Report of the 2016 Academic Audit of Lincoln University – Te Whare Wānaka o Aoraki

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

December 2016

Te Pokapū Kounga Mātauranga
mō ngā Whare Wānanga o Aotearoa

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

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Foreword

The 2016 audit of Lincoln University is the fifth academic audit of the University carried out by the Academic Quality Agency for New Zealand Universities (AQA). The University was last audited in 2012, as part of the Cycle 4 audit of New Zealand universities, by a Panel of auditors from the (then) New Zealand Universities Academic Audit Unit.[1]

The current (fifth) audit cycle focuses on teaching and learning and student support, including for postgraduate students.

The methodology adopted for the 2016 audit of Lincoln University is that used for all New Zealand universities in this cycle of audits. The methodology is based on a framework of 40 Guideline Statements which are expressions of the qualities or standards that a contemporary university of good international standing might be expected to demonstrate. The Guideline Statements were developed after extensive discussion with New Zealand university staff and Vice-Chancellors and consultation with other stakeholders, including students and academic auditors. The Guideline Statements are informed by comparable frameworks in other jurisdictions, in particular the QAA (UK).

AQA academic audits draw on a university's self-review and the supporting documentation it provides, publicly accessible pages of the University's website and interviews with staff, students, Council members and, where appropriate, external stakeholders. Lincoln University submitted its Self-review Portfolio, including a report and key supporting documentation in both print and electronic form, in April 2016. The Self-review Report included links to documents organised by the University in an electronic depository for the purpose of the audit. Further documents were provided on request as needed, some being tabled at the time of the site visit. The Panel also received a written statement from the Lincoln University Students' Association, LUSA.

These various sources and resources enabled Panel members to triangulate claims made by the University and to ensure the Panel's own conclusions do not rely on a single source of evidence. The Panel has used the current [2014-2018] Strategic Plan and associated documents to provide the context for this audit.

The Chair of the audit Panel and the audit Director visited the University for a pre-audit planning meeting in June, when they met with the Vice-Chancellor and other staff. At the time of this visit the Deputy Vice-Chancellor position was vacant.

The full Panel of five auditors, including an international auditor, came together at Lincoln on 7 August 2016 for the site visit on 8-11 August. In total, during the site visit the Panel spoke with 70 staff and 20 students from both Lincoln and Telford campuses, as well as three members of the University Council. This was at a time when the University was undergoing a number of changes of senior staff and this meant that unfortunately, due to vacancies or absences, the Panel was unable

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

to speak to several staff with key responsibilities. This omission might impact on the completeness of the evidence which was available to the Panel and it may be that appointments made since the Panel visit have addressed some of the evidence gaps.

This report presents the Panel's findings, based on the evidence it has considered. The AQA's conclusions are phrased as recommendations, affirmations and commendations, defined as follows:

Recommendations - refer to areas where the audit Panel believes the University would benefit from making some improvements or changes. Recommendations alert the University to what the Panel believes needs to be addressed, not to how this is done. The Panel may indicate some priority for recommendations by noting a need for action as urgent.

Affirmations – refer to areas which the University has already identified for itself in its Self-review Report or during the site visit as requiring attention, and about which the University has already taken action but does not yet have sufficient outcome to evaluate impact. Affirmations are in effect a validation by the audit Panel that something needs to be done and that the approach taken is likely to be effective.

Commendations – refer to examples of exceptionally good practice, or to examples of effective innovative practice, in areas which have or should result in enhancements to academic quality or to processes underpinning academic quality and which should produce positive impacts on teaching, learning and student experience.

The report is released under the authorisation of the AQA Board.

Dr Jan Cameron
Audit Director
For Academic Quality Agency for New Zealand Universities

November 2016

Executive Summary

Established in 1878 as an Agricultural College of the University of Canterbury, Lincoln University became a University in 1990. Its main campus is at Lincoln in Canterbury. In 2011 Telford Rural Polytechnic based in Balclutha merged with Lincoln University. Students from the new Lincoln-Telford Division include distance students, students based in Northland as well as students based at the Telford campus.

In 2015 the University had a total enrolment of 5,819 students (2,934 EFTS) and 682 full-time equivalent staff. Its portfolio of programmes, from Level 1 to Level 9, is predominantly in land-based disciplines or vocational areas.

The University was audited by the Academic Quality Agency for New Zealand Universities (AQA) in 2016. The 2016 audit follows the methodology used for all New Zealand universities in the fifth cycle of academic audits. It focuses on teaching and learning and student support, including postgraduate. The AQA audit methodology incorporates a framework of 40 Guideline Statements which articulate the qualities or standards which a contemporary university of good standing internationally might be expected to demonstrate.

Prior to 2016, Lincoln was most recently audited by AQA (as the New Zealand Universities Academic Audit Unit) in 2012. The University provided an update against the findings of that audit. While the audit Panel was aware of the pressures on Lincoln University resulting from the impact of the 2010 and 2011 earthquakes, and was mindful of the work involved subsequent to the merger with Telford Rural Polytechnic, it nevertheless expressed concern that some recommendations from the 2012 Cycle 4 audit relating to fundamental academic processes had not yet been fully addressed or were only being addressed as recently as 2015-2016.

At the time of the audit site visit a review of management and academic decision-making at the University was underway. A paper outlining options for the future of the University had also just been received by Council. The Panel was advised of these developments, however some proposals remained confidential; the Panel was not shown the contents of the Council paper. While the audit reflected the situation in place at the time of the audit, this audit report's recommendations must be read in light of subsequent developments.

The University has had a conventional academic management structure. The Panel learned that this was likely to change. The Panel is mindful that, because of its small size and the consequentially smaller pool of staff, Lincoln might be challenged to cover the full range of academic leadership roles which is normal for a university of any size. Similarly, the need to encompass a breadth of responsibilities within single roles might lead or have led to a dilution of impact in particular areas.

The Panel needed to evaluate leadership, management and governance as it was at the time of the audit. The Panel saw a need for a clear delegations statement pertaining to academic decision-making to be developed and communicated to staff. It also urged the University to complete a review and refreshment of all academic policies. There is a need for much more robust strategic planning related to teaching and learning, with objectives which can be evaluated and appropriate

key performance indicators. An apparent lack of external referencing and academic benchmarking was an issue raised in the previous Cycle 4 audit which remains relevant and did not appear to have been addressed in any systematic way.

Formal policies and processes in some academic areas were of concern to the Panel. In particular, policies, processes and expectations related to assessment and moderation needed attention, as did the provisions and procedures for appeals, academic grievances and complaints. The Panel assessed that the University's approach to academic integrity needed development. The Panel encouraged the University to expedite its redevelopment of policies and processes related to programme reviews.

The Panel has commented on how the University might address aspects of its Whenua (Māori) matrix within its curriculum and pedagogy, noting that this aspiration is dependent on staff capability. It was evident to the Panel that while a number of academic areas need development or review, there is good leadership being provided by the Library, Teaching and Learning Group in the development of teaching quality and support for student achievement.

The University has been doing some commendable work to encourage recruitment and support for students for whom university access might be a challenge. In particular, the Lincoln-Telford Division's activities in partnership with schools, trade academies and employers appear to be very effective in supporting transition to study. The University's Whenua Kura, which is a partnership between Lincoln University, Ngāi Tahu Farming and Te Tapuae o Rehua, aimed at enhancing participation and employment outcomes for Māori, was seen as a good initiative. A complementary Motu Strategy intended to enhance participation by domestic Pasifika students needs to be progressed. The University provides good support for its international students. The Panel was impressed by the contributions made by the Lincoln University Students' Association in several areas and urges the University to ensure that the very good links with management that LUSA has enjoyed in the past are sustained. The "open door" culture which exists with academic staff is a feature of the Lincoln experience and is appreciated by students.

At the time of the audit the University was placing strong emphasis on the development of the proposed Hub which would co-locate University staff with staff from several other land-based organisations. The Panel encourages the University to explore how this might benefit postgraduate study. Overall, the Panel was impressed with the University's policies and processes in the postgraduate area. These demonstrated a robust and coordinated approach across faculties which could be emulated in other areas. The "House Rules" documents covering both PhD and Master's requirements and student support are commended.

The University identified fifteen enhancements which were either in process or required. The Panel concurred that the areas identified need attention. The audit Panel has made eight commendations, four affirmations and thirteen recommendations.

Contents

List of Key Terms and Acronyms

AQA	Academic Quality Agency for New Zealand Universities
AR	The University's most recent (2015) Annual Report
CRM	The University's Customer Relationship Management tool
CUAP	Universities New Zealand Committee on University Academic Programmes
EFTS	Equivalent Full-Time Student(s)
EPI	Educational Performance Indicator
FTE	Full-time Equivalent (staff)
IP	Lincoln University 2015-2017 Investment Plan
ITS	Information Technology Services
KPI	Key Performance Indicator
LTL	Library, Teaching and Learning
LUCAS	The University's student administration system
LUSA	Lincoln University Students' Association
NZQA	New Zealand Qualifications Authority
Panel	Unless otherwise specified, "the Panel" refers to the Academic Audit Panel engaged by AQA to conduct the 2016 audit of Lincoln University
PDA	Professional Development and Appraisal
SD	Supporting document (forms part of the University's Self-review Portfolio)
SP	The University's Strategic Plan 2014-2018
SR	Self-review Report
TEC	Tertiary Education Commission

Preface

Lincoln University was established in 1990. Formerly a college of the University of Canterbury, it has a history going back to 1878 when it was established as Lincoln College, dedicated to agriculture. In 2011 Telford Rural Polytechnic, based in Balclutha, merged with the University.[2] Telford campus, based on a 910ha farm, was established in 1963 and is owned by a trust.[3]

In 2016 the University operated from Te Waihora campus at Lincoln in Canterbury, with a campus in Balclutha at Telford and a satellite campus at Northland College in Kaikohe. A number of students associated with Telford study by distance.

In the twelve months prior to the audit site visit, i.e. during the period in which the audit self-review was undertaken, Lincoln University experienced two changes in Vice-Chancellor (one of whom was an Acting Vice-Chancellor) and the departure of several senior management staff, including all of the five previous Deputy Vice-Chancellors. The current Vice-Chancellor had been in post five months at the time of the site visit. These staff changes have had implications for the audit and, in particular, the assessment which it would be fair for an audit panel to make. In particular, some aspects evaluated in the audit report were no longer current and other changes were likely. It was also the case that the Panel was made aware of possible future developments which were not at the time widely known among staff. This led, in some cases, to the Panel being given contradictory information by some of the staff it interviewed. As a result the triangulation of some of the audit findings became difficult. Overall the Panel's approach has been to assess the lived experience at Lincoln as it was described in the Self-review Report or by staff and students during interviews, and to evaluate the evidence whereby the University had made its own assessment.

Since the audit site visit, but within the timeframe of the audit process, Lincoln announced a major "refresh" of the University involving a review of a wide range of University activity.[4] This process will be in train at the time this audit report is released.

University Profile

In 2015 the University had a total enrolment of 5,819 students (2,934 EFTS) and 682 full-time equivalent staff.[5]

The Te Waihora campus offers a range of degree-level land-based programmes as well as University Studies and English Language programmes. The Lincoln-Telford Division, which operates across both Te Waihora and Telford campuses, is focussed on sub-degree level (L1-4) agriculture and horticulture and related disciplines such as apiculture, forestry and veterinary practice. It has arrangements with a number of farms where students gain work experience during their study.[6]

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[2] www.beehive.govt.nz/release/telford-polytech-merge-lincoln-university Accessed 14.08.16.
[3] Self-review Report (henceforth referred to as SR), p15.
[4] www.lincoln.ac.nz/refreshing Accessed 23.08.16; www.lincoln.ac.nz/Lincoln-Home/About-Lincoln/Refreshing-Lincoln/Project-Updates/Dialogue-has-commenced-on-refreshing-Lincoln-University/ Accessed 22.08.16.
[5] Annual Report 2015 (henceforth referred to as AR), pp75-76.
[6] www.telford.ac.nz/About-Telford/ Accessed 14.08.16.

Off shore, Lincoln offers a Postgraduate Diploma in Applied Science in Sarawak, Malaysia, a Master of International Nature Conservation in Germany, and a Master of Natural Resources Management and Ecological Engineering in Austria. A Postgraduate Certificate in Academic English intended to be offered from 2016 in Harbin, China, had not proceeded. Lincoln offers two programmes jointly taught and awarded with the University of Canterbury: a Master's Degree and Postgraduate Diploma in Water Resource Management and a Master of Disaster Risk and Resilience.

In 2015, 27% of Lincoln students by headcount (1,592 out of 5,819) were enrolled in undergraduate degree-level programmes, approximately 7% in postgraduate programmes, approximately 40% in pre-degree certificates and diplomas and 26% of students enrolled were in Certificate of Proficiency (both undergraduate and postgraduate), English Language and STAR programmes.[7] Figures provided to the Panel indicate a much higher proportion of EFTS than headcount at the degree and postgraduate level (66% EFTS in 2014, compared to approx. 34% headcount) which might be accounted for by the smaller size (40-80 credits) of many sub-degree level qualifications.[8] The Panel was told that the Telford Division has approximately 950 EFTS, of which 750 EFTS are Level 3-4. Approximately 100 students in the Telford Division study on Te Waihora campus at Lincoln.

Extrapolating from different data sources, one can conclude that Lincoln University currently has around twice as many pre-degree and sub-degree level students as degree-level and postgraduate students, but twice as many EFTS are derived from degree and postgraduate enrolments as from pre-degree and sub-degree enrolments.

The majority of Lincoln students study part-time (67%) and are domestic students (81%).[9] The proportion of part-time students may be accounted for by enrolments in short programmes of less than 120 credits (2,498 students in degree level study equated with approximately 1,956 EFTS in 2015, leaving approximately 3,321 students accounting for 978 EFTS).[10]

Just under 6% of domestic students identified as Māori (5.9% of EFTS at level 4 and above) and less than 1% identified as Pacific students (0.8% of EFTS at level 4 and above). The majority of Māori students are enrolled in Level 3-6 certificates and diplomas.[11]

International students account for 19% of EFTS (564.9 EFTS in 2015). Of the 1,104 international students, the majority come from China (506 students or 46%) with the remainder originating from a range of countries.[12]

Of the 682 staff (FTE) reported in 2015, half (350 or 51%) were teaching and research staff.[13]

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[7] Calculated from AR p75. STAR = Secondary-Tertiary Alignment Resource students, who are secondary school students studying tertiary courses.

[8] http://pr2014.publications.tec.govt.nz/uploads/The-Tertiary-Education-Performance-Report-2014.pdf pp 44-45 Accessed 15.08.16; www.nzqa.govt.nz/nzqf/search/results.do?org=700642001 Accessed 15.08.16; 2014 Annual Report, p79. The Strategic Plan states that in 2012 2,063 EFTS (56%) derived from degree and postgraduate enrolments and 1,654 (44%) from pre-undergraduate programmes (SP, p3).

[9] AR p75.

[10] Calculated from 2015 Annual Report data and TEC data, see n7. Calculations are inexact since data sources do not differentiate diploma and certificate enrolments which are at degree-level (Level 5 or above).

[11] AR, pp24-25.

[12] AR, p25.

[13] AR, p76.

Lincoln's academic offerings span a wide range of programmes from Level 1 (pre-degree) to doctoral level. The Qualifications Reform initiated by the University in 2011 streamlined the portfolio of offerings to focus on land-based interests, including such areas as sport and recreation, tourism management and Māori planning and development (see section 3.2).[14] In addition to pre-degree certificates and diplomas in university preparation and English language, diplomas and certificates are offered in various land-related areas. Most of the latter were inherited from Telford Polytechnic where a key part of the Telford provision is the work experience gained on Telford farms.[15] The Panel noted that some Level 1-3 courses provided at Telford are subject to an investigation by the Tertiary Education Commission (TEC)[16] and that a number of Level 3-4 courses were subject to a government competition for funding in 2017.[17] The contestable funding, the outcome of which was still unknown in mid-2016, concerned approximately 80% of the Telford Division's delivery (approx. 750 EFTS). The Panel was informed that this imposed uncertainty on prospective students, Telford staff, those on teaching contracts and provider partners.

The University is structured academically as three faculties, each headed by a Dean, and two Divisions each headed by a Director:

> Faculty of Agribusiness and Commerce (four departments; approx. 78 academic staff)[18]
> Faculty of Agriculture and Life Sciences (four departments; approx. 45 academic staff)
> Faculty of Environment, Society and Design (three departments and one school; approx. 46 academic staff)
> Lincoln -Telford Division (approx. 28 teaching staff)
> Division of University Studies and English Language (approx. 12 teaching staff).

The University also has two self-governing research centres (the Bio-Protection Research Centre and the Agribusiness and Economics Research Unit) and several companies (for example, Lincoln Hospitality is a subsidiary that provides accommodation, catering, recreation and early childhood services). The University owns, leases and operates a variety of farms.

At the time the self-review was undertaken Lincoln University had a conventional management structure of an Executive Leadership Team including the Vice-Chancellor, Deputy Vice-Chancellors, Deans, Directors and heads of several corporate services. Between the Panel's receipt of the Self-review Report and the site visit a number of these positions had become vacant. Some roles were being undertaken by people in acting or interim positions. The Vice-Chancellor signalled a review of senior management roles and titles. In particular, of relevance to the audit, the former role of Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Academic Quality and Student Experience) had been replaced by an interim Chief Academic Officer. It was anticipated that this would be the only academic position in the new Senior Management Team.

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[14] 2016 Calendar, pp3-5.

[15] www.telford.ac.nz/About-Telford/ Accessed 14.08.16.

[16] The findings of the investigation were published by the TEC on 19/10/16, after the academic audit had been completed.

[17] www.tec.govt.nz/About-us/News/Media-releases/TEC-confirms-two-investigations/ Accessed 15.08.16, www.tec.govt.nz/Funding/Fund-finder/SAC-levels-3-and-4-competitive-pilot/ Accessed 15.08.16.

[18] Staff numbers as in 2016 Calendar.

For the audit these changes posed a challenge in that there were gaps in role knowledge and responsibility that might have informed the Panel during its deliberations. It was difficult to assume where future responsibilities pertaining to academic quality would lie. The Panel was also aware that some individuals were carrying more than one area of responsibility in the interim arrangements. It would be misleading, therefore, for this audit report to cite a current management structure for the University, other than that the Chief Academic Officer role currently has responsibility for all academic matters as well as for the Library and for Lincoln Research and innovation. The Director, Teaching and Learning, the University Librarian, the Deans and the two Division Directors report to this position. Heads of Departments and School report to the Deans.

Terms of reference for Lincoln's Academic Board refer only to academic programmes, courses, teaching and learning and the award of qualifications, as indicated in the Education Act (S182(2)(a)). The Academic Board has authority to establish standing committees or working parties if appropriate. The Panel notes that the Board's terms of reference are due for review in 2017, which will be necessary if there are changes to the senior management structure or the functions of the Board. Staff advised that changes were in train to amend the Academic Board's functions and composition to extend its oversight and allow a stronger academic voice to be heard.

The academic committee structure which flowed from Academic Board at the time of the audit comprised:

> Courses Committee
> Academic Programmes Committee
> Academic Administration Committee
> Faculty/Division Teaching Committees (which report to the above three committees as relevant).

Other committees, namely Research and Commercialisation; Māori and Pasifika; Finance; and Education and Marketing are sub-committees of the Executive Leadership Team. Human and Animal Ethics Committees report to the Vice-Chancellor and to Council.

Vision, Mission and Strategic Plan

Lincoln University defines its mission as "to deliver a great whole-of-university experience for students, clients and staff" and its vision to be "a specialist land-based university that's a great place to learn, discover and share". The "essence" of Lincoln University is articulated in a Strategic Framework which states that: "Lincoln University will provide high quality education, student support, R&D, and knowledge and technology extension for the primary industries, tourism, sport, conservation, Māori, land-based professions, Pasifika, and other indigenous peoples, whilst becoming profitable, national and global".[19]

The University's strategic documents reiterate the distinctiveness of Lincoln as focussed on land-based programmes, research and knowledge transfer. The 2014-2018 Strategic Plan is intended to

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[19] Lincoln University Strategic Plan 2014-2018 (henceforth referred to as SP), p2.

"deepen" the land-based specialisation and "enhance Lincoln's position as a global centre of excellence in the land-based sector".[20] In 2013 Lincoln became one of the first universities outside Europe to become a partner in the Euroleague for Life Sciences, a network of leading universities cooperating in the fields of Natural Resource Management, Agricultural and Forestry Sciences, Life Sciences, Veterinary Sciences, Food Sciences and Environmental Sciences.[21]

The strap-line for Lincoln University which is widely used is *Feed the world; Protect the future; Live well.*

Lincoln's strategic objectives are:
- Vibrant, successful student experience and highly-employable, entrepreneurial graduates, who will embrace life-long learning and continuing professional development
- High engagement with clients
- Energetic, high-performing, well-rewarded staff
- Innovative and responsive curriculum
- Creative, productive, high-yielding research that informs policy and practice
- Modern equipment and facilities
- Culture that engenders quality
- Achieve surplus with annual growth in revenue of 5%.[22]

At the time of the audit the University was managing several challenges, some of which are a legacy of the 2010 and 2011 Christchurch earthquakes. The University's claims for earthquake damage had not been finalised, meaning that significant building remediation and replacement had not yet commenced. Financial sustainability was an issue and while there had been some recovery in student numbers it remained a challenge to ensure growth continued.

The University's research strategy has been refined to align with the Strategic Plan and "amplify the connectedness with industry and commercial entities". At the same time a reform of Lincoln's qualifications was implemented, which was also intended to ensure alignment with the University's strategic mission and to assist with financial sustainability. The University was well advanced in plans to develop "The Hub" which would bring together postgraduate students and Lincoln University staff with staff from several Crown Research Institutes and land-based organisations (AgResearch Limited; Plant and Food Research; Landcare Research; DairyNZ). The 2013 Whenua Strategy had been implemented as a platform for strategies and activities which will facilitate Māori land-based responsiveness. The University had also taken action to significantly reduce costs and improve operational efficiency.[23]

The Panel was told that the merger with Telford Rural Polytechnic provided opportunity for "vertical integration" of programmes and research (see Section 2.2). The University cites distributed delivery throughout New Zealand and engagement with schools, trades academies and elite training farms as

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[20] Lincoln University Investment Plan 2015-2017 (henceforth referred to as IP), p3-4.
[21] The League is for European universities. Institutions outside Europe may be partners (but not members). www.euroleague-study.org/109993#jfmulticontent_c232921-1 Accessed 15.08.16
[22] SP, p2.
[23] IP, pp3-5.

mechanisms for delivery of courses which not only contribute to the primary (i.e. agriculture) sector but also contribute to a Government priority of attracting and engaging at risk young people.[24] However the Panel heard that the future mechanisms for some of the Telford delivery were under review.

Finally, it should be noted that at the time of the audit site visit a paper reviewing options for the future of the University had just been received by Council. While the Panel was advised of this document, and it had been reported in the media, the Panel was not privy to the contents of the paper. The Panel is aware that by the time its audit report is released there could be new options for Lincoln under discussion.

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[24] IP, pp15-16.

1. Leadership and Management of Teaching and Learning

As described in the Preface, Lincoln University's leadership and management structure was in a process of change at the time of the audit. Since the audit evaluates the effectiveness of current processes, this section necessarily refers to the structure and responsibilities which were in place, rather than to intended changes which could not yet be evaluated.

1.1 Delegations

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

The only delegations document provided to the Panel was the Delegations Policy which defined the delegated role from Council to the Vice-Chancellor, and the following principles for sub-delegation from the Vice-Chancellor:

> "[F]ull and clear delegations provide University management with clear instructions from Council and the Vice-Chancellor for the management and reporting of their assigned responsibilities. This provides management with assurances as to:
> - The legislative authority necessitating the tasks assigned to the group(s) or positions within the University's management structure.
> - The range and scope of powers available to them to complete the tasks of their assigned position and expectations in terms of reporting performance of those tasks.
>
> Delegations are assigned to a group(s) or a position holder, not the person or person(s) in that position. …
>
> As personnel change within the management of the University there will be a requirement to induct the new position holder in the delegated authorities of the organisational position to which they have been appointed. This induction will be carried out by the person who holds the position that has been assigning the delegation or a suitably qualified nominee.
>
> Staff members holding a delegated authorisation for the position they have within the University will be required to sign for that delegation to confirm they understand the scope of the delegation and the responsibility and reporting that it entails.
>
> A complete list of delegated authorisations will be maintained, reviewed and updated on a regular basis. This will encompass protocols to capture temporary delegations in the event of sickness, annual leave or other absence of the holder of a delegated authority."[25]

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[25] Delegations Policy 2009.

Staff who were asked how they knew who had delegated authority for different activities were vague in their understanding and most likely to assume this was defined by roles. The Panel saw several sample letters of delegation to individual staff, and position descriptions which specified authorities. For example, the Chair of the faculty Postgraduate Studies Committee may approve admission to postgraduate study in that faculty. Such responsibilities appeared to be stated clearly for the individual but not communicated more widely. The Panel was also concerned that many academic decisions appeared, in practice, to be taken at faculty level, without central oversight, risking inconsistency which might result in inequities for students across faculties.

The Self-review Report states that some key academic decisions are made by the Academic Board or its committees. The only decision that the Academic Board appeared empowered to make is confirmation of examination results - all other "decisions" of the Academic Board are in fact recommendations to Council.[26] Likewise, both the Academic Programmes Committee and the Courses Committee make recommendations or give advice to Academic Board. The Academic Administration Committee (AAC), however, has authority to make decisions on a range of matters on behalf of the Vice-Chancellor (pertaining to admissions; academic progress; relief of hardship; aegrotat outcomes) or the Academic Board (pertaining to such matters as approval of personal courses of study; dispensations from regulations and appointment of examiners). The terms of reference for this committee also state clearly those matters where decisions may be further delegated, to Deans, Academic Programme Managers or the Postgraduate Subcommittee of AAC.[27]

The Panel heard that Academic Board was not very effective, that staff had felt disempowered in its deliberations and that there are intentions to extend the role and decision-making powers of Academic Board. Any such move will need to conform to the requirements of the Education Act, in that Academic Board's role is as advisory to Council and its powers are those delegated by Council.[28]

The current (2016) University Calendar is clear on a number of delegations. For example, it states that applications for special admission and admission *ad eundem statum* must be made to the Deputy Vice-Chancellor who presumably makes a decision on behalf of AAC for the Academic Board. According to the regulations, approval of courses of study is made by the relevant Programme Co-ordinator.[29] Some policies also define delegated authority (for example, the Course Advice and Approvals Policy defines levels of responsibility and delegation flows).

The Panel explored the role of Heads of Department/School. It was told that these are short 2-3 year appointments reporting to the Dean and that staff "take their turn" at being Head. This process has implications for exercise of authority, especially in matters related to staffing and staff performance.

In summary, delegations for academic decision-making are somewhat dispersed. Although these are specified in some terms of reference, some position descriptions and some regulations, there is a need for a cohesive statement that is widely disseminated so that it is clear to all staff who has authority to make which decisions. This has become more urgent as roles and, possibly, terms of

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[26] Terms of Reference Academic Board 2014.
[27] Terms of Reference Academic Administration Committee 2013.
[28] Education Act 1989 s 182(2).
[29] 2016 Calendar pp37; 39.

reference for the Academic Board and key academic committees are changing. The Panel was told that the University is looking at greater empowerment of Deans so they can make decisions on a local basis around employment, research and courses.

Recommendation : The Panel recommends that when the new management and committee structures are finalised the University review which academic decisions are taken at which level of the organisation and articulates and communicates to all staff a clear delegations statement for all academic decision-making.

In terms of senior management structure, institutional responsibility for academic quality rests with the (interim) Chief Academic Officer (CAO). This person had been in the role only a few weeks at the time of the site visit. The Panel was told that a differentiation of areas of responsibility was still being finalised and that it was unclear which of the CAO or the Chair of Academic Board or the Acting Director, Academic Quality would be responsible for which areas. At the time of the site visit day-to-day responsibility for academic quality, resided with the Acting Director, Academic Quality who was also the Chair of Academic Board. The Chief Academic Officer's responsibilities included escalated student and other issues which could not be resolved by the Deans.

The Panel was also told that it is the Deans who manage academic quality, though some noted that Heads of Department also have a role. At one level this observation is correct in that all staff have a part to play in ensuring quality. However with respect to delegated authority it was unclear to the Panel what authority these different parties had.

Academic Managers (Programmes) have some oversight of academic quality pertaining to programmes in the faculties and divisions, and faculty teaching committees have an oversight role with respect to programme delivery.

While a delegations schedule specifies decision-making authority, academic policies and procedures might also define some decision-making authority, as well as assisting with quality assurance by specifying expected or required practice. The 2012 Cycle 4 academic audit identified the need to update a number of policies.[30] In response, the University commenced an initiative in 2015 to review and refresh all academic policies to ensure the overall policy framework is coherent and reflects all the academic activities of the University. In addition to determining whether a policy is needed, one of the project's main goals, as advised in the Cycle 4 audit report, is to align and consolidate the original Lincoln and Telford policies and related procedures and guidelines. Other objectives are:
- to ensure all polices reflect a whole-of-University position including Divisions, Faculties and Research Centres;
- to ensure all policies reflect the University's Open Access position;
- to ensure all policies comply with formatting standards and templates and reflect current nomenclature;
- to ensure consistency across policies, guidelines, House Rules and Regulations.[31]

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[30] Lincoln University Cycle 4 Academic Audit Report, p23.
[31] Terms of Reference, Policy Refresh Project (not dated).

The 2016 Panel noted that the terms of reference of the project are comprehensive and encompass the 2012 concerns. However limited action seems to have been taken to address the objectives of the project. The Panel was concerned to read policies where, in some cases, a significant amount of time had elapsed since the last review, or the specified date for review had passed. For instance, the Assessment Policy is dated November 2005.[32] The Panel is mindful of developments in pedagogy and assessment over the last ten years which might at least have prompted a review to ensure policy remained fit-for-purpose. As with the delegations schedule, an overall review of academic policies is increasingly critical given the changes which are under way at Lincoln.

Recommendation: The Panel recommends that the University expedite the implementation of the Policy Refresh Project and ensure that all academic policies and procedures which have not been reviewed since 2010 be reviewed and, if necessary, revised by the end of 2017 and that henceforth all academic policies and procedures be reviewed within five years of the previous review.

1.2   Strategic and operational planning

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

The institutional strategic and planning documents provided to the Panel were:
>   Strategic Plan 2014-2018
>   Investment Plan 2015-2017
>   2015 Business Plan (a one-page summary of tasks by person responsible)
>   Learning and Teaching Plan (?2012-2015)[33]
>   Fourth Learning and Teaching Strategic Directions 2016-2020 (Draft)
>   Research for Lincoln – A Research Strategy 2014-2018
>   Whenua Strategy.

The Panel was also shown some confidential draft documents which outlined planned strategic projects and potential key performance indicators (KPIs). The Panel was told that Council does not currently have any critical KPIs for internal reporting purposes.

The Panel set aside the 2015 Business Plan as none of the individuals identified as having a responsibility now held those roles at Lincoln, and only in one case was the 2016 incumbent familiar with the strategic tasks identified in that part of the Business Plan.[34]

The Strategic Plan identifies strengths, weakness, opportunities and constraints. Key strategic issues are grouped in three themes: restore institutional viability; grow the performance of New Zealand's land-based industries; and expand the global influence of New Zealand's land-based expertise. The

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[32] http://registry.lincoln.ac.nz/cache/LPP/Assessment%20Policy%20(ATAS).pdf Accessed 16.08.16.
[33] The plan itself is not dated. Its title states that it "supports the Learning and Teaching Strategic Direction 2012-2015".
[34] This referred to the Whenua Strategy. See Section 2.2.

Strategic Plan has performance indicators, some of which are measurable (e.g. campus master plan 50% implemented) but others of which are subjective (e.g. "enduring" education and research partnerships).

There did not appear to be a close alignment between the KPIs of the Investment Plan (which derive from TEC Education Performance Indicators) and the performance measures of the Strategic Plan. Neither did there appear to be any connection between the Fourth Learning and Teaching Plan and the objectives of the Strategic Plan. Rather, the latter is focussed most strongly on building capability for the land-based sector, nationally and internationally. Mention is made of curriculum but there is little focus on teaching and learning as these are considered in the Learning and Teaching Plan.

The main goal of the Learning and Teaching Strategic Directions 2016-2020 is for Lincoln University to "compete nationally and internationally in how it delivers quality teaching in modern digital and physical learning environments" (see Section 6). The strategy supports the institution's strategic aim to maximise student enrolments. In addition to addressing technology developments it also promotes the scholarship of teaching and research on quality teaching practice.[35] As a work in progress this document is ambitious in scope, and necessary to ensure Lincoln University does "compete nationally and internationally" in delivering quality teaching. The document's development needs to move beyond strategies (such as "ensuring assessment standards are consistent across the University") to consider *how* these strategies will be implemented. The Panel notes that since the Cycle 4 audit the University has completed two major strategic projects related to teaching and learning, namely the Connecting the Knowledge Networks Project (2012) which informed the third Learning and Teaching Strategic Directions and addressed systems and infrastructure support for learning, teaching and research activities, and the Qualifications Reform in 2013-2015 (see Section 3.1).

The Research Strategy and the Whenua Strategy directly address aspects of the Strategic Plan. The Research Strategy has an emphasis on building relevant research capability. It also considers postgraduate teaching in the form of the development of a postgraduate school for the Lincoln Hub.

The Whenua Strategy, approved in 2013, addresses the University's strategic theme of growing the performance of New Zealand's land-based industries. It also emphasises capability building for Māori and their connection with the land. The University reported that development and implementation of activities associated with the Whenua Strategy has been delayed due to the DVC Māori and Communities position being vacant until recently.[36] The Panel received an update of action now underway and a recent (June 2016) assessment of progress. In particular the assessment highlighted the need for new ways of working, not just new initiatives, which would permeate University business (for example, incorporation of kaupapa Māori pedagogy; appropriate marketing and branding). The objectives are ambitious. A 2016 assessment of progress advised development of a medium term operational plan for the strategy. It also noted that the strategy lacked specific goals

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[35] Learning and Teaching Strategic Directions 2016-2020, p1.
[36] The newly-appointed DVC Māori and Communities has also departed the University since the audit site visit.

and intended outcomes, noting that this makes it very difficult to assess progress or effectiveness, and risks ineffective or inefficient management of investment.[37]

The major gap in all the above plans (except the Investment Plan, whose KPIs are predetermined) is an evaluative mechanism whereby progress towards a strategic objective can be measured, and its impact assessed. Most performance indicators are actions which might have happened or be happening (or not happening). The Panel concluded that currently the University might be challenged to produce evaluative reports of any rigour concerning progress towards meeting its objectives. There is no dashboard of the kind that readily conveys to management and staff scores on various measures and progress towards goals. There did not appear to be easily accessible institution-wide data for a range of student learning and achievement or teaching-related information, which was not helped by uneven use of tools such as Moodle and Gradebook and by varying practices in faculties.

The Panel was shown a set of draft institutional measures. Given these had not yet been to Council this audit report cannot discuss the detail. The Panel observes, however, that these measures are data-driven and some version of them should give the University a basis for monitoring its performance which it does not currently appear to have. The University is encouraged to ensure the new measures address the expectations of this Guideline Statement.

Recommendation: The Panel recommends that future strategic plans (including plans related to teaching and learning) include objectives related to student achievement and teaching quality, with key performance indicators which inform academic quality assurance processes.

Affirmation: The Panel affirms the Whenua Strategy and encourages the University to move promptly to systematic implementation, with appropriate goals and performance measures, as is feasible within the objectives and capability of the University.

In the context of strategic approaches to ensuring the University meets nationally and internationally agreed standards of academic quality and quality assurance, the Panel noted that the Cycle 4 academic audit made two recommendations which refer to such activity:

- 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. (R2)[38]

- 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

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[37] Whenua Strategy: implementation assessment, June 2016, pp5, 9.
[38] Lincoln University Cycle 4 Academic Audit Report, p21.

require consistent application across the University, and those activities which require formal, rather than informal, oversight. (R5)[39]

In addition to benchmarking specific to assessment (see Section 3.5), institutional benchmarking was explored by the Panel as a follow-up to the Cycle 4 concerns. Apart from mention of an initiative with the University of Tasmania, the Panel gained no information that convinced it that the Cycle 4 recommendation had been addressed. Yet the Panel did learn of benchmarking opportunities, such as the University's partner status with the Euroleague for Life Sciences.[40] Comments by staff that Lincoln would need a university similar to itself in order to undertake meaningful benchmarking overlook the fact that many academic processes and procedures, and teaching and learning development approaches, apply regardless of disciplinary focus.

Staff had endeavoured to address the recommendation related to the development of a quality assurance framework. An initial document states that the principles that would apply to a quality assurance framework are:
- Individual staff responsibility and contribution
- Peer review and approval leading to collective decisions
- Student engagement and representation
- Evidence-based monitoring and review
- Continuous improvement and enhancement
- Support for the University's strategic direction
- Externally referenced.[41]

Given that work on this project only began in 2016 it would be premature for the Panel to comment on the outcomes. The University is encouraged to persist with development of the framework.

Recommendation: The Panel recommends that the University urgently address Recommendation 2 from the 2012 Cycle 4 academic audit regarding externality and benchmarking, by exploring 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.

1.3   Student input

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

The majority of University committees or boards, including Council, include one or more student members. Usually these are appointed as nominees of the Lincoln University Students' Association, LUSA. Students had also been members of a number of working groups, including the group which

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[39] Lincoln University Cycle 4 Academic Audit Report, p23.
[40] The ELLS states that its focus is on joint teaching and learning, student and staff mobility, and quality assurance and that through the sharing of expertise and resources this network will enhance the national and international position and potential of all partner universities. www.euroleague-study.org Accessed 16.08.16.
[41] Lincoln University Academic Quality Framework: A Guide to Academic Processes and Decision Making, p1.

undertook the audit self-review. The Self-review Report documented a number of initiatives at Lincoln which had been undertaken jointly between LUSA and the University.

The Panel interviewed members of the LUSA Board and was impressed by their commitment and enthusiasm. The Panel concluded that they were a strong and effective voice on the Te Waihora campus. The Panel heard that the Vice-Chancellor meets regularly with students, both formally and informally. Students expressed some concern at the loss of established points of contact with management, resulting from recent departures of senior staff. The University should take care to restore these connections within the proposed management structure as soon as possible.

Student input by and for students based on the Telford campus was reported as weak or absent. The University should ensure inclusiveness of Telford students in areas which affect them.

The class representative system seemed to be working well, and regular meetings between class representatives and Deans were obviously valued by both parties.

Feedback by students is also considered in Section 5.5.

1.4   Infrastructure

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

Degree-level teaching, learning and student experience at Lincoln is predominantly a campus-based activity. The delay in campus redevelopment consequent to delays in earthquake claims settlements has clearly had a significant impact on staff, students and management. Over 40% of floor space, including 60% of specialised laboratory space, had to be vacated after the earthquakes. The Panel noted that a whole generation of degree students had entered and completed their study during this time of space disruption. The University has met the challenges in various ways to ensure business continuity, including reconfiguring existing space to accommodate laboratories and teaching spaces, new buildings and the development of a multi-functional student space, "The Workshop".[42] The Panel was told that a deadline for settlement of all insurance claims was approaching, in February 2017. The Panel understood this to imply that settlement would give some security to subsequent infrastructure planning, which until that date has been uncertain.[43]

In July 2012 a Te Waihora Campus Development Plan was developed. The University invited staff contributions to the plan development. It also noted trends in teaching spaces elsewhere.[44] This plan and subsequent planning activities have informed the business cases for Crown capital support to rebuild science facilities and develop the Lincoln Hub on the Te Waihora campus.

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[42] SR, p15.
[43] The deadline refers to all earthquake insurance claims from the February 2011 earthquakes. It is unclear to the Panel whether the six-year deadline dates from the earthquake or the claim being made. See www.insurancebusinessonline.co.nz/nz/news/breaking-news/nz-insurers-extend-time-limit-on-chch-claims-210150.aspx Accessed 17.08.16.
[44] SR, p15.

The University uses a room utilisation survey to gain feedback on its teaching spaces. The Panel heard that there is an issue with staff preferring not to use older buildings or buildings not adequately equipped with technology. A review of teaching spaces on the Te Waihora campus, undertaken by the Teaching Media Liaison Group in 2015, identified a list of essential technical developments. A case has been made for a network upgrade which will provide coverage to all teaching spaces on both Te Waihora and Telford campuses.

The Panel concluded that significant store for making infrastructure fit-for-purpose is being set on the development of the Hub (due for a start to construction in 2017) and the refurbishment and/or replacement of other earthquake affected buildings.

There is significant work underway to ensure that IT and library resources are fit for purpose. Other technological resources are in various stages of development. There is an active investigation of the best way to manage an upgrade to the student management system, and to provide staff and administration with the kind of student achievement data that could be used to promote effective learning and teaching practices. A Customer Relationship Management (CRM) system has been applied effectively to the management of international students; it seems to have worked well in increasing the conversion rate of applications to enrolments. Data warehousing is not well developed, limiting the ability to generate institutional reports or to make data easily accessible to staff.

Much of the teaching and learning below Level 5 in the Telford Division is in workplaces, farms and/or by distance mode. As noted above, the Telford site is owned by a trust, though Lincoln University owns assets at Telford. The Panel gained no indication that these are inadequate though it did receive some concerns about the management of animals at Telford, including management of animals owned by students. The Panel suggests the University explores whether there is any basis for concern. It notes that the terms of reference of the Animal Ethics Committee cover such situations adequately.

The Panel understands the financial implications of significant developments of technical systems, particularly given the capital works the University is also addressing. The Panel nevertheless urges the University to proceed systematically with the adoption and/or embedding of contemporary solutions which will assist the University in meeting its objectives for supporting teaching and learning and for facilitating useful reporting.

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

The Panel received an update of the "Connecting the Knowledge Networks" project initiated in 2012. This project was intended to address the systems and infrastructure required to support teaching and learning. The University states that it informs information resource decisions.

Central to the Knowledge Network is an integrated Library system which covers library and learning resources. The Librarian is designated the Head of Library, Teaching and Learning (LTL). LTL staff are members of faculty and division teaching and learning committees to facilitate communication related to technological, digital and information resources. An updated website was launched by LTL in 2016 to facilitate better access to its resources.[45]

Information Technology Services (ITS) is responsible for provision and maintenance of technology infrastructure for all teaching, learning and office space.

The University documented a number of initiatives undertaken by these two groups since the last audit, including:
- An upgrade of the library information and discovery systems
- Introduction of Equella, a learning object repository layer to support the learning management system (Moodle) and to meet new copyright reporting requirements
- Adoption of Open Access, particularly for research outputs
- Trialling mechanisms for staff and research students to manage research data
- Migration of previous data bases to a single integrated interface with resultant improvements in efficiency of service and workflows
- Adoption of cloud-based services for some key systems.[46]

The Library benchmarks itself against Australasian and other international libraries and reports that it ranks highly on its expenditure per capita.[47]

The 2012-2015 Learning and Teaching Strategic Directions emphasised the need for the University to prepare for an e-enabled environment for teaching and learning. The draft 2016-2020 document proposes, among other initiatives, a "digital/cloud-based learning campus" which will support students in blended and/or distance programmes. Greater use of digital content, development of video-capture in teaching spaces and mobile learning and teaching technologies are among the actions proposed to drive the new directions.[48]

From its discussions with staff and students, the Panel concluded that the University is currently some way from achieving the objectives of the latest Strategic Directions document. The Panel was told that staff are moving to online systems for distance delivery and that some staff are using online resources for campus teaching. There is some use of video links for teaching, enabling classes to be delivered from Te Waihora campus to Telford and vice versa. However, while the LEARN (Moodle) learning management system is available, the Panel heard that its use is not strongly embedded among academic staff. Use of Turnitin detection software was said to be constrained in part because some assessment is submitted in hand-written form. Overall, the Panel concluded that electronic

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[45] https://ltl.lincoln.ac.nz/new-library-teaching-and-learning-site-january-26-2016/ Accessed 21.08.16.
[46] SFR, pp17-18.
[47] SR, p18.
[48] Draft Fourth Learning and Teaching Strategic Directions 2016-2020.

delivery and use of electronic resources and systems in campus-based teaching are not well developed at Lincoln. The draft Strategic Directions document refers to the need to incorporate electronic forms of teaching as a driver for student growth. More critically, such developments are fundamental to contemporary teaching and learning. While the strategic plans indicate the directions the University needs to take, the operationalisation of this for all academic staff might be a challenge (see also Section 6.4).

The Panel heard a range of views about Equella, with some staff finding it difficult to use while others indicated it posed no problem. The criticisms related mainly to a need to repeatedly upload lecture material and, secondly, to constraints on using material for students (e.g. illustrations which are copyright). Students as well as staff reported difficulties which resulted from Equella. The Panel was told that Equella had been introduced without the full impact of implementation being well understood and that academic staff had been given too little time to undertake the uploading of material. It appeared that this was particularly problematic for staff not experienced in using this kind of technology, which possibly explains the variable comments the Panel heard. Given the University's commitment to using this resource it might be wise to review the implementation process to identify where there are problems and how these might be remediated.

Notwithstanding some of the challenges referred to above, it was clear to the Panel that Library, Teaching and Learning is the unit at Lincoln which understands the direction that the University needs to move in to meet contemporary teaching and learning expectations, and that it is endeavouring to provide guidance to the University community in this area.

Commendation: The Panel commends Library, Teaching and Learning (LTL) for its leadership in developing and managing new systems to support staff and students, and encourages LTL to augment its monitoring of the impacts of such initiatives.

1.6 Risk management

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

Given its experience of the 2010 and 2011 Christchurch earthquakes, and subsequent aftershocks, Lincoln University has significant experience in managing the risks and outcomes of infrastructure failure. The 2012 Cycle 4 audit commended the University on its responses.[49]

The University has an ITS recovery plan and has identified infrastructure risks which might result from physical, power, ITS and biosecurity problems. It referred to the mitigating effects of online teaching (though as noted above this might not be widespread), use of aegrotat systems in the event of cancelled exams, use of generators for power outages and the relocation of the primary data centre to an off-site cloud-hosted provider. Further migration of teaching systems to the cloud

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[49] The Panel commended 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. (Lincoln University Cycle 4 Audit Report, p18.)

would enhance the ability to continue teaching in the event of physical infrastructure failure or campus closure.

The Panel was alerted to an event which had caused significant disruption to an online examination, but was satisfied that the University had learned from this and taken steps to avoid any similar disruption in the future.

Lincoln University has a detailed system for managing biosecurity, including specific protocols and an operating manual, a Bio-safety Officer and a Biosafety Committee. Protocols have been approved by the Ministry for Primary Industries (MPI).[50]

The University has appropriate risk registers and emergency management procedures. For example, the Panel saw risk registers used by faculties for field work. IT risks with the connection to Telford campus have been addressed. The Panel was advised that the Lincoln-Telford Campus Disaster Recovery Policy is under review. The University's responses to the inaccessibility of teaching spaces have been referred to in Section 1.4.

The Panel was told that the University has identified risks to personal safety both on campus and to the wider community associated with scenarios such as a "shooter on campus". In 2016 it intended to develop a campus lockdown protocol in conjunction with an external consultant.[51]

The Panel is satisfied that the University meets all the expectations of the Guideline Statement.

Affirmation: The Panel affirms the ongoing work of the University in managing its responses to space constraints consequent to earthquake damage, demolition and remediation.

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[50] SR, p20.
[51] "Shooter on campus" is a specific scenario identified by the University. SR, p69.

2.   Student Profile: Access, Transition and Admission Processes

The Lincoln University student profile in 2015 was[52]:

	All students	%
Total students, Headcount	5,819	
Total students, EFTS	2,934	
Total students	**Headcount**	
Domestic students	81	%
International students	19	%
Total students (by ethnicity)	**Headcount**	
Pākehā/European students	61	%
Māori students	12	%
Pasifika students	2	%
Asian students	16	%
Other and non-declared	10	%
Total students (by qualification enrolment)	**EFTS**	
Pre-degree students (L1-4)	34	%
Undergraduate students (L5-7)	50	%
Taught Postgraduate students	7	%
Research Postgraduate students	9	%

2.1   Admission and selection

Universities' admission and selection policies and practices should be clear and publicly available to students.

Lincoln University states that it has "targeted approaches to marketing and student recruitment". The targeting appears to be more about Lincoln than about students since the claim goes on to say this is "focussed on the land-based specialisation across both New Zealand and international markets".[53] The clearest statement in the Investment Plan refers to "attracting and encouraging at risk young people" primarily through the Lincoln-Telford provision.[54] The Whenua and Motu Strategies refer to enhancing access for Māori and Pasifika students respectively. However, these strategies are described in the Annual Report as being more to do with aligning programmes with

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[52] Calculated from AR, pp 13-14 and SR pp 83-85 and EFTS data provided on request by the University, 22.08.16.
[53] IP, p4.
[54] IP, p15.

Māori and Pasifika development aspirations than with recruitment and support for students.[55] The Investment Plan has forecast enrolment figures for these groups and for international students, but there are no clear objectives or KPIs. The focus of the Strategic Plan is on increasing numbers (5% annual growth in student volumes sourced primarily from international markets).[56]

The Choose Lincoln Strategy 2016-2018 (dated September 2015) sets specific targets for new students, both by qualification, level and by student group (domestic; international; Māori and Pasifika). The purpose of the strategy is "to help domestic and international students who fit the University's brand and mission choose to study at Lincoln".[57]

From its interviews, the Panel gained conflicting messages regarding targeted recruitment, with some people saying that specific groups were a focus and others saying these same groups were not important. Given the lack of clarity that emerged, the Panel has assumed that the University does not encourage selection of any specific targeted groups for its academic programmes in the sense that these programmes would then have to prioritise enrolments or might establish quota.

The Regulations are clear regarding admission, personal courses of study and processes for enrolment in programmes. These regulations and procedures are accessible both in the Calendar and on the web, as well as in the "House Rules" for postgraduate study.[58] Apart from general enrolment requirements (e.g. the requirement for a candidate to have an average of B$^+$ or higher in 300-level courses to be eligible to enrol in an Honours programme), the University does not have any degree-level programmes where selection is applied.[59] Selection is applied to the Diploma for Rural Veterinary Technicians and the Telford Certificate in Forestry which are limited to 12 and 15 places respectively.[60] The proposed regulations for the Certificate in Forestry have a provision that "special consideration will be given to a reasonable number of disadvantaged groups of people to ensure equity, if there is no health and safety risk to the applicant and/or fellow trainees and the rights of other students are not disregarded or hindered in an unfair and/or unethical manner".[61]

Lincoln has a non-UE entry pathway, the Certificate and Diploma in University Studies, the latter providing entry to second year degree study for successful students. English language requirements for international students are stated clearly in the Calendar and on the website, as are requirements for special admission, admission *ad eundem statum* and credit transfer.[62]

In 2015 MyLinc, a portal to streamline the application process by making it user-friendly and student-centric, was introduced on the Te Waihora campus. The initiative follows on from the 2014

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[55] AR, p20.

[56] SP, p15.

[57] Choose Lincoln Strategy 2015-2018, p2.

[58] 2016 Calendar, pp32-39, 48; www.lincoln.ac.nz/Lincoln-Home/Study/Qualifications/?QualGroup=bachelors%20degree; www.lincoln.ac.nz/PageFiles/23364/Bachelors-Honours.pdf Accessed 18.08.16.

[59] See, for example, Calendar p146.

[60] 2016 Calendar pp342-343, para 4.

[61] Proposal to CUAP, 2013. The regulations for this award do not appear in the 2016 Calendar. They are on the website but the entry does not refer to there being a limit on enrolments or a selection process www.telford.ac.nz/Courses-Onsite/Forestry/ Accessed 18.08.16.

[62] 2016 Calendar pp 34-38; www.lincoln.ac.nz/Lincoln-Home/Study/Undergraduate/Entry-Requirements/ Accessed 18.08.16.

Conversion Efficiency Review and fits within the objectives of the Choose Lincoln Strategy. The Conversion Efficiency Review recommended a number of initiatives including the integration of the Customer Relationship Management (CRM) platform and LUCAS (the University's student management system), a refresh of the website and the use of graduate stories on faculty websites.[63] The over-riding intent of the review recommendations was to put the student at the centre of the process. From its interviews, the Panel concluded that this intent had been achieved. MyLinc is integrated with CRM, LUCAS and Starrez (the accommodation management system). MyLinc is intended to ensure that for potential students:

- assistance is available during the application process;
- there is a 'one-stop-application-shop' where intending students can apply to study, for accommodation and scholarships in one place;
- students can monitor the status and progress of their application(s).[64]

In association with MyLinc the University has begun a "Nurture Campaign" which involves emails to current and future students about such matters as programme choice, IT and student support. The CRM platform enables the University to monitor and send communications. It also enables the University to identify a student's home region and thereby follow up with targeted communications regarding events in that region.[65]

The Self-review Report argues that the increase in enrolments of new students in the first semester of 2016 compared to 2015 is a result, in part, of the CRM implementation and the Choose Lincoln Strategy.[66] The Panel saw sample (anonymised) emails and performance reports and explored the use and effectiveness of MyLinc with students and a number of staff. Both staff and students expressed satisfaction with the MyLinc and CRM tools. Staff reported to the Panel that the turn-around from application to conditional offer was now less than three days. Staff perceptions that enquiries are more quickly converted to enrolments, and in greater proportion, were supported by International Student Barometer data that indicated the ratio of applications to offers in 2015 was higher at Lincoln than at other New Zealand universities. MyLinc is a key process in ensuring the University's admission processes are communicated clearly to students.

Commendation: The Panel commends the University on the coordinated approach to improving the application and enrolment process for students, including the Choose Lincoln Strategy and the implementation of MyLinc, and the support it provides to students to assist their transition to university life.

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[63] See for example, www.lincoln.ac.nz/Study/Qualifications/Qualification/?QualCode=b.agricultural%20science&major=false Accessed 18.08.16.

[64] SR, p23.

[65] SR, pp23-24.

[66] The other contributing factor, it is argued, is the Qualifications Reform – see Section 3.2. The CRM has not yet been implemented for students at Telford.

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

The University lists a number of different groups of students for whom it develops "approaches" to access and transition. Priority groups are defined as Māori, Pasifika, international (excluding NZAid) and domestic undergraduate students.[67]

The activities of Student Liaison to encourage access include Lincoln University events, a presence at other events such as field days and Get Ahead days run by Young Farmers, as well as meetings with schools, whānau and parents. The SchoolsLinc Department, staffed by former school teachers, engages school students in years 10-13 in activities aimed at enhancing NCEA achievement in land-based areas of the curriculum, promoting science and involving school students in the "Waterwatch" programme monitoring the health of local waterways.

Lincoln participates with the University of Canterbury in offering UNI101, an interactive event aimed at filling gaps in the knowledge of students, parents and careers advisers about practical aspects of student life (e.g. how to apply for a student loan; how to choose a degree). A range of scholarships is available to assist new students to study at both degree and sub-degree level.

Transition for all new students is supported by a range of events which are usual in universities, including orientation activities, pōwhiri, social activities organised by LUSA, campus tours and faculty-specific welcomes. A peer mentoring network, LincMe-Up is an initiative of LUSA with the University, dedicated to new students. Specific orientation is provided for Future Leader, Sports and Global Challenges scholars; each Future Leader scholar is assigned a mentor prior to arrival at University.

Beyond the opportunities for all new students, the University provides a range of specialised activities for international students, Māori and Pasifika students and for potential students who plan to study in the Lincoln-Telford Division.

Telford campus runs a residential "Taster Camp" over three days of the school holidays, which is aimed at giving school students an opportunity to make informed decisions about their career pathway. The University's evaluations show a conversion rate of more than 1:3 from attendance at the camps to enrolment.[68] It also uses STAR (Secondary-Tertiary Alignment Resource) to provide the opportunity for school students to do courses in Apiculture, Agriculture, Dairy, Equine and Horticulture. The Lincoln-Telford Division has partnerships with a range of schools and Trade Academies from Southland to Northland and is also contracted to provide course material and services for agricultural unit standards through the Trade Academies and Youth Guarantee schemes.

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[67] SR, p25.
[68] Taster Camps Conversion Data 2012-2015, provided by the University.

With cohorts of younger students, Telford campus includes parents in its transition activities and facilitates introductions to staff who may support students (e.g. the nurse, chaplain and local police).

A dedicated webpage and prospectus provides information for international students.[69] Lincoln prides itself on having a diverse group of international students – the Panel was informed that in 2015 the 1,104 international students came from 23 countries. In addition to the International Student Advisor on Te Waihora campus, Lincoln has dedicated staff in Student Administration for processing international admission applications and providing advice. International students on the Telford campus are supported by a senior tutor who liaises closely with the Te Waihora international student advisor. For international students arriving in Christchurch, Lincoln provides a "meet and greet" service and transport to their accommodation. The English for Academic Purposes programmes and Graduate Certificate in Academic English are available for students who need to gain academic and English language skills prior to degree study. NZAid students are provided with a buddy for personal support, and have dedicated orientation activities, some funded by MFAT. The Panel has learned of activities to help NZAid students transition out of the University. International Student Barometer (ISB) data indicate a high level of satisfaction with arrival arrangements by international students. However from its interviews the Panel deduced that while some international students receive support from a variety of sources, others who are not linked to specific study schemes (such as StudyAbroad) would benefit from more attention.

While acknowledging that its Pasifika student numbers are low, the University states that it has a long-established relationship with the international Pasifika community. It has a programme to support students in Papua New Guinea (the LincWantok Programme) – 18 Papua New Guinea students are recorded in 2015 and 37 in 2014.[70] However while NZAid numbers from the Pacific have grown in recent years (from nine in 2011 to 24 in 2015)[71], total Pasifika enrolments in 2015 were less than 100 students (1.56% of total enrolments). The Panel recognises that the Canterbury region does not have large numbers of people of Pacific nationality. Nevertheless, it agrees with the University that more could be done to encourage local Pasifika students to enrol at Lincoln and endorses the University's proposed enhancement 12, to develop a Pasifika Strategy.[72] While the Motu Strategy has been referred to in both the 2015 Annual Report and the Strategic Plan as for approval in 2016, staff told the Panel that development and implementation had been delayed because of staff changes and vacancies.

The University has paid close attention to the participation of Māori students, consistent with its strategic commitment to assisting in building Māori capability and enhancing Māori engagement with the land-based sector and in alignment with the Whenua Strategy. There are two major initiatives focussed on new students: Whenua Kura and Poutama Whenua.

Whenua Kura is a partnership between Lincoln University, Ngāi Tahu Farming and Te Tapuae o Rehua, aimed at increasing:
- Māori participation in land-based training

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[69] www.lincoln.ac.nz/Lincoln-Home/Future-Students/International/ Accessed 10.08.16.
[70] AR, p75.
[71] NZAid Student Numbers by Country of Citizenship, data provided by the University.
[72] SR, p99.

- Māori educational achievement success (Māori achieving success as Māori)
- Māori entering and gaining employment in the land-based industries
- Māori leadership in all sectors of the land-based industries
- The influence of Ngāi Tahu values on the culture and practices of the land-based industries and their communities.[73]

To help realise these goals, the partnership offers scholarships and work experience to learners of Māori descent for several Lincoln-Telford Division qualifications, providing a pathway for Māori students to articulate from certificate to diploma level. This is underpinned by academic support and pastoral care based on Māori values, and with work experience on Ngāi Tahu farms. The Whenua Strategy noted that in 2012 89% of Māori students (headcount) at Lincoln were studying Telford-based programmes.[74]

Poutama Whenua is another pathway that provides multiple programmes for Māori students, covering certificates and diplomas (levels 3-5) through to undergraduate and postgraduate (levels 7-9). The programmes also offer a comprehensive package of support services.[75]

At Te Waihora a Noho Marae (Māori student welcome) is run over three days, including a range of workshops to introduce students to university life.

From what it read and heard the Panel concluded that the Whenua Kura and Poutama Whenua programmes are providing excellent training and employment opportunities for Māori students. While most students see the certificate programmes as an end in themselves, and staff indicated those who graduate are usually employment-ready, there are some students who do transition into diploma programmes.

Commendation: The Panel commends the University on the success of its Whenua Kura and Poutama Whenua initiatives and the contribution made by these programmes to facilitating Māori student participation in tertiary study.

Recommendation: The Panel recommends the University proceeds with development and operationalisation of the Motu Strategy and in particular explores how enrolment of domestic Pasifika students might be encouraged and their participation supported.

2.3   Academic advice

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

The Calendar and House Rules referred to in Section 2.1 are the official sources of academic advice to students. Various other handbooks, guides and prospectuses are also available. The Panel noted a

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[73] SR, p25.

[74] 134 Māori students at Te Waihora campus and 1,086 at Telford or in programmes delivered by Telford contractors elsewhere. Whenua Strategy 2014, p6.

[75] SR, pp25-26; www.lincoln.ac.nz/lincoln-home/future-students/maori-students/poutama-whenua/ Accessed 18.08.16.

clear statement on the PhD House Rules document, that as far as regulations associated with postgraduate study are concerned, the Calendar takes precedence over all of the other publications.[76] The University is also endeavouring to make course advice accessible via LEARN.

The Panel reviewed the University Policy on Course Advice and Approval. In addition to ensuring students receive appropriate academic advice, the Policy is intended to ensure that students will be advised and mentored so that they can meet their academic and career goals through their course of study. While this is a high-level policy it nevertheless might address more specifically some principles of academic advising. The Panel noted it was dated 2005 with a review date of 2008. This Policy must be included in the policy review and refresh exercise, as the University proposes (see Section 1.1).

Staff who have a responsibility to provide advice to students include student administration staff (on academic procedures), course advisers for specific degree programmes, heads of programmes and the Academic Delivery Manager at Telford, and examiners for individual programmes and courses. The Academic Administration Committee advises on hardship cases and issues such as course substitution, which may include mitigation of incorrect advice.

Following the Qualifications Reform of 2014 the University held special course advice days for returning students to provide direction on the transition from old to new programme requirements. The Panel was told that the University did not have any grandparenting provision but did ensure no student would be unfairly penalised by the transition.

Other avenues for gaining academic advice include dedicated advisers for Future Leaders, Sports Scholars and international students. The Panel was told that staff receive training so they are aware of when they need to refer a student elsewhere. Some staff stated they would like formal course advice to be mandatory for students, though they recognised the staffing demands this would pose. A course advice book was suggested.

Most widely mentioned by students was the open door policy adopted by most academic staff. This extends beyond informal advice to include completion checks and assurance of meeting programme requirements. Staff might also provide learning support. Students were unfailingly appreciative of the availability of the majority of staff in their programmes, whether by email contact, personal appointment or drop-in.

From its overview the Panel concluded that avenues for giving academic advice appeared adequate. A set of principles on who may give advice about what, would enhance the course advice policy.

Commendation: The Panel commends the University on its promotion of an "Open Door" culture and on the accessibility of academic staff to students in need of advice or support.

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[76] www.lincoln.ac.nz/PageFiles/23364/Current-%20PhD-House-Rules-Hardcopy.pdf Updated May 2016. Accessed 22.08.16.

3. Curriculum and Assessment

A major strategic initiative at Lincoln over the period 2013-2015, which impacts on several Guideline Statements in this section, was the implementation of the Qualifications Reform. The main objective of the reform was to align qualifications with Lincoln's strategic differentiation as a provider of land-based programmes and to simplify pathways for students. The reform was also intended to assist with financial sustainability by removing inefficient "low volume" courses. The proposal for reform noted that the previous qualifications portfolio was inconsistent in the extent to which it was learner-centric, adopted current pedagogy and made use of teaching technology.[77] By 2016 the University had reviewed and reformed all bachelors, postgraduate, research and taught master's degrees, resulting in a reduction in the number of degrees and majors and the introduction of three courses common to all degrees (see Section 3.2). The University Studies and English Language programmes had also been reviewed and reviews of most Level 2-6 qualifications and of the PhD were under way.[78]

3.1   Programme approval

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

Lincoln University's draft (2016) Academic Programmes Policy defines the criteria which should characterise a Lincoln programme. A programme should:

- be interdisciplinary, experiential, inclusive of mātauranga Māori, relevant, have a clear graduate profile, and appropriate delivery and assessment methodologies;
- allow the University to demonstrate the strongly established links between research and teaching;
- be responsive to feedback;
- undergo an annual academic programme review and be reviewed as part of a qualifications portfolio review every 5-8 years; new programmes will also undergo a graduating year review;
- be developed, modified, reviewed and deleted by processes that are in line with the Committee on University Academic Programmes (CUAP) requirements, the University's Academic Quality Framework and meet all internal, external and stakeholder quality assessment and review standards, including professional accreditation where appropriate;
- recognise learner diversity and provide equal education opportunities in learning;
- equip students for employment and further and lifelong learning;
- facilitate student pathways to provide entry to, and progression up, the qualification framework.

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[77] Proposal for Qualifications Reform, 2013, pp1-2; Qualifications Reform – Final report (undated).
[78] SR, p4.

The Panel heard that the mātauranga Māori component had been difficult to implement and was still a work in progress. It heard that one faculty teaching and learning committee was considering how this might be achieved (see Section 3.2).

The related draft (2016) Procedures for the Introduction, Modification, Deletion and Review of Academic Programmes are a comprehensive guide to requirements and good practice for these developments and also advises on CUAP requirements. It sets out procedures for:

- the introduction of a new programme or major;
- a substantial modification to an existing programme;
- the deletion of a programme or major;
- minor modification to a programme schedule, regulations, content or sequencing of existing majors;
- the introduction and renewal of a new short course;
- review processes and requirements.

Given these policies and procedures had not yet been approved, the Panel was unable to test their effectiveness. The Panel notes though that the content of the documents is consistent with practice in other New Zealand universities. The Panel expects that related documents might include guidance to staff on the preparation of proposals including, for instance, when and how to seek stakeholder input, and library and capital impact reports. The Procedures refer to templates for a number of different approval and review applications.

The approval process outlined in the above documents involves steps from the faculty Teaching Committee to the Academic Programmes Committee to the Academic Board. The Board is to report annually to Council on the approvals it has given. Professional accreditation is also required or sought for some programmes.

From its discussions with staff the Panel learned that Lincoln has active industry liaison groups or committees for planning and other input to programmes within faculties, divisions and departments. The Panel saw samples of support letters received from stakeholder groups as part of the Qualifications Reform process. Student and Māori comment is facilitated through membership of faculty Teaching Committees, Academic Programmes Committee and Academic Board. The Lincoln-Telford Programme Advisory Committee includes industry as well as staff and student members.[79]

The Panel was assured that when a programme is discontinued, as had happened as a consequence of the Qualifications Reform, options were available to students to ensure they were not disadvantaged.

On the basis of the draft policies and procedures, the reports of processes used for the qualifications reform, and the reports of customary practice the Panel agrees that the expectations of this Guideline Statement are met.

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[79] SR, pp34-37.

> **3.2   Graduate attributes**
>
> Universities should have clearly-defined intended graduate outcomes (graduate attributes) which are publicly available and are accessible to students and staff.

The University requires all proposals for qualifications and majors to include a programme Graduate Profile. The Panel was provided with a set of guidelines for constructing a graduate profile and mapping graduate attributes. The contribution of individual courses to a programme graduate profile is identified in course outlines. The graduate profiles are available on the web page for each qualification.[80]

The Panel was told that the Qualifications Reform was useful in prompting staff to think "on the same page" regarding graduate profiles. The Qualifications Reform introduced three core courses for all Lincoln degree programmes:

>   LINC101 Land, People and Economies: The principles and dimensions of people-land relationships
>   LINC102 Research and Analytical Skills
>   LINC201 Sustainable Futures: A critical discussion of sustainability issues.

The Whenua Strategy proposes a "Māori Responsiveness Matrix" which would be applied to all programmes (as well as to decision-making across the University). The matrix refers to tikanga Māori and Treaty of Waitangi Principles as well as strategic focus areas.[81] Development of Māori majors and pathways for study of te reo Māori and development of Tikanga Māori and Ritenga for LIncolnFirst certificate programmes are included in the Whenua workplan.[82]

The above initiatives imply a basis for an institutional graduate profile at Lincoln.

The Panel explored with staff the progress which had been made to date, being mindful that the new requirements had been in place only a short time. Staff reported that LINC101 was developed, mainly using guest lecturers. LINC102 had proved problematic, because of different requirements in different programmes, and had since been removed by Academic Board; faculties were developing their own courses to cover the theme.

The Panel was told that the reformed qualifications are somewhat inflexible and student choice is limited. Staff suggested that the Qualifications Reform had reduced the ability for students to do cross-faculty courses. In some programmes which were professionally prescribed, the introduction of the LINC courses had constrained student choice of electives. From its discussions, the Panel was made aware that the Qualifications Reform is still a work in progress and that staff are open to review and revision if required in order to achieve the reform's objectives.

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[80] See, for example, www.lincoln.ac.nz/Study/Qualifications/Qualification/Graduate-Profiles/?profilecode=Graduate%20Profile:%20Bachelor%20of%20Environmental%20Management Accessed 19.08.16.

[81] Whenua Strategy pp 13-15; 19-20.

[82] Whenua Annual Workplan 2013-2014.

With respect to the Whenua Strategy, the Panel was told that the Māori focus in courses is not as high as it should be and more work needs to be done. It was suggested to the Panel that a "paradigm shift" is needed in faculties if the objectives of the strategy are to be achieved. A 2016 draft Whenua Strategy 3 Year Implementation Plan proposed appointment of a dedicated staff member to lead and coordinate bicultural capability building across faculties. The plan reiterated that the strategy is the responsibility of all staff to implement.[83]

Students were aware of learning outcomes for their courses but were not familiar with the terminology of graduate profiles. Staff also tended to refer mainly to the outcomes for their own qualifications; some recounted the value of the programme profile in guiding how they articulated individual course outcomes and also for assessing whether stair-casing occurred. A student suggestion that it would be useful for students to see a map or matrix of how course outcomes contributed to programme profiles might be considered useful, not only for students but also for staff. Provision of a graduate profile statement with University transcripts and parchments, being considered by the University, would be a good initiative, as would be the provision of a co-curricular transcript.[84]

Affirmation: The Panel affirms the progress made on the Qualifications Reform and encourages the University to keep under review the effectiveness of the changes in meeting the reform objectives while at the same time ensuring that student pathways are not unduly constrained.

Recommendation: The Panel recommends that the University assess how best to implement the aspects of the Whenua matrix which pertain to programme content and pedagogy, recognising the particularities of programmes and capability of staff.

3.3   Graduate outcomes

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

As indicated in Section 3.2, one of the objectives of the Qualifications Reform was to ensure students had the opportunity to achieve graduate profiles which are aligned with the University's strategic focus. That is, programmes would have a land-based focus and would include pan-institution courses related to this. Development of Māori content and tikanga would also contribute to building capability and awareness of the relationship of Māori with the land. The curriculum is thus the main strategy used by Lincoln to ensure students have opportunity to meet the intended graduate outcomes. All courses are expected to articulate clear learning outcomes.

Lincoln University emphasises producing work-ready graduates. In the Lincoln-Telford Division this is achieved through the practical experience students gain on Lincoln farms and in the workplace. Level 1-4 students who need assistance are provided with numeracy and literacy tuition. Telford staff also facilitate students gaining such qualifications as heavy traffic licenses. For degree-level programmes, the Qualifications Reform introduced third year practicum courses to provide

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[83] Whenua Strategy 3 Year Implementation Plan (2016).
[84] SR, p38.

advanced practical experience in industry and/or research projects, enabling students to gain research, analytic and communication skills as well as hands-on experience. The Te Waihora Careers and Employment Centre provides assistance in developing career management skills and transitioning to employment. The Panel noted that in the 2014 Graduate Survey the greatest cluster of responses for the best aspects of a Lincoln programme was for the practical aspects of study.[85]

The Panel is satisfied that Lincoln University provides a wide range of opportunities for students to achieve the learning outcomes of their programmes. Pre-moderation of assessment (see Section 3.6) assists in giving staff confidence that this is aligned to intended outcomes.

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

It was clear to the Panel that the main focus for the University in recent years had been the Qualifications Reform, during which all degree-level qualifications (except, to date, the PhD) had been reviewed. The Panel explored the University's processes for ongoing review. It was advised that a new programme policy, procedures and review schedule is in development. A preliminary schedule from 2016 through to 2022 was provided. Staff who were interviewed could not identify any mechanisms within the University whereby the challenges and good practices identified in programme reviews might be shared.

The University reported that it will have four types of programme review:
- Graduating Year Reviews as required by CUAP (for new programmes and major changes)
- Professional accreditation reviews, as specified by relevant accreditation bodies
- Qualification portfolio reviews, which are likely to be on a 7-year cycle
- Annual academic programme reviews, for all programmes.

The Annual Academic Programme Report is an initiative inherited from Telford Rural Polytechnic. This has been adapted to apply to all Lincoln programmes. A template is intended to be prepopulated with much of the data required. It includes changes required, action points, student feedback and issues identified, as well as quantitative data (e.g., enrolments, student demographic profile). Courses with low enrolments are also required to document how the course fits a set of criteria (acceptability, accessibility, accreditation, affordability, appropriateness) to justify a continued offering.[86]

The Panel sees the extension of the Annual Academic Programme Report to all programmes as a positive initiative. The Panel alerts the University to the need to ensure programmes are not over-

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[85] 2014 Graduate Survey Report, p24.
[86] Annual Academic Programme Review Template.

reviewed if they are also subject to accreditation reviews; the review schedule might be constructed to avoid this.

Recommendation: The Panel recommends the University complete its redevelopment of the programme review policy, procedures and guidelines to inform preparation for the reviews scheduled in 2017 and thereafter and explores how good outcomes of reviews might be shared across faculties.

3.5 Benchmarking programmes

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

The University lists a variety of different activities which involve benchmarking.[87] It states that the previous requirement for programme reviews to include external members will be retained in the new procedures. Internal benchmarking occurs via examiners' meetings within each Faculty. Postgraduate benchmarking occurs via thesis examination (see Section 7.4). Other benchmarking initiatives are specific to individual programmes (for example, an ACODE exercise benchmarking technology-enhanced learning; benchmarking University Studies programmes against the University of Canterbury programmes and the Peer Assisted Study Session against that at the University of Otago; inclusion in an Ako Aotearoa benchmarking pilot; benchmarking skills achievement at national competitions).

The University also cites several links with overseas universities which could provide opportunity for institutional benchmarking: partner status of the Euroleague for Life Sciences; membership of the Global Challenges University Alliance; relationships with the University of Adelaide, University of Tasmania and Botswana University of Agriculture, where some benchmarking activity has been undertaken.

None of the above activities indicates a systematic or strategic approach to benchmarking and most are only peripheral to curriculum and assessment. The University acknowledges its lack of formal policy or guidelines and accepts that a strategic framework for continual benchmarking of its academic practices and standards is needed.[88] A recommendation pertaining to benchmarking has been made in Section 1.2.

3.6 Assessment

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

The General Course and Examination Regulations specify overall requirements for assessment.[89] The University Policy on Assessment states its expectations in principle, for instance that assessment will

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[87] SR, pp42-46.
[88] SR pp42, 99.
[89] 2016 Calendar pp48-60.

be aligned with learning objectives and that grade distributions will be consistent with quality norms. The Policy is supported by a statement on continuous assessment.[90] The Panel was unsure how useful the policy and statement are. They are both over ten years old and overdue for review and refresh.

Course examiners have responsibilities related to assessment preparation and moderation. They must have these approved by Academic Board and then make available to students a course outline which includes information about, for example, assignments, projects, examinations, laboratories and field trips as well as policies relating to:
- extensions of time for submission of assignments
- penalties for late submission of assignments
- scaling
- dishonest academic practice
- mandatory components
- use of calculators
- use of dictionaries
- workload.[91]

The Panel was advised that all examination papers are moderated within the Faculty or Division before the examination. Subsequently there is moderation of grades at Faculty or Division examiners' meetings. The Academic Administration Committee reviews summary reports from each department to ensure consistency across the institution and rectify or explain any anomalies. For Lincoln-Telford Division programmes which have unit standards the moderation or review might be undertaken by the standard setting body (NZQA or ITO). Where off-campus providers use their own assessments, the University requires that these be both pre-assessment and post-assessment moderated. Delivery partners provide annual reports of their moderation activities to the Division.

The Panel discussed assessment and moderation practices with a range of staff. The Panel considered the use of grading rubrics, especially if there are several markers in a large class, to be good practice. Some, but not all, programmes used these. The Panel heard that in some programmes the markers receive training in use of rubrics. It was apparent to the Panel that assessment and moderation practices are mostly an individual Faculty decision, in some cases left to individual teachers to decide.

The University recognises a growing gap between traditional modes of assessment used by many Lincoln staff and the expectations and experiences of students entering the University. It states that this will be a topic covered in Learning and Teaching Strategic Directions 2016-2020 and that there will be a major review of assessment practices in 2016-2017.[92] The Panel agrees that these actions are necessary.

From its discussions about assessment the Panel learned of some technical matters that need to be addressed. There appeared to be no central repository of internal assessment results. The Panel was

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[90] Proportion of Continuous Assessment to Examination Statement, 2005.
[91] Subject Examiner Roles (2008).
[92] SR, p58.

told that many staff do not use Moodle for recording grades and that though ITS will produce reports from the data it has available to it, these reports are not done routinely. Consequently committees cannot extract comprehensive information about students, making it difficult to track students who are not performing well. The Panel learned that some groups of students, e.g. sports scholars, are tracked as a cohort and analyses of academic performance completed using simple spreadsheets.[93] The University is encouraged to consider centralising all assessment data. Appropriately managed, such a facility might also enable students to monitor their own performance more effectively.

Recommendation: The Panel recommends that, in its revision of the Assessment Policy and its development of the Fourth Learning and Teaching Strategic Directions, the University address all forms of assessment (not only exams) and gives greater clarification to the expectations of academic staff regarding such matters as use of grading rubrics, criterion-referencing, pre- and post-assessment moderation and formative feedback to students.

3.7   Equivalence of learning outcomes

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

Lincoln University has limited activity on other campuses. The programme in Sarawak is delivered and assessed by Lincoln staff as part of the Lincoln programme. For the Master's programmes in Germany and Austria, as with the Master's programme taught with the University of Canterbury, the component courses are delivered by the host institution and Joint Boards of Studies ensure adherence to each university's quality assurance requirements.

For programmes delivered at sites across New Zealand by the Lincoln-Telford Division, the lesson plans, learning outcomes and assessment are the same.

The Panel did not identify any issues related to equivalence of learning outcomes.

3.8   Academic misconduct

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

The University's procedures for addressing academic misconduct are set out in the University's Regulations and in its Dishonest and Improper Academic Practice and Breach of Instructions Policy (and Procedures).[94] For students in the Lincoln-Telford Division, Regulation 5 (xv) of the Lincoln-Telford Division's Student Code of Conduct states that "Students enrolled with Telford are expected at all times to comply with all reasonable expectations of conduct during assessments and

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[93] Lincoln University Sports Scholarship Analysis 2014.
[94] 2016 Calendar pp55-56.

examinations, and not engage in any malpractice including plagiarism and impersonation, which may misrepresent results, or otherwise give one student an unfair advantage over others." Students in breach of this regulation are subject to misconduct procedures outlined in the Student Discipline Policy. Lincoln-Telford's Delivery Partners are advised what constitutes academic misconduct. Students undertaking a thesis or dissertation are required to sign a declaration, co-signed by the Supervisor, confirming the thesis or dissertation represents their own work.[95]

Students interviewed by the Panel were well aware of plagiarism as a form of academic dishonesty. They confirmed that all course outlines made reference to it, and most lecturers raised the matter. The Panel was told that pre-degree programmes also taught students about plagiarism and appropriate referencing and that the Proctor raises this during orientation briefings. Postgraduate students, however, and staff who might be supervisors, were not very alert to possibilities for research misconduct and how this might be prevented or identified.

The Panel was surprised at the small number of notifications and investigations of academic misconduct in the 2015 Proctor's report. While there is no evidence that Lincoln does experience any more academic dishonesty than any other university, the Panel had a number of concerns about process. The Panel was told by staff that it was up to individual staff members to decide on a student's intent to be dishonest. Staff may consult the Proctor informally, before making a formal referral for investigation or penalty. The Proctor keeps a spreadsheet of cases referred to him but will not know of cases resolved at department level or not reported to him. The Proctor (or departments or divisions) will therefore have no way of identifying incidents which follow others resolved by academic staff and not reported, especially if these are across different programmes. The procedures for referral to the Proctor need to be specified to remove risk of inconsistency due to individualised assessment by academic staff. Some kind of central database which records all incidents, including those resolved by academic staff and not reported to the Proctor, could help with this.

The emphasis on "cheating" and dishonesty conveyed to the Panel during interviews signalled a simplistic and punitive approach; the Panel encourages the University to move to a culture of promoting academic integrity rather than catching and punishing dishonesty. The Panel explored the ways in which Lincoln staff do currently educate students about academic integrity and the resources staff themselves use to ensure academic integrity. The Panel noted that Library, Teaching and Learning provide resources on referencing practice. Examination invigilators are briefed on protocols and the need to be alert to examination dishonesty. Some academic staff use Turnitin , which might facilitate student learning about plagiarism and appropriate writing as well as identifying dishonesty. However Turnitin is not used in all programmes. The University appears to give little guidance to academic staff on how to formulate assessment tasks to minimise the opportunity for dishonesty, how to identify dishonesty or how to assess seriousness.

From the information conveyed to it, the Panel is not confident that the University can address academic dishonesty with rigour. From its discussions with staff, the Panel concluded that while they are well aware of plagiarism risks, most are not vigilant for other contemporary forms of dishonesty which are evolving nationally and internationally (for example, use of electronic devices, contract cheating and essays for sale). This places the University at risk. The University would benefit from

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[95] SR, p50.

exploring the range of practices used elsewhere to prevent, identify and manage academic dishonesty and to promote academic integrity.

The Proctor at Lincoln is an academic staff member. Given the reliance on the Proctor to deal with reported dishonesty (as well as other matters) expeditiously, the Panel believes a second proctor is needed to ensure there is always one available and to facilitate consultation and professional support for incumbents.

Recommendation: The Panel recommends that the University give priority to reviewing its policies and processes for preventing and managing academic dishonesty, that it consider mechanisms for ensuring proven dishonesty allegations are recorded confidentially, and that it also consider developing educative resources for both staff and students to ensure academic integrity in teaching, learning, assessment and research.

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

Lincoln University has had no requests for assessment in te reo Māori. The University has appropriate policies and procedures in place should there be a request to use te reo Māori in a formal examination.[96] Students are advised to seek advice regarding their level of competence prior to the examination. The Panel suggests the possibility of assessment in te reo Māori being included as part of the implementation of the Whenua Strategy. Consideration should also be given to requests for assessment of in-course assignments and of theses in te reo Māori.

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[96] Procedure to Enable Examination Scripts in the Maori Language (2007); Assessment in te reo Māori (Telford, 2009).

4. Student Engagement and Achievement

Lincoln University's Strategic Plan states in its first Objective that it aims for a "vibrant, successful student experience".[97] The Plan is silent on how this is to be achieved. Despite this, students told the Panel that they enjoyed their Lincoln participation. In the 2014 Graduate Survey the average agreement on the Learning Community Scale, which focuses on student perceptions of the social experience of learning at university as a measure of student engagement, or a commitment to learning, was 70% and the mean score was 3.8 on a scale of 1-5, indicating students had a positive perception though not a strong one.[98]

The Panel learned that in conjunction with LUSA the University had engaged a company to assess current and preferred future student experience at Lincoln. The outcomes of the Project are intended to inform a student experience strategy.[99]

Students indicated a general communication issue at Lincoln. The Panel heard that it is not uncommon for students to ask for information that is in fact available. Postgraduate students also indicated they would appreciate better communication about activities happening outside their faculties, such as research seminars. The Panel was told by students that the University is being proactive about addressing student communication. The Panel encourages any developments which will address this student concern.

4.1   Student engagement

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

In its Self-review Report the University lists a large number of ways in which staff assist students to engage in their study and learning. Experiential and practical learning, a feature of Lincoln programmes, is seen as contributing to student engagement. Comments made by students who were interviewed would endorse this claim. Both Te Waihora and Telford campuses have dedicated practical work coordinators who manage work placements. Other support at Te Waihora is mostly for specific groups of students, for instance mentoring and a student support system (MAPSS) for Māori and Pasifika students, academic guides for first year residential students and a conference for postgraduate students.

Pre-degree students appear to have closer guidance and support to encourage engagement. Student engagement is monitored by staff in the English Language programme. Telford campus provides a variety of personal support for students (including those studying off-campus): for example, the

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[97] SP, p2.
[98] 2014 Graduate Survey results, pp13; 16-17.
[99] SR, p55; Contract for Service (Student Experience Preferences) Project Outline, 2015.

Division provides stationery, wall planners, monthly phone calls, optional tutorials, progress reports and carries out surveys 4-6 weeks into a course as well as at the end of the student's enrolment.[100]

The University cites several sources of data to monitor student engagement and satisfaction, including undergraduate and postgraduate student satisfaction surveys, course evaluations, the Australasian Survey of Student Engagement (AUSSE)[101], the International Student Barometer (ISB), and course feedback surveys as well as the student representative system, and the relationship staff have with LUSA. Survey data are reported to the Education and Marketing Committee. The AUSSE and ISB data have enabled the University to benchmark itself against other Australasian universities.

The Panel encourages the University to proceed with an evidence-based student experience strategy which might guide the student experience project initiated in 2016.

Affirmation: The Panel affirms the efforts made by staff in the Lincoln-Telford Division to support pre-degree students and to encourage their engagement with their study.

4.2   Retention and completion

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

Many of the activities provided by Lincoln to assist student retention, academic success and completion are recorded elsewhere in Sections 2.2, 4.1 and 5.2.

Māori and Pasifika students are two of the priority groups identified by the University for targeted assistance with educational achievement. The Whenua Strategy aims to improve Māori student experience and achievement by promoting a Māori-responsive framework for teaching and learning. To date initiatives in support of this objective include noho marae and pōwhiri for new staff, students and visitors, Rā Whakamana celebration for Māori graduands, Whenua Kura (see Section 2.1), engagement with local iwi and organisations to develop educational initiatives, kaupapa units within each Faculty for supporting Māori students. Māori pedagogies have been incorporated into one Telford Certificate. Currently the University has no dedicated support for its Pasifika students; the Pasifika Strategy is a work in progress.

Library, Teaching and Learning provides workshops, online tutorials and other activities to assist student learning. All undergraduate students are expected to complete a Library orientation programme by the end of their first semester of study. International students may receive support from the International Student Adviser (this is mainly pastoral and social support – see Section 5.2). Some receive extensive support from NZAid and Study Abroad staff (see Section 2.2). The Inclusive Education staff from Student Health and Support assist students whose learning or assessment might be impacted by a disability, injury or illness.

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[100] SR, pp54-55.
[101] The report provided was 2010 and the Panel understands that the AUSSE is no longer available.

Educational Performance Indicators (EPIs) record progress in meeting completion, retention and progression targets. The data for 2015 show gradually improving course and qualification completion rates since 2013 for Māori and improved qualification completion rates for Pasifika students.[102] The University points out the bias inherent in aggregate data due to the impact of short (less than one year) pre-degree courses on apparent retention. On the other hand one might expect this bias to impact more positively on qualification completion data. The Panel was shown a report on students identified as potentially eligible to complete if advice was given (and taken) – for instance students who were short of one course, or who might have credits which had not been transferred. It was unclear to the Panel how this report was followed up or whether such reporting would become embedded practice.

In summary, the Panel considered the University's systems for monitoring and enhancing student engagement could benefit from some development, recognising the constraints of the University's ability to fund such efforts. Some activities, such as identification of barriers to individual student success, have potential to be useful in guiding other strategies.

4.3   Feedback to students

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

Apart from reference to assessment regulations and the need to address assessment feedback, the Self-review Report provided little information on feedback to students.

In interviews with staff and students the Panel received conflicting views about assessment feedback timing. The University noted that test scripts are not always returned in a timely manner. Students indicated the three-week turnaround for assignments is usually met though there was some inconsistency in the nature of the feedback received on assignments. Students also expressed some minor concerns about inconsistent marking where several markers were used for an assessment. Some students said that if they had inadequate feedback they went to the lecturer concerned (as part of the open door practice) and department heads said they would follow up any delays if they were made aware of them.

The University recognises that its approach to assessment needs attention, a topic which is to be addressed in the Fourth Learning and Teaching Strategic Directions (Strategic Direction 8).[103] The Panel agrees. It detected a number of weaknesses in assessment management, though it noted the good practice exercised in the Lincoln-Telford Division where students receive quarterly reports on their progress, delivery partners provide feedback to students and students studying by distance receive written feedback which may be followed up by telephone contact.

A recommendation regarding assessment is made in Section 3.6.

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[102] AR, p24.
[103] SR, p58.

> **4.4   Under-achieving students**
>
> Universities should use processes for identifying and assisting students at risk of under-achieving.

The Unsatisfactory Progress Regulations provide a clear framework for identifying and managing students who fail to make satisfactory academic progress.[104] This process is overseen by the Academic Administration Committee. Students who are deemed to be at risk are sent letters with sanctions or requirements of varying severity. Letters include advice on the support available to help students achieve. Some specific groups of students (Māori, Pasifika, Scholarship students) have their progress monitored by designated support staff.

The Panel was told that tutors in the compulsory LINC courses have been helpful in identifying at-risk students. Staff said that students on Te Waihora campus are monitored by their teachers and if they fail their first assignment they are encouraged to attend workshops provided by Library, Teaching and Learning. The Panel was not aware of any official policy or guidelines that promoted this course of action. It noted a pilot being implemented in one Faculty to monitor the progress of first year students and suggests that if the process is deemed effective it might be codified for the whole University.

Students in pre-degree programmes and students on the Telford campus, having closer interaction with their teachers, are able to be monitored and assisted if seen to be struggling. On Telford campus use of the Adult Literacy and Numeracy Assessment Tool (ALNAT) facilitates identification of students who need skill development. Telford students whose assessment is poor are offered additional support; for students under 18 parents or caregivers might be contacted.[105]

The University states that a monitoring and intervention framework for Māori and Pasifika students is in development.[106] The Panel suggests that this initiative be extended to all students and might involve in its development an evaluation of the Faculty pilot mentioned above.

The Panel considers that the formal mechanisms used by Lincoln to identify students at risk of under achieving are appropriate. There are also informal mechanisms which might be effective. An apparent lack of institutional oversight is possibly an impediment to sharing good practice and maximising localised experience in monitoring and assisting students at an earlier stage of their programme.

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[104] 2016 Calendar, pp56-57.
[105] The Panel was told that Telford students give approval for this contact in their enrolment contracts.
[106] SR, p59.

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

Lincoln University provides similar recognition to high-achieving students as that provided by other New Zealand universities, including scholarships, awards, prizes, Blues awards, special events and invitations to undertake an honours programme. There is a Dean's (and Director's) List to recognise high-achieving students at all levels; such students receive a congratulatory letter and are invited to an Academic Achievers' Dinner. A "Lincoln's Best" award, decided by LUSA, recognises individual success and contribution to vibrancy on campus by students, staff and clubs. The George F Wright Cup is awarded by the Vice-Chancellor to the student who is considered to have contributed most to campus life in the current year.

For undergraduate students, Lincoln's Future Leader and Global Challenge and Sport Scholarships recognise excellence and potential. In particular, the Global Challenge Scholarships promote the Lincoln strap-line of "feed the world, protect the future, live well".[107]

The Lincoln-Telford Division has a substantial number of awards and scholarships/bursaries.

The Panel is satisfied that the University has an appropriate range of mechanisms for recognising and celebrating student success. The Panel noted a number of avenues whereby the University publicises its students' achievements, including newsletters, formal publications, television monitors around the Te Waihora campus, the University Facebook page and other social media.

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[107] The Global Challenge Scholarships are part of the Global Challenges programme which extends the common LINC courses concept into secondary schools, and out into the community with learning materials, events, communications and activities. (Global Challenges Programme & Scholars proposal 2014.)

5. Student Feedback and Support

Lincoln University provides a number of dedicated services to facilitate student support, some of which have been referred to in previous sections as helping provide academic support. Some aspects of student support for Māori, Pasifika and international students have also been discussed in Sections 2.2 and 4.2. This section refers to support which is not directly about learning or academic issues. Services provided specifically for postgraduate students are discussed in Section 7.2.

5.1 Academic appeals and grievances

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

Provisions for academic appeals are addressed within the Dishonest Practice and Breach of Instructions regulations and Discipline regulations for decisions made within those regulations.[108] Other academic regulations sometimes, but not always, include an appeal provision or clause.[109] Students may apply for a reconsideration of grade or an examination recount but no appeal provision is listed.

The Student Complaints, Grievances and Appeals Procedure provides the framework for managing a complaint, appeal or grievance. The appeals framework is designed to enable student grievances, where possible, to be addressed and resolved as close to the level at which they arose in the University's management structure. Staff told the Panel that students may appeal an assessment result to the Head of department or the Dean or the Academic Administration Committee.

The Lincoln-Telford Division has a separate complaints policy and an appeals policy.

It was not immediately obvious from the University's website homepage what a student should do or where they should go if they had a complaint or grievance. LUSA provides an advocacy and support service for students with an appeal, complaint or grievance. The Panel was also told that LUSA can assist with appeals related to teaching and that students can appeal either through LUSA or by themselves. Students said that the role of the Proctor with respect to student complaints or issues around academic dishonesty was not well understood.

The Self-review Report notes that the management of an appeal in practice varies and may depend on the nature of the issue. Some appeal applications are facilitated by an online process and others through an academic administrator or by written application to the Academic Administration Committee.

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[108] 2016 Calendar, pp55; 64.
[109] For example, General Admission regulation, clause 7, 2016 Calendar, p36.

The Panel was advised that all existing policies and procedures related to complaints, appeals and grievances are under review.[110] The Panel agrees that this is necessary. Consideration also needs to be given to how the procedures are communicated to both staff and students. Given the acknowledged datedness of the current regulations and procedures, the Panel is reluctant to comment further on them.

Recommendation: The Panel recommends that the University urgently review, refresh and refine its provisions for appeals and its procedures for appeals, academic grievances and complaints.

5.2   Learning support

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

The University informed the Panel about a range of learning support services on its Te Waihora campus provided by Library, Teaching and Learning (LTL), including tutorials, workshops, individual appointments and drop-in meetings. LTL offerings include general study skills, mathematics and statistics, English language skills, academic writing and workshops for postgraduate students. Specific workshops are available for dyslexic students (in conjunction with Inclusive Education staff). An information skills course, which might be face-to-face or online, is mandatory for undergraduates. The LTL website provides online resources; the AskLive online chat service provides real-time advice to students and staff.

The Panel reviewed 2014 figures for student participation in academic writing, language, learning and mathematics/statistics support sessions (workshops, PASS sessions and individual appointments). The report noted the challenge of providing individual assistance given the limited staffing available.[111]

As noted in previous sections, Lincoln provides dedicated support for Māori students and international students. The Peer Assisted Study Sessions (PASS) for Māori and Pasifika students is coordinated and administered by LTL. Monitoring of the PASS programme, which started in 2011, indicated an increase in uptake between first and second semester 2014 but because of financial constraints the number of courses where PASS was active declined in 2015, though student achievement data indicated a higher percentage of pass rates for students who participated in the scheme.[112] In 2016 the training of mentors was extended to include support for PASS facilitators. It was apparent to the Panel that LTL is doing good work in encouraging PASS support, that students find it beneficial and it was pleasing to note the ongoing evaluation of the programme.

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[110] SR, p63.
[111] Learner Advisor Teaching 2014 Snapshot of Service, p4.
[112] Report on the PASS Programme, Semesters 1 & 2, 2015. It is, however, possible that participants in the scheme are those students already more likely to succeed.

As noted in Section 2.3, the "open door" availability of staff to assist with learning needs is much appreciated by students. Students who were interviewed told the Panel that support for their learning at Lincoln was good and that there is very good additional support, if necessary, for students with long term problems or illness. It was noted, however, that there could be better communication of what is available.

Commendation: The Panel commends the work of Library, Teaching and Learning in providing support for students and in particular for its coordination and oversight of the PASS programme.

5.3   Personal support and safety

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

Lincoln University has the usual range of personal support services for students, including at Te Waihora campus:

- health and counselling services
- chaplaincy services
- dedicated prayer rooms
- two childcare centres
- student clubs and societies
- a recreation centre
- a dedicated student space.

LUSA has a Service Level Agreement with the University to provide:

- Advocacy
- Counselling Services and Pastoral Care
- Employment Information
- Financial Support and Advice.

Quarterly Reporting for January – March 2015 confirmed that intended outcomes (KPIs) were met[113].

Residential Assistants from each Te Waihora Hall hold social events and invite guest speakers to address students on a variety of issues. Comments from interviews indicated that pastoral support at Lincoln is very good, in particular for NZAid and StudyAbroad students. Two dedicated administrators are available to assist with the academic and personal needs of international scholarship and StudyAbroad students. StudyAbroad students have additional support available. Social events are organised for families new to New Zealand. LUSA's LincMe-Up programme provides peer mentoring to international students.[114]

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[113] LUSA Quarterly Report Jan-March 2015.
[114] SR, p72.

Lincoln was a participant in the South Island Tertiary Forum (2015) which had a particular focus on mental health, drugs and alcohol and sexual health, physical activity and wellbeing.[115] The University reported that over 4,000 students and graduates were registered on its CareerHub in 2014 and that 313 students had attended individual career appointments.[116]

Given its land-based focus, Lincoln University places significant emphasis on the safety, health and wellbeing of its staff and students. It has appropriate policies in place for different farm activities (e.g. quad bike use, equine safety, firearms use) as well as policies for drug and alcohol, ethical behaviour and harassment prevention. A Code of Conduct for field work and tours is included as an Appendix in course outlines where this applies.

Lincoln University houses around 600 students on the Te Waihora campus and cites its procedures and facilities to demonstrate how it ensures that its environment is safe and secure. The University has a service to escort students and staff to their cars or hall of residence after dark if required. However the Panel heard from some international students that they felt unsafe walking around the campus at night, mainly because of antisocial behaviour rather than physical risk. This appeared to relate mainly to routes to and from the hostels. The Panel was told that some parts of the campus had poor lighting.

5.4   Support on other campuses

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

Students on the Telford campus have dedicated learning support (see Sections 4.1, 4.2 and 5.1). Currently there is no peer mentoring. In 2016 the University planned to run pilot programmes for assisting off-campus learners with literacy or numeracy challenges. Although Telford students do not have access to all of the services available on the Te Waihora campus, there is a pastoral support person available, at any time, as well as an on-site Health nurse who has close links to Te Waihora health staff as well as to the community health services. Community support is also available from Te Tapuae o Rehua. The Panel was told that hostel supervisors at Telford provide a lot of pastoral care. The MoU for the Whenua Kura programme covers pastoral as well as academic support of students in the workplace. Telford personal support appears appropriate to the scale and demographic profile of students.[117]

The Panel was unable to evaluate support provided to students on international programmes but saw an example of an inter-institutional MoU covering support arrangements (Master of International Nature Conservation at Georg August University, Göttingen) as well as quality assurance through a joint board of studies. For the Postgraduate Diploma in Applied Science

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[115] South Island Tertiary Forum 6th November 2015, Notes.
[116] Learner Advisor Teaching 2014 Snapshot of Service, p5.
[117] SR, pp67; 74.

(offshore delivery) the Panel was informed of an "Orientation to University Studies" programme held prior to the start of each programme to ensure that all students have an adequate introduction to the requirements of postgraduate study and Lincoln University systems.

The Panel is satisfied that what it learned about support on other campuses is appropriate to this Guideline Statement.

5.5   Feedback from students

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

The University has a number of mechanisms for obtaining student feedback, including lecturer evaluations, annual qualification reports, course evaluations and student representative systems. LUSA has a student support and advice service and a very good Student Rep Handbook which advises representatives about their role, and who to talk to about issues raised by students. It notes that student representatives are the "intermediary" between students and staff who make decisions.[118] The Panel reviewed Faculty notes which recorded issues raised by student representatives and the staff responsible for follow-up.

Explorance Blue is used as the online survey tool. The Panel was informed of the use of mid-semester surveys by some staff, allowing lecturers to address any student concerns before the end of a course. Student representatives also meet with Faculty Deans twice each semester to discuss issues that range across a variety of subjects. LUSA student representatives interviewed by the Panel confirmed that their views are taken seriously by the institution at all levels.

Course evaluations provide student feedback on the teaching and learning in the class. The evaluations are carried out biennially and provide feedback on course content, teaching methods, assessment issues, and the availability and usefulness of resources. The University states that copies of survey reports are accessible to students on LEARN and that changes to courses arising from feedback are incorporated into future course outlines.[119]

The Panel saw a number of course and lecturer evaluations, as well as aggregated reports which are provided to the lecturer, their Head of department and Faculty Dean or Division Director, the Director of Teaching and Learning and the CAO. The Panel was told that the Head of Learning and Teaching reviews the evaluation data and flags areas of excellence and potential concern in meetings with Deans and/or Heads of departments.

The Undergraduate Student Satisfaction Survey provides feedback on overall satisfaction, library and IT facilities, teaching and learning, pastoral and non-academic support. The 2014 report seen

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[118] LUSA Student Rep Handbook.
[119] SR, p75.

by the Panel indicates that 81% of students were satisfied, or very satisfied, with their decision to enrol at Lincoln University.

Annual surveys for residential students are run on both campuses, with 98% of respondents indicating overall satisfaction with their Halls of Residence.

The Panel noted the drop in student response rates in course and lecturer evaluations and acknowledges the University's own concerns about how to raise survey response rates. It was suggested by some staff and by some students that a key factor in this was relying on students to complete surveys online in their own time. Online completion in class time was suggested as a strategy to improve response rates.

Overall, the Panel is satisfied that the University has appropriate feedback mechanisms in place for monitoring and enhancing the quality of delivery. Along with other New Zealand universities, it is challenged to find ways to improve student response rates for surveys. The Panel endorses the University's proposed review of the internal and external student survey framework scheduled for 2016.[120]

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

A Graduate Feedback Survey is carried out annually by Lincoln. The survey focuses on graduates' perception of their total programmes of study and teaching and learning experience at Lincoln University. The 2014 survey indicated that 85% of respondents were satisfied with the quality of their programmes.

Other mechanisms used by the University to gain feedback include the national graduate longitudinal study employer feedback through the Lincoln University Planning Advisory Board (Department of Environmental Management) and other advisory boards, and connections with alumni through the Alumni and Development Office.[121]

The Panel is satisfied that the University has the appropriate mechanisms in place for obtaining and acting on postgraduate feedback.

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[120] SR, p78.
[121] SR, pp78-79.

6.   Teaching Quality

Lincoln's (draft) Fourth Learning and Teaching Strategic Directions 2016-2020 proposes "a set of key strategies that will see Lincoln compete nationally and internationally in how it delivers quality teaching in modern digital and physical learning environments". The document highlights the need for infrastructure to make the transition from face-to-face teaching to blended and online delivery. It states that the University's focus on on-campus teaching is the major reason why its online learning systems are under-utilised. The document also highlights a need for pedagogical research and attention to the scholarship of teaching and learning.[122]

While the Panel supports the overall intentions and some specific missions, objectives and strategies contained within the Directions document, its evaluation for this audit is on current practices. The Panel does, however, note that a number of actions from the previous Learning and Teaching Plan (2012-2015) have been transferred to the new iteration.

6.1   Staff recruitment and induction

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

Lincoln University's recruitment and selection processes appear to conform to acceptable practice. The Panel was assured that the requirement that staff hold qualifications in advance of the level at which they are teaching is met; the Panel understands that for some Level 1-3 courses the emphasis is more likely to be on advanced experience than formal qualifications per se. The University advised that there are specific requirements for staff teaching unit standards.[123] The University was reviewing all policies and processes pertaining to human resources at the time of the audit. The Panel was told that areas being considered for improvement include probity checking of new staff, as well as verification of the highest relevant qualification of academic candidates prior to appointment.

All new staff receive an induction pack and are expected to undertake a structured orientation. Human Resources manage induction to the University but the Panel was told this is usually an informal one-on-one meeting with the staff member. Academic units are expected to provide induction specific to that area. Heads have a staff induction checklist. The Panel noted that the Induction Programme Policy (2008) states that the orientation programme includes provision of mentors or buddies.[124] The Panel was told that informally all professors are mentors. Other staff

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[122] Fourth Learning and Teaching Strategic Directions 2016-2020, p1.
[123] SR, p80.
[124] Induction Procedure (2008), p1.

advised that it is inappropriate to have line managers as mentors of their staff, since this might inhibit frank discussion. In 2010 it was proposed that a formal mentoring system be introduced.[125] At the time of the audit this appeared to be left to Faculty or department initiative. Faculties and Divisions might individualise induction, with activities understood to include workshops, mentoring and advice about academic expectations. It is expected that contract staff will receive an induction by an academic staff member. New Māori staff on the Telford campus are welcomed with a whakatau.

The Panel was not able to check the effectiveness of induction with the staff who were interviewed; staff said there had been few new staff appointed recently. Also the senior Human Resources staff were new and unfamiliar with historical practice. The 2012-2015 Learning and Teaching Plan had an action to review the academic staff orientation programme, which the Plan recorded as completed.[126] The Panel was unable to discover what the outcome of this review had been.

Recommendation: The Panel recommends that in reviewing its policies and procedures the Human Resources department ensure there is a clear statement of institutional expectations regarding the academic and general induction of new staff, including contract staff, and develops an induction framework which will foster consistent practice across the University.

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

Lincoln University relies on its research strategy to ensure staff teaching at degree-level are research-active. The Research Strategy makes explicit Lincoln's distinctive research profile, reflecting its specialist, land-based orientation. The overall intent of the Strategy is: "A vibrant research culture built on a foundation of disciplinary excellence, underpinning high-quality tertiary education, and driving solutions and value for land-based stakeholders."

Staff at all levels in the institution confirmed their understanding and commitment to the research profile. The Panel saw aggregate PBRF and workforce survey data which supported the University's claim about research activity. It also heard from many sources that research-informed teaching is thoroughly integrated into all levels of degree teaching. Position descriptions of academic posts, including academic management positions, contained explicit expectations of research activity. All staff at Assistant Lecturer level and above, including academic management positions, are expected to be engaged in research activities, with associated performance indicators explicitly stated in the relevant position descriptions. The Panel was told that staff from one of the two Research Centres teach into undergraduate programmes.

Lincoln University promotes a vertically-integrated research model by which it means that staff teaching at sub-degree level (including staff in the Lincoln-Telford Division) have their curriculum,

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[125] Learning and Teaching Plan 2012-2015, Recommendation 14.
[126] 2012-2015 Learning and Teaching Plan, status report, not dated.

teaching and knowledge base informed by Lincoln research. Staff at Telford contribute to Lincoln research through their work on farms in accordance with the Telford Farm legislation that includes "experiments and research" as part of Telford's purpose. The Panel heard that, at both the Te Waihora and Telford campuses, Lincoln-Telford Division staff work with and deliver programmes alongside Lincoln University staff actively engaged in research.

The Cycle 4 audit recommended that the University assess its workload models and develop some University-wide principles for workload management.[127] The University determined that since needs and requirements differed across faculties they should establish their own models. Staff interviewed by the Panel confirmed the existence and application of these workload models. The Panel heard some reference to a 40-40-20 model and also to a "three-cubed" model (that a staff member teaches three courses, supervises three students, publishes three papers annually). There was no indication as to whether workload models took account of such community activity as often falls on Māori staff, in particular.

The Panel was left with the impression that workload models were still in the process of being trialled. It encourages the University to continue working on methods to improve the effectiveness of workload models to help academic staff balance their teaching, research, administration and community service.

Recommendation: The Panel recommends the University continue its review of workload models used in academic departments and faculties, and endeavours to develop a set of principles which can be adopted across the University.

6.3   Teaching quality

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

Course and teaching surveys are the main formal means of evaluating teaching quality. Courses are assessed after every second offering and lecturer evaluations are annual. The aggregation of scores is undertaken by Library, Teaching and Learning. LTL reports the outcomes to the Vice-Chancellor's Office, Deans and Heads of Departments. The Panel heard from staff that individual and anonymous student feedback was often used to enhance the content and delivery of courses. The Panel was told that only the lecturer concerned receives individual results of the teaching survey and that effective management (by Deans or Heads) of low performers is a challenge. The Panel believes that the private nature of teaching surveys is not helpful to line managers in signalling teaching difficulties or for conducting performance development and appraisal reviews.

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[127] Lincoln University Cycle 4 Academic Audit, Recommendation 9, p43.

The Panel considered the overview statement to staff, which provides guidelines on interpreting evaluation scores, to be helpful.[128] After reviewing the policy and guidelines for conducting surveys and discussing teaching evaluations with staff the Panel is satisfied that Lincoln has the appropriate processes in place. Staff interviewed by the Panel confirmed that they understood the monitoring aspects of course and lecturer evaluations, and the use of such evaluations when applying for promotion. Staff also informed the Panel of their concerns with regard to the reliability of these evaluations if student response rates continued to remain low (see Section 5.5).

Annual performance development and appraisal (PDA) is initiated at departmental level and followed up by Deans of the relevant Faculty. Records of agreed goals and objectives are kept at Faculty level, typically with the staff member's line manager.

For staff at Telford, student evaluations of tutors are undertaken on an annual basis. Collated results are then forwarded to the Head of Programmes and the Academic Programme and Quality Assurance Manager. Student evaluation summaries are reviewed by the Division's Teaching Committee. They are also used as evidence by individual staff members as part of the PDA process to support professional development requests, salary reviews and promotion applications.

The Policy on Course and Lecturer Evaluations by Students reminds staff of other forms of feedback on their teaching, including peer review.

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

The 2012-2015 Learning and Teaching Plan lists eight actions to provide support for the development of excellence in learning and teaching. Of the six actions related to teaching, those completed were the review of academic orientation (see Section 3.1), and access for staff to tertiary teaching qualifications and other professional development. Other actions which were ongoing were the enhancement of the staff professional development programme; development of a digital learning environment and support for online delivery; and encouragement of staff use of flexible and blended teaching.[129]

The Policy on Staff Development and the Policy on Professional Development and Appraisal form the context for staff teaching development. The aims include enabling staff to manage their career development and identify appropriate training opportunities.[130]

The Panel was informed of a number of examples of support activities for staff provided by Library, Teaching and Learning. Details of workshops, resources and links are provided to staff through the

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[128] Student Evaluation of Courses Semester One 2015 Report to Participants.
[129] 2012-2015 Learning and Teaching Plan, status report, not dated.
[130] Both policies dated 2008. The Panel notes all HR policies are currently under review.

intranet and the LTL blog which provides links to technological and pedagogical research and teaching practices.[131] From the review in the 2014 report, the majority of sessions appeared to be related to use of new and existing technologies.[132] Lincoln staff have access to University of Canterbury learning and development courses.

Postgraduate students informed the Panel of support provided by departments before they undertook tutorials or workshops with undergraduate students.

Several staff mentioned the TEACHr/Equella project, which commenced in 2015 (see Section 1.5[133]). Workshops to prepare staff for the changed environment around copyright reporting were held throughout 2015, and are ongoing. As noted in Section 1.5, the Panel heard conflicting views from staff concerning the ease with which material could be entered and remains unsure as to how or when the University will resolve outstanding issues.

The Teaching Media Liaison Group is charged with exploring pedagogical trends and developments in tertiary teaching and to consider how these might be applied at Lincoln. The group includes academic staff, ITS, LTL, technical staff and student representation. The main outcome of this group at the time of the audit appeared to have been the teaching spaces review (see Section 1.4).

The Panel was told that funds for staff development initiatives were limited. The Panel thus supports the University's efforts to provide access to expertise or experiences not available on the Te Waihora or Telford campuses.

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

Staff in the Lincoln-Telford Division are expected to ensure that their programmes and delivery materials reflect industry best practice and relevant research.[134] The Lincoln-Telford Division holds an annual two-day event - *Academic Delivery Days* – in conjunction with their delivery partners, programme managers and teaching staff. This event focuses primarily on effective teaching methods and the supporting pedagogy. The Learning Skills team at Telford liaises with LTL at Te Waihora to assist with provision of support services. The Panel was told that LTL at Te Waihora has sent academic developers to Telford for up to four weeks and staff have also done one or two day "flying visits". Some interviewees raised with the Panel a concern about variable quality of tutor delivery at Telford but the Panel was assured that appropriate action was taken once teaching quality issues were brought to the attention of senior staff.

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[131] See https://ltl.lincoln.ac.nz/new-library-teaching-and-learning-site-january-26-2016/ "Teach – Whakaakona". Accessed 21.08.16.

[132] Learner Advisor Teaching 2014 Snapshot of Service, pp6-7.

[133] TEACHr is the name of the project which uses Equella.

[134] SR, p87.

Staff teaching the Lincoln programme in Sarawak receive support from Lincoln staff. An in-country administrator also provides support. For other programmes taught overseas the responsibility for support rests with those institutions.

6.6   Teaching recognition

Universities' reward processes (promotion; special awards) should recognise teaching capability.

Lincoln's Recognition and Reward Policy outlines the University's principles for recognition, including:
- a holistic approach to recognition and reward that has regard to both intrinsic and extrinsic elements;
- a fair and equitable approach to the allocation of recognition and reward;
- rewards and recognition are linked to the achievement of University goals;
- good communication about reward and recognition policy, procedure and outcomes;
- individual and group contributions are appropriately recognised and rewarded;
- the form of recognition and reward is aligned with the nature and value of contribution made;
- reward and recognition policy and practice is consistent with the University's Equal Opportunity policy;
- statutory and contractual employment requirements are complied with.[135]

The Learning and Teaching Strategic Directions 2012–2015 encouraged the University to be more explicit in its support for an excellent teaching and learning culture. The Panel was advised that Teaching Excellence Awards are now extended to cover many more categories of staff, including early career staff, tutors, teaching assistants, educational support and postgraduate research supervisors. LTL provides assistance to staff nominated for Ako Aotearoa national tertiary teaching awards.

LUSA presents awards which recognise excellence in teaching and support. Teaching excellence of Lincoln-Telford Division staff is recognised at a dinner at Telford.

The Panel was told that in practice the main criteria for academic promotion remain research-based and that staff whose main strengths are in teaching have struggled. However, the Panel was also told that all staff on continuing appointments are entitled to have their salary reviewed under the Annual Promotions Procedure, where a manager can request a one-off payment for a staff member in recognition of special duties or achievements. The Self-review Report notes that this is not formalised, but "is permitted".[136]

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[135] Recognition and Reward Policy 2008, currently under review – see Section 6.1.
[136] SR, p89.

7.   Supervision of Research Students

In 2015 Lincoln University recorded 278 PhD students and 231 Master's students. That same year there were 71 research degree completions. Taught postgraduate programmes, which include Honours programmes and postgraduate certificates and diplomas, accounted for nearly half the postgraduate EFTS (210.5 out of a total 471.2 EFTS). These figures together give an indication of the scale of Lincoln's postgraduate research enrolment. In 2015, 260.7 EFTS derived from research postgraduate programmes.[137]

 This section focuses only on research students, i.e. master's thesis and doctoral students.

As previously noted, Lincoln University is setting considerable store on the establishment of the Lincoln Hub. This included a proposal for a postgraduate school which was intended to facilitate PhD research among the partners and thereby increase PhD enrolments. The Hub would also facilitate Lincoln's objective of providing PhD students with an interdisciplinary experience (Strategic Objective SO5 of the Research Strategy).[138]

All Master's degrees were reviewed as part of the Qualifications Reform project and a number deleted from Lincoln's portfolio. The Panel notes that as part of the Qualifications Reform project the PhD is to be reviewed.

An Academic Programme Director (Postgraduate Studies) has oversight of postgraduate programmes and students.

All requirements for thesis research are contained in a user-friendly booklet (also online) referred to as the House Rules. Separate documents are available for all postgraduate programmes.[139] As well as academic requirements specific to the degree, the House Rules include information on English language requirements, privacy and the Official Information Act, intellectual property, health and safety, ethics, helpful contacts, the roles of supervisor and student. This section refers to the House Rules for the PhD qualification but it should be noted that the House Rules for Master's cover similar material as well as information specific to different Master's degrees. The Master's House Rules include agreements for students studying at Boku University in Austria.[140]

Commendation: The Panel commends the University on the development, regular review and wide use of the suite of House Rules documents for postgraduate study.

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[137] AR, pp75-76; data provided on request by the University, 22.08.16.
[138] Lincoln University Research Strategy 2014-2018, pp3; 13-15. Lincoln Hub Programme Business Case, p21.
[139] www.lincoln.ac.nz/Lincoln-Home/Study/Postgraduate/House-Rules/ Accessed 22.08.16
[140] House Rules for the Study of Masters at Lincoln University (April 2016).

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

Given an objective of the Lincoln Hub is to enable industry leaders to be involved, *inter alia,* in postgraduate supervision, the Panel paid close attention to the training and appointment of supervisors and examiners. The Panel understood that the most recent iteration of the PhD House Rules (May 2016) had been produced since discussion about the Lincoln Hub commenced and might be anticipated to account for those developments related to the Hub outlined above which might impact on postgraduate research and supervision.

Supervisors are approved by the Postgraduate Director after approval by the relevant Faculty Dean. The University requires a minimum of two Lincoln academic staff members as supervisors for doctoral and for Master's research. In the House Rules the criteria for appointment of supervisors are articulated clearly.[141] The University differentiates five levels of supervision readiness:

> Level 1 - Primary supervisor for a PhD
> Level 2 - Associate supervisor for a PhD
> Level 3 - Primary supervisor for a Master's thesis
> Level 4 - Primary supervisor for a dissertation
> Level 5 - Associate supervisor for a Master's thesis.[142]

The primary supervisor for a PhD must be an academic staff member holding a PhD and/or having a well-established and relevant research record and/or a proven track record of supervision. The primary supervisor for a Master's thesis must hold a Master's degree or higher (normally) and/or have a well-established and relevant research record and have been an associate supervisor for either a PhD or Master's thesis. External experts may act as advisers but not as supervisors.

The Panel heard that a significant number of PhD students have an external adviser.[143] The University has clear criteria for what is expected of an adviser. The circumstances in which an external person may be appointed as a co-supervisor are also documented.[144] For international PhD students the primary supervisor must also meet TEC criteria (that the supervisor has national/international research standing).[145] Where the research is fundamentally or significantly Māori research focussed, formal acknowledgment of the role of a Māori Research Mentor is required. Kaupapa Māori research requires a separately negotiated agreement, signed by the

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[141] www.lincoln.ac.nz/PageFiles/23364/Current-%20PhD-House-Rules-Hardcopy.pdf Updated May 2016. Accessed 22.08.16.
[142] PhD House Rules (May 2016), pp23, 24.
[143] Staff referred specifically to staff of Crown Research Institutes.
[144] PhD House Rules (May 2016), p24.
[145] SR, p92.

designated Tuakana, an 'assistant' and by a member of the appropriate kaitiaki collective (e.g., iwi, hapū, whānau) responsible for approving the overall process.[146]

All new staff at Lincoln are required to attend the Lincoln University "best practice in supervision" workshop. Ongoing expectations are that supervisors will attend selected "best practice in supervision" workshops or other targeted supervision development workshops. All staff new-to-supervision are allocated a mentor who is an experienced supervisor. Heads of Department/School advised they pay attention to ensuring no staff become overloaded with supervision responsibilities.

Commendation: The Panel commends the University on its processes for ensuring thesis supervision is undertaken by appropriately qualified, trained and supported staff and that the requirements are communicated clearly to both staff and students.

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

Within three months of commencing their study postgraduate students and their supervisors are required to sign a Mutual Expectations Agreement, MEA.[147] The aims of this document, according to the House Rules, are first, to encourage communication between the student and their Supervisor/s and second, to record their agreed mutual expectations. These expectations include consideration of routine resourcing requirements for the research (study space, access to computing, materials etc.).[148] The Panel was told that responsibility for resourcing lies with the Faculty Dean and/or the Chair of the Postgraduate Committee or, if costs are high, with the Chair of the Research Committee. The Dean of Faculty or the Faculty Postgraduate Coordinator is expected to analyse the requirements of the topic, in order to determine that the facilities needed for the project are available (including the proposed source of funds where applicable). A research topic will not be approved if the research is dependent on obtaining a grant which has been applied for but not awarded at the time the application is made.[149]

Adequacy and use of resources is monitored within the six-monthly supervision reports (see Section 7.3). Thesis students told the Panel they appreciated the financial support made available for them to attend conferences off-campus. They also said that opportunities to tutor or demonstrate helped them feel part of the Lincoln community.

Staff believed that thesis students used a buddy system, though none of the postgraduate students interviewed were aware of it.[150] Students indicated more assistance is needed to guide international

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[146] www.lincoln.ac.nz/Lincoln-Home/Student-Life/Study-Resources/Postgraduate-resources/Supervision-Mutual-Expectations/ p2. Accessed 22.08.16.

[147] www.lincoln.ac.nz/Lincoln-Home/Student-Life/Study-Resources/Postgraduate-resources/Supervision-Mutual-Expectations/ Accessed 22.08.16.

[148] MEA, pp5-6.

[149] PhD House Rules, p24.

[150] It is likely the buddy system referred to is that used by the Bio-Protection Research Centre – SR, p97.

students (the Panel was told that most PhD students are international and can feel especially isolated if in a small department). It was suggested by students that orientation activities for postgraduate students, especially those who are international, needed developing. Some students found the Postgraduate Society and social events helpful to their integration.

The processes for resourcing PhD theses appeared appropriate and no issues were reported to the Panel by students or staff. It was clear to the Panel that some students needed more social support. The Panel noted the provision of the Certificate in Effective Tertiary Teaching as a series of eight workshops for postgraduate students likely to be involved in teaching or tutoring, held in 2014, as a positive initiative.[151]

Commendation: The Panel commends the University on the development and use of the Mutual Expectations Agreement and encourages the University to ensure this is reviewed and, if necessary, refreshed on a regular basis.

Recommendation: The Panel recommends that the University review its orientation offerings targeted at PhD students and considers formalising the buddy system so that it can be monitored and is available for all research students, but especially for international students and students new to Lincoln.

7.3   Research supervision

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

Research supervision at Lincoln is structured and monitored by processes similar to those used in other New Zealand universities. As indicated above, Lincoln's Mutual Expectations Agreement requires student and supervisor to agree on such matters as frequency of meetings, timelines, support required and provided as well as mechanisms for resolving any conflict or disagreement that might arise. Student progress is monitored formally through six-monthly reporting completed by both the student and the supervisor. The University notes that as this reporting covers any welfare issues it is pivotal to retention and completion rates.[152] Reports are signed off by the Faculty Dean, who follows up any issues, while institutional oversight is provided by the Academic Programme Director (Postgraduate Studies).

Students interviewed by the Panel confirmed that the documented procedures are followed. No concerns were reported to the Panel. The Panel noted data in the Self-review Report indicating that supervision and associate supervision received high scores in the 2014 Postgraduate Student Satisfaction Survey.

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[151] Learner Advisor Teaching 2014 Snapshot of Service, p8. The Certificate is no longer listed on the Lincoln website.
[152] SR, p94.

7.4   Thesis examination

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

The Cycle 4 audit drew attention to an anomaly regarding the examination of PhD theses (Recommendation R7 relating to the practice of including supervisors as examiners).[153] This issue has been addressed. Lincoln's thesis examination process now conforms to that used in other New Zealand universities. PhD theses are examined by an international and an external (to Lincoln) national examiner. Master's theses are examined by an examiner external to Lincoln and an independent internal examiner. For PhDs a senior academic external to the Faculty or research centre of the candidate is appointed as examination convenor. The House Rules indicate potential conflict of interest situations which might preclude a person from being an examiner.

The criteria for thesis examination are detailed in the relevant House Rules.[154] The Panel was told that Guidelines are sent to thesis examiners outlining what is expected of them.

The Panel is satisfied that Lincoln's thesis examination procedures now reflect what is commonly regarded as good practice. It was unclear whether mentoring of supervisors is paralleled by any training or support for new examiners.

7.5   Postgraduate student feedback

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

The formal mechanism for feedback during the course of a student's study is adherence to the interactions agreed to in the Mutual Expectations Agreement (MEA). This includes a requirement for regular meetings between the student and supervisor(s). From its interviews with staff and students the Panel concluded that the MEA is understood and appreciated; i.e., it is a genuine agreement and not merely a bureaucratic document. The University also uses its Postgraduate Student Satisfaction Survey to evaluate at the aggregate level.

The Panel learned of other informal means whereby student feedback may be given through available support networks. The Postgraduate Society affiliated with LUSA was highly regarded, especially by students new to Lincoln. The society is primarily a communications and social network. It meets monthly when the Postgraduate Director and administrators may attend. Student representatives also attend Faculty postgraduate committee meetings.

LUSA holds activities for PhD students and the Postgraduate Officer in LUSA provides a vehicle for the student voice to be heard.

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[153] Lincoln University Cycle 4 Academic Audit Report, p35.
[154] PhD House Rules (May 2016) pp35-37; Master's House Rules (April 2016) pp37-38.

Conclusion

During the site visit the Panel interviewed approximately 70 staff and 20 students, including staff and students based on the Telford campus, as well as three members of the University Council. Students spoken to were articulate and frank and gave very warm and positive reflections on their experience at Lincoln University. Council members were particularly helpful in explaining the current Lincoln context.

The Panel found most staff to be well versed in their portfolio areas and prepared to engage well with the Panel. However the absence of some key staff, vacancies in some senior roles, and the relative newness of other senior staff meant that in some areas the Panel was challenged to gather sufficient information to triangulate its tentative conclusions or the University's claims. Conclusions in this report must be considered in the context of best available evidence. The Panel is also aware that over the time of the audit (March-August 2016) there was significant change happening or indicated at Lincoln, which created a degree of uncertainty about some activities.

The Panel reviewed the University's response to the 2012 Cycle 4 recommendations. The University had addressed some, but not all of these. Those which have not yet been addressed, or only partially addressed, remain relevant and this Panel has made recommendations reflecting a continued concern.

The Panel concluded that the University needs clear delegation statements to ensure academic decision-making has integrity, and it needs robust performance indicators to inform its planning and evaluation of progress towards objectives. Academic policies in almost all areas need review and in some areas need a refreshed, contemporary approach. However postgraduate policies and procedures are robust and comprehensive.

There is good leadership from Library, Teaching and Learning in support for teaching and for student achievement. A wide variety of support is available to foster access and transition, in particular in the Lincoln-Telford Division and, within that, for Māori students and potential Māori students. More attention needs to be given to encouraging domestic Pasifika student participation.

The Panel's commendations, affirmations and recommendations follow. The University is expected to report on its response to the recommendations made by the Panel in twelve months' time (December 2017) and again at the time of the next academic audit.

Commendations

GS 1.5   C1   *The Panel commends Library, Teaching and Learning (LTL) for its leadership in developing and managing new systems to support staff and students, and encourages LTL to augment its monitoring of the impacts of such initiatives.*

GS 2.1   C2   *The Panel commends the University on the coordinated approach to improving the application and enrolment process for students, including the Choose Lincoln*

Strategy and the implementation of MyLinc, and the support it provides to students to assist their transition to university life.

GS 2.2   C3   *The Panel commends the University on the success of its Whenua Kura and Poutama Whenua initiatives and the contribution made by these programmes to facilitating Māori student participation in tertiary study.*

GS 2.3   C4   *The Panel commends the University on its promotion of an "Open Door" culture and on the accessibility of academic staff to students in need of advice or support.*

GS 5.2   C5   *The Panel commends the work of Library, Teaching and Learning in providing support for students and in particular for its coordination and oversight of the PASS programme.*

GS 7   C6   *The Panel commends the University on the development, regular review and wide use of the suite of House Rules documents for postgraduate study.*

GS 7.1   C7   *The Panel commends the University on its processes for ensuring thesis supervision is undertaken by appropriately qualified, trained and supported staff and that the requirements are communicated clearly to both staff and students.*

GS 7.2   C8   *The Panel commends the University on the development and use of the Mutual Expectations Agreement and encourages the University to ensure this is reviewed and, if necessary, refreshed on a regular basis.*

Affirmations

GS 1.2   A1   *The Panel affirms the Whenua Strategy and encourages the University to move promptly to systematic implementation, with appropriate goals and performance measures, as is feasible within the objectives and capability of the University.*

GS 1.6   A2   *The Panel affirms the ongoing work of the University in managing its responses to space constraints consequent to earthquake damage, demolition and remediation.*

GS 3.2   A3   *The Panel affirms the progress made on the Qualifications Reform and encourages the University to keep under review the effectiveness of the changes in meeting the reform objectives while at the same time ensuring that student pathways are not unduly constrained.*

GS 4.1   A4   *The Panel affirms the efforts made by staff in the Lincoln-Telford Division to support pre-degree students and to encourage their engagement with their study.*

Recommendations

GS 1.1   R1   *The Panel recommends that when the new management and committee structures are finalised the University review which academic decisions are taken at which level of the organisation and articulates and communicates to all staff a clear delegations statement for all academic decision-making.*

GS 1.1   R2   *The Panel recommends that the University expedite the implementation of the Policy Refresh Project and ensure that all academic policies and procedures which have not been reviewed since 2010 be reviewed and, if necessary, revised by the end of 2017 and that henceforth all academic policies and procedures be reviewed within five years of the previous review.*

GS 1.2   R3   *The Panel recommends that future strategic plans (including plans related to teaching and learning) include objectives related to student achievement and teaching quality, with key performance indicators which inform academic quality assurance processes.*

GS 1.2   R4   *The Panel recommends that the University urgently address Recommendation 2 from the 2012 Cycle 4 academic audit regarding externality and benchmarking, by exploring 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.*

GS 2.2   R5   *The Panel recommends the University proceeds with development and operationalisation of the Motu Strategy and in particular explores how enrolment of domestic Pasifika students might be encouraged and their participation supported.*

GS 3.2   R6   *The Panel recommends that the University assess how best to implement the aspects of the Whenua matrix which pertain to programme content and pedagogy, recognising the particularities of programmes and capability of staff.*

GS 3.4   R7   *The Panel recommends the University complete its redevelopment of the programme review policy, procedures and guidelines to inform preparation for the reviews scheduled in 2017 and thereafter and explores how good outcomes of reviews might be shared across faculties.*

GS 3.6   R8   *The Panel recommends that, in its revision of the Assessment Policy and its development of the Fourth Learning and Teaching Strategic Directions, the University address all forms of assessment (not only exams) and gives greater clarification to the expectations of academic staff regarding such matters as use of grading rubrics, criterion-referencing, pre- and post-assessment moderation and formative feedback to students.*

GS 3.8   R9   *The Panel recommends that the University give priority to reviewing its policies and processes for preventing and managing academic dishonesty, that it consider mechanisms for ensuring proven dishonesty allegations are recorded confidentially, and that it also consider developing educative resources for both staff and students to ensure academic integrity in teaching, learning, assessment and research.*

GS 5.1   R10   *The Panel recommends that the University urgently review, refresh and refine its provisions for appeals and its procedures for appeals, academic grievances and complaints.*

GS 6.1   R11   *The Panel recommends that in reviewing its policies and procedures the Human Resources department ensure there is a clear statement of institutional expectations regarding the academic and general induction of new staff, including contract staff, and develops an induction framework which will foster consistent practice across the University.*

GS 6.2   R12   *The Panel recommends the University continue its review of workload models used in academic departments and faculties, and endeavours to develop a set of principles which can be adopted across the University.*

GS 7.2   R13   *The Panel recommends that the University review its orientation offerings targeted at PhD students and considers formalising the buddy system so that it can be monitored and is available for all research students, but especially for international students and students new to Lincoln.*

Acknowledgments

The Panel thanks Lincoln University Vice-Chancellor Professor Robin Pollard for his warm welcome to the University.

The preparation and submission of the University's Self-review Portfolio was managed by Dr Lorraine Petelo and Ms Paula Morrison. The Panel and its secretariat are most grateful for their assistance throughout the audit process. The effort of all those who contributed to the University's self-assessment process, preparation of the Self-review Report and the organisation associated with the site visit is appreciated. The contribution made by students, through LUSA, is also appreciated.

The Panel appreciated the open interaction and frank comments and observations of all those staff, students and Council members who gave their time to appear before it during the site visit.

Appreciation is also expressed to the Executive Director of AQA, Emeritus Professor Sheelagh Matear, a former staff member of Lincoln University, for her willingness to step aside from this audit. Professor Matear had no part in any communications or deliberations on either the audit process or the report content. The AQA Board appointed the former AQA Director, reporting to the Chair of the AQA Board, to manage the entire audit process.

Audit Panel

Emeritus Professor Dugald Scott *Chair of the Panel*	Education Consultant
Professor Jeanette Baird	Divine Word University, Papua New Guinea
Fiona Coote	Massey University
Associate Professor Pat Cragg	University of Otago
Professor Ajit Narayanan	Auckland University of Technology

Secretariat:

Dr Jan Cameron	Education Consultant Academic Quality Agency for New Zealand Universities
Heather Dickie	Education Consultant Academic Quality Agency for New Zealand Universities

The Academic Quality Agency for New Zealand Universities

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

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

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

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

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

Cycle 5 Academic Audit Process

Key principles underpinning academic audits carried out by AQA are:

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

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

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

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

Cycle 5 Academic Audit Framework

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

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

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

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

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