

Lincoln University
Te Whare Wānaka o Aoraki

Academic audit report
Cycle 4 October 2012



New Zealand Universities Academic Audit Unit

Te Wāhanga Tātari

Monitoring and enhancing academic quality in New Zealand universities since 1993

**Lincoln University
Te Whare Wānaka o Aoraki**

Academic audit report

Cycle 4

October 2012

This audit report is the final report of Cycle 4 academic audits to be administered by the New Zealand Universities Academic Audit Unit -Te Wāhanga Tātari during the period 2008-2012.

Cycle 4 academic audits are whole of institution reports, and follow Cycle 1 audits on whole of institution in 1995-1998; Cycle 2 audits on research, research students, and research-teaching nexus in 2000-2001; and Cycle 3 audits on teaching quality, programme delivery, and the achievement of learning outcomes in 2003-2006.

The hardcopy printed version of this report is the version authorised by the NZUAAU Board.

An electronic version of the report is posted on the NZUAAU website as a portable document format (PDF) file.

Postal address

P O Box 5787
Lambton Quay
Wellington 6145
New Zealand

Location

Level 9
142 Lambton Quay
Wellington 6011
New Zealand

Website

www.nzuaau.ac.nz

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Preface

Background

The New Zealand Universities Academic Audit Unit was established in 1993 to consider and review New Zealand universities' mechanisms for monitoring and enhancing the academic quality and standards which are necessary for achieving their stated aims and objectives, and to comment on the extent to which procedures in place are applied effectively and reflect good practice in maintaining quality.¹ Since its establishment, the NZUAAU has administered three complete cycles of academic audit:

- Cycle 1 academic audits were full institutional audits of the then seven universities; they were conducted during the period 1995-1998.
- Cycle 2 academic audits focused on research policy and management, the research-teaching nexus and the support of postgraduate students, as well as a theme specific to each university; they were conducted during the period 2000-2001. In 2001, a full institutional academic audit was conducted at the eighth New Zealand university - the newly-created Auckland University of Technology (AUT University).
- Cycle 3 academic audits focused on teaching quality, programme delivery, and the achievement of learning outcomes; they were conducted during the period 2003-2008.

The audits in the present cycle, Cycle 4, are full institutional audits, and are being administered over the period 2008-2012.²

The Process of Audit

The process of audit requires a self-assessment which informs a self-review report (structured with respect to the Cycle 4 indicative framework as set down in the NZUAAU 2007 *Academic audit manual*) in which the University evaluates its progress towards achieving its goals and objectives related to the focus of the audit, identifies areas for improvement, and details intended plans, strategies and activities with respect to enhancement initiatives.³ The report is the foundation of the Audit Portfolio, which includes key supplementary documents identified by the University.

After examining the Portfolio, and seeking further information if necessary, the Audit Panel conducts interviews during a site visit to the University to seek verification of materials read, and to inform an audit report which is structured in accordance with the indicative framework. The report commends good practice and makes recommendations intended to assist the University in its own programme of continuous improvement of quality and added value in the activities which are the focus of Cycle 4 audit.⁴

Soon after the publication of the audit report, the panel Chair and NZUAAU Director discuss with the University the preferred procedures to be used in the follow-up to audit and the monitoring of

¹ See *Appendix 3* for NZUAAU terms of reference, vision and objective with respect to academic audit.

² See *Appendix 4* for the framework for Cycle 4 academic audits.

³ John M. Jennings *Academic Audit manual for use in Cycle 4 academic audits by the New Zealand Universities Academic Audit Unit, Te Wāhanga Tātari*. NZUAAU, Wellington, 2007.

⁴ See John M. Jennings *Handbook for auditors*. NZUAAU, Wellington, 2010.

follow-up activities. A formal report against the audit recommendations is required one year after the public release of the audit report.

Academic Audit of Lincoln University

The academic audit of Lincoln University took place against a backdrop of the Canterbury earthquakes of 2010 and 2011, and disruption caused by snow in 2011. Between September 2010 and August 2011 the University was closed for 22.5 working days. The earthquakes impacted not only on buildings and infrastructure but also on the professional and personal lives of students and staff⁵. In this context agreement was reached between the University and the Audit Unit that the self-review process might be constrained. In actuality, a full self-review portfolio was submitted to schedule in mid-April 2012. In the circumstances, this was a significant achievement.

The panel appointed to carry out the academic audit of the University met in Auckland on 30 May 2012 for a preliminary meeting during which it evaluated the material it had received and determined further materials required. The Director of NZUAAU met with the newly-appointed Vice-Chancellor in Wellington on 8 June to apprise him of audit processes. The Chair of the panel and the NZUAAU Director undertook a Planning Visit to the University on 15 June 2012 to discuss the supply of the further materials requested as well as arrangements for the site visit. The five-member panel conducted a four-day site visit to the University on 23-26 July 2012.

The visit to Lincoln University was hosted by the Vice-Chancellor, Dr Andrew West, and on the final day by the Assistant Vice-Chancellor (Academic), Professor Sheelagh Matear. The panel notes that the Vice-Chancellor had been in post only three months at the time of the site visit.

During the site visit, the panel interviewed approximately 130 people – members of Council, staff, students and external stakeholders. Video interviews were conducted with staff and students based at Telford campus. The panel's work was much assisted by the University's latest Annual Report, which is a comprehensive overview of objectives, achievements and performance monitoring.

The findings of the panel as expressed in this report are based on the written information supplied by the University and from material publicly available on the University's website, and on the information gained through interviews conducted during the site visit.

Dr Jan Cameron
Director
October 2012

⁵A confidential report on Displaced Productivity after the Earthquakes quantifies the impact across all levels of staffing. (Self-review report p9; portfolio document 4). The panel also viewed confidential "Earthquake Update" reports to Council (portfolio document 20) which include reports on the impacts on student recruitment, retention and performance.

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Summary

General

Lincoln University

Lincoln's history as a recognized tertiary institution dates to 1878 when it was founded as a School of Agriculture linked to Canterbury College. It welcomed its first intake of students in 1880.

In 1896, with agriculture now well established as the mainstay of New Zealand's exports, the School of Agriculture separated from Canterbury College and became Canterbury Agricultural College, with its own governing body and the ability to award degrees through the University of New Zealand. In 1961, the University was officially renamed Lincoln College, becoming a constituent college of the University of Canterbury. In 1990 college formally separated from the University of Canterbury to become Lincoln University. The University currently operates from two campuses, at Lincoln and at Telford.

The present Vice-Chancellor took up his position in April 2012.

Governance and Management

Vision and Mission

The Lincoln University Charter established that the vision of Lincoln University is to provide national and international leadership in research and teaching that will contribute to ensuring a sustainable environmental, social and economic future for New Zealand. Lincoln's aim is to be New Zealand's specialist, land-based university. Current planning documents reiterate these intentions.

Governance and Management Structure

The governance and management structures are similar to other New Zealand universities. The University Council is fully engaged with institutional planning and strategic direction. The University differentiates Faculties engaged in teaching and research from teaching-only Divisions. It was unclear to the audit panel where Faculties fitted in decision-making and accountability relationships.

Strategic Planning

At institutional level the University has a robust planning and strategic delivery process, clearly focussed on its distinctive characteristics of being specialised in land-based sciences and related disciplines. The merger with the former Telford Rural Polytechnic based in Otago aligns with strategic objectives in developing a wide spectrum of vocational and professional education, as well as knowledge and technology transfer, in land-based disciplines. The change management processes used for the merger are commendable.

Collegiality

The University enjoys a very collegial environment, which extends to postgraduate students as academic peers. Staff and students are congratulated on their resilience and positive outlook in the face of the unusual difficulties stemming from the 2010-2011 earthquakes, as well as other disruptions to normal business.

Quality Assurance and Enhancement

The Quality Assurance System	The University engages in the usual range of academic quality assurance practices, with a mix of codified and informal approaches. The audit panel believes a formal quality assurance framework would assist the University in developing, coordinating and monitoring academic quality, and in managing academic risk at different levels in the organisation. Given the size of the institution and reliance on a small number of key staff, systems adopted must be manageable as well as fit-for-purpose.
Programme Approval and Review	Standard approval and review processes are used for academic programmes. The integration of annual quality reports used at Telford, with programme monitoring reports used at Lincoln, will produce a robust system of annual reporting and feedback.
Learning and Teaching Quality and Student Experience	The University employs a wide range of mechanisms to gain feedback from students. The panel noted various ways in which feedback has informed the operational plan and prompted new initiatives. Staff at Lincoln were described as exceptionally receptive to interaction with, and being supportive of, students.
Moderation and Benchmarking activities	External moderation of both undergraduate assessment and grading of honours degrees must be developed systematically. The University should explore benchmarking opportunities for a range of academic processes. Benchmarking need not be with a single institution but may be as appropriate for the processes being addressed.

Teaching and Learning and Student Support

Teaching and Learning Plan	The audit panel affirms the approach being adopted to integrate high level strategic planning for teaching and learning with coordinated projects and priorities for action. Such an approach shows vision and systematic operational planning.
Academic Programmes	The University's programmes span a wide range of land-based disciplines, including those related to business, sport and tourism. With the inclusion of Telford, there is now opportunity for programmes to be vertically integrated from L2 to L10. The University considers interdisciplinarity and in-context learning to be important features of its programmes. Staff, students and external stakeholders spoke highly of opportunities to include practical experience as an integral part of teaching and learning.
Teaching-research Nexus	Lincoln's approach to the teaching-research nexus emphasizes research-informed teaching and learning, including the knowledge-transfer activities which characterise its pathways into practice-based, vocational learning.
Student Achievement and Success	The University has strong systems for identifying and assisting Māori, Pacific and international students at risk, but these are labour-intensive. It is recommended that the University explore how such systems might be utilised efficiently to assist all students at risk of under-achieving.
Learning Environment and Student Support	The initiatives flowing out of the "Student Experience and Retention Project" encapsulate the University's student-centred ethos. Students and external stakeholders spoke highly of the Lincoln University learning environment.

Distance Education	Teaching at Telford has been strengthened by its experience with distance education. Lincoln University will capitalise on this to extend its reach nationally, thereby facilitating access (and in particular for Māori students) to a specialised, land-based education.
Internationalisation	Despite the enrolment down-turn of recent years, the University continues to have a relatively high proportion of international students. There is some contribution to internationalised teaching, learning and curriculum but this is not strongly developed.

Research Environment and Postgraduate Students

Research Environment	Strong partnerships with agricultural industries, Crown Research Institutes and Ngāi Tahu are a feature of the University's research environment. With a commitment to transforming land, people and the national economy, Lincoln University's research is very practically-oriented.
Postgraduate Students and Postgraduate support	Recent feedback from students has led to a range of initiatives and improvements in services for postgraduate students and in the management of postgraduate research. Postgraduate students enjoy a parity of esteem with academic staff.
Postgraduate Supervision	The University has systems in place to ensure postgraduate students are supervised by appropriately trained and experienced staff. Supervision training processes apply to external supervisors as well as to University staff. The development of a memorandum of understanding for marae-based research is a laudable initiative.
Thesis examination	The University is advised to review its thesis examination processes and to find ways of acknowledging outstanding doctoral theses.

Te Tiriti o Waitangi

Treaty Partners	Māori communities, and Ngāi Tahu in particular, are prominent in University strategic and operational planning. Through Telford, the University is extending its formal relationships to Northland, and it is developing formal arrangements in Nelson and Gisborne. Local Māori spoke highly of their interactions with the University and the University is commended on its interface with the Māori community.
Māori Strategic Framework	Formalized engagement with Maori is expressed in many forms, including a Charter of Understanding between Lincoln University and Te Taumutu Runanga. Internally, the University has several linked committees and groups which provide support and communication and which also raise the profile of the University across the wider Lincoln community.
Māori Student Access, Support and Achievement	Kaupapa Māori units in each faculty enable staff to monitor Māori student engagement and assessment, and to provide support. A Peer Assisted Study Scheme has been introduced. The Manawa Whenua Agricultural Academy is expected to enhance access by Māori, with sub-degree programmes potentially providing a pathway to higher level study.
Curriculum	A feature of Lincoln University is a degree structure which enables students to study courses which are relevant to and reflect Māori interests.

University Staff

Recruitment and Induction	The University has clear processes for approval of new appointments and effective processes for induction of both academic and non-academic staff.
Performance Review and Promotion	An annual performance development and appraisal process provides for systematic and formal engagement between staff and their managers. The panel considers that teaching evaluations should be mandatory for all staff and that, where these occur, there are processes in place for follow-up. The performance review processes were scheduled for review at the time of the audit.
Professional Development and Staff Support	The panel considers that staff should have more regular opportunity for external engagement in research and teaching, by way of study leave entitlement. The new “Library, Teaching and Learning” unit provides support for staff which they consider valuable. Staff engagement surveys have resulted in initiatives to address concerns raised. Staff spoke highly of the community ethos at the university.
Staff Workloads and Workforce Planning	While academic workloads are managed in different ways within different administrative areas, the panel believes the University needs to develop a set of institution-wide principles for workload management. The University is aware of the challenges involved in future academic workforce planning.

Community Engagement

Community Connections	In addition to strong connections with local Māori communities, the University interacts very proactively with the agricultural community and with the local Lincoln community. External stakeholders appreciate the University’s initiatives but believe it could do much more to promote itself and its achievements.
Links with Schools	The University has several projects and activities involving schools. These are appreciated, in particular, by rural schools whose resources are otherwise constrained.
Pacific Peoples	While the University wishes to respond to the Pacific community, in practice the opportunities to do so are limited because of the demographic composition locally.

External Academic Collaborations and Partnerships

National Collaborations	The University is commended for the range and depth of its domestic partnerships and for the ways in which it leverages off these to achieve its vision of technology development and knowledge transfer.
International Collaborations	The University’s international partnerships have not been developed in a strategic and systematic manner. It is suggested that these need to be reviewed and managed more proactively. The relationship which has been developed with the Western Province of Papua New Guinea is a useful model.

Commendations, Affirmations and Recommendations

Key: C = Commendation A = Affirmation R = Recommendation

NOTE: The words 'the University' in each recommendation are intended to refer to the agency within Lincoln University that the University itself deems to be most appropriate to address and progress the recommendation.

1. Introduction

2. Governance and Management

C1. The panel *commends* the University for the manner in which its land-based focus has been redeveloped, reinvigorated and communicated to key stakeholders (including staff and Ngāi Tahu). The panel also *commends* the ways in which this focus is being given effect by strategic initiatives, in particular by the merger with Telford Rural Polytechnic, to ensure provision of a wide spectrum of vocational and professional education in land-based disciplines and in developing research and facilitating knowledge transfer. (p16)

R1. The panel *recommends* that the University improves and targets its external stakeholder communication with respect to its core focus on the land-based industries, and the achievements and research and educational opportunities flowing from that focus. (p16)

C2. The panel *commends* the University on the strategy and execution of the merger with Telford Rural Polytechnic. The panel considers the change management processes which have been used to have been very effective. It commends the University on its endeavours to ensure that the concept of "parity of esteem" is adopted across activities and between staff. (p17)

C3. The panel *commends* the whole University community on its collegiality, optimism and resilience in handling adversity and change in the 2010-2012 period, and on its determination to ensure Lincoln University has a strong and positive future. (p18)

3. Quality Assurance and Enhancement

A1. The panel *affirms* the University's development of course and programme monitoring and reporting processes and supports the integration of these into a coherent annual reporting and feedback system. (p20)

R2. The panel *recommends* that the University further explores opportunities for benchmarking academic practice and academic standards in order to identify and confirm good practice, to

improve Lincoln academic processes where appropriate, and to ensure Lincoln student achievement is externally validated. (p21)

R3. The panel *recommends* the University develops external moderation procedures for the grading of Honours degrees, and explores means of moderating undergraduate assessment standards. (p21)

R4. The panel *recommends* that the University develops a process which enables it to integrate challenges, enhancements, reviews, projects and intentions, as outlined in the self-review report, with the prioritisation, planning, people and financial resource capacity to deliver the changes required. (p22)

R5. The panel *recommends* that the University develops and articulates an academic quality assurance framework which shows how academic processes are developed, coordinated, and monitored, and how risks related to academic activity are managed at different levels of the organisation. Such a framework must be fit for purpose in a small university, identifying those activities which require consistent application across the University, and those activities which require formal, rather than informal, oversight. (p23)

4. Teaching and Learning and Student Support

A2. The panel *affirms* the approach taken by the University to develop a comprehensive, coordinated and contemporary strategy for learning and teaching, with clear connections between discrete projects within the “priorities for action” and the strategic direction of the University. The panel considers the approach to show vision and systematic operational planning. (p25)

C4. The panel *commends* the University on the emphasis it places on ensuring appropriate practical experience is an integral part of teaching and learning, not only facilitating student learning but also enhancing immediate employability of graduates. (p26)

R6. The panel *recommends* that the University explores the feasibility of developing a system whereby existing data might be analysed and used to assist staff in identifying all students who are under-achieving, and to guide programmes of assistance for students with particular needs for academic support. (p29)

C5. The University is *commended* on its student-centred ethos, evidenced by both the formal and informal support available, by the objectives of the Student Experience and Retention Project, and by the high ratings given to the University on this dimension by students and stakeholders. (p30)

5. Research Environment and Postgraduate students

A3. The panel *affirms* the development of a template for memoranda of understanding with iwi as a means of formalizing arrangements for marae-based research. (p34)

R7. The panel *recommends* that the University addresses specific matters related to doctoral examination and achievement, *viz*:

- (a) to review the practice of including supervisors as thesis examiners;
- (b) to find ways of acknowledging outstanding theses. (p35)

C6. The panel *commends* the University for its overall management of postgraduate study, including formal oversight, initiatives to reduce completion time, provision of appropriate support and the collegial respect accorded postgraduate students. (p36)

6. Te Tiriti o Waitangi

A4. The panel *affirms* the University's efforts to ensure that all students across all programmes have opportunities to take courses which include Māori-relevant content. (p40)

C7. The University is *commended* on the strength of its interface with the Māori community and iwi partners across social, cultural, economic, environmental and educational dimensions. In particular, the panel commends the University's provisions for ensuring all students have opportunity to receive an education which is relevant to Māori and which reflects Māori interests and aspirations. The determination to build on current achievements, in particular through the outreach potential from the Telford merger, is noted. (p40)

7. Staff: Academic, Management and Professional Support

R8. The panel *recommends* that the University develops strategies for ensuring staff have regular opportunities to take research and study leave to refresh their academic practice. (p43)

R9. The panel *recommends* the University gives priority to its proposed assessment of academic workload models across the University and the development of University-wide principles for academic workload management. (p43)

8. Community Engagement

9. External Partnerships and Collaborations

C8. The panel *commends* the University on the range and depth of its domestic partnerships and on the manner in which it leverages these to gain benefits in research funding, delivery of applied teaching, facilitation of knowledge and technology transfer and support for strategic developments consistent with its vision. (p47)

R10. The panel *recommends* that the University establishes criteria for the assessment and approval of potential international partnerships and introduces processes for regular monitoring and review to ensure partnerships are consistent with the University's strategic objectives. (p47)

A5. The panel *affirms* the University's model for establishing a relationship with a South Pacific nation (the LincWanTok Model), and for its comprehensive nature and focus on building alignment between Pacific needs and Lincoln capability. (p49)

1

Introduction

1.1 Lincoln University - *Te Whare Wānaka o Aoraki*

Lincoln University is New Zealand's only specialist university. It began as a land grant college, the Lincoln School of Agriculture, in 1880⁶, transitioning to Canterbury Agricultural College in 1896. After the dissolution of the University of New Zealand in 1962 it became Lincoln College (a constituent college of the University of Canterbury), achieving autonomous status as Lincoln University in 1990. On 1 January 2011 Telford Rural Polytechnic⁷, based in Balclutha was incorporated into the University as part of a major initiative to improve capability in land-based industries.⁸

Lincoln's mission is "to provide national and international leadership in research and teaching that will contribute to ensuring a sustainable environmental, social and economic future for New Zealand."⁹ The University is determined to be distinctive for

- its focus is on "transforming land, people and economies";
- technology transfer "across the entire value chain of the land-based sectors";
- relevance of education to students and the land-based sectors;
- an education which highlights the relationships between theory and practice;
- innovative strategic partnerships which "add value to the University's objectives and to New Zealand's land-based sectors";
- a vibrant and engaging campus and community;
- "being valued nationally and internationally for its contribution to the land-based sectors".¹⁰

Land-based industries are recognized as involving responsible stewardship of resources as well as value-addition across all environmental resources, viz land, water and air. This includes the rural-urban interface, transformation and use of food, spatial planning and landscape architecture, recreation and tourism, as well as the scientific and commercial aspects of agribusiness. In relation to food production the University's focus is global.

Central to the mission is the University's links with AgResearch Limited, Ngāi Tahu, Massey University and relevant industry partners. This particular set of partnerships is currently referred to as the Lincoln University Plus Model which encompasses all aspects of land-based and agricultural sector provision. The LU Plus Model focuses on "how people responsibly interact with, create value from, and utilise the land and associated resources for commercial, social, scientific, environmental and cultural purposes".¹¹ Activities in support of the Model include teaching and learning from sub-

⁶Land was purchased for the purpose by the Canterbury College Board in 1877 and the first director appointed in 1878. Self-review report, p1.

⁷Referred to in the remainder of this report as "Telford".

⁸See section 2.4. Telford was established in 1964 as the Telford Farm Training Institute. It became a polytechnic in 1991. See <http://www.telford.ac.nz/About-Telford/Telford-Farm/>

⁹2011 Annual Report p3.

¹⁰Summarized from "Lincoln University: One of New Zealand's Strategic Assets".

¹¹Self-review report, p1

degree level to doctoral, research, commercialisation and extension activities with industry. The audit panel also heard how this focus relates to the particular relationships of local iwi with the environment.

The University's strategic documents reiterate a list of distinctive contributions derived from core values and beliefs around a commitment to the land and to people's relationships with the land. There is also a commitment to supporting national objectives related to land-based industry. Aligned with these commitments, the University intends to provide "vocational education that changes practice" alongside, or incorporated into, academic education. The strategic documents highlight technology transfer and activities which promote sustainable and responsible use and management of natural resources across the entire value chain.¹²

While the above focus is not new at Lincoln, it has been described as "reinvigorated". The University sees itself as "leading the conversation" about land and relevant partnerships, recognising as it does so its support "of the aspirations of Ngāi Tahu, Māori, Pacifica and other indigenous people".¹³ The defining characteristics of Lincoln have been encapsulated in its current (2009) brand which promotes "Land" as the University's identity. Staff and stakeholders indicated that this brand is clear to them, that they know what the University is about, and share its commitment to the land and its people.

Lincoln's enrolment figure for 2011 of 3,187 individuals on the Lincoln campus (2,501 EFTS) is a decrease from around 3,400 in the previous three years. Most notable is a 13.7% decrease in international student numbers from 2010 to 2011.¹⁴ At least some of the decrease is earthquake-related.¹⁵ In addition, there were 982 EFTS within the Telford Division in 2011. Just over one-third of Lincoln-based students were part-time; 1,031 students were international with the largest proportion of these (39%) from China. The University had 681.3 fulltime equivalent staff in 2011, of whom 47.9 were at Telford. Total revenue in 2011 was \$114million including \$23million of research revenue. Approximately one-quarter of research publications were characterised as "community engagement publications", reflecting the applied nature of the University's research.¹⁶

With the incorporation of Telford, Lincoln University's qualification portfolio ranges from Level 2 to Level 10 (PhD) and covers a wide spectrum of land-based disciplines. Telford provides Level 2 to Level 5 courses on campus and by correspondence, short courses (under 40 credits) and the STAR programme in schools.¹⁷ The Telford programmes cover small farming practice and a wide range of specialist areas, such as equine, camelid, deer and dairy knowledge, silviculture, agribusiness management, beekeeping and fire and rescue.¹⁸ The Lincoln Foundation Studies and English Language Division offers bridging programmes into university study. The University offers twenty Bachelor's degrees, thirty-four postgraduate degrees and a range of undergraduate, graduate and postgraduate diplomas and certificates.¹⁹ Degree level programmes at Lincoln include agricultural sciences; ecology; soil and physical sciences; wine, food and molecular biosciences; all main business disciplines; applied computing; environmental management; social science, parks, recreation and

¹²"Lincoln University: One of New Zealand's Strategic Assets" Higher Level Strategic Document (draft) pp2-3. Portfolio item 38.

¹³"Lincoln University: One of New Zealand's Strategic Assets" p5. Throughout this audit report the term "Pacifica" is used in keeping with the University's terminology.

¹⁴Calculated from Annual Report p83.

¹⁵2011 Annual Report pp4; 83.

¹⁶2011 Annual Report pp83-84.

¹⁷STAR is the Ministry of Education funded Secondary Tertiary Alignment Resource.

¹⁸See <http://www.telford.ac.nz/More-Courses/> downloaded 30.07.12

¹⁹2012 Lincoln University Calendar.

sport; and landscape architecture. The University highlights the practical component of many of its programmes and promotes its programmes as being interdisciplinary.

The University has fourteen research centres including the Bio-Protection Research Centre (which is a centre of research excellence funded by the Tertiary Education Commission), and the Agribusiness and Economics Research Unit, which are national centres.²⁰

Lincoln University owns eight farm properties and hosts the Biological Husbandry Unit which provides model organic systems for research and education. There are also large commercial-scale farming and forestry units owned by the Telford Farm Training Institute, which are used at Telford²¹. The University owns Lincoln Hospitality Ltd. and Lincoln Ventures Ltd. research development company, and is involved in three joint venture operations: two with Ngāi Tahu Property Ltd. and another, Agri-One, with Massey University.

1.2 Response to Cycle 3 Academic Audit

Lincoln University's Cycle 3 academic audit site visit took place in September 2006, with the report published in January 2007. The Cycle 4 panel received the University's 2008 follow-up report which addressed the six recommendations and also included a status report on the initiatives outlined by the University in its Cycle 3 self-review.²² The Cycle 3 follow-up report indicated how actions pertaining to the recommendations had been incorporated into the University's 2008 and 2009 operational plans.

A further update on actions related to the recommendations was included in the Cycle 4 self-review report. The Cycle 4 audit panel observed that progress had been made in the areas which were of concern to the Cycle 3 audit panel. In some areas, however, the panel felt the intentions of the Cycle 3 recommendations had not yet been fully addressed. These are addressed in the relevant chapters of this report (see sections 3.3; 4.2).

The University identified key changes relevant to academic quality which have been put in place since the Cycle 3 audit, viz:

- development of a flexible learning initiative;
- organisational restructure into Faculties, Research Centres and teaching-only Divisions;
- change to the grading system;
- review and revision of the teaching timetable;
- merger of "Teaching and Learning Services" and the Library to form "Library, Teaching and Learning";
- development of a scenario for the future of the Library, Teaching and Learning.

These initiatives were considered by the audit panel during its deliberations.

²⁰2011 Annual Report p2.

²¹The Institute is a separate charitable entity established by Act of Parliament to manage a training farm bequest. The governing Board of the Institute has Lincoln representation. (Lincoln University 2011-2013 Investment Plan, p7)

²²Self-review portfolio document 18.

1.3 Approach to Cycle 4 Academic Audit

Lincoln University reported on processes used to ensure staff at both the Lincoln and the Telford campuses had opportunity to be familiar with the audit and the self-review report. In particular, the University noted the benefits to the integration process of involving Telford staff in the self-review process.²³

In preparation for the Cycle 4 audit the University adopted the indicative framework proposed by NZUAAU²⁴. This framework asks universities to identify their commitments, strengths and progress, challenges, monitoring and enhancements for key areas listed under:

- Teaching and learning
- Research environment
- Te Tiriti o Waitangi
- Academic and support staff
- Institutional quality assurance
- Management and administrative support
- Community engagement
- External collaboration

Universities are free to develop the structure of their self-review report to reflect their specific priorities, provided that the broad themes within each of the above key areas are addressed. In its self-review report Lincoln University conflated the two staffing sections of the indicative framework (i.e., Academic and Support Staff; Management and Administrative Support) into one chapter, “University Staff: Academic, Management and Support”. NZUAAU believes this arrangement with respect to staffing was sensible.

The self-review report addresses the areas outlined in the indicative framework. The structure of the report, in which supporting documentation was identified by margin notes, and strengths, progress, challenges and enhancements required were summarized at the end of each chapter, served the audit panel well. However the panel felt that in several areas the University’s report was primarily descriptive and its evaluation of effectiveness was limited. To some extent this might reflect the early agreement between NZUAAU and the University that it would not undertake additional work in preparing this audit, because of the on-going disruptions to normal business which the University was experiencing over the period of the self-review and audit.

This audit report focuses on areas within the indicative framework which the panel considered were critical to interrogate for a range of reasons. In some cases the panel had concerns or required further clarity on matters identified from its reading of the portfolio material prior to the site visit. In other cases the panel wished to explore areas especially crucial to Lincoln University’s own plans for its future development or areas which the panel considered to be potential exemplars of good practice. Where the panel considered additional emphases or actions are required with respect to the enhancements identified by the University, these are detailed in the audit report.

The audit panel congratulates the University on the manner in which the self-review was completed and arrangements for the audit site visit carried out, given the unusual demands which have been placed on the University since September 2010.

²³ Self-review report, p9.

²⁴ Appendix 4

2

Governance and Management

2.1 Vision and Mission

Lincoln University's *Vision* is "to provide the national and international leadership in research and teaching that will contribute to ensuring a sustainable environmental, social and economic future for New Zealand". The *values* which underpin the University's objectives towards achieving the vision are listed as:

- Scholarship
- Academic freedom
- Independent and creative thought
- Quality
- Professionalism
- Innovation
- Student focus
- Relevance
- The Treaty of Waitangi
- International perspective
- Responsible utilisation and management of natural resources
- Ethical standards
- Accountability.²⁵

The *Strategic Objectives*, derived from the 2005-2007 University profile, "blend the medium term priorities of Lincoln University with the national Tertiary Education Strategy", aiming to provide a basis for longer term achievement as "an effective, valued and leading institution in 2015 and beyond".²⁶ These objectives, which were approved by the Lincoln University Council in 2005, are not particularly distinctive for a New Zealand university. Since 2005 Lincoln University has, however, undertaken other strategic initiatives, not signalled in the 2005 document, from which it can develop its long-term strategic direction, including

- a commissioned report: "Lincoln University's Distinctive Contribution to the Economic Transformation of New Zealand" 2007;
- a commissioned report: "Economic Strategy Issues for the New Zealand Region in the Global Economy" 2009;
- the "LU Plus" model;
- a significant brand refresh to emphasize "Land";
- submissions to the Tertiary Education Commission's review of provision of education and training in the land-based industries, 2008;
- development of an amalgamation proposal with AgResearch Ltd;
- development of the "Business Case for Merger with Telford Rural Polytechnic".²⁷

²⁵From "Statement of Strategic Direction 2005-2015", Portfolio document 72.

²⁶*Ibid.*

²⁷Self-review report p12.

Each of these initiatives has contributed emphasis to Lincoln University's consolidated focus on land-based education, research and knowledge transfer.

In relation to the future direction of the University, the draft higher level strategic document "Lincoln University: One of New Zealand's Strategic Assets" and the "Lincoln University Investment Plan 2011-2013"²⁸ together articulate the University's aspiration "to be one of New Zealand's strategic assets", and to do this by leveraging off the gains from the merger with Telford Rural Polytechnic. Lincoln University aims to

- increase national reach of land-based education and vocational training;
- make research and knowledge available;
- contribute to national benefit from land-based industries;
- enhance research capability in land-based industries;
- maintain focus on land-based teaching, training and research;
- enhance student learning experiences and opportunities in land-based and related disciplines;
- strengthen staff career achievement and opportunities;
- work alongside tangata whenua to further the aspirations of Ngāi Tahu , Māori , Pacific and other indigenous people;
- support and contribute to the development of stakeholders;
- ensure financial viability and cost effectiveness.²⁹

At the same time, Lincoln University intends to respond to the priorities identified in the Tertiary Education Strategy 2010-2015. In particular, the staff who were interviewed emphasized to the audit panel those priorities related to improving Māori and Pacific student success, and to increasing the number of young people transitioning to tertiary education and achieving qualifications at level 4 and above.

While the emphases of some of the strategic documents submitted to the audit panel have been superseded, the panel noted the coherence of the most recent strategic statements. The panel's assessment of the activities covered by the indicative framework took into consideration the values and objectives outlined above.

2.2 Governance and Management Structure

The University Council is constituted and empowered, according to legislation, as the governing body of the University. It is chaired by the Chancellor and comprises elected, appointed and co-opted members representing key stakeholders, including alumni, students and staff as well as ministerial appointments and the former Chair of the Telford Council. Specific subcommittees support the Council on such matters as audit and risk management, planning and marketing, fees, CEO appointment and remuneration and special awards. Consideration is being given to establishing the Council appeals committee, which currently is convened on an ad hoc basis, as a standing committee of Council. Council is also advised by the Telford Advisory Committee and, on matters related to Māori students and Treaty obligations, by Ahumairaki.

The audit panel appreciated meeting with ten members of the University Council. The members impressed the panel with the extent to which they were informed and focussed on the University's challenges and direction. Council involvement in the development of high level strategic documents

²⁸Portfolio document 38.

²⁹Summarized from Lincoln University Investment Plan 2011-2013, p1.

was noted, as was Council's substantial involvement in the planning and implementation of the merger with Telford, with earthquake recovery and with funding negotiations.

Council members appeared to be sensitive to the risks associated with Lincoln's particular disciplinary focus³⁰, in particular the assumption that agriculture would remain core to New Zealand's economy and also that the strong practical orientation presented a risk for profitability. On the other hand, Council was also well aware of the opportunities to contribute to solutions to global problems related to food supply and to the environment. Council members made it clear to the panel that they considered they played an "active role" in planning and developing initiatives – their support (and funding) of the Flexible Learning Initiative (see section 4.4) is one example and their involvement in the joint property development venture with Ngāi Tahu is another. Council members emphasised that they are not daunted by risks and opportunities.

In response to audit panel queries, Council members indicated they receive adequate information by way of reports from various parts of the University, that their discussions with staff are "frank" and that, while they could use more information, they wished to ensure this would be meaningful to their role.

At the time of the audit the senior management group at Lincoln University comprised, in addition to the Vice-Chancellor:

- Assistant Vice-Chancellor (Academic)
- Assistant Vice-Chancellor (Māori and Pacifica)
- Assistant Vice-Chancellor (External Relations and Development)
- Finance Director
- Director of Human Resources
- Director of Telford Division
- Dean of Commerce
- Dean of Agriculture and Life Sciences
- Dean of Environment, Society and Design

The Finance Director is also CEO of Lincoln Hospitality Ltd. It is noted that, at the time of the audit visit, oversight of the research portfolio rested with the AVC(Academic).

The academic structure of the University comprises three faculties and two teaching-only divisions:

- The Faculty of Agriculture and Life Sciences (four departments)
- The Faculty of Commerce (four departments plus the Executive Development Programme)
- The Faculty of Environment, Society and Design (three departments plus the School of Landscape Architecture)
- The Foundation Studies and English Language Division
- The Telford Division.

The University hosts two stand-alone research centres:

- The Bio-Protection Research Centre
- The Agribusiness and Economics Research Unit.

In addition to the farm properties, Lincoln University owns four subsidiary companies:

- Lincoln Ventures Limited (research and development)

³⁰For example: the reliance on agriculture being seen as central to the New Zealand economy and the risks attached to a curriculum focussed around agriculture. These curriculum areas are perceived to be under-funded and unable to be cross-subsidized by more profitable courses which fall outside the range taught at Lincoln.

- Lincoln Hospitality Limited (accommodation, hospitality and child care)
- Lincoln University Property, JV1 and JV2 (joint ventures with Ngāi Tahu Property Ltd)
- Agri-One Limited (joint venture with Massey University).

Lincoln University's governance and management structure is traditional for an established university. It was apparent that considerable reliance is placed on those in the Assistant Vice-Chancellor roles to provide advice, communication and decisions to staff and to members of the Māori communities. The panel noted that the role of faculties in strategic decision-making and academic planning was unclear.

Lincoln University staff who were interviewed maintain that the University's small size is one of its distinctive, positive characteristics. While concurring in general with this view, particularly in relation to the experience of students, the panel also considered that smallness might bring disadvantages as well as advantages. In particular, the panel observed that the university had the same core functions, required the same range of activities and roles, and similar numbers of people involved, as would be the case in a larger university. As such, the economies of scale possible in larger organisations were not always possible. The panel considered that the University had opportunities, because of its small scale, to take advantage of processes and communication channels which work effectively because of closer interaction among staff and between staff and students. In its deliberations, the panel took care to assess the extent to which conventional formal structures were essential, primarily to ensure a common sense of purpose and to ensure risk management of core activities, and where this imperative would not be critical.

2.3 Strategic Planning

As noted in section 1.1, Lincoln University has developed a set of coherent strategic documents, in particular:

- The Statement of Strategic Direction
- The overarching higher level strategic document "Lincoln University: One of New Zealand's Strategic Assets" which will set the direction to 2020³¹
- Investment Plan
- Operational Plan
- Learning and Teaching Strategic Plan

A major challenge for Lincoln University is its financial sustainability. The audit panel heard that the University has the oldest building stock and the lowest academic pay rates among New Zealand universities. The University has also experienced a decline in international student fee income since a peak in 2004. In addition, the panel was told that agriculture courses are not funded at a rate which recognizes their true cost, a deficit which is exacerbated in a university with a focused portfolio of disciplines which cannot easily be cross-subsidized, and the small number of students to off-set those costs. The University's strategic documents address these challenges, which sit alongside those which arise from the costs of infrastructure replacement consequent to the 2010-2011 Christchurch earthquakes. While these are operational matters there are obvious implications for the academic functions of the University.

³¹Seen as draft. Portfolio document 32.

Apart from the Learning and Teaching Plan, the above plans were current. The panel heard that the next iteration of the Learning and Teaching Plan will incorporate the actions required to give effect to the [new] strategic direction, and to ensure actions arising out of the Cycle 4 self-review are prioritized and planned.

It was clear to the panel that the high level strategic documents are consistent in their message, both about Lincoln University's objectives and about how the University is to achieve these. The panel also heard from the Vice-Chancellor his own vision for how the University can ensure long-term financial viability. The audit panel was impressed by the strategic alignment of the Telford merger and the LU Plus model with the objectives of increasing national reach of land-based education, of ensuring effective knowledge transfer from the laboratories of researchers to the farm gate, and of a commitment to meeting the aspirations of Māori. This alignment was evident in the portfolio documentation and was referred to repeatedly, albeit sometimes in informal terms, by Council, staff and stakeholders.

C1. The panel *commends* the University for the manner in which its land-based focus has been redeveloped, reinvigorated and communicated to key stakeholders (including staff and Ngāi Tahu). The panel also *commends* the ways in which this focus is being given effect by strategic initiatives, in particular by the merger with Telford Rural Polytechnic, to ensure provision of a wide spectrum of vocational and professional education in land-based disciplines and in developing research and facilitating knowledge transfer.

Lincoln University wishes to be internationally recognised as a specialised university delivering land-based sciences and related disciplines. Reported activity indicated that considerable attention has been paid in recent years to structuring the organisation and its processes towards the direction in which the University wishes and intends to move. Various actions have been identified for attention in the future. The audit panel encourages the University to develop more precise timelines, and to remain vigilant to the interconnectivity of initiatives. The University also needs to ensure that it has sufficient experience among its managers, and sufficient resources, to carry out its intentions.

The panel heard from external stakeholders that, while the "Land" brand was well communicated and well understood, information about the University's achievements and capability for engagement was not well communicated. The overall message from stakeholders was that the University is overly modest, to its detriment. For example, the panel heard that the strengths of Lincoln were not well understood by school leavers and that the wider community was not well informed about initiatives in research and technology transfer or about opportunities for professional development in the sector. If the "Land" brand is to be fully realised, the University would need to attend more closely to communicating the substance underpinning the brand.

R1. The panel *recommends* that the University improves and targets its external stakeholder communication with respect to its core focus on the land-based industries, and the achievements and research and educational opportunities flowing from that focus.

2.4 Telford Merger

While the merger with Telford has been a major exercise for the University, the panel was anxious to ensure that the process of integration, bringing together two very different systems of quality assurance, did not dominate discussions of academic quality. That said, the panel was keenly interested in the University's reasons for, and implementation of, the merger because they potentially posed a risk to academic quality.

The University made available to the panel its high level integration management plan for the new Telford Division³². In addition to this and other portfolio documents related to Telford, the panel received a briefing from senior managers (including the Telford Director). The panel also spoke by video conference with staff and students based at Telford campus. The panel heard of numerous aspects of the interaction between Lincoln campus staff and Telford staff and students which it considered to be highly effective, including:

- the deliberate involvement of Telford staff in preparation for the audit as an introduction to university expectations of academic quality;
- the frequent presence on the Telford campus of the AVC (Academic);
- the recognition that Telford's experience in regional delivery³³ could contribute to achievement of Lincoln's FLI vision (see section 4.4) and that the pedagogy associated with practical, vocational instruction at Telford can inform pedagogy for professional practical instruction;
- use of Lincoln campus laboratories by Telford staff and overall willingness of Lincoln staff to be of assistance to Telford staff;
- the inclusion of a Lincoln Council member on the [former] Telford Council and reciprocal presence of the Chair of the Telford Council on the Lincoln Council;
- incidents of knowledge transfer already flowing from Lincoln through Telford practitioners to the industry;
- reviews of policies with Lincoln-based staff acknowledging this is not a one-way alignment but that, in some cases, Telford policies might be preferred to those existing at Lincoln;
- visits to Telford campus by Library staff for workshops and professional development;
- discussions about staircasing qualifications as mechanisms for advancing knowledge in the industry;
- discussions about using the Telford qualification structure and teaching strategies to enhance uptake by Māori students.

Two over-riding strategic positions were made clear to the panel. First, that with its extensive range of correspondence courses and regional delivery, Telford is seen by senior management and Council as an agency for developing a national profile for Lincoln University. Second, in several different groups interviewed, the expression "parity of esteem" was used to describe the relationship between the two campuses – parity of esteem of staff, objectives and awards. "Parity of esteem" is also used to signify the retention of identity of the two campuses and the two cultures. The change process does not appear to be aiming for uniformity where such might not be realistic.

Interviews with Telford staff indicated they felt comfortable with merger developments, and did not feel "taken over". They talked about involvement and collaboration; about two organisations learning from each other; about opportunities and about communication. Telford students also referred to the advantages that having recourse to the Lincoln brand would confer on their qualifications.

C2. The panel commends the University on the strategy and execution of the merger with Telford Rural Polytechnic. The panel considers the change management processes which have been used to have been very effective. It commends the University on its endeavours to ensure that the concept of "parity of esteem" is adopted across activities and between staff.

³²"Integration of Telford Division into Lincoln University. Programme Management Plan" Portfolio document 83. See also 2011 Annual Report pp24-25.

³³While Telford campus is in Otago, approximately 80% of Telford students reside in the North Island.

2.5 Resilience and Collegiality

As already noted, Lincoln University has been through testing times in recent years – earthquakes; unusable buildings; closures because of snow; a decline in international student numbers; financial uncertainty. In addition, it has experienced several changes which impact directly on staff (for example, changes in teaching systems; merging of Library and Teaching and Learning; the Telford merger; a change in Vice-Chancellor).

The audit panel was informed that an estimated 55% of staff experienced major or extreme impact on their personal lives in February 2011 and only 4% reported no impact.³⁴ Despite these negative impacts, the University made its resources available to the community in February, accommodating a large forensic police contingent on campus and also hosting other Christchurch organisations and education providers. Staff and students have contributed to various recovery activities.³⁵ While the University initially did not experience the scale of damage to buildings which was experienced elsewhere, subsequent assessment has meant closure of some buildings and a significant dislocation of activity – especially laboratory work. As the University moves into extended negotiation with government and insurers regarding the financing of reconstruction, it is clear that the impact of the earthquakes of 2010 and 2011 will be felt at Lincoln for some time to come.

In what might be considered very difficult times, the panel was impressed by the attitude of all the staff that it met. Staff talked about the University being “a good place to work”, about there being a “good opportunity at the moment to develop”, and characterised the University as a “very positive place” and “more stable than other places”. Lincoln University came across as a friendly place which is strong on caring for and about staff. When asked about how they have coped with the changes and challenges around them, staff conveyed an attitude of “just getting on with it”. This impression was confirmed by external stakeholders, who said that the University’s response to the earthquakes has been noted and respected by the local community.

The audit panel considers the reactions of staff to the disruptions they have experienced since September 2010 indicate an admirable ability to handle adversity and change with a spirit of optimism. Such an ethos does not dominate without strong and positive leadership. Despite all the disruptions the University is clearly moving ahead with determination.

C3. The panel *commends* the whole University community on its collegiality, optimism and resilience in handling adversity and change in the 2010-2012 period, and on its determination to ensure Lincoln University has a strong and positive future.

³⁴Displaced Productivity after the Earthquakes (portfolio document 4), pp5-7.

³⁵2011 Annual Report, p6.

3

Quality Assurance and Enhancement

3.1 Academic Quality Assurance

Lincoln University's academic committee structure includes three committees of the Academic Board: the Academic Administration Committee, the Academic Programmes Committee, and a Courses Committee which provides independent scrutiny of the integrity, quality and rigour of courses.³⁶ These institution-wide committees are supported by Faculty Teaching Committees.³⁷ The panel was told that some, but not all, faculties include postgraduate matters within the responsibilities of their research committees.

The academic quality assurance system outlined by the University identifies key activities expected in a university, *viz* programme approval and review; moderation; student feedback and academic integrity. While the panel considered these processes, overall, to be sound (see below), the system as a whole appeared not as cohesive or embedded in staff thinking as it might be. The University has itself identified several areas for improvement in its self-review. In addition, the panel was concerned that some of the recommendations from the Cycle 3 academic audit had not yet been fully implemented.

The panel recognized that in a small university there is potential for quality oversight to operate by informal means or be directed by customary practice. The panel also recognized that in a small university, multiple tasks which in a larger university might be identified with specific roles might here rest with a small number of individuals as part of a portfolio of multiple responsibilities. Some senior managers talked about being "spread thinly", but also about seeing the opportunity to engage easily with senior colleagues as an advantage of the relatively small size. The degree to which faculty deans have autonomy in academic quality matters was debated, with the panel being told deans had "less autonomy" than in other universities. It was unclear where the levers for developing academic quality at faculty level reside. The panel's comments need to be understood within an appreciation that the University must determine for itself the degree of formality which is fit for purpose.

This chapter reviews some of the elements of a quality assurance system and returns in section 3.6 to some overview statements.

3.2 Programme Approval and Review

The programme approval process at Lincoln University follows a system which is standard for New Zealand universities, and appears robust. However it was not clear to the panel how, or the extent to

³⁶ <http://www.lincoln.ac.nz/about-lincoln-university/university-structure-and-staff/management/the-academic-board/>
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³⁷ Portfolio document 3.

which, the outcomes of individual programme reviews informed other parts of the University, in particular contributing to understanding of good practice.

A revised programme review framework, which includes an internal self-review and an external review, was approved as policy in 2009. The panel heard that until recently programme reviews at Lincoln had not been formally scheduled but had occurred on an *ad hoc* basis. The panel endorses the University's move to develop a more systematic programme review schedule.

The University has identified a need to introduce course and programme monitoring reports which address aspects of curriculum, assessment and graduate outcomes, and to use these reports within the regular review and reporting framework. The self-review report refers to Programme Monitoring Reports which record various statistical information "and are intended to be used as a starting point ... to consider whether changes are required to programmes or whether a programme should be formally reviewed", and to Annual Quality Reports which have been used by Telford.³⁸ The latter include evaluative information, such as a self-assessment of student feedback, feedback from farmers re student placements, and moderation of resources. The enhancement proposed by the University appears to conflate these two processes, to provide a coherent annual reporting system. This is identified as a work in progress, which the audit panel supports.

A quality assurance framework which shows how different sets of processes and procedures contribute to an assurance of academic quality would make transparent the connections between these review activities and integrate them into both the programme and course approval processes and the evaluation processes.

A1. The panel affirms the University's development of course and programme monitoring and reporting processes and supports the integration of these into a coherent annual reporting and feedback system.

3.3 Moderation, Benchmarking and Externality

Moderation is done at Lincoln in various ways, including through accreditation by professional bodies, external examination of theses and internally by course committee oversight. In the case of courses taught by Telford, moderation has been carried out by NZQA and by the relevant Industry Training Organisation. The University identified moderation of special topics and courses without a final exam as an area needing attention. The University recognizes that benchmarking of grading of degree courses and awards (such as Honours programmes) is necessary. The panel considered that external moderation of assessment decisions is desirable at degree level, as well as Honours level. If it is grading of particular disciplines which is the focus then similarity of institution is less critical than is the similarity of the benchmark programme.

Benchmarking of academic activity was raised as an issue by the Cycle 3 audit panel. The Cycle 3 report recommended "that the University develops an institution-wide understanding of benchmarking in teaching and learning and develops more formal processes to enhance national and international benchmarking of teaching and learning".³⁹ The University reports that it has not developed a formal process for benchmarking but has accessed some external reference points, citing the International Student Barometer (ISB), the Australasian Survey of Student Engagement (AUSSE) and data from some government agencies.

³⁸Self-review report, p24.

³⁹Lincoln University Academic Audit Report Cycle 3, R6, p27.

Of interest to the Cycle 4 audit panel was the University's response that its specialist nature makes finding benchmarking partners for a whole-of-institution approach challenging, "as there are few, if any, similar institutions in New Zealand or Australia".⁴⁰ The panel felt this observation suggested the University had taken a narrow interpretation of the issue raised by the Cycle 3 audit panel. The Cycle 4 panel is of the view that many activities undertaken by the University can be benchmarked without the partner or comparator institutions needing to be similar to Lincoln. This is particularly the case in areas of curriculum, assessment, pedagogical practice, professional development and staff support. Some of these areas are elaborated on further in other chapters. The panel strongly supports the University's proposed enhancement to "investigate the feasibility of benchmarking against an appropriate external institution" but, as indicated above with respect to grade moderation, the panel suggests that benchmarking need not be limited to a single partner institution.

Overall, the panel was concerned at an apparent lack of externality in a number of areas of academic practice (see also sections 5.3; 7.4). In discussions with staff, an impression was gained of somewhat isolated academic activity and a lack of awareness of the opportunities which might flow from considering good practice elsewhere. The University's use of the International Student Barometer (ISB), and its actions in changing some processes as a result (see section 3.4 below), indicate that failure to benchmark other areas is not because of an unwillingness or inability to do so. It is suggested, the University might extend its vision to other activities where benchmarking could provide a useful basis for evaluating whether university processes conform to recognized good practice, without being constrained by whole-of-institution comparability.

R2. The panel *recommends* that the University further explores opportunities for benchmarking academic practice and academic standards in order to identify and confirm good practice, to improve Lincoln academic processes where appropriate and to ensure Lincoln student achievement is externally validated.

R3. The panel *recommends* the University develops external moderation procedures for the grading of Honours degrees, and explores means of moderating undergraduate assessment standards.

3.4 Assurance of Learning and Teaching Quality and Student Experience

In terms of quality assurance of teaching and learning, Lincoln University employs processes common to other New Zealand universities. The effectiveness of teaching is quality assured primarily through staff performance review (see section 7.3) and via course and teaching surveys. While course surveys are compulsory, and must be undertaken at least every other year, teaching evaluations are voluntary. The panel believes that from a student and academic quality perspective, mandating teaching evaluations would be desirable. The panel noted feedback to students on actions taken in response to survey evaluations, through the "Rough Guide" to undergraduate courses in the Student handbook.⁴¹ Further aspects related to teaching quality are discussed in Chapters 4 and 7.

With respect to assurance of learning quality, the panel viewed academic integrity policies and procedures and is satisfied these are appropriate.

The University documents a variety of means of gaining student feedback on their experience at Lincoln, including:

⁴⁰Self-review report, p7.

⁴¹Self-review report, p23.

- postgraduate Student Satisfaction Survey (biennial);
- graduate Feedback Survey (annual);
- undergraduate Student Satisfaction Survey (triennial);
- course evaluations (biannual);
- teacher evaluations (occasional – are voluntary for staff except when required for promotion purposes);
- student surveys as part of programme review processes;
- the International Student Barometer (2008 and 2011);
- the Australasian Survey of Student Engagement (2008 and 2012);
- student evaluations fed into the Telford Annual Qualification Reports;
- information provided to class representatives;
- information provided to the LUSA Education Coordinator;
- information provided to student representatives on committees and boards.

The University states that information gained from student feedback informs the actions of the Operational Plans. The panel was satisfied that good feedback channels occur. It heard of a number of instances where initiatives had been a consequence of feedback from surveys or reviews. The 2010 review of the University teaching timetable was prompted by such feedback. The panel also heard several times from both Lincoln-based students and Telford-based students that academic staff have an open-door policy, are readily accessible and are receptive to students raising issues with them. The panel applauds this openness among staff.

3.5 Quality Enhancement

The University's key recent quality enhancement initiatives pertaining directly to quality assurance are the timetable review and the review of the academic grading framework.⁴² It is noted that a review of the student evaluation system (course and teaching surveys) was carried out in 2011, with a consultation document expected in 2012.⁴³ Other important quality assurance projects have concerned the merger with Telford, in particular the reviews of policies and processes and a qualification review (see section 4.3).

As part of its self-review the University identified fifty-nine challenges and proposed ninety-six enhancements.⁴⁴ Such an extensive list of challenges and enhancements establishes a major work plan for the University. The audit panel discussed the processes of prioritizing with senior staff, who explained how initiatives would fit with strategic and operational planning and, in particular, how they would fit with future learning and teaching strategic documents. The panel saw that all the proposed enhancements had value, but considers some are more critical than others. These are highlighted in relevant chapters of this report.

The panel also reflected on the suite of projects which the University already has in progress, in addition to those flowing out of the Telford merger and those resulting from responses to the earthquake disruption. The panel had some concern that the responsibility for the coordination and over-sight of this large programme of activity appeared to rest on a small number of individuals.

R4. The panel *recommends* that the University develops a process which enables it to integrate challenges, enhancements, reviews, projects and intentions, as outlined in the self-review report, with the prioritisation, planning, people and financial resource capacity to deliver the changes required.

⁴²Self-review report pp13-14; 18-19. Portfolio documents 33; 35

⁴³Self-review report, p23.

⁴⁴ See Appendix 1

3.6 The Quality Assurance System

From its reading and interviews the audit panel gained a number of insights into how Lincoln University assures academic quality. In some cases this is done informally, by personal oversight or customary practice. In other cases expected practices are codified. An example of the latter is the template for the approval of new or changed policies. Overall the panel considered that, while individual elements of quality assurance processes were generally sound, it was not convinced that academic quality assurance is embedded in the University in a systemic way. The panel was concerned that responsibility for academic quality assurance, and the risks associated with academic activity, appeared to focus almost entirely on the Assistant Vice-Chancellor (Academic) – although the panel heard that others had some responsibility, it found little evidence of how this responsibility is executed in practice. While no specific incidents were identified about which the panel had concern, the panel nevertheless saw this over-reliance on a single role as a potential risk to the University.

It was not clear to the audit panel how policies and processes in place at Telford would be integrated into existing Lincoln policies and processes. The panel heard that there is a comprehensive evaluation in train, which includes identification of good practice at Telford which might be adopted across the whole institution, as well as consideration of how existing Lincoln procedures might need to be adapted to accommodate Telford. The panel acknowledges that the review task is a sizeable one.

The discussion in this chapter indicates several areas where a more precise articulation of processes of developing, implementing, moderating and evaluating academic policies and procedures would make clear the interconnections between them, and thereby allow the University to rationalise application, intervention and improvement. Such streamlining might also assist in ensuring the purposes of these processes in assuring quality are more widely understood, and might also assist with the integration of academic processes which are appropriate for Telford.

R5. The panel *recommends* that the University develops and articulates an academic quality assurance framework which shows how academic processes are developed, coordinated, and monitored, and how risks related to academic activity are managed at different levels of the organisation. Such a framework must be fit for purpose in a small university, identifying those activities which require consistent application across the University, and those activities which require formal, rather than informal, oversight.

4

Teaching and Learning and Student Support

4.1 Strategic Objectives and Strategic Planning

Lincoln University's Strategic Priority 3 aims to provide "Transformational education" through "vertically integrated programmes based on disciplinary depth, quality-assured research excellence, and national and global relevance".⁴⁵ The 2011-2013 Investment Plan indicates that the University will continue to enhance student experience and academic quality, ensure a mix of domestic and international students, and develop off-shore delivery where appropriate.⁴⁶ Operational objectives include:

3.1 To develop the strategic direction for learning and teaching, ensuring that academic programmes and delivery are aligned to the strategic direction of the University, student educational needs, development of future employment and careers and further study.

3.2 To create a unique "Lincoln University experience" through a responsive and supportive learning environment that reflects and celebrates the diversity of student aspirations and experience and to increase student retention, engagement and achievement.⁴⁷

In addition, the Telford merger has prompted strategic planning for growth of vocational training and increased opportunities for progression via staircasing.

The University's Learning and Teaching Strategic Plan 2009-2011 was developed, in part, as a response to the Cycle 3 audit, which found a "vagueness" in strategic planning for a quality teaching and learning culture.⁴⁸ The 2009-2011 plan is intended to emphasize "the inter-disciplinary and in-context learning that distinguishes the University".⁴⁹ The Vision Statement for Learning and Teaching refers to "exciting, challenging and worthwhile" learning, "mediated by clear curricula, best practice delivery, and valid and reliable assessment". Objectives to realise this vision included curriculum statements outlining graduate profiles and clear statements linking learning outcomes, teaching methods and assessment requirements to the graduate profiles. The audit panel viewed a sample of graduate outcome statements as evidence but understands that progress across all faculties varies and, in some cases, has been curtailed as a consequence of earthquake disruption. The panel was informed that all degree programmes now have updated graduate profiles.⁵⁰

Since the Cycle 3 audit the University has undertaken several major projects to support teaching and learning and the student experience. The most important of these, in an overarching strategic sense, have been the merger of the former Library with "Teaching and Learning Services" into a

⁴⁵2011 Annual Report, p27.

⁴⁶2011-13 Investment Plan, p21.

⁴⁷Operational Plan 2012 – Quarterly reporting template, pp11-15. (Portfolio document 95).

⁴⁸ Learning and Teaching Strategic Plan 2009-2011 p2 (Portfolio document 40); Lincoln University Cycle 3 Audit Report, p7.

⁴⁹Learning and Teaching Strategic Plan 2009-2011 p2 (Portfolio document 40).

⁵⁰Portfolio documents 13; 14; 27. Self-review report p14.

single organisational unit - the “Library, Teaching and Learning” - and the “Connecting the Knowledge Networks” framework initiated in 2011. Other projects are referred to below.

The Library, Teaching and Learning aims to capitalise on developments in digital media and become the focal point for the development of learning and teaching at Lincoln. The “first driver” for the merger was the integration of learning support for students.⁵¹ Staff who were interviewed spoke positively about the integration of services which is now evolving. The audit panel was impressed by the University’s foresight in bringing these areas together under the leadership of the Librarian, without losing sight of the central importance of the Library itself. The panel was also impressed by the vision articulated by the Librarian.

The “Connecting the Knowledge Networks” project was initiated to realise the opportunities arising from the merger of the Library with “Teaching and Learning Services”.⁵² The University articulated five priorities for action which reflected “clear and strong themes” which emerged from the consultation process:

- development of a Digital Campus Strategy (8 projects);
- a Learning and Teaching Strategy 2012-2015;
- a Research Strategy 2012-2015;
- strategies to support teaching;
- evaluation of the flexible learning initiative and development of a “learning centric” intranet.⁵³

The University’s self-review report shows how the priorities, and the actions flowing from them, connect and link into the objectives articulated in higher level strategic documents. The project is overseen by the Learning@Lincoln Steering group.

The panel received information on several of the activities within the priority areas noted above. A number were described as being works in progress. The University’s Learning and Teaching Strategic Plan 2012-2015 was being developed at the time of the audit. Its focus will be “on creating a culture across the University which supports good quality teaching and graduates”.⁵⁴ The panel endorses this approach, provided it ensures that critical practical matters which promote student achievement are not under-stated.

A2. The panel *affirms* the approach taken by the University to develop a comprehensive, coordinated and contemporary strategy for learning and teaching, with clear connections between discrete projects within the “priorities for action” and the strategic direction of the University. The panel considers the approach to show vision and systematic operational planning.

4.2 Interdisciplinarity, In-Context Learning and the Teaching-research Nexus

In much of the documentation related to learning and teaching, and through several of the interviews, the audit panel was advised that “interdisciplinarity” is a distinguishing feature of Lincoln University. On probing, however, the panel was not convinced that this aspect of Lincoln’s

⁵¹See Merger proposal, Portfolio documents 66; 86.

⁵²“Connecting the Knowledge Networks: Reimagining Learning, Teaching and Research at Lincoln University to 2020”. Portfolio document 16.

⁵³Self-review report, pp17-18.

⁵⁴Self-review report p14.

curriculum profile is understood clearly. Examples cited to the panel were primarily varieties of multidisciplinary study: for example, inclusion of a minor in Māori Studies in a degree programme in another discipline; the requirement for a broad base of disciplines (biology, chemistry, etc) to study agriculture. The audit panel believes that Lincoln University does engage in interdisciplinary education and research (for example, environmental science), but this is not articulated well.

It is noted that the Cycle 3 audit panel made a similar observation and recommended (R2) that the University facilitate institution-wide discussion “on the pedagogical basis and understanding of ‘interdisciplinary’ and ‘multidisciplinary’ teaching and learning ...”⁵⁵ Neither the one-year follow-up report, nor the Cycle 4 self-review report indicated that this has happened. The development of a schedule of additional major and minor subjects in 2008-9 might have facilitated inclusion of majors from complementary disciplines in a degree programme but, in the panel’s view, this does not, in itself, constitute interdisciplinarity.

The panel believes that the concept of interdisciplinarity needs to be better and more widely understood by staff, and more accurately conveyed to students and stakeholders, if it is to be advanced as a “defining feature” of the University. This task might fall within the enhancement proposed by the University, *viz* to be “explicit and deliberate about ... commitment to interdisciplinary and experiential learning and teaching”.⁵⁶

The other defining feature in terms of learning and teaching which is claimed by the University is its “in-context”, or practice-based, teaching and learning. The panel found that this did in fact pervade much of Lincoln’s academic activity, and is set to be a key feature of its gains from the merger with Telford. The concept of application permeates teaching and research; at higher levels it is more commonly identified as technology transfer and knowledge transfer.

Staff who met the audit panel regarded professional and vocational practice as embedded in most Lincoln programmes. This extended beyond the obvious opportunities in agriculture to include, for example, hotel experience for tourism students. The 2009 AUSSE analysis indicates a considerably higher proportion of Lincoln students (77% of all students; 83% of students beyond first year) experienced workplace learning, than was the case for the group of New Zealand benchmark universities (54% of all students; 62% of students beyond first year).⁵⁷ Undergraduate students who were interviewed told the panel how much they valued the practical opportunities, saying this was often a reason why students chose Lincoln. Pre-degree students studying at Telford have significant portions of their programme spent on farms.⁵⁸ The practice-based learning extends beyond formal academic programmes: external stakeholders referred to outreach activities to school students which involved demonstration or “hands-on” opportunities and to field days where Lincoln staff provided practical advice to farmers. External stakeholders spoke of the effect of this applied experience in enhancing the employability of Lincoln graduates.

C4. The panel *commends* the University on the emphasis it places on ensuring appropriate practical experience is an integral part of teaching and learning, not only facilitating student learning but also enhancing immediate employability of graduates.

⁵⁵ Lincoln University Cycle 3 Academic Audit report, p16. Cycle 3 Academic Audit Follow-up Report, pp1-2 (Portfolio document 18); Self review report pp6-7.

⁵⁶ Self-review report, p20.

⁵⁷ Australasian Survey of Student Engagement, 2009, Lincoln University report, p10. Portfolio document 12a. Benchmark group was five other New Zealand universities.

⁵⁸ For example, L3 certificate in Agriculture students spend approximately 400 hours on farms. During 2011, 1014 Telford students were placed on 104 farms as part of the work experience programme.

The panel was advised that a review of practical work is under way. One aspect which might be considered in that review is an apparent confusion among students as to what is identified as “practical work” and is assessed for credit, and what is identified as “placement” which might be required for credit but not actually assessed. Other areas which might be considered relate to subcontractor provision and the role of farmers, in particular, in assessment. Some students appeared unclear on the contribution (if any) made by farm supervisors to final assessment.

Universities and degree teaching are characterised by being research-informed; it is expected that degrees will be taught mainly by people involved in research. The panel heard of processes requiring statements showing how research informed courses. Lincoln-based staff clearly understood how research underpinned their teaching, often in application. The panel was, however, interested in how Lincoln University expected to deliver on these expectations, given the integration of Telford. Responses satisfied the panel that this matter is not an issue of concern. Firstly the Telford staff (including subcontractors) who are not research-active will be involved predominantly with pre-degree teaching. Secondly, the University places considerable importance on knowledge transfer from those undertaking research to those applying it (i.e., being research-informed).

4.3 Academic Programmes

As already noted, Lincoln University’s degree programmes span various disciplines which relate to, or support, land-based activity. Degree programmes are distinctive in that provision is made for students to include a minor in Māori Studies (see section 6.4) and in that a large number of programmes include practical and/or applied elements.

Degree level programmes are developed, approved and reviewed in a manner which is similar to that in other New Zealand universities.

With the merger of Telford, the University inherits a suite of sub-degree programmes not typical in a New Zealand university. It is expected there will be some rationalization of the range and number of these programmes to ensure they are economically viable and align with Lincoln’s strategic objectives. A review has already been completed to facilitate a strategic framework for NZQF L1-L6 agriculture, horticulture, farm management and associated qualifications, including identification of pathways.⁵⁹ However, the University has made it clear that it intends to retain such a suite, as an essential element in its mission to provide a vertically integrated set of academic and vocational qualifications to meet sector needs. The panel supports the University’s proposed enhancements to align curriculum across all levels, and thereby articulate pathways between qualifications.

The University faces a number of challenges from its incorporation of sub-degree programmes. For example, the unit sizes, pedagogical approaches and nature of assessment in such programmes, commonly differ from those in degree programmes. Given the inclusion of qualifications based on unit standards, one particular challenge for the University will be the need to incorporate the different moderation system required by NZQA. The panel also heard of the possible need to adjust teaching periods for such qualifications to align with farming cycles, rather than traditional academic cycles.

Programme design and review, at both degree and sub-degree level, normally involve stakeholder input. It is noted in the self-review report that the applied nature of Lincoln’s teaching and research

⁵⁹Portfolio document 35. “NZQF” refers to the New Zealand Qualifications Framework.

means many staff are involved “in the field”, and thus aware of industry needs.⁶⁰ Student input is facilitated through committee membership, surveys and the class rep system.

4.4 Programme Delivery

The University reported that, in the final stage of implementing the 2009-2011 Learning and Teaching Strategic Plan, attention was being given to ensuring alignment of course learning outcomes with teaching strategies, assessment and graduate profiles.⁶¹ Teaching at Lincoln includes blended teaching, and distance delivery, especially of sub-degree programmes from Telford. Several interviewees spoke of the opportunity for the University to learn from Telford’s experience in distance delivery. Telford is currently constrained by lack of access to ultrafast broadband. Bandwidth at Telford is adequate for on-campus use there, but inadequate for accessing Lincoln campus resources. The University is working with government to achieve this.

The University’s “Flexible Learning Initiative”, FLI, was introduced in 2010 in the Faculty of Commerce. Aimed at improving e-learning opportunities, FLI is intended to offer students greater flexibility in their learning opportunities and thence, it is expected, improve recruitment, retention and performance.⁶² A range of additional benefits from the initiative was recounted, including improvements in overall teaching practice which flowed from the pedagogical emphasis adopted by FLI. Some staff are alert to the challenges in trying to balance flexibility of delivery with sufficient commonality in approach to give students a sense of consistency within programmes. After a successful pilot, oversight of FLI now rests with the Learning @ Lincoln Steering Group, with staff located in Library, Learning and Teaching.

In its self-review the University has identified challenges and enhancements related to flexible delivery (see Appendix 2). The audit panel strongly supports these enhancements. The panel’s view is that the University clearly needed to undertake the developments outlined if its teaching capability is to be on a par with that of other tertiary institutions. It heard that many staff still had “the traditional view of lectures”. Council and senior management have also recognized that, if Lincoln is to extend its reach, then a reasonably sophisticated mode of flexible delivery will be essential. What was notable with the FLI was the systematic way in which the University has undertaken the project; the panel was impressed by the formal rubric adopted to guide conversion to flexible modes of delivery.

Processes related to course and teaching quality are referred to in sections 3.4 and 7.3.

4.5 Student Achievement and Success

Lincoln University employs usual university processes for monitoring academic performance. Documentation related to examining processes and consideration of grades was made available to the panel.⁶³ The panel noted the additional demands made on the University to resolve disruption to semester one examinations in 2011, and that aegrotat processes needed to be used as appropriately as possible, given that internal assessment opportunities were sometimes also truncated.⁶⁴ The University offers various scholarships, awards and prizes to acknowledge

⁶⁰Self-review report, p21.

⁶¹Self-review report, p22.

⁶²Portfolio documents 26; 79

⁶³Portfolio documents 22; 23

⁶⁴Nearly 1500 aegrotat applications were submitted for the June 2011 examination period, of which only 56 were for medical reasons. (2011 Annual Report, p27)

outstanding students. It was noted that academic success is required to retain existing scholarships, including the sports scholarships which are an important feature of Lincoln's provision.

Under-achieving or at-risk students are identified by end-of-semester results. The panel was told that the University "aims" to identify students who are struggling, and that examiners are "encouraged" to identify students who fail their first assignment, in both cases referring students to appropriate support services. It appeared to the panel that these processes are working well for Māori students, presumably because of the individualised attention provided by staff of the Office of Māori Development. Some staff indicated they would like to be more proactive in assisting at-risk students before they post end-of-semester results. The panel observed that the information to do this is available, but is under-used. It acknowledges that the staff overseeing and supporting Māori student said the process is "labour-intensive". The panel encourages the University to explore how data and processes already available might be used more proactively to benefit *all* students at risk of under-achieving.

The panel explored the contribution made by the English Language and Foundation Studies programmes. Some staff expressed concern that student preparation was sometimes unsatisfactory, but commented that it was difficult to extricate causal factors, noting that the impediment might be language ability rather than academic aptitude. It was acknowledged that some research was needed to determine the true effects. The panel was advised that data are available to do this.

R6. The panel *recommends* that the University explores the feasibility of developing a system whereby existing data might be analysed and used to assist staff in identifying all students who are under-achieving and to guide programmes of assistance for students with particular needs for academic support.

4.6 Learning Environment and Student Support

Operational Objective 3.3 for the University is "To create a unique 'Lincoln University experience' through a responsive and supportive learning environment ...".⁶⁵ The University provides the usual range of professional support services for students – for example, counsellors; international adviser; chaplain; career and employment advice; tutorials related to academic skills and on-line tutorials. The panel was satisfied that these services met student needs. It was recognized by staff that, although the Library's provision for students in remote locations and studying by distance was currently adequate, it would not necessarily continue to be so. Planning underway was linked to decisions about flexible learning and the overall digital strategy.

The University has good benchmark data on student satisfaction and student engagement. It participates in the Australasian Survey of Student Engagement (AUSSE) and the International Student Barometer (ISB) survey, and made its individual reports available to the audit panel. The AUSSE report showed that a higher proportion of Lincoln students used student support services (70% of all students; 72% of first year students) than did those in other New Zealand benchmark universities as a group (51% of all students; 53% of first years).⁶⁶ The 2011 ISB indicated a high level of satisfaction (91% average) by international students with most services used, but a low level of

⁶⁵Operational Plan 2012, p14. Portfolio document 95.

⁶⁶Australasian Survey of Student Engagement, 2009, Lincoln University report, p10. Portfolio document12a. Benchmark group was five other New Zealand universities.

usage (44% across all services), though both figures were comparable to those for other New Zealand universities in the survey⁶⁷.

A major University initiative in 2009-2011 was the “Student Experience and Retention” Project, aimed at providing an integrated approach to improving student experience and thereby improving student engagement, retention and achievement. The project comprises eight subprojects, “designed to take a holistic approach to student experience” and addressing aspects of student life not already addressed elsewhere in the University:

- student orientation and induction;
- good quality teaching and manageable student workloads;
- peer and academic mentoring;
- transition/conversion and monitoring;
- institutional behaviours, environment and processes;
- identifying ‘at risk’ students, recognition of high achievers;
- campus life/student experience (non-academic);
- student contact.

Outcomes to date include an enhanced orientation programme, course workload analysis and establishment of a “Student Life Group” to encourage student participation in events. The major initiative to emerge has been the Peer Assisted Study Session programme (PASS), which has been piloted and is yet to be evaluated.⁶⁸ The comprehensive and systematic approach to documenting the objectives, activities, reporting and monitoring of subprojects of the “Student Experience and Retention” Project is an exemplar of good practice.⁶⁹

It has been claimed, both in the self-review and by staff interviewed, that Lincoln students have opportunity to engage with staff in ways which are not possible in larger universities. Students and stakeholders endorsed this perception. The Student Support Network, of staff identified as available to assist students who are experiencing problems with any aspect of their life or study, tends to confirm these claims. It was reported that students have a degree of familiarity with their teachers which is not typical elsewhere. Partly this was attributed to classes being relatively small, but partly also to teaching staff being easily available. Students at both Telford and Lincoln referred to being supported by staff over personal challenges, as well as on academic issues. Some staff referred to this as the “Lincoln Way”.

C5. The University is *commended* on its student-centred ethos, evidenced by both the formal and informal support available, by the objectives of the Student Experience and Retention Project, and by the high ratings given to the University on this dimension by students and stakeholders.

Staff spoke highly of support for students, one opining that “pastoral care can be a bit of a badge for Lincoln”. However, several staff as well as some stakeholders commented that formal support services at Lincoln are not as well used by students as they would wish. Neither the Student Support Network nor a “text” support message service have been well used. This is despite, or possibly because of, the approachability of staff. These observations will need to be considered as Lincoln University negotiates service provision with its students’ association in response to the voluntary student association membership legislation.

⁶⁷isb Report 2011, pp62-66, Portfolio document 36. Usage ranged from 11% (careers service) to 71% (accommodation office) and 70% (study resources), but satisfaction was consistently over 90% except for catering. Six other New Zealand universities participated in the 2011 ISB.

⁶⁸Self-review report pp 31-32. Portfolio document 75.

⁶⁹Student Experience and Retention Project 2009, Final report December 2010. Portfolio document 75.

4.7 Pacific Students and International Students

The University's Investment Plan includes a response "to the needs of the Pacific community" within its strategic priorities.⁷⁰ The Plan identifies different areas of study priority for Pacific people, depending on whether they are domestic or international. The Operational Plan 2011 similarly notes a need to develop specific programmes, alternative approaches to programme delivery and support services to suit Pacific (and Māori) students. Some potential initiatives are itemized in the self-review report.⁷¹

Lincoln University has few Pacific students, 24.9 EFTS which was 0.9% of total domestic EFTS in 2011. Their qualification and completion rates are not high.⁷² Staff spoken to about support for these students recognize there is no single "Pacific Student" group, but students from a range of Pacific nations. They also recognize that specific support for these students is difficult to provide. Most of the pastoral and academic support provisions made for Māori students are also available for Pacific students. This includes monitoring student achievement and provision of specific tutoring. The inclusion of Pacific in the portfolio of the Assistant Vice-Chancellor (Māori and Pacifica) and in the office of Māori and Pacifica Development (Te Manutaki) is noted by the panel.⁷³ The panel endorses the University's commitment to be sensitive to the needs of Pacifica students.

Despite the negative impacts of 2010 and 2011 on student recruitment, the University has a relatively large proportion of international students when compared to other New Zealand universities: Lincoln University had 1031 international students in 2011 (*cf* 1195 in 2010; 1215 in 2009). In 2010, in the most recent figures provided to the panel, international students came from 62 countries and comprised 29.8% of total EFTS. Approximately 40% of international students came from China.⁷⁴

The panel heard that the academic progress of international students is monitored through the same process as for Māori and Pacific students. An International Student Advisor facilitates pastoral care. The University states that it ranked number one of the New Zealand universities in the 2011 ISB survey results, an improvement from fifth in 2008.⁷⁵ As noted above, in the previous survey in 2008, international students reported high levels of satisfaction with almost all services they had used.

⁷⁰Strategic priority 6, in 2011 Annual Report, p36.

⁷¹2011 Operational Plan pp24-25. Self-review Report, p49.

⁷²2011 Annual Report, p37.

⁷³Portfolio document 48.

⁷⁴2011 Annual Report, pp 28;83.

⁷⁵2011 Annual Report, pp28-29. The panel did not see the 2011 ISB report.

5

Research Environment and Postgraduate Students

5.1 Research Environment

Lincoln University is committed to being a “specialised, internationally recognised, research-led University.”⁷⁶ Its fourth Strategic Priority is to be “distinguished in New Zealand and internationally, through ... high quality research outputs, training of graduates and effective technology transfer, including professional development, across the entire land-based sector”.⁷⁷ Features which support this vision include:

- a Graduate Certificate in Science, Innovation and Entrepreneurship (in collaboration with the University of Canterbury);
- a lead role in “Kiwinet”, a commercialisation centre funded by the Ministry of Science and Innovation;
- providing ten other research centres, several in collaboration with other partners, in areas ranging from computational solutions to viticulture and oenology;
- a partnership with Massey University and key industry groups in the Agriculture and Life Sciences Partnership for Excellence which aims to build capability in agriculture by integrating university research and educational activities with industry;
- membership of the Building Research Capability in Social Sciences (BRCSS) consortium;
- hosting three national research centres –
 - the National Centre for Nitrous Oxide measurement
 - the Agribusiness and Economics Research Unit
 - the Bio-Protection Research Centre.⁷⁸

It is noted that the partnership for excellence is one component of the “Lincoln University Plus” model for development of contributions to land-based education and research.

The panel was told that Lincoln University is the most research intensive university in New Zealand when measured on a *per capita* basis. External research revenue has been increasing significantly, approaching \$24million in 2011; the number of what Lincoln describes as “premium” publications has also increased, provisionally calculated as 455 for 242 academic staff in 2011⁷⁹.

⁷⁶Self-review report, p39.

⁷⁷2011 Annual Report, p30.

⁷⁸2011 Annual Report, p30; Self-review report, pp42-43; “Transform. A profile of Lincoln University’s research”, Portfolio document 87.

⁷⁹2011 Annual Report, p84.

As already noted, two features exemplify Lincoln's research character, *viz* an emphasis on applied research and an emphasis on knowledge/technology transfer. Lincoln research is frequently characterised as transferring knowledge from the University to the farm gate and beyond.⁸⁰

The University's research report "Transform" states that "Lincoln University is 100% committed to transforming land, people and economies".⁸¹ The second point of the 2011-2013 Investment Plan states that Lincoln will make its research and knowledge available through its graduates and technology transfer activities.⁸² The panel heard that the applied emphasis poses an element of risk for the University in that, to some extent, this is incompatible with PBRF research criteria which drive funding from this source. However staff and stakeholders alike placed high value on the contributions Lincoln University makes to the local and national community by its translation of research to action. The University has a number of collaborations and partnerships with Crown Research Institutes. As noted in Chapter 6, the University's Charter with Ngāi Tahu encompasses mutual research interests.

The University's Research Strategy is intended to develop a culture of staff research excellence, improve research degree completions, and grow external research income. Investment in infrastructure and people, and alignment with institutional strategic objectives are the intended mechanisms.⁸³ The audit panel interrogated the alignment between Telford (a teaching-only division) and the University's research expectations. It was made very clear to the panel by staff at both campuses and by senior managers that, while most staff at Telford will not be research-active, the vision is to take research into Telford programmes so that it underpins education. The panel was told that the merger has raised awareness of research among Telford staff and that through research-informed education "students are [the] best way of getting practice change" in the agriculture sector.

Organisational support for research comes from the Research and Commercialisation Office, the University Research Committee (chaired by the Director of Research Strategy and Development), Faculty Research and Postgraduate Committees and the University Ethics Committees. The University offers internal research funds, and awards for outstanding early career researchers. It owns Lincoln Ventures Ltd, a private science and technology company.

The University's research activity is evaluated through PBRF. The audit panel is satisfied that there is a strong interface between the University's research activity and its teaching and learning up to and including postgraduate study. The panel noted that currently the University does not have a senior management role dedicated to research, but understands the distribution of senior management responsibilities within roles is to be reviewed.

5.2 Postgraduate Administration

Postgraduate study at Lincoln is overseen by the Postgraduate Director. The Postgraduate Director is assisted by the Postgraduate Liaison Group which, *inter alia*, reviews survey results and recommends strategies to address issues identified. From its self-assessment the University concluded that postgraduate student administration processes, supervision, thesis examination and completion have improved. Recent activities which have contributed to this improvement include:

⁸⁰From "farm to fork" in the case of research done in the Department of Food, Wine and Molecular Biosciences – see "Transform", pp 32-33. Portfolio document 87.

⁸¹"Transform", inside front cover.

⁸²Lincoln University Investment Plan 2011-2013, p6.

⁸³Self-review report, p39.

- reduction of application turnaround times, a response to International Student Barometer (ISB) survey feedback;
- ongoing work to streamline finance, management and academic reporting processes electronically;
- attention to the University website pages relevant to postgraduate students;
- improved monitoring of academic progress;
- requirement of a completion plan for students who have consumed over 3.0EFTS of funding;
- introduction of a sunset clause for degree completion.⁸⁴

The audit panel was pleased to read and hear from several sources of the University's willingness to use student feedback for prompting enhancement initiatives. For example, the University responded "immediately" to concerns brought to the attention of its 2005 Supervision Task Force and Dissertation Working Group. In addition to the ISB, the University draws on feedback via the Postgraduate Student Satisfaction Survey and is developing a Supervision Exit Survey⁸⁵. Scholarships and prizes recognize excellence.⁸⁶ The audit panel notes the University's report on the impact of the earthquakes on postgraduate students, prepared for insurance purposes, but which recognizes the effects of disruption to research projects and delayed completion.⁸⁷

The panel was also impressed by the initiative to develop a Memorandum of Understanding with local iwi for students undertaking marae-based research. The panel heard that this is being trialled in Nelson and is to be introduced in Gisborne. It noted the observation made by staff that the process of negotiating the MoU was an important educational activity for the research student. Similar memoranda exist for tuakana (Māori mentors) for research.

A3. The panel affirms the development of a template for memoranda of understanding with iwi as a means of formalizing arrangements for marae-based research.

5.3 Postgraduate Supervision

The University's processes for postgraduate supervision include conventional arrangements, such as a statement of minimum services provision, a Mutual Expectations Agreement, certification of the student's own work, and examination panels including external examiners for PhDs.⁸⁸

"House Rules" direct the appointment of supervisors. Central monitoring of supervision arrangements is undertaken by the Postgraduate Director and the Academic Administration Committee. The panel was told about the "dashboard" project which facilitates monitoring of supervision load of staff. Beginning supervisors receive training, though not all staff appeared to be aware that this expectation was codified as an institutional requirement. Informal mentoring of supervisors also occurs. Supervision quality is overseen by heads of departments.

The audit panel was particularly interested in the management of supervision by non-University staff. It was advised that approaches vary. In cases involving Crown Research Institute staff, where they did not participate in supervision training they would not be given responsibility as a primary supervisor. Staff of Lincoln Ventures Ltd. who are eligible to supervise do attend supervision

⁸⁴Self-review report pp 27; 45.

⁸⁵Portfolio documents 64; 77.

⁸⁶Self-review report, pp 29-30; 44-45.

⁸⁷Portfolio document 10.

⁸⁸Portfolio documents 49; 50; 60.

workshops. It appeared to the panel that the University was mindful of risks attached to involvement of non-University staff in supervision, and took steps to manage these.

The panel endorses the encouragement given to PhD students to publish their research and encourages the University to explore similar opportunities for Master's thesis students.

A review of PhD and Master's thesis examination took place in 2006, with subsequent changes to examination processes. The audit panel was nevertheless concerned to hear that thesis supervisors retain a role in examination of theses. The panel urges the University to review this practice, for both PhD and Master's theses, in light of examination procedures which are commonly agreed to be good practice in universities internationally. The University is also encouraged to consider ways of acknowledging outstanding PhD theses.

R7. The panel *recommends* that the University addresses specific matters related to doctoral examination and achievement, *viz*:

- (c) to review the practice of including supervisors as thesis examiners;**
- (d) to find ways of acknowledging outstanding theses.**

The audit panel was impressed by the ways, often subtle, in which postgraduate students appeared to be recognized as colleagues by academic staff. This consideration emerged in the ways in which postgraduate students were discussed, their recognition on staff noticeboards and a general ethos of inclusiveness.

Staff acknowledged that Honours dissertations might not receive the same quality of attention as did Master's and PhD theses. The panel was concerned to hear that there did not appear to be a systematic process for ensuring grade equivalence for Honours degrees and has made a recommendation on this (see section 3.3).

5.4 Postgraduate Student Support

The audit panel was informed that postgraduate student support is promoted via a close relationship between the Postgraduate Director and teaching staff, with whom he discusses the needs of each student. Support is negotiated with the student "from day one", and external support found if required.

Internal study support for postgraduate students includes a number of resources provided by Library, Teaching and Learning, including thesis writing workshops and thesis writing groups for both Master's and PhD students. Recent initiatives reported to the panel included the provision of an annual research grant to students and the development of ways of tracking performance related to the funding. Additional pastoral support is available for international postgraduate students. The postgraduate students interviewed were generally positive about the support services they had used.

Lincoln University research students have several opportunities to develop their academic skills, including an annual postgraduate conference and a Thr3sis competition, both with prizes for best presentations, and possibilities to attend external conferences. The University seeks to recognize opportunities for students to develop intellectual property early in their research process. The policy on intellectual property was under review at the time of the audit, in conjunction with development of an open access policy.⁸⁹

⁸⁹Portfolio documents 51; 52.

- C6. The panel *commends* the University for its overall management of postgraduate study, including formal oversight, initiatives to reduce completion time, provision of appropriate support and the collegial respect accorded postgraduate students.**

6

Te Tiriti o Waitangi

6.1 The University's Relationship with Māori Communities

Throughout the University's strategic planning documents the place of Māori generally, and Ngāi Tahu in particular, is prominent. The University recognizes that Māori are "the largest natural grouping of pastoral farmers in New Zealand" and that the "Māori agricultural asset base is a crucial part of the path for Māori economic development".⁹⁰ The University's high level strategic document refers to being "responsive to and supportive of the aspirations of Ngāi Tahu [and] Māori", and to contributing to improved Māori outcomes in

- agriculture, land utilisation and resource based production;
- tourism, sport and recreation;
- environmental management, planning and design;
- business and commercial enterprise.

Lincoln University also intends to be renowned for study pathways and structured progression for Māori wishing to study at tertiary level in land-based industries.⁹¹

Emphasis in the strategic documents is on working *alongside* tangata whenua to assist in meeting these objectives. Formalized engagement with Ngāi Tahu is expressed in several forms (see below). This is perhaps symbolized in the joint venture companies between Ngāi Tahu and Lincoln University to develop land in Lincoln township for residential and commercial use. The University also recognizes a need to establish relationships with North Island Māori communities if it is to extend provision to Māori students in the north. To that end advantage will be taken of Telford's existing relationship with Te Runanga o Te Rarawa in Northland.

The audit panel met with a group of Ngāi Tahu stakeholders who confirmed the high regard they had for the University. The local runanga provides tikanga support for the University and in turn feels well supported and informed by the Assistant Vice-Chancellor (Māori and Pacifica). Stakeholders cited projects where Lincoln staff and students had assisted them, for example through research on "the lake" (Te Waihora) and assistance with landscaping a marae project for the local runanga. They told the panel that the University is receptive to engaging with whanau or with iwi "as a whole". The Charter between Ngāi Tahu and the University encompasses mutual research interests (see below). The University publishes a newsletter, Te Hononono-Māori Linc, which is distributed to the Māori community.⁹² The panel was told Ngāi Tahu and the University "are partners" and that local Māori "feel it's our university".

⁹⁰Lincoln University Investment Plan 2011-2013, p11.

⁹¹"Lincoln University: One of New Zealand's Strategic Assets".

⁹²Portfolio document 80.

6.2 Māori Strategic Planning

The University's intentions and plans for meeting its objectives with respect to Māori are outlined in overarching strategic documents. Key initiatives towards furthering Māori aspirations include:

- ongoing collaboration with Te Tapuae o Rehua⁹³ to provide opportunities for Māori students;
- a Charter of Understanding between Lincoln University and Te Taumutu Runanga⁹⁴;
- a partnership via Telford with Te Runanga o Te Rarawa in Kaitaia;
- establishment of Manawa Whenua Agricultural Academy which focuses on building Māori capability in agriculture-related study through a whanau approach;
- ongoing involvement in national initiatives, including
 - Te Ipukarea (National Māori Language Institute)
 - Manu Ao (National Inter-university Māori Academy for academic and professional development)
 - Nga Pae o Te Maramatanga (National Māori Centre of research excellence)
 - Te Kupenga o MAI (National programme for Māori and indigenous postgraduate advancement)⁹⁵.

The Charter of Understanding is accorded high significance by the University. It not only articulates a common understanding of the land and land-based industries but provides the basis for developing better alignment between the University's research and education capability and the social, cultural, environmental and commercial needs and aspirations of Ngāi Tahu.⁹⁶

In addition to the role of Assistant Vice-Chancellor (Māori and Pacifica), Lincoln University's internal structure provides several linked committees and groups to provide support and communication about Māori development across the University:

- Ahumairaki – a sub-committee of Council, whose responsibilities include monitoring of the relationship with Ngāi Tahu;
- Te Puna Whakapuawai – the institutional wananga, or institutional forum for discussing Māori development and Treaty responsiveness issues;
- Te Manutaki, the Office of Māori Development (3 staff, led by the AVC(Māori and Pacifica)) which is project-focussed and is in effect the operational arm of Te Puna Whakapuawai;
- Kaupapa Māori units in the faculties, with responsibilities in developing curriculum and research⁹⁷;
- Taki Rua, the Māori Student Support group;
- Te Awarua, the Māori liaison group which considers recruitment and marketing.

The University reported that this structure is working well, raising the profile of Māori across the wider university community and expected to provide a platform for developing new initiatives. The panel viewed agenda and minutes of Ahumairaki⁹⁸ and heard positive feedback from iwi partners about the effectiveness of that committee. Stakeholders made clear to the panel their appreciation

⁹³Te Tapuae o Rehua is a company which includes Te Rūnanga o Ngāi Tahu and other tertiary institutions within the takiwā (tribal area). The company is committed to collaboratively increasing the numbers of Ngāi Tahu and other Māori participating and achieving within tertiary institutions in Te Wai Pounamu (the South Island).

⁹⁴Portfolio document 81.

⁹⁵Lincoln University Investment Plan 2011-2013, p12.

⁹⁶Self-review report p48; Portfolio document 81.

⁹⁷One to be developed also in the Telford Division (Self-review report, p51)

⁹⁸Portfolio documents 5; 11.

of the high reliance they placed on the Assistant Vice-Chancellor (Māori and Pacifica) to maintain effective communication and interaction. The panel was told that attracting Māori staff is a challenge.

6.3 Māori Student Access, Support and Achievement

The number of Māori students studying at Lincoln has risen over recent years from a low of 88 students in 2009.⁹⁹ Māori students constituted 9.4% of total domestic EFTS in 2011.¹⁰⁰ The University believes the increased participation “is a direct ... result of coordinated and new approaches made possible by the introduction of a new committee and new unit structure and the employment of staff dedicated to Māori support and liaison”.¹⁰¹ Māori stakeholders observed that the University needed to market itself more directly to potential students who are Māori, and to provide advice re subject selection to students early in their secondary school careers. The University planned to initiate a targeted marketing approach to potential Māori students in 2012.¹⁰²

The University envisages that the merger with Telford will enable it to provide greater access opportunities for Māori students through its provision of land-based education and vocational training nationally. In particular, through the qualification portfolio and teaching strategies already in place at Telford, Lincoln University will offer Māori (and Pacifica) improved study pathways and progression; appropriate curricula and learning support; an improved national reach and regional network of provision.¹⁰³ The Manawa Whenua Agricultural Academy, funded by TEC Priorities for Focus funding, provides a mechanism for supporting sub-degree programmes initially. Māori interviewees told the panel that Telford has been “a shot in the arm” for Māori.

Retention rates at Lincoln University for Māori students (around 90%) compare favourably with that of the overall domestic student group (84%). However course completion rates for Māori students studying at degree level (76% in 2010) are lower than for other students.¹⁰⁴ The University acknowledges it has work to do in improving this outcome.¹⁰⁵ The panel heard in some detail about the work being done by the staff of the Office of Māori Development to identify Māori students¹⁰⁶ at risk of under-achieving at university, and the ways in which they are supported to improve. Staff also identify high-achieving Māori students, supporting their efforts and advising on scholarships and summer research opportunities.

Establishment of Kaupapa Māori units within each academic faculty enables academic staff to monitor Māori student engagement and assessment and provide support. Processes might involve whanau and were described as very labour-intensive. The panel heard that the University uses a Peer Assisted Study Scheme (PASS), launched in 2012, as well as specific tutoring for Māori students. One stakeholder described the support at Lincoln as “exemplary”. Students interviewed confirmed

⁹⁹ The self-review report (p49) gives numbers of students as 156 in 2010; the 2011 Annual Report (p37) records 257.3 EFTS for 2011, which includes students enrolled at Telford. The panel was not able therefore to provide an exact comparison between 2009 and 2011.

¹⁰⁰ 2011 Annual Report, p37.

¹⁰¹ Self-review report, p49.

¹⁰² 2011 Annual Report, p36.

¹⁰³ Lincoln University Investment Plan 2011-2013, p2.

¹⁰⁴ Figure from the Self-review report is assumed to refer to degree level since they are pre-merger; 2011 Annual Report figures for 2011 show 83.9% course completion for Level 4 and above, and 65% for levels 1-3. (Self-review Report, p51; 2011 Annual Report, p37.)

¹⁰⁵ Self-review report, p50.

¹⁰⁶ “Māori students” refers to those who self-identify as Māori.

this. However, both staff and stakeholders spoke of the challenge of gaining participation by Māori students in events and activities promoted for them.

6.4 Curriculum

The University notes that Māori students participate in the full range of degree programmes. It has adopted several different approaches to ensuring curriculum and study are relevant to, and reflect, Māori interests (including interest in things Māori by non-Māori students), notably:

- it offers a dedicated level 5 Diploma in Māori Studies;
- it provides a minor in Māori Studies which may be included in most degree programmes;
- it has undertaken a curriculum review to identify courses with Māori content, identified the degree programmes which are most popular with Māori students and subjects most relevant to Māori students, and works with teachers in key courses in those programmes to introduce Māori-themed content;
- the pre-degree level courses have a strong focus on providing opportunities which are directly relevant to Māori aspirations and which might facilitate both access and staircasing to higher level qualifications;
- special provision is made for marae-based research, including appointment of a Māori research mentor for postgraduate students (see section 5.2).

The panel was impressed with the University's determination to ensure it delivers on its intentions to serve the Māori community, including strategies for enabling non-Māori to gain understanding on issues relevant to Māori.

A4. The panel *affirms* the University's efforts to ensure that all students across all programmes have opportunities to take courses which include Māori-relevant content.

6.5 Overview

The audit panel concluded that Māori interests, aspirations and needs are embedded in Lincoln University's activities. The University recognizes the progress it has made, but also notes challenges in enhancing support for Māori across the wider University community. Integration of Telford provides opportunities for advancing activity to meet the aspirations of Māori, both in terms of access for students and in study in land-based areas which have direct relevance. The panel noted that the University's interface with Māori is often subtle and attitudes about this are modest. It was clear to the panel that respect between the partners is mutual.

C7. The University is *commended* on the strength of its interface with the Māori community and iwi partners across social, cultural, economic, environmental and educational dimensions. In particular, the panel commends the University's provisions for ensuring all students have opportunity to receive an education which is relevant to Māori and which reflects Māori interests and aspirations. The determination to build on current achievements, in particular through the outreach potential from the Telford merger, is noted.

7

Staff: Academic, Management and Professional Support

7.1 Workforce Planning

Lincoln University is involved in Universities New Zealand's national initiatives to consider and develop academic workforce planning. Lincoln University plans to undertake further work on this. The University is aware of the challenges of succession planning and the pressures likely to be generated by an ageing workforce, in non-academic as well as academic roles. It has taken steps to facilitate "refreshment" of the staff profile.¹⁰⁷ The panel was told there is some anxiety at faculty level over ability to recruit and retain staff in the future. The panel agrees that such issues are increasingly critical in universities and supports efforts the University is making to manage them.

7.2 Recruitment and Induction

The audit panel considered the University's staff recruitment and orientation processes to be effective. It heard that policies and delegations for approval of permanent positions are centralised and are very clear, as are processes for appointment of selection panels.

Orientation of new staff occurs through several avenues. In addition to a general induction to be completed by the staff member and his/her manager, other activities which are provided include an orientation day for any new staff, plus a specific academic orientation offered to new academic staff. These latter orientation sessions are provided by Library, Teaching and Learning. Line managers are expected to address professional development needs, establish objectives and identify any professional support needed. Mentoring and a 'buddy' system may be incorporated as part of this overall process. The panel was satisfied that there are checks in place to ensure induction and orientation are completed adequately.

Academic staff spoke positively of their induction processes, one noting that this is not limited to just the early years of appointment. Mentoring, for instance, may continue for some years.

Non-academic staff recounted the induction activities, commenting that those provided by Human Resources are "quite regimented" but "work a treat" for new staff. Processes can be monitored by the administrators and secretaries group.

7.3 Performance Review

The University's annual performance development and appraisal process (PD&A) provides for systematic and formal engagement between staff and their managers. Through this process professional development needs are identified and addressed. High-achieving academic staff are

¹⁰⁷Self-review report, p56.

also identified for potential recognition via promotion or provision of research opportunities. The University provides awards for teaching and research excellence.

The University has processes for ensuring that teaching evaluations are followed up but the panel has noted its concern that teaching evaluations by students are voluntary (see section 3.4). The outcome of a review of the process, carried out in 2011, was not yet available.

Although academic staff appeared satisfied with their professional development and performance appraisal, the panel was also told of a need to improve the administration of the process, in particular to assist Heads of Departments who have to undertake the reviews and to ensure the process is formative for staff. Staff noted some variation in formality across departments. The University is encouraged to proceed with the review of the PD&A process which is planned in 2013.

The panel was told that apart from the annual PD&A, non-academic staff do not have close performance monitoring, though they do “feel valued”. The University has no awards for non-academic staff comparable to those for teaching and research excellence – the awards for which they are eligible relate to service in the Lincoln community, not to the University. The audit panel encourages the University to formally recognise excellence in non-academic staff.

The University identified management of contract teaching staff as an area for enhancement.¹⁰⁸

7.4 Professional Development and Staff Support

A survey of staff engagement at Lincoln in 2010 enabled the University to identify areas for improvement in employee engagement and internal communication.¹⁰⁹ The panel was pleased to hear that many of the issues revealed in the survey have been addressed; subsequent initiatives include regular staff briefings and more opportunities for social activity. The survey has been replicated at Telford.¹¹⁰

Non-academic staff reported that the University is very supportive, citing various activities from which they have benefited in their work. They placed value on the informal, as well as the formal, channels of communication. These staff noted that Lincoln University does not “have a gap” between academic and non-academic staff. The panel was told of social activities which include Telford staff, and heard that Lincoln University is a “village” community. Clearly this community ethos is valued by staff. Those interviewed by the panel spoke of the University as a “very positive place”, “stable”, with a “friendly environment” and a “nice campus”.

Non-academic staff reported that there were career constraints, though they believed these relate to career positions which do not have a natural progression pathway, rather than to University processes. The audit panel suggests the University might look at the possibility of greater staff mobility (including staff exchanges and secondments) for non-academic staff, as a means of benchmarking and to provide professional development opportunities.

Academic staff are provided with workshops to support their teaching practice. Mentoring appears to be the main avenue for improving research practice. The panel was concerned to hear from academic staff that, while they are eligible to apply for research and study leave, there are academic staff who in fact have not been granted leave after significant periods of time at the University, or

¹⁰⁸Self-review report, p58.

¹⁰⁹Portfolio document #21. The 2010 survey focussed specifically on internal communication. The next survey was due in 2012 but likely to be deferred.

¹¹⁰Portfolio document #93.

who have not been able to pursue leave opportunities because of lack of funding. Senior managers concurred, stating that study leave is competitive and discretionary. This consequent lack of exposure of staff to research and teaching practice elsewhere was a concern to the panel in the light of its view that, generally, the University needs to increase the range of its external focus. The panel considered that research or study leave need not be international and that, given the close proximity of other land-based industries and the CRIs, opportunity exists close to hand for this experience by research placements, staff exchange or secondment.

R8. The panel *recommends* that the University develops strategies for ensuring staff have regular opportunities to take research and study leave to refresh their academic practice.

7.5 Academic Workloads

The panel understands that, while faculties do have means by which they manage academic workloads, the University has no institution-wide or formal academic workload management model. Staff who were interviewed had different views on this, citing specific discipline characteristics as an impediment to a single model. The systems which were described to the panel seemed to be entirely quantitative, sometimes complex and not always understood clearly by staff. Staff also indicated the models which existed were not always applied rigorously. This is an area identified by the University for enhancement. The panel believes the University would benefit from an overarching framework for the management of workload which articulates basic and common principles.

R9. The panel *recommends* the University gives priority to its proposed assessment of academic workload models across the University and the development of University-wide principles for academic workload management.

8

Community Engagement

8.1 Community Connections

Lincoln University identifies with both a geographical and a professional/industry community.

The University is a major focus of the small village community of Lincoln and its surrounding region. Staff undertake activities such as giving talks, sharing research and using professional expertise in the community (for example veterinary advice or advice on landscaping) and supporting community social activities. As an institution, the University demonstrates its commitment to the community through its focus on environmental issues. These contributions include the Lincoln Environmental Organisation (LEO), established in 1990, and support of the Lincoln Envirotown Project, for which it provides an office and other resources. The University also runs Waterwatch Canterbury-Kaitiaki Wai, which involves school students and community groups in monitoring their local rivers and streams. Lincoln's involvement in these projects was spoken of highly by stakeholders.

As noted elsewhere, the University provided a home to a number of organisations at the time of the 2011 February earthquake. A critical task currently is involvement in the greater Christchurch region's recovery from the 2010 and 2011 earthquakes with involvement not only in recovery of education in the region, but also provision of expertise in areas such as landscape architecture and contributions to community forums and other projects.

The University's relationship with the farming community is expressed in several different ways, including:

- education and professional development through conferences, workshops, short courses on a wide range of land-based topics;
- provision of the 11-month Kellogg Rural Leadership Development programme, which targets emerging agribusiness leaders, and the Crop Agronomy Short Course, both of which may be used as recognised credit towards Lincoln qualifications;
- provision of farm tours, including hosting of international delegations to view farming practice;
- contributions to field days;
- hosting the annual South Island Dairy Event.

Stakeholders indicated these contributions are appreciated by the local community, but they commented that Lincoln University could do more to market itself through these activities. The panel heard that the local community and related industries would like to hear and see more of Lincoln University. Additionally several stakeholders separately told the panel about a lay perception that agriculture is not associated with intellectual acumen. The assumption was that, if the University promoted itself more vigorously, this would help overcome what was seen by them as a national prejudice. A recommendation has been made about external communication (see section 2.3).

An important community and professional commitment is the University's partnership with DairyNZ, South Island dairy farmers, Ravensdown, Plant and Food Research Ltd, and Livestock Improvement Corporation in the South Island Dairying Development Centre (SIDCC). This cluster of expertise and resources aims to accelerate development of dairying in the South Island.¹¹¹

Stakeholders appreciated the professional contributions made by the University, commenting that the approach taken to dairying could be extended to the beef industry and to sheep farming.

Lincoln University is also home to high performance programmes of several sports, sponsors competitions and offers sports scholarships. The panel was told that the scholarships are "a huge drawcard" to attract athletes to the city of Christchurch. Partners in the sports scholarship scheme include Canterbury Rugby, Canterbury Golf, Canterbury Rowing, Canterbury Netball, Canterbury Hockey and Canterbury Cricket.¹¹²

The audit panel noted the University's proposed enhancement activities and, in particular, the aim to further develop knowledge transfer through SIDDC and develop a broader knowledge transfer strategy.

8.2 Relationships with Schools

Lincoln University's academic contributions to schools are *via* Science Outreach programmes and *via* STAR-funded teaching. As noted in section 1.1, Telford has experience in delivering sub-degree courses to secondary school students. Lincoln campus offers a limited range of courses for advanced school students *via* its Accelerated Learning Programmes (ALP). Telford also runs residential "taster weeks" for school students.

Science Outreach offers workshops and practical activities to both students and teachers. These are particularly valuable to small rural schools where facilities and opportunities are limited. The University also provides website links to information which will be useful to schools. Several university staff participate in the local high school's "Adopt-a-Scientist" initiative.

Stakeholders indicated the value to them and to school students of these initiatives but, again, commented that the University should promote itself more, for example about its scholarships and the opportunities Lincoln provided.

8.3 Relationships with Māori Communities

Relationships with the local Māori community are strong. The University includes in its proposed activities with Ngāi Tahu an intent to work together "to address ... fundamental and intergenerational issues around a treaty partnership between an iwi and a university".¹¹³ See Chapter 6 for further discussion of Lincoln University's relationship with Ngāi Tahu and other Māori communities.

¹¹¹Self-review report, pp68-69.

¹¹²Strategic Marketing and Recruitment Plan 2012-2014, p22. Portfolio document 74.

¹¹³Self-review report p75.

8.4 Relationships with Pacific Peoples

The University includes an objective in its Investment Plan to “further respond to the needs of the Pacific community”, both domestically and internationally, by developing a marketing strategy which aligns needs with Lincoln’s specialised offerings.¹¹⁴ Part of the strategy includes outreach into the Pacific region (see section 9.2). Locally initiatives appear to be in development of a more systematic and coordinated approach to student recruitment and engagement with stakeholder groups. The University also facilitates an institutional forum, Te Ara Pacifica, for considering the University’s Pacific development initiatives.¹¹⁵ The panel received insufficient information to make any assessment of effectiveness of the University’s engagement with Pacific people locally, and recognizes that opportunity for this is somewhat constrained by the demographic composition of Canterbury’s population.

¹¹⁴2011 Annual Report, p36.

¹¹⁵2011-2014 Investment Plan, p14.

9

External Partnerships and Collaborations

9.1 National Collaborations

The audit panel observed that Lincoln University has a small number of national collaborations with a strong strategic emphasis on collaboration that will advance its commitment to land-based teaching and research. “Innovative Partnerships” are the University’s fifth Strategic Priority, where it is stated that the University aims to establish, as a defining feature, the University’s “leading role in building innovative partnerships, nationally and internationally, to further the University’s strategic direction and reputation”.¹¹⁶ To that end, the University has established partnerships with key national players in the land-based sector. These major national collaborations that Lincoln has have already been detailed in Chapter 5, namely

- the Lincoln University Plus Model;
- the Agriculture and Life Sciences Partnership for Excellence project;
- collaborations with respect to research centres;
- links with Crown Research Institutes, both for research and for joint postgraduate supervision.

With respect to the LU Plus Model, the panel was made aware of the considerable importance attached to engagement with the agricultural sector, and in particular with the dairy industry, the red meat industry and with the Crown Research Institutes. These interactions impacted on all aspects of the University’s business, but are most obvious with respect to research developments and technology transfer (see section 5.1). Furthermore, the relationships appeared to the panel to be stable and growing.

C8. The panel *commends* the University on the range and depth of its domestic partnerships and on the manner in which it leverages these to gain benefits in research funding, delivery of applied teaching, facilitation of knowledge and technology transfer and support for strategic developments consistent with its vision.

Other initiatives where Lincoln University collaborates with other institutions include

- the joint appointment of staff and appointment of adjunct staff;
- joint Waterways Centre for Freshwater Management and joint Centre for Food Safety with the University of Canterbury;
- joint activities to enhance knowledge exchange;
- joint activities in international consultancy and aid provision;
- a partnership with Nelson Marlborough Institute of technology in Viticulture and Oenology qualifications;
- a joint MSc in Plant Breeding, with Massey University;

¹¹⁶2011 Annual Report, p33.

- joint Master of Water Resource Management and Postgraduate Certificate and Diploma, with the University of Canterbury.¹¹⁷

Partnerships with Ngāi Tahu have been discussed in Chapter 6.

Lincoln University is a member of the Canterbury Tertiary Alliance (involving the University of Canterbury and Christchurch Polytechnic Institute of Technology).¹¹⁸ It is recognized that the earthquakes of 2010 and 2011 have been a driver in enhancing collaboration and creating new opportunities within the tertiary sector in Christchurch, and that earthquake recovery in the education sector will require a collaborative approach.¹¹⁹

9.2 International Partnerships

The audit panel reviewed a list of Lincoln’s international agreements. It was told that there had recently been effort to reduce the number of memoranda of understanding with an emphasis on increasing the relevance and depth of activity related to Lincoln’s core focus.

The panel investigated how the University evaluated international partnerships. The University currently has no over-arching strategy for the establishment and management of such arrangements. Single-objective partnerships for internationalisation objectives including research, student exchange and study abroad appear to have been established in an opportunistic manner, in a devolved environment. The panel is of the view that multiple single-purpose partnerships are resource-intensive and often do not produce adequate return on investment. The panel believes the University would benefit from establishing fewer, high value partnerships, which leverage several international objectives aligned to the University’s strategic objectives.

The audit panel was advised that research partnerships were judged successful by informal means (for example, if projects get funding or if Lincoln graduates receive employment by the partner). But while faculty approval is required for new contracts, there does not appear to be any formal review or monitoring system for existing contracts. The audit panel supports a review of such relationships.

R10. The panel *recommends* that the University establishes criteria for the assessment and approval of potential international partnerships and introduces processes for regular monitoring and review to ensure partnerships are consistent with the University’s strategic objectives.

As noted in section 8.4, development of relationships with Pacific nations is part of Lincoln University’s strategic plan, and also in keeping with current government strategy.¹²⁰ Objectives in the Pacific include capacity-building in resource management and areas such as tourism, fisheries and agriculture. The University has a long-standing relationship with the University of the South Pacific whereby it trains animal science students at USP’s Alafua campus. The University also has a “significant” relationship with the Western Province of Papua New Guinea, articulated in the LincWanTok agreement which covers academic programmes, research, extension training and assessment activities (such as environmental impact analysis).¹²¹ It is noted that students from Papua New Guinea are studying at Telford as well as at the Lincoln campus.¹²² The University sees its

¹¹⁷Self-review report, p73-75.

¹¹⁸Strategic Marketing and recruitment Plan 2012-2014, p8. Portfolio document 74.

¹¹⁹2011 Annual Report, p35.

¹²⁰Investment Plan 2011-2013, p14.

¹²¹Self-review report, p71.

¹²²2011 Annual Report, p37.

arrangement with Papua New Guinea as providing a potential model for its relationships with other Pacific nations whose community needs and aspirations align with Lincoln's capability.

A5. The panel affirms the University's model for establishing a relationship with a South Pacific nation (the LincWanTok Model), for its comprehensive nature and focus on building alignment between Pacific needs and Lincoln capability.

9.3 Student Exchanges and International Student Recruitment

International student recruitment has been an important component of Lincoln University's growth since its establishment as an autonomous institution and continues to be an important feature of the University's financial sustainability strategy. The 2012-2014 Marketing and Recruitment Plan is a very comprehensive document which addresses a number of significant challenges.

The University has a tripartite agreement with Chinese universities which is supported by the New Zealand government.¹²³ While China has been the dominant source country for international students in recent years, the University recognizes that diversity is important. Collaborative approaches involving EducationNZ and also StudyChristchurch¹²⁴ will be employed for future recruitment.

The panel explored recruitment strategies with staff it interviewed, and discussed how the University quality assured recruitment processes and outcomes. It was satisfied the University has adequate processes in place for ensuring students meet entry standards and are well informed about programme requirements. The panel was told there is a "genuine involvement" of academics in the recruitment process, with a legacy effect of staff networks in some countries.

One challenge the University is grasping is the lack of inclination of domestic students (compared to overseas students) to undertake exchanges. Some initiatives have been introduced to communicate to domestic students the advantages of overseas study with University exchange partners. The panel supports the University's determination to encourage more outwards exchange movement.

¹²³Strategic Marketing and recruitment Plan 2012-2014, p17. Portfolio document 74.

¹²⁴ "International education is recognised as a priority sector for the Canterbury economy, our aim is to enhance the capability of the international education sector to contribute to the economic and social development within Canterbury". http://www.studychristchurch.co.nz/members_downloaded_6.08.12. StudyChristchurch is a joint initiative of Lincoln University, the University of Canterbury and CPIT.

Acknowledgments

The panel thanks in particular Dr Andrew West (Vice-Chancellor), Professor Sheelagh Matear (Assistant Vice-Chancellor (Academic)), Professor Hirini Matunga (Assistant Vice-Chancellor (Māori and Pacifica)), Dr Gill Jordan (Project Officer – Academic Quality) and Ms Nicki Masters (Administrator) for their support of the audit process and for the University's warm welcome to the panel. The panel appreciates the effort of all those who contributed to the University's self-assessment process, the compilation of the self-assessment Portfolio, including the self-review report, and the organisation associated with the site visit.

The panel is most grateful for the openness and frankness of all those who gave their time to appear before the panel and for their constructive comments and observations.

Audit Panel

Chair of the Panel

Professor Rob Allen
Auckland University of Technology

New Zealand members of the Panel

Professor Carolyn Burns
University of Otago

Professor Bruce Harris
University of Auckland

Mrs Ceillhe Sperath
External/industry member

Overseas member of the Panel

Emeritus Professor Debbie Clayton
Australia

In attendance:

Dr Jan Cameron
Director, New Zealand Universities Academic Audit Unit

Ms Heather Kirkwood
Quality Enhancement and Communications Manager, New Zealand Universities Academic Audit Unit

Appendix 1

Lincoln University

Statistical Overview 2011¹²⁵

The following figures incorporate Telford Division:

Student Enrolments	EFTS	% of EFTS
Lincoln	2,501	72%
Telford Division	982	28%
Total	3,483	
Staff (Full-time equivalent)		
Academic	256.0	
Research and technical staff	118.7	
Administrative and support staff	306.6	
Total	681.3	
Qualification Completions		
Postgraduate	250	
Undergraduate	429	
Sub-degree	414	
Entry-level (excl. English Language quals.)	648	

The following figures relate to Lincoln Campus activity only (i.e., excluding Telford Division):

Student Enrolments	Students (Head Count)	% of Students
Domestic	2,156	68%
International (full fee paying)	1,031	32%
Total	3,187	
Enrolments by Ethnicity	% of all EFTS	
European/Pakeha	75.6%	
Māori	7.6%	
Asian	17.2%	
Pacific Islanders	3.1%	
Middle Eastern/African/Latin American	3.1%	
Other/Unknown	2.5%	
Gender (n=3,187)		
Male	56.8%	
Female	43.2%	

¹²⁵ Statistical overview information is derived from the Lincoln University 2011 Annual Report pp.83-84.

Full-time/Part-time (n=3,187)

Full-time	61.1%
Part-time	38.9%

Enrolments by Qualification Type, Students (Head Count)

PhD Degrees	267
Masters Degrees, Research	91
Masters Degrees, Taught	144
Bachelor with Honours	27
Postgraduate Diplomas and Certificates	90
Graduate Diplomas and Certificates	91
Bachelor Degrees	1,696
Diplomas	213
Certificates (excluding Foundation Studies)	56
Study Abroad and Int. Exchange Undergraduate	113
Study Abroad and Int. Exchange Postgraduate	14
Certificates of Proficiency UG and PG	132
Certificates in Foundation Studies	88
English Language Programmes	165

Appendix 2

Enhancements Identified by the University¹²⁶

Challenges

Enhancements

Teaching & Learning

Encourage lecturing staff across the University to become involved with the FLI project and assess their courses against the FLI rubric.

Communicate the achievements and benefits of FLI more widely.

Determine the most effective way of encouraging examiners to deliver courses in a flexible format.

Support staff capability to be able to develop and deliver courses in a flexible format.

Ensuring all programmes have associated graduate outcomes that are appropriate, tangible and measurable. Make these available to students and external stakeholders.

Discuss criteria for the development and articulation of graduate outcomes that are appropriate, tangible and measurable.

The graduate profile database is up to date and complete.

Ensure all course outlines include information which indicates how the course learning outcomes contribute to the programme graduate outcomes.

Revise and introduce a standard course outline template across the University.

Introduce a process to ensure that all course outlines conform to the revised template within a set timeframe.

Achieving the perceived benefits in terms of academic programme delivery provided by the merger of Lincoln University with Telford Rural Polytechnic.

Align curriculum across all levels and academic pathways between qualifications are articulated.

Investigate the use of the Telford delivery models across the University.

Achieve a mix of provision that meets the land-based sector's demonstrated needs and demands.

¹²⁶ Extracted from the Self-review report.

Challenges

To further refine the University timetable, to enhance student choice and accessibility of courses, and make better use of the University facilities.

To be explicit and deliberate about our commitment to interdisciplinary and experiential learning and teaching.

To achieve the benefits associated with the merger of Lincoln University with Telford Rural Polytechnic.

To ensure students who are admitted to academic programmes after completing the Certificate of Foundation Studies or the Certificate in University Preparation are adequately prepared to be successful in their chosen programmes.

Enhancements

Investigate ways of increasing student enrolments.

Make better use of the Syllabus Plus software timetabling capability.

Review the timetable blocks allocated to core and most frequently taken elective courses to avoid lecture clashes and undesirable spacing of contact sessions.

Enforce a time limit on making changes to timetable blocks so that rooms can be allocated effectively and students are not inconvenienced by late timetable changes.

To include in the Learning and Teaching Plan 2012-2015 a clear statement about our commitment to interdisciplinary and experiential learning and teaching and a description of what is special about the learning and teaching environment at Lincoln University i.e. the 'Lincoln way'.

Develop vertical integration of programmes and staircasing pathways.

Incorporate Telford qualifications into Lincoln University publications appropriately.

Review the programme offerings to avoid duplication and Low volume courses and programmes.

Merge and align the policies and procedures of Lincoln University and Telford.

Streamline the administrative processes of Lincoln University and Telford.

Introduce a more structured dialogue with the faculties as the key stakeholder and undertake statistical analysis to measure student success.

Challenges

To ensure the practical work requirement of a programme is relevant, of value (the learning outcomes contribute to the programme graduate outcomes) and the attainment of outcomes is clearly defined and assessed appropriately.

To ensure that :

- * Programme graduate outcomes, curriculum, viability, etc are monitored consistently across the University;
- * Course curriculum, assessment, prerequisite courses and contribution to the programme graduate outcomes are monitored consistently.

To ensure that:

- * Course evaluations are acted upon to improve learning.
- * Lecturers who achieve poor evaluations seek assistance.

To make Course Outlines more widely available to assist non-enrolled students choose courses.

To introduce a process for annual programme and course checks across the University.

To recognise that the Telford learning environment and student population is different to that on the main campus.

To ensure that the enhancements introduced as a result of the Student Experience and Retention Project are continued and improved upon. Also the recommendations made are carried out.

To ensure that lecturers and course advisers are accessible to students.

Enhancements

Undertake a review of practical work across all programmes.

Develop programme and course monitoring reports.

Use these in a regular review and reporting framework.

Develop a clear procedure to close the loop from evaluation, notification, action, review and monitoring.

If the University adopts the principles of Open Access (proposal currently open for consultation) then these (or at least sections of the information) are likely to be available more widely.

Determine best format for a "Programme Monitoring Report".

Formalise a process for review and reporting back on the information provided.

Formalise a process for follow up reporting of the effectiveness of any actions taken.

Review the services to students on the Telford campus and seek to gain benefits for both Telford and Lincoln University students.

Introduce a reporting schedule on the progress of each sub-project or recommendation.

Review how course advice is provided to students in each faculty and division.

Challenges

To prepare students for postgraduate study in all faculties.

Providing students with high quality, timely and accessible course advice.

Practical work is relevant, adds value and learning outcomes are clearly defined and assessed.

To monitor the use of facilities and attendance on courses, workshops and tutorials offered by the Library, Teaching and Learning.

To ensure students have access to the range of support services they need on campus.

To ensure all staff are aware of their obligations under the Code of Practice for the Pastoral Care of International Students.

To ensure students have access to the range of support services they need on campus.

Ensuring all students perform to the best of their abilities by identifying and supporting poorly performing students.

Enhancements

Develop a best practice guide.

Review the Faculty of Commerce CPPP programme and consider whether a similar programme should be developed for use in other faculties and research centres.

Review the information provided to students on and off campus.

Encourage students to obtain course advice at an early stage in their course planning.

Ensure all course advisers are well informed.

Undertake a thorough review of practical work.

Establish a reporting framework for the merged Library, Teaching and Learning.

Evaluate the provision and accessibility of support services on campus.

Make recommendations for improvement where identified.

Undertake (by a variety of methods) to remind staff of their obligations under the Code of Practice for the Pastoral Care of International Students.

Evaluate the provision and accessibility of support services on campus.

Make recommendations for improvement where identified.

Identify poorly performing students early in the semester, before they fail the courses.

Encourage/require poorly performing students to take advantage of the support available.

Monitor the effect of intervention on student performance.

Challenges

To standardise research student progress reporting across the University.

Consistently identify and recognise highly performing students across the University.

Research Environment

Ensuring all students perform to the best of their abilities by identifying and supporting poorly performing students.

Consistently identify and recognise highly performing students across the University.

Increasing research publication output.

To ensure a consistent high standard of research supervision across the University.

Provide accurate and timely data to support supervisors and principal investigators.

To ensure consistency in the management, strategic development and enhancement of research across the University.

Enhancements

Review the support available to ensure it meets the diverse needs of all students.

Develop a reporting framework for research students that is meaningful and captures progress, research planning and feedback. Review the methods currently used. Identify and recommend best practice, recognising that one method is unlikely to satisfy all areas of the campus.

Identify poorly performing students early in the semester.

Encourage/require poorly performing students to take advantage of the support available. Monitor the effect of intervention on student performance. Review the support available to ensure it meets the diverse needs of all students.

Review the methods currently used. Identify and recommend best practice, recognising that one method is unlikely to satisfy all areas of the campus.

Undertake research to identify the reasons for lower research publication rate.

Identify barriers to publication output and where they exist put strategies in place to ameliorate them. Through student feedback, identify areas of concern and put strategies in place to address those concerns.

Development of a research reporting dashboard.

Ensure all Faculties and Research Centres have Research Committees, with well documented and appropriate Terms of Reference.

Challenges

To ensure consistency in the management of postgraduate students, strategic development of postgraduate programmes and enhancement of postgraduate enrolment across the University.

Te Tiriti o Waitangi

To further raise awareness of the Māori focussed committees, units and support across the wider University community.

To integrate the Telford Division into the institutional Māori Development structure.

To secure ongoing funding for the Māori Support Officer and the Māori Outreach Coordinator.

To establish stair-casing pathways from Telford programmes and Lincoln University programmes.

To ensure all students have the opportunity to access courses across all programmes which include Māori relevant content.

To formalise the relationship and ensure a clear understanding between participants in Maori focussed postgraduate research projects.

University Staff

Managing contract teaching staff.

Ensure new staff are well informed about University systems, processes and expectations.

Enhancements

Ensure all Faculties and Research Centres have Postgraduate Committees, with well documented and appropriate Terms of Reference.

To include Māori representation on Ahumairaki to reflect the national reach of the Telford Division.

Te Awhioraki to include the interests of Telford internal and extramural Māori students.

Establish a Kaupapa Māori Unit in the Telford Division (and possibly also one in the Foundation Studies and English Language Division).

Continue to offer appropriate courses to maintain the Māori Studies minor.

Continue to encourage the examiners of key courses to include Māori related content as appropriate.

Develop a template for a Memorandum of Understanding between students and iwi regarding postgraduate research.

Identifying staff in fixed term and contract positions who could be encouraged to apply for permanent positions in the University.

Investigate the feasibility of introducing a formal mentoring system.

Challenges

Recognise and reward research excellence.

Manage staff workload.

Using the results of the staff engagement survey to enhance staff satisfaction and engagement.

To ensure the professional development programme offered by the Library, Teaching and Learning is relevant and appropriate.

Enhancements

Review and make improvements to the new staff orientation procedure.

Update LPP with process documentation.

Assess the respective merits of workload models in use across the University.

Develop a university-wide workload model for academic staff.

Repeat staff engagement surveys to identify opportunities to increase engagement over time.

Assess how well the feedback on the professional development programme is working.

Institutional Quality Assurance

Ensuring the quality assurance processes at Telford are robust and appropriate.

Review the quality assurance processes for all form of delivery on the Telford campus.

Align and incorporate, where appropriate, the Telford quality assurance processes with those of the University.

To ensure that the performance of contract teaching staff is appropriate.

Introduce a process for moderating the performance of contract staff employed to teach at the University.

Introduction of a regular programme review schedule.

Develop a regular programme review schedule.

To evaluate the success of programme changes as a result of review.

Develop a process for monitoring the effect of programme changes.

Benchmarking - How do we know that a first class honours degree at Lincoln University is as good as one from elsewhere?

Investigate the feasibility of benchmarking against an appropriate external institution.

To ensure that PhD and Master's examination processes are in line with best practice.

Review the examination processes at Lincoln University, compare with those at other institutions and introduce changes as appropriate.

Challenges

To ensure internal consistency in the marking of examination scripts and dissertations.

To improve the exam script moderation process.

Quality assurance of special topics and courses that do not have a final exam.

Ensuring the results of surveys are distributed widely and acted upon.

Enhancements

Reconsider whether Lincoln University staff should be involved in the marking of thesis.

Introduce an internal process for moderating marking for all course assessment.

Introduce an internal process for moderating marking for all dissertations.

Introduce formal guidelines for the exam moderation process and responsibilities. To include ensuring assessment is appropriate for the course learning outcomes and academic level.

Introduce a moderation process for special topics and courses that do not have a final exam.

Ensure all staff are aware that survey results are available and that they can be accessed easily.

Ensure that the results are considered and reported on by the appropriate faculty/department/committee etc.

Ensure and document changes or initiatives that result from the outcome of surveys where appropriate.

Monitor the results of any enhancement initiatives.

Identify aspects that we do well.

Community Engagement

Recording the extension activities undertaken by Lincoln University staff and students.

To extend the reach of knowledge transfer activities through SIDDC.

To enhance the transfer of knowledge between Lincoln University, the national and international community and industry stakeholders.

Recover Lincoln University's and the greater Christchurch region's position as a destination for international education.

Introduce a centralised system to record such activities.

Involve a greater range of farmers in SIDDC events.

Develop a Lincoln University knowledge transfer strategy.

Progress collaborative activities with the University of Canterbury and CPIT and Education New Zealand.

Challenges

Enhancements

External Collaborations

To develop staircasing pathways for students, both within Lincoln University and also with external organisations.

Develop staircasing pathways so that students can progress through the programmes offered by Lincoln University.

Develop articulation agreements with other organisations so that clear pathways into Lincoln University programmes are available.

Appendix 3

New Zealand Universities Academic Audit

Unit – Te Wāhanga Tātari

Mission:

To contribute to the advancement of New Zealand 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.

Terms of reference:

- to consider and review the Universities' mechanisms for monitoring and enhancing the ongoing academic quality of academic programmes, their delivery and their learning outcomes, and the extent to which the Universities are achieving their stated aims and objectives in these areas;
- to comment on the extent to which procedures in place in individual universities are applied effectively;
- to comment on the extent to which procedures in place in individual universities reflect good practice in maintaining quality;
- to identify and commend to universities national and international good practice in regard to academic quality assurance and quality enhancement,
- to assist the University sector to improve its educational quality;
- to advise the New Zealand Vice-Chancellors' Committee on quality assurance matters;
- to carry out such contract work as is compatible with its audit role.

The Audit Unit acts as a fully independent body in the conduct of its audit activities.

Objective with respect to academic audits conducted during the period 2008-2012:

- Timely completion of academic audits producing audit reports acknowledged as authoritative, fair and perceptive, and of assistance to universities.

Appendix 4

Cycle 4 Focus - The 2007 Indicative Framework

	<i>Topics</i>	<i>Activities</i>
1	General	
2	Teaching and learning	2.1 The development, design, implementation and delivery of academic programmes and courses that: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> * develop intellectual independence, * are relevant to the needs of the disciplines, * are relevant to the needs of learners and other stakeholders. 2.2 The learning environment and learning support for students, including learning support for students from targeted groups. 2.3 Student achievement and success.
3	Research environment	3.1 Research students and research supervision. 3.2 Teaching and learning within a research environment. 3.3 The interdependence of research and teaching. 3.4 The role of critic and conscience of society.
4	Te Tiriti o Waitangi	4.1 The application of the principles of Te Tiriti to: ¹²⁷ <ul style="list-style-type: none"> * access to learning, * curriculum.
5	Academic and support staff	5.1 The determination of an appropriate academic staff profile across the institution. 5.2 Recruitment, appointment and induction strategies. 5.3 The implementation and monitoring of workload models. 5.4 Professional support, development and appraisal of academic staff.

¹²⁷ A discussion of the implications for universities arising from the principles of Te Tiriti is found in John M Jennings, *New Zealand universities and Te Tiriti o Waitangi*, Wellington, New Zealand Universities Academic Audit Unit, 2004, 'AAU Series on Quality' no.9, available at www.nzuaau.ac.nz/reports-and-papers

	<i>Topics</i>	<i>Activities</i>
6	<i>Institutional quality assurance</i>	6.1 The internal planning-implementation-reporting-evaluation-enhancement cycle as applied to academic processes, academic programmes and courses.
7	<i>Management and administrative support</i>	7.1 The development of a management and administrative infrastructure that provides effective support to research-informed teaching and learning. 7.2 The determination of an appropriate management and administrative staff profile. 7.3 Professional support, development and appraisal of management and administrative staff.
8	<i>Community engagement</i>	8.1 The identification of stakeholders and communities of interest, the seeking of advice, and the application of information gained to curriculum and student learning.
9	<i>External academic collaborations and partnerships</i>	9.1 The development of external collaborative research and academic ventures and partnerships that impact on curriculum and student learning and achievement.

The following questions are to be applied to each of the above topics:

Commitments

What are the goals and objectives and the expected outputs and outcomes in this area and how were they determined?

Strengths and progress

What are the key strengths in this area and what positive progress has been made in achieving the goals and objectives?

What are the output/outcome data and other evidence used to determine strengths and to judge progress, and how relevant and effective are they?

Challenges

What are the key challenges for the University in this area?

Monitoring

What key quality mechanisms and processes are used to monitor ongoing quality and to provide input into continuous improvement in this area, and how effective are they?

Enhancement

Arising from the self-assessment, what are the areas in which enhancement is needed?

What enhancement activities will be undertaken during the next planning period – say, three years – who will be responsible, and what are the expected outputs and outcomes of those enhancement activities?

How will the University monitor the effectiveness of changes arising from the enhancement activities?