

## Cycle 6 Academic Audit

The site visit for the Cycle 6 academic audit of Te Whare Wānaka o Aoraki Lincoln University was held at the beginning of March 2024. The Panel, chaired by Professor Tim Cooper, spent three days on the University campus. They were welcomed to the University by a mihi whakatau led by former AQA auditor, Professor Hirini Matunga. During this time, the Panel held 23 interview sessions and talked to one Council member, 41 members of staff and 27 students. The other members of the audit panel are Dr Sharon Toi, Letuimanu'asina Emma Kruse Va'ai, Heather Merrick and Liam Davies.

The Cycle 6 audit for the University of Otago is now underway, with the panel having been appointed and the University scheduled to submit its self-review portfolio around the time this newsletter is distributed.

The remaining key dates in the Cycle 6 schedule to the end of 2025 are:

- **April 2024:** One-year follow-up report from Te Herenga Waka – Victoria University of Wellington due.
- **Week of 20 May 2024:** Self-review portfolio from Auckland University of Technology (AUT) Te Wānanga Aronui o Tāmaki Makau Rau due to be submitted.
- **Week of 10 June 2024:** Report for Te Whare Wānaka o Aoraki Lincoln University scheduled to be released.
- **June 2024:** One-year follow-up report from Massey University Te Kunenga ki Pūrehuroa due.
- **Week of 22 July 2024:** Site visit for the University of Otago academic audit.
- **Week of 9 September 2024:** Site visit for Auckland University of Technology (AUT) Te Wānanga Aronui o Tāmaki Makau Rau.
- **Week of 28 October:** University of Otago report scheduled to be released.
- **Week of 16 December 2024:** Report for Auckland University of Technology (AUT) Te Wānanga Aronui o Tāmaki Makau Rau scheduled to be released.
- **December 2024:** One-year follow-up reports from Te Whare Wānanga o Waitaha | University of Canterbury and the University of Waikato due.
- **June 2025:** One year follow up report from Te Whare Wānaka o Aoraki Lincoln University due.
- **October 2025:** One-year follow-up report from the University of Otago due.
- **December 2025:** One-year follow-up report from Auckland University of Technology (AUT) Te Wānanga Aronui o Tāmaki Makau Rau due.

It is anticipated that reviews of Cycle 6 will commence in 2025. These include reviews of the enhancement theme component of Cycle 6.

### AQA | About

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

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

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

## One-year follow-up reports

The first of the one-year follow-up reports has been received from Waipapa Taumata Rau, University of Auckland and the second is expected from Te Herenga Waka – Victoria University of Wellington soon. The one-year follow-up report process consists of the university submitting a report addressing progress on affirmations and responses to affirmations. Universities are encouraged to use a common framework for assessing progress. The Chair of the audit panel and the AQA Executive Director visit the university to discuss the report, after which the university submits their final report. The university may wish to amend some content after discussion with the Chair of the Panel. The final report is considered by the AQA Board. Once the report is accepted by the AQA Board, it is published by the university.

## Cycle 6 affirmations to date

The December 2023 newsletter provided an overview of the patterns of commendations, affirmations and recommendations made in the five Cycle 6 academic audit reports published to date. That overview noted that, in total across the five audits, the numbers of commendations, affirmations and recommendations made were broadly comparable. This article examines **affirmations** further; these respond to enhancement initiatives identified by universities in their self-reviews and reflect work that is already underway or planned. Therefore, they have the potential to provide insight into emerging themes in academic quality across the university sector.

This article examines guideline statements where four or more affirmations have been made and where there is a commonality in affirmations made, suggesting that universities are progressing in common directions. It also highlights a further cross-cutting theme in affirmations that emerges across multiple guideline statements.

Four affirmations were made with respect to the following guideline statements – GS 2 (Student voice), GS 10 (Academic advice), and GS 18 (Assessment). As indicated in the December newsletter, four universities were in the process of developing or planning student voice, engagement, or partnership frameworks. There could be value in exploring the intent of the different terminology used by universities, as voice, engagement and partnership may mean different things. **Matthews and Dollinger (2023)** explore differences between voice and representation.

While all five universities with audit reports published to date received affirmations for work planned or underway on assessment, there is some variation in the approaches and priorities. Differing terminology may reflect differing priorities across policy development, flexibility, equity and accessibility of assessment, innovative assessment in digital environments, and effective assessment.

There appears to be more commonality in the work affirmed in GS 10 (Academic advising). All affirmations use terms reflecting a consistent and co-ordinated approach to advising being taken across the university. Academic advice is serving as a focal point around which to access and co-ordinate other support.

A further theme of an emphasis on data, analytics and monitoring student progress can be seen across several guideline statements. It is evident in GS 1 (planning and reporting), GS 2 (Student voice), GS 8 (Access) and GS 12 (Learning support). This demonstrates the value in being alert to themes that may emerge across multiple guideline statements.

The commonality in affirmations across universities with respect to these guidelines statements suggests there would be merit in universities sharing approaches and good practices.

## Student Voice

*Contributed by Harris Puanaki Devon and Kyea Watene-Hakaria, Tumuaki Takirua o Te Mana Ākonga (NZUSA)*

E rere, e tiu, e hoka e taku manu kai mātauranga,  
 Ki whea rānei  
 Ki Te Herenga Waka koia ko au  
 Ki Te Kunenga ki Pūrehuroa koia ko au  
 Ki Waipapa Taumata Rau koia ko au  
 Ki Aronui koia ko au  
 Ki Waikato koia ko au  
 Ki Aoraki koia ko au  
 Ki Waitaha koia ko au  
 Ki Ōtakau Whakaihu Waka koia ko au  
 Ki Ara koia ko au  
 Ki Te Tau Ihu o te waka koia ko au  
 E tau, e manu ki ōu kōhanga wānanga  
 Ki a au, ki Te Mana Ākonga e!



Tēnā koutou e te whānau whānui o AQA.

Hīnei te reo whakamānawa o Te Mana Ākonga e rere atu nei ki a koutou.

Te Mana Ākonga is the elected National Māori Students' Association, representing all ākonga Māori in the Aotearoa New Zealand tertiary sector. Since its founding in the 1970s, Te Mana Ākonga is, and has always been, a passionate advocate for the rights, experience, pastoral care, and welfare of ākonga Māori. We believe that relationships underpinned via honourable conduct, fair processes, good faith, Te Tiriti o Waitangi decision making, and equitable authority ensures success for all - Māori and Tāngata Tiriti alike.

Te Mana Ākonga comprises of 10 rōpū Māori from all 8 Universities, as well as networks from both Ara and **SANITI**. In addition to our rōpū, we also have our executive team with Harris Puanaki Devon (Te Arawa whānau, Te Awa Tupua, Tūwharetoa) and Kyea Watene-Hakaria (Raukawa, Te Arawa, Mātaatua) as our Tumuaki Takirua for 2024.

With the year in full swing, so are we! This year, Te Mana Ākonga is focused on Māori educational sovereignty and a Te Tiriti led education system, as we collectively believe that this is what's best for all. What this looks like is enhancing the visibility of local ākonga Māori's needs and aspirations that foster a positive learning experience at all respected tertiary institutions. We, as Te Mana Ākonga, work towards ensuring our ākonga feel empowered both in and outside the classroom, as we recognise that their academic success is not isolated from their living situations and wellbeing.

There's a lot more that we get up to throughout out the year, and a lot more stories to be told. There's always a seat at our table for you all, nō reira nau mai, haere mai, whakapā mai ki a māua.

Ko Te Mana Ākonga kia ū, ko Te Mana Ākonga kia ita, ko Te Mana Ākonga kia tapatahi.

## Quality People

Congratulations to **Professor Robyn Longhurst** and **Professor Stuart Brock** on their new roles! Robyn is the Deputy Vice-Chancellor, Academic at Te Herenga Waka – Victoria University of Wellington, and Stuart is the Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Academic) at the University of Otago. Both are current auditors and have been members of Cycle 6 audit panels. AQA looks forward to continuing to work with them in their new roles.

## Have You Seen This?

Many people will have already seen the report from the Australian Universities **Accord**. This sets out a long-term vision for Australian higher education. While it is a long and detailed report, with 47 recommendations, a key message is that the education system needs to be more equitable and innovative. Associated commentary and responses are also worth a read.

Other jurisdictions considering the future of their quality assurance system include Ireland. QQI has released a **report** by Professor Paul Giller, which presents a series of proposals intended to contribute to the next phase of quality assurance in Ireland.

Staying with QQI, they have also published a **White paper** on academic integrity that outlines an intended policy approach and the responsibilities of different parts of the system.

An ENQA **thematic analysis** examines how quality agencies employ follow-up reporting requirements. It finds that follow-up reporting should be integral to the overall review process, while follow-up processes that incorporate an enhancement component are preferred.

Finally, it is very good to see a chapter by former NZUSA President (and member of the AQA Board) Ellen Dixon, former Tumuaki Takirua for Te Mana Ākonga, Nkhaya Paulsen-More, and former NZUSA Vice-President (and audit panel member) Liam Davies contribute a chapter to the rather massive **The Bloomsbury Handbook of Student Politics and Representation in Higher Education**. This is available as an open access publication.

### Meetings and Conference Calendar

#### 21-24 May 2024

*Gatineau – Ottawa, Canada*

Joint International **Conference** on Ethics and Integrity in Academia: Plagiarism, Prevention and Pedagogy in a New Digital Era

#### 10-12 June 2024

*Bucharest, Romania*

INQAAHE **Forum** - Transforming Society: Social Responsibility through Quality Assurance of Tertiary Education

#### 19-21 June 2024

*Hong Kong*

Critical University Studies **Conference**: Rage against the machine - remaking universities for hopeful futures

#### 1-3 July 2024

*Melbourne*

Student Success **Conference**

#### 8-11 July 2024

*Adelaide*

HERDSA **Conference**

#### 24-25 October 2024

*Placeholder*

2024 **CAULLT** Conference

#### 14-16 November 2024

*University of Twente, Netherlands*

European Quality Assurance **Forum** (EQAF)



**AQA** | Academic  
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For New Zealand Universities

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We welcome feedback on this newsletter and the AQA website, along with news and suggestions for newsletter items.

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