

news

March 2015



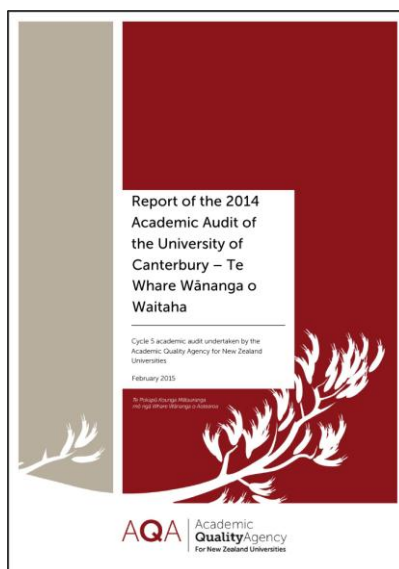
Te Pokapū Kōunga Mātauranga mō ngā Whare Wānanga o Aotearoa

Cycle 5 Academic Audits

The report of the 2014 Academic Audit of the University of Canterbury will be released next week, at 10am on Tuesday 24 March. The report will be available from the AQA website:

www.aqa.ac.nz/canterburycycle5.

(Note: this link will not become active until this time). The Canterbury academic audit was the fourth to be conducted of a New Zealand university using the new Cycle 5 methodology.



Preparations are underway for the 2015 audits of the University of Waikato (August site visit) and AUT University. www.aqa.ac.nz/cycle5

Support for Quality Conference

AQA is pleased to confirm that the **2015 AQA Support for Quality Conference will be held in Wellington on Wednesday 1 October**. We are intending to have a preceding half-day workshop devoted to programme reviews in the afternoon of Tuesday 30 September. Further details about the conference, including a programme for the day, will be made available in May. www.aqa.ac.nz/supportforquality

Suggestions for topics and presenters, and offers from universities of case studies to highlight good practice are welcomed: comms@aqac.ac.nz

Student Voice in Universities

On Friday 15 May 2015 NZUSA, with the support of AQA, will be hosting a **National Summit on Enhancing the Student Voice at Universities** in Wellington. The summit builds on a successful collaborative research project, including case studies conducted at two New Zealand universities, which identified principles for good practice that underpin student engagement and its potential for contributing to quality enhancement. That research is available at:

www.ako.aotearoa.ac.nz/studentvoice

NZUSA and AQA are inviting universities to participate, to share good practice and plan actions to help build cultures that value the contribution of the student voice to enhance quality. The day will include a speaker from sparqs (student participation in quality Scotland).

Register for the event at:

<http://goo.gl/ANpN3m>

AQA | About

The Academic Quality Agency for New Zealand Universities (AQA) was established in 1993 to carry out audits of the processes in universities which underpin academic quality. The mission

of AQA is to contribute to high quality New Zealand university education by engaging as a leader and advocate in the development of universities based on high quality, internationally acceptable,

academic practices, and by providing quality assurance and quality enhancement services which assist universities in facilitating excellent student experience and learning outcomes.

Quality Enhancement

QA of Cross-Border Education

The European Association for Quality Assurance in Higher Education has been granted funding for a project entitled "Quality Assurance of Cross-border Higher Education (CBHE)". Between 1 October 2013 and 31 December 2015, the project is exploring the different ways in which European QA agencies and higher education institutions (HEIs) address the accreditation and quality assurance of programmes delivered outside of their countries. The outputs of the project will include a toolkit on quality assurance of CBHE for agencies and HEIs, common principles for quality assurance of CBHE for agencies and HEIs, and publication of the project outcomes and recommendations in a comprehensive final report. <https://qache.wordpress.com/>

Ako Aotearoa Funding Information Sessions

Free information sessions are being held in April across New Zealand to support project teams interested in applying for Ako Aotearoa funding.

<https://akoaoaotearoa.ac.nz/about-funding-information-sessions>

Ako Aotearoa Announce newly-awarded National Project Fund projects

Ako Aotearoa has announced the successful project teams to receive funding through the 2014/2015 round of the Ako Aotearoa National Project Fund (NPF). Three new major projects have been funded:

- "Building an evidence-base for teaching and learning design using learning analytics data" co-led by Associate Professor Cathy Gunn (The University of Auckland) and Dr Jenny McDonald (University of Otago)
- "He Tātua o Kahukura" led by Associate Professor Leonie Pihama (Te Kotahi Research Institute, The University of Waikato)
- "Making the invisible visible: Illuminating undergraduate learning outcomes beyond content and skills" led by Dr Barbara Kensington-Miller (The University of Auckland).

Read more about the projects and project teams here: <http://tinyurl.com/nxanz84>

AQA 2015 External Review

Like New Zealand universities, AQA is itself subject to regular external review. The last review of AQA (then the NZUAAU) was held in 2009. The 2015 external review of AQA is now underway with a site visit by a panel of three members in June. The review is being managed by Universities New Zealand.

The overall objective of the review is to assess how effectively AQA:

- assists the Vice-Chancellors' Committee to discharge its responsibilities for quality assurance under the Education Act;

- meets its own mission and objectives;
- meets the INQAAHE Guidelines of Good Practice;
- transacts its core business processes.

The review is being framed under five headings: accountability, transparency and resources; relationships between AQA and the universities; external review; quality enhancement; and external activities.

Requests for further information about the AQA external review can be directed to: jackie.bailey@universitiesnz.ac.nz.

AQA Board's Role in Audit

The Board of AQA has, among its terms of reference, responsibility for appointing audit panels and for receiving and approving the release of audit reports. The Board must ensure that the process of audit is such to produce reports that reflect an independent judgement, are evidence-based and that are perceived as authoritative, rigorous, fair and perceptive.

The Board receives and reviews the formal follow-up report from each audited New Zealand university approximately 12 months after the public release of the audit report.

International Focus

One of the objectives of the AQA is to improve the quality of AQA activities, including audit practice, by interaction with other education and academic quality assurance agencies, both nationally and internationally. AQA is a member of the Asia-Pacific Quality Network (APQN) and the International Network for Quality Assurance Agencies in Higher Education (INQAAHE).

APQN News

In January 2015, the QACHE (Quality Assurance of Cross-border Higher Education) project held a small-scale regional forum in Macau with invited APQN members. The QACHE project is looking into different ways in which European QA agencies and institutions address the accreditation and quality assurance of programmes delivered outside of their countries.

<https://qache.wordpress.com/2014/10/29/asia-regional-forum-macau-23-january-2015/>

INQAAHE News

INQAAHE held its President and Board member elections and announced that Dr Jagannath Patil will be the new President of INQAAHE. Dr Patil (JP) is the current President of APQN and is well known to AQA. We look forward to continuing to engage with JP in his new role and to see the interests of Asian and Pacific members continue to be highlighted on this international stage.

www.inqaahe.org/

HKCAAVQ and AQA sign Memorandum

AQA has signed a Memorandum of Cooperation with the Hong Kong Council for Accreditation of Academic and Vocational Qualifications (HKCAAVQ). AQA and HKCAAVQ have long had a positive and cooperative relationship and this was



formalised in an agreement to continue to work to enhance collaboration in the quality enhancement of university education in Hong Kong and New Zealand. The Memoranda was signed in Hong Kong in January 2015 by Dr Jan Cameron, Director of AQA and Professor William Lee, Executive Director of HKCAAVQ. The signing was witnessed by Dr Alex Chan (Vice-Chairman of HKCAAVQ Board) and Ms Gabrielle Rush (New Zealand Consulate General, HK). *Photo: HKCAAVQ.*

What's happening in external QA internationally?

Australia

In February, TEQSA (the Tertiary Education Quality and Standards Agency) released a document entitled "A risk and standards based approach to quality assurance in Australia's diverse higher education sector". This document sets out TEQSA's approach to quality assurance.

<http://tinyurl.com/kx79w4e>

United Kingdom

Also in February, HEFCE (the Higher Education Funding Council for England) released two comparator studies to inform the current quality assessment review in England, Wales and Northern Ireland. One of these studies provides a useful comparative account of approaches to the assessment of academic standards and quality in Norway, the United States and Australia, focusing on issues such as the role of audit and reporting, the burden of different approaches, and the role of outcomes-based approaches.

<http://tinyurl.com/n3ztjk6>

The QAA (Quality Assurance Agency for Higher Education) has initiated a debate on the academic study of economics. According to the QAA, "Critics, including many students, academics and professionals in the field, claim that Economics teaching has become too narrow and conceals rather than reveals underpinning ideologies." A panel of experts from the subject community, which represents views from across the spectrum, including employer representatives, has developed a consultation document on the matter. <http://tinyurl.com/m27c5rb>

Have You Seen This?

- NZQA is seeking feedback on its work to **reference the New Zealand Qualifications Framework (NZQF) and the Australian Qualifications Framework (AQF)**. NZQA and the Australian Government Department of Education and Training have drafted a referencing report which sets out the comparability of the levels and qualification types of the two national qualification frameworks. Feedback is due by 20 March 2015. www.nzqa.govt.nz/about-us/consultations-and-reviews/referencing-the-nzqf-and-aqf/
- Universities Australia, the Australian Chamber of Commerce and Industry, Australian Industry Group, the Business Council of Australia and the Australian Collaborative Education Network have collaborated to develop **Australia's first National Work Integrated Learning Strategy**. Work Integrated Learning is about integrating theory with practical work experience in education and includes activities such as work placements, internships, shadowing programs and practical projects. <https://www.universitiesaustralia.edu.au/news/media-releases/Landmark-strategy-to-make-graduates-more-job-ready-#.VQiWfl6Ud3U>
- The Higher Education Academy and the QAA (UK) have released new research showing the **benefits of effective practice in the design of directed independent learning opportunities**. <https://www.heacademy.ac.uk/node/10750>
- A new report by the OECD **looked at education reforms carried out by its member countries** between 2008 and 2014. It found that only one in ten of those reforms were scrutinised for impact. www.oecd.org/edu/education-policy-outlook-2015-9789264225442-en.htm
- Several **new Office of Learning and Teaching (OLT) resources and project reports** may be of interest to New Zealand universities:
 - "Supporting academic integrity" (a compilation of resources developed as a result of OLT funding)
 - "Exploring the role of technology in fostering a sense of belonging in students studying by distance",
 - "Design of a participatory supervision support platform for improving higher degree supervision: A feasibility study". www.olt.gov.au/
- HERDSA and Ako Aotearoa will be holding a symposium on **"Evaluation and the quality of teaching and learning in tertiary education"** on 24 April in Wellington. The event is free for HERDSA members. www.ako.aotearoa.ac.nz/herdsasympoium2015
- Tuia Te Ako hui 2015 will be held from 8-10 July at Lincoln University. The hui "brings together the diverse Māori tertiary whanau to discuss, debate and challenge **current issues relating to Māori success in tertiary education**". <https://ako.aotearoa.ac.nz/tuiateako2015>
- The 12th annual (and 2nd international) conference on **Enhancement and Innovation in Higher Education** will be held in Glasgow, Scotland from 9-11 June 2015 with a focus on "student transitions". The three-day event will consider a range of student transitions and other aspects of the student experience through several broad conference tracks. www.enhancementthemes.ac.uk/events/forthcoming-events/2014/02/06/12th-enhancement-themes-conference-9---11-june-2015-glasgow
- A calendar of upcoming events can be found on the AQA website: www.aqa.ac.nz/events



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