



University of Auckland
Te Whare Wānanga o
Tāmaki Makaurau
Academic audit report
Cycle 4 August 2009



New Zealand Universities Academic Audit Unit
Te Wāhanga Tātari

University of Auckland
Te Whare Wānanga o
Tāmaki Makaurau

Academic audit report

Cycle 4

August 2009

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

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

The hardcopy printed version of this report is the version authorised by the Board of the Unit. An electronic version of the report is posted on the Unit's website as a portable document format (PDF) file.

© 2009 New Zealand Universities Academic Audit Unit-Te Wāhanga Tātari

Postal address:
P O Box 9747
Marion Square
Wellington 6141
New Zealand

Location:
Level 3
West Block
Education House
178 Willis Street
Wellington
New Zealand

Website:
<http://www.nzuaau.ac.nz>

ISBN 978 – 0 – 9582872 – 2 – 7

Preface

Background

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

- Cycle 1 academic audits were full institutional audits of the then seven universities; they were conducted during the period 1995-1998.
- Cycle 2 academic audits focussed on research policy and management, the research-teaching nexus and the support of postgraduate students, as well as a theme specific to each university; they were conducted during the period 2000-2001. In 2001, a full institutional academic audit was conducted at the eighth New Zealand university – the newly-created Auckland University of Technology.
- Cycle 3 academic audits focussed on teaching quality, programme delivery, and the achievement of learning outcomes, during the period 2003-2006.

The present cycle of academic audits – Cycle 4, of which this is the second – are full institutional audits, and are being administered over the period 2008-2012.²

The process of audit

The process of audit requires a self-review which informs an audit portfolio (structured with respect to the Cycle 4 framework) in which the university evaluates its progress towards achieving its goals and objectives related to the focus of the audit, identifies areas for improvement, and details intended plans, strategies and activities with respect to enhancement initiatives. After examining the portfolio, and seeking further information if necessary, the Audit Panel conducts interviews during a site visit to the university to seek verification of materials read, and to inform an audit report which is structured in accordance with the framework for the conduct of Cycle 4 audits as set down in the Unit's 2007 *Academic audit manual*.³ The report commends good practice, affirms actions to be taken by the university, and makes recommendations intended to assist the university in its own programme of continuous improvement of quality and added value in the activities identified by the Unit as the focus of Cycle 4 audits.

A draft report is sent to the university for the correction of errors and for comment on tone and expression. University comments are considered by the panel before the preparation of the final report which is approved by the Board of the Unit prior to publication. Soon after the publication of the audit report, the Unit discusses with the university the preferred procedures to be used in the follow-up to audit and the monitoring of follow-up activities.

¹ See *Appendix 2* for the Unit's complete terms of reference, its vision and its objective with respect to academic audit.

² See *Appendix 3* for the framework for Cycle 4 academic audits.

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

University of Auckland academic audit

The University of Auckland agreed to an academic site visit in May 2009, requiring the submission of the self-review portfolio by late February 2009. The panel appointed to carry out the academic audit of the University met in Wellington on 3 April 2009 for a preliminary meeting at which it evaluated the material it had received, and determined further materials required. The Chair of the panel and the Director of the Unit undertook a planning visit to the University on 17 April 2009 to discuss the supply of the further materials requested as well as arrangements for the site visit. The four-day site visit by the whole panel to the University of Auckland took place on 18-21 May 2009 hosted by the Vice-Chancellor, Professor Stuart McCutcheon. During the site visit, the panel interviewed about 175 members of staff, students and stakeholders.

The Vice-Chancellor of the University of Auckland is a member of the Board of the Unit. Whenever the audit or draft report was discussed by the Board, the Vice-Chancellor declared a conflict of interest and was not present.

The findings of the panel as expressed in this report are based on the written information supplied by the University and on the information gained through interviews conducted during the site visit.

John M. Jennings

*Director
August 2009*

Contents

Preface	iii
Summary	vii
Commendations and recommendations	xi
Preamble	xv
1 General	
1.1 University of Auckland	1
1.2 Mission and values	2
1.3 Strategic plan	3
1.4 The management structure	5
1.5 Risk management	7
1.6 Communication	8
1.7 Equal opportunities	8
2 Teaching and learning	
2.1 Objectives and values	11
2.2 Planning, design and review of programmes and courses	11
2.3 Delivery of courses and programmes	12
2.4 Learning environment	14
2.5 Learning support	15
2.6 Assessment	16
2.7 Student achievement and success	16
2.8 Student associations	17
3 Research environment	
3.1 Objectives and values	19
3.2 Research Committee	19
3.3 Research students and research supervision	20
3.4 Teaching and learning within a research environment	21
4 Te Tiriti o Waitangi and Pacific	
4.1 Objective and value	23
4.2 Te Tiriti o Waitangi	23
4.3 Pacific students	25
4.4 Tuākana for Māori and Pacific	26

5 University staff: academic, management and support	
5.1 Objectives and value	27
5.2 Staff profile and induction	27
5.3 Professional support, development and promotion	28
5.4 Faculty of Education	29
5.5 Leadership programmes	30
5.6 Staff survey	30
6 Institutional quality assurance	
6.1 Objective	31
6.2 Mechanisms	31
6.3 Reviews	32
6.4 Student evaluations	33
7 Community engagement	
7.1 Objective	35
7.2 Relationships with employers and professional bodies	35
7.3 Engagement with schools	36
7.4 The role of critic and conscience of society	36
8 International standing	
8.1 Objectives and value	37
8.2 An international university	37
8.3 Exchange agreements	39
8.4 International students and study abroad	39
Acknowledgements	41
Audit panel	41
Appendices	
1 University of Auckland enhancements	43
2 New Zealand Universities Academic Audit Unit – Te Wāhanga Tātari	47
3 Cycle 4 indicative framework	48

Summary

General

University of Auckland	The University conducts research and delivers academic programmes through eight faculties on four main campuses in Auckland and four satellite campuses in Northland and Auckland. The University's mission is to be a research-led, international university, and its purpose is to engage in teaching, learning and research of a standard comparable to that of research intensive, comprehensive universities world-wide. The University is proud of its achievements and is commended for the clear understanding and articulation of its current and future distinctiveness.
Strategic plan	The high-level <i>Strategic plan 2005-2012</i> successfully articulates the objectives for the whole University, forms the basis for all other planning documents, and is well known and understood throughout the University. Targets set in the <i>Strategic plan</i> are ambitious and some are not likely to be achieved by 2012. It is recommended that the University communicates where the responsibility lies for achieving the specific objectives, and what the consequences will be if objectives are not met.
The management structure	The University is commended for the understanding Council has of its governance role. The Vice-Chancellor is advised by a large Senior Management Team, and Deans are pivotal in implementing the <i>Strategic plan</i> and monitoring progress. While it is not clear as to how good practice in a Faculty is shared and promulgated around other Faculties, it was clear that the Education Committee, Academic Programmes Committee and Teaching and Learning Quality Committee contribute to and disseminate good practice, and this is commended. Much of the institutional responsibility for quality assurance is vested in key senior positions and the University will have to manage the risk to the maintenance and enhancement of quality and standards arising from such concentration of responsibility.
Risk management	The University is commended for its recognition of the need to manage risk and for the development of a comprehensive framework. It is recommended that in implementing the programme of activity, the University gives urgent attention to the greater embedding of risk management across the University.
Communication	Communication from senior management is improving, and work is progressing on improving the University's website.
Equal opportunities	There is evidence of the positive impact arising from the work of the Equal Opportunities Office.

Teaching and learning

Planning, design and review of programmes and courses	Graduate profiles set out attributes considered to be attainable by graduates of a research-led comprehensive university. The introduction of General Education in every degree has the broad support of the University community including students. General Education is about to be reviewed, and the review will need to address issues of student choice and timetabling.
--	--

Delivery of courses and programmes	The University is primarily a campus-based provider and its commitment to enhance the effectiveness of e-learning is affirmed. It is recommended that greater clarification be given about the strategic role of technology in teaching and learning and in helping staff make optimum use of the opportunities afforded by the technology. The University is monitoring the impact of the recent introduction of limitations on entry into the University on access by students from under-represented groups.
Learning environment	The University is commended for the investment into quality learning spaces and information commons areas. A Campus Development Strategy has been developed to address issues of upgrading facilities to match the needs of present-day research, teaching and learning. The University supports its Library system well and is commended for the development and implementation of the 'Referencite' website which provides a tangible illustration of the University's determination to promote, support and monitor academic honesty.
Learning support	Student learning support programmes are regarded as supporting students to have greater success, rather than as remedial work for those unable to cope, and work is being done to think more creatively about the use of resources particularly given the diversity of cultural backgrounds in the University. The University is commended for its commitment to an English ability testing procedure, using the DELNA programme.
Assessment	The University's commitment to provide guidance and support to staff concerning good practice in assessment and to re-examine the management of external assessment and moderation is affirmed.
Student achievement and success	The University is commended for the ways it recognises student success and for the many reported positive aspects of the student experience. The University has taken part in the AUSSE survey of student engagement, and is committed to looking at ways of improving undergraduate student engagement.

Research environment

Research Committee	The University believes there are considerable cross-disciplinary strengths arising from the breadth of the University. Research policies are reviewed regularly. Research centres are reviewed to ensure their ongoing alignment with the <i>Strategic plan</i> .
Research students and research supervision	Strategic targets for masters and PhD completions are not being met at present, and the University's commitments to monitoring the effectiveness of the doctoral Electronic Expression of Interest and to a postgraduate recruitment and marketing plan are affirmed. The University is committed to monitoring regularly the provision and quality of facilities for postgraduate students, to monitoring supervisor performance, and to encouraging a culture of departmental discussion and analysis of research supervision practices and research student progress. The University is commended for the Summer Scholarship Scheme whereby competent undergraduate students can take part in research activities while awaiting enrolment in postgraduate research degrees.
Teaching and learning within a research environment	There is a clear understanding by students of the research-teaching nexus, with examples of the nexus in undergraduate programmes.

Te Tiriti o Waitangi and Pacific

Te Tiriti o Waitangi	The University is being proactive in its response to Te Tiriti o Waitangi. The commitment to work with schools in identifying barriers to students gaining admission, and to identify foundation programmes in other tertiary providers that can act as pathways for Māori into Science, Engineering, Architecture and Health Science degrees is affirmed. Awards are made to top scholars as part of its commitment to increased participation by Māori students in postgraduate programmes. Students expressed appreciation for the services they can access and for the opportunities for Māori students to support each other. It is recommended that staff induction includes information to assist staff towards a greater awareness and understanding of cultural practices arising from Te Tiriti and non-Western cultural practices in general. The effective impact of the Faculty of Engineering equity strategies is commended.
Pacific students	The University has initiatives to address the low enrolment of Pacific students, with the Equal Opportunities Office playing an important role. Pacific students have needs both distinct and similar to Māori students. The Pacific community needs to take leadership for the support programmes, and care is required to ensure views of all cultures that come within the definition 'Pacific' are represented.
Tuākana for Māori and Pacific	Tuākana is a University-wide mentoring and tutoring scheme for Māori and Pacific students which was reported on in a positive way, and which will require monitoring to ensure it continues to be fit for purpose.

University staff: academic, management and support

Staff profile and induction	The staff profile is monitored, and structures, policies, practices and incentives are used to encourage the retention and progression of outstanding staff. There is an equity emphasis on Māori and Pacific staff and on women in some disciplinary areas. Staff induction is mandatory.
Professional support, development and promotion	The Centre for Academic Development has brought together existing agencies to provide a co-ordinated and integrated approach to staff professional development and student learning support. Staff considered the provision of developmental opportunities for staff to be of high quality and relevant. It is readily acknowledged that the professional support and development offered by the various agencies within the Centre are useful only to those who actually attend, and that the impact on the University is dependent on staff participation and staff application of what is learned.
Faculty of Education	There is appreciation of the support provided by the University to encourage and support upskilling through PhD enrolment and involvement in the University's research community following the amalgamation of the Auckland College of Education and the University of Auckland.
Leadership programmes	The University is looking for ways to make leadership roles more aspirational, and it provides HeadsUp, the General Staff Leadership Development Programme, and Women in Leadership Programme. The last of these has been in place for ten years and is being reviewed to ensure it is fit for purpose.
Staff survey	The University administered an internationally-benchmarked staff survey in 2007 with a follow-up in 2009 and the University will need to provide adequate resources so that meaningful and well-communicated actions will arise from the 2009 survey.

Institutional quality assurance

Mechanisms	There is a quality assurance framework in place, and the University's commitment to accompany new and revised teaching and learning policies and guidelines with implementation and communication plans is affirmed.
Reviews	There are many and varied types of reviews carried out by the University, and the University must ensure that reviews and post-review implementation processes are time specified, consistent and aligned with the realisation of the <i>Strategic plan</i> . There is much emphasis on professional accreditation, and the University needs to ensure they contribute to programme and departmental reviews.
Student evaluations	The University has processes to follow up on low-scoring results of student evaluations and there is evidence that student feedback is being applied into some programmes. It is recommended that there be a 'one-stop shop' providing feedback on actions arising from evaluations to those who engage in surveys and evaluations, possibly using the University's website.

Community engagement

Relationships with employers and professional bodies	The University is commended for the depth and range of its engagement with employers, professional bodies and other stakeholder groups. The University's commitment to undertake a study of best practice in employer input into curriculum, teaching and learning, especially in areas where this is currently missing or inadequate, is affirmed. The University's commitment to improve the tracking of graduates is also affirmed.
Engagement with schools	There is strong and effective engagement with schools.
The role of critic and conscience of society	University staff are aware of their obligations and responsibilities, and were positive about the contribution the University makes to public debates.

International standing

An international university	The University is commended for its utilisation of existing benchmarking tools in order to measure its success against its strategies towards internationalisation, but it is recommended that the University clarifies the logic and philosophy behind benchmarking and reconsiders its range of comparator institutions. The needs for internationalisation might be well understood by the Senior Management Team, but it appears that the level of planning and resourcing to achieve these objectives is not well articulated.
Bilateral exchange agreements	The University is committed to review individual international agreements regularly to ensure that they are active and providing benefit to staff and students, and to terminate those that no longer fulfil their original purpose.
International students and study abroad	The University is aware of its obligations to international students and is committed to increasing publicity and enhancing support for study abroad courses for domestic students. The results of the recent International Student Barometer identified areas of performance below other New Zealand universities, and it is recommended that the University ensures urgency is given to addressing and resolving the concerns raised by that survey.

Commendations and recommendations

Key: C = Commendation R = Recommendation A = Affirmation

NOTE: *The words 'the University' in recommendations are intended to refer to the agency within the University of Auckland that the University itself deems to be the one most appropriate to address and progress the recommendation.*

General

Mission and values

C 1 p.3 The panel commends the University for the clear understanding and articulation of the current and future distinctiveness of the University of Auckland as expressed by students, staff and other stakeholders.

Strategic plan

R 1 p.4 **The panel recommends that the Vice-Chancellor communicates to the University community the responsibilities for achieving the objectives of the *Strategic plan 2005-2012*, and the consequences of not achieving those objectives.**

The management structure

C 2 p.5 The panel commends the University for the understanding by Council of their governance role and the constructive relationship with the senior management of the University.

C 3 p.7 The panel commends the University for the contribution to and dissemination of good practice by the Education Committee, Academic Programmes Committee, and Teaching and Learning Quality Committee.

Risk management

C 4 p.8 The panel commends the University for its recognition of the need to manage risk and for the development of a comprehensive framework for risk management.

R 2 p.8 **The panel recommends that, in implementing the risk management programme of activity, the University gives urgent attention to the need for a greater embedding of risk management across the University.**

Teaching and learning

Delivery of courses and programmes

A 1 p.13 *The panel affirms the University's commitment to enhance the effectiveness of e-learning throughout the University (University Enhancement 3), but is of the view that this requires greater urgency, a higher rating, and a shorter timeframe.*

R 3 p.13 **The panel recommends that the University provides greater clarification about the strategic role of media-rich technology in teaching and learning, and that more focused effort be put into getting and helping academic staff to make optimum use of the opportunities afforded by such technology.**

Learning environment

- C 5 p.14 The panel commends the University for the investment into the quality of learning spaces, and the central Kate Edger Information Commons and commons in a number of the faculties, and in the planning for more commons in areas not served at present.
- C 6 P.15 The panel commends the University for the development and implementation of their 'Referencite' website, aimed at educating students about referencing practice, which provides tangible illustration of the University's determination to promote, support and monitor academic honesty.

Learning support

- C 7 p.16 The panel commends the University for the commitment to the English ability testing procedure which facilitates English language support for those who should benefit from it.

Assessment

- A 2 p.16 *The panel affirms the University's intentions to provide appropriate guidance and professional development to staff concerning good practice in assessment through Faculty and University programmes (University Enhancement 6), and to re-examine the ways in which departments and schools manage external assessment and moderation in order to increase efficiency and effectiveness (University Enhancement 7).*

Student achievement and success

- C 8 p.17 The panel commends the University for the recognition of student success and for the many reported positive aspects of the student experience.

Research environment

Research students and research supervision

- A 3 p.21 *The panel affirms the University's intention to monitor the effectiveness of the doctoral Electronic Expression of Interest and application for admission processes (University Enhancement 8a).*
- A 4 p.21 *The panel affirms the University's intention to implement a University of Auckland postgraduate recruitment and marketing plan (University Enhancement 8b).*
- C 9 p.21 The panel commends the University for the Summer Scholarship Scheme whereby undergraduate students can take part in research activities while awaiting enrolment in postgraduate research degrees.

Te Tiriti o Waitangi and Pacific

Te Tiriti o Waitangi

- A 5 p.24 *The panel affirms the University's commitment to work both with secondary schools and with Starpath in identifying the barriers to students gaining the prerequisite subjects required for admission to its programmes (University*

Enhancement 12a), and with other tertiary providers to identify foundation programmes that can act as pathways for Māori into Science, Engineering, Architecture and Health Science degrees (University Enhancement 12b).

- R 4** p.25 **The panel recommends that staff induction sessions include specific information to assist staff towards a greater awareness and understanding of the cultural practices arising from Te Tiriti o Waitangi, as well as highlighting the need to be sensitive to other non-Western cultural practices in general.**

Institutional quality assurance

Mechanisms

- A 6 p.32 *The panel affirms the University's intentions to accompany all new or significantly revised University-level teaching and learning policies and guidelines with implementation/communication plans, and to include quality monitoring mechanisms for new or significantly revised teaching and learning policies and guidelines so as to improve reporting on effectiveness of implementation (University Enhancement 1), and would support this being given a higher priority.*

Student evaluations

- R 5** p.33 **The panel recommends that the University develops a 'one-stop shop' providing feedback on actions arising from surveys and evaluations to those who engage in them, possibly through the University's website.**

Community engagement

Relationships with employers and professional bodies

- A 7 p.35 *The panel affirms the University's intention to undertake a study of best practice in employer input into the curriculum, teaching and learning and to develop an implementation plan in areas where this is currently missing or inadequate (University Enhancement 19).*
- C 10 p.36 *The panel commends the University for the depth and range of the University's engagement with employers, professional bodies and other stakeholder groups.*
- A 8 p.36 *The panel affirms the University's intention to improve University-wide tracking of graduates by considering the application in other faculties of the mechanisms under development in the Faculty of Medical and Health Sciences (University Enhancement 20).*

International standing

An international university

- C 11 p.38 *The panel commends the University for its initial utilisation of existing benchmarking tools in order to measure its success against its strategies towards internationalisation.*

- R 6** p.38 **The panel recommends that the University clarifies the logic and philosophy behind benchmarking and the uses to which findings are to be put, and reconsiders its range of comparator institutions for specific discipline areas, academic programmes and other aspects of its activities.**

International students and study abroad

- R 7** p.40 **The panel recommends that the University ensures urgency is given to addressing and resolving the concerns raised by the International Student Barometer.**

Preamble

▪ **The self-assessment portfolio**

In early 2008, the University of Auckland discussed the structure of the self-assessment portfolio with the Unit, and it was confirmed that the University would follow the topics and activities in the indicative framework for Cycle 4 academic audits⁴ with two amendments – the bringing forward of section 6 ‘Institutional quality assurance’ to the beginning of the Portfolio, and the bringing together of sections 5 ‘Academic and support staff’ and 7 ‘Management and administrative support’ into one entitled ‘University staff: academic, management and support’. The Cycle 4 indicative framework asks questions about the output/outcome data and other evidence used to determine strengths and to judge progress, the mechanisms and processes used to monitor ongoing quality and provide input into continuous improvement. It also requires an evaluation of the relevance and effectiveness of evidence, mechanisms and processes.

The *Academic audit portfolio 2009* [Portfolio] as submitted by the University followed the agreed structure and provided material that addressed the indicative framework and included examples that indicated the effectiveness of processes used. More evidence was sought by the panel and was readily provided. Overall there was an evidence base upon which the panel could then assess the University’s claims about quality and performance and test them in interviews. Near the beginning, the Portfolio listed the major institutional developments since the Cycle 3 academic audit, identifying the *Strategic plan 2005-2012* as the defining document which had been developed, promulgated and implemented soon after the last audit. The portfolio also gave details of progress made in teaching and learning since the Cycle 3 academic audit which focussed in that area.

The Portfolio included 22 Enhancements in the areas of the University’s academic programmes, teaching, learning and assessment; postgraduate student supervision and support; Te Tiriti o Waitangi; staff succession planning, equity, appointment, leadership and promotions; community engagement and feedback from graduates; international partnerships and study abroad. The Enhancements – assigned priority levels and timeframes – were set within the context of the challenges being faced by the University in these particular areas. The Enhancements had arisen out of the work of the Audit Working Groups; they were prioritised by the Steering Group, discussed by the Senior Management Team, and then approved by the Education Committee. It is accepted by the University that the Enhancements will impact on the *Strategic plan*, especially when it is reviewed in 2011, and that the Enhancements will require implementation plans and implementation monitoring once the findings of this audit report are considered by the University.

▪ **This academic audit report**

The structure of this report follows that of the indicative framework for Cycle 4 academic audits, with three adjustments – Pacific matters are incorporated into the section Te Tiriti o Waitangi and follow Te Tiriti since it is recognised by the University that Māori and Pacific students have both distinct and similar needs and both come within the responsibilities of the Pro Vice-Chancellor (Māori); University staff are considered under one heading as in the Portfolio; and the section on external academic collaborations and partnerships is absorbed into a wider discussion of the international standing of the University. *Appendix 1* of this report has the full list of Enhancements, and the panel supports their advance by the University. In the text of this report, the panel has included ‘affirmations’ only for those Enhancements which, in its view, are of greatest significance to the future strategic direction of the University.

⁴ See *Appendix 3* of this report for the framework for Cycle 4 academic audits.

1

General

1.1 University of Auckland

The University of Auckland conducts research and delivers academic programmes to 40,648 students (2008) through eight Faculties: the Faculty of **Arts**, the Faculty of **Business and Economics**, the **National Institute of Creative Arts and Industries**, the Faculty of **Education**, the Faculty of **Engineering**, the Faculty of **Law**, the Faculty of **Medical and Health Sciences**, and the Faculty of **Science**. Research and teaching are undertaken by just over 2,000 academic staff, supported by nearly 2,500 general staff.

The Faculties operate on four main campuses and four satellite campuses. The **City Campus** houses six of the eight Faculties, servicing about 70 percent of students, as well as housing the University's central administration. The Central Library is near to the University's main student learning centre which includes the Kate Edger Information Commons, student learning and international student support services, and facilities associated with the Auckland University Students' Association. (The panel visited the Kate Edger Information Commons, the Faculty of Engineering, and the Owen G Glenn Building.)

The **Grafton Campus** houses the Faculty of Health and Medical Sciences (11 percent of students), across Grafton Gully from the City Campus, in buildings next to and over the road from the Auckland City Hospital. Planning is well advanced for the refurbishment of these buildings to provide facilities and student learning spaces comparable to those on the City Campus and suited to the research, teaching and learning needs of the twenty-first century.

The **Epsom Campus** houses the Faculty of Education (11 percent of students) which is the campus of the former Auckland College of Education which merged with the University in 2004. (The panel visited the campus to talk to staff and inspect the student learning facilities in the Library.) Some improvements have already been made to student learning spaces. The panel was assured by staff that the physical distance from the City Campus did not feel like a barrier, especially with respect to the library and information technology parts of the University system. It was perceived by staff interviewed that students in Education courses were more part of Epsom Campus rather than the University, and students were required to travel to the City Campus for courses outside of Education. The panel was told that the Campus plan for the University hopes to integrate the Faculty of Education into the City Campus in due course.

The **Tamaki Campus** in East Auckland has a special character. It is research intensive with about 50 percent of the programmes being at postgraduate level. There are collaborative links between Crown Research Institutes and disciplines, and between different disciplines on campus which facilitate interdisciplinary collaborations. The Tamaki Campus is considered to provide a model which explores co-operative research with business. The panel was interested in learning of the effectiveness and impact of the Tamaki campus on the University and was told that there was evidence of the Tamaki model being taken up by the wider University, such as interdisciplinary projects in areas within Engineering.

Besides the Auckland city campuses, there are four satellite campuses – at **Kawakawa**, Northland (graduate programmes in Business), at **Tai Tokerau** in Whangarei, Northland (part of the former Auckland College of Education), the **Leigh Marine Reserve**, Cape Rodney, Hauraki Gulf (Marine Laboratory), and the **Manukau Institute of Technology** (certain courses offered on the Institute's campus).

1.2 Mission and values

As set out in the University's *Charter*, the **mission** of the University is:

to be a research-led, international university, recognised for excellence in teaching, learning, research, creative work and administration, for the significance of its contributions to the advancement of knowledge and its commitment to serve its local, national and international communities.

The **purpose** of the University is:

to engage in teaching, learning and research of a standard comparable to that of research-intensive, comprehensive universities world-wide.

In carrying out this purpose, the University **aims**:

to develop the knowledge, understanding and talents of its students, foster the research and creativity of its staff, enrich the cultures and promote the prosperity of Auckland, its region and the nation, and enhance knowledge in the various fields of its endeavour.

The University is committed to:

- *conserving, advancing and disseminating knowledge through teaching, learning, research and creative work of the highest standard,*
- *creating a diverse, collegial scholarly community in which individuals are valued and respected, academic freedom is exercised with intellectual rigour and high ethical standards, and critical enquiry is encouraged,*
- *placing a strong emphasis on serving its student body,*
- *working to advance the intellectual, cultural, environmental, economic and social well-being of the peoples of Auckland and New Zealand,*
- *recognising a special relationship with Māori under Te Tiriti o Waitangi,*
- *providing equal opportunities to all who have the potential to succeed in a University of high international standing,*
- *engaging with national and international scholars, education and research institutions to enhance intellectual development, educational quality and research productivity,*
- *the development and commercialisation of enterprise based on its research and creative works,*
- *providing high quality management marked by open, transparent, responsive, and accountable academic and administrative policies, practices and services.*

It was clear to the panel that the University of Auckland is proud of its achievements, has a clear sense of purpose and direction and is determined to build on its pre-eminent position. The University has much to be proud of – the hosting of several national Centres for Excellence,

considerable external non-government funding, the highest international ranking in New Zealand terms, and international alliances. The large size of the University and the breadth of its offerings give it advantages over other New Zealand universities with respect to student choice of disciplines and academic involvement. Success to date has the potential to bring further success with it.

The panel also heard from students and other stakeholders who gave clear reasons for pride in the University, including its academic breadth and diversity, its international ranking, its community and international linkages, its reputation for research and research-intensive teaching, and opportunities for study abroad. While it was acknowledged that the size of the University can leave some students feeling overwhelmed, the scale of the University also brought benefits of choice and involvement. Aspects of the distinctiveness of the University were related to the nature of Auckland city where much is happening and where the city has more employment opportunities, and different nationalities and diversity of cultures. Many companies and industries are based in Auckland and the frequent interaction with their representatives is welcomed by both staff and students. As well, a large proportion of students live at home in Auckland and have linkages with their friends and former schoolmates. This last aspect is recognised by the students themselves as providing a safe place for serious study.

Commendation

C 1 The panel commends the University for the clear understanding and articulation of the current and future distinctiveness of the University of Auckland as expressed by students, staff and other stakeholders.

The panel is of the view that the University should guard against the possibility of the justified pride and success in the University's achievements encouraging a sense that by simply doing more of the same, the University will achieve the desired future objectives. The language used in the Portfolio gave the impression that students were beneficiaries of the research-informed teaching and research training delivered by the University, and were recipients of teaching and supervision rather than genuine participants in learning. Interviews helped modify that view to some extent, with students appreciating the qualities of staff as researchers and teachers, and academic staff understanding their responsibilities to students as research-teaching academics. Progressing the University's Enhancements arising from the self-assessment associated with this academic audit, and addressing the recommendations in this report, will offer an opportunity for the University to take a more proactive role in the co-ordination of enhancement activities that will lead the University forward and assist it in achieving its objectives and associated targets.

1.3 Strategic plan

The primary high-level planning document is the *Strategic plan 2005-2012* [*Strategic plan*]. It contains 20 objectives and associated actions, many of which contain specific targets for 2012. The plan was developed in 2005 with the arrival of the present Vice-Chancellor, and the developmental work was informed by benchmarking with the Australian Group of Eight universities. The plan was approved by Council in August 2005. It was reviewed and reconfirmed in 2006.

The *Strategic plan* is described as the primary document in the University's cycle of planning, delivery and accountability, and was known to exist by all those interviewed by the panel during the site visit. It is apparent that the plan is successfully articulating the objectives for the whole University, and from interviews, the panel gained a clear and consistent impression that the

Strategic plan is well known and well understood, and is the main driver for the University's follow-on planning activities. The plan forms the basis for annual planning and resource allocation, and all other plans – at committee level, Faculty level and department/unit level – must be aligned with the *Strategic plan*; alignment is checked by the Planning and Quality Office. Actions associated with objectives are intended to facilitate the implementation of the plan. The plan consolidates the activities of the University, and the panel was told that the University continually models the impact of external factors and adjusts the way of achieving the plan accordingly. There are formal discussions about plans with the Vice-Chancellor and Deans, and six-monthly discussions against the key performance indicators. The reporting is now much more focussed and data-based than was evident in the more descriptive and narrative approach to reporting at the time of the 2004 Cycle 3 academic audit. The panel was told that there was now a greater maturity in the use and understanding of data relevant to management planning and decision making.

Key performance indicators associated with the plan are providing measures of progress and supplying data which can be used for a variety of purposes (including the performance appraisal of line managers) and which can be shared with the University's communities of interest. It was made clear to the panel that progress towards the University's objectives is monitored, and that reviews of academic programmes and departments take place and lead to change. However, data available in reporting documents such as the University's *Annual report* suggest that in some cases it will not be possible for the University to achieve the *Strategic plan* objectives and targets by 2012. This has raised questions for the University as to how best to amend activities and approaches so as to ensure that targets are achieved in a timely fashion. The University's responses given in interviews to the non-achievement of key targets was to acknowledge that the targets are ambitious – they are 'stretch targets' – and that a longer timeframe may be required. The panel understands that if targets and key performance indicators are not achieved, there are discussions with the Faculty or unit and adjustments made to meet the challenge.

It was not entirely clear to the panel, however, as to who is taking specific responsibility for addressing the consequences arising from the non-achievement of targets. There was some indication given to the panel that the performance of Faculties and units against targets may soon be managed more explicitly and formally, especially in the discussions planned in 2011 for the preparation of a new strategic plan to succeed the plan for 2005-2012. Such actions would be consistent with *Strategic plan* objective 20 to:

Operate planning and review processes that drive achievement of the University's strategic objectives.

If this is so, and if targets are to be meaningful and if the University expects them to be met, then the panel is of the view that there needs to be a clearer understanding as to where the specific responsibilities lie for addressing and acting upon the non-achievement of particular and identified targets.

Recommendation

R 1 The panel recommends that the Vice-Chancellor communicates to the University community the responsibilities for achieving the objectives of the *Strategic plan 2005-2012*, and the consequences of not achieving those objectives.

As part of the Cycle 4 process, each university under audit is invited by the Unit at the time of the university's consideration of the draft report to comment on any or all recommendations. The University of Auckland has offered comment on this recommendation only. The University

holds that the responsibilities for achieving objectives and associated targets and monitoring progress are well-articulated and understood throughout the institution. The University also reported that:

. . . the budget and planning process was being modified so that Deans and other senior managers would be required to comment more specifically on the progress their unit was making in each of the its Key Performance Indicators, and the actions and budget investments they would be making to rectify any deficiencies in progress against targets.

The consequence of not meeting some objectives is built into the budgetary process and is readily apparent to managers.

1.4 The management structure

As the academic and administrative head of the University, the **Vice-Chancellor** seeks advice from a range of sources, in particular his large **Senior Management Team** comprising Deputy Vice-Chancellors, Pro Vice-Chancellors, Deans and Directors of large service divisions. Good communication of senior management decisions is important, and academic staff interviewed by the panel reported an improvement in communication in recent years, and a greater visibility of some senior management personnel around the University to explain decisions, to discuss progress in relevant aspects of the *Strategic plan*, and to seek comment and opinion.

The Vice-Chancellor is appointed by **Council** and in interview, it was apparent that the Council understood the key performance indicators and found them useful. The Council supports diversity and institutional autonomy and the role of the University as a critic and conscience of society. The panel was told that Council members can go back to their constituencies for advice or opinion or feedback on University matters. Councillors indicated that they are well-briefed by the Vice-Chancellor and his senior managers (as appropriate) and expressed satisfaction in training and preparation for their positions, although the panel noted that there was no programme of self-assessment by the Council. Council indicated an understanding of the work required to update facilities to match the needs of present-day research and teaching, and to maintain the international position of the University.

Commendation

C 2 The panel commends the University for the understanding by Council of their governance role and the constructive relationship with the senior management of the University.

The responsibility for the implementation of the strategies and the research, teaching and learning and community engagement activities necessary to achieve the objectives of the *Strategic plan* is devolved to the Faculties and to the **Deans**. The Deans are pivotal as they manage Faculty resources to implement the strategies and monitor progress in achieving University and Faculty objectives and associated targets. The Portfolio notes that the devolution allows for initiatives that take account of disciplinary and professional cultures while maintaining the principles of collective responsibility and collegiality. It would appear that Deans have major responsibilities for everything that is achieved, or not achieved. The panel came to the view that there should be greater clarity as to how Deans understand and are held accountable for their role in achieving relevant strategic objectives and related plans; as to how learnings are shared between Deans on good practices or initiatives that are undertaken in high performing areas, and as to how experiences to combat particular issues are shared. For

example, the panel visited the Faculty of Engineering and was impressed with the way the Faculty identifies, resources and deals with challenges. But it was not clear to the panel if there are formal mechanisms that lead to a sharing of such good practice in other Faculties.

It was apparent to the panel in interview that the Deans are supportive of the strategic direction of the University and of the contributions made by their **Faculties** to the achievements of the University. The panel was made aware of initiatives by individual Faculties to enhance the quality of teaching and learning. Faculty processes around their activities vary, and while there is an appreciation by the University community of the University's strategic direction, there are differences in emphasis and consequent outcomes. The *Strategic plan* provides the objectives/outcomes and the institutional principles for all faculties to aspire to, but the processes that faculties use can vary depending on the nature of the disciplines within them, and the cultures associated with those disciplines. The issue for the panel is the extent to which variation in process (to match the needs of disciplinary cultures and needs) might lead to undesired inconsistency in the way the University's *Strategic plan* is realised, with a consequent variation in the quality and nature of the student learning experience. The panel considers that not enough attention is being paid to the differences and considers that such unintended variation needs discussion and consideration by the Vice-Chancellor and Deans. As well, there appears to be insufficient attention being given to opportunities for cross-Faculty learning and sharing of good practice and innovation.

The University is aware of the need to have controls in place to avoid the negative consequences of the silo culture that can develop with devolution. The *Strategic plan* assists in a common focus for all Faculties, and the two **Deputy Vice-Chancellors** – Academic and Research – have pan-University responsibilities for policy, management, standards and performance in their respective fields. They use their influence and discussion to achieve their aims, but must rely on Deans and others with responsibilities for the allocation of resources to ensure policies are implemented. Deputy Vice-Chancellors negotiate with Faculties over aspects that fall within their terms of reference, and they monitor the use of processes to achieve those objectives. It was generally accepted in interviews that things work in the teaching and learning area throughout the University because of the contribution and attention to detail by the long-standing Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Academic) who relinquishes the position this year after ten years' service.

Three other officers with pan-University responsibilities are the **Pro Vice-Chancellor (Māori)**, **Pro Vice-Chancellor (Equity)** and the **Pro Vice-Chancellor (International)**.

The first two Pro Vice-Chancellors interact a great deal, given that the former engages with Pacific students and staff as well as having responsibility for Māori students and staff, and the latter is responsible for staff and student equity groups including Māori, Pacific, other ethnic groups, women at senior levels and in certain subject areas, students from low socio-economic backgrounds as well as people with disabilities and impairments. The Pro Vice-Chancellor (International) advises the Vice-Chancellor and senior management on international direction, opportunities and risks to the University, and oversees Auckland International which is responsible for international student recruitment, admission and pastoral care.

The **Senate** (the University's Academic Board) provides advice to the Vice-Chancellor on academic matters, and has a range of **Committees** to carry out its responsibilities. The panel is aware that Senate recently conducted a review of its Committees in 2000, and there are many committees in place, some of them rather large arising from a desire to be representative of faculties and communities of interest. The panel's interest is not so much with the number of

committees – which, if working well, can provide necessary involvement, participation and checks and balances – but at the large size of many of them.

The **Education Committee** appears to be pivotal to the maintenance and enhancement of the quality of student outputs and outcomes. The Education Committee – which is a Committee of the Senate – reviews Faculty teaching and learning strategies within Faculty plans and evaluates programme and departmental reviews. Other key academic committees are the **Academic Programmes Committee** and the **Teaching and Learning Quality Committee** (which is a sub-committee of the Education Committee). The latter was considered by staff interviewed by the panel to be pro-active, with initiatives filtered through to Faculties by Faculty representatives on that Committee.

These three committees are chaired by Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Academic) who can play an important co-ordinating role; the Committees have Faculty representation as well as some overlap of membership. The committees provide a forum in which good practice can be observed and the panel was told of the importance of members of these key committees facilitating the sharing of good practice by taking initiatives from another Faculty back to their own Faculties. Thus these committees provide valuable networking opportunities across the University.

Commendation

C 3 The panel commends the University for the contribution to and dissemination of good practice by the Education Committee, Academic Programmes Committee, and Teaching and Learning Quality Committee

The panel was told that the structure was well-suited to the University, and there is evidence to indicate that there are academic initiatives and innovations taking place and that there are high quality activities in research and teaching. However, it was apparent to the panel that quality assurance and enhancement responsibilities within the management structure rely heavily on a handful of personnel who have key roles within the system – Deputy Vice-Chancellors and Deans in particular – and that some of them are moving on or are new to the University. The panel was made aware of the difficulties leading to delays in the appointment of some Deans after international searches, and that there have been one or two exceptions to the policy of international searches for appointments to senior management positions.

This raises the issue of ‘future proofing’ the organisation through succession planning, which the panel acknowledges is difficult to manage when good appointees are unexpectedly ‘head hunted’ by other institutions in the middle of their terms in office. At present, much of the institutional responsibility for quality assurance is vested in one or two people, in particular in the position and portfolio of responsibilities of the Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Academic). The challenge for the University is the manner in which the University will manage the risk to the maintenance and enhancement of quality and standards arising from such concentration of responsibility, especially in the context of a change in personnel.

1.5 Risk management

The University recognises the need to have effective risk management policies and processes in place to manage risk prudently in all areas of its activities. The Council, through its Audit and Risk Committee, has specific responsibility in this respect, and appears to be a major vehicle for

ensuring teaching and research are of quality, and programme and departmental reviews are sent to Council who find them useful in keeping them informed on issues facing the University.

The panel was provided with a copy of *Integrating risk management*, released about the time of the site visit, which was intended to provide an overview of the risk management framework at the University; to provide an initial view of strategic risk assessment for the University and suggest an approach to refining and validating the assessment; and to summarise the risk management programme of activity for 2009-2010.

The panel was impressed by the thoroughness and coverage of this document. The panel was advised that implementing and integrating risk management across the Faculties was still very much a work in progress, although there has been considerable discussion in Faculties about identifying institutional risks. The panel strongly supports the proposed requirement that risk 'owners' incorporate planned risk mitigation activities into their normal annual planning process.

Commendation

C 4 The panel commends the University for its recognition of the need to manage risk and for the development of a comprehensive framework for risk management.

Recommendation

R 2 The panel recommends that, in implementing the risk management programme of activity, the University gives urgent attention to the need for a greater embedding of risk management across the University.

1.6 Communication

It is generally accepted that communication is more challenging in a large University, that efforts have been made by the University to ensure adequate communication, and that communication can be more effective. As mentioned earlier (section 1.4) academic staff interviewed by the panel reported to the panel an improvement in communication by senior management in recent years, and although contact with staff is variable, the efforts being made are appreciated.

The University's website is a key communication tool, but the panel received a strong message from students that the website is not helping in this respect. The panel acknowledges that the University is going through a process of review of the purpose of the website so as to identify the primary audiences better, and to encourage a redesign of the website to facilitate access to information and to encourage engagement with the communities of interest.

1.7 Equal opportunities

The Equal Opportunities Office leads equity policy and programme development in the University; provides services that assist students and staff to achieve their potential; assists in providing an environment that is welcoming, accessible and inclusive to all; provides specialist advice on equity matters; benchmarks the University's success in achieving the University's equity goals; and contributes to education and awareness programmes to achieve equity objectives. The work of the office overlaps with those that provide services for under-represented and disadvantaged groups, such as women students in Science and Engineering, Māori and Pacific students, and students with disabilities. The Pro Vice-Chancellor (Equal Opportunities) is responsible for the performance of the Office.

The panel came to the view that the work undertaken by the Equal Opportunities Office is considerable, with interviewees providing examples of the positive impact arising from their work. The Office reported having a particularly high presence around the times of orientation and graduation. The University has been made aware of equity issues raised and was assisting in the embedment of this work by supporting equity and Te Tiriti o Waitangi appointments in Faculties appropriate to the different levels of need.

2

Teaching and learning

2.1 Objectives and values

The University's objectives⁵ for teaching and learning are as follows.

- *Create a distinctive international educational experience for our students, in Auckland and overseas.* [SP⁶ Objective 2]
- *Achieve a high quality student body with an annual growth rate of equivalent full-time students of 1 percent. This student body to be composed as follows: 78 percent in undergraduate, 12 percent in taught postgraduate and 10 per cent in research postgraduate programmes.* [SP Objective 7]
- *Create a curriculum meeting the highest standards of excellence across the University.* [SP Objective 8]
- *Recruit and retain a high-quality student body, striving to create equal opportunities for all those of ability to succeed in a university of high international standing.* [SP Objective 13]
- *Enhance and promote a student environment that is welcoming, enjoyable and stimulating, encouraging students to reach their full potential within a climate of academic excellence.* [SP Objective 14]
- *Provide an infrastructure that supports teaching, learning, research, and community engagement of the highest quality.* [SP Objective 18]

The University is committed to:

- *placing a strong emphasis on serving our student body.*

2.2 Planning, design and review of programmes and courses

Departments are responsible for course design, and Faculties are responsible for course approval prior to approval by the University and, where required, by the Committee on University Academic Programmes of the New Zealand Vice-Chancellors' Committee. The drivers for the development of new academic programmes and for changes to existing programmes come from various sources, including the professions and industry as well as advisory committees for relevant sectors (especially for professional academic qualifications), feedback from students, the changing needs of disciplines, suggestions made by external assessors, and by external groups involved in programme reviews. The Graduating Year Review required to be undertaken at the time of graduation by the first cohort of students in a new programme can also lead to change and enhancement. The panel was told by students in professional courses that while it might be

⁵ Objectives in *Strategic plan 2005-2012* are generally expressed as targets to be achieved by 31 December 2012.

⁶ SP = *Strategic plan 2005-2012*.

necessary to include certain courses as required by the professions, the students would appreciate specific communication that could provide more clarity around the reasons for this. However, the University appreciates that it is required to distinguish between student needs and student wants, and between disciplinary needs, professional needs and industry needs.

The University has four generic Graduate Profiles – Graduate Profile for undergraduate students, Coursework Postgraduate Profile, Research Postgraduate Profile, and Doctoral Graduate Profile – which map out a set of attributes which are considered to be attainable by graduates of a research-led comprehensive university. The generic profiles are supplemented where necessary by graduate profiles for specific qualifications which must ‘sit on top’ of the generic ones. In interviews, there was a general acceptance and understanding of graduate profiles which were regarded as being flexible enough to be adapted to the specific needs of qualifications.

Following the report of the University’s Curriculum Commission in 2002 – and reported on in the 2004 Cycle 3 academic audit of the University – it became necessary for students in every degree to include appropriate selections from General Education courses. General Education is governed by a Board of Studies, and a General Education Course Co-ordinators’ Forum is held each semester to obtain feedback from staff. The first cohort of students under the new requirement graduated in 2008 and the University Enhancement 2 is to *evaluate the General Education programme in 2009*. The panel heard broad support for General Education by both students (some of those involved in the review being particularly enthusiastic) as well as staff. There is a wish to expand truly interdisciplinary courses within the General Education offerings, and a determination to ensure the character of General Education is maintained. The panel was told of the complexity around regulations, and the choice of General Education courses must not be similar to the students’ majoring subjects. Highly structured professional degrees permit only a limited choice, and timetable issues further limited choice. Faculties are seeking ways of accommodating General Education into academic programmes.

The panel also heard of wider timetabling problems. A timetable project, presently underway, hopes to lead to a better utilisation of space, but it was not clear to the panel if it will assist in solving timetable clashes for students and staff. It is apparent that there are some timetable clashes for those who are required to travel between the Grafton and City campuses for Medical and Health Science students, and between Epsom and City campuses for Education students. There was hope expressed to the panel that the timetable project would also make the timetable available earlier so as to assist students better in their choice of courses.

2.3 Delivery of courses and programmes

The University is committed to recruiting and retaining ‘a high-quality student body, striving to create equal opportunities for all those of ability to succeed in a university of high international standing’ and to enhancing and promoting ‘a student environment that is welcoming, enjoyable and stimulating, encouraging students to reach their full potential within a climate of academic excellence’ [*Strategic plan* Objectives 13, 14]. Actions detailed in the *Strategic plan* in support of this objective go beyond enhancing an environment that encourages students’ academic, personal and career development, and celebrating student success in academic, recreational and cultural activities, to include encouraging activities and events that engage students in campus life, monitoring and evaluating student satisfaction with the student experience, and providing facilities and services that support the social, recreational, cultural and spiritual needs of students.

The University is aware that the first contacts made by prospective students with the University are through its student administration services and that the quality of this service is important. The University Call Centre is often the first point of contact for students, and University-level arrangements include Course Advice Day, Courses and Careers Day, and Orientation. The panel was told by some students of examples of receiving conflicting information from student administrative services, and was told by staff of the monitoring of administrative services that has taken place, leading to a review of student administration which was in progress at the time of the academic audit. The aim of the review is to improve process management, to align activities that have the same outcomes, and to address the need to improve the student experience of services.

Once enrolled, students are interested in the quality of the teaching and of the support for their learning. Students are provided with detailed course outlines at the outset of courses, in line with Faculty and departmental templates designed to provide a consistent approach to the provision of information. The panel was told by staff that the driver for teaching excellence comes from their own wish to do their best for themselves, their disciplines and their students. The University recognises the professional contribution that academic staff make to teaching excellence and the role of collegiality in achieving this. In interviews, students made it clear that they come to the University because of the reputation of staff as researchers in their fields, and students expect to experience good teachers who are up-to-date with their disciplines.

The University is primarily a campus-based provider, and within this framework, the University encourages and supports the use of new teaching technologies and flexible modes of teaching and learning including on-line courses and blended forms of learning where appropriate. The University's E-learning Strategy is co-ordinated by the Teaching and Learning Technologies Committee, and the panel saw evidence of significant investment the University is making in information technology. Effort needs to be put into realising the benefits from this investment for student learning by providing the necessary encouragement and support for staff to maximise the potential benefits of these teaching and learning tools in enabling the University to meet its teaching and learning strategic objectives.

Affirmation

A 1 The panel affirms the University's commitment to enhance the effectiveness of e-learning throughout the University (University Enhancement 3), but is of the view that this requires greater urgency, a higher rating, and a shorter timeframe.

Recommendation

R 3 The panel recommends that the University provides greater clarification about the strategic role of media-rich technology in teaching and learning, and that more focused effort be put into getting and helping academic staff to make optimum use of the opportunities afforded by such technology.

The University has introduced limitation of entry procedures to manage student enrolment numbers to about present levels. The limitation of entry procedures have provision to compensate for those who need access to the University, and the procedures – which were widely discussed – have been generally accepted. Limitation of entry has limited entry to about 2008 levels. Thus it is not about decreasing opportunities, but about maintaining present enrolment size. Students interviewed by the panel were on the whole positive about managed entry, and from the evidence available to date, the thresholds have had no impact on access by Māori students although there appears to have been some negative impact on Pacific students.

The University is aware of this and is working with appropriate schools to improve student preparation.

2.4 Learning environment

The panel noted the progress being made by the University through new buildings and building refurbishments to provide ‘an infrastructure that supports teaching, learning, research, and community engagement of the highest quality’ [*Strategic plan* Objective 18].

The panel visited the Kate Edger Information Commons, the new Owen G Glenn building for the Faculty of Business and Economics, and the student learning spaces and libraries in the Faculty of Engineering (City Campus) and Faculty of Education (Epsom Campus). The panel was impressed with the newer student learning spaces it visited, including lecture and teaching spaces and information commons, and it was clear to the panel that there has been a high level of investment in teaching and learning facilities and equipment.

The University is well aware of the way such well-designed and adaptable learning and study spaces are raising student expectations and placing pressure on Faculties without such facilities, or with facilities of lesser quality. This pressure is being addressed in the Campus Development Strategy which combines a comprehensive assessment of the University’s future space needs with proposals for how those needs can be met. It is intended that group learning spaces be highly differentiated from those that are more social spaces, and from those designed for individual study. The panel supports the University Enhancement 4 to ***implement the Campus Development Strategy and monitor the impact on the quality of teaching, learning and research***, and notes that some campuses need more attention than others.

Commendation

C 5 The panel commends the University for the investment into the quality of learning spaces, and the central Kate Edger Information Commons and commons in a number of the faculties, and in the planning for more commons in areas not served at present.

The primary resource centre in the University is the Library which is an integrated system covering five campuses. It includes a central General Library on the City Campus, plus 12 specialist libraries and four Information Commons facilities. The Portfolio listed the many services provided by the Library, reported that the Library’s website provides access worldwide to its extensive collection of electronic resources and electronic services, and indicated that student survey results indicate very high levels of satisfaction with services and collections.

The panel was told by Library staff that the University has been proactive in ensuring the Libraries in the University and its satellites are well-funded and well-resourced. The Librarian is a member of the Senior Management Team and the Library sees its role as helping translate the *Strategic plan* into action, with support for teaching and learning being its priority, closely followed by support for research.

The panel was told that the Library is responsive to requests, and access to Library materials is now very much through on-line resources from on and off campus, rather than physical resources within the buildings. The electronic library is one Library accessible to everyone. The Library Committee provides a most effective forum for academics; it also provides a forum for students who also have other opportunities to express their needs.

The Library plays a pivotal role in information technology literacy for students, with subject librarians often presenting to classes. Faculties usually run their own computer literacy groups, usually in consultation with other service providers. There has been some testing of effectiveness of the Library literacy classes and some improvement has been noted but not dramatic changes. There is a strong interaction between Library Committee and the Information Technology Committee, and there is a strong Library input into the information technology strategy.

The Information Technology Strategy and Policy Committee has an academic chair, and the strategic links to the Vice-Chancellor and faculties have been strengthened recently. Information technology is a key tool in support of the work of Faculties, and the monitoring of its effectiveness across the University in support teaching and learning is a responsibility of the Teaching and Learning Quality Committee. There is a whole-of-university approach to information technology provision with a unified approach to all main and satellite campuses. The Epsom Campus (Education) and the Tamaki Campus (research, postgraduate, special character) present special challenges. Not only did Information Technology have input into the University's risk management framework, but Information Technology also has its own risk manager. Measures to provide adequate business recovery safeguards are ongoing.

The panel was told that the University was being proactive over academic honesty, with some departments using the electronic tool Turnitin, and the University completed the development of its own Referencite website about referencing practice in early 2009. The panel encourages the University to do more on the educative front, to educate students about being honest in academic endeavour.

Commendation

C 6 The panel commends the University for the development and implementation of their 'Referencite' website, aimed at educating students about referencing practice, which provides tangible illustration of the University's determination to promote, support and monitor academic honesty.

2.5 Learning support

Student learning support programmes are delivered by the *Student Learning Centre* – which is a division of the Centre for Academic Development, and which has a presence on all campuses – in a variety of modes including workshops, individual consultations, and self-access resources. The Centre works with Faculties to respond to identified needs. Staff from the Centre interviewed by the panel stressed that learning support must not be perceived as remedial work for those not able to cope, but rather as learning support to assist and support students to improve and have greater success. Centre staff appreciated that the language used in the provision and marketing of student support needs to be success-oriented rather than problem-oriented. Students are identified for learning support by themselves, or by staff at course or Faculty level. Support staff appeared to believe that they must cater for individual needs, and the processes for setting up student support appeared to be mixed. Staff considered they need to think more creatively about how they use their resources, particularly given the diversity of cultural backgrounds in the University. More advice might be sought from students to see what they need, and to see if there is a need to incorporate pedagogies from other cultures and to enhance learning. The panel is of the view that there is a need for more co-ordination in the provision of information about student services.

Some students reported not being clear as to how to access student learning support, and some were not clear as to where to go for help more generally – such as extensions to deadlines for essays. Students do need to be able to navigate the complexities of the University systems, and more help for students might give the University a greater student-centred reputation than is sometimes the case. The panel considers that urgently needed improvements to the website may help in these matters.

The panel was impressed by the language needs assessment of all students upon entry into the University using the Diagnostic English Language Needs Assessment (DELNA) programme as a diagnostic tool. In 2006, the participation by students was to be mandatory. Students are informed about their levels of academic English through a personalised letter, and those who might benefit from language teaching support are informed about the assistance that is available and are directed towards it. Faculties are sent ‘clusters’ of students’ names whom Faculties can then approach and offer to direct to assistance. The panel was told that some attempts have been made to track the progress of students, and where this has been done, it shows that the impact has a longer-term impact, far beyond grades achieved.

Commendation

C 7 The panel commends the University for the commitment to the English ability testing procedure which facilitates English language support for those who should benefit from it.

2.6 Assessment

The University has policies and guidelines that govern assessment practices across the University, and grade descriptors have been developed by Faculties. The Portfolio reported that the University has continued to enhance its assessment practices, and pass rates and grades are reviewed annually by the Education Committee. The main conversations about assessment during site visits were with students who reported variable marking across courses. The University is obviously aware of the variability in the application of assessment policies and guidelines and intends to strengthen good practice in this area. The panel affirms the two University Enhancements in this area.

Affirmation

A 2 The panel affirms the University’s intentions to provide appropriate guidance and professional development to staff concerning good practice in assessment through Faculty and University programmes (University Enhancement 6), and to re-examine the ways in which departments and schools manage external assessment and moderation in order to increase efficiency and effectiveness (University Enhancement 7).

The panel is also of the view that it would expect the latter of these enhancements – relating to external assessment and moderation – to be seen by the University as an important aspect in its aspirations to benchmark nationally and internationally and that this enhancement should have a higher priority.

2.7 Student achievement and success

The panel recognised that the University is very interested in high student achievement and high student success, and the Portfolio lists the means by which student achievement is publicly

recognised. The panel was told by various interviewees that students come to the University to learn, and while particular issues and student experiences were recounted to panel members, in general terms the students interviewed talked very positively about their learning experiences at the University.

Commendation

C 8 The panel commends the University for the recognition of student success and for the many reported positive aspects of the student experience.

The Portfolio reported on the University's involvement in the recently-established Australasian Survey of Student Engagement (AUSSE) which was developed and managed by the Australian Council for Educational Research. The results from the survey are designed to stimulate evidence-focused conversations about students' engagement in university study. By providing information that can be generalised and is sensitive to institutional diversity, the AUSSE plays an important role in helping institutions monitor and enhance the quality of education.

The panel was told that the relevant University committees have discussed the AUSSE results and that the information has been sent to the Faculties as input into their on-going review of course design and delivery. The responsibility for the lifting of the results of AUSSE rests with the Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Academic), and Faculties have been asked to develop initiatives to improve the AUSSE results. The panel supports the way the University's Enhancement 5 intends *to use the results of the University trial of the Australasian Survey of Student Engagement (AUSSE) survey as a basis for discussions of ways of improving undergraduate student engagement.*

In cases where action must be taken to improve performance, the panel found it difficult to understand where responsibilities for action lie. Given the devolution to Faculties, Deans may be presumed to take much of the responsibility for performance but greater clarity could be given as to whose responsibility it is to undertake the work to raise the performance. Action plans are required, with specific identification of individuals responsible both for initiating the implementation of agreed actions and for effectively monitoring its implementation.

2.8 Student associations

The Auckland University Students' Association is a voluntary, University-wide students' association, and works in partnership with Nga Tauira Māori, the Māori students' association. There is also a Pacific Students' Association and a Postgraduate Students' Association and several Faculty-based student associations. Students are represented on all major academic committees of the University and on the Senate and Council. A Staff-Student Consultative Committee system is linked to courses through class representatives, and the Vice-Chancellor also meets regularly with student representatives.

Representatives from students associations were generally comfortable with the level of communication with members of the senior management team. They were realistic in their acknowledgement of the extent to which they had input into the decision making at the University and they reported that they rely on student representatives on committees to provide input into University decisions and to bring information back to students. That representation also included membership on groups associated with the self-assessment associated with this academic audit. The associations also collect fact and opinion through the class representative system, clubs and Faculty meetings, and they use referenda for information on extraordinary

issues. While the Auckland University Students' Association has carried out surveys, it reported that it does not have access to the results of student evaluations of teaching and courses.

Those interviewed were generally happy with the quality of communication between the associations and the Pro Vice-Chancellors Māori and Equity, and of the support being given for Māori and Pacific students in Faculties. It was pointed out that many Māori and Pacific students rely much more on face-to-face interaction than on other modes of communication. Interviewees also identified the presence of student representatives on programme and departmental review panels as aiding communication about the work of Faculties.

3

Research environment

3.1 Objectives and values

The University's objectives for the research environment are as follows.

- *Achieve a Performance-Based Research Fund ratio of A:B:C:R rated researchers working at the University of 120:50:22:8 through the development of a high quality research environment.* [SP Objective 3]
- *Achieve 800 masters and 500 doctoral completions per annum through the development of an international quality graduate programme.* [SP Objective 4]
- *Provide enhanced support for research activities by doubling external research income to \$270 million per annum.* [SP Objective 5]
- *Develop large-scale research institutes of excellence.* [SP Objective 6]

The University is committed to:

- *the development and commercialisation of enterprise based on its research and creative works.*

3.2 Research Committee

The panel was told that the activities of the Research Committee were explicitly aligned with the objectives of the *Strategic plan*. It reviews the University's research policies on an annual basis. The Performance-Based Research Fund was regarded as only one driver for increased research output, with the main driver being to develop and sustain a high quality research environment. It is believed by the University that there are considerable cross-disciplinary strengths arising from the breadth of the University.

There was recognition that research centres, of which there are a large number, played an important element in the character of the research environment, with each accounting for performance annually. The panel recognises the good practice that to ensure the quality and relevance of research centres, a review is underway to check they are operating and producing outputs that are in line with the *Strategic plan*.

Research money is devolved to Faculties so as to allow funding to match the needs of Faculties more closely. There are Faculty Research Development Funds available. These funds are under review to consider the guidelines under which they operate, and to track and measure the effectiveness of funding usage in achieving the objectives of the *Strategic plan*.

The panel recognises that the University has been proactive in supporting the new Faculty of Education arising from the merger of the former Auckland College of Education with the University. Most of the increasing numbers of PhD enrolments in Education are staff PhDs who may apply for developmental grants. The Faculty is being proactive in encouraging staff in developing the Faculty's research activities and in their own professional upskilling to work

within a research-intensive University environment. Faculty staff interviewed, who were former College of Education staff, expressed appreciation and satisfaction with the support they were receiving.

3.3 Research students and research supervision

The Portfolio reports that the *Strategic plan* signals the University's commitment to enhancing its overall research environment to ensure a high quality experience for research students working alongside excellent researchers. The Dean of Graduate Studies has the oversight of all postgraduate research studies, and the Dean is supported by the Board of Graduate Studies which has Faculty and student representation. The Dean meets with the Postgraduate Students' Association three times a year and the panel was told that the student representatives on the Board keep it informed on student needs.

Providing adequate space and resources for postgraduate students is an ongoing issue requiring attention as student numbers and resource demands grow. In 2008, a review of space and other support requirements identified the need for increased space and the panel understands that this has been included in the University's building programme. The panel supports University Enhancement 10 – *monitor regularly, as the Campus Development Strategy proceeds, the provision and quality of facilities for postgraduate students* – and it heard evidence to suggest this is occurring already across the University. University Enhancement 11 – *encourage student engagement in departmental seminars, in informal interactions with staff, and attendance at showcase University functions and events through better communication and enhanced publicity, and identification of the benefits of such engagement* – is also welcomed by the panel who heard from students that they already appreciated this where it is occurring at present.

The University acknowledges the strategic targets in the *Strategic plan* Objective 4 of 800 Masters, and 500 doctoral completions as a big stretch. That these targets arose from benchmarking against Group of Eight universities in Australia raises the more general question (see sections 4.2 and 8.2 of this report) about the choice of comparator institutions. Impacting on this objective is the University's assessment that only 47 percent of staff who are eligible to be main supervisors (that is, of academics with PhD or equivalent and national and/or international standing as researchers and the prerequisite training and experience) are currently main supervisors, although the majority of staff are involved in supervisory teams. The University recognises that it needs to ensure that it has sufficient supervisory capacity in main supervisors.

The panel was assured that the University did not intend to achieve those targets by lowering standards; rather, it would take more years than are left in the timeframe 2005-2012 to achieve them. There was recognition that there is room for improvement in aspects of thesis supervision that relate to thesis completion and student satisfaction; and while some students reported difficulty in contacting supervisors, they recognised that where supervisors are leaders in their field they will be in heavy demand.

The panel supports the idea expressed that the Academic Performance Review processes should look more carefully at PhD supervision given the University's strategic priorities. Certainly the panel heard from students interviewed about the different Faculty approaches to the identification of supervision for students, some of which appeared to differ from what the panel understood to be required by the doctoral Electronic Expression of Interest. The panel heard from students and staff in one Faculty that students are required to find their own supervisors,

whereas the panel understands that the doctoral Electronic Expression of Interest requires on-line discussions between prospective supervisors and applicants before acceptance. On the positive side, the panel was told by masters students who knew of the doctoral process that they would like to see something similar in place for masters research degree applications.

Affirmation

A 3 The panel affirms the University's intention to monitor the effectiveness of the doctoral Electronic Expression of Interest and application for admission processes (University Enhancement 8a).

The panel believes that if the University is to achieve the growth that will allow it to reach its completion targets, much of that growth will have to come from international students and that Auckland International will require assistance in achieving this.

Affirmation

A 4 The panel affirms the University's intention to implement a University of Auckland postgraduate recruitment and marketing plan (University Enhancement 8b).

The panel noted two University Enhancements with respect to supervision: University Enhancement 9a – *include in the Academic Heads programme a workshop on the importance and characteristics of good research supervision* – and 9b – *encourage a culture of departmental discussion and analysis of research supervision practices and reviews of research student progress*. Department discussion and analysis of supervision is already occurring.

The panel was particularly interested in the Summer Scholarship scheme which is centrally funded (and topped up by Faculties) and Faculty administered. These scholarships offer opportunities for competent students who have completed their undergraduate degrees to carry out research in the summer period prior to beginning a postgraduate programme. Publication is not an expected output, but the panel was told that publication can result, and co-authorship is encouraged. The programme has been running for five years, and although there has been no formal tracking, Faculties reported to the panel that there is a high percentage take up into postgraduate studies by students in the programme.

Commendation

C 9 The panel commends the University for the Summer Scholarship Scheme whereby undergraduate students can take part in research activities while awaiting enrolment in postgraduate research degrees.

3.4 Teaching and learning within a research environment.

Enhancing the research-teaching nexus in university academic programmes, undergraduate as well as postgraduate, is an ongoing challenge. The panel was aware of the discussions undertaken by the University in work associated with Cycle 2 and Cycle 3 academic audits in 2000 and 2004 respectively, and the Portfolio provided a list of actions taken by Faculties to enhance the teaching-research nexus as reported to the Teaching and Learning Quality Committee in 2007.

The panel was pleased to hear of the extent of student understanding of the nexus, and of examples where this is happening in senior undergraduate years. A research component in 300-

level courses is not uncommon. The Summer Scholarship Scheme (referred to in section 3.3 above) is another Faculty-centred activity that involves students in research activities before postgraduate study and develops the interest students might have had in research.

4

Te Tiriti o Waitangi and Pacific

4.1 Objective and value

The University's objective for Te Tiriti o Waitangi is as follows.

- *Fulfil the responsibilities and obligations of the University under Te Tiriti o Waitangi.*
[SP Objective 10]

The University is committed to:

- *recognising a special relationship with Māori under Te Tiriti o Waitangi.*

The University is also committed to supporting Pacific students and staff, with the Pro Vice-Chancellor (Māori) having responsibility for Māori students and staff and engaging with Pacific students and staff.

4.2 Te Tiriti o Waitangi

The University is aware of the need to maintain and strengthen its core of Māori staff, provide programmes that attract Māori students and recognise their aspirations to participate fully within their chosen disciplines, and contribute to Māori intellectual and cultural advancement. To achieve this requires improvement to recruitment, retention and success rates of students and expansion of opportunities for staff.

The Portfolio reports on the increase of Māori enrolments over recent years (especially with the merger of the University with the Auckland College of Education), making up 7 percent of the domestic student body in 2008. The recently introduced University-wide limitation of entry system appears not to have penalised access, with reports to the panel that all Māori eligible to enter on the basis of entrance qualifications did so in 2009. Enrolment across Faculties varies: while overall student numbers enrolled at pre-degree level has dropped since 2004, student enrolment in undergraduate and postgraduate degrees has risen. The panel recognises that the University benchmarks itself as a University with the Group of Eight universities in Australia. In terms of benchmarking concerning indigenous peoples, the University should consider whether there may be more appropriate comparators elsewhere in Australia, in Canada and in other countries, and it encourages the University to explore such linkages.

The Portfolio reports that some emphasis is placed on the University's engagement with Māori students in secondary schools and in pre-degree programmes because the University has identified admission qualifications as a major barrier to Māori participation in University programmes. Once in the University, Māori success rates are comparable with that of other students.

The positive impact of the work by the University services such as Schools Partnership Office (see section 7.3) and Starpath with schools in general and targeted schools in particular was commented upon most favourably by stakeholders interviewed. Work in schools is funded by alternative sources including fund-raising and funding from the charitable sector. Potential

Māori scholarship students are known in targeted schools, are identified from year 9 onwards, and consistent contact with Māori students and links with parents helps develop a whanau culture for Māori students. Another vehicle for engagement with schools is the Starpath project which seeks to transform educational outcomes for students from under-represented groups. Starpath has partnerships with a number of secondary schools and has recently expanded partnerships into Northland. The Faculty of Education has appointed an Associate Dean (Pasifika) who is responsible for liaison with Pacific communities and students.

The panel fully supports the University in its commitment to Māori access.

Affirmation

A 5 The panel affirms the University's commitment to work both with secondary schools and with Starpath in identifying the barriers to students gaining the prerequisite subjects required for admission to its programmes (University Enhancement 12a), and with other tertiary providers to identify foundation programmes that can act as pathways for Māori into Science, Engineering, Architecture and Health Science degrees (University Enhancement 12b).

The panel was told about the Faculty of Engineering equity strategies on access and support for Māori students and of the effective impact they were having. The panel encourages the University to examine the Faculty's approach and to encourage other parts of the University to learn from these initiatives as might be appropriately adapted.

To support Māori students at University, six Faculties have Assistant Deans (Māori), while the other two Faculties incorporate that work into the portfolio of the Associate Dean (Equity). The University provides rest, recreation and study spaces for Māori, has a Māori Counsellor and Māori Equity Advisors in the Equity Office, and has Māori Advisers in four of the Faculties. Te Puni Wānanga is the Māori arm of the Student Learning Centre, based in a kaupapa Māori environment, providing individual assistance for Māori students and courses specifically designed to meet their learning needs.

From what the panel read and heard, it came to the view that the University is being proactive in its response to Te Tiriti o Waitangi. Assistance for Māori students is being driven by a desire to aim for higher levels of student success, with greater prospects to engage in postgraduate study, and then as graduates to be champions for the University. To highlight this, the University offers Chancellor's Awards for top Māori and Pacific scholars, and some departments supplement this with scholarships of their own during Summer School. The University is committed to increase the participation of Māori students in postgraduate programmes, and University Enhancement 13 supports *the work of the Māori and Indigenous Postgraduate Advancement (MAI) programme in increasing the number of Māori students enrolling in doctoral programmes*, and emphasises *the benefits for Māori of postgraduate study and research training in postgraduate recruitment programmes*.

In interview, Māori students expressed appreciation for the Māori services that they can access, and for the opportunities for Māori students to support each other. The panel was of the view that they saw the services as assisting them achieve better than might otherwise be the case. The panel was made aware of tension in some areas of the University arising from a lack of understanding by staff of non-Western cultural practices which students found unsettling and requiring attention. While the panel appreciates that the Pro Vice-Chancellor (Māori) is willing to interact with students and their whanau, the senior position of the Pro Vice-Chancellor may create a barrier for students who do not see him as someone they can approach over such issues.

Thus problems requiring University attention go through the Faculty Māori liaison person to Dean. In practice, what currently appears to be happening is sensible. But Māori staff alone cannot be expected to meet all pastoral care demands that might arise, and the panel encourages the University to look at ways of supporting and assisting staff to gain an awareness and understanding of non-western cultural practices.

Recommendation

R 4 The panel recommends that staff induction sessions include specific information to assist staff towards a greater awareness and understanding of the cultural practices arising from Te Tiriti o Waitangi, as well as highlighting the need to be sensitive to other non-Western cultural practices in general.

4.3 Pacific students

The Portfolio reports that a number of programmes and initiatives within the University are designed to encourage Pacific students to engage in university study, and to support their success, retention and progression into postgraduate study. There is a significant number of Pacific people in Auckland and therefore the potential for significant numbers of students. Percentage rates and success rates for Pacific students are still below the University average. While quotas are in place, these can give rise to a stigma of being a Pacific student who comes in on the quota rather than on ability alone. The view expressed by those interviewed from the Pacific community was generally that their students should challenge themselves more to get into the University in their own right.

The Equal Opportunities Office assists Pacific students, employing a Pacific Equity Adviser, and the Student Learning Centre has a dedicated learning support and advice programme. The Fale Pasifika complex houses the Centre for Pacific Students and is the home base for Pacific students. As well, the Auckland University Students' Association has a cultural space – O Lagi Atea Moana – for Pacific students, and it houses the Association's Pacific Student Officer. The panel heard some criticism about the need for a greater consistency across departments with respect to support for Pacific students and staff, and for co-ordination around student services.

In 2001, the University carried out a Pacific equity audit which resulted in a report with recommendations. This Unit's Cycle 3 academic audit commended the University's commitment to Pacific students and staff and recommended that the mechanisms for support for Pacific students and staff be robust and effective in meeting needs. While the Portfolio for this audit reports initiatives within faculties to support Pacific students, the panel heard in interview that it was difficult to see where specific improvements and changes might have taken place. This suggested that there appeared to be a lack of awareness of what had been done in response to the report, and that what had been done did not appear to have been communicated to the Pacific students and staff.

Pacific students have needs both distinct and similar to Māori students, and those needs have been identified through student representatives, student engagement in programme and department reviews, and consultation with internal and external Pacific communities. The panel was told that Māori and Pacific students are happy to help each other. The panel gained the impression that the perception by Pacific students is that, while learning support is appreciated, the support tends to be putting in systems that are remedial, designed to 'fix' under-prepared and underperforming students. By way of contrast, students held that there was sometimes an equal or greater need to focus on improving the teaching skills of staff, rather than the primary

emphasis on addressing perceived shortcomings of students. While student learning facilities are readily accessible to students, the University needs to be mindful that many Pacific people do not like to ask for help, thereby negating the effectiveness of the services being provided.

There seemed to be uncertainty as to why the Pacific community itself did not appear to be providing more obvious leadership. The panel was told that while leadership may be there, there was little communication about what was being done, its effectiveness, and the impact on students and staff. There was also concern expressed that there are many cultures which come under the definition 'Pacific' (such as Samoan, Tongan, Fijian) and that often representatives of only one or two cultures were consulted rather than ensuring the views of all Pacific peoples were represented. It was also accepted that the Pacific community need to take leadership for the support programmes for students, and must want to determine for themselves what they want to do, and must ensure that the support programmes for their students best meet their needs. It was pointed out that there needed to be a culturally safe environment to encourage Pacific students to come forward with any concerns that require addressing. The panel is of the view that improvements in this area will require both a culture shift that accepts that it is good to seek help, as well as the education of staff to be more sensitive to Pacific academic and cultural needs (see also R 4 in section 4.2.).

4.4 Tuākana for Māori and Pacific

The Equal Opportunities Office administers Tuākana, a University-wide mentoring and tutoring scheme for Māori and Pacific students, based on the concept of older siblings (Tuākana) supporting younger ones. It is designed to assist students' transition into university life and to achieve academically by providing academic tutoring and mentoring and a contact network to help students achieve academically and to thrive in the University community. Tuākana operates in all Faculties and is funded from government funding for Māori and Pacific equity initiatives. All new Māori and Pacific students are contacted early in each semester and invited to register for mentoring and tutoring support.

Students interviewed who were either mentored and/or mentors in the scheme reported positively on the programme and on the impact of the scheme for them. Māori men appeared to be less willing to seek help than were women. Those students who were mentors did so because they wanted to give something back to their communities. Clearly such a scheme has the potential for good, although it will be necessary to monitor it carefully to ensure that it continues to be fit for purpose, to be accessed by students, and to be meeting the needs of students.

5

University staff: academic, management and support

5.1 Objectives and value

The University's objectives for the staff of the University are as follows.

- *Recruit and retain a high-quality staff striving to create equal opportunities for all those of ability to succeed in a university of high international standing.* [SP Objective 13]
- *Create a culture that encourages academic and general staff to reach their full potential.* [SP Objective 15]
- *Promote governance and management practices consistent with the mission and values of the University of Auckland.* [SP Objective 19]

The University is committed to:

- *providing high quality management marked by open, transparent, responsible and accountable academic and administrative policies, practices and services.*

5.2 Staff profile and induction

The University has several key committees to address staff issues:

- the Staff Advisory Committee and its sub-committee the Staff Professional Development Committee provide policy advice to the Vice-Chancellor and are responsible for monitoring and co-ordinating the implementation of policies and procedures related to staff issues,
- the University Academic Staffing Committee deals with promotion and continuation for senior academic staff,
- the Faculty Staffing Committees deal with all local issues of appointment and continuation up to Associate Professor.

The portfolio reports that the University seeks to encourage the retention and progression of outstanding staff through structures, policies, practices and incentives that support excellence in teaching, research, administration and services, with an equity emphasis on Māori and Pacific staff and on women in some disciplinary areas and in senior management positions. The overall staff profile is monitored by such means as student:academic staff ratios, general:academic staff ratios, permanent:non-permanent staff ratios, and position descriptions for new appointments.

The challenges associated with succession planning were raised in section 1.4 of this report, and the panel acknowledges it is difficult to manage this when individuals are unexpectedly 'head hunted' by other institutions. Although the panel was told in interviews that succession planning is considered during the Academic Performance Review process, the panel was not clear if there was strong support for a more systematic approach to succession planning, both for academic

and research programmes as well as for leadership and for management roles. The panel was assured of the University's commitment to international searches for academic positions, but it understands that the University's commitment to international searches is not always followed in the case of all senior positions.

Decision making requires good information, and the panel supports the University Enhancement 14 to *use Human Resources Connect+ to improve human resources processes, availability of data, workforce planning, and the ability to report on staffing issues* if that will assist better decision making. The panel also supports the University Enhancement 15 to *develop a recruitment strategy to attract Māori and Pacific job applicants*, and to *support the Māori Academic network across Aotearoa (MANU-AO) programme in its work of promoting Māori and Pacific staff engagement in the University's activities*.

The panel was told that new academic staff now attend a mandatory induction programme delivered by the Centre for Academic Development, in which University policies and guidelines are discussed, the Student Learning Centre talks about their work with students, and students talk about the work of the learning centre. There is a mandatory three-day course for staff who are new to tertiary teaching. There was a recognition that work-life balance and workload at various stages of a career were issues that should be considered during induction, and that work-life balance can be a particular challenge for women.

5.3 Professional support, development and promotion

The Portfolio reports that the University considers its comprehensive suite of leadership programmes and recognition and rewards systems for academic and general staff to be strengths. The primary agent for professional development is the *Centre for Academic Development* which is a central service unit formed by bringing together a number of existing agencies to provide a co-ordinated and integrated approach to staff professional development and student learning support. The Director of the Centre sits on the Teaching and Learning Quality Committee and acts as a liaison between the Centre for Academic Development and the committee which plays a critical role in the quality assurance of teaching and learning throughout the University.

Assistance to academic staff is mainly through the *Academic Practice Group* section of the Centre which offers a range of professional development activities designed especially for recently appointed academic staff, including programmes for new academics, and a postgraduate certificate in academic practice. It provides support for teaching and learning staff issues, including teaching to diversity in the student profile in response to the increasing diversity of the population of the city of Auckland that the University serves. The Group's membership of the Centre for Academic Development facilitates the awareness of student issues requiring attention because of the experience and expertise of the Student Learning Centre which is also part of the Centre for Academic Development.

Staff issues other than teaching and learning are addressed by the *Staff and Organisational Development Unit* which was established within Human Resources to provide professional and organisational development services and programmes for all staff including general staff.

The panel was impressed with the calibre of academic staff interviewed, their enthusiasm, and their apparent active engagement in the life of the University. The panel was told in interview of the value and relevance of the courses offered by the Centre for Academic Development, and staff interviewed were very supportive of the work of the Centre. Staff reported a strong emphasis on teaching excellence by the Centre and a shared culture of high expectations,

although it was readily acknowledged that the professional support and development courses offered by the various agencies within the Centre were useful only to those who actually attend, and that the impact on the University was dependent on staff participation and staff application of what was learned. The panel was told that staff needs are identified through staff input, and a lot of what is done is on the basis of staff coming to the Unit for assistance. As well, conversations within the Teaching and Learning Quality Committee can provide input which has led to the development of courses and workshops on issues such as workload, the changing student demographic, balancing research and teaching, and teaching to classes of various sizes. One suggestion made to the panel was that the Centre for Academic Development needs to be more proactive in supporting staff in their understanding and use of information technology and other teaching technologies.

The panel learned with interest from the Portfolio of the University's adaptation by the University of the Future Research Leadership Programme to support early-to-mid career researchers, which is in place in Group of Eight universities. The programme's rationale was presented to the panel during the site visit and appeared a laudable means of assuring the continued professional growth of staff at levels that lie outside the normal leadership development programmes

The Academic Performance Review process was reviewed in 2005 and the Portfolio reports that that the University has identified other changes in process relating to the culture of appraisal which have yet to be accomplished. The Equal Opportunities Office monitors the promotions processes and outcomes, including the processes on under-represented groups. The procedures require balance between research and teaching, and although policies are clear and transparent, it was indicated to the panel that practice varies from Faculty to Faculty, with a sense among staff that there is still a greater emphasis on research. The University Enhancement 18 is designed to *define more clearly promotional standards and how they are applied*, and the panel supports this.

5.4 Faculty of Education

The panel visited the Faculty of Education at the Epsom Campus. The present Faculty has existed from 2004 when the Auckland College of Education merged with the University, and the University Education staff joined the staff at Epsom.

In interviews with the panel, it was noted that the placement of students in teacher education was labour intensive for academic staff and was a source of tension in the new Faculty which was now within a research-intensive University. This issue was clearly recognised and was being addressed. Staff who had been employed by the former College acknowledged that it had taken a while to get used to the changed professional expectations of academics, and that benchmarking against other faculties for promotion to Associate Professor was difficult given that staff were not beginning from the same level of research output. The University was encouraging and supporting the upskilling of staff through PhD enrolment and involvement in the University's research community. The PhD targets in the University's *Strategic plan* were considered to be particularly ambitious for the Faculty of Education, with, as yet, not enough qualified staff in the Faculty to supervise PhDs. Many of the staff PhDs are in disciplines related to, but outside of, Education. The University had recognised that the PhD targets are ambitious for the Faculty, and staff were grateful for the incentives being provided, including the easing of teaching loads for staff enrolled in PhDs, research money to support research activity, and the 'buy out' of teaching so as to have time to prepare research for publication.

5.5 Leadership programmes

The portfolio reports the University is committed to increasing leadership capacity. The Academic Heads Advisory Group and the Staff and Organisational Development Unit run a HeadsUp Programme targeted at current and future Heads of Department. There is also the Leadership Development Programme for general staff in leadership roles; and the Women in Leadership Programme which has two strands, one for mid-career women, and one for senior women. The General Staff Managers' Forum is a growing forum for sharing information and practice relevant to the responsibilities they face.

The leadership programmes prepare people for leadership positions, and the panel was told that the University is looking for ways to make leadership roles more aspirational. The success of this initiative will, however, depend on the provision of appropriate incentives and support. It was also suggested to the panel that there needs to be more done to identify and train people who should be leaders, and that staff need to be more aware of the rewards arising from taking on different or additional responsibilities.

The University's commitment is being backed up by University Enhancement 17 to *use the Leadership Framework project to define further the University's academic leadership expectations and to enhance staff leadership capabilities.*

The Panel was particularly interested in the Women in Leadership Programme which has been running for 10 years. The impact of the programme has not been formally tracked, and a review will be made to assess ways in which the programme can remain 'fit for purpose'. While there are still very few women holding senior leadership positions, the panel was told that the programme has provided useful networking and support to mid-career women and has demonstrated to women that the University will support them to develop. It was pointed out to the panel that leadership in the University requires people from other under-represented groups as well as women, and that there must be kept in mind the (relatively small) number of such people who are available, or who offer themselves for senior leadership positions.

5.6 Staff survey

The Portfolio reports on the results of the University's first internationally-benchmarked staff survey in 2007, the results of which pointed to a number of challenges. The University responded by concentrating initially on three major areas – improving rewards, recognition and career development; enhancing the visibility of, and access to, the University leadership; and improving Human Resource information systems and processes.

The survey was repeated in 2009 and had closed about the time of the site visit of the audit panel. The panel was told that once the results of the 2009 survey were known, the Vice-Chancellor will hold forums on all campuses; reports will be made to the University community, particularly to Faculties and service units; action plans with accountabilities will be set down; and progress reported back to the University. The panel applauds the 2007 initiative and the 2009 follow-up survey. In common with other actions and activities, the University will need to provide adequate resources so that meaningful and well-communicated actions can be taken arising from the survey. Implementation will require clear accountability and timeframes.

6

Institutional quality assurance

6.1 Objective

The University's objective for institutional quality assurance is as follows.

- *Operate planning and review processes that drive achievement of the University's strategic objectives.* [SP Objective 20]

6.2 Mechanisms

In 2007, a University framework for quality assurance for teaching and learning was developed. Beginning with the University's teaching and learning objectives, and graduate profiles, the framework then sets out some major features of the quality system:

- planning – *Strategic plan, Investment plan, Faculty plans,*
- assurance – procedures to report upon, review and assure the quality of teaching and learning,
- responsibilities – shared by individual staff members, teaching teams, academic heads, Deans, and the Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Academic), together with University responsibility through the Teaching and Learning Quality Committee reporting to the Education Committee,
- student learning outcomes,
- support for staff,
- support for students – services and facilities to enable every student to be an effective learner and to achieve the appropriate graduate profile,
- student input – student involvement and feedback.

The Committee system is explained, the role of the academic head is defined, quality assurance processes relating to academic programmes and course delivery are described, and the need for academic integrity is set out. The process and history of external academic audits is summarised.

The Portfolio notes that quality assurance systems at the University focus on processes and outcomes; are supported by annual and longer-term planning processes, monitoring and reporting; are continuous; involves self-review and self-assessment; are aided by periodic external input, monitoring, benchmarking and review; are the responsibility of individual staff members, teaching teams, academic heads, Associate Deans and members of the Senior Management Team; and are enhanced by staff professional development.

In interviews, those involved in the self-assessment associated with this academic audit observed that the self-assessment helped the University think more clearly about quality assurance in the *Strategic plan* and alignment with the plan. The self-assessment process also demonstrated that

the University does not normally think of research, or teaching and learning practice in a ‘quality assurance’ way, even though much of their practice is guided by quality assurance processes.

The activities of the extensive University-wide committee system – particularly the Academic Programmes Committee, and the Education Committee and its sub-committee, the Teaching and Learning Quality Committee – are themselves important to the University’s quality assurance processes which are made apparent through a University-level quality assurance framework. These three committees in particular are pivotal to quality assurance, with their activities including approval of new programmes and changes to courses, evaluation of faculty plans, and evaluation of the implementation of programme review reports. Committee members in interview stressed the learning and sharing of good practice across Faculties that arise from, and are facilitated by, committee membership.

The University recognises that the existence of policies and procedures do not, in themselves, guarantee the delivery of a particular set of desirable outcomes. Their effectiveness is heavily influenced by the extent to which they are consistently implemented. The policies themselves need reviewing from time to time, and a recent procedural document relating to policy formation, review and revision is being applied to all policies over time. The panel supports the University’s intention to ensure there are implementation plans for all policies, along with regular monitoring of their continuing relevance and effectiveness.

Affirmation

A 6 The panel affirms the University’s intentions to accompany all new or significantly revised University-level teaching and learning policies and guidelines with implementation/communication plans, and to include quality monitoring mechanisms for new or significantly revised teaching and learning policies and guidelines so as to improve reporting on effectiveness of implementation (University Enhancement 1), and would support this being given a higher priority.

6.3 Reviews

There are many and varied types of reviews carried out by the University, with reviews of academic programmes and departments being the primary ones. Programme reviews require implementation plans and year-after reports, with the Education Committee playing a key role in monitoring the implementation following a review. The panel noted the considerable review activity and gained the impression that they may be mostly about assessing how well programmes and departments are performing with less emphasis on how these might lead to strategic decisions. In the view of the panel, the University must ensure that reviews and post-review implementation processes are always time-specified, consistent and aligned with the realisation of the *Strategic plan*.

The Portfolio also reports on major University-level academic quality data collection, analysis and feedback processes outside of programme and departmental reviews – around surveys of teaching, courses, and student engagement; end-of-semester summary course, teaching and tutoring evaluations, exit interviews; formative/fast feedback evaluations; monthly Faculty and department staff-student consultative committee meetings. As well, there is student participation on ‘standing committees’ and special committees/reference groups; and student statistics (including progression, retention, pass rates, completion) are analysed annually.

In academic programmes which contribute to preparation for professional practice, much reliance is placed on success in professional accreditation. But professional accreditation is, not unexpectedly, more focussed on the needs of professions, and such accreditation processes do not necessarily address all aspects of the work and quality of an academic department or university-level education that would be put before a programme or departmental review panel. The University needs to ensure that professional accreditations also contribute to programme and departmental reviews.

6.4 Student evaluations

From interviews, the panel came to the view that student evaluation scores are a primary measure of quality in teaching and course delivery for staff and the University. Summative course evaluations by students are required on a regular cycle as stipulated by the Student Evaluation of Courses and Teaching Policy.

The panel heard evidence of student feedback being applied into programmes and facilities, and it was confirmed that the Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Academic) and Quality Co-ordinator discuss results of the evaluations with Faculties, and Faculties are required to address low-scoring courses. Compared to the time of the 2004 Cycle 3 academic audit of the University, it is clear that there is much more effort spent by the University in closing the loop and giving feedback to students since Cycle 3, but the interviews with students suggested feedback is still variable. Students interviewed did not always know how to access survey results, and reported that it is difficult to know of changes arising from the evaluations, although one Faculty described to the panel their method for sharing with students findings and changes made. The panel came to the view that more use could be made of technology to facilitate student access to evaluation data and to understand the use and impact of these data.

Recommendation

R 5 The panel recommends that the University develops a ‘one-stop shop’ providing feedback on actions arising from surveys and evaluations to those who engage in them, possibly through the University’s website.

7

Community engagement

7.1 Objective

The University's objective for community engagement is as follows.

- *Engage alumni and friends in mutually supportive and productive relationships.*

[SP Objective 12]

7.2 Relationships with employers and professional bodies

The Portfolio reports on a range of relationships with stakeholders – community engagement in academic programme design, delivery and teaching, and review and accreditation of programmes by representatives of professions and industries for which the University provides pre-employment education. It also notes examples of research interaction, membership by professionals and industry personnel on advisory boards, contributions to teaching and tutoring by professionals and business/industry personnel, and internships and placements of students in business and industry.

There is a Community Consultative Group which includes representatives from business, education, and city ethnic groups. The Group is used by the University to provide community perceptions, student perceptions, and to provide post-graduation communication alongside input from alumni. The Group is asked for input, for advice and for feedback – for example, feedback on community perceptions of the proposed limitation of, or the management of, entry. The panel interviewed some members of the Group who reported that the University is interested in knowing why students go to the University of Auckland, and it summarised the main interactions between the University and community as being through partnerships. The University provides opportunities for the Group to raise agenda items, and stakeholders advised that they feel the University keeps them well informed and that the University takes account of their views. The University is being proactive in anticipating the changing demographics of Auckland and in addressing the implications of these changes. Those who were members of advisory boards commented on the reflective nature of their deliberations.

The panel heard that students find it stimulating to hear visiting lecturers/speakers from industry/business, and that this is seen as a natural link to graduate profiles in professional and applied faculties. Such community engagement requires a good network of contacts and knowledge of appropriate people. That the University values these connections is evidenced by a commitment to improving employer input and in extending it where it is missing or inadequate.

Affirmation

- A 7 The panel affirms the University's intention to undertake a study of best practice in employer input into the curriculum, teaching and learning and to develop an implementation plan in areas where this is currently missing or inadequate (University Enhancement 19).**

Commendation

C 10 The panel commends the University for the depth and range of the University's engagement with employers, professional bodies and other stakeholder groups.

University alumni are another important source of input and feedback, and the University is aware that the contact with alumni is variable and that the tracking of graduates must be much more systematic. It intends to build on good practice in one Faculty and have it applied to all Faculties.

Affirmation

A 8 The panel affirms the University's intention to improve University-wide tracking of graduates by considering the application in other faculties of the mechanisms under development in the Faculty of Medical and Health Sciences (University Enhancement 20).

7.3 Engagement with schools

The panel interviewed the Director of the Schools Partnership Office which is one agency that runs a variety of programmes to engage with schools and potential students. The Office encourages school students who consider themselves unable to enter the University to believe that they can. The Office attends Auckland Principals' Association meetings, and the Vice-Chancellor hosts an annual Principals' Forum. In the opinion of the Office, engagement with schools – which is funded by alternative sources – is strong and effective, and is one way of 'future proofing' for the University. In the view of the Office, the introduction of limitation of entry has not done any harm, and provides students with clear benchmarks for entry. (See also 4.2 for reference to Starpath.)

7.4 The role of critic and conscience of society.

The Portfolio confirms the University plays a role as critic and conscience of society. The University is aware of the need to balance the support of members of the University community to contribute to public debates on issues of interest, with the responsibility of those people to participate constructively and responsibly and thereby contribute effectively to knowledge and understanding. From interviews, the panel was of the view that the University staff are aware of their obligations, and were positive about the contribution the University makes to the Auckland region as well as nationally and internationally.

8

International standing

8.1 Objectives and value

According to the University's *Charter*, the **mission** of the University is:

to be a research-led, international university, recognised for excellence in teaching, learning, research, creative work, and administration, for the significance of its contributions to the advancement of knowledge and its commitment to serve its local, national and international communities.

The **purpose** of the University is:

to engage in teaching, learning and research of a standard comparable to that of research-intensive, comprehensive universities world-wide.

The University's objectives with respect to the University's place in the world are as follows.

- *Establish the University of Auckland, New Zealand's premier research university, as a peer of the world's leading autonomous universities through association and collaboration, and by an active presence in the international academic community.*
[SP Objective 1]
- *Create a distinctive international educational experience for our students, in Auckland and overseas.*
[SP Objective 2]
- *Develop effective partnerships with the University's local, national and international communities.*
[SP Objective 11]
- *Recruit and retain a high-quality staff and student body, striving to create equal opportunities for all those of ability to succeed in a university of high international standing.*
[SP Objective 13]

The University is committed to:

- *engaging with national and international scholars, educational and research institutions to enhance intellectual development, educational quality and research productivity.*

8.2 An international university

The *Strategic plan* notes that by virtue of the University's history and nature, and through the scholarship and research of its academic community, the University transcends national boundaries. As an academic community, the University has set a mission to be a university of high international standing, and the major aim of the University in the period 2005 to 2012 is to improve the University's international standing through the enhancement of the quality of teaching and learning, research, and the support systems that underpin these activities. The University needs to anticipate that the University's stakeholders will have an expectation that

there is continuing improvement in the University's relative position to comparative universities throughout the world.

It was made clear to the panel during interviews that the University is proud of its international connections, and there were repeated references to the Group of Eight universities in Australia, and of the importance of liaison and linkages through membership of Universitas 21 and the Association of Pacific Rim Universities [APRU]. In the development of targets and key performance indicators to measure progress towards the achievement of the *Strategic plan*, the University benchmarked with the Group of Eight universities in Australia. There were also reports of much international outreach within Faculties, although the panel was not aware of any formalised staff development programme with respect to internationalisation.

The panel considered that the University should reinforce that benchmarking is a way to inform strategic direction and operational decision making. The logic for benchmarking was not apparent, and the panel was of the view that the approach to benchmarking needs to be redefined and developed. Given the breadth of academic programmes, the University should give consideration to a range of comparators best suited to the University's culture, context, and wide range of disciplines. As an example, as was pointed out in section 4.2, with respect to benchmarking concerning indigenous peoples, the panel is of the view that there may be comparators in Australia, in Canada and in other countries more appropriate than the Group of Eight universities.

Commendation

C 11 The panel commends the University for its initial utilisation of existing benchmarking tools in order to measure its success against its strategies towards internationalisation.

Recommendation

R 6 The panel recommends that the University clarifies the logic and philosophy behind benchmarking and the uses to which findings are to be put, and reconsiders its range of comparator institutions for specific discipline areas, academic programmes and other aspects of its activities.

Internationalisation involves a number of aspects, including curriculum, international students to the university, domestic study abroad, diversity of academic staff, cultural competency of staff, offshore teaching and international partnerships. The strategic and academic leadership in internationalisation is provided by the Pro Vice-Chancellor (International), while the operational leadership is provided by the Director of Auckland International. The panel could not discern how well the University community knows where the internationalisation strategy fits in with the strategic direction and operational activities of the University, or even supports the internationalisation strategy. The needs for internationalisation might be well understood by the Senior Management Team, and the University has high-level internationally-oriented objectives. However, it appears to the panel that the level of planning and resourcing to achieve these objectives is not well articulated.

There is a need for a clearer identification and alignment of resources and objectives in terms of international activities given the strategic role and contribution of international activities and their reach and influence across the University. (It was unfortunate that the Pro Vice-Chancellor (International) was not able to be in Auckland for interview at the time of the panel's site visit.) As well, the apparent lack of knowledge or understanding of the role and activities of Auckland

International as evidenced in interviews has led the panel to the view that there is a need for a plan for communicating to staff and other stakeholders what the internationally-oriented strategies are and how they are expected to be involved or how it may affect them.

Another dimension that was raised during interviews was that Auckland was becoming a multi-cultural city. A 'critical mass' is developing in some cultural areas that could have significant impact on Auckland society, and on the demographic from which the University drew its students which, in turn, will impact on the diversity of students and student cultures. However, it was not clear to the panel how the University might be planning to address this, although there was reference made to the Academic Practice Group programmes on teaching to diversity that are provided for staff new to tertiary teaching. The sense the panel developed was that this was directed more particularly to the increasing international enrolments rather than to the impact on enrolments arising from the growing internationalisation of Auckland.

8.3 Exchange agreements

The Portfolio describes the range of external research collaborations at present in place, and notes that the University has 130 bilateral partnerships with international universities, which include staff and student exchanges and research collaborations. All such agreements must have an academic sponsor, and be approved by the academic head and Dean of the Faculty. The process of proposing and approving such agreements was reviewed in 2008, and the University has a two-part University Enhancement 21 – *to embed the improved process for proposing and approving international exchange agreements, and to review individual international agreements regularly to ensure that they are active and providing benefit to staff and students, and to terminate those that no longer fulfil their original purpose*. The panel supports this as it regards this as an expected element in any ongoing administration of such agreements.

8.4 International students and study abroad

International students who seek to come to the University are recruited and admitted through Auckland International which had been reviewed in recent times. There were concerns expressed to the panel about the limited evidence that the intent of that review will be implemented, leading the panel to the view that there needs to be greater clarity about the relationship of Auckland International to the rest of the University.

The University is below its maximum of 20 percent of students being international as provided for in the *Strategic plan* – 12 percent of all Equivalent Full-time Students are international – and the panel noted that the priority is to get international PhD student numbers up, in part as the work of these PhD students underpins the research effort of the University.

Students on campus are supported by the International Student Information Centre which has a team of international student advisers. The Centre is the place for students to go when general support and student welfare is an issue and when information and advice are sought about such things as student visa renewal, and international student activities and events in Auckland.

The University also encourages domestic students to carry out part of their study in an overseas university under the '360⁰ Auckland Abroad' student study exchange scheme, and again the number of students involved is well below its target – 300 at present, compared to the target of 2,000. It is not surprising, therefore, that University Enhancement 22 intends to *increase*

publicity and enhance support for study abroad courses and programmes to increase the number of domestic students who include an international experience within their degree.

The University has taken part in the International Student Barometer which is an independent and confidential feedback process for education providers, tracking decision-making, perceptions, expectations and experiences of international students. It is administered worldwide and provides a comparative measure, and over time will allow for the tracking of how expectations and perceptions change, not only in an institution but also against national and global benchmarks. The Barometer covers such things as the University's performance from student enquiry to acceptance, arrival and orientation, the learning and the living experiences and support services.

The results of the International Student Barometer identified significant number of areas of performance below that of New Zealand and international universities. Those of greatest concern to the University are the levels of student satisfaction with the learning and living experiences as well as support services. The University has recognised the need to address this, and Deans and heads of service units have been asked to give thought to the ways the University might improve performance.

R 7 The panel recommends that the University ensures urgency is given to addressing and resolving the concerns raised by the International Student Barometer.

Acknowledgements

The panel thanks in particular Professor Stuart McCutcheon (Vice-Chancellor), Professor Raewyn Dalziel (Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Academic)) and Dr David Tippin (Quality Co-ordinator) for their support of the audit process and for the University's warm welcome. The panel thanks all those who contributed to the University's self-assessment process, the compilation of the self-assessment Portfolio, and the organisation associated with the site visit. The panel is most grateful for the openness and frankness of those who gave of their time to appear before the panel and for their constructive comments and observations.

Audit panel

Chair of the panel

Professor Robert Hannah
Associate Dean (Research), Humanities, University of Otago

New Zealand academic member of the panel

Professor Sheelagh Matear
Assistant Vice-Chancellor (Academic), Lincoln University

New Zealand non-academic members of the panel

Dr Grant Sinclair
Company Director, Wellington

Ceillhe Sperath, *Ngapuhi, Ngati-Hau, Ngati Manu, Ngati Wai*
Company Director, Auckland

Overseas member of the panel

Professor Kevin McConkey
Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Academic and Global Relations), University of Newcastle,
Australia

In attendance:

John M. Jennings
Director, New Zealand Universities Academic Audit Unit

Appendix 1

University of Auckland enhancements

Notes

- This listing of the University's key improvements, as identified in the University's Portfolio associated with this academic audit, is ordered according to the framework of this report.
- The numbering of the improvements is as used in the Portfolio.

Teaching and learning

Planning, design and review of programmes and courses

Enhancement 2

Evaluate the General Education programme in 2009.

High, 2009

Delivery of courses and programmes

Enhancement 3

Enhance the effectiveness of e-learning throughout the University by:

- *embedding existing good practices more widely in course delivery and teaching,*
- *augmenting professional development to ensure that teaching staff are skilled in and conversant with new technologies and related pedagogy,*
- *monitoring the impact on learning processes and outcomes.*

Medium, ongoing

Learning environment

Enhancement 4

Implement the Campus Development Strategy and monitor the impact on the quality of teaching, learning and research.

High, ongoing

Assessment

Enhancement 6

Provide appropriate guidance and professional development to staff concerning good practice in assessment through Faculty and University programmes.

Medium, ongoing

Enhancement 7

Re-examine the ways in which departments and schools manage external assessment and moderation in order to increase its efficiency and effectiveness.

Medium, 2009

Student achievement and success

Enhancement 5

Use the results of the University trial of the Australasian Survey of Student Engagement (AUSSE) survey as a basis for discussions with staff and students in 2009 of ways of improving undergraduate student engagement. Medium, 2009

Research environment

Research students and supervision

Enhancement 8

8a Monitor the effectiveness of the doctoral Electronic Expression of Interest and application for admission processes. High, ongoing

8b Implement a University of Auckland postgraduate recruitment and marketing plan. High, 2009

Enhancement 9

9a Include in the Academic Heads programme a workshop on the importance and characteristics of good research supervision. High, ongoing

9b Encourage a culture of departmental discussion and analysis of research supervision practices and reviews of research student progress. High, ongoing

Enhancement 10

Monitor regularly, as the Campus Development Strategy proceeds, the provision and quality of facilities for postgraduate students. High, ongoing

Enhancement 11

Encourage student engagement in departmental seminars, in informal interactions with staff, and attendance at showcase University functions and events through better communication and enhanced publicity, and identification of the benefits of such engagement. Medium, ongoing

Te Tiriti o Waitangi and Pacific

Te Tiriti o Waitangi

Enhancement 12

12a Work with secondary schools and with Starpath in identifying the barriers to students gaining the prerequisite subjects required for admission to these programmes. High, ongoing

12b Work with other tertiary providers to identify foundation programmes that can act as pathways into Science, Engineering, Architecture and Health Science degrees. High, ongoing

Enhancement 13

13a Support the work of the Māori and Indigenous Postgraduate Advancement (MAI) programme in increasing the number of Māori students enrolling in doctoral programmes. High, ongoing

13b Emphasise the benefits for Māori of postgraduate study and research training in postgraduate recruitment programmes. High, ongoing

University staff: academic, management and support

Staff profile

Enhancement 14

Use Human Resources Connect+ to improve human resources processes, availability of data, workforce planning, and the ability to report on staffing issues. Medium, ongoing

Enhancement 15

15a Develop a recruitment strategy to attract Māori and Pacific job applicants. High, ongoing
15b Support the Māori Academic network across Aotearoa (MANU-AO) programme in its work of promoting Māori and Pacific staff engagement in the University's activities. High, ongoing

Interview technique

Enhancement 16

Develop training programmes and workshops for all staff involved in interviews for academic staff and require all staff new to interviewing to undertake training prior to participation on an interview panel. Medium, 2010

Promotion

Enhancement 18

Define more clearly promotional standards and how they are applied. High, 2009-2010

Leadership programmes

Enhancement 17

Use the Leadership Framework project to define further the University's academic leadership expectations and to enhance staff leadership capabilities. High, 2009

Institutional quality assurance

Mechanisms

Enhancement 1

1a Accompany all new or significantly revised University-level teaching and learning policies and guidelines with an implementation/communication plan. Medium, ongoing
1b Include quality monitoring mechanisms for new or significantly revised teaching and learning policies and guidelines to improve reporting on effectiveness of implementation. Medium, ongoing

Community engagement

Relationships with employers

Enhancement 19

Undertake a study of best practice in employer input into the curriculum, teaching and learning and develop an implementation plan in areas where this is currently missing or inadequate. Medium, 2010

Alumni

Enhancement 20

Improve University-wide tracking of graduates by considering the application in other faculties of the mechanisms under development in the Faculty of Medical and Health Sciences.

Medium, 2010

International standing

Exchange agreements

Enhancement 21

21a *Embed the improved process for proposing and approving international exchange agreements.* Medium, ongoing

21b *Review individual international agreements regularly to ensure that they are active and providing benefit to staff and students, and terminate those that no longer fulfil their original purpose.* Medium, ongoing

Study abroad

Enhancement 22

Increase publicity and enhance support for study abroad courses and programmes to increase the number of domestic students who include an international experience within their degree.

High, ongoing

Appendix 2

New Zealand Universities Academic Audit Unit Te Wāhanga Tātari

Terms of reference

The Unit's terms of reference are:

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

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

Vision

- Quality New Zealand university education serving students' future.

Mission

To contribute to quality New Zealand university education by:

- engaging as leader and advocate in the development of quality cultures,
- applying quality assurance and quality enhancement processes that enable improvement in student engagement, experience and learning outcomes.

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

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

Appendix 3

Cycle 4 indicative framework

Update on the 'mid-term' report on Cycle 3 recommendations and university enhancement initiatives

Given the focus of Cycle 3 was teaching quality, programme delivery and the achievement of learning objectives, the university may wish to incorporate reports on recommendations and enhancement initiatives from Cycle 3 into relevant sections that follow.

	<i>Topics</i>	<i>Activities</i>
1	General	
2	Teaching and learning	2.1 The development, design, implementation and delivery of academic programmes and courses that: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> * develop intellectual independence, * are relevant to the needs of the disciplines, * are relevant to the needs of learners and other stakeholders. 2.2 The learning environment and learning support for students, including learning support for students from targeted groups. 2.3 Student achievement and success.
3	Research environment	3.1 Research students and research supervision. 3.2 Teaching and learning within a research environment. 3.3 The interdependence of research and teaching. 3.4 The role of critic and conscience of society.
4	Te Tiriti o Waitangi	4.1 The application of the principles ⁷ of Te Tiriti to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> * access to learning, * curriculum.
5	Academic and support staff	5.1 The determination of an appropriate academic staff profile across the institution. 5.2 Recruitment, appointment and induction strategies. 5.3 The implementation and monitoring of workload models. 5.4 Professional support, development and appraisal of academic staff.
6	Institutional quality assurance	6.1 The internal planning-implementation-reporting-evaluation-enhancement cycle as applied to academic processes, academic programmes and courses.
7	Management and administrative support	7.1 The development of a management and administrative infrastructure that provides effective support to research-informed teaching and

⁷ A discussion of the implications for universities arising from the principles of Te Tiriti is found in John M Jennings (compiler), *New Zealand universities and Te Tiriti o Waitangi*, Wellington, New Zealand Universities Academic Audit Unit, 2004, 'AAU Series on Quality' no.4.
Available at http://www.nzuaau.ac.nz/nzuaau_site/publications/asq/Te%20Tiriti%20o%20Waitangi.pdf

	<i>Topics</i>	<i>Activities</i>
		learning. 7.2 The determination of an appropriate management and administrative staff profile. 7.3 Professional support, development and appraisal of management and administrative staff.
8	<i>Community engagement</i>	8.1 The identification of stakeholders and communities of interest, the seeking of advice, and the application of information gained to curriculum and student learning.
9	<i>External academic collaborations and partnerships</i>	9.1 The development of external collaborative research and academic ventures and partnerships that impact on curriculum and student learning and achievement.

To each of these sections, the following questions are to be applied to each of the above topics

Commitments

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

Strengths and progress

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

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

Challenges

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

Monitoring

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

Enhancement

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

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

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