news

December 2021

Te Pokapū Kounga Mātauranga mō ngā Whare Wānanga o Aotearoa

Adjustments to Audit Processes

AQA consulted with universities on changes to the audit process that would enable audits to proceed in an environment that is likely to continue to be affected by COVID-19. The following changes have been agreed:

1. Planning and follow-up visits are planned to occur face-to-face with a pivot to online if necessary.
2. The first panel meeting (2 days) will be an online meeting.
3. The site visit schedule will be planned as a face-to-face meeting at the university but will change to a 4-day meeting to allow for online pivot options and the possibility of losing a day due to panel members and agency staff needing to return home. Contingency schedules for completing the site visit online will be developed.
4. The international panel member will contribute remotely as a 'consulting panel member' (but could contribute in-person if they and the university agree to accept the risks involved with this or if the COVID-19 pandemic situation improves).
5. If it is clear at the time of the second planning meeting that a site visit will be held online, the international panel member may contribute synchronously (depending on time zones).

These adjustments are only in terms of process and no changes to the Cycle 6 Audit Framework or expectations for self-review portfolios have been made. The AQA website and audit resources (including the guides) will be updated to reflect these changes.

AQA One-Year Follow-up Report

AQA's one-year follow-up report has been accepted by the Vice-Chancellors. The Review Panel made 11 recommendations and AQA is making progress on responding to all recommendations. The response to some recommendations required changes to be made to the AQA Constitution and these have now been approved by the Vice-Chancellors. AQA's one-year follow-up report is available on the AQA **website**.

Cycle 6 Academic Audit Update

The audit phase of Cycle 6 is now underway. The first planning meeting with The University of Auckland – Waipapa Taumata Rau was held on 6 December (via Zoom) and the first planning meeting with Te Herenga Waka – Victoria University of Wellington will be held the week of 14 February 2022.

Changes to the AQA Board

The 2020 External Review of AQA recommended that AQA appoint a Deputy Chair or Co-Chair who is Māori. Changes to the AQA Constitution to implement this recommendation and the recommendation that the AQA Board be expanded to include a member from Te Mana Ākonga have now been approved by the AQA Board and the New Zealand Vice-Chancellors' Committee.

Therefore, AQA is inviting applications for a Māori Lay member of the AQA Board. The role description is available **here**.

The AQA Board meeting of 23 November was the last meeting for Dr Kaye McAulay. Dr McAulay has served on the AQA Board for six years and the Chair of Board thanked her for her contribution.

Work with AQA

AQA is seeking to fill a staff role and a vacancy on the AQA Board. We are also continuing to welcome applications to join the Cycle 6 Register of Auditors and Reviewers.

AQA is seeking a Pou Ārahi Arotake | Assistant Director to guide AQA's strategic goal of becoming a Te Tiriti o Waitangi responsive organisation and a good Te Tiriti partner. This is a full-time role based in Wellington. However, there is the potential for the role to be flexible and not full-time. We would also consider a secondment. Informal enquiries to find out more are welcome and the position description is available on the AQA **website**.

Quality People on the Move

Congratulations to Heather Merrick who will be moving from The University of Auckland to take up the Director of Academic Quality role at AUT in the new year.

Quality in Changing Times

Reflecting the ongoing impacts of COVID-19 and restrictions on being able to meet in-person, Quality Managers from seven universities met for an online "Quality Catch-up" on 2 December. The meeting focussed on 'change' – within universities, externally and in quality processes and arrangements.

The external developments that attracted particular attention were the Pastoral Care Code of Practice and student voice and partnership and how Whiria Ngā Rau could support the development of student engagement frameworks. Universities, particularly those earlier in the Cycle 6 schedule had been undertaking self-review for academic audit alongside the Gap analysis required for the Code and saw opportunities for synergy. The changing environment for assessment was also discussed.
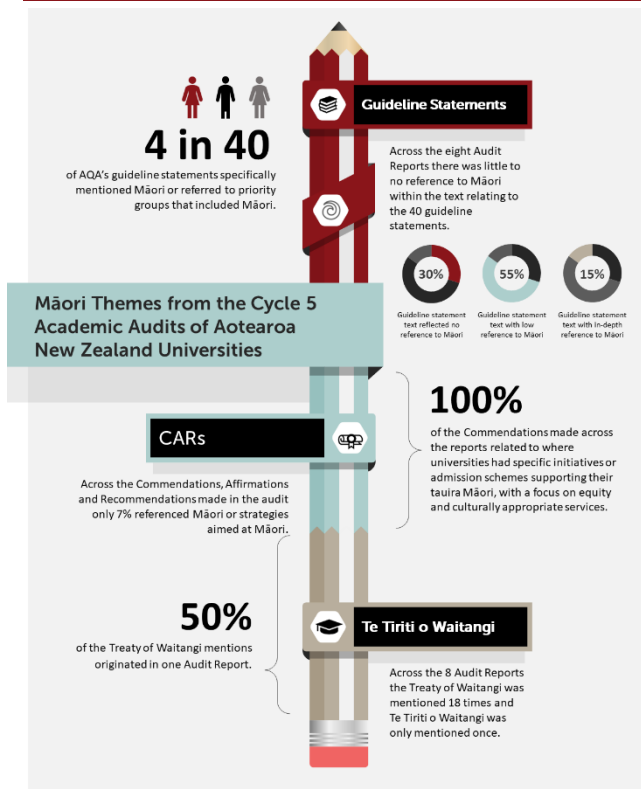
Māori Themes from Cycle 5

A report on Māori Themes from Cycle 5 Academic Audit reports is now available on the AQA **website**. It focuses on references to Māori in the text of the Audit Reports and the commendations, affirmations and recommendations (CARs), from a te ao Māori and Te Tiriti o Waitangi lens. The recommendations made in the report are that:

- AQA and audit panels need to create an approach that weaves Te Tiriti o Waitangi and understanding of te ao Māori and tikanga throughout the audit process. This will require obtaining cultural advice and ensuring cultural expertise is embedded in the audit process.

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Māori Themes from Cycle 5 *(continued)*

4 in 40
of AQA's guideline statements specifically mentioned Māori or referred to priority groups that included Māori.

Guideline Statements
Across the eight Audit Reports there was little to no reference to Māori within the text relating to the 40 guideline statements.

30% Guideline statement text reflected no reference to Māori

55% Guideline statement text with low reference to Māori

15% Guideline statement text with in-depth reference to Māori

Māori Themes from the Cycle 5 Academic Audits of Aotearoa New Zealand Universities

CARs
Across the Commendations, Affirmations and Recommendations made in the audit only 7% referenced Māori or strategies aimed at Māori.

100%
of the Commendations made across the reports related to where universities had specific initiatives or admission schemes supporting their tauira Māori, with a focus on equity and culturally appropriate services.

50%
of the Treaty of Waitangi mentions originated in one Audit Report.

Te Tiriti o Waitangi
Across the 8 Audit Reports the Treaty of Waitangi was mentioned 18 times and Te Tiriti o Waitangi was only mentioned once.

- There needs to be a stronger Māori voice throughout the Audit Reports. This should include feedback from tauira Māori and Māori staff, in addition to ensuring adequate Māori membership on every audit panel.

- Where universities identify using principles from either the Treaty of Waitangi or Te Tiriti o Waitangi, the audit assessment must include detailed information on what principles the universities used and how these were used. It is not enough for universities to mention these principles, audit panels need to have the skills and knowledge to assess how successful the universities have been at implementing them.

The authors also make valuable suggestions for audit panels and these suggestions will be incorporated into auditor training.

Student Voice Summit 2021

NZUSA and its partner associations held a successful **Student Voice Summit** online on 19 and 20 November 2021. As well as being in a new online format, the 2021 Summit brought learner voices from across the tertiary education sector together for the first time and expanded its remit to address students in quality, academic decision-making, pastoral care and well-being, and governance.

The Summit provided the opportunity for students to present "**Whiria Ngā Rau**: Progressing from Student Voice to Partnership: to the Minister of Education, the Hon. Chris Hipkins and to hear from the Minister and leaders across the tertiary education sector in Aotearoa New Zealand. A presentation from the **Global Student Forum** brought an international perspective to the Summit

The final session of the Summit examined what an education system with "learners at the centre" would look like in practice. Recordings from the Summit will be used to develop professional development resources for students and institutions to use throughout the year.
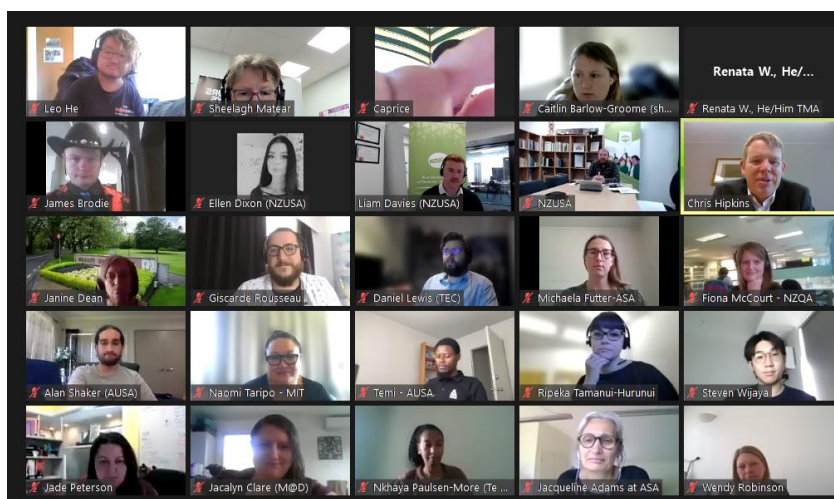
Have You Seen This?

The final 'Have you seen this' column for this year is a round-up of reports and papers produced by AQA this year. Although we've featured some of these before, it's nice to see them all in one place.

In the first part of the year, AQA undertook a synthesis of universities experiences of their rapid moves to online teaching in respond to the first wave of the COVID-19 pandemic. This **Good Practice Assessment** tracked the timeline of university responses, how universities configured their response teams including how students contributed in these teams, how quality was maintained through the response and the sorts of factors that constituted success. This report is included in a TEC **compilation of resources** to support online teaching.

In a third part of the review of Cycle 5 Academic Audit, the AQA Executive Director published an analysis of the **impact of Cycle 5 audit** recommendations on universities in Quality in Higher Education (Vol. 27, Iss. 3). This article is behind a paywall but can be accessed through university libraries or contact **Sheelagh.matear@aqa.ac.nz** for a copy.

An analysis of **Māori Themes** from the Cycle 5 Academic Audit Reports by Hana Meinders-Sykes and Tiana Mihaere is featured in this newsletter. It will provide a valuable guide and basis for comparison for Cycle 6 Academic Audit.

To accompany the release of Whiria Ngā Rau by NZUSA, Sam Smith developed a **Students in Quality** working paper for AQA to guide how AQA can draw on Whiria Ngā Rau to inform Auditor and Board training and working in partnership with students. This paper is included in the 'Living Whiria Ngā Rau' resources on the NZUSA **website.**

Finally, AQA developed a working paper to guide adjustments to Cycle 6 Academic audit processes. This ensured that the adjustments to audit processes outlined in this newsletter were based on best practice internationally and the advice of experienced auditors and reviewers.

Meetings and Conference Calendar

Some upcoming conferences and events are signalling that they hope to return to an "in-person" format next year. Others are retaining an online option.

24-27 January 2022
Washington, DC and online
CHEA/CIQC Annual Conference – Higher Education and Quality Assurance: What should change and what remains the same.

8-10 March
Online
International Center for Academic Integrity annual **conference**

4-6 May 2022
Porto and online
European Conference on Academic Integrity and Plagiarism - Ethics and integrity in the changing world. (**link not yet available**)

6-9 June 2022
Mexico City
13th INQAAHE Biennial Forum - Sustainable Quality Assurance: Optimizing Synergies between Artificial and Human Intelligence.

27-30 June 2022
Melbourne and online
HERDSA Annual Conference

4-7 July 2022
Online
Students Transitions Achievement Retention & Success (STARS) **Conference**

26-30 September 2022
Tarndanya, Adelaide, South Australia and in hybrid mode
World Indigenous Peoples' Conference on Education

Ngā mihi o te tau hou kia koutou katoa
As we approach the end of what has been another challenging year, AQA would like to acknowledge the work of the academic quality community who have contributed to AQA's work, provided feedback and ensured that academic quality has continued to support teaching and learning and the student experience. I hope that you have an opportunity for relaxation and connection with whānau and friends and look forward to seeing you in 2022.