

AN OVERVIEW OF THE NEW ZEALAND UNIVERSITIES ACADEMIC AUDIT UNIT



New Zealand Universities Academic Audit Unit

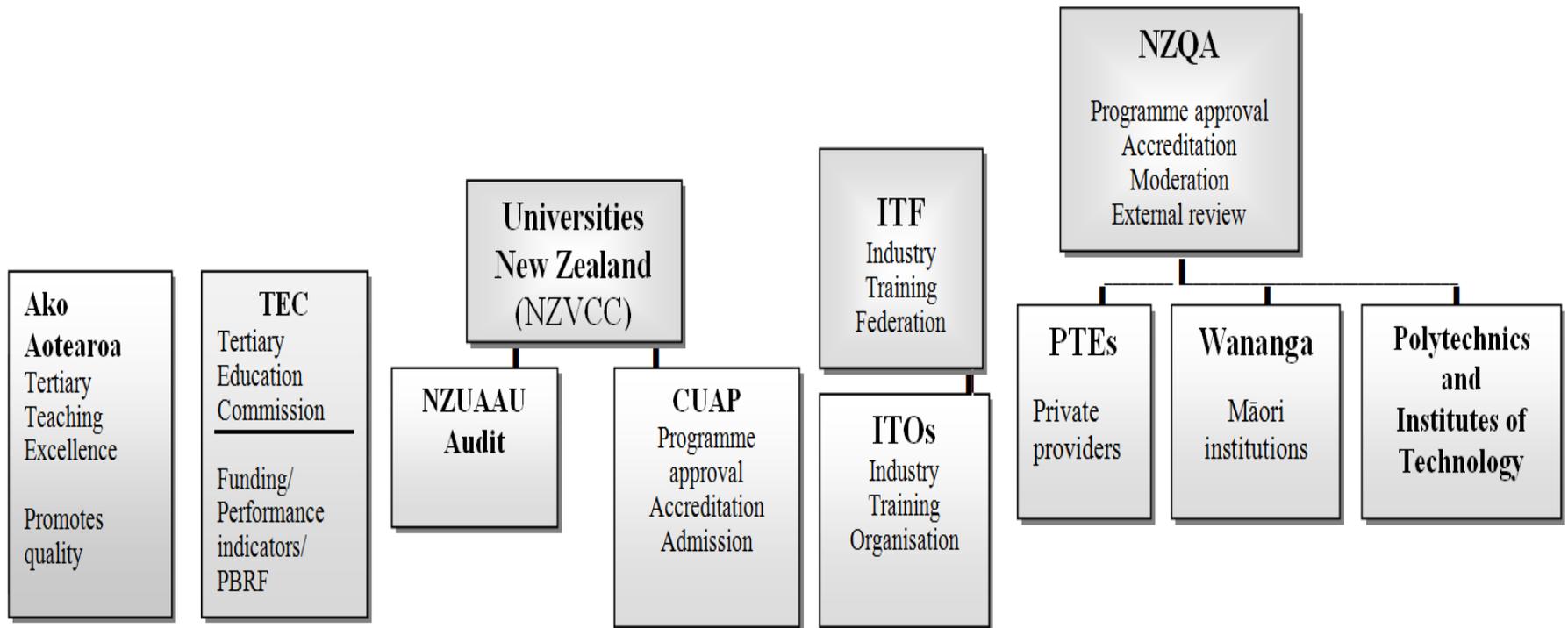
Te Wāhanga Tātari

Monitoring and enhancing academic quality in New Zealand universities since 1993

New Zealand Universities Academic Audit Unit (NZUAAU) *Te Wāhanga Tātari*

- Established by the New Zealand Vice-Chancellors' Committee in 1993 “to maintain and enhance the quality of academic activities of universities”.
- Its governance and operations are independent of Universities New Zealand – Te Pōkai Tara.
- Is concerned with institutional quality assurance (excluding programme accreditation, which is done by CUAP).
- Has two staff: a Director, and a Quality Enhancement and Communications Manager.

NZ Tertiary Quality Framework



NZUAAU Governance

NZUAAU is governed by a Board which includes:

- an independent Chair appointed by the Vice-Chancellors' Committee
- the Director of NZUAAU and nominees of:
 - the Vice-Chancellors' Committee
 - the New Zealand Tertiary Education Union
 - the New Zealand Union of Students' Associations
 - relevant professional and employer bodies
 - a person from the community with expertise in quality assurance.

The Board is appointed by the Vice-Chancellors' Committee.

Governance (continued)

- The Constitution of NZUAAU is determined by the Board of NZUAAU and approved by the Vice-Chancellors' Committee.
- NZUAAU is funded primarily by the New Zealand universities.
- However NZUAAU is fully independent of Universities New Zealand in the conduct of its quality assurance activity:
“Neither the NZVCC nor the individual Vice-Chancellors have authority to amend audit process or the content of audit reports or otherwise direct the operations of the NZUAAU”
(Constitution clause 1.4 Independence of the NZUAAU”

NZUAAU Mission

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;
- providing quality assurance and quality enhancement services which assist universities in facilitating excellent student experience and learning outcomes.

Quality Assurance Principles

- NZUAAU is a full member of the International Network of Quality Assurance Agencies in Higher Education (INQAAHE) and conducts its activity in accordance with the INQAAHE Guidelines for Good Practice.
- Quality assurance is by academic audit which is predicated on self-review, peer assessment and expert comment.

Academic Audit

NZUAAU conducts five yearly institutional audits of all New Zealand universities:

- Cycle 1 1995-1998 Full institutional audits
- Cycle 2 2000-2001 Research policy and management
- Cycle 3 2003-2008 Teaching, learning and programme delivery
- Cycle 4 2008-2012 Full institutional audit.
- Cycle 5 will commence in 2013. The audit methodology is currently under development. The focus of the audit will be on teaching, learning and student support (including post-graduate).

NZUAAU is itself audited regularly (1997; 2001; 2009) by panels which include an INQAAHE member.

Audit reports are published on the NZUAAU website www.nzuaau.ac.nz

Audit Panels and Process

- Audit panels are drawn from the NZUAAU Register of Auditors, plus an overseas auditor.
- New Zealand auditors are senior academics and other professionals with experience in quality assurance. They are recruited and trained by NZUAAU. A number also serve on audit panels in other countries.
- The methodology for each Cycle of audits is developed by NZUAAU in consultation with academic experts on the Cycle theme.

Academic Audit Process

- Audits involve:
 - A self-review by the university and production of a report which includes the desired enhancement activities identified by the university;
 - Review of the self-review report and supplementary material by the audit panel;
 - A site visit to the university by the panel; interviews with staff, students and stakeholders; inspection of facilities and documentation;
 - Preparation of an audit report, which is a public document;
 - Follow-up on recommendations one year after release of the report.

Quality Enhancement

NZUAAU identifies, disseminates and contributes to the development of good practice, via:

- An annual Quality Enhancement Meeting for universities;
- A quarterly newsletter;
- Our website www.nzuaau.ac.nz;
- Production of occasional good practice publications and analyses;
- Participation in national and international workshops on academic quality;
- Contributions to Australian and INQAAHE Good Practice databases;
- Participation in Asia-Pacific Quality Network quality enhancement activity.

Contact

NZ Universities Academic Audit Unit

Level 9, 142 Lambton Quay, Wellington 6011

P. O. Box 5787, Lambton Quay, Wellington 6145

New Zealand

Tel 64 4 801 7925

Fax 64 4 381 8501

Email director@nzuaau.ac.nz

Website www.nzuaau.ac.nz