, 2, a, b, c). Include Academic Board transmission if needed.
Action Required	Secretary and Chair will determine if the item is discussed. You may be invited to present.
Why Is the Committee Receiving This Paper	Link to AQAC’s Charter, policy requirements, or prior meeting context.
Authority for Decision	Reference AQAC’s Charter and its role in advising Academic Board.
Policy/Legislative Element	Link directly to relevant policy or legislation.
Executive Summary	Max 100 words. Include context, history, and relevance.
Background	Provide key information, risks, and next steps. Keep total paper under 3 pages. Use attachments for detail.

Section	Guidance
Consultation and Discussion Record	Include only if consultation occurred. Delete if not applicable.

2.0 Consider Your Reader

- AQAC members come from diverse backgrounds – write clearly and avoid assumptions.
- Spell out abbreviations on first use.
- Use **PDFs** for data (not Excel) to preserve version integrity.
- **Redact names/UIDs** and mark papers as confidential if needed ie when disclosing of commercial issues/interest or when the disclosure of identifiable student information/results/wellbeing is unavoidable. If you are unsure, please consult with the AQAC Secretary or Chair.
- Ask a knowledgeable colleague to review your paper for clarity and accuracy.

3.0 Annual Reports

- Explain why the report is submitted and link to relevant policy.
- Attach the report – do not include it in the cover sheet.
- Avoid duplication.
- Highlight continuous improvement and propose changes with rationale, actions, responsible officers, and implementation plans.
- Use **5-year time-series data** to show trends.
- Keep language simple and focused.

4.0 Accreditation

- Consult all impacted Schools/Colleges.
- Document stakeholder support in the Consultation Record.
- Include Graduate Attributes in UG Awards.
- Review for cut-and-paste errors – these are common and easily avoidable.

5.0 Incident Reports

- Use AQAC templates and follow flowcharts from SharePoint.
- Promote transparency and collective learning by documenting incidents clearly.

6.0 Policy and Procedures

- **Version control is critical.**
- Request the **native file** from the Policy Manager.

- Submit both tracked and clean versions.
 - Check spelling and capitalisation – especially for “University.”
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Additional Tips

◆ Tone and Style

- Use plain English.
- Be diplomatic but direct.

◆ Visual Aids

- Use charts/tables where helpful. Label and reference them properly.

◆ Common Mistakes to Avoid

- Duplicate content
- Missing links to policy
- Submitting without consultation
- Using outdated templates

Submission Checklist

Before submitting, confirm the following:

- Correct template used (latest version from AQAC SharePoint)
- Executive Summary is ≤100 words and clearly outlines context and relevance
- Recommendation is clear, actionable, and structured (with transmission to Academic Board if needed)
- All abbreviations spelled out on first use
- All hyperlinks are working and point to correct policy/legislation
- Consultation and Discussion Record included or removed appropriately
- Confidential information redacted (names, UIDs, sensitive data)
- Data presented in PDF format (not Excel)
- The Approver is aware and briefed
- Attachments are referenced in the paper and correctly labelled
- Annual Report (if applicable) is attached, not embedded
- Tracked and clean versions of policy documents included (if submitting policy changes)
- Paper reviewed by a colleague for clarity and accuracy
- Cut-and-paste errors checked and corrected
- Version control confirmed (especially for policy/procedure documents)
- Visuals (if used) are labelled and relevant