Report of the 2014 Academic Audit of The University of Auckland - Te Whare Wānanga o Tāmaki Makaurau

Cycle 5 academic audit undertaken by the Academic Quality Agency for New Zealand Universities

October 2014

Te Pokapū Kounga Mātauranga mō ngā Whare Wānanga o Aotearoa

AQA | Academic **Quality**Agency
For New Zealand Universities

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Foreword

The 2014 audit of the University of Auckland is the fifth academic audit of the University carried out by the Academic Quality Agency for New Zealand Universities. The University was last audited in 2009, as part of the Cycle 4 audit of New Zealand universities, by a Panel of auditors from the (then) New Zealand Universities Academic Audit Unit.[1]

The methodology adopted for the 2014 audit of the University of Auckland is that used for all New Zealand universities in this cycle of audits. The focus of Cycle 5 audits is on teaching and learning and student support, including postgraduate. The methodology is centred on a framework of 40 Guideline Statements which are expressions of the qualities or standards which a contemporary university of good standing internationally might be expected to demonstrate. The Guideline Statements were developed after extensive discussion with New Zealand university staff and Vice-Chancellors and consultation with other stakeholders, including students and academic auditors. The Guideline Statements are informed by comparable frameworks in other jurisdictions, in particular the QAA (UK).

The Cycle 5 audit was carried out by a Panel of AQA auditors, including two international auditors, between April and July 2014. This report presents the Panel's findings, based on the evidence it has considered. The report is released under the authorisation of the AQA Board.

Dr Jan Cameron
Director
Academic Quality Agency for New Zealand Universities

October 2014

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[1] The New Zealand Universities Academic Audit Unit changed its name to the Academic Quality Agency for New Zealand Universities from 1 January 2013.

Executive Summary

Established in 1883 as a constituent college of the University of New Zealand, the University of Auckland is New Zealand's largest university. In 2013 it had a total enrolment of 41,363 students and 4,909 staff (FTE), of whom 2,131 were academic staff. The University's academic offerings range from foundation to doctorate level and the majority of programmes are taught in an on-campus mode of delivery.

The University was audited by the Academic Quality Agency for New Zealand Universities (AQA) in 2014. The AQA audit methodology incorporates a framework of 40 Guideline Statements which articulate the qualities or standards which a contemporary university of good standing internationally might be expected to demonstrate. Given the University of Auckland's desire to place itself alongside highly ranked peer institutions internationally, the Panel also paid attention to areas where international benchmarking was considered appropriate, while at the same time recognizing that the audit framework has been developed to evaluate New Zealand universities within a New Zealand context.

The University was last audited by AQA (as the then New Zealand Universities Academic Audit Unit) in 2009. The University provided an update against the findings of that Audit, and the Panel was pleased to see progress made against most of the 2009 recommendations. In the areas of benchmarking and digital technologies the Panel reiterated the findings of the previous audit, indicating that it believed the University would benefit from further work which would ensure it achieves the high quality learning and teaching environment which is consistent with its ambitions. The Panel recommends the University develops a high-level benchmarking statement which sets out the objectives and scope of institutional benchmarking, guidelines for benchmarking for different kinds of activities and outcomes, and designated responsibilities.

Since 2011 the University of Auckland has embarked on a substantial review of faculty professional and administration processes and roles. The University has also recently introduced a new distributed leadership framework. The objectives and change management processes underlying both of these projects signalled a move towards rationalising the complexity of professional and administrative support in a multifaceted organisation. The Panel considered that the changes proposed should address a number of the issues with which it had concerns. The University is commended on its attention to developing, assessing and rewarding leadership capability of all staff and to the articulation of its philosophy and objectives in the Leadership Framework.

The University's current Strategic Plan expresses a vision to be a "research-led, international university, recognised for excellence in teaching, learning, research, creative work, and administration, for the significance of its contributions to the advancement of knowledge and its commitment to serve its local, national and international communities". To achieve this vision, the University has developed 19 objectives and seven aspirations in the areas of: staff recruitment and support; student recruitment and experience; research; Māori; partnerships; autonomy, sustainability and equity; and, global standing and service to New Zealand. The Panel was of the view that there was some inconsistency in the development of KPIs across the University's various strategic documents and reporting sequences. It felt that the revised Planning and Accountability

Framework, when adopted, should address some of the inconsistencies which risk obscuring the University's progress against its own objectives.

The Panel considers the University's Long Term Capital Plan over the next decade to be ambitious, but was satisfied that those responsible for maintenance, refurbishment and development of infrastructure are well versed in the space needs and expectations related to teaching and learning and have good processes in place for gaining input related to pedagogical developments.

The University has a structured approach to student input and feedback, ensuring that this happens systematically at the level of the student's individual class, at school, department and faculty level and at institutional level. The Panel considered these processes for ensuring a student voice is heard at all organisational levels of the University are exemplary.

The University's current Learning and Teaching Plan includes several "actions" related to digital technologies, digital learning and alignment of infrastructure developments with teaching and learning requirements. However the Panel deduced that decisions to engage in use of contemporary digital technologies for teaching remained largely a matter of individual staff preference or were individual department or school or faculty initiatives. The Panel recommends that the University gives urgent attention to developing a coherent strategy to develop digital technologies and staff engagement with these for student learning.

Information resources under the stewardship of Libraries and Learning Services are highly regarded and the University is commended for continuing to provide exceptionally good quality services to staff and students.

The University aims for "a diverse student body of the highest possible academic potential". The University is commended on its long-standing comprehensive, systematic and informed approach to encouraging the access and transition of Māori and Pacific students, including the University Targeted Admission Scheme (UTAS), clear communication of admission requirements and wide range of activities to support transition. In particular, the Panel commends the support provided by the Faculty of Medical and Health Sciences' Māori and Pacific Admission Scheme (MAPAS) and the Tuākana Learning Community.

The University identified some areas of risk surrounding the provision of academic advice, and the Panel recommends that it establishes formal protocols in this area. In the provision of non-course-related information, the University is commended on its AskAuckland website and mobile app.

The University's processes for course and programme approval are consistent and robust, and include a range of mechanisms to seek relevant stakeholder input. The University's current Graduate Profile is in need of refreshment to reflect its contemporary aspirations for its graduates.

The Guidelines for Programme Reviews are comprehensive. The Panel recommends that the University explores ways of ensuring that programmes which are subject to professional accreditation review are reviewed regularly for assurance that they also deliver general education and non-discipline-specific experiences which align with the institution's Graduate Profile.

The Panel considered that the University's processes for managing and monitoring assessment practice and outcomes are sound. It is satisfied that the University has adequate procedures in place for identifying and assisting students who might be at risk of not meeting the University's achievement expectation. The University is commended on the introduction of a mandatory academic integrity course and on its initiative in making this available for open access.

The University has recognised the particular issues of student engagement that are linked to a multiple site, city-based institution with a large percentage of students living at home. Overall, the Panel was satisfied that the University has very good support services to ensure a safe and inclusive environment for its staff and students.

The Panel was impressed with the University's triangulated approach to teaching evaluation and is satisfied that the University has appropriate mechanisms in place to reward staff who demonstrate excellent teaching capability. The Panel affirms the University's new Academic Standards policy as a defining document to clarify performance and responsibility expectations of academic staff. The Panel also affirmed the research ethos of the Centre for Learning and Research in Higher Education and the wide range of services it offers to staff and postgraduate students.

The University has ambitious goals for postgraduate student numbers and completions, and routinely benchmarks its postgraduate activities with comparator universities. The University has robust examination processes in place, and is commended on the extensive range of resources and services it makes available for doctoral students. The Panel recommends that the University implements electronic systems for reports on research supervision.

The University has made significant progress in its overall risk management since the previous audit in 2009. The Panel affirmed the University's planning and risk management procedures at an institutional level, while urging the University to give priority to finalising the proposed Teaching and Learning Continuity Plan and communicating this to all staff and, as appropriate, to students.

In sum, the Panel had no issues of serious concern regarding the University of Auckland's conformity with the expectations expressed in the Cycle 5 Guideline Statements. The majority of these were met, in some cases at a high standard. In most cases where improvements are needed, the University had identified this in its self-review.

The University identified nine enhancements which it intends to undertake by 2016. The Panel supports these enhancement initiatives.

The Panel has made eight commendations, six affirmations and seven recommendations.

Contents

List of Key Terms and Acronyms

APRU	Association of Pacific Rim Universities
AQA	Academic Quality Agency for New Zealand Universities
AUSSE	Australasian Survey of Student Engagement
BoGS	Board of Graduate Studies
Cecil	The University of Auckland's Enterprise Learning Management System.
CLeaR	Centre for Learning and Research in Higher Education
CUAP	Committee on University Academic Programmes
DELNA	Diagnostic English Language Needs Assessment
DES	Doctoral Exit Survey
EFTS	Equivalent Full-Time Students
FAR	Faculty Administration Review project
FTE	Full-time Equivalent (staff)
GES	Guaranteed Entry Score
Go8	Group of Eight (Australian Universities)
ISB	International Student Barometer
KPI	Key Performance Indicator
LLS	Libraries and Learning Services
MAPAS	Māori and Pacific Admission Scheme
MOOC	Massive Open Online Course
Panel	Unless otherwise specified, "the Panel" refers to the Academic Audit Panel engaged by AQA to conduct the 2014 audit of the University of Auckland.
POD	People and Organisational Development
PReSS	Postgraduate Research Student Support accounts
RedCarpet	The University's online portal for new staff.
SPO	Schools Partnership Office
SR	Self-review Report
TLQC	Teaching and Learning Quality Committee
TLS	Teaching and Learning Survey
U21	Universitas21
UTAS	Undergraduate Targeted Admissions Scheme
VCDD	Vice-Chancellor, Deputies and Deans

Preface

Established in 1883 as a constituent college of the University of New Zealand, the University of Auckland is New Zealand's largest university. In 2013 it had a total enrolment of 41,363 students (33,050 EFTS) and 4,909 staff (FTE), of whom 2,131 (43%) were academic staff.[2] The University's academic offerings span a full spectrum of programmes from foundation to doctorate level. It is a member of several international consortia, including Universitas21 (U21), the World Universities Network (WUN) and the Association of Pacific Rim Universities (APRU). The University of Auckland aspires to be recognised as a university "of global standing" and claims to be "among the top eight universities in Australasia".[3]

In 2014 the University delivered its programmes from four sites in the Auckland metropolitan area (City, Grafton, Tamaki, and Epsom campuses) as well as two Faculty of Medical and Health Sciences sites in Whangarei and Hamilton and teacher education programmes taught from Manukau Institute of Technology and from Tai Tokerau campus in Whangarei. The majority of programmes are taught in an on-campus mode of delivery. The BEd (TESOL) has been offered in Malaysia under contract to the Malaysian Government since 2004 but 2014 is its final year of delivery. The Postgraduate Certificate in Light Metals Reduction Technology is delivered intermittently overseas with a block course component taught on-site at a smelter.[4] The University has no overseas campuses.

University Profile

The University of Auckland is structured as eight faculties (each headed by a Dean) and one Institute (headed by a Director), supported by administrative, professional and service units which report to a member of senior management. Apart from the Faculty of Law, which has only one School, each faculty comprises several schools and/or departments plus research centres in some faculties and a faculty administrative office in each. The University also has a School of Graduate Studies and two large research institutes.

In addition to the Vice-Chancellor, the senior management of the University comprises three Deputy Vice-Chancellors (Academic, Research and Strategic Engagement), two Pro-Vice-Chancellors (Māori and Equity), the eight faculty Deans, the Dean of Graduate Studies, the Registrar, the University Librarian, the Chair of the University Budget Committee, Directors of Human Resources, Administration, CIO, Finance, Property and Planning, and the Chief Executive Officer of Auckland UniServices Limited. Most services pertaining to students report to the Director of Administration, with the exception of graduate studies, Libraries and Learning Services and some small programmes which report to the DVC (Academic).[5]

The University's academic committee structure flows from the Senate (a committee of Council) to a suite of Senate academic committees, plus the Faculty Boards. The Education Committee (of which

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[2] 2013 Annual Report (henceforth referred to as AR), p8.
[3] Strategic Plan 2013-2020 (henceforth referred to as SP), p4; SR p5.
[4] https://cdn.auckland.ac.nz/assets/engineering/for/future-postgraduates/study-options/documents/pgstudy-lmrtech.pdf accessed 04.08.14.
[5] Self-review Report (henceforth referred to as SR) pp 8-10.

the Teaching and Learning Quality Committee is a subcommittee) and the Academic Programmes Committee are committees of Senate.   Each Faculty Board in turn has various academic subcommittees, including a teaching and learning subcommittee (headed by an Associate Dean (Academic)) and a postgraduate subcommittee (headed by an Associate Dean (Postgraduate)).

Faculty Associate Deans (Postgraduate) are all members of the University's Board of Graduate Studies, which is a Senate committee. Faculty Associate Deans (Academic) are all members of the University's Teaching and Learning Quality Committee.

Of the 33,050 EFTS in 2013, 80% (26,508 EFTS) were enrolled in undergraduate degree-level programmes, approximately 12% in taught postgraduate programmes and 8% in postgraduate research programmes.[6] Just over one third (36%) of students studied part-time. The majority (86%) of University of Auckland students are domestic. Just under 3,000 students identify as Māori and just over 3,000 as of Pacific ethnicity.[7]

Vision, Mission and Strategic Plan[8]

The University's Mission is to be:

A research-led, international university, recognised for excellence in teaching, learning, research, creative work, and administration, for the significance of its contributions to the advancement of knowledge and its commitment to serve its local, national and international communities.

In summary, the University's values are:
- Conserving, advancing and disseminating knowledge
- Creating a diverse, collegial scholarly community where academic freedom is exercised to high standards
- Placing a strong emphasis on serving students
- Working to advance the wellbeing of people of Auckland and of New Zealand
- Recognising a special relationship with Māori
- Providing equal opportunities to those with potential to succeed
- Engaging with national and international scholars to enhance academic development and productivity
- Developing and commercialising research and creative enterprise
- Providing high quality management.

In order for The University of Auckland to achieve its vision it specifies seven aspirations:
- To be a community of highly accomplished and well supported academic and professional staff
- To attract students of high academic potential and give them an outstanding university experience so that they become successful and influential graduates and loyal alumni

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[6] Calculated from Annual Report 2013, p9; SR p180.
[7] SR, p6.
[8] SP, p3.

- To benefit society by conducting and applying research of the highest quality
- To benefit Māori and the University through partnerships that acknowledge the principles of the Treaty of Waitangi
- To develop strong partnerships with key organisations and communities, nationally and internationally
- To adhere to core values and remain an autonomous, sustainable, equitable organisation
- To be a public university of global standing that serves New Zealand, is distinctive and reflects [Auckland's] place in the Asia/Pacific region.

The University has four institutional graduate profiles for undergraduates, taught postgraduates, research graduates and doctoral graduates. These were developed in 2003; postgraduate graduate profiles were revised in 2008. The Undergraduate Graduate Profile includes specialist knowledge relating to mastery of a discipline, general intellectual skills (such as intellectual integrity; a capacity for creativity) and personal qualities (such as ability to work independently).[9] The University states that it is intending to review the 2003 Undergraduate Graduate Profile to consider currency, relevance and articulation with graduate profiles for programmes.[10] (See Section 3.2)

The 2014 Academic Audit

The methodology adopted for the current audit is that used for New Zealand universities in the fifth cycle of academic audits. It focuses on teaching and learning and student support, including postgraduate.

AQA academic audits draw on the University's self-review and the supporting documentation it provides, publicly accessible pages of the University's website and interviews with staff, students, Council members and a number of external stakeholders. These various sources enable Panel members to triangulate claims made by the University and to ensure the Panel's own conclusions do not rely on a single source of evidence.

The University of Auckland aspires "to be ranked among the peer universities that make up the top half of the Australian Group of Eight, the UK Russell group and the Canadian U15".[11] Recognising this, the audit Panel paid particular attention to the standards of these peer groups when undertaking its evaluation of activity.

The University submitted its Self-review Portfolio, including a report and key supporting documentation in both print and electronic form, at the beginning of April 2014. The Self-review Report included hyperlinks to documents on the University's public website and also links to documents organised on a SharePoint site by the University for the purpose of the audit. Panel members were also provided with access to the University's (staff-only) intranet. These processes ensured the audit Panel had a large amount of information available to it. Further documents were provided on request as needed. In addition, the University provided an update memo a short time

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[9] Supplementary Document 3.9, Graduate Profiles (henceforth referred to as SD).
[10] SR, p85.
[11] SP, p2.

before the site visit. This indicated a number of initiatives that had been introduced since the Self-review Portfolio was submitted.

As part of the audit process an invitation was extended to the Auckland University Students' Association, AUSA, to comment on the Guideline Statements as they saw fit. A comprehensive submission was received from AUSA in late 2013.

The Chair of the audit Panel and the AQA Director visited the University for a pre-audit planning meeting in May 2014. In addition to reviewing the logistics of the site visit, the planning visit provided an opportunity for the Chair of the Panel to meet with the Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Academic) and other staff and also to address straight-forward queries raised by the Panel.

The full Panel of six auditors came together in Auckland on 7 July for the site visit to the City Campus on 8-10 July. In total, during the site visit the Panel spoke to about 70 staff and 20 students, as well as some members of the University Council and a group of stakeholders.

1. Leadership and Management of Teaching and Learning

The University's objectives for achieving its aspirations for accomplished and well supported staff include "a commitment to clear expectations" and "an environment in which distributed leadership is developed and valued".[12] To produce "a sustainable, autonomous university" the University of Auckland aims to have "an infrastructure of the highest quality possible to support [our] teaching, learning, research and community engagement", to have "sustainable practices" and "a safe and healthy environment" and to have "high quality governance and management practices". [13] The audit Panel considered that these objectives should be reflected in the leadership and management of teaching and learning.

Given the University of Auckland's desire to place itself alongside highly ranked peer institutions internationally, the Panel also paid attention to areas where international benchmarking was considered appropriate, while at the same time recognising that the audit framework has been developed to evaluate New Zealand universities within a New Zealand context.

1.1 Delegations

Universities should have clear delegations for decision-making related to teaching and learning quality and research supervision, and for accountability for quality assurance of programmes and courses.

The academic decision-making which is normally controlled by specified authority delegated from Council or the Vice-Chancellor is to some extent defined by the formal structure of a university. At the time of the audit site visit the University of Auckland had two major initiatives under way, both of which will provide a new context for delegations processes. These initiatives (a Leadership Framework and the Faculty Administration Review) were widely understood by University staff but had not been finalised for implementation at the time of the audit.

The introduction of a "Leadership Framework" is intended to encourage staff at all levels to develop and exhibit leadership responsibility, as appropriate to their roles.[14] The objective is highlighted in the Strategic Plan 2013-2020 under Objective 3.[15] Described variously as "distributed leadership" or "integrated leadership", this model focuses on developing leadership capability across the University, including strengthening the leadership and management dimension of Heads of schools and departments, rather than emphasising their administrative roles. The model should also help with identification of specific responsibilities, a trait which will assist in clarifying delegations. The University considers that distributed leadership is an effective way of developing and recognising diverse forms or areas of leadership in a complex organisation where staff might have multiple roles with respect to their institution, their students and colleagues, their profession or discipline and the public.

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[12] SP, Objectives 1 and 3, pp6-7.
[13] SP, Objectives 15, 16, 17 and 18, pp16-18.
[14] "Guide to the University of Auckland Leadership Framework", July 2013.
[15] SP, p7.

The FAR Project (Faculty Administration Review) is a comprehensive review of faculty professional and administration processes and roles. The project commenced in 2011 and was subject to widespread consultation in 2013; confirmation of structural changes was imminent, the week following the audit site visit.[16] In essence, the proposals of the FAR project will lead to a "consistent, transparent, effective, low-cost administration model" in support of teaching, learning and research across all faculties.[17] The new model is intended to provide "clear and meaningful" career pathways for professional staff, standardise roles and processes to maximise efficiency, and provide consistent and strengthened support for Academic Heads.[18] The model should also assist with ensuring students receive advice and support which is consistent across the University, wherever it is sought.

The Panel considered that the conceptualisation, objectives, strategic development and change management processes underlying both of the above projects signal a sophisticated move towards recognising and rationalising the complexity of professional support processes. The aim is to develop and reward the capability to manage and use these processes in ways consistent with the University's objectives.

Whether considering the current or the future organisational environment, clear delegations for teaching and learning decision-making are a necessary part of academic quality assurance. They assist with ensuring consistent application of academic regulations, policies and procedures for students, and ensure staff are clear about which decisions they have responsibility for and/or are accountable for. The University's Self-review Report states that the University did not have a formal schedule of academic delegations but planned to develop one. This development will be informed by the FAR project.[19] However, the Enhancement and Assurance Framework document does include a comprehensive list of approving and delegated authorities.[20] From its interviews, the Panel assessed that delegations are clearer and more clearly understood for postgraduate responsibilities than they are at an institutional level for undergraduate and University support processes. The Panel encourages the University to alert staff to the Enhancement and Assurance Framework as a reference for academic delegations (see 1.2 below).

> *Commendation:* The Panel **commends** the University on its attention to developing, assessing and rewarding leadership capability of all staff, as appropriate to their role within the University, and to its articulation of its philosophy and objectives in the Leadership Framework.

> *Affirmation:* The Panel **affirms** the objectives of and planning for the Faculty Administration Review (FAR) project, in particular with respect to the clarification of leadership roles and administrative responsibilities and the potential for systematisation and consequent consistency of academic processes across the University.

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[16] See www.staff.auckland.ac.nz/en/how-the-university-works/projects-and-programmes/the-faculty-administration-review-far-project.html accessed 14.07.14.

[17] The Faculty of Education is exempt from the FAR process, having already undergone a similar review in 2013.

[18] FAR Consultation document, 17 April 2014.

[19] SR, pp20; 23.

[20] Enhancement and Assurance Framework (not dated). See www.staff.auckland.ac.nz/en/teaching-and-students/teaching-and-learning-1/teaching-and-learning-quality-assurance/teaching-and-learning-quality-assurance-overview.html accessed 14.07.14.

> **1.2   Strategic and operational planning**
>
> Universities should have appropriate strategic and operational planning documents which include objectives related to student achievement and teaching quality, with key performance indicators which inform academic quality assurance processes.

The University's "Strategic Plan 2013-2020" underpins the University's vision to be internationally ranked as a public university alongside peer universities of the Australian Group of Eight, the UK Russell Group and the Canadian U15. The Plan emphasizes the importance of an environment in which "highly talented" staff and students can flourish. It also recognises the constraints within which all New Zealand universities operate when endeavouring to enhance their standing. The nineteen Objectives of the Plan are intended to provide the basis for annual planning and resource allocation. The University's Planning and Budget Report provides the performance indicators for the Strategic Plan, which are in turn reported against in the Statement of Service Performance and the Annual Report.

The "Planning and Accountability" document is intended to become a handbook which provides a framework for annual planning and reporting at the University of Auckland.[21] The framework will show how the University gives effect to the Objectives of its Strategic Plan. It incorporates annual plans (e.g. the Budget), medium term plans (e.g. faculty and service division plans; the learning and teaching plan) and long term plans (e.g. long term capital plans).

The Panel had some difficulty finding its way through planning documents and KPIs which underpin or evolve from the Strategic Plan. It found that KPIs were not applied uniformly or consistently and that critical KPIs were in some cases maintained separately from the strategic objectives to which they referred. For example, KPIs "informing" academic quality processes are reiterated in the Annual Report but do not appear to be part of a quality assurance plan, or of the Enhancement and Assurance Framework.[22] The Learning and Teaching Plan, which is in many ways fundamental to this audit, is without any KPIs or targets. Only through its interrogation at interview did the Panel discover that this "Plan" is in practice a project schedule for new initiatives; it was not commensurate with the kind of strategic plan which might cascade down from (or up to) an institutional plan.[23] The Panel heard that faculties report on their own teaching and learning objectives to the Teaching and Learning Quality Committee (TLQC). The self-review reports that this process enables faculties to exchange information.[24] Faculties also report on their performance against their own plans to an annual planning meeting but it was not clear where TLQC came in this reporting sequence or whether they happen in parallel. Neither was it clear whether outcomes of faculty plans are referenced back to the University Learning and Teaching Plan to enable some assessment of their focus and progress. The Planning and Accountability Framework, when adopted, should clarify some of these linkages and, hence, the University's progress against its objectives.

In the course of the audit the Panel reviewed the University's overall academic quality assurance processes. The new "Enhancement and Assurance Framework" uses the "Planning, Implementation,

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[21] Working Draft as at April 2014.
[22] SR, p47.
[23] 2013-2016 Learning and Teaching Plan.
[24] SR, p24.

Monitoring, Evaluation, Enhancement" model to describe the processes which support the quality management of learning and teaching. As noted above, the Framework clarifies responsibilities and accountabilities of the key components of the model as they refer to teaching and learning. The Panel endorses the University's Enhancement Initiative 1(a) to approve, communicate and embed the Framework.

The University has comprehensive documentation related to academic processes on its website but the search function on the website was sometimes found to be uneven and somewhat idiosyncratic in identifying specific policies and/or statutes by keywords. It was noted that since the Self-review report was submitted the University has initiated a project to develop a revised platform for the website to ensure consistency across University policy.[25]

The Cycle 4 academic audit raised some issues about the University's benchmarking processes, including a need to "clarify the logic and philosophy behind benchmarking and the use to which findings are to be put" (Recommendation 6).[26] At the time, the University did not accept the Cycle 4 Panel's recommendation. However, the rationale for this recommendation remained evident to the Cycle 5 Panel. One of the University's objectives is to have "an international standing that places [it] in the top half of the groups of leading Australian, British and Canadian universities", which it says will be ascertained via strong international relationships, collaborations and partnerships with such universities and facilitated as well by benchmarking performance in teaching and learning, research, service, equity, leadership and management.[27] This focus implies a need for benchmarking of a wide range of activities across the University. Exploring these, the Panel learned that staff are proactively benchmarking as a means of assuring quality in a number of areas.[28] The Panel was also told of a list of partner institutions which are used for benchmarking as appropriate to the issue. However the Panel remained concerned about issues which were similar to those which concerned the Cycle 4 Panel. In particular, there appeared to be no high-level statement of institutional strategy and philosophy which would provide a clear, systematic approach to guide staff in different areas of activity. This issue is particularly important for the University given its aspirations with respect to international comparator groups of universities.

> *Recommendation:* The Panel **recommends** that the University develops a high-level benchmarking statement which sets out the objectives and scope of institutional benchmarking, guidelines for operationalising benchmarking for different kinds of activities and outcomes and designated responsibilities for ensuring appropriate action is taken in response to benchmarked evaluations.

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[25] Additional communication from the University 26.06.14.
[26] University of Auckland Cycle 4 Audit Report, 2009, pp37-38.
[27] SP, Objective 19, p19.
[28] For example, TEFMA for facilities management (see section 1.4); Go8 Deans meetings; UniForum reports on academic services see https://www.uniforum.co/ accessed 15.07.14.

> **1.3 Student input**
> Universities should facilitate student input to planning, policy development and monitoring of key academic activities.

The Enhancement and Assurance Framework includes a model for input from and feedback to students. This is a process model, which refers to how feedback is provided by students, how feedback is considered, how results are reported back to students and how changes might be made as a result of feedback.

The University also has a structured approach to student input and feedback, ensuring that this happens systematically at the level of the student's individual class, at school or department, and at faculty level. Ultimately, the Vice-Chancellor's Student Consultative Committee provides a vehicle for student consultation at the institutional level. Students are also represented on core academic committees and there is a student member of Council.[29]

The Panel heard from students that its extensive class representative system is "deep": in 2013 there were over 1,200 class representatives, providing invaluable feedback from every level at the University. The hierarchical system of representation ensures there is a "genuine student voice" at all levels of the institution. The opportunities provided by the Vice-Chancellor's Student Consultative Committee to keep students informed about University business are appreciated but some students considered this group does not meet frequently enough to be as effective as it might be.

The Panel considered the systematic structure and processes for ensuring a student voice is heard at all organisational levels of the University are exemplary.

> *Commendation:* The Panel **commends** the University for using systematic mechanisms for ensuring student input is sought, feedback given and information shared across all levels of the University.

> **1.4 Infrastructure**
> Universities should have strategies and/or use processes for ensuring that their teaching and learning spaces and facilities are appropriate for their teaching and learning needs.

The Strategic Plan highlights as a "key action" to "ensure that the University's capital planning is guided by appropriate benchmarks of the nature and extent of physical infrastructure provided by peer international universities, and by innovations that lead the University to improve its international standing".[30] Intentions to improve the physical base are couched within a realisation of the need to ensure efficiency and sustainability as well as health and safety.

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[29] SR pp44-46.
[30] SP, Objective 15, p16.

The Panel considers the University's Long Term Capital Plan over the next decade to be ambitious. The Capital Plan includes the development of both informal and formal spaces, the latter catering for teaching, research, services and student activities. The University reports that the quality of teaching and learning spaces is monitored via KPIs reported to Council, including academic staff: student ratios, total investment as assets $/total EFTS and via TEFMA benchmarks.[31] The Panel was also told that the quality of technical, laboratory and studio spaces is benchmarked against national and international standards.[32] Staff responsible for infrastructure development appeared to be well informed by information shared with comparator Australian universities. They were aware of the need to incorporate new developments in teaching and learning into space design (whether new space or refurbishment) but also recognised the time lag that often prevails. An initiative to establish "best practice" forums between Property Services and faculties facilitates sharing of effective examples of space developments which staff have experienced elsewhere. Student input may come via faculties, through the Vice-Chancellor's Student Consultative Committee, or via direct surveys.

The Panel was satisfied that those responsible for infrastructure are well versed in the space needs and expectations related to teaching and learning and have good processes in place for gaining input to decisions about maintenance, refurbishment and development. An example cited of new multidisciplinary laboratories in the Faculty of Medical and Health Sciences illustrated the University's focus on endeavouring to ensure future space and technology can meet ongoing pedagogical developments.[33] The Panel supports the mechanisms in place to do this and considers that they will underpin capital planning.

The University identifies as a "key action" in developing a high quality learning environment the intention to draw on international best practice in the use of new technologies for teaching and learning.[34] The Learning and Teaching Plan 2013-2016 includes several "Actions" related to digital technologies, digital learning and alignment of infrastructure developments with teaching and learning requirements.[35] Given that the Cycle 4 audit made a recommendation in this area, the Panel explored staff and student expectations of digital technologies and the University's plans around development of these in some detail.

The Panel was impressed by a 2010 memorandum to the senior management team on this issue but was concerned that not a great deal of strategic progress appeared to have been made since then.[36] The Panel noted that many of the "Actions" in the Learning and Teaching Plan have no timeline attached to them.

From its interviews the Panel heard of discussions between senior managers responsible for IT systems, learning development and academic quality, and it heard of faculty IT strategy groups. But apart from some isolated examples of departments, schools or faculties developing their own

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[31] TEFMA = Tertiary Education Facilities Management Association.
[32] SR, p35.
[33] SR, p35.
[34] SP, Objective 7, p11.
[35] Learning and Teaching Plan 2013-2016, section 6 "Learning Spaces and Technology".
[36] Internal memorandum 7 October 2010, provided as SD 6.3.

systems or processes,[37] and discussion of lecture recording, the Panel heard little of technologies which might be considered innovative in comparator universities. It concluded that for many staff "online" teaching and learning was confused with "distance" teaching and learning. The Panel deduced that decisions to engage in use of contemporary digital technologies for teaching remained largely a matter of individual staff preference or were individual department or school or faculty initiatives. Just as recorded in the 2010 memorandum, use of technologies that facilitate interaction is not widespread. While the Panel heard of staff learning from peer example, it also heard of instances where a particular culture within a department or school effectively discouraged new staff from using or experimenting with new developments or using alternative technologies, such as Twitter. Staff referred to there being no clear avenue to gain support for Turnitin and that they had to seek this out individually. CLeaR was given credit for assisting staff (see section 6.4) and the Library (i.e. Libraries and Learning Services) for providing support in how to use the Cecil learning management system. One Faculty (Education) uses Moodle as well as Cecil and seems able to provide support from the expertise in its own faculty. Such unevenness in use of various technologies across the University could be an issue for students who are studying in more than one faculty.

The University acknowledges some areas where development is needed or underway. IT staff undertake benchmarking assessments, for example via annual EDUCAUSE surveys and by monitoring Australian developments.[38] The Self-review notes that the University is in the process of upgrading its wireless access points, over a four year cycle.[39] The University learning management system, Cecil, is under review, with expectation of a new system in place for 2016. On more than one occasion the Panel heard of instances where staff use different communication strategies instead of Cecil, for example Facebook or personal websites. The Panel noted a preponderance of paper-based administration at postgraduate level, inability for many students to submit assessment electronically and a relative absence of such teaching and learning strategies as online discussion fora or tutorials. As observed by the 2009 audit panel, e-learning activities and investments continue to be fragmented and lacking in clear strategic direction.[40] The Panel acknowledges the University's intention to continue to provide a campus-based education. This might explain why some staff have been slow to utilize electronic media in their teaching and in learning more generally. If this is the case, it overlooks the potential for a wide range of alternative teaching and learning strategies for students who are local. An obvious outlier to this conclusion is the University's strategic decision to offer two MOOCs through a relationship with FutureLearn (see section 3.8), an initiative which suggests there is support at senior levels of the University for adoption of new digital resources. This support needs to be conveyed to those schools and departments where use of new technologies is largely a matter for individual initiative.

The variable experiences reported by both staff and students, and the active resistance reported in some areas of the University, suggest to the Panel that there is currently a general lack of confidence among many staff in moving innovatively in a direction which parallels student experience in other

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[37] For example, the use of digital workbooks for laboratory students; the use of Course-Builder platform.
[38] EDUCAUSE is an international network of IT and related staff in universities and other institutions focussed on strategic IT decisions in education. See www.educause.edu/about accessed 15.07.14.
[39] SR, pp37; 40.
[40] SD 6.3, Internal memorandum.

aspects of their lives and meets their expectations of a 21st century education. In the Panel's opinion, strong direction is urgently needed if the University is to provide a learning experience consistent with that of the international universities with which it wishes to align itself and with some other New Zealand universities. The University is encouraged to evaluate the provisions made for various forms of electronic interaction in teaching and learning by these universities.

> *Recommendation:* The Panel **recommends** that in order to provide a high-quality learning and teaching environment across the institution, the University gives urgent attention to implementing a coherent strategy to develop digital technologies and to promote and support staff use of these, including prioritising and developing timelines for the Actions outlined in Section 6 of the 2013-2016 Learning and Teaching Plan.

1.5   Information resources
Universities should use processes for ensuring that their information resources are appropriate and sufficient for research-informed teaching and learning.

Information resources under the stewardship of Libraries and Learning Services (LLS) are highly regarded by both staff and students, being compared very favourably with those in overseas institutions with which staff were familiar. It was of interest to the Panel to observe that in a number of ways Libraries and Learning Services were an exception to the above comments regarding adoption of digital technologies. They record high use of the four Information Commons facilities, with over one million logins on those computers in 2012.[41] Academic staff spoke highly of the service provided by Subject Librarians.

In 2012, the Library noted that "for libraries to be well supported it is essential that they are embedded in the teaching, learning and research activities of their institution".[42] The Panel gained evidence of this as staff and students referred to the role of LLS in (for example) learning support, development of the academic integrity course, support for Cecil and involvement in the University's PBRF submission. Libraries and Learning Services are also well represented across key University committees: the Librarian or her nominee sits on the Teaching and Learning Quality Committee, the Information Technology and Strategy Committee, the Auckland University Press Board and the Equity Committee (co-opted). Each faculty also has a Library Committee. Policy advice for Libraries and Learning Services is the responsibility of the Library Committee, a committee of Senate.

From its interviews and the reports available to it the Panel observed that the University has undertaken considerable investment in Libraries and Learning Services. The Panel reviewed the Collection Management Plan, the 2012 Library Annual Report and other reports. Processes appeared systematic, robust and reflective of good practice; the Annual Report includes a set of KPIs to measure effectiveness. Libraries and Learning Services staff include specialists in digital services supporting a number of programmes and tools for information access and a Learning Services team which runs generic information skills workshops as well as a range of workshops targeted to

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[41] Library Annual Report 2012, p7.
[42] Library Annual Report 2012, p1.

particular programmes, courses or research areas and also workshops targeted to doctoral students. The Māori and Pasifika team is dedicated to supporting the development of those groups of students, and to supporting the Principles of the Treaty of Waitangi.

Libraries and Learning Services staff participate in a range of networks which can provide informal benchmarking experience. Importance is placed on collaboration with libraries in other New Zealand universities, for example, participation in development of the "CONZUL Store" of single print copies for collective use.[43] Formal assessments come via Australasian library client satisfaction surveys, teaching and learning surveys and comparison of KPIs against benchmark institutions. The Panel was provided with confidential information which confirmed that the University of Auckland Library compared extremely well with Australasian benchmark institutions. In the International Student Barometer survey in 2013 it also rated highly (over 90% satisfaction) among international students surveyed, as it did in 2012 among undergraduates surveyed via the University Teaching and Learning Survey.[44]

The Panel notes that the University received two commendations for its Library services in the Cycle 4 audit.

> *Commendation:* The Panel **commends** the University for continuing to provide exceptionally good quality libraries and learning services to staff and students, including provision of a wide range of resources and expertise to support teaching, learning and research.

1.6   Risk management
Universities should have recovery plans and procedures which are designed to facilitate continuity of teaching and learning in instances of infrastructure system failure.

The key guiding documents for the University's risk management and recovery are its Crisis Management Plan and its Resilience Management Plan. "Resilience" refers to the University's ability to return to business as usual after an emergency or major interruption. The two Plans are differentiated in that the Resilience Management Plan "applies to everyone" and provides the over-arching policy framework, whereas the Crisis Management Plan applies to those parts of the organisation affected by a major incident or interruption. Beneath these, faculties and service divisions have their own specific resilience management plans which are reviewed as part of the annual planning and reporting cycle.

These Resilience Management and Crisis Management Plans between them identify response structures (i.e. roles, responsibilities and authorities) and articulate comprehensive procedures for managing risk and for identifying, managing and recovering from an emergency, crisis or disaster situation which results in disruption of core business.

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[43] CONZUL = Council of New Zealand University Librarians.
[44] SR, p39.

The Cycle 4 audit identified risk management as an area needing attention. There is no doubt that the University of Auckland has since then learned from experiences at other universities, and has also experienced significant disruption on its own campus (from power outages). Recent developments have included a relocation of a second data centre and considerable investment in building strengthening. The Panel was told that various aspects of planning had been tested in both real-life and simulated events and that the University engaged in desk-top response exercises. However these activities did not appear to be well-known in the faculties. The Panel heard of procedures for automating and prioritising the re-start of IT systems. It also heard that the University was engaged with Auckland City disaster planning in the event of a more widespread event. The Panel was convinced that the University had sound preparations at the institutional level, in particular to manage risk to people and infrastructure and to enable a resumption of business activity.

The Panel was less confident about the ability of staff to resume teaching, learning and research activity following an emergency or major interruption. While it was told that provision is made for business enterprise systems to be backed-up or managed to restart promptly, and all service divisions have business continuity plans, it appeared that academic staff who were interviewed were less clear about the implications for them if there was significant disruption to academic activities. For example, while some suggested that lack of reliance on digital technology made them less at risk of teaching disruption, few realised that digital technology could in fact become an effective tool for minimising such disruption, rather than exacerbating it. Even quite senior staff said they knew the University has a plan but they were unclear what the plan involved or meant for them personally.

The Self-review Report states that the University Learning and Teaching Plan "consolidates" the work of the Resilience Management Plan, "committing to a plan to set out procedures to ensure the continuity of learning and teaching in the event of a disaster".[45] From its reading of it, it was difficult for the Panel to see how the Learning and Teaching Plan in any way reflects the priorities or approaches of the Resilience Management Plan. The Self-review Report also refers to a Teaching and Learning Continuity Plan, yet to be finalised, which will "hold in one place the processes for ensuring continuity of key services across the University" and will include a communication plan "ensuring that all staff are aware of procedures related to the continuity of teaching and learning in the event of infrastructure system failure".[46] Given the general paucity of staff understanding about risk to business continuity and their role in managing the effects of significant infrastructure failure, the development and communication of the Teaching and Learning Continuity Plan outlined as Enhancement 2 in the Self-review Report is urgently needed.

> ***Affirmation:*** The Panel **affirms** the University's planning and risk management procedures for mitigation of the effects of a disaster, crisis or significant infrastructure failure at an institutional level, and urges the University to give priority to finalising the proposed Teaching and Learning Continuity Plan and communicating this to all staff and, as appropriate, to students.

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[45] SR, p41.
[46] SR, pp41-42.

2. Student Profile: Access, Transition and Admission Processes

The University of Auckland's student profile in 2013, as headcount, was: [47]

	All students	%
Total students	**41,363**	
Students aged under 24	26,441	64%
Students aged 24 and over	14,922	36%
Domestic students	35,766	86%
International students	5,597	14%
Pakeha/European	17,451	42%
Māori students	2,882	7%
Pasifika students	3,277	8%
Asian students	15,291	37%
Other	2,462	6%
Full-time students	26,597	64%
Part-time	14,766	36%
Undergraduate	30,771	74%
Postgraduate	10,592	26%
[includes PhD students	1,719	4%]

The University recognises that this profile does not align well with those of the universities with which it wishes to compare itself and intends "to move to a student body that better aligns with that typically seen at leading peer research-intensive universities".[48] It recognises the challenge of meeting international benchmarks and targets while at the same time meeting equity targets that are specific to New Zealand and have a unique character in the Auckland region. While it aims for moderate growth in the number of undergraduate students, the University of Auckland seeks to increase the proportion of postgraduate students. It also intends to increase the proportion of international students.[49]

> ### 2.1 Admission and selection
> Universities' admission and selection policies and practices should be clear and publicly available to students.

The University of Auckland aims for "a diverse student body of the highest possible academic potential".[50] To achieve this, for undergraduate admission it operates a system of Guaranteed Entry Scores (GES) and a University Targeted Admission Scheme (UTAS) for specific equity groups (see 2.2

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[47] AR, pp 8-9.; SP, pp6; 70; 72-73.
[48] SP, Objective 5, p9.
[49] SR, p51.
[50] SP, Objective 4, p8.

below). The UTAS admission requirements for Māori and Pacific students, along with other information such as about scholarships, pastoral and academic and support, are publicised in information booklets directed to students, their families, schools and communities.[51] Information for equity groups is also available online.[52]

In 2013 the number of students admitted above and below the GES were:[53]

School leavers admitted 2013*	Admitted above GES	Admitted below GES	% Admitted below GES
Total school leaver students	3,950	382	9%
Māori	237	68	22%
Pacific	325	124	28%
All others	3,388	190	5%

*For students admitted via NCEA results only.

The University acknowledges a potential tension between its equity obligations and its aspirations for a student profile characterised by high-achieving admission cohorts, more international students and a greater proportion of postgraduate students. However, currently it does not appear to believe its equity objectives are compromised by a vision to be more like its international benchmark universities. Rather, the University is placing emphasis on assisting students whose backgrounds might have been academically constrained to reach their full potential (see section 2.2 below). For example, the Panel was told that although the University of Auckland has a slightly lower proportion of Māori students than some other New Zealand universities, it is above local benchmarks for retention and performance of this group. (See also section 4.2.)

The University's Admission Regulations are clear and publicly available in the Calendar and on the University website.[54] The "Ask Auckland" link provides answers to frequently asked questions and offers a facility for enquiries.[55] The effectiveness of the online application and enrolment system is monitored via KPIs related to student enquiries.[56] Students expressed satisfaction that admission regulations are readily available and well understood. The Panel heard positive comments from stakeholders who were familiar with the Guaranteed Entry Scheme.

A review of admissions processes for taught postgraduate students in 2012, centralising those which did not require special admission criteria, is reported to have improved consistency and clarity of the selection process for students.[57] A consequence of the University's focus on attracting high-achieving students which was brought to the Panel's attention is the increasing challenge of providing scholarships for very good students wishing to transition to postgraduate study (see section 7.2).

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[51] "The University of Auckland Tauira Māori" and "The University of Auckland Pacific".
[52] https://www.auckland.ac.nz/en/about/eo-equity-office.html.
[53] SR, p73.
[54] https://www.auckland.ac.nz/en/about/admission-and-enrolment.html accessed 04.07.14.
[55] https://uoa.custhelp.com/app/answers/list/p/213,99 accessed 04.07.14.
[56] SR, p55.
[57] SR, p54.

This could potentially impact on the University's desire to increase its proportion of postgraduate students and the intended increase in recruitment of international students.

Admission requirements and the registration process for PhD students are detailed in the Statute and Guidelines for the Degree of Doctor of Philosophy.[58]

2.2   Access and Transition
Universities should use policies and/or procedures which are designed to assist the access and transition of equity groups or other priority groups.

In its Self-review Report the University refers to Māori, Pacific and disabled students as priority groups and mentions an intention to extend provisions, from 2015, to refugees and students from low-decile schools.[59] The Self-review Report states that 10% of places in limited entry programmes are reserved for students from equity groups and that students who do not meet the GES for the programme, but who have University Entrance, may apply for one of these places under the UTAS system.[60]

Partnerships of mutual benefit with Māori are the focus of Objective 11 of the Strategic Plan, including the development and implementation of strategies to improve Māori participation, success, retention and completion rates in all disciplines. The Strategic Plan also identifies other groups with "different intellectual traditions and different bodies of experience" as creating a challenge to provide an environment which is inclusive and supportive in enabling their academic success. A particular action identified is to "identify students of ability whose personal circumstances limit their opportunity to access and succeed at university and assist them to overcome those barriers through a coordinated, research-informed suite of support programmes".[61]

The Panel gained evidence of the University's endeavours to ensure that its interventions to ease access and transition are research-based. For nearly ten years the University has hosted the Starpath Project (a Partnership for Excellence initiative) which undertakes "high quality research and implements an evidence-based school-wide intervention aimed at improving the educational outcomes for students who are currently not meeting the criteria required to progress into degree-level study and, as a result, are under-represented in tertiary education".[62] Within the University a variety of activities are offered to secondary school students and their families, including a programme where university students mentor students from ten secondary schools in after-school homework workshops. The University has found that bridging support for equity groups works best when this is offered by the University (rather than other providers), extends beyond a single semester, and incorporates efforts to assist potential students and their families to become familiar with a university environment. Funding of such initiatives is a challenge, since not all of these are

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[58] https://cdn.auckland.ac.nz/assets/central/for/current-students/postgraduate-students/documents/policies-guidelines-forms/doctoral-policies-guidelines/2011-phd-statute-and-guidelines.pdf accessed 23.07.14.
[59] SR, pp58-59.
[60] SR, p57.
[61] SP, Objective 11, p13; Objective 4, p8.
[62] www.education.auckland.ac.nz/en/about/research/starpath-home.html accessed 19.07.14.

necessarily eligible for [government] equity funding. Strategic relationships with local and regional iwi and with Pacific groups, including Pacific churches, are intended to assist with realising the possibility of a university education for Māori and Pacific students. A particular challenge identified by the University is the risk that the gap between entry scores of those admitted under the GES and those admitted under UTAS will widen; the Panel was also alerted to the risk that those admitted under the UTAS might think of themselves as inferior in some way. The University's Certificate in Academic Preparation is intended to address any gap in performance readiness.[63] The University also has a Deed of Co-operation with Manukau Institute of Technology which includes the commitment to developing learning pathways into tertiary education.[64]

Once enrolled, Māori and Pacific students have available to them a wide range of support services, including the Tuākana Learning Community and services provided by faculties (SR pp74-76; sections 4.2, 5.2, 5.3 below). The Panel considers the First Year Transition Programme in the Faculty of Arts, which includes attendance and assignment tracking, targeted learning sessions and interventions for students who fail to attend or pay fees or complete compulsory work, to be a good model for other faculties. The programme is based on and benchmarked against a similar one at Queensland University of Technology.[65] The Panel was also impressed by the Māori and Pacific Admission Scheme (MAPAS) offered by the Faculty of Medical and Health Sciences which provides both admission pathways and subsequent support to students of indigenous Māori or Pacific ancestry. It is a comprehensive programme of activities in which MAPAS students are required to participate, including an introductory wānanga, tutorials, events, mentoring and a commitment to seek support early if needed. Other culturally-appropriate academic and pastoral support is also available.[66]

The University is also mindful of a significant group of resident Asian students who, like Pacific students, are not a single homogeneous set. Relationships with Chinese and Indian communities were highlighted. Students alerted the Panel to the need to ensure such groups do not get "ring-fenced" and become culturally isolated, as a result of targeted assistance and other activities.

Evaluation of the effectiveness of the University's initiatives to improve access and transition is facilitated partly by analysis of conversion rates of applications.[67] Participation rates are part of the University's suite of institutional KPIs, reported to Council. The academic progress of UTAS students in their first academic year is monitored by each faculty.

The University requires testing of English language via the DELNA programme for all first year students.[68] The programme includes screening and diagnosis and is available for postgraduate students as well as undergraduates.

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[63] SR, p63.

[64] SR, p62.

[65] SR, p75.

[66] SR, p126; https://www.fmhs.auckland.ac.nz/en/faculty/for/future-undergraduates/Māori -and-pacific-admission-scheme.html accessed 19.07.14.

[67] SR, p53.

[68] DELNA = Diagnostic English Language Needs Assessment.

Commendation: The Panel **commends** the University on its long-standing comprehensive, systematic and informed approach to encouraging the access and transition of Māori and Pacific students to University, including the UTAS provision, clear communication of admission requirements and wide range of activities to support transition at both institutional and faculty level.

2.3   Academic advice
Universities should use processes for providing academic advice and course information to both new and continuing students.

Students reported that communication of academic information is done well by the University, initially via the Schools Partnerships Office (for secondary school students) and also via the Contact Centre, the Student Information Centre and the University websites. Other vehicles for disseminating academic advice include course and careers advice days and the RightNowKnowledgeBase which supports the "AskAuckland" website which includes non-course-related information (e.g. regarding aegrotats). The University's mobile app links to the "AskAuckland" database.

At faculty level, course advisers are nominated for both undergraduate and postgraduate advice. Teaching and Learning Survey responses from first year students for 2012 indicated close to 90% satisfaction with information services which provide academic advice.

Recent teaching and learning surveys identified the quality of academic advice as an issue.[69] The University has also identified the lack of any formal protocols governing the provision of academic advice as a risk to the University.[70] The Panel agreed. Not only does this absence risk exposing it to a failure to meet student expectations but also risks undermining the integrity of academic achievement if incorrect advice is given, or advice is given by staff who do not hold that delegated authority (see section 1.1). The Panel was advised that the FAR project should assist in ensuring consistency and accuracy of advice. Nevertheless, the Panel considers that formal protocols are still desirable to guide both staff and students.

Adequate provision is in place to resolve any complaints or disputes which might arise from hardship caused because of inaccurate advice received by a student.

> *Commendation:* The Panel **commends** the University on its "AskAuckland" website and mobile app, the usability of these, and on the development of a comprehensive database to underpin them.

> *Recommendation:* The Panel **recommends** that as part of the FAR project the University ensures it establishes formal protocols for the provision of advice to students about academic matters, including defining which staff have authority to give advice about matters which require specific decisions.

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[69] https://www.auckland.ac.nz/en/about/teaching-learning/improving-the-student-experience/actions-and-improvements/what-did-students-say.html accessed 20.07.14.
[70] SR, p69.

3.   Curriculum and Assessment

Objective 7 of the Strategic Plan refers to "a high quality learning environment" which will facilitate an "inclusive, challenging and transformative educational experience". This objective encompasses curriculum and research-informed innovation in teaching and learning as well as the integration of an international experience, support of equity, and support of and reward for excellent teaching. It is predicated on the existence of a relevant University graduate profile which will meet national needs and international standards, as well as the promotion of research-informed innovation in teaching and learning to enhance student engagement and achievement.[71]

The University's curriculum portfolio encompasses most significant discipline areas. It provides a full suite of the professional programmes offered in New Zealand, except for Veterinary Science and Dentistry. Teacher education programmes are delivered at Manukau Institute of Technology and the Epsom sites in Auckland and the Tai Tokerau site in Whangarei provides a base for teacher education teaching in the North. The only off-shore delivery site has been in Malaysia where the BEd (TESOL) has been offered; 2014 is the final year of delivery. A Postgraduate Certificate in Light Metals Reduction Technology is offered intermittently overseas with a block course component taught on-site at a smelter.[72]

3.1   Programme approval

The University should have consistent and robust internal course and programme approval processes which meet any national and professional expectations and which include opportunity for input from stakeholders where appropriate.

The University's Amendment Guidelines set out the overall requirements for the design, approval, implementation, delivery and review of qualifications. In addition to outlining requirements for proposals of new courses and amendments to existing programmes, including deletions, the Guidelines explain academic, regulatory, and administrative constraints for related matters such as course/class availability changes, internal and external reviews of academic programmes and tertiary education funding requirements.[73]

The University cites a range of mechanisms whereby relevant stakeholder input is ensured for programmes which are not professionally accredited: for example, Boards of Studies and Advisory Boards include external representatives; individual consultation with external groups; feedback from internship or practicum providers. Opportunity for input by Māori into programme planning was referred to. Students are members of faculties and committees which scrutinise academic proposals. The Panel heard of the use of programme reviews to help staff ensure their curricula are "cutting edge" (see section 3.4 below). Internal approval processes involve faculty approval and approval in

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[71] SP, Objective 8, p11.

[72] "The programme is designed to allow students from all around the world to participate and maximise learning while only requiring three weeks away from home". See www.engineering.auckland.ac.nz/en/for/futurepostgraduates/fp-study-options/fp-applying-for-a-postgraduate-certificate/pgcertlmrtech.html accessed 18.07.14.

[73] https://www.staff.auckland.ac.nz/en/teaching-and-students/academic-programmes/amendment-process.html#db7c6de5ce66240ee1c0ba044e33a7b7 accessed 18.07.14.

principle by the Vice-Chancellor, Deputies and Deans Group (VCDD) before proceeding to the Academic Programmes Committee (a committee of Senate). The review by VCDD allows resource requirements and strategic appropriateness to be considered.

As understood by the Panel, and evidenced by progression to CUAP approval, the University's processes for course and programme approval are consistent and robust.[74]

3.2   Graduate attributes

Universities should have clearly-defined intended graduate outcomes (graduate attributes) which are publically available and are accessible to students and staff.

The University's Strategic Plan identifies the development of appropriate graduate profiles as a "key action": "ensure that [we] have graduate profiles which clearly lay out the desired attributes of graduates and the value that students obtain from their extracurricular, as well as their academic, university experiences".[75] The Strategic Plan also implies some of the qualities that might be expected in graduates. For instance, under Objective 7 it states that in order to "maximise the opportunity for all students to succeed" the University *(inter alia)* wishes to encourage the integration of international experience into the curriculum, and wishes to provide all students with the opportunity to "gain the educational benefits of research-informed and research-based teaching and learning".

The University's current Graduate Profile was developed in 2003, when such statements were relatively new in New Zealand. The Profile itemises specialist knowledge, general intellectual skills and capabilities, and personal qualities. The language, if not the content, of the profile is in need of refreshment. The University also needs to ensure that the objectives of the Graduate Profile align with the University's institutional objectives, for example to pay attention to employability or to international experience.

The Panel became familiar with the three postgraduate profiles developed in 2008 and a range of graduate profiles at programme or qualification level and considered a number of these to be excellent.[76] Some staff who were interviewed indicated the value of having a current and appropriate graduate profile to provide critical direction to the desired outcomes of student learning. The Learning and Teaching Plan indicates an intention to monitor and share best practices in curriculum mapping onto graduate profiles at faculty level (Action 2.1) and the University has identified a review of the Graduate Profile as a required enhancement. The Panel believes this is an urgent matter. The Panel's concern is that if programme-level profiles are developed independently of an institutional graduate profile, they will risk missing some of the attributes which the University considers all graduates should acquire or demonstrate. If the University is to proceed with a significant review of undergraduate programmes, then an institution-wide and commonly-understood Graduate Profile is an essential building block.

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[74] SR, p82.
[75] SP, Objective 8, p11.
[76] The postgraduate profiles are the Postgraduate Coursework Profile; the Research Postgraduate Profile; and the Doctoral Profile.

Recommendation: The Panel **recommends** that the University review its current institutional Graduate Profile and revise as appropriate to reflect its contemporary aspirations for its graduates. The University should endeavour to ensure that attributes from the institutional Graduate Profile are reflected in graduate profiles for individual programmes where appropriate.

3.3   Graduate outcomes
Universities should have processes for ensuring students have the opportunity to meet the intended graduate outcomes (graduate attributes) during their period of study.

The Learning and Teaching Plan states that it will "develop appropriate analytics for evaluating institutional effectiveness in enabling students to achieve intended graduate attributes" (Action 2.2). This latter intention assumes a common Graduate Profile. Given the apparent disjunction between faculty or programme graduate profiles, and the 2003 institutional Graduate Profile, it was not clear to the Panel what analytics have been, or might be, developed that would contribute to the evaluation.

In assessing graduate outcomes, the Panel focussed mainly on those associated with programme graduate profiles. It was clear that internships and practicum placements for professional programmes, along with the involvement of practitioners in programme teaching, provided good opportunities for students to become familiar with and potentially acquire the attributes relevant to those professions. In one faculty a growing postgraduate cohort of practitioners also provides opportunity for staff to ensure intended graduate attributes are appropriate and to assist students to gain these. Other faculties discussed mechanisms whereby they tried to ensure students gained skills not directly related to the curriculum (e.g. communication skills). The Learning and Teaching Plan indicates an intention to formally recognise non-credit-bearing activities which contribute to achievement of intended graduate attributes but the immediate outcome of the plan is only at the exploration stage (Action 3.12).

Employability and work-readiness were raised as a challenge by both employers and recent graduates. The biggest challenges relate to non-professional programmes, especially when these disciplines might not be directly linked to areas of employment. This is recognised in the Learning and Teaching Plan (Actions 2.3, 3.12 and 3.13). The Panel is aware of the growing recognition by universities of the need to provide opportunities for these students to gain workplace experience while studying. In light of the University's objectives to produce influential graduates who become leaders,[77] this requires more than just a framework to capture and enhance employability prospects (Action 3.13), but needs to focus explicitly on mechanisms whereby those prospects are realised.

Recommendation: The Panel **recommends** that the University develops its work programme beyond the Actions set out under "Student Employment Outcomes" in the Learning and Teaching Plan 2013-2016, to give explicit recognition to the development of work-readiness through the delivery of the curriculum, in particular in non-professional programmes.

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[77] SP, pp8; 10.

> **3.4 Programme review**
> Universities should have regular reviews of programmes and courses, including external accreditation reviews, which include input from students and other stakeholders and which are used to ensure curriculum quality.

The University's Amendment Guidelines set out the expectations for reviews of new programmes. The Amendment Guidelines also outline the process for the Quality Assurance Report for off-shore programmes or courses.

The Guidelines for Programme Reviews are comprehensive, including information about review cycles, a list of all qualifications by review category, guidelines for panel appointment, content and structure of self-review portfolios and review reports, site visit processes and the timeline for review activities through to submission of the status report on implementation.

Programme review reports, the response from faculty and the implementation plan are reported to the Education Committee of Senate (Category B and C reviews) and also to Council (Category A reviews). A one-year-on status report to the Education Committee is also required. Documentation was provided which verified this reporting and the actions taken.

The Panel learned of a variety of review forms: course reviews undertaken by course directors; programme reviews; curriculum reviews; accreditation reviews; department reviews; self-review as part of the Graduating Year Reviews required by CUAP for new programmes. Different programme review types are categorised in the Programme Review Guidelines as Category A, B or C. The Guidelines state that doctorates are not reviewed but the Panel was told that the PhD would be reviewed in 2014.

While it became clear that all non-professional programmes are subject to review on a five or ten year cycle (depending on whether they are Category B or Category A programmes), the situation for professional programmes was less certain. Some interviewees said these were reviewed only at the time of accreditation; others said that they might be reviewed during a department review. In practice, it appears that both situations occur. The Panel is concerned, however, if professional programmes are evaluated only by accreditation bodies.[78] This practice risks there being no opportunity for the University to assure itself that the programme meets non-professional requirements, for example any general education requirements or non-credit requirements. Neither does the University at present have any mechanism for ensuring professional programmes with external accreditation are appropriately aligned to the University Graduate profile. The University is encouraged to explore models of joint review which occur elsewhere, which avoid undue replication of time, effort and documentation but which facilitate achieving the complementary objectives of the two kinds of review. The Panel also considers that a ten year cycle is possibly too long for significant (Category A) programmes, though it acknowledges that this fits within the current CUAP Guidelines.[79]

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[78] SR, p89: "Programmes which undergo external accreditation are exempt from University programme review."

[79] Universities New Zealand Committee on University Academic Programmes, Handbook 2013-2014, p57, advises a "five to 10-year cycle".

All courses must be evaluated after the second offering and thereafter every three years. A template is available to guide this process. Courses which receive less than 70% agreement that the students were satisfied with the quality of the course are flagged for Deans or Academic Heads to require an action plan to be developed.

During the site visit and in the Self-review Report the Panel heard and read of a possible restructure of the University's undergraduate degrees, although the timing of this was uncertain. Action 2.3 of the Learning and Teaching Plan indicates the purpose of a restructure would be to sharpen the focus of higher-level study and to enhance preparation for postgraduate study and employment, as well as to facilitate greater efficiency in teaching and learning. The Panel also learned that a restructure would align degrees more closely with those of the University's Australian benchmark universities. The undergraduate degree was last revised in 2008. As indicated in section 3.2, it is the Panel's view that finalisation of an institutional Graduate Profile is a prerequisite to any redevelopment of this degree.

Examples were provided of stakeholder input to reviews and the Panel was satisfied that the expectations in this Guideline are met.

> *Recommendation:* The Panel **recommends** that the University explore ways of ensuring that programmes which are subject to professional accreditation review are also reviewed regularly for assurance that they deliver general education and non-discipline-specific experiences which align with the institution's Graduate Profile.

3.5 Benchmarking programmes
Universities should use processes for benchmarking curriculum and assessment standards to ensure they are internationally appropriate. (See also 7.4 re thesis assessment)

While the Strategic Plan refers in several places to benchmarking, and to the University's desire to align itself with particular groups of peer institutions, the Plan is silent on curriculum or programme benchmarking other than to state that it needs to ensure that curricula "deliver high quality programmes that meet national needs and international standards in an efficient manner".[80]

The University provided examples of how department and programme reviews are benchmarked, involving people from other institutions. Guidelines for the review of major qualifications state that panels must include two members external to the University of Auckland, one of whom normally will be from another New Zealand university "or eastern Australian university". Elsewhere in the Guidelines it is stated that the list of potential reviewers should include "at least one representative from a *Universitas21* partner".[81] These two statements are not mutually exclusive.[82] During its interviews, the Panel was told that preference is given to use of staff from comparator universities in the Russell Group, Go8 or U21 but programmes can make a case to use reviewers from other

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[80] SP, Objective 7, p11.
[81] Guidelines for Programme Reviews, 2008, pp6-7.
[82] Universitas21 universities in eastern Australia are the University of Melbourne, University of New South Wales and the University of Queensland.

universities. It appeared that acknowledgment of the special status of these university groups was variable among those staff interviewed; in some cases the link with comparator universities was strong and benchmarking activity quite extensive (e.g. curriculum development; student advice; relevant regulations) but in others it was more appropriate for the discipline to use other universities and for some staff the notion of benchmarking appeared limited to occasional meetings with peers from elsewhere. This variability would probably be the case in most New Zealand universities. However, given the particular importance the University of Auckland places on being internationally comparable, it is suggested by the Panel that stronger or more explicit direction might be desirable. This would be assisted by articulation of a formal benchmarking strategy as discussed in Chapter 1.

All research theses are benchmarked externally via the external examination process (see section 7.4).

3.6   Assessment

Universities should use documented procedures for monitoring and moderating assessment processes and standards. (See also 7.4 re thesis assessment)

The University states that "assessment quality is monitored as part of core University quality assurance processes".[83] All student assessment is guided by the Assessment of Student Learning Policy which is intended to ensure that the processes of assessment are carried out in a manner that is fair, valid, robust, manageable and relevant. This policy is supported by the Examination Regulations and the Instructions to Examiners and Assessors. Oversight of assessment is the responsibility of the course co-ordinator. The University provided evidence of regular review of the Assessment of Student Learning Policy and action taken as a follow-up to review.

The Panel explored assessment practice with staff and was satisfied that this reflected normal practice in Australasian universities. No systemic problems were detected in student responses, either to assessment practices or to the communication of assessment requirements, though the desire for more tutorials in some subjects was raised. Students indicated that good processes exist if a student is dissatisfied with an assessment outcome; the University states that there are very few formal appeals related to assessment.[84]

Grades and pass rates are reviewed annually by the Education Committee. Any issues regarding student achievement which are identified are expected to be addressed in faculty-level plans. Department or programme reviews might also identify issues related to assessment.

The Panel considered that the University's processes for managing and monitoring assessment practice and outcomes are sound and noted that the Centre for Learning and Research in Higher Education (CLeaR) is providing support for staff who require assistance with implementing appropriate assessment practices.

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[83] SR, p97.
[84] SR, p97.

The University's website "Peerwise" which supports students in the creation, sharing, evaluation and discussion of assessment questions is noted as a positive initiative.[85]

> **3.7   Equivalence of learning outcomes**
> Universities should have formal mechanisms to ensure that learning outcomes of students in programmes taught on other campuses and/or with partner institutions, including those which are in other countries, meet the standards expected by the university on its home campus.

For the purposes of this audit, the University of Auckland is considered to be a single campus with multiple sites where central University processes apply. The Panel was told that the Bachelor of Teaching (Primary) programmes taught at Manukau Institute of Technology and at the Tai Tokerau campus in Whangarei are managed through the processes employed by the Faculty of Education.

The Bachelor of Education (TESOL) programme which has been taught in Malaysia has been offered in two modes: a University-based mode and a "two-country" model. As noted above, the University's Amendment Guidelines set out the expectations for reviews of programmes delivered off-shore. Given this programme will be no longer taught after 2014 the Panel did not explore equivalence issues any further.

> **3.8   Academic misconduct**
> Universities should use procedures for addressing academic misconduct, including plagiarism and other forms of cheating.

The University's policies and regulations on academic misconduct are set out clearly on the University webpages in the Academic Conduct Statute and Code of Conduct for Research.[86] The University also has a policy on use of advice in course work which sets out the circumstances in which third party input to assessment tasks might be acceptable.[87]

The University has a dedicated Academic Integrity website which covers, *inter alia,* referencing, use of Turnitin and copyright, as well as relevant regulations and policies.[88] Furthermore, from 2014 the University requires all students starting a new programme to take a course on academic integrity. This non-credit online course, introduced in 2013, uses a series of modules and scenarios "designed to increase student knowledge of academic integrity, university rules relating to academic conduct, and the identification and consequences of academic misconduct".[89] It is a University-wide response to the realisation that many beginning students have a weak understanding of referencing, information sourcing and plagiarism and also recognising a significant replication of effort by staff across the University as they addressed this individually in their classes. From late 2014 the course will be available for open access as a MOOC via FutureLearn.

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[85] https://peerwise.cs.auckland.ac.nz/ accessed 18.07.14.

[86] https://policies.auckland.ac.nz/policy-display-register/student-academic-conduct-statute.pdf and
https://policies.auckland.ac.nz/policy-display-register/code-of-conduct-research.pdf accessed 04.07.14.

[87] https://policies.auckland.ac.nz/policy-display-register/third-party-assistance-in-ug-and-pg-coursework-guidelines.pdf accessed 04.07.14.

[88] https://www.auckland.ac.nz/en/about/teaching-learning/academic-integrity.html accessed 04.07.14.

[89] ACADInt A01, 2014 Calendar, p393 and elsewhere.

Both staff and students interviewed appreciated the Academic Integrity Course. The only improvement suggested, by staff, was that the requirement should be that it is completed in the first year of study rather than being a completion requirement for the qualification. The Panel read of one faculty's initiative in identifying first year students who had not yet completed the course and assigning mentors to them to provide encouragement to do so.

> *Commendation:* The Panel **commends** the University on the introduction of a mandatory academic integrity course and on its initiative in making this available for open access.

3.9   Assessment in te reo Māori
Universities should have and, where appropriate, use procedures to facilitate assessment in te reo Māori.

The University's policy on assessment in te reo Māori is accessible via the University's website.[90] The policy states that the University endorses the right of its students with an appropriate level of language fluency to use te reo Māori in course assessments, both for coursework and examinations. It ensures that competent staff will be available to assess work submitted either fully or partially in te reo Māori.

The PhD Statute outlines expectations regarding presentation and examination of a thesis in te reo Māori.[91]

The University states that it has only a "limited number" of requests for assessment in te reo Māori, and that these are usually at postgraduate level.[92]

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[90] https://policies.auckland.ac.nz/policy-display-register/te-reo-Māori -in-teaching-learning-and-assessment-policy.pdf accessed 04.07.14.
[91] https://cdn.auckland.ac.nz/assets/central/for/current-students/postgraduate-students/documents/policies-guidelines-forms/doctoral-policies-guidelines/2011-phd-statute-and-guidelines.pdf accessed 23.07.14
[92] SR, p104. The Panel was told there had been no applications in the last seven years.

4.   Student Engagement and Achievement

This chapter focuses on monitoring and enhancing engagement with study and learning, and on the University's management of potential high achievers and of students at risk of underachieving. Services provided by the University to support student learning are reviewed in Chapter 5.

The University's Strategic Plan states that to assist with achieving "a student body with the highest possible academic potential" (Objective 4) it needs to ensure it provides "the kind of environment, both academic and extracurricular, that is particularly attractive to students of high academic potential". The University also makes clear that students, as well as staff, have a responsibility for engagement.[93]

4.1   Student engagement
Universities should use processes for monitoring and enhancing students' engagement with their study and learning.

At institutional level, the University has used three surveys to monitor student engagement: the Teaching and Learning Survey (TLS); the International Student Barometer (ISB); and the Australasian Survey of Student Engagement (AUSSE). The international surveys have been used to "fine tune" the teaching and learning survey. For example, a relatively low score on active learning experiences from the AUSSE in 2010 prompted the inclusion of more detailed questions on this topic in the TLS. It is unclear, however, whether the subsequent improvement in TLS results reflected actions taken as a result of TLS feedback or the inclusion of more relevant TLS questions.

Both the AUSSE and the ISB enable the University to benchmark student engagement and experience. Results from the ISB are reported to the International Office to initiate any action required. Significant issues identified in the surveys are expected to be addressed in strategic and operational plans. The Panel understood that the AUSSE is about to be terminated by its Australian sponsors. The University appeared to be aware of the need to fill this gap.

Measurement of student achievement is also provided by the University as a proxy for student engagement.[94] The University reports standard achievement data on first year retention, progression, pass rates and qualification completion. These data are available to faculties, departments and schools. A regular review of achievement data is undertaken by the Education Committee.

Other informal mechanisms whereby student engagement can be monitored include the class representative system, surveys of specific activities, focus groups and routine course and teaching evaluations. Groups such as CampusLife undertake their own evaluations of activities intended to enhance student engagement and participation.[95]

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[93] SR, p112; Student Charter, clause 4.5.
[94] SR, p115.
[95] SR, pp113-114.

CampusLife, established in 2010, was described to the Panel as being about providing students with a vibrant university experience and helping them to succeed. In addition to providing pastoral support (see section 5.3), it provides activities intended or expected to provide engagement opportunities for students. The Panel considered the Student Leadership Programme and the Student Volunteer Hub to be excellent initiatives, the latter being the outcome of discussions between staff and students involved in the 360° Leadership Programme. CampusLife is also responsible for orientation activities, for the UniGuides and UniAmbassadors Programme, for activities for international students, and for sports, clubs and other student organisations.[96] The First Year Transition project, looking at local and international best practices as well as student feedback, is also intended to encourage engagement (see section 2.2).

The University has recognised the particular issues of student engagement that are linked to a multiple site, city-based institution with a large percentage of students living at home in the Auckland region. To encourage these students to become engaged with campus life it is paying attention to activities which might involve them (such as sports and clubs).

The CampusLife initiatives are likely to be positive in addressing student needs and providing enhanced extra-curricular activities and a greater sense of student community. While CampusLife provides a series of centrally-driven services, there are also initiatives at faculty level to enhance student engagement.

4.2   Retention and completion
Universities should use processes for assisting the retention, academic success and completion rates for particular groups, including Māori and international students.

The services outlined in section 2.2 to assist with first year transition also serve to assist with retention and academic achievement. Specific programmes to support student learning are provided by Libraries and Learning Services. These include workshops for both undergraduate and postgraduate students focussing on academic writing, time management, referencing, note-taking, reading and thinking skills, and test/exam preparation; specific mathematics workshops; one-on-one tutorials; support groups for students for whom English is not a first language, for students with a learning disability and for Māori and Pacific students.[97] Assistance is also provided on use of the Library and its search engines. The services offered by Student Learning Services were appreciated by students.

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[96] UniAmbassadors are students employed on a casual basis to represent the University and provide directional support for key events. UniGuides are current students who volunteer their time as mentors to welcome new students and assist in creating a positive academic and social transition to university life. The 360° Leadership Programme is a development programme designed for students in their first or second year of study who want to grow their leadership capabilities and apply what they learn in a real world context. See https://www.auckland.ac.nz/en/for/current-students/cs-life-at-auckland/campus-life-2.html accessed 19.07.14.

[97] See also section 7.2 for postgraduate support.

Library and Learning Services host Te Fale Pouawhina programme, which uses kaupapa Māori and Pasifika approaches to learning to provide academic literacy support for students at all levels of study and in the University's outreach programmes.

The Panel was impressed by the Tuākana Learning Community for Māori and Pacific students.[98] This programme has been in place at the University for over twenty years. It is overseen by the Equity Office and is delivered in all faculties to provide pastoral and learning support, including mentoring programmes. It is supported by TEC Equity funding and also by faculty funds. The programme supports objectives related to Māori and Te Tiriti obligations in the University's Strategic Plan. It works on the "buddy system" principle of tuākana/teina (older sibling/younger sibling) and allows that at any time in the learning community the roles of mentor and mentee or expert and learner might be reversed. Small group learning is facilitated, along with linkages to services and other support. The University reports that close to two-thirds of students identified as Māori or Pacific use the programme and that its research indicates improvements in achievement for these students.[99] From its investigations the Panel concluded that the Tuākana programme is well embedded in the University and there is a range of strategies in place for gaining feedback from students, including research projects to monitor achievement of those who participate.

A dedicated website is provided for international students and faculties also have webpages providing specific information for international students.[100] Students who were interviewed commented that international students often need more support than they find easy to access; language and cultural isolation might be a barrier to accessing the services available. At the same time, students warned that providing specialised services just for international students risked isolating them further. DELNA is used as a diagnostic tool for English language but there appears to be a need for a mechanism to ensure that students whose English is shown to be weak then take sufficient action to be able to engage academically.

> *Commendation:* The Panel **commends** the University on its support for Māori and Pacific students, in particular the MAPAS programme and the Tuākana Learning Community and the approach the University has taken to ensuring the Tuākana programme is culturally-relevant, evidence-based and faculty-embedded.

4.3   Feedback to students
Universities should use processes for providing feedback to students on their academic progress (see also 7.3 re thesis students).

The Assessment of Student Learning Policy provides for formative as well as summative assessment. It states that "students will receive their work back with constructive and timely feedback as soon as possible and no later than three teaching weeks after the day the work was handed in or due, whichever is the later" and that "internally assessed tasks which count in a final grade for a course

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[98] See https://www.auckland.ac.nz/en/about/eo-equity-office/eo-tuakana.html accessed 19.07.14.
[99] SR, p115; reference to achievement in Tuākana brochure.
[100] https://www.auckland.ac.nz/en/for/international-students.html accessed 19.07.14.

which has an examination must be marked and available to students before the date of examinations".

Most students who were interviewed by the Panel agreed that the assessment guidelines were met. The University Teaching and Learning Survey asks students if they receive helpful feedback on their learning progress. In 2012, 90% of undergraduate students and 93% of postgraduate coursework students agreed that the feedback they received was useful. Fewer students in 2012 agreed that group work was assessed fairly.[101] The Panel notes that in 2011 the University had undertaken a review of assessment for group work and subsequently removed the limit on the proportion of assessment which could be ascribed to group work. It is not apparent whether the student response in 2012 is related to the 2011 decision.

In addition to normal feedback on individual items of assessment, students may receive feedback on their overall progress through discussion with academic staff or staff at faculty student centres. Students told the Panel that except for some isolated instances, the University is very good at advising students of their academic progress. Students referred to use of Cecil and also the online transcripts available at Student Services Online.

4.4 Under-achieving students

Universities should use processes for identifying and assisting students at risk of under-achieving.

The University's Academic Standing Statute provides for identification of students who fail 50% or more of the points for which they were enrolled as being "at academic risk" (students passing more than 50% points are deemed to be of "good academic standing"). Students deemed at risk are advised of assistance available to them from department or student centre advisers or from the course co-ordinator. The University student website explains the assessment of academic standing and subsequent actions clearly.[102]

A student who is designated as being "at risk" for two semesters is placed on restricted status. Designation of being "at risk" for three semesters makes the student liable for discontinuation. Academic Standing reports may be generated at faculty level, enabling staff to monitor student progress. Faculties are expected to respond to the Education Committee on actions taken to support students not of "good standing". Some faculties have specific requirements for continuation of study and have instituted support activities to address particular impediments to achievement. The University reports that it undertook a significant amount of data analysis as well as benchmarking reviews of Go8 universities before determining the best model to use and the impact of changes in the [former] Unsatisfactory Progress regulations.[103]

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[101] SR, p118.

[102] https://www.auckland.ac.nz/en/for/current-students/cs-academic-information/cs-regulations-policies-and-guidelines/cs-academic-standing.html accessed 20.07.14.

[103] SR, p120.

A number of other mechanisms used in the University for identifying students at risk of under-achieving before such formal review points have been recounted in section 2.2. In particular, the First Year Experience Programme indicates a range of intervention points when students at risk of under-achieving can be identified and assisted.

The Panel is satisfied that the University has adequate procedures in place for identifying and assisting students who might be at risk of not meeting the University's 50% achievement expectation.

4.5   High-achieving students
Universities should use processes for identifying and supporting high-achieving, and/or potentially high-achieving, students.

The University acknowledges that high-achieving students also need support to reach their aspirations. The Learning and Teaching Plan has, as an Action, the development and promotion of "innovative approaches to enhancing the academic challenges available to high performing students, particularly those from general faculties" (Action 3.7), to be achieved by the end of 2015. The University also identifies a challenge in providing increasing amounts of learning support in the increasingly competitive environment.[104] Such support needs to address high achieving students who wish to maximise their potential. The Panel supports the University's endeavours to provide for high-achieving students, while nevertheless giving priority to "closing the gap" for those admitted under the Targeted Admission Scheme.

In addition to institutional scholarships and prizes, faculties have a range of activities intended to reward and encourage these students, including scholarships, awards and prizes, internship and research opportunities, congratulatory letters and promotion of achievements on campus (in newsletters, e-screens, recruitment material, exhibitions, etc.). The Faculty of Engineering offers an accelerated pathway and the Faculty of Science provides for guaranteed entry into some Honours streams.

The Panel heard that there is currently a mismatch between high level student achievement and provision of an adequate number of University scholarships for these students to make the transition to postgraduate study. If the University wishes to increase the number of postgraduate students, then the provision of additional scholarships to help high-achieving undergraduates achieve postgraduate aspirations would appear to be a strategic priority.

The University's new High Performance student support programme provides for students who are high achievers in sport, the arts or cultural activity, as well as academically. It is intended to assist students to maintain their achievements in both academic and non-academic spheres. Annual Blues awards also recognise non-academic achievements.

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[104] SR, p117.

5.   Student Feedback and Support

> ### 5.1   Academic appeals and grievances
> Universities must have policies and/or procedures which they use to address academic appeals and grievances.

Within its Examination regulations, the University has provision for a reconsideration of a grade resulting from an aegrotat application and for recount of examination marks.[105] The Credit regulations include a review and appeal procedure as does the Academic Standing Statute, and PhD regulations include an appeal procedure related to PhD registration and examination.[106] The Appeals Committee of Council includes a student member.

General academic grievances are provided for in the resolution of Student Academic Disputes and Complaints Statute, which covers such matters as alleged unfair treatment by a staff member; disagreements related to research supervision; etc.[107] Students reported that most issues pertaining to an academic grievance are resolved informally at faculty level.

Students indicated uncertainty about the role of the Discipline Committee, suggesting that devolution of authority to faculty level risked inconsistent treatment across the University. Students also told the Panel that there is no student representative involved in faculty-level determinations, whereas the Discipline Committee includes two students, who must be members of Senate. It was suggested that more training would be beneficial for student representatives. The Panel alerts the University to the concern and to the possibility of misunderstanding about discipline processes.

The "AskAuckland" facility on the University's website provides simple access and clear responses to questions such as "how do I appeal an aegrotat decision?". The Panel is satisfied that the University's statutes incorporating appeals or relating to grievances or discipline issues are clear.

> ### 5.2   Learning support
> Universities should provide opportunity for all students to access appropriate learning support services, including specialised learning support services for international students and others with particular needs. (See also 4.2 and 5.4)

In addition to the learning support services provided by the University recounted in sections 2.2 and 4.2, specific services for students with learning disabilities are highlighted, along with services to improve English language.

The Learning Disabilities programme within Student Learning Services provides assistance for students with a wide range of conditions. For many of these (such as brain injury, mental health or

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[105] www.calendar.auckland.ac.nz/regulations/academic/examination.html accessed 04.07.14.

[106] www.calendar.auckland.ac.nz/regulations/academic/credit.html;
www.calendar.auckland.ac.nz/regulations/doctoral/PhD.html accessed 04.07.14.

[107] https://policies.auckland.ac.nz/policy-display-register/resolution-of-student-academic-disputes-and-complaints-statute.pdf.

sensory impairment) individual consultations are available to identify resources which might assist. For other conditions, workshops in the Academic Pathways Programme might target challenges such as handwriting and learning styles.

As already reported, the University uses DELNA to screen and diagnose English language competency for all new students. Students requiring assistance to develop their competency may access English Language Enrichment services offered by Student Learning Services, or may take relevant credit courses in Applied Language Studies and Linguistics. DELNA is under ongoing student and institutional evaluation. The University reports that in 2012, 95% of first year respondents were satisfied with the services available to help them improve their English language skills. However the Panel was concerned to read that in 2012 only 56% of those non-doctoral students who were recommended to do the diagnostic step after screening complied (100% of doctoral students complied). If this proportion is typical, the Panel encourages the University to explore ways of encouraging more students to take this step and, if appropriate, access English language support. The English Language Enrichment service is available to all students, through a drop-in centre at the city campus or through ELE Online for students accessing it from elsewhere.[108]

Subject Librarians and Student Learning Advisers take a collaborative approach with academic staff to embed academic literacy into courses.

The University reports various means of evaluating effectiveness of its learning support activities.[109] It is noted that from 2016 all domestic students applying for admission will be required to meet an Academic English requirement and that those who do not do so will be admitted conditional on passing an academic English language course.

Students reported favourably on the requirement that lectures with more than 100 attendees be recorded, identifying the benefits to students who are disabled, sick or otherwise unable to be on campus. They considered the risk that recording becoming the norm would discourage students from on-campus attendance is minimal.

5.3   Personal support and safety
Universities must provide safe and inclusive campus environments and should provide opportunity for all students to access appropriate pastoral and social support services.

As well as a high quality learning environment (Objective 7), the University includes in its Strategic Plan the Objective of providing a "distinctive, high quality extracurricular experience" (Objective 8) and "a safe and healthy environment" (Objective 17).

The development of CampusLife has been focussed on bringing together services which will help achieve these strategic objectives. The wide range of social, pastoral and personal support services available reflect those of most universities in New Zealand and elsewhere, including for example,

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[108] See www.library.auckland.ac.nz/services/student-learning/ele accessed 20.07.14.
[109] SR, p131.

Halls of Residence which have resident advisers; Accommodation Solutions Advisory Service for non-campus accommodation; childcare, parent rooms and breastfeeding facilities; health, counselling, recreation and religious facilities and services; sport, recreation and clubs; services to support career development and employment.[110]

Students reported satisfaction with health and counselling services, though some reported lengthy delays in accessing counselling services at peak times. Childcare provision was appreciated by students. A plea was made for improved campus lighting to reduce potential risk to safety. The University has a policy on the prevention of bullying and harassment, and has dispute resolution services. Unisafe staff provide a 24/7 security service and the Unisafe website provides guidance on how to prevent, manage and respond to a range of personal safety and security events, including aggression, threats to safety and suspicious activity.[111] Students were somewhat unclear about the role of the new Proctor position, though it is outlined clearly on the student webpages.[112]

The Panel was interested in how the University is negotiating its relationship with AUSA (Auckland University Students' Association) given the recent voluntary student union membership legislation. While student union membership was voluntary at Auckland since 1999, prior to the legislation, changes as a result of the 2011 legislation have affected the categories of student services for which universities are responsible. The Panel heard of some tension between AUSA and the University regarding responsibilities which had been assigned to CampusLife. The Panel heard that while AUSA might have lost some of its independence regarding the running of student events it had, on the other hand, gained a degree of financial security. The Panel concluded that the University was aware of tensions, many of which had already been resolved, and it was actively managing any ongoing issues to ensure positive outcomes for students.

Specialised support services for Māori and Pacific students have been recounted in sections 2.2 and 4.2. The University has a marae (Waipapa Marae) in the city and also at Epsom campus. It also has a Fale Pasifika.

Efforts to ensure an inclusive environment at the University of Auckland are a responsibility of the Equity Office. Faculties also demonstrate a commitment to equity and inclusiveness through dedicated webpages and support.[113] The University offers several specialised services for students with disabilities, for example interpreters for deaf people, specialised spaces, and a planned Braille map of the campus. All faculties have a designated disability liaison staff member. In 2012, over 700 students were supported by Disability Services. In conjunction with AUSA, the University has established a network, a dedicated safe space and dedicated webpage for lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and intersex staff and students. Excellence in Equity Awards established by the University aim to acknowledge and stimulate equity-focused research, teaching and learning and to support the University's equity objectives in the Strategic Plan. These awards are a good initiative.

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[110] See SR, pp134-135; https://www.auckland.ac.nz/en/for/current-students/cs-student-support-and-services.html accessed 20.07.14.

[111] http://www.science.auckland.ac.nz/en/for/current-students-4/health-and-safety/emergency-response-and-management/personal-safety_1.html accessed 20.07.14.

[112] https://www.auckland.ac.nz/en/for/current-students/cs-student-support-and-services/cs-personal-support/proctor.html accessed 20.07.14.

[113] See, for example, http://www.education.auckland.ac.nz/en/about/equity.html accessed 20.07.14.

The Panel was satisfied that the University has very good support services to ensure a safe and inclusive environment for its staff and students.

5.4   Support on other campuses
Universities should have formal mechanisms to ensure appropriate learning and pastoral support is provided for students in programmes taught on other campuses and/or with partner institutions, including those which are in other countries.

As indicated in section 3.7, the Panel regarded the University of Auckland as a single campus in the Auckland area, as students and staff on satellite sites are within commuting distance of the main City site. The Self-review Report lists a range of services available on satellite sites, including online services. The Panel understands that support at Tai Tokerau in Whangarei is more limited and that some services might not be available on a daily basis.

Tailored workshops have been provided to students studying in Malaysia.

5.5   Feedback from students
Universities should use processes for gaining feedback on student satisfaction with teaching, courses and student services and should be able to demonstrate that feedback is used to inform improvement initiatives. (See also 7.5 re thesis students)

Institutional mechanisms for gaining student feedback are outlined in section 4.1. In addition to these (TLS; AUSSE; ISB) the Doctoral Exit Survey (DES) and Library Client Surveys are augmented by specific focus groups, surveys and other forms of consultation conducted by student support services. The Vice-Chancellor's Student Consultative Group and faculty, school and department-based initiatives are also avenues for feedback on student concerns (see also section 1.3).

The University responded to a Cycle 4 audit recommendation to develop a "one-stop-shop" approach to soliciting feedback by introducing an "Improving the Student Experience" website which is monitored by the office of the DVC (Academic) and the Teaching and Learning Quality Committee, and which includes updates on responses to student feedback.[114] The information on this website should, in turn, be useful feedback to students. The University suggests that its Student Communication Plan might be used to improve student understanding of the ways in which their feedback is responded to.[115]

The University's website for international students includes a summary of the University's obligations under the Code of Practice for Pastoral Care of International Students and advises students of their avenues for reporting any instances where they believe the Code might have been breached.[116]

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[114] https://www.auckland.ac.nz/en/about/teaching-learning/improving-the-student-experience.html accessed 20.07.14.
[115] SR, p142.
[116] https://www.auckland.ac.nz/en/for/international-students/is-life-at-auckland/is-student-support-and-services/is-specialised-support-for-international-students/is-code-of-practice.html accessed 19.07.14.

5.6   Feedback from graduates

Universities should use processes for gaining feedback from graduates regarding their satisfaction with their university experience and learning outcomes and should be able to demonstrate that this feedback is used.

While individual faculties, departments and schools might gather feedback from graduates, either directly or through programme reviews, the University has no institutional mechanism for doing this. It acknowledges this and proposes to monitor a graduate destination survey administered by the Faculty of Business and Economics to consider whether it might be adopted institution-wide.

The Panel supports this proposal, noting that graduate feedback is increasingly important not just to indicate overall satisfaction with a graduate's university experience, but also for assessment of employability and an understanding of graduation destinations.

6. Teaching Quality

The University of Auckland aspires to be "a community of highly accomplished and well supported academic and professional staff" in which there are clear expectations and development of staff potential, inclusiveness and high achievement. The University aims to foster a high level of engagement of staff and to celebrate success.[117] It is committed to the research-informed development of teaching practice.

The new Leadership Framework provides a background to the University's expectation that staff will provide leadership in their activities, at all levels as appropriate to their role and position (see section 1.1).

6.1 Staff recruitment and induction
Universities' processes for recruitment and induction should ensure that all teaching staff are appropriately qualified, according to the level(s) at which they will be teaching (i.e. degree level; postgraduate; sub-degree) and that all teaching staff receive assistance to become familiar with their university's academic expectations.

In 2013 the University reported a staff profile as (FTE):[118]

Academic	2,131
Professional service staff	2,778
Total staff	4,909

Permanent appointments are managed by Faculty Staffing Committees (academic staff below professor) or by the faculty Human Resources Advisor under the authority of the HR Director and the Vice-Chancellor, using separate search panels and interview panels (professorial appointments). The procedures documented in respective policies are comprehensive and clear.[119] Other appointment and employment policies are available on the staff intranet.

Since 2012, the University has been in the process of developing and introducing a new set of "Academic Standards" as the criteria for academic staff appointment, continuing employment and promotion. The standards are aligned to the Strategic Plan in that they address teaching, research and creative work, and service and leadership. Particular standards are to be seen as indicative thresholds, not as rigid barriers. Performance above expectations in one area may compensate for lesser performance in another, provided that performance in each area is considered to be satisfactory and that there is evidence of on-going progress and sustained achievements. The statement on Academic Standards defines performance or achievement in each of the three areas of responsibility and for each level of academic appointment. Reference is also made to different discipline areas and different kinds of activity such as co-teaching. For example, professors are

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[117] SP, Objective 2, p7.
[118] Annual Report 2013, p8.
[119] https://policies.auckland.ac.nz/policy-display-register/appointment-permanent-professor.pdf accessed 21.07.14.

expected to "show evidence of international eminence in their field" and the policy statement provides examples of how this "international eminence" might be displayed.[120] The new framework was first used in 2013 for that promotion round for staff on individual employment agreements.

The University's Staff Orientation and Induction Policy states that "Staff joining the University *must* participate in an effective orientation and induction programme so that they understand the institution, their work environment, and their role and responsibilities" (emph. added).[121]

New staff induction is managed by the People and Organisational Development (POD) unit of HR. The Managers and Academic Heads Guide for Inducting New Staff provides guidelines on what to consider when inducting new staff at the University of Auckland. Orientation activities include a marae welcome and prior advice on marae protocol, as well as compulsory workshops covering Research and Teaching; Doctoral Policy and Processes; Graduate Research Supervision and an Introduction to University Teaching and Learning which are provided by the Centre for Learning and Research in Higher Education, CLeaR (see section 6.3). Each new appointee also has a personal induction plan which covers introduction to the University, to the department, school or faculty and to their position.

In response to feedback from staff, and after exploring induction systems offered in benchmark (Go8) universities, the University of Auckland has recently introduced an induction process which commences when an appointment is confirmed and flows through into post-arrival induction. The new "RedCarpet" portal requires new appointees to become familiar with University policies and complete various activities before progressing to new ones, thereby providing assurance to the University that key processes which previously were reliant on individual discretion are actually addressed before an applicant arrives on campus. At the time of the audit, HR staff reported very positive reaction from new staff and from staff managers to this tool.

> *Affirmation:* The Panel **affirms** the University's new Academic Standards policy as a defining document to clarify performance and responsibility expectations of academic staff at all levels and for appointment, performance evaluation, continuation and promotion purposes.

> *Affirmation:* The Panel **affirms** the University's initiative in implementing the RedCarpet online portal for new staff, whereby they may engage with University induction experiences from the time of confirmation of appointment.

6.2   Research-active staff
Universities' workload management processes should ensure that degree-level students are taught mainly by staff who are research-active.

The University's lecturers, senior lecturers, associate professors and professors are expected to be

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[120] The University of Auckland "Academic Standards", March 2013.
[121] https://policies.auckland.ac.nz/policy-display-register/staff-orientation-and-induction-policy.pdf accessed 04.07.14.

research-active. Staff in the staff grades of tutor or professional teaching fellow are not expected to be research-active. These staff teach under the supervision of course directors.[122]

In March 2010 the Vice-Chancellor outlined in a statement to all staff the importance of research-informed teaching to the University. His statement included the expectation that the teaching in all degree and postgraduate programmes should be led by staff who are active in research. Subsequently, teaching staff who were not research-active were required to be supervised by staff who were. These expectations have since been incorporated into the new Academic Standards (see section 6.1).

The University advised that 23% of staff fell into the "teaching-only" category, with some variation across faculties which might be explained by the designation of some professional tutors (for example clinical tutors) as non-research.[123]

Each teaching unit is expected to have a workload model which might be guided by a faculty model or guidelines. The Panel explored a range of models from different parts of the University. It found that these ranged from the 40/40/20 model which is the University guideline (teaching/research/service or administration) to quite complex algorithms. The Panel noted that models were assumed to apply over a three year cycle to allow for some annual variation in activity; some variation is also permitted for individuals holding senior administrative roles. The Panel found no evidence that any particular model was more or less robust in its outcome than were other models and those staff who were interviewed appeared to accept any differences between departments or schools as appropriate. Staff spoken to seemed to be aware of the University's expectations and of norms within their discipline regarding the links between research and teaching.[124] It is also noted that in some disciplines consideration is also given to teaching staff being "practice-informed" because of the discipline's professional orientation. No particular concerns were identified by the Panel.

6.3   Teaching quality

Universities should use processes for assessing teaching quality and for monitoring and enhancing individual teaching capability of all teaching staff. (See also 6.5, and 7.1 re thesis supervision).

The Learning and Teaching Quality: Enhancement and Assurance Framework sets out a range of ways in which teaching quality is monitored.[125] Academic Performance Review is one strategy. That policy states that "All academic staff, whether full-time or part-time, on permanent appointments or limited term appointments of twelve months or more are entitled to and must be provided with an

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[122] SR, p146.

[123] SR, p146. The data provided in the Self-review Report appeared to imply that a larger proportion of teaching staff fell into a "teaching-only" category. This was corrected by the University.

[124] This discussion relates mainly to undergraduate and taught postgraduate teaching. See section 7 regarding thesis supervision.

[125] https://cdn.auckland.ac.nz/assets/central/about/teaching-and-learning/teaching-and-learning-quality-assurance/documents/Learning%20and%20Teaching%20Quality%20Enhancement%20and%20Assurance%20Framework%20FINAL.pdf p7, accessed 22.07.14.

Academic Performance Review." The policy outlines the procedures to be used in undertaking reviews.[126]

The Academic Performance Review Policy is to be reviewed in 2014 to align it with the Academic Standards Policy. The latter Policy sets out clear expectations regarding teaching responsibilities for each academic staff grade. For example, a senior lecturer might be expected to take a leadership role in developing courses, or an associate professor in mentoring early career teachers. A statement on teaching quality in this policy refers to "teaching and supervision that is intellectually challenging, well-informed by relevant research, and takes account of evidence from students to increase student understanding [and engagement]".[127] Evidence for promotion is to be submitted in a teaching portfolio and should include evidence of how reflection on the learning and achievement experiences of the applicant's students has been used to inform their teaching practice. Resources to support staff in undertaking evaluations of their teaching are available through the University's Guidelines for Enhancement and Evaluation of Teaching and Courses and from the Centre for Learning and Research in Higher Education (CLeaR).

At an institutional level, teaching evaluations are required for all new staff by the end of their second year of teaching, and for continuing staff are required every three years. Non-continuing and part-time staff are also assessed via the course and teaching evaluations. The course review process, which includes a review of the curriculum, might also be used to assess teaching quality. As already noted, where there is less than 70% student satisfaction with a course, this is followed up by the DVC (Academic) with the relevant Dean and/or Academic Head.

From 2014, all promotion applications to professor or associate professor must include a report from a peer review team which includes a senior faculty member and a senior staff member from CLeaR. The Panel was impressed with this triangulated approach to teaching evaluation. While it is evident from policy documents that evaluation for promotion requires such attention to be paid to teaching, it was not clear to the Panel the extent to which peer evaluation is used for routine performance review. Staff whose teaching fails to meet an expected standard are addressed through the formal Academic Performance Review process.[128]

The University's Policy on Enhancement and Evaluation of Teaching and Courses states that multiple strands of evaluation feedback are required to build and enhance teaching strategies and course delivery. The combination of processes outlined above is a good model for achieving this objective.

> *Affirmation:* The Panel **affirms** the University's model for evaluating teaching whereby triangulation is possible from attention to self-reflection, peer assessment and student evaluation.

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[126] https://policies.auckland.ac.nz/policy-display-register/academic-performance-review.pdf accessed 04.07.14.
[127] Academic Standards, p20.
[128] SR, p151.

> **6.4   Teaching development**
> Universities should provide opportunities for staff to develop their teaching practice, including application of contemporary pedagogical research, use of learning management systems and use of new technologies.

The Learning and Teaching Quality: Enhancement and Assurance Framework and the Academic Staff Professional Development Policy indicate the University's commitment to assisting staff to enhance their teaching capability. The latter policy stipulates that "appropriate professional development is to be available to all staff". It states that responsibility for encouraging the growth of, and participation in, professional development activities rests with Deans of Faculties and Academic Heads.[129] The Learning and Teaching Plan also proposes several "Actions" intended to "develop the University's capacity in the scholarship of teaching and learning…".[130] The Panel supports these intentions. It would like to see more specific targets and timelines evolving from them.

The Centre for Learning and Research in Higher Education, established in 2013, is the main institutional service to assist staff in developing their teaching and exploring innovative practices. CLeaR provides a range of workshops, seminars and resources, fosters collaboration with academic staff, facilitates communities of practice and undertakes pedagogical research.[131] Learning Enhancement Grants, funded by the Vice-Chancellor's Office, are available to support various innovative projects. CLeaR staff work closely with academic staff, staff of Libraries and Learning Services and staff in the People and Organisations unit of Human Resources. It provides support to staff on the use of the learning management system Cecil and on CourseBuilder which enables staff to create individual course websites.[132] CLeaR pays attention to the specific needs of Māori staff.[133] It also trains staff who will undertake peer assessment of teaching (see section 6.3 above).

CLeaR offers a structured approach to developing the capability of new staff. From the induction workshop required of all new appointees, CLeaR offers CLeaR LighTs - Leadership in Teaching in which participants develop an individual learning plan around a specific theme for the year and participate in a range of related activities during the year, including short courses, short seminars, symposia, and a mini-MOOC. The CLeaR LighTs programme bridges the gap between the Introduction to University Teaching and Learning and the Postgraduate Certificate in Academic Practice tertiary teaching qualification. CLeaR offers academic development bursaries to assist staff wishing to enrol in the certificate. While the numbers completing the certificate had been relatively small, the Panel heard that staff who had done the programme were enthusiastic about it and in some cases became "trailblazers" in their teaching practice.

Each year eight staff (one from each faculty) are provided with CLeaR Fellowships to enable them to have time buy-out during which they form a multi-disciplinary team focusing on a key University teaching and learning priority. The team's achievements, intended to inform and encourage

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[129] https://policies.auckland.ac.nz/policy-display-register/academic-staff-professional-development.pdf accessed 22.07.14.
[130] Learning and Teaching Plan, section 3, pp9-10; section 6, pp16-17.
[131] https://www.clear.auckland.ac.nz/en.html?p=na_staff accessed 22.07.14.
[132] SR, pp153-156.
[133] https://www.clear.auckland.ac.nz/en/Māori -academics.html accessed 22.07.14.

colleagues to try out innovative methods, are disseminated through various showcases, feedback to their faculties, and as a collection of teaching cases in print and digital format.

The Panel heard that the placement of CLeaR within the Faculty of Education, but with ring-fenced funding, helped give the unit an academic identity and also imbued it with a research ethos appropriate to informed pedagogical development. The Panel considered this to be an effective organisational model.

CLeaR undertakes evaluations of its activities and has been involved in the development of institutional evaluation processes. Staff interviewed by the Panel reported favourably on the CLeaR activities in which they had participated and academic heads endorsed the training available for tutors. However the Panel was told that in some schools staff preferred to get assistance that they needed locally rather than from the central service. It was not certain whether such local assistance will continue to be available once the FAR has been completed.

The main issue identified by the Panel with respect to professional development of staff related to encouragement to explore innovative technologies in teaching practice. It appeared to the Panel that CLeaR was encouraging and able to assist but that impediments, if such existed, are at department and school level and tend to be in the nature of peer resistance. This has been discussed further in section 1.4. The risk that teaching quality will be affected by uneven staff engagement with teaching technologies is recognised by the University.[134] Actions under Section 6 of the Learning and Teaching Plan are intended to address this risk. As noted in section 1.4, the Panel encourages close attention to be paid to implementation of these Actions.

> *Affirmation:* The Panel **affirms** the work of CLeaR and the wide range of services it offers to staff and postgraduate students, and in particular the Panel endorses the research ethos underpinning CLeaR's work in developing teaching and learning.

6.5   Teaching support on other campuses
Universities should have formal mechanisms to ensure appropriate teaching support is provided for staff in programmes taught on other campuses and/or with partner institutions, including those which are in other countries.

The University's teaching support services outlined above are available to staff at all sites, whether through online activities or by personal support from CLeaR staff.[135]

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[134] SR, p157.
[135] SR, p158.

> **6.6   Teaching recognition**
>
> Universities' reward processes (promotion; special awards) should recognise teaching capability.

In addition to the promotion processes referred to in section 6.1, the University proactively recognises and rewards excellent teaching in a number of ways, including both faculty and University teaching awards and nomination for national awards; recognition in the Vice-Chancellor's reports; receipt of CLeaR fellowships and participation in CLeaR showcase events. Despite this, the Panel heard of a perception that persists amongst academic staff that the University values teaching less than research. The revised Academic Standards should assist in addressing this perception.[136] The Learning and Teaching Plan also identifies actions that might be taken to help profile innovative practice and to recognise staff who excel in teaching and pedagogical development.[137]

Staff mentioned that those who have graduated from the Postgraduate Certificate in Academic Practice are recognised, as contributors to CLeaR programmes, within faculties and through involvement in teaching and learning projects. Some have gone on to receive teaching awards.

The Panel is satisfied that the University has appropriate mechanisms in place to reward staff who demonstrate excellent teaching capability.

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[136] SR, p160.
[137] Learning and Teaching Plan, pp14-15.

7.   Supervision of Research Students

This chapter focuses only on research students, i.e. master's thesis and doctoral students. Responses from taught master's and honours students who were interviewed have been incorporated into previous sections.

In 2013 the University of Auckland had 10,592 postgraduate students of whom 2,432 were doctoral students.[138] Research student EFTS were 1,776 doctoral and 712 master's; 849 research postgraduate EFTS were international students, 104 Māori and 95 Pacific students.[139] While the University's student profile strategy refers to a future increase in postgraduate numbers, the bulk of the increase is intended to be in taught postgraduate programmes and predominantly from international enrolments. A slight increase in doctoral enrolments is envisaged.[140] However any increase in postgraduate research students has implications for the areas reviewed in this chapter. It is also noted that recent growth is partly a consequence of the domestic fees policy for international students and future growth is therefore also vulnerable to any changes in that policy.[141]

The University also aspires to "a substantial increase in annual completions of taught masters, research masters and doctorates" (Strategic Plan, Objective 6). Over the last three years the number of completions within these categories have been 1,710 (2011), 1,888 (2012), 1,711 (2013) with average proportions of postgraduate completions being 34% taught master's, 48% research master's and 18% doctorates.[142] The University's objective for 2020 is to have a total of 2,850 students with a doubling of completions for taught master's, a 25% increase in research master's and a 50% increase in doctorates.[143] The Self-review Report states that doctoral completions within 5 years were 48% in 2009 but have since been steady at 57%, while the average time to completion has improved from 4.2 years in 2009 to 4.0 years in 2012.[144]

The Panel notes that postgraduate activities are routinely benchmarked with comparator universities, in particular with Universitas21, Australian Go8 and with Association of Pacific Rim Universities. The Self-review Report provided examples of initiatives where this had occurred.[145]

The Board of Graduate Studies (BoGS), a committee of Senate, has responsibility to advise on postgraduate study, undertake administrative matters relating to thesis research, scholarships, prizes and awards, to oversee thesis examinations and to collate and report on relevant statistics. The School of Graduate Studies has overall responsibility for the development and oversight of policies and procedures for graduate programmes and for advocacy for graduate students. The School provides information and administrative services to all prospective and current postgraduate students. The Dean of Graduate Studies chairs the Board of Graduate Studies.

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[138] SR, p71.
[139] SR, p180.
[140] SP, Objective 5, p9.
[141] SR, p164.
[142] Calculated from 2013 Annual Report, p33.
[143] Calculated from Strategic Plan p10.
[144] SR, pp175; 180.
[145] SR, p164.

> **7.1   Qualification of supervisors**
>
> Universities should use documented processes for ensuring staff supervising research students
> are appropriately trained and experienced as supervisors, including processes to enable new or
> inexperienced staff to gain experience as supervisors.

Supervisors of PhD students are appointed by the Board of Graduate Studies, BoGS. Master's
supervisors are appointed by the Head of School or Department. All supervisors must be accredited.
To reach and to maintain accreditation they must hold at least a master's degree or equivalent
research or professional experience (for master's supervision) or a doctoral degree or other
appropriate qualification and experience (for doctoral supervision) and be engaged in research.
While it is recognised that doctoral qualifications have not traditionally been an academic
expectation in some professional disciplines, the Panel is nevertheless concerned if a legacy of
allowing staff without a higher degree to supervise master's research students persists in disciplines
where doctorates are the norm.

Doctoral supervisors must have attended a CLeaR doctoral orientation seminar and then attend a
doctoral briefing every five years. Main supervisors must have prior experience of co-supervision
and it is advised that new master's supervisors should be mentored by a senior supervisor before
becoming a main supervisor.[146] In addition to a main supervisor, doctoral students must have either
a co-supervisor or an advisory team.[147] Supervisors must be actively involved in research in the
candidate's general field.[148] The register of eligible supervisors is maintained by the Graduate
Centre.

The Panel was told there are few problems in ensuring staff attend the mandatory orientation
before becoming eligible to supervise. However there are currently no formal processes for
removing an unsatisfactory supervisor from the register but if such a situation occurred the first step
would be to escalate a concern to the Academic Head or relevant faculty Dean to identify
appropriate professional development for the staff member.

A University website is devoted to supervision, "why it is important, how to do it well and how to
resolve problems" and contains a number of resources for staff.[149] CLeaR, in collaboration with the
Dean of Graduate Studies, provides various workshops for supervisors and potential supervisors.
Staff spoke positively of these workshops.

The University limits postgraduate supervision to normally six full-time equivalent (FTE) research
students at any one time and has guidelines indicating how this load might be calculated (in terms of

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[146] https://cdn.auckland.ac.nz/assets/central/for/current-students/postgraduate-
students/documents/policies-guidelines-forms/doctoral-policies-guidelines/accreditation-of-
supervisors.pdf accessed 22.07.14.

[147] Senate Guidelines on Thesis Supervision.

[148] https://cdn.auckland.ac.nz/assets/central/for/current-students/postgraduate-
students/documents/policies-guidelines-forms/doctoral-policies-guidelines/2011-phd-statute-and-
guidelines.pdf accessed 23.07.14.

[149] https://www.auckland.ac.nz/en/for/current-students/cs-current-pg/cs-current-pg-policies/cs-pg-
supervision-tools.html accessed 22.07.14.

thesis weighting and co-supervision) as well as the circumstances where it might be exceeded.[150] The University recognises that one of the challenges which will emanate from any increase in the numbers of research postgraduate students will be the need to ensure adequate supervision can be maintained.

7.2   Resourcing of research students

Universities should use documented processes for ensuring research students are appropriately resourced to do their research.

Since 2011 all new doctoral candidates have been required to undertake DELNA English Language screening as part of their provisional goals. From 2013 they are also required to complete the Academic Integrity Module. Postgraduate students who were interviewed saw these tests as useful requirements. A Doctoral Skills programme is offered by Student Learning Services in Libraries and Learning Services.[151] The University has also piloted an induction programme for international doctoral students, aimed at building cohorts of students who may use seminars to explore issues they face as well as topics such as how to work with a supervisor or how to undertake a literature review. Feedback from early cohorts had been very positive.

Along with sufficient supervisors, adequate scholarship support will be an increasing challenge if the University grows its postgraduate numbers as it wishes to. The University currently provides around 140 new doctoral scholarships and 50 new master's scholarships a year, as well as some faculty scholarships. Some students felt that a focus on providing scholarships for international students risked depriving deserving domestic students. Students also commented on the difficulty of obtaining scholarships given the competitive situation with cohorts of very high achievers applying. Some alternative support is available for postgraduate students as tutors or working in the Library.

Doctoral students have available to them a sum of money to assist with their research. These "PReSS" accounts (Postgraduate Research Student Support Accounts) are available to doctoral candidates for up to four years of study. Funds are administered by the School of Graduate Studies and use of funds is overseen by the Dean of Graduate Studies. The University is aware that administration of accounts needs to improve so that reporting can be integrated with other student systems – lack of such integration makes analysis and reporting difficult.[152] Students reported favourably on the provision of PReSS accounts and the use which can be made of them.

In addition to the PReSS accounts, the Tuākana Contestable Fund supports Māori and Pacific postgraduate students or potential postgraduate students to attend conferences, wānanga, fono or symposia.

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[150] https://cdn.auckland.ac.nz/assets/central/for/current-students/postgraduate-students/documents/supervision-tools/postgraduate-supervision-limits.pdf accessed 22.07.14.

[151] See http://www.library.auckland.ac.nz/student-learning/index.php?p=slc_city_postgraduate for resources offered by Library Learning services. Accessed 22.07.14.

[152] SR, pp167-168.

Expectations of resource support for postgraduate students are laid out in the Guidelines on Resources and Support for Doctoral Students.[153] Departments and schools are expected to provide the basic necessities for a student to do their research. The availability and quality of facilities and resources for doctoral students is monitored on an ongoing basis in the Doctoral Exit Survey to ensure that appropriate resources are provided. Libraries and Learning Services provide access to resources for doctoral students on the same basis as for University staff. A wide variety of learning resources for postgraduate students is listed on the Libraries and Learning Services website.[154] The responsiveness of the Library to postgraduate needs was praised by interviewees. Staff indicated that growth in postgraduate enrolments could place increased pressure on laboratory and desk space notwithstanding the University's capital plans, which they acknowledged.

In addition to the services and resources outlined above, the University provides several opportunities for postgraduate students to prepare for future careers or employment, such as the Doctoral Academic Careers Module; workshops run by Career Development and Employment Services; teaching development workshops for students who are employed as tutors; competitions and awards for high-achieving doctoral students.[155] The Panel supports the proposed initiative to develop a programme of internships to support non-academic career paths for PhD graduates.[156]

The University considers that its support for postgraduate students is a strength. Its evaluation is supported by responses in the Doctoral Exit Survey (see section 7.5 below). Students reported favourably on the resources (PReSS accounts; workshops and seminars; department facilities and sometimes access to research funds) though they noted that master's students are ineligible for PReSS account money. The Panel considers that the communication and allocation of resources is currently appropriate but will need to be monitored closely if postgraduate enrolments increase significantly.

> *Commendation:* The Panel **commends** the University on the extensive range of resources and support services it makes available for doctoral students.

7.3   Research supervision
Universities should use documented processes for ensuring supervision of research students is effective and that student progress and support are appropriately monitored.

The Senate Guidelines on Thesis Supervision address the respective responsibilities of student and supervisor and advise on avenues to follow in the case of a dispute related to supervision. The Guidelines also provide links to other documents intended to assist students and supervisors, for example, the Guide to Theses and Dissertations.

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[153] https://cdn.auckland.ac.nz/assets/central/for/current-students/postgraduate-students/documents/policies-guidelines-forms/doctoral-policies-guidelines/resources-phd-research.pdf 22.07.14.

[154] www.library.auckland.ac.nz/student-learning/index.php?p=resources_for_postgraduates accessed 22.07.14.

[155] SR, p174.

[156] Enhancement 8, SR, p175.

The Guidelines spell out the various steps and milestones in the research process for both master's and doctoral students. These specify that master's students, with their supervisors, should review progress after three months' research, and must submit a formal progress report after six months (or 12 months if part-time). Doctoral students undertake reviews with their main supervisors after six and twelve months; they are also required to submit an annual formal report. Avenues for addressing problems with supervision are clear.[157]

The Panel was concerned to hear that reporting on thesis supervision is paper-based, meaning it is possible that neither party's comments might be confidential. Processing is unnecessarily complex and slower than it would be if done electronically; paper-based systems do not lend themselves to analysing trends easily. There is also a risk factor in relying on potentially destructible paper-based systems. Staff reported the need to scan documents for electronic storage, involving additional time and risking inconsistent procedures across the University. The Panel urges the University to move rapidly to adopting electronic processes for completion, reporting, confirmation and storage of supervision reports. It is acknowledged that alternative avenues exist for recording confidential comments (e.g. drop-in appointments; email) but these do not alleviate the Panel's concerns.

> *Recommendation:* The Panel **recommends** that the University implements electronic systems for eliciting, completing, disseminating and storing student and supervisor reports on research supervision in order to mitigate the risks associated with a paper-based system and to better facilitate institution-wide analysis.

7.4   Thesis examination
Universities' thesis examination processes should ensure thesis standards are internationally benchmarked.

All doctoral theses are submitted electronically. The Statute and Guidelines for the Degree of Doctor of Philosophy encompasses all requirements for PhD thesis examination.[158] The regulations stipulate that theses must meet "internationally recognised standards for such work". Evaluation of this requirement is assisted by the inclusion of at least one examiner who is external to New Zealand; the second PhD examiner must be external to the University but may be from New Zealand. PhD examiners may not be staff members of the University, or have been involved in the research or preparation of the thesis. Examiners are nominated by the Head of Department or School (unless that person was a supervisor) and are approved by the Board of Graduate Studies. The Board of Graduate Studies also appoints an examination committee normally comprising the Academic Head, faculty Associate Dean (Postgraduate) and a staff member familiar with the general field of the thesis topic who will oversee the examination process, including any oral examination, and deliberate on the outcome after receiving the examiners' reports.

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[157] See https://cdn.auckland.ac.nz/assets/stat/for/current-students/documents/pathways-for-dealing-with-problems-in-supervision.pdf accessed 23.07.14.

[158] https://cdn.auckland.ac.nz/assets/central/for/current-students/postgraduate-students/documents/policies-guidelines-forms/doctoral-policies-guidelines/2011-phd-statute-and-guidelines.pdf accessed 23.07.14.

Guidelines for the Appointment of Examiners of Doctoral and Masters Theses address the management of conflict of interest and provide more detail on appointment of examiners, for instance stating that PhD examiners may not normally have been involved in any substantial research collaboration with any of the candidate's supervisory team within the last 5 years.[159] The University also has separate comprehensive Guidelines for Examiners and Guidelines for Oral Examinations. Requirements for the submission and examination of master's theses are outlined in regulations for each degree.[160] For master's theses at least one examiner must be external to the University; supervisors may not examine their own students.

As outlined in the Statute and associated Guidelines, the University appears to have very robust examination processes in place. Staff reported that procedures work well. The list of associated procedures and forms appended to the Guidelines should be a useful resource for both staff and students.

7.5   Postgraduate student feedback
Universities should use processes for gaining feedback on student satisfaction with supervision and support for postgraduate students and be able to demonstrate that feedback is used to inform improvement initiatives.

Postgraduate students have some avenues for input to academic deliberations at faculty or University level. Two students sit on the Board of Graduate Studies and postgraduate students may be nominated to other bodies, such as Senate or TLQC. Most faculties have a postgraduate students association in addition to the University PGSA. However the University has limited opportunity for gaining more systematic feedback from doctoral or research master's students while they are students. Reliance appears to be on the regular supervision reports which provide opportunity for students to comment individually; issues raised may be followed up by the Dean of Graduate Studies. The Board of Graduate Studies has within its terms of reference the collection and reporting of graduate statistics, but the terms of reference make no mention of any role in addressing issues revealed in supervision reports which might be or might become systemic.

On the other hand, the Panel considers the Doctoral Exit Survey (DES) to be a good initiative, as is the strategy of requesting this to be completed at the time students submit their theses. The survey solicits feedback on supervision, resources, support and professional development opportunities. If collated results indicate an issue this is followed up by the Dean of Graduate Studies with the service, department, school or faculty concerned. The Panel was told that feedback is reported to the Board of Graduate Studies and to the Postgraduate Students Association. Examples were provided to the Panel of actions taken as a result of DES responses.

The Panel suggests that the University consider introducing a research students experience survey and/or a master's students exit survey or some other mechanisms which will facilitate feedback regarding ongoing postgraduate student experience.

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[159] https://cdn.auckland.ac.nz/assets/central/for/current-students/postgraduate-students/documents/policies-guidelines-forms/guidelines-for-the-appointment-of-examiners.pdf accessed 23.07.14.

[160] For example, www.calendar.auckland.ac.nz/regulations/nicai/MFA.html accessed 23.07.14.

Conclusion

In the course of the site visit to the University the Panel talked to about 70 staff and 20 students, plus some Council members and a group of stakeholders. Staff and students were well-versed in their portfolio areas and prepared to engage constructively with the Panel. Students spoken to were articulate and frank and appreciated the opportunities offered by the University of Auckland.

The Panel had no issues of serious concern regarding conformity with the expectations expressed in the Cycle 5 Guideline Statements. The majority of these were met, in some cases at a high standard. In most cases where improvements are needed, the University had identified this in its self-review. The Panel believes that the FAR Project and the proposed review of the undergraduate degree have the potential to address a number of the concerns that it has noted in this report. Attention to development of its digital technologies and its staff capacity to use these effectively will address several other areas which have been highlighted as needing improvement if the University is to achieve its aspirations of alignment with its own comparator international universities.

The University identified nine Enhancements which it intends to undertake by 2016. The Panel supports these enhancement initiatives though the Panel notes that some of those listed might require a staged approach. The University also identified specific risks and challenges. The Panel suggests that some of these might properly translate into further enhancement initiatives.

The recommendations the Panel has made are intended to assist the University as it moves forward the implementation of its Strategic Plan to 2020 and the implementation of the projects listed in the Learning and Teaching Plan 2013-2016.

The University is expected to report on its response to the recommendations made by the Panel in twelve months' time (late in 2015) and again at the time of the next academic audit.

Commendations, Affirmations and Recommendations

Commendations

GS1.1   C1   The Panel **commends** the University on its attention to developing, assessing and rewarding leadership capability of all staff, as appropriate to their role within the University, and to its articulation of its philosophy and objectives in the Leadership Framework.

GS1.3   C2   The Panel **commends** the University for using systematic mechanisms for ensuring student input is sought, feedback given and information shared across all levels of the University.

GS1.5   C3   The Panel **commends** the University for continuing to provide exceptionally good quality libraries and learning services to staff and students, including provision of a wide range of resources and expertise to support teaching, learning and research.

GS2.2 C4 The Panel **commends** the University on its long-standing comprehensive, systematic and informed approach to encouraging the access and transition of Māori and Pacific students to University, including the UTAS provision, clear communication of admission requirements and wide range of activities to support transition at both institutional and faculty level.

GS2.3 C5 The Panel **commends** the University on its "AskAuckland" website and mobile app, the usability of these, and on the development of a comprehensive database to underpin them.

GS3.8 C6 The Panel **commends** the University on the introduction of a mandatory academic integrity course and on its initiative in making this available for open access.

GS4.2 C7 The Panel **commends** the University on its support for Māori and Pacific students, in particular the MAPAS programme and the Tuākana Learning Community and the approach the University has taken to ensuring the Tuākana programme is culturally-relevant, evidence-based and faculty-embedded.

GS7.2 C8 The Panel **commends** the University on the extensive range of resources and support services it makes available for doctoral students.

Affirmations

GS1.1 A1 The Panel **affirms** the objectives of and planning for the Faculty Administration Review (FAR) project, in particular with respect to the clarification of leadership roles and administrative responsibilities and the potential for systematisation and consequent consistency of academic processes across the University.

GS1.6 A2 The Panel **affirms** the University's planning and risk management procedures for mitigation of the effects of a disaster, crisis or significant infrastructure failure at an institutional level, and urges the University to give priority to finalising the proposed Teaching and Learning Continuity Plan and communicating this to all staff and, as appropriate, to students.

GS6.1 A3 The Panel **affirms** the University's new Academic Standards policy as a defining document to clarify performance and responsibility expectations of academic staff at all levels and for appointment, performance evaluation, continuation and promotion purposes.

GS6.1 A4 The Panel **affirms** the University's initiative in implementing the RedCarpet online portal for new staff, whereby they may engage with University induction experiences from the time of confirmation of appointment.

GS6.3 A5 The Panel **affirms** the University's model for evaluating teaching whereby triangulation is possible from attention to self-reflection, peer assessment and

student evaluation.

GS6.4   A6   The Panel **affirms** the work of CLeaR and the wide range of services it offers to staff and postgraduate students, and in particular the Panel endorses the research ethos underpinning CLeaR's work in developing teaching and learning.

Recommendations

GS1.2   R1   The Panel **recommends** that the University develops a high-level benchmarking statement which sets out the objectives and scope of institutional benchmarking, guidelines for operationalising benchmarking for different kinds of activities and outcomes and designated responsibilities for ensuring appropriate action is taken in response to benchmarked evaluations.

GS1.4   R2   The Panel **recommends** that in order to provide a high-quality learning and teaching environment across the institution, the University gives urgent attention to implementing a coherent strategy to develop digital technologies and to promote and support staff use of these, including prioritising and developing timelines for the Actions outlined in Section 6 of the 2013-2016 Learning and Teaching Plan.

GS2.3   R3   The Panel **recommends** that as part of the FAR project the University ensures it establishes formal protocols for the provision of advice to students about academic matters, including defining which staff have authority to give advice about matters which require specific decisions.

GS3.2   R4   The Panel **recommends** that the University review its current institutional Graduate Profile and revise as appropriate to reflect its contemporary aspirations for its graduates. The University should endeavour to ensure that attributes from the institutional Graduate Profile are reflected in graduate profiles for individual programmes where appropriate.

GS3.3   R5   The Panel **recommends** that the University develops its work programme beyond the Actions set out under "Student Employment Outcomes" in the Learning and Teaching Plan 2013-2016, to give explicit recognition to the development of work-readiness through the delivery of the curriculum, in particular in non-professional programmes.

GS3.4   R6   The Panel **recommends** that the University explore ways of ensuring that programmes which are subject to professional accreditation review are also reviewed regularly for assurance that they deliver general education and non-discipline-specific experiences which align with the institution's Graduate Profile.

GS7.3   R7   The Panel **recommends** that the University implements electronic systems for eliciting, completing, disseminating and storing student and supervisor reports on research supervision in order to mitigate the risks associated with a paper-based system and to better facilitate institution-wide analysis.

Acknowledgments

The Panel thanks in particular Professor Stuart McCutcheon, Vice-Chancellor of The University of Auckland, for his warm welcome to the University. Appreciation is also extended to the University of Auckland staff who hosted the Panel.

The preparation and submission of the University's Self-review Portfolio was managed by Mrs Heather Merrick. AQA is grateful for her assistance throughout the audit process, and also that of Mrs Pamela Moss. The effort of all those who contributed to the University's self-assessment process, preparation of the Self-review Report and the organisation associated with the site visit is appreciated.

The Panel is most grateful for the open interaction and frank comments and observations of all those staff, students, Council members and stakeholders who gave their time to appear before it during the site visit. The Panel also appreciated the access the University provided to discussion papers which were at an early stage of development and, as such, were as yet confidential to the University.

Audit Panel

Emeritus Professor Gareth Jones   University of Otago
Chair of the Panel

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Emeritus Professor Roger Field   Education Consultant

Professor Cindy Kiro   Victoria University of Wellington

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The Academic Quality Agency for New Zealand Universities

The Academic Quality Agency for New Zealand Universities (AQA) was established by New Zealand universities in 1994, as the New Zealand Universities Academic Audit Unit. It is an independent body whose purpose is to contribute to the advancement of university education by:

- Engaging as a leader and advocate in the development of academic quality;
- Applying quality assurance and quality enhancement processes that assist universities in improving student engagement, academic experience and learning outcomes.

The AQA helps support universities in achieving standards of excellence in research and teaching by conducting institutional audits of the processes in universities which underpin academic quality and by identifying and disseminating information on good practice in developing and maintaining quality in higher education. Activities include a quarterly newsletter and regular meetings on quality enhancement topics.

The AQA interacts with other educational bodies within New Zealand and with similar academic quality assurance agencies internationally. The Agency is a full member of the Asia-Pacific Quality Network (APQN), and of the International Network for Quality Assurance Agencies in Higher Education (INQAAHE). AQA has been assessed as adhering to the INQAAHE Guidelines of Good Practice in Quality Assurance.

Further information is available from the AQA website: www.aqa.ac.nz.

Cycle 5 Academic Audit Process

Key principles underpinning academic audits carried out by AQA are:

- peer review
- evidence-based
- externally benchmarked
- enhancement-led.

Audits are carried out by panels of trained auditors who are selected from universities' senior academic staff and other professionals with knowledge of academic auditing and evaluation. Each panel includes at least one overseas external auditor. An audit begins with a process of self-review leading to an audit portfolio that the university uses to report on its progress towards achieving the goals and objectives related to the focus of the audit. The audit panel verifies the portfolio through documentary analysis, interviews and site visits.

Final audit reports of New Zealand universities are publicly available. Reports commend good practice and make recommendations intended to assist the university in its own programme of continuous improvement. For New Zealand universities, progress on the recommendations is submitted to the AQA Board in a follow-up report 12 months later. A further report on progress in

implementing the recommendations of the previous audit also forms part of the self-review process in the next audit round.

Cycle 5 Academic Audit Framework

The Cycle 5 academic audit is framed around academic activities related to teaching and learning and student support. The key **Academic Activity Themes** which have been identified and which form the framework for both the self-review and the academic audit are:

1. Leadership and Management of Teaching and Learning
2. Student Profile: Access, Transition and Admission Processes
3. Curriculum and Assessment
4. Student Engagement and Achievement
5. Student Feedback and Support
6. Teaching Quality
7. Supervision of Research Students.

The audit framework covers activities and quality assurance processes which might be expected as fundamental in a contemporary university of good standing. The framework articulates these expectations in a series of Guideline Statements.

For each academic activity theme, universities are expected to address not just whether they do undertake the activities or processes identified in the Guideline Statements, but also evaluate how well they do so, and on what evidence they base their own self-evaluation. From their own self-evaluation, areas and strategies for improvement might be identified. The Cycle 5 Academic Audit Handbook provides more information on the kinds of evidence and indicators which might be appropriate for each expectation referred to in the Guideline Statements.

Throughout the academic activity areas identified in the framework, attention should be paid to such features as different modes of delivery and acknowledgement of learner diversity (e.g., international students; on-campus/off-campus). Unless otherwise stated, all activities and processes relate to postgraduate as well as undergraduate study. Where appropriate, specific attention might be paid to special student groups (e.g., Māori students, international students) but unless otherwise stated it is assumed processes discussed apply to all students similarly.