



**University of
Canterbury**
Te Whare Wānanga o Waitaha
Academic audit report
Cycle 4 August 2010



New Zealand Universities Academic Audit Unit
Te Wāhanga Tātari

University of Canterbury
Te Whare Wānanga o Waitaha

Academic audit report

Cycle 4

August 2010

This audit report is the fourth 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, and research-teaching nexus 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. An electronic version of the report is posted on the Unit's website as a portable document format (PDF) file.

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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; they were conducted during the period 2003-2008.

The present cycle of academic audits – Cycle 4, of which this is the fourth – 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-assessment which informs an audit Portfolio structured with respect to evaluation questions framed within the Cycle 4 indicative framework. The questions ask the university how it knows that its core activities of teaching, learning, research and community engagement are relevant and of international quality, and that its policies, procedures and the work of units in support of its core activities are effective. The university is expected to evaluate its progress towards achieving its goals and objectives related to the focus of the audit, to identify areas for improvement, and to indicate the intended enhancement initiatives arising from the audit process.

After examining the Portfolio, and seeking further information if necessary, the audit panel conducts interviews in 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 Cycle 4 framework. The report commends good practice, makes recommendations and affirms university proposed actions and enhancement initiatives. The report is 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. The conduct of Cycle 4 audit is detailed in Unit's 2007 *Academic audit manual*.³

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 Canterbury academic audit

The University of Canterbury agreed to an academic audit site visit in May-June 2010, requiring the submission of the self-review Portfolio by early March 2010. The panel appointed to carry out the academic audit of the University met in Christchurch prior to the University's submission to discuss the audit approach required by evaluation questions. The panel met again in Christchurch on 8 April 2010 for a preliminary meeting at which it evaluated the material it had received, and determined further materials required. The Chair and the Secretariat to the audit panel undertook a planning visit to the University on 19 April 2010 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 Canterbury took place from 31 May to 3 June 2010, hosted by the Vice-Chancellor, Dr Rod Carr. During the site visits, the panel interviewed 140 people – members of Council, staff, students and stakeholders.

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.

New Director of the Unit

In March 2010, Dr Jan Cameron, Assistant Vice-Chancellor (Academic) at the University of Canterbury until the end of January 2010, took up the position of Director of the New Zealand Universities Academic Audit Unit. Given that Dr Cameron had been responsible for the University self assessment and was involved in the writing of the early drafts of the University Portfolio submission, the Chair of the Board advised the University that it would be inappropriate for Dr Cameron to be involved in any way with the administration of the audit as Director of the Unit. The retiring Director of the Unit, Mr John Jennings, was appointed as Secretariat to the academic audit panel. No University materials provided to the panel were sent or held by the Unit's office during the academic audit process; no meetings of the panel were held in Wellington; and no discussion of the academic audit took place between Dr Cameron and Mr Jennings or between Dr Cameron and any member of the panel during the process of the audit.

In summary, Dr Cameron played no part in the administration of the audit, in the evaluation of materials submitted by the University, in any of the discussions by the panel, or in the writing of this audit report.

John M. Jennings

*Secretariat to the panel for the academic audit of the University of Canterbury
August 2010*

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Summary

General

The University of Canterbury

The University of Canterbury has one campus at Ilam in Christchurch. The College of Education also has service and teaching centres in five cities throughout New Zealand. The present Vice-Chancellor took up his position in February 2009, and during the time of the audit process, the senior management and support services were undergoing restructuring.

Planning and reporting

The Vice-Chancellor is leading the University through a strategic planning process which is being directed by a statement of strategic intent. Planning and reporting is effective, but the panel found it difficult to get information as to how the reported data provided by key performance indicators and statements of service performance were being fed into the planning process.

A matrix of Colleges and Faculties

Research and teaching is conducted through five Colleges and a School of Law, and academic units are within Colleges. Academic programmes are administered by seven Faculties. Faculties are responsible for the design and character of academic programmes, while the Colleges and School of Law are responsible for the resources required to deliver academic programmes, and for the quality of research, teaching and learning. The University is aware of the risks that might arise from the inconsistency in the way Colleges implement policies and carry out their activities, and the University must monitor activities to ensure the matrix model is the most appropriate structure in a period of change.

Risk management

The University has appropriate processes to identify and monitor risks faced by the University.

Internationalisation

The intention of the University becoming more strategic in its approach to internationalisation is to prepare graduates to operate in a global environment. The panel recommends that the University reviews what internationalisation means for the University with a wider discussion, more effective strategies and specific indicators to monitor progress.

Benchmarking activities

The most significant benchmarking exercise is that with the University of Adelaide, supplemented by a number and variety of informal benchmarking activities. The panel questioned whether the University of Adelaide might be too close a 'fit', and recommends that the University broadens and widens benchmarking to include Crown Research Institutes, private companies, and other New Zealand universities in relation to Te Tiriti o Waitangi, and monitors the application of information gained to ensure enhancement of performance and standards in line with the University's statement of strategic intent.

Teaching and learning

How does the University identify the needs of learners?

The University has a range of liaisons and consultations, including professional accreditation of professional qualifications and advisory committees for non-professional qualifications, to identify the needs of learners. There was a general acceptance in the University of the benefits of relevant graduate profile statements in directing curriculum and assessment in

	<p>relation to the strategic intent of the University, and the panel affirms the University Action to have good practice in matching student learning and assessment with graduate profiles applied across all faculties.</p>
How does the University know that programmes and activities match the needs of learners and stakeholders?	<p>The University relies on professional accreditation of appropriate qualifications and cycles of programme reviews of all qualifications. The panel commends the University for the successful implementation of a common point value for all undergraduate degree courses and for the consequent benefits to students.</p>
How does the University know that teaching is effective?	<p>At the time of the audit there was no systematic approach to measuring the quality of teaching, and the Teaching and Learning Committee was considering ways of measuring teaching quality at the request of the Vice-Chancellor and Academic Board. The Teaching and Learning Committee responds to undesirable impacts arising from inconsistencies in the delivery of teaching across Faculties working mainly through feedback to Heads of School/Department. The University relies on student evaluations of the quality of teaching and courses, and the panel affirms the University's Action to ensure feedback from students is acted upon, and recommends this should be applied to teaching quality as well as course quality. The University faces significant cost in upgrading teaching and learning facilities to match the aspiration of being world-class, and the panel affirms the University Action to seek input from users of teaching and learning spaces in the design of their refurbishment, and to have Pro Vice-Chancellors responsible for promoting active learning options in those spaces. Improved hours of access to the Library are being considered by the University, and the information communications technology infrastructure is being reviewed and upgraded.</p>
How does the University know that learners are guided and supported effectively?	<p>Informal feedback to the panel on the relevance and effectiveness of student learning support services was positive, although the University has no systematic process for monitoring performance. There are various initiatives for the early identification of students at risk, and the panel affirms the University Action to focus institutional research and support provision so that students with potential but who are 'at risk' can be identified and assisted at an early stage. The panel commends the Alternative Format Centre (which converts texts from traditional to alternative formats) for being recognised as one of the leading sites in Australasia. The panel commends the commitment of the staff of the Pacific Development Team, and for their support to Pacific students during their transition into university study as well as the effective programme of mentoring Pacific students during their studies.</p>
How does the University ensure there are reflective processes for determining objectives and outcomes?	<p>The detailed process for the development and approval of new academic programmes is extensive, aligned to the requirements of the Committee on University Academic Programmes of the New Zealand Vice-Chancellors' Committee. Programme objectives and a review of outcomes against objectives are evaluated as part of the University's cycles of academic programme reviews.</p>
How does the University know that learners achieve stated objectives and outcomes?	<p>A key to knowing that learners achieve stated objectives is through valid and reliable assessment, and although there have been workshops and seminars on assessment practices, it was not clear to the panel as to how, or if, assessment practices were being monitored. Pro Vice-Chancellors and Deans are responsible for the effectiveness and appropriateness of assessment, but there</p>

appeared not to be any University-wide scrutiny of practice.

Research environment

How does the University know that research activities and research policies are aligned with each other and with external contexts?

The University's research plan is aligned with other institutional strategic plans. The panel commends the University for the establishment of the first two cross-disciplinary research institutes that align with the research strengths and the new strategic direction of the University. It is intended that, in all, up to six institutes will be established which will express the research excellence across the University. It was made clear to the panel that these institutes would not undermine support for other research of high quality undertaken by staff.

How does the University know that research students are guided and supported effectively?

The University has undertaken surveys of postgraduate student experience, and has promulgated impressive detailed analyses of findings and trends. Inevitably there is a delay in processing the information and attending to issues reported in the surveys. The panel recommends that PhD students be surveyed on completion, and that better use be made of the information to be found in the annual progress reports. The panel also recommends that the University develops consistent University-wide standards and formal agreements between provisional supervisors and PhD students for student support during the provisional enrolment period of the first twelve months.

How does the University know that there is an effective interaction between teaching and research?

There has been an awareness by the University of the research-teaching nexus since preparation for the 2000 Cycle 2 academic audit. There appear to be no systems and processes to test the effectiveness of the nexus throughout the University and the panel noted University Actions to support ways of giving effect to the nexus in teaching, and ways of introducing research-grounded orientation to undergraduate students.

How does the University know that it is effectively fulfilling the role of critic and conscience of society?

The panel affirms the University Action to have a member of the Senior Management Team oversee the development of a clear and broad concept of what is understood by 'critic and conscience', the provision of advice and training, the recognition of the role in position descriptions, and consultation with Māori staff as to the most appropriate expression of the role for them.

Te Tiriti o Waitangi

How does the University ensure an understanding of the principles of Te Tiriti o Waitangi?

The University's understanding of Te Tiriti o Waitangi is that its responsibilities with regard to the rights of citizenship for all, access to university education by Māori students with special effort in recruitment, support, retention, completion of qualifications and graduation. This is a key strategic area for the University which is developing a range of relevant key performance indicators.

How does the University know that it is effectively applying the principles of Te Tiriti o Waitangi?

The University recognises that the percentage of students and staff who identify as Māori is low compared to other New Zealand universities (in part reflecting the local demographic profile), and it recognises that it has not progressed as far in Te Tiriti matters as it would have liked. On the retirement of the present Assistant Vice-Chancellor (Māori), the University is intending to increase the position to full time, and the panel recommends that the position report at the highest level of senior management; the role description reflect a meaningful portfolio with clear mandate, line management responsibilities,

and resources to implement initiatives; and that the appointment to this position be treated as a matter of urgency. The panel also recommended the establishment of a Rūnanga of Council. The panel commends the University for its initiatives to provide learning support and pastoral care of Māori students, including Te Whare Akonga o te Akatoki; the Māori Development Team; te reo Maori scholarships; and the successful introduction of the course on Science, Māori and Indigenous Knowledge. The panel also commends the University for the appointment of the Professor of Māori Research with responsibilities across the University and for the proactive approach taken by the incumbent to engage with the University community. The panel was told of concerns over issues of cultural awareness and recommends that the University takes urgent steps to implement training for all staff on the University's responsibilities to Te Tiriti and to include the realisation of biculturalism in graduate profile statements and the attributes of graduates. The panel also regarded as matters of urgency the completion of the drafting of the Māori plan and recommends the provision of a 'marae complex'.

University staff

How does the University determine the appropriate staff profile and resourcing to fulfil its core purposes and functions?

The profile of staff comes under scrutiny on each occasion of resignation or retirement, and various criteria are considered – in particular, the strategic developments of the University and the risks associated with not replacing or adding staff. The University recognises that its percentage of women academic staff, while improving, is still below the sector benchmark, and that the proportions of Māori and Pacific staff are below those of other New Zealand universities. The panel did not detect any systematic plan for addressing these issues.

How does the University know that the staffing strategies around recruitment, appointment, induction, retention, workload, professional development and appraisal are effective?

The University has begun a series of benchmarked staff satisfaction surveys. Attendance at induction/orientation seminars is optional, and there is a need for more systematic training of staff on cultural awareness, the needs of Māori and Pacific students, and training to interact positively with students from diverse cultural backgrounds and national contexts. The University recognises the need for monitoring and evaluation of workload across Colleges to ensure equity and effective teaching. There is a University Action that all teaching staff should be required to engage in a specified number of teaching development activities during employment with the University. The panel recommends that the University ensures consistent institution-wide application and monitoring of the Professional Development and Review process.

Institutional quality assurance

How does the University know that the maintenance and enhancement of standards of research, teaching and student learning have benefited from institutional quality

The University places an emphasis on the five-year cycles of reviews of academic programmes to assure quality, and the processes associated with the accreditation of professional qualifications. The panel was aware of the general issue of the use made of information and feedback to relevant communities, and it became aware of instances where the feedback loop is incomplete, and where there is little transparency as to how information from reviews is used for improvement of the quality of activities. The panel recommends that the University ensures there is a systematic central follow-up on all reviews, internal and external academic audits and surveys, and on the implementation and effectiveness of actions taken as a result. The University

assurance?

has expectations of staff, and most of the University Actions identify actions that should be undertaken rather than actions that must be taken. The panel recommends that there be a set of required policies in areas of direct relevance to the maintenance of quality of core activities, and that compliance with those policies be monitored through internal reviews as well as internal and external audits.

Management and administrative support

How does the University know that its management and administrative support are fit for purpose?

Project STAR, leading to the restructuring of senior management, is a direct response to the question as to whether or not the University knows that its management and administrative support are fit for purpose. There has been good consultation about the process, and continuing communication with the University community will be necessary, as will the monitoring of the impact and effectiveness of changes arising from the Project.

Community engagement

How does the University know that research and teaching benefit from community engagement?

The University reported on the benefits for academic programmes and research collaborations arising from its engagement with its communities of interest. While the University regards community engagement as important, it is aware that it does not monitor it as well as it should. Nevertheless, the panel commends the University for its efforts to strengthen relationships and engagement with stakeholders in education, industry and the service sector.

External academic collaborations and partnerships

How does the University know that curriculum, standards and outcomes for learners are enhanced by external academic collaborations?

The University recognises that the monitoring of collaborations and partnerships in recent years has been neglected, and is reviewing partnerships to develop more meaningful and active collaborations with universities and institutes better aligned with the University's new strategic direction. It intends to do more to facilitate comprehensive and in-depth engagements related to research and academic programmes and to curriculum development.

Commendations, recommendations and affirmations

Key: C = Commendations R = Recommendations A = Affirmations

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

General

Planning and reporting

C 1 p.2 The panel commends the Vice-Chancellor for his involvement of Council and the University community in the development of the statement of strategic intent, for his commitment to change, and for his willingness to consult widely about implementation of his vision for the University.

Internationalisation

R 1 p.5 The panel recommends that the University reviews what internationalisation means for the University, discusses the issue with the University community (including external stakeholders), determines how strategies can best be implemented, and specifies indicators that will be used to monitor impact towards ongoing improvement.

Benchmarking

R 2 p.6 The panel, while recognising the work accomplished in implementing benchmarking activities with the University of Adelaide, recommends that the University broadens and widens its benchmarking to include other universities (including other New Zealand universities in relation to Te Tiriti o Waitangi), research institutes and/or private companies in New Zealand and overseas, and that it monitors the application of the information gained to ensure that it leads to enhancement of the University's performance and standards in research, teaching and learning in line with the University's statement of strategic intent.

Teaching and learning

Graduate profiles

A 1 p.8 *The panel affirms University Action 3 – that the work in some Faculties to match student learning and assessment with the graduate profiles of undergraduate and postgraduate awards be emulated across all Faculties, and that Deans take responsibility for ensuring graduate profiles are coherent and embedded in staff and student academic culture.*

Common course point value

C 2 p.9 The panel commends the University for the successful implementation of a common point value for all undergraduate degree courses and for the consequent benefits to students.

Feedback on student evaluations

- A 2 p.10 *The panel affirms University Action 2 – develop procedures to ensure feedback from students is acted upon and that students are informed of the outcomes – but recommends that the Action should not only develop the procedures but also implement and monitor them, and that these procedures include both teaching and course quality.*

Teaching and learning spaces

- A 3 p.11 *The panel affirms University Action 9 – that users of refurbished teaching and learning spaces have opportunities for input to design, and that Pro Vice-Chancellors be responsible for promoting active learning options in these spaces.*

Students at risk

- A 4 p.13 *The panel affirms University Action 12 – that the University needs to focus institutional research and support provision in such a way that students with potential but who are ‘at risk’ can be identified and assisted at an early stage.*

Support for Pacific students

- C3 p.14 The panel commends the University for the commitment of the staff of the Pacific Development Team to supporting the transition of Pacific students into university study and to providing an effective programme for mentoring students during their studies.

Research environment

Research institutes

- C 4 p.18 The panel commends the University for the establishment of cross-disciplinary research institutes that align with the research strengths and new strategic direction of the University.

PhD surveys

- R 3 p.19 **The panel recommends that the University:**
- **administers focussed PhD student satisfaction surveys upon individual student completion and**
 - **implements a systematic feedback process on information gained from completion surveys and annual progress reports to relevant disciplinary units.**

First six months of PhD enrolment

- R 4 p.20 **The panel recommends that the University, through the Dean of Postgraduate Research in collaboration with the Colleges, develops consistent University-wide standards and formal agreements between provisional supervisors and PhD students for student support during the initial enrolment prior to approval of the PhD proposal.**

Critic and conscience of society

- A 5 p.21 *The panel affirms University Action 20 and supports a member of the Senior Management Team being given responsibility for developing a clear and broad concept of what is understood by ‘critic and conscience’, for developing guidelines, for providing advice and training, for developing explicit recognition of performance in this role in position descriptions, and for ensuring Māori staff are consulted with reference to this role for and about Māori.*

Tiriti o Waitangi

Assistant Vice-Chancellor (Māori)

- R 5 p.25 **The panel recommends that the University ensures that:**
- **the person replacing the present Assistant Vice-Chancellor (Māori) upon his retirement report at the highest level of senior management and be a member of the Senior Management Team,**
 - **the role description reflects a meaningful portfolio with a clear mandate and line management responsibilities, with the new appointee supported and fully resourced to be able to make decisions, implement initiatives across the University, and ensure actions,**
 - **the appointment to this position be treated as a matter of urgency.**

Runanga

- R 6 p.25 **The panel recommends that the University establishes a Rūnanga of the Council, to be a representative Māori body made up of mana whenua including at least Ngāi Tūahuriri and Ngāi Tahu, the wider Māori community, staff and students, to advise the appointee replacing the retiring Assistant Vice-Chancellor (Māori).**

Te Tiriti o Waitangi initiatives

- C 5 p.25 The panel commends the University for its initiatives to provide learning support and pastoral care for Māori students, including:
- Te Whare Akonga o te Akatoki (Māori student study centre),
 - Māori Development Team support and mentoring of Māori students,
 - te reo Māori scholarship scheme,
 - student support in Aotahi (School of Māori and Indigenous Studies) in the College of Arts, and in the School of Māori, Social and Cultural Studies in the College of Education, and
 - the successful introduction of the course on Science, Māori and Indigenous Knowledge [SCIM] offered through the Faculty of Science.

Professor of Māori Research

- C 6 p.26 The panel commends the University for appointing a Professor of Māori Research with responsibilities across the University, and for the proactive approach taken by the appointee to engage with the University community.

Te Tiriti o Waitangi responsibilities

- R 7** p.27 **The panel recommends that the University takes steps to:**
- **address its responsibilities and obligations under Te Tiriti o Waitangi and to build on curriculum initiatives already taken,**
 - **implement training for all staff on the University’s responsibilities under Te Tiriti o Waitangi to increase cultural awareness and culturally responsive interactions, and**
 - **include the realisation of biculturalism in graduate profile statements and the attributes of graduates associated with academic qualifications.**

Māori plan

- R 8** p.27 **The panel recommends that the University Senior Management Team completes the draft Māori plan as a matter of urgency, undertakes consultation, and has the plan endorsed by the relevant parties by the end of 2010.**

Marae complex

- R 9** p.27 **The panel recommends that the University gives priority to the provision of a ‘marae complex’ that is a central place where Māori-focussed gatherings, events and activities including pōwhiri, wānanga, noho marae, professional development, hui and University events can be conducted in accordance with Māori protocol.**

University staff

Professional Development and Review

- R 10** p.33 **The panel recommends that the University ensures consistent University-wide application and monitoring of the academic staff Professional Development and Review process which includes evidence on workload, research and teaching performance, and which is improvement focussed.**

Institutional quality assurance

Follow-up to reviews and audits

- R 11** p.36 **The panel recommends that the University ensures there is an effective systematic central follow-up on all reviews, internal and external academic audits, and surveys; on the recommendations contained in the reports arising from such activities; and on the implementation and effectiveness of actions taken arising from the consideration of the information and any recommendations they contain in enhancing the core activities of the University.**
- R 12** p.37 **The panel recommends that the University implements a set of required policies in areas of direct relevance to the maintenance of quality in research, teaching and learning across the University, and that compliance with those policies be monitored through internal reviews as well as internal and external audits.**

Community engagement

Follow-up to reviews and audits

C 7 p.42 The panel commends the University for its support for strong relationships and engagement with stakeholders in education, industry and the service sector.

Preamble

▪ **The self-assessment Portfolio**

In January 2009, the New Zealand Universities Academic Audit Unit and the University of Canterbury agreed that the structure of the self-assessment Portfolio, and the audit itself, would relate to evaluation questions as determined at that date,⁴ constructed within the Cycle 4 indicative framework for Cycle 4 academic audits. The Cycle 4 indicative framework covers learning and teaching, the research environment, Te Tiriti o Waitangi, staff, institutional quality assurance, management and administrative support, community engagement, and external academic collaborations and partnerships. In general, the evaluation questions ask the University how it knows if what it does is effective, and if the implementation of policies and procedures is effective.⁵

The University self-assessment involved 14 working groups comprising academic and general staff, and students where relevant. The working groups focussed on all the key audit questions. The University submitted an *Academic audit self-review report* [Portfolio] which addressed the evaluation questions using the findings as reported by the working groups, together with information from key planning and reporting documents. The Portfolio was accompanied by the complete working group reports, key planning and reporting documents, and a report on progress made in addressing the recommendations in the Cycle 3 audit report.

The Portfolio contained 20 University Actions arising from a consideration of the 160 recommendations included in the 14 working group reports. Half of the University Actions were in the area of learning and teaching; four in the area of research environment; three for University staff; two for Te Tiriti o Waitangi, and one for each of institutional quality assurance and general. This report refers to all University Actions in the text; the five that are formally affirmed by the panel are considered by the panel to be of greatest significance to the University. *Appendix 1* of this report has the full list of University Actions, and the panel supports their advancement by the University.

▪ **The academic audit report**

The structure of this report follows that of the indicative framework for Cycle 4 academic audits, and uses the questions as agreed with the University in January 2009.

⁴ The final version of the evaluation questions was approved by the Board of the New Zealand Universities Academic Audit Unit in June 2009. They have been accepted by the university sector, and will be used as the framework for the remaining cycle 4 academic audits, to be conducted from the second half of 2010.

⁵ See *Appendix 3* of this report for the Cycle 4 framework and evaluation questions as agreed to in January 2009 (with two refinements made by the University).

1

General

1.1 Statement of strategic intent

We have a vision of people prepared to make a difference – tangata tū, tangata ora.

Our mission is to contribute to society through knowledge in chosen areas of endeavour by promoting a world class learning environment known for attracting people with the greatest potential to make a difference.

We seek to be known as a University where knowledge is created, critiqued, disseminated and protected and where research, teaching and learning take place in ways that are inspirational and innovative.

Looking towards 2023, the 150th anniversary of our founding, the primary components of our strategy are to Challenge, Concentrate and Connect.

Strategic direction

The University is committed to its role as a regional institution which fosters and celebrates excellence in its research, teaching, learning and community service. It seeks to ensure that its students are prepared for lifelong learning and graduate from the University with qualifications of international standing, fully prepared for future careers in New Zealand and beyond. It also seeks to ensure that its staff and students enjoy and benefit from a supportive collegial environment. The University recognises that there should be equality of opportunity in education and employment for all staff and students, irrespective of background and that age, gender, ethnicity, or any type of disability should not disadvantage or hinder appointment, professional development, advancement, promotion or successful study.

University of Canterbury profile 2008-2010, p.7

1.2 The University of Canterbury in 2010

The University of Canterbury conducts its research and delivers its teaching to a total of 28,812 students (end of 2009) through five Colleges – the College of Arts (6,728 students), the College of Business and Economics (4,297), the College of Education (4,122), the College of Engineering (6,152), the College of Science (5,849) – and the School of Law (1,664). The School of Law and all Colleges other than Education are situated on the Ilam campus. The College of Education is situated on the Dovedale campus just ten minutes' walk away, and has service and teaching centres in Tauranga (Early Childhood Education), Rotorua (Primary Teacher Education working with the Waiariki Institute of Technology), New Plymouth (Early Childhood Teacher Education working with the Western Institute of Technology), Nelson (pre-service teacher education in Early Childhood and Primary) and Timaru (servicing South Canterbury).

The present Vice-Chancellor of the University took up his position in February 2009, and the panel was aware that the University's self-assessment during 2009 as part of the process associated with the academic audit and the site visit of the panel during 2010 were being conducted during the first 18 months of the new Vice-Chancellor's appointment.

The Vice-Chancellor has emphasised research development during the initial period of his appointment, but has also clearly signalled his support to enhance the reputation of the University as a student-centred University through renewed attention to quality teaching and learning.

A major activity for the Vice-Chancellor and senior management at the time of the site visit was Project STAR [STAR = 'supporting teaching and research'], involving the review and, if possible, a restructuring of those services provided by the University that support teaching and learning and the conduct of research. ('Project STAR' is discussed in section 7 of this report.) The self-assessment Portfolio contained a preliminary discussion of Project STAR, and the panel received an update at the time of the site visit. Academic audit is a snapshot of the University at a particular time. The panel kept this in mind, and throughout the audit process, it was conscious that the University had recently determined a new statement of strategic intent, that it was reading materials written prior to the restructuring, and that it was interviewing staff – most of whom were eager to know the final outcome of the restructuring – in the middle of a significant exercise for the University. The panel recognises the fact that the restructuring process underway was, in itself, an indication of the University's willingness to quality assure its own support structures, build on its strengths, and eliminate weaknesses and waste to achieve the enhancement of structures and support for its core activities of research, teaching and learning.

1.3 Planning and reporting

The Vice-Chancellor has led the University community in the development of a statement of strategic intent. The panel was impressed by the reported extent to which Council had been involved in discussions with the Senior Management Team leading to the statement of strategic intent (set out in section 1.1 of this report) which now informs every aspect of planning throughout the University. The panel was told that there had been multiple opportunities for staff to have input into the discussions leading to the statement of strategic intent. The panel was assured by discussions with staff that there had been good communication within the University community about the new strategic direction, and understands that the impact and effectiveness of the new direction will be monitored primarily through change proposals that come through the Academic Board and Council.

Commendation

C 1 The panel commends the Vice-Chancellor for his involvement of Council and the University community in the development of the statement of strategic intent, for his commitment to change, and for his willingness to consult widely about implementation of his vision for the University.

The panel understands that College and service unit plans that were being developed and presented to the University about the time of the panel's site visit, were intended to be aligned with the high level planning documents such as the *Profile/Investment plan* and the statement of strategic intent with its theme of 'Challenge, Concentrate, Connect'. It is understood that College plans and service unit plans will then be used to reassess the high-level University planning documents in forming the overall University strategic plan.

The *Profile/Investment plan 2008-2010* contained strategic objectives, and the *Annual report 2009* provided comprehensive reports of progress toward achieving the stated objectives. Both were effectively presented. Each annual report brings together quarterly reports to Council on statements of service performance, thus keeping Council well informed of progress in a timely fashion.

However, the panel found it difficult to obtain information as to how the reported data provided by key performance indicators and the statements of service performance were being fed into the planning process and any consequential modification and enhancement of objectives and strategies and future planning documents. This issue is addressed in section 6 of this report.

1.4 A matrix of Colleges and Faculties

As already indicated, the University conducts research and delivers teaching through five Colleges and a School of Law. The Colleges are headed by Pro Vice-Chancellors, and the School of Law is headed by a Head of School. Pro Vice-Chancellors are the academic and administrative heads of the Colleges, and the Head of the School of Law is also the Dean. Academic units within the Colleges are Schools or Departments, and teaching and research staff are housed within the Schools or Departments from which they contribute to academic programmes.

Academic programmes across the University are administered by seven faculties – the Faculties of Commerce, Creative Arts, Education, Engineering and Forestry, Humanities and Social Sciences, Law and Science. The Pro Vice-Chancellors of the College of Business and Economics and of the College of Education are the Deans of the Faculties of Commerce and of Education respectively; and the Head of the School of Law is also a Dean. The other Faculties – Creative Arts, Engineering and Forestry, Humanities and Social Sciences, and Science – are headed by independent Deans whose responsibilities may extend across more than one College.

This structure of Colleges overlaying Faculties is described in the self-assessment Portfolio as ‘forming a matrix of vertical administration and line management with horizontal stewardship of awards and academic regulations’. Operationally, Pro Vice-Chancellors of Colleges report to the Vice-Chancellor and are members of the Senior Management Team, while Deans (who are academics in departments) report to the Academic Administration Committee (the executive committee of the Academic Board) and are members of that Committee. Several Schools and Departments contribute to qualifications administered by Faculties that are ‘centred’ in other Colleges – for example, the Department of Mathematics and Statistics in the College of Engineering contributes to academic programmes in the Faculties of Commerce, Humanities and Social Sciences and Science as well as the Faculty of Engineering and Forestry.

Faculties are academic agents that are neither committees of the Academic Board nor committees of Colleges. While Faculties are responsible for the design and character of academic programmes, Colleges are responsible for the resources required to deliver academic programmes and for the quality of research, teaching and learning. The self-assessment Portfolio acknowledged that the matrix structure is at times unwieldy and a cause of confusion, with College accountability and a strategic view of what is sustainable on the one hand, and Faculty academic integrity and focus on the other. Some see Faculties as impeding strategic activity, whereas others see Faculties as the academic heart of the University. In interviews during the site visit, the panel was made aware that there is a heavy dependence on the positive personal relationships between the present Pro Vice-Chancellors and Deans and the ability of present

incumbents to work well together. This positive interaction appears to help reduce any potential for tension between Colleges and Faculties that might otherwise develop in such a matrix structure.

The panel came to the view from discussions during interviews that the University is aware of variations among Colleges with respect to funding categories and access to external funding which impact on support for students, postgraduate students in particular. The University is also aware that with responsibilities for the quality of research, teaching and learning being devolved to Colleges, there is a risk to the University that might arise from inconsistency in the way Colleges implement policies and carry out activities, thereby giving rise to variability in the quality of the student learning experience. The Portfolio also acknowledged that at an administrative level, one cost of devolution (newly in place at the time of the Cycle 3 academic audit in 2005) has been an apparent replication of administrative processes, with the associated risk of inconsistency and/or repeated effort to a single end.

Given the range of views expressed, including that of senior personnel, the panel is of the view that the University must monitor the activities of Colleges and Faculties to ensure that the matrix model is, in fact, the most appropriate during the planned period of change and for the longer term, as well as address any negative effects that inconsistencies might unintentionally have on the student learning experience. The panel understands that the Senior Management Team intends to develop a discussion paper on this issue for consideration by the Academic Board.

1.5 Risk management

The panel is of the view that the Council has appropriate processes to identify and monitor risks faced by the University. The major risks identified by Council and others interviewed by the panel included the funding environment; the aging teaching and learning spaces and the need to refurbish existing spaces to match the needs of the application of teaching technologies of the 21st century; the information and communication technology infrastructure and the need to overhaul and strengthen it; and the attraction and retention of world-class staff. Challenges identified by those interviewed included the Performance Based Research Funding; the bringing of staff at the College of Education 'up to speed' in research activity; the increasing of external funding; and the impact of the development of indicators to measure teaching quality together with associated changes to funding that will recognise teaching quality.

1.6 Internationalisation

The intention of internationalisation of the University is to prepare graduates to operate in a global environment. The University indicated to the panel that it sought to become more strategic in its approach to internationalisation. The panel was told that internationalisation of the University included: being world class in specific areas and recognised internationally for this; having a learning campus with diverse cultures represented; supporting study abroad by domestic students and tapping into the experience of such students on their return; widening and broadening curricula to make this more suitable for students from any country and, therefore, attracting international students to the University; and incorporating international dimensions in activities on campus.

It was seen that these elements can be strengthened by the continuing appointment of academic staff from overseas (the University already has a high percentage of international staff), enhanced contribution of visiting international scholars to the research and/or teaching of the

University, and the further involvement of academic staff in international conferences. In this respect, the University derives considerable benefit from Visiting Erskine and Visiting Canterbury Fellows. Other indicators of progress in internationalisation would be greater interaction between domestic and international students, the acceptability of the University's graduates to international institutions as staff or as postgraduate students, and the employment of University graduates in industry world-wide.

The panel appreciated that some of these activities are in place, but agreed with the University that more could be done.

Recommendation

R 1 The panel recommends that the University reviews what internationalisation means for the University, discusses the issue with the University community (including external stakeholders), determines how strategies can best be implemented, and specifies indicators that will be used to monitor impact towards ongoing improvement.

1.7 Benchmarking activities

The 2005 Cycle 3 self-assessment gave rise to a recommended action (2.2) to develop an institution-wide benchmarking statement, and the Cycle 3 report recommended (R 20) that the University ensures that any information gained will feed ideas and innovative practices into the enhancement of teaching and learning. Subsequently, benchmarking was adopted as a pan-University project. The self-assessment Portfolio reported that this project focussed initially on methodologies before piloting these on four topics: teaching evaluation surveys; programme reviews; sustainability; and international comparison. The most significant outcome has been the initiation of a benchmarking relationship with the University of Adelaide, starting mid 2008, initially covering teaching evaluation, assessment in Science, further use of data in the Australasian Survey of Student Engagement (AUSSE), key performance indicators for business processes and sustainability. The panel understood that the objective was for benchmarking to lead to mutual enhancement, and the panel was told that the impact and the extent of benefits for both parties to come from this benchmarking exercise have yet to be evaluated systematically.

The panel recognised that this institutional benchmarking exercise was supplemented by the great number and variety of informal benchmarking activities across the University, chiefly those arising from collegial relationships. The question raised for the panel was the extent to which benchmarking activities with partner institutions are systematic, the extent to which the information and benefits gained might be applicable to other parts of the University, and the extent to which the information and benefits were known by the University and, ideally, shared.

The panel was pleased to see the initiative taken in developing a benchmarking relationship with the University of Adelaide, and it noted the University Action 13 arising from the self-assessment was that *the University should continue to use its relationship with the University of Adelaide for benchmarking and learning, including postgraduate experience survey procedures and the implications of these for learning and teaching*. The panel questioned whether the University of Adelaide might be too close a 'fit' and less aspirational than might be the case with other universities and academic institutions. It came to the view that the University should consider benchmarking with other institutions, including those more suited to particular disciplines, that were better able to stretch the performance of the University. In addition, the panel saw potential for benchmarking with one or more New Zealand tertiary institutions with

respect to obligations under Te Tiriti o Waitangi (Te Tiriti is discussed in section 4 of this report). Formal processes for making benchmarking decisions at all levels should be developed with the aim of giving benchmarking a more strategic focus.

Recommendation

R 2 The panel, while recognising the work accomplished in implementing benchmarking activities with the University of Adelaide, recommends that the University broadens and widens its benchmarking to include other universities (including other New Zealand universities in relation to Te Tiriti o Waitangi), research institutes and/or private companies in New Zealand and overseas, and that it monitors the application of the information gained to ensure that it leads to enhancement of the University's performance and standards in research, teaching and learning in line with the University's statement of strategic intent.

2

Teaching and learning

2.1 Goals and objectives

Key strategic area no. 2: Teaching and learning

To consolidate and maintain excellence in curricula, teaching and learning to standards appropriate to an international research-led university.

Charter goal

To pursue excellence in curricula, teaching and life-long learning to a standard befitting an international research university and in a manner which will challenge and develop the capabilities, potential and intellectual independence of our students.

Targets

- *Encourage, support and reward excellence in teaching and learning.*
- *Ensure that curricula, teaching and modes of assessment are relevant to learners' needs and reflect accepted academic and professional standards.*
- *Support and further enhance key aspects of teaching and learning capabilities.*

Key strategic area no. 3: Students

To attract, value, retain and graduate students from a wide diversity of backgrounds, especially those who are dedicated to the pursuit and achievement of excellence.

Charter goal

To attract and value students from a wide diversity of backgrounds; to promote equal educational opportunities for disadvantaged and under-represented groups; to encourage and support all students in their studies and beyond; and to foster in them a sense of the University's vision and of what it means to belong to a scholarly community.

Targets

- *Develop and implement strategies to increase student participation rates.*
- *Develop and implement strategies to increase student retention rates.*
- *Develop and implement strategies to increase successful course completion rates.*
- *Develop and implement strategies to decrease first-year qualification-level attrition.*
- *Develop and implement strategies to increase qualification-level graduation rates.*
- *Develop and enhance mechanisms for attracting, supporting and retaining students, especially those from under-represented groups.*

2.2 How does the University identify the needs of learners?

The Portfolio reported that the needs of undergraduate learners are identified through liaison consultations in schools and at careers fairs, and by academic advice from Deans and College Academic Managers to continuing students. Postgraduate surveys of students focus on learner needs. Evidence of employer satisfaction – as reported during interactions with employers and the occasional informal surveys – is also fed into discussions about programme and curriculum design.

Professional programmes require accreditation by the relevant professional agencies if graduates are to be accepted into the professions, and the accreditation processes identify the needs of stakeholders, and therefore the needs of learners entering those professions. The panel was told that Colleges delivering non-professional degrees also have advisory committees who interact with the University over curriculum. It was not clear to the panel at what stage consultation with stakeholders was typically undertaken, and it was of the view that stakeholder input to course and curriculum development should occur in the early stage of programme development as well as at the final review stage.

Having identified the needs of learners, the University requires academic programmes to have relevant graduate profiles, containing statements of graduate attributes. Graduate profile statements have recently assumed more importance and influence in the design of academic programmes, curricula within programmes, and teaching and assessment strategies applied in the delivery of the programmes. Graduate profiles are developed at the time of the design of academic programme proposals and are evaluated by relevant committees of the University during the approval process. They are re-evaluated at the time of the academic programme reviews.

The panel heard from a range of staff interviews of recent attempts to improve the graduate profile statements and to strengthen the relationship of those attributes within profile statements to the learning objectives, the curriculum content and the outcomes and achievements of graduates. There was a general acceptance of the benefits of graduate profile statements in directing curriculum and assessment in relation to the strategic intent of the University.

Interviews with students largely supported the University's self-assessment finding that most students are unaware of the existence of graduate profile statements and that many staff as well as most students are unaware of their purpose or value. The University has proposed more work in ensuring the relationship between graduate profiles and student learning and assessment.

Affirmation

A 1 The panel affirms University Action 3 – that the work in some Faculties to match student learning and assessment with the graduate profiles of undergraduate and postgraduate awards be emulated across all Faculties, and that Deans take responsibility for ensuring graduate profiles are coherent and embedded in staff and student academic culture.

The Portfolio acknowledged that most strategies designed to meet the graduate profile assume that learner needs are those of the majority of the on-campus school-leaver cohort, whereas there are significant needs for students over 25 years of age, second-chance and off-campus students, and students for whom English is not their first language. Attention to these groups is *ad hoc*. The panel noted that there was no University Action to address this.

2.3 How does the University know that programmes and activities match the needs of learners and stakeholders?

Besides the processes for accreditation of professional degrees, all academic programmes are subject to a five-year review cycle. The procedures for these reviews require consideration of the needs of stakeholders and learners for each programme. Review panels include stakeholder and external representation, and the procedures require consultation with current students, recent graduates and external stakeholders including employers. (Programme reviews are considered again in section 6 of this report.)

The panel was told that the University recently undertook a major task of moving to a common point value in academic programmes across the University, thus providing a common point value for all undergraduate degree courses. It was reported that this had benefited students in two ways: simplifying and facilitating cross-faculty transfer between programmes; and making it much easier for students to incorporate courses from faculties outside of the Faculty of the qualifications in which they are enrolled. This significant change appears to be making a positive contribution to meeting the needs of learners.

Commendation

C 2 The panel commends the University for the successful implementation of a common point value for all undergraduate degree courses and for the consequent benefits to students.

2.4 How does the University know that teaching is effective?

If it is to be effective, teaching must be of high quality. At present there is no systematic approach to measuring the quality of teaching, and in response to a request from the Vice-Chancellor for advice on such measures, the Academic Board requested the Teaching and Learning Committee to consider ways by which the quality of teaching might be measured for consideration by the Academic Board and report back to the Vice-Chancellor.

The Teaching and Learning Committee of Academic Board works at a high policy level, and provides an instrument to align teaching and learning activities with the strategic intent of the University. While the Committee does not monitor actual teaching and learning, it is well placed to react to any undesirable impacts arising from inconsistencies across Faculties and Colleges that might be brought to its attention, working mainly through feedback to Heads of School/Department. Consideration may need to be given to a more proactive stance in monitoring the quality of teaching and learning across the whole University.

The Teaching and Learning Committee administers the various University teaching awards (which are linked with the national tertiary teaching awards) that acknowledge and recognise excellence. It also makes a small number of teaching development grants to support activities not fully funded by Colleges, Schools or Departments. These actions identify good practice, and the sharing of good practice and support for educational initiatives is the subject of University Action 4 – *Pro Vice-Chancellors should ensure that College budgets have provision (similar to that for research initiatives, including study leave) for sharing best practice and supporting new initiatives to enhance teaching and student learning.*

Evaluations and surveys

The University relies heavily on student evaluations of both the quality of teaching and the quality of courses. The panel understands that the results and other information gathered in the evaluations for *courses* are sent to the staff member and the relevant Head of School/Department. The results and information gathered in the evaluations for *teaching*, however, are confidential to the staff member but must be included in applications for promotion. It is expected that the staff member and Head of School/Department will discuss the evaluations, and it is expected that the staff member will act on any issues that the evaluations may reveal.

Colleges and Schools/Departments are expected to take remedial action when poor teaching is detected, but it was not clear to the panel what action is taken, or the extent to which change is monitored. Feedback to students on the information gathered and on the responses to the information – whether changes have been made, or why changes would be too difficult or inappropriate to make – is uneven. The 2005 Cycle 3 audit report noted an absence of feedback to students, and the present audit panel came to the view that only a small proportion of staff were sharing the information and giving feedback to their students. Timely feedback and sharing of information would instil confidence amongst the students that evaluations were being taken seriously and issues addressed wherever possible. The University is examining this issue.

Affirmation

A 2 The panel affirms University Action 2 – develop procedures to ensure feedback from students is acted upon and that students are informed of the outcomes – but recommends that the Action should not only develop the procedures but also implement and monitor them, and that these procedures include both teaching and course quality.

The University participates in the Australasian Survey of Student Engagement [AUSSE] which provides information on the time and effort students devote to educationally purposeful activities, as well as on students' perceptions of the quality of other aspects of their university experience. The working party on 'Effective teaching' reported on the 2007 survey results, which showed that the students' engagement with learning is in line with international trends, that students felt well supported in their learning and academically challenged, and that a high percentage described their overall educational experience at the University as 'good' or 'excellent'. The 2008 survey results were not available to the working group. This raised a question for the panel as to the timeliness of feedback of information about programmes to teaching staff and stakeholders regarding guidance and support for students. University Action 7 suggests *AUSSE be used more explicitly as a basis for benchmarking performance against other Australasian institutions, and key outcomes from the AUSSE should be the subject of considered review by teaching staff.* The panel supports this Action, but notes that it does not explicitly address the issue of timely and effective reporting.

Class representative system

The class representative system, operated by the University of Canterbury Students' Association, assists in the liaison between teachers and students. Such liaison can lead to the identification and communication of issues and problems and assist in their speedy resolution. This scheme can also act as another source of information about teaching quality. The panel was told there was general acceptance of the scheme by departments, although some were less accepting than others; and the panel noted that the report of the working group on 'Effective teaching' prepared

as part of the self-assessment for this audit urged a more effective use of the class representative system. Students told the panel that the ‘visibility’ of class representatives and the impact of the system varied across the University.

Teaching and learning spaces

The University is aware of the variable quality of teaching and learning spaces – described by those interviewed as ranging from excellent, flexible and relevant to today’s approaches to teaching in newly designed spaces and refurbished spaces, to inappropriate and/or inadequate in older spaces badly in need of refurbishment and/or redesign. During the site visit, the panel split into pairs, with one pair visiting the Biological Sciences (a new building in progress) and the New Zealand ICT Innovation Institute [NZi3]; the second pair visiting the College of Education campus; and the third pair touring the central campus, visiting the Library and Te Whare Akonga o te Akatoki (Māori student study centre). It was clear to the panel that the University faces significant cost in upgrading its facilities to match the aspiration of being world-class as well as the expectations of its students, and a campus master plan is being developed to identify requirements, establish priorities, and propose a programme of action. Teaching staff and students (as appropriate) must have meaningful input into the design of teaching spaces, and the panel heard of examples where this has happened for buildings under construction or being refurbished. The experiences and expectations of as many students as possible should also be canvassed.

Affirmation

A 3 The panel affirms University Action 9 – that users of refurbished teaching and learning spaces have opportunities for input to design, and that Pro Vice-Chancellors be responsible for promoting active learning options in these spaces.

The University Library is one of the important student learning spaces, and there is interest within the University community in the wider impact of the restructuring of the Library, in particular the reorientation of specialist librarians to staff able to provide stronger disciplinary support, and on access to Library facilities. Both undergraduate and postgraduate students expressed their disappointment at the limited times when the Library was open, particularly on weekends and some nights for study use. The panel was told about emerging proposals to reorganise some Library spaces to allow 24 hour access to appropriate sections of the building.

The panel was told by staff and students about specific problems encountered with occasional failure of the information communication technology infrastructure in recent times. The University is aware of these concerns, and the panel was told that the infrastructure is being reviewed. The campus is not yet covered by wireless although this project is underway, and the way content is captured, managed and assessed is being reviewed. The panel was told of issues arising from tensions between the centralised Information and Communication Technology Services ‘ownership’ of systems and their support, and the College/School/Departmental ‘ownership’ and support of systems better matched to their needs.

It appears that some of the problems arise from the demand for more capacity, and from the introduction of MOODLE/LEARN as the system for delivering e-Learning programmes. University Action 8 suggests the *Director of Learning Resources should carry out a formal risk assessment and develop a risk management plan for MOODLE/LEARN*, and the panel concurs.

The uptake and usage of e-learning technologies appears to be variable, influenced primarily in part by the varying needs of disciplines, as well as by the enthusiasm or confidence of teaching staff. Only the College of Education appeared to be utilising e-learning technologies

systematically whereas most programmes at Faculties used e-learning resources primarily for posting course information. Specialist support staff are available through the Digital Media Group within the Learning and Resources section, and ways to engage more staff with electronic teaching technologies are being explored.

2.5 How does the University know that learners are guided and supported effectively?

Student advice

The Portfolio reported on the move to on-line enrolment in 2006 which has increased efficiency but created difficulties for those students at risk of making unwise programme choices by not seeking individual advice. Colleges have Academic Managers and student advisors who provide advice to students who present, and who follow-up when students are identified with enrolment issues. One College has introduced student advice days at mid year and towards the end of the academic year, a scheme that could be usefully emulated by other Colleges. The University is aware that students with problems need to be identified as early as possible after enrolment, and processes are being introduced to monitor attendance and the submission of work in order to pick up students at risk who could be directed to additional support. The panel was told that members of the teams involved in providing student advice meet and interact to discuss recurring issues and problems that arise during their work, and to ensure their work is effective and their advice remains relevant and up-to-date.

Students over 20 years of age who lack academic study skills are encouraged to complete bridging courses and/or university preparation courses prior to enrolment in degree courses. Students are not obliged to undertake such preparation, and those who do not and present in courses as students at risk are identified as early as possible and referred to student learning support for help. The students themselves must take responsibility for seeking that help and for taking advantage of the services.

Student learning support

A number of student learning support services is available, as is usual in today's universities. The panel was told that there was no systematic process for monitoring and measuring the relevance and effectiveness of student learning support services, although informal feedback was positive. In general, the University appears largely reactive and relies on students telling authorities if, in their view, there are problems with the quality and relevance of services. These are then addressed as quickly as possible. The Library administers user surveys every two years and acts on responses to the extent these are consistent with the Library's goals and objectives, and to the extent that financial and staff resources permit.

Before the staff of student learning support services can assist students, students who need support must be identified and seek the help of such services. The University has traditionally relied on students requiring learning support to self-identify. However, it appears that there are now a range of initiatives and practices as well as special testing of skills or language in many departments to identify as early as possible those students thought to be at risk – identifying those, for example, not engaging in learning, not succeeding, not attending, not submitting assessments, and/or having difficulties with English. The panel supports the University's efforts to identify students at risk as early as possible during each semester, and it was told about particular examples of strategies for student assessment and support in year 1 of study, such as

the skills training in MapleTA testing software in Mathematics and Statistics, and the trial of pastoral care in Social and Political Sciences modelled after that used by Aotahi. The aim of these is to identify students at risk early enough to provide support to enhance success in that same semester.

Affirmation

A 4 The panel affirms University Action 12 – that the University needs to focus institutional research and support provision in such a way that students with potential but who are ‘at risk’ can be identified and assisted at an early stage.

The major student equity issues were identified as including under-represented groups, international students, students with disabilities, adult students and part-time students. At the time of the audit process, the University was still working to raise awareness of these issues. Support for various groups of students, however, was limited by funding available, and tended to be responsive and reactive to student needs rather than proactive. The panel found that student support can be *ad hoc* in some areas.

The panel was interested in the effectiveness and impact of the Alternative Format Centre which converted texts from traditional to alternative formats (for example, written publications into Braille), and was pleased to be told that this Centre was widely considered to be a leading site in Australasia.

Students over 20 years of age can legally enrol at the University. Those who lack appropriate study skills are encouraged to undertake bridging courses, but many enter directly into mainstream courses without sufficient skills, knowledge and study experience to ensure success. Consequently, the completion and retention rates for students over 25 years of age are markedly below the average across the University, and the University is concerned about this. At risk students over 25 years of age are one of the groups targeted for identification early in the semester, and any identified as requiring learning support are referred to relevant student services. It is, however, up to the students themselves to take advantage of the services and the support they can offer.

Pacific students

Pacific students are an under-represented group at the University, with percentage participation and success rates well below national University averages. Enrolments of Pacific students are spread across all Colleges with the majority in the Colleges of Arts and Education. Work is being undertaken to recruit more Pacific students and to support them in their studies, and Pacific families are often involved during recruitment and induction. The panel was told that while a Pacific policy is in place, there is a need for high-level Pacific leadership in the University to ensure the effective implementation of the policy, as well as to monitor the ongoing effectiveness of activities in this area. An identifiable Pacific space for students would assist in developing a sense of community, and the panel understands that planning is underway to develop a cultural precinct based on Aotahi, the School of Māori and Indigenous Studies and the Macmillan Brown Centre for Pacific Studies. There may also be need for a senior Pacific administration officer working across the University, especially given that the Assistant Vice-Chancellor (Māori) senior management team position may no longer have responsibilities for Pacific students and staff.

Encouraging Pacific students to come to University is a beginning; support for them once at University is essential to their success and retention, especially for students in their first year at

the University. To this end, the University is revising its 2007 Pacific plan and has produced an information booklet for Pacific students which is part of the drive to encourage students to take responsibility for their own improvement and success. The information booklet provides information about the Pacific Development Team, student induction and orientation programmes, mentoring, student spaces, academic courses relating to the Pacific, cultural support for students, and scholarships and awards that are currently available. The panel met with the Pacific Development Team within the Māori and Pacific Development Centre and was told about the Pacific Academic Services and Solutions infrastructure that provides academic services to help Pacific students on the road to success, including tutoring at any level by high-achieving University students.

Commendation

C 3 The panel commends the University for the commitment of the staff of the Pacific Development Team to supporting the transition of Pacific students into university study and to providing an effective programme for mentoring students during their studies.

Academic grievance

The University policy on academic grievance was under review at the time of the audit site visit, and the panel was told that the Students' Association had input into the review process. The Portfolio reported that the previous informal academic grievance process that was jointly administered by the University and the Students' Association – through which minor grievances could be resolved informally – was no longer in operation. The panel was also told that the Students' Association's experience of the formal academic grievance process was that it was convoluted. The University is aware of the need for informal resolution of grievances, and University Action 10 calls for *informal procedures for the low level resolution of academic grievances to be reinstated in some form as a matter of urgency.*

2.6 How does the University ensure there are reflective processes for determining objectives and outcomes?

Student learning objectives are determined during the development of, and revision of, courses and programmes. The University processes involved in the development and presentation of new proposals are extensive, and new programmes, along with new majors in existing degrees, have been developed to align with the requirements of the Committee on University Academic Programmes [CUAP] of the New Zealand Vice-Chancellors' Committee. Proposals are normally proposed by Faculties and are scrutinised by boards of studies and Faculties, the Academic Administration Committee, appropriate stakeholder organisations, and the Academic Board before approval by Council and transmission to CUAP. Proposals are required to be quality assured by CUAP before they can be delivered and funded.

The University also relies on Graduating Year Reviews, required by CUAP, at the time the first cohort of students in a new programme have completed the course. Programme objectives, along with outcomes against those objectives, are evaluated by the University as part of its five-yearly academic programme reviews and during accreditation reviews in the case of professional qualifications.

2.7 How does the University know that learners achieve stated objectives and outcomes?

A key to knowing that learners actually achieve stated objectives is through valid and reliable assessment. The Portfolio reported on work undertaken in 2008 through workshops and seminars focusing on assessment practices. The panel supports these activities and the training of staff in assessment practices. Training and ongoing support for staff in implementing good assessment practice has valuable and positive consequences for student learning. However, the Portfolio does not report on the extent to which staff take up these opportunities, nor does it report on any monitoring of the impact on assessment practice resulting from these activities. Pro Vice-Chancellors and Deans are responsible for the effectiveness and appropriateness of assessment by teaching staff, and the panel interviews suggested that the marking of student work and the quality and timeliness of feedback to students varied across the University.

It was not clear to the panel how or if this was being monitored, and there did not appear to be any University-wide scrutiny of practice. The panel is of the view that the University should act promptly on a recommendation in the self-assessment report of the working group on 'Effective teaching' that there be a process for monitoring and reviewing assessment and alignment of assessment with learning outcomes, and encouragement and support for the development of valid and more diverse forms of assessment.

The panel was assured that the processes for reporting and taking action on progression and attrition data have been strengthened in recent years, with faster feedback and timely advice to under-performing students. A review of students' success and progress takes place at the end of each semester, and students with low grade point averages are identified, with a range of possible actions provided from the end of the first semester of undergraduate degree study – from warnings to exclusion from programmes, Faculties and the University. Such reviews supplement work that has also been undertaken to identify students at risk as early as possible during a semester, not waiting until the completion and publication of results. The panel supports the University in its intention (University Action 11) to *continue efforts to refine key data with respect to retention, achievement, progression and completion such that more reliable analyses can be completed to inform academic advice and interventions for at-risk students*. This is particularly important given the University's stated intention to continue with an 'open entry' approach for the first year in undergraduate programmes.

3

Research environment

3.1 Goals and objectives

Key strategic area no. 1: Research and creative work

To consolidate and maintain the University's status as a top research-led university.

Charter goal

To pursue internationally recognised excellence in research, scholarship and creative arts while maintaining and strengthening our role as a centre for high quality research education and research training.

Targets

- *Enhance the quality and impact of University research outputs*
- *Increase research activity throughout the University.*
- *Pursue national and international research collaborations with other leading tertiary institutions and research organisations.*
- *Enhance research capability and productivity through investment in current and future researchers.*

3.2 How does the University know that research activities and research policies are aligned with each other and with external contexts?

The Portfolio reported that the University *Research plan* is aligned with University planning documents and provides the framework for research priorities in accordance with the overarching policy objective '*To consolidate and maintain the University's status as a top research-led university*'. The Research Committee provides policy advice to the University. Research and Innovation – resulting from a reorganisation of the former Research Office and Canterprise – provides a 'one-stop-shop' for research and innovation services, providing operational advice to academic staff and handling commercialisation, applied research, consultancy and contracted research. Research and Innovation is also charged with increasing external funding for research.

The University's annual reports indicate that external research funding decreased from 2008 to 2009, and the University is responding to this by improving its identification and reporting of external research funding, some of which it believes is not being reported. The Portfolio also acknowledged that the research activities and the application of institutional policies vary across Colleges. The panel was told that mechanisms for securing funds to support research activities, and the allocation of funds to research were uneven across as well as within Colleges. The Portfolio noted that this variation has the potential for perceptions of inequity, and that there is scope for more sharing of ideas, approaches and resources across the University.

The University intends to reduce the number of staff defined in the Performance-Based Research Fund process as 'research inactive', and Colleges have been asked to report on numbers, and to indicate the percentage of research inactive staff that might be deemed acceptable in their discipline areas. The Portfolio reported on a variety of approaches to enable academic staff to improve their research active status, particularly in the College of Education.

This is a work in progress, and the working group report on research listed various activities rather than ways by which the University would align them with research policies. One reported development was the intention to align research with the strategic direction of the University. It was signalled by launching the first two research institutes in cross-disciplinary areas of internationally-recognised University research strength. The University aims to establish two more institutes in each of the two following years, and all institutes will express the University's research excellence, and will help improve the international awareness and recognition of its research. It was made clear to the panel that it was the University's intention that these institutes would not undermine support of other research of high quality undertaken by staff, but rather that their presence would indicate that increased funding will be in areas that are more strategic to the University, or in areas that represent the research strength across the University. The panel was impressed by this development.

Commendation

C 4 The panel commends the University for the establishment of cross-disciplinary research institutes that align with the research strengths and new strategic direction of the University.

3.3 How does the University know that research students are guided and supported effectively?

Oversight for the enrolment, progress and examination of postgraduate research students is the responsibility of the Dean of Postgraduate Research, who is appointed by the Vice-Chancellor and reports to the Assistant Vice-Chancellor (Research) and not to any particular College or Faculty.

The Portfolio noted that the University has devoted considerable effort to improving postgraduate research policies, resources, supervision (obligatory supervision training is now required before appointment as a main supervisor) and student culture. The panel was provided with reports prepared by the former University Centre for Teaching and Learning on the supervisory experience (2006), and reports for the 2007 University postgraduate experience questionnaires for doctoral students and for masters students (both follow-ups to similar questionnaires in 2004). The panel understands these reports are distributed to Schools and Departments for consideration. The Portfolio noted an increase in the percentage of those satisfied overall with the quality of their research experience, an improvement in research culture (although perceptions differ between staff and students), increased clarity about expectations of the postgraduate experience, and increased satisfaction with the effectiveness of supervision.

Concerns noted included the need for more methodological training, the perception of resource inequity, and the need to provide more encouragement to share student research experiences. Students also reported that the enrolment process is confusing, and several supervisors indicated their continuing concern over poor English language skills among all students.

During the site visit, interviews with staff and PhD students confirmed both the gains and the concerns apparent from the survey findings. It appears that advice to PhD students, the level of departmental induction, and the provision of resources and financial support of PhD students remains variable across Schools/Departments. With new PhD students able to enrol throughout the year, many students miss out on the scheduled orientation and/or induction sessions as the sessions are offered six monthly, or the students have been at the University for some months prior to orientation when its effectiveness has thereby lessened. The University needs to consider whether the starting time for PhD students should be aligned with orientation and inductions, or whether orientation and inductions should be offered with arrival of the students throughout the year, although the latter would have significant implications for the University.

Another area commented on during interviews was the extent to which the present information and communication technology infrastructure could support adequately all the demands of the University. This impacts on the work of postgraduate students, and can have an adverse effect on their progress.

The panel was impressed by the detailed analyses of student satisfaction surveys provided in interpretative reports for teaching departments by the office of the Dean of Postgraduate Research. While the panel was pleased that surveys are being administered, analysed, and reported back, it was concerned that the surveys are on a three-year cycle with reports produced in the year following. Therefore information provided in the reports is not current information to the University. As well, the panel was not made aware of systematic feedback or analysis of individual PhD student annual reports cycling back to supervisors and the faculties. The consequent delays to acting on deficiencies identified in surveys while awaiting the next survey might put the University at reputational risk.

The panel came to the view that more current information could be gathered from surveying PhD students at the time of completion. Better use could be made of annual reports to identify issues, and information gathered from the surveys should be analysed along with analysis of data from PhD student completion surveys. The panel noted that PhD completion rates are less than desired, and interviews confirmed the Portfolio findings that the analysis by completion variables and assessment of progress towards completion were being frustrated by poor data and/or poor access to data. University Action 14 arising from the self-assessment process attempts to address this by requiring *data relating to postgraduate students to be available in appropriate forms from the University Student Management System*. Colleges and disciplinary faculties could report annually to the Dean of Postgraduate Research and the Academic Board regarding actions taken towards quality improvement in response to issues identified from the progress reports, PhD completion data, and PhD completion surveys.

Recommendation

R 3 The panel recommends that the University:

- **administers focussed PhD student satisfaction surveys upon individual student completion and**
- **implements a systematic feedback process on information gained from completion surveys and annual progress reports to relevant disciplinary units.**

The panel asked about the development of an understanding of biculturalism in PhD students given that graduates working in New Zealand require such understanding and should graduate with increased awareness. It would appear that the extent of such understanding depends on the subject area, the nature of the research topic, and involvement with the ethics approval process (which requires projects to accord with Te Tiriti o Waitangi, and researchers of projects that involve Māori participants or raise issues of central concern to Māori to consult with the appropriate Māori bodies and communities, and to recognise Māori attitudes to ownership).

During the site visit, the panel sought information on the first six months of enrolment for a PhD student. At the time of enrolment, a potential senior supervisor is identified and in the first six months, the student works with that person to develop a research proposal. At the end of that period, the research proposal is submitted (along with evidence that an induction course has been completed, a supervision agreement is in place, and ethics approval obtained) and at the time the research proposal is approved and registered, a senior supervisor and members of the supervisory team are appointed. The panel heard anecdotal evidence from students about varying supervisory and support experiences during the first six months, arising largely from the size of departments and the scale of PhD research programmes. This led the panel to consider that some kind of interim supervision agreement is required, involving supervisor(s), supervision meetings, communications and the resources available prior to submission of the research proposal and preparation of a final supervision agreement upon full registration. Intellectual property should also be resolved by that time. It was the view of the panel that the first six months are very important to the continuing wellbeing of the student and to the timely completion of the research proposal.

Recommendation

R 4 The panel recommends that the University, through the Dean of Postgraduate Research in collaboration with the Colleges, develops consistent University-wide standards and formal agreements between provisional supervisors and PhD students for student support during the initial enrolment prior to approval of the PhD proposal.

3.4 How does the University know that there is an effective interaction between teaching and research?

The Portfolio noted that the research-teaching nexus was discussed thoughtfully by the University community during the self-assessment process associated with the Cycle 2 academic audit in 2000, and there has been an awareness of this requirement of university teaching since then. The Portfolio set out existing connections between research and teaching and identifies key examples – teaching programmes that have grown directly out of research; teaching across the University that takes place within a distinct research culture; the contribution of visiting researchers and scholars (as in the Visiting Erskine Fellowship programme available to some discipline areas, and Visiting Canterbury Fellowships Programme for others) to teaching; and teaching that is influenced by research into teaching. It is to be expected that postgraduate students are aware of the nexus, especially in courses preparing them for dissertation or thesis research.

Responsibility for the research-teaching nexus appeared to be devolved to Colleges, Schools and Departments, and there appear to be no systems and processes to test the effectiveness of this nexus across the University, nor feedback cycles to facilitate enhancement. This is

acknowledged by the reference in the Portfolio that while there are pockets where undergraduate students are actively engaged in research projects or taught research techniques, it is recognised that many undergraduate students might not be aware of the research basis for what and how they are taught.

The Portfolio listed two University Actions arising from the self-assessment. University Action 15 invites programme convenors to *consider how the teaching-research nexus is given effect in their disciplines and to ensure this is communicated to students, in particular by drawing their attention to graduate profiles and learning outcome statements*. University Action 16 invites programme convenors, supported by Pro Vice-Chancellors, to *encourage inquiry-based learning and active learning as ways of introducing a research-grounded orientation to undergraduate studies*. The panel is concerned that neither of these proposed Actions will be obligatory, and neither will assist the University to know that there is, in fact, an effective interaction between teaching and research.

3.5 How does the University know that it is effectively fulfilling the role of critic and conscience of society?

The Portfolio acknowledged that while the environment of the University must include the role of critic and conscience of society, the University has no formal documents that direct activity or provide guidance on how the role might or should be discharged. The working group considering this issue during the self-assessment associated with this audit reported that while there do not appear to be barriers to fulfilling this role, the staff had differing understandings of the role of critic and conscience of society; students were largely unaware of the role or what it means (although some students interviewed by the panel were aware of the role and what it means); there was lack of active encouragement by the University; there was a risk of the role being vulnerable to 'benign neglect'; and there was a risk of the role coming under threat from workload and other pressures.

The University has accepted the working party's recommendation that the role be supported more proactively. The panel affirms the University Action arising from the working group self-assessment report, provided the University is careful not to prescribe the role of critic and conscience of society, but rather to facilitate it. For this reason, the panel agrees with developing recognition of the role in position descriptions but not in promotions as required by the University Action.

Affirmation

A 5 The panel affirms University Action 20 and supports a member of the Senior Management Team being given responsibility for developing a clear and broad concept of what is understood by 'critic and conscience', for developing guidelines, for providing advice and training, for developing explicit recognition of performance in this role in position descriptions, and for ensuring Māori staff are consulted with reference to this role for and about Māori.

4

Te Tiriti o Waitangi

4.1 Goals and objectives

Key strategic area no. 6: Māori and the University

To make a significant and sustained contribution to regional and national Māori development aspirations by working with Māori.

Charter goal

To demonstrate a commitment to the Treaty of Waitangi and, by working in partnership with tangata whenua through mana whenua, make a significant contribution to regional and national Māori development aspirations.

Targets

- *Maintain strong partner relationships with Te Rūnanga-o-Ngāi Tūahuriri (mana whenua) and Ngāi Tahu (tangata whenua), and also with Ngā Mātā Waka and other Māori groups.*
- *Increase understanding among staff and students of tikanga Māori and of the relevance that Te Tiriti o Waitangi has to the University.*
- *Develop research programmes which will contribute to achieving Māori development aspirations and will advance Māori knowledge, culture and identities, particularly those that reflect Kaupapa Māori aspirations and are led by Māori.*
- *Develop and implement strategies for increasing, extending and enhancing Māori content in the University's curricula, particularly those that reflect Kaupapa Māori aspirations and are led by Māori.*
- *Support the preservation and revitalisation of Te Reo through teaching, scholarship and advocacy giving particular emphasis to Māori participation.*
- *Develop and implement strategies to recruit, retain and support increasing numbers of Māori staff and students.*
- *Actively support the development of Māori academic leadership within the University.*

4.2 How does the University ensure an understanding of the principles of Te Tiriti o Waitangi?

The panel was told by the Assistant Vice-Chancellor (Māori) that, in his view, only Article 3 of Te Tiriti o Waitangi is appropriate to the University. This requires the University to accept its responsibilities with regard to the rights of citizenship for all, and to facilitate access to University education by Māori students, with special effort going to recruitment, support,

retention, completion of qualifications and graduation. Alongside this were the University's responsibilities for the recruitment, support and retention of Māori staff. The panel was told that the Assistant Vice-Chancellor (Māori) had conducted seminars for Senior Management and staff on Te Tiriti o Waitangi and the obligations it placed on the University community.

The University has identified 'Māori and the University: *To make a significant and sustained contribution to regional and national Māori development aspirations by working with Māori*' as a key strategic area and is developing a range of appropriate key performance indicators. Colleges were to incorporate Māori-specific goals into their strategic plans, along with initiatives to achieve those goals. At the time of the self assessment, these had been included in the strategic plan of the College of Education where there is a higher percentage of Māori students compared to other Colleges.

4.3 How does the University know that it is effectively applying the principles of Te Tiriti o Waitangi?

Leadership

The Portfolio acknowledged that compared with other New Zealand universities, the percentage of students and staff who identify as Māori is low – 5.5% and 3.8% respectively (2009), compared to 5.5% for both at Lincoln University, and 8.2% and 7.3% respectively at the University of Otago. In part this reflects the local demographic profile.

Key to the effective application of the principles of Te Tiriti is strong leadership. The University, including the Senior Management Team, looks to the Assistant Vice-Chancellor (Māori) – who is a member of that Team – for leadership with respect to the University's understanding and application of the principles of Te Tiriti o Waitangi. The present incumbent – officially an 0.2 Equivalent Full-Time position – retires at the end of 2010, and work has begun on developing a role description for a full-time replacement. Given the part-time nature of the present position, it is not surprising that there have been limits as to what the present incumbent could achieve, and the panel came to the view that much of the progress made had been reactive to issues as they arose. Nevertheless, the present incumbent has contributed much to the understanding and incorporation of Māori protocols and an increased cultural awareness among staff across the University.

From interviews during the site visit, it appeared to the panel that the University recognises it has not progressed as far as it would have liked. Strong leadership at a senior level is expected by the University community, and there is now an urgent need to finalise the role description for a new full-time member of the Senior Management Team, with a meaningful portfolio and reporting duties and line responsibilities, clear mandate, support and resources to be able to make decisions, implement initiatives across the University, and ensure progress. University Action 18 asks that *in reviewing the Assistant Vice-Chancellor (Māori) role, the Vice-Chancellor should note the recommendations made by the audit working group, especially with regard to building capability and understanding across the whole University.* The panel is of the view that consideration must be given to ensuring sufficient mana for the position. (The panel discussed with the Vice-Chancellor whether or not the 'Assistant Vice-Chancellor' level was sufficient for the appointment. The panel understands that the appointee will be a full member of the Senior Management Team.) Further, the appointee must be given a clear mandate and resourced adequately to be able to bring about change and to implement agreed actions. The person should also be supported by a group of advisers representing the Māori community.

Recommendation

R 5 The panel recommends that the University ensures that:

- the person replacing the present Assistant Vice-Chancellor (Māori) upon his retirement report at the highest level of senior management and be a member of the Senior Management Team,
- the role description reflects a meaningful portfolio with a clear mandate and line management responsibilities, with the new appointee supported and fully resourced to be able to make decisions, implement initiatives across the University, and ensure actions,
- the appointment to this position be treated as a matter of urgency.

Recommendation

R 6 The panel recommends that the University establishes a Rūnanga of the Council, to be a representative Māori body made up of mana whenua including at least Ngāi Tūahuriri and Ngāi Tahu, the wider Māori community, staff and students, to advise the appointee replacing the retiring Assistant Vice-Chancellor (Māori).

Curriculum

With respect to curriculum, Aotahi, the School of Māori and Indigenous Studies in the College of Arts offers full programmes in te reo Māori, and Māori and indigenous studies from undergraduate through to research levels; while the School of Māori, Social and Cultural Studies in the College of Education provides for teacher education students and offers bilingual and immersion teaching for teachers in the use of te reo Māori in the classroom. The Portfolio reported that general cultural, political, historical, economic and environmental issues related to Māori are evident in curricula across a range of disciplines, with Te Tiriti o Waitangi addressed directly in professional programmes.

Māori students

With respect to Māori students, much work has been undertaken to recruit more Māori students and to support them in their studies. The Māori Development Team supports the Māori Liaison officer to improve participation, and the panel was told that successful Māori students are taken to schools to encourage Māori students to enrol at the University. Once in the University, the Centre provides support for students to be successful, with particular initiatives in tracking the in-term progress of first year students as well as reviewing student success at the end of each semester. The Centre's objective is to raise participation rates, achieve better success rates, ensure progression to advancing years, and raise the percentage of qualification completions, all of which are below the University averages. The panel was pleased to note that the Centre was only one support agency for Māori students, and that there were other University initiatives that are to be commended.

Commendation

C 5 The panel commends the University for its initiatives to provide learning support and pastoral care for Māori students, including:

- Te Whare Akonga o te Akatoki (Māori student study centre),

- **Māori Development Team support and mentoring of Māori students,**
- **te reo Māori scholarship scheme,**
- **student support in Aotahi (School of Māori and Indigenous Studies) in the College of Arts, and in the School of Māori, Social and Cultural Studies in the College of Education, and**
- **the successful introduction of the course on Science, Māori and Indigenous Knowledge [SCIM] offered through the Faculty of Science.**

Māori staff

With respect to Māori staff, the Portfolio reported that the self-assessment demonstrated the need to build more capacity in the face of difficulties in recruiting appropriately qualified Māori staff. Support was also needed in areas where there are few Māori staff and limited peer support, given the impact on their workload arising from significant pastoral and cultural demands on Māori staff from within the University and in the wider Māori community, all of which lay outside of their individual research and teaching commitments. Another important factor was that many Māori staff were emerging researchers, completing postgraduate qualifications.

Māori research

With respect to research by Māori, the Portfolio reported that when non-Māori researchers approached Māori academic staff regarding research projects that have Māori content or significant impact on Māori, there was a perception that Māori were simply asked for advice and not seen as prospective research partners. This indicated to the panel that processes were needed for consultation with Māori on research involving and about Māori. Therefore the panel applauds the appointment of a Professor of Māori Research. The panel was impressed with reports of his work throughout the University in increasing the awareness of research by Māori and non-Māori, and in encouraging and participating in symposia bringing together Māori researchers and others working on Māori issues. The panel was of the view that the appointment of a Professor of Māori Research, with University-wide responsibilities, will facilitate discussions across the University about needs of, and staff involvement in, Māori research.

Commendation

C 6 The panel commends the University for appointing a Professor of Māori Research with responsibilities across the University, and for the proactive approach taken by the appointee to engage with the University community.

Cultural awareness

Interactions with Māori about research topics and methodologies raised the wider issue of staff cultural awareness. The panel was told that the Assistant Vice-Chancellor (Māori) had given courses to staff about this, but from discussions in interviews the panel was of the view that more needs to be done to assist all staff to upskill themselves on the University's responsibilities under Te Tiriti o Waitangi. University Action 19 confirms that the University sees the following need: *'Pro Vice-Chancellors, assisted by the Assistant Vice-Chancellor (Māori) should provide opportunities for all staff to discuss the obligations posed by Te Tiriti o Waitangi and in particular how these might be met appropriately in curricula, teaching and research'*. Systematic training of academic and general staff on Te Tiriti, especially given the high

percentage of international staff at the University, would assist in the building of bridges between staff and Māori students across all disciplines.

Another issue considered by the panel was the extent to which graduates left the University uninformed about biculturalism given that graduates may well be working in environments that require a sensitive understanding of biculturalism as practised in this country. The panel was of the view that the University has a responsibility to attend to this matter across all qualifications, and not just those of a professional nature where the discipline interacts directly with Māori communities.

The panel is of the view that the University's initiatives relating to policies, provisions and Māori knowledge are positive responses to the University's legal responsibilities with respect to Te Tiriti o Waitangi. Negative expressions of concern can undermine necessary developments. The panel was told that a Māori plan is under development. If the development of such a plan involves wide discussion of Te Tiriti o Waitangi, the University's responses to the principles in Te Tiriti, and the appropriate strategies to support those responses, then this will strengthen awareness and understanding of Te Tiriti across the institution.

Recommendation

R 7 The panel recommends that the University takes steps to:

- **address its responsibilities and obligations under Te Tiriti o Waitangi and to build on curriculum initiatives already taken,**
- **implement training for all staff on the University's responsibilities under Te Tiriti o Waitangi to increase cultural awareness and culturally responsive interactions, and**
- **include the realisation of biculturalism in graduate profile statements and the attributes of graduates associated with academic qualifications.**

Recommendation

R 8 The panel recommends that the University Senior Management Team completes the draft Māori plan as a matter of urgency, undertakes consultation, and has the plan endorsed by the relevant parties by the end of 2010.

The University lacks a marae and the panel understands that the University intends to build a 'cultural facility'. The panel is of the view that a specifically Māori space is required as was recommended in the report of the working group on the 'Applications of the principles of Te Tiriti o Waitangi', prepared as part of the self-assessment associated with this academic audit. That report recommended that a University 'marae complex' be built that can be a central place for pōwhiri, wānanga, noho marae, professional development, hui and University events, and the panel concurs.

Recommendation

R 9 The panel recommends that the University gives priority to the provision of a 'marae complex' that is a central place where Māori-focussed gatherings, events and activities including pōwhiri, wānanga, noho marae, professional development, hui and University events can be conducted in accordance with Māori protocol.

5

University staff

5.1 Goals and objectives

Key strategic area no.4: Staff

To attract, retain and develop high quality, motivated and enthusiastic staff at all levels who contribute to achieving the University's mission, vision and strategic direction.

Charter goal

To develop effective strategies to recruit, retain and develop high quality staff in accordance with policies of equal opportunity, maximise their potential and reward them for effort, excellence and innovation in line with the vision of the University.

Targets

- *Review and redevelop staff recruitment, selection and orientation practices.*
- *Review and develop learning and development systems to ensure that all staff are receiving the learning opportunities they need to perform their roles and develop their careers.*
- *Implement effective and appropriate professional development and review processes for all staff.*
- *Review and develop remuneration and promotion systems to ensure they support the University's objectives, and that they reward and recognise staff appropriately.*
- *Continue to develop and maintain a work environment and employee support climate that contributes to the well-being, satisfaction and motivation of all employees and meets statutory requirements.*
- *Continue to set and achieve participation and retention targets for under-represented groups of staff.*

5.2 How does the University determine the appropriate staff profile and resourcing to fulfil its core purposes and functions?

The Portfolio reported on staff numbers (603 Equivalent Full-Time continuing academic staff, and 1069 EFT continuing non-academic staff) and the University's intention to reduce non-academic staff by about 200 positions over the next ten years. The profile of staff in each unit comes under scrutiny each time resignation or retirement requires the case to be made for retention, or whenever a new position is sought. The main criteria for a decision is not only the strategic developments of the University but also risks associated with not replacing or adding staff, staff:student ratios, and essential teaching and technical requirements of programmes. The challenges facing staff recruitment in an environment where there are international salary

differentials and workforce shortages in some disciplines is also a cause for concern on the part of the University.

The University acknowledges that the percentage of women academic staff, while increasing, is still below the sector average (36% against 40.2%), and that Māori and Pacific staff (3.5% and 1.1% respectively) are below that of other universities and the percentages of the New Zealand population (15% and 9%). The self-assessment report of the working group on 'Effective teaching' recommended that the University aims for an academic staff profile that is increasingly reflective of the gender balance and cultural diversity of the student population. While acknowledging these things, the panel did not detect any systematic plan within the University for addressing issues of disproportionate representation of key demographic groups among academic and technical staff.

5.3 How does the University know that the staffing strategies around recruitment, appointment, induction, retention, workload, professional development and appraisal are effective?

General

The panel was pleased to read in the Portfolio about the series of benchmarked staff satisfaction surveys for continuing staff embarked upon by the University. When completed, the reports arising from these surveys will provide a benchmark for future comparison. Through these surveys, the University has been able to track the extent of satisfaction, the good practices appreciated by staff (such as the development of a Human Resources toolkit and academic position descriptions, the establishment of the Equity and Diversity Committee, and the continuing support of the New Zealand Vice-Chancellors' Committee Equity and Diversity Committee) as well as concerns (such as dissatisfaction with change processes, communication and cross-unit co-operation).

Human resources personnel are members of the central Human Resources section, and are also appointed to College offices. The panel learned that human resources personnel in Colleges are responsible to the Pro Vice-Chancellors and not the central Human Resources section. The panel is of the view that 'HR' liaison in Colleges should be more formally linked to the central service unit to ensure integrity and consistency of policy and practice across the University.

Recruitment and appointment

The internal review of recruitment and selection processes has resulted in improved processes and in revised position descriptions that identify key outcomes, key performance indicators and desired behaviours. Managers are now required to undergo training in the recruitment, selection and appointment of new staff.

Staff induction

Attendance by staff at induction/orientation seminars is optional with only a 60% take-up in 2008. The panel is of the view that this should be a formal requirement for all new staff. Greater uptake by staff of training for a tertiary teaching qualification is also desirable. The Portfolio expressed the view that tertiary teaching will not gain professional credibility unless there is a more proactive encouragement to staff to gain appropriate professional skills and credentials. Both issues are to be addressed by University Action 5 which indicates that *the Vice-Chancellor*

should establish expectations for all new staff to attend academic induction programmes and set targets to encourage increasing numbers of staff to gain appropriate tertiary teaching qualifications.

The panel became aware during interviews that more could be done to address the findings of this working group. There was no evidence to indicate whether or not teaching staff are aware of factors relevant to teaching students from diverse cultural and international backgrounds. The panel considers that there is a need for more systematic training of staff on cultural awareness, on the needs of Māori students and of Pacific students, and on ways to interact positively with students from diverse cultural backgrounds and national contexts.

Staff workload

The University-wide policy and guidelines on academic workload are implemented at College and School/Department level and require adaptation to cater for variation as appropriate to College needs. Such flexibility has given rise to concern by staff in some areas of the University about the complexity of workload models in their disciplines. The University views workload management as a 'work in progress' and there is no University-wide monitoring of the implementation of the policy and guidelines or of their impact on staff. The self-assessment report of the working group on 'Effective teaching' recommended monitoring and evaluation of workload across Colleges to ensure equity and effective teaching, and the panel supports this position.

Staff development

Since the Cycle 3 academic audit in 2005, the major agency for the professional development of academic staff has been the University Centre for Teaching and Learning [UCTL]. The Centre offered staff induction/orientation programmes; a variety of workshops and seminars to support research-informed teaching, flexible learning and assessment development; qualifications in tertiary teaching; assistance to teaching staff in Schools and Departments on an as-required basis; one-to-one staff development; and also administered the surveys and evaluations on teaching and courses. The positive impact of the work of the Centre, and the need to strengthen the Centre, is raised in a number of the working group reports prepared as part of the University's self-assessment process.

It was apparent to the panel that there had been limited uptake of the variety of workshops and seminars provided by the Centre to support and enhance research-informed tertiary teaching and assessment. Project STAR (see section 7.2 of this report) offered the opportunity to redeploy the expertise throughout the University in order to improve the impact of its work. The decision has now been made to disaggregate the Centre as part of the restructuring process. The administration and delivery of qualifications in tertiary teaching has been moved to the College of Education; the evaluation survey function has moved out of the University to the Centre for Evaluation and Monitoring [CEM(NZ)]; institutional research about teaching and learning has moved to the Office of the Deputy Vice-Chancellor; flexible learning is now Electronic Learning Media under the Digital Media Group Manager who is responsible to the Pro Vice-Chancellor (Learning and Resources); and learning skills will be part of a proposed Learning Preparation and Support Group within the portfolio of the Pro Vice-Chancellor (Student Services and International).

While the funding and co-ordination of professional development workshops and seminars is now the responsibility of Human Resources, the direction about the professional development

priorities will be the responsibility of the Senior Management Team. The development of each academic staff member will be the responsibility of the Pro Vice-Chancellors supported by the Deputy Vice-Chancellor.

The giving of responsibility for workshops and seminars to Human Resources raised concerns for some of those interviewed by the panel, who saw professional development as a pedagogical issue and not a Human Resources or employment issue. Concern was also expressed that activities co-ordinated by Human Resources might come to be regarded as remedial or performance review activities rather than professional development.

University Action 6, arising from the self-assessment process, states that *all teaching staff should be required to engage in a specified number of teaching development activities either as a condition of employment or as a prerequisite of consideration for promotion*. As reported above, the Portfolio expressed the view that more encouragement should be given to staff to gain professional skills and credentials. It was apparent to the panel that staff should be encouraged to continue to engage with professional issues beyond formal activities.

Academic staff interviewed during the site visit advised the panel that they had retained contact details of former University Centre for Teaching and Learning staff, but most did not know where these people were located. With the disaggregation of a clearly defined Unit dedicated to the enhancement of teaching and learning and professional development, the University must ensure that there is a one-channel mechanism for staff – especially staff new to the University – for the specialist advice for academic staff professional development and teaching support.

Professional Development and Review

The 2005 Cycle 3 self-assessment gave rise to a recommended action (4.5) to implement a Professional Development and Review policy and to monitor and evaluate it within three years. The Cycle 3 audit report contained a recommendation (R 7) in support of the University's initiative. Since then, the University has introduced a formal Professional Development and Review process across the University, although similar processes had been in place in some areas of the institution for many years. Such a process can provide the University with the opportunity to review the goals and achievements of staff against institutional goals as the University works towards achieving its statement of strategic intent. It was evident to the panel that this process has met general acceptance, with those interviewed by the panel finding it to be positive and supportive.

The University was aware of the implications of the process for the workloads of Heads of School/Department, and for maintaining the value of annual interviews, and University Action 17 arising from the self-assessment indicates that *'Human Resources should make available more extensive training for Heads [of School] around Professional Development and Review and promotions processes'*. In its self-assessment report, the working group on 'Staff support' concluded that the University in 2009 was still in the 'implementation stage', and therefore there had not yet been any objective assessment of the effectiveness of the process. The panel was not aware of any benchmarking across the Colleges and Schools/Departments to give confidence to the University that the process was effective institution-wide, or that it is working to ensure that staff are research-active and engaged in quality teaching.

Recommendation

R 10 The panel recommends that the University ensures consistent University-wide application and monitoring of the academic staff Professional Development and Review process which includes evidence on workload, research and teaching performance, and which is improvement focussed.

Promotion

The Portfolio reported that the promotions processes have been refined over the last five years, particularly in response to concerns about the prioritising of research over teaching in the application of criteria – still an issue as reported in the self-assessment report of the working group on ‘Staff support’ and in interviews with the panel – and the low number of women promoted. The new processes require evidence-based portfolios, independent internal observers and an external observer for senior promotions. The Deputy Vice-Chancellor conducts an annual review of promotions to facilitate opportunities for continuous improvement. This appears to have been well received by Faculties. The ongoing need for training of Heads of School/Department is also recognised by the University.

The panel heard that the Vice-Chancellor has called for advice about how the quality of teaching might be measured. The panel was not clear as to the process for cycling back of feedback on teaching to academic staff to enhance quality teaching and ensure quality research-informed teaching. There does not appear to be a rigorous process in place for the review and improvement of teaching quality. Other than when academic staff are seeking promotion, there would appear to be no University evaluation of the quality of their teaching except through regular student evaluation surveys and peer review, the findings of which can remain confidential to each academic staff member. There are no formal reporting requirements where actions are needed to attend to teaching receiving poor evaluations.

6

Institutional quality assurance

6.1 How does the University know that the maintenance and enhancement of standards of research, teaching and student learning have benefited from institutional quality assurance?

Institutional quality assurance processes should add value to the institution by ensuring the maintenance and enhancement of research, teaching and learning. The Portfolio identified three main levels of activity:

- oversight of standards and policy by the Academic Board and its key committees – Academic Administration Committee, Teaching and Learning Committee, Postgraduate Committee, Research Committee and Library Committee;
- oversight of monitoring, evaluation and leadership in quality enhancement by the Academic Quality Assurance Unit and the former University Centre for Teaching and Learning; and
- responsibility of academic units, Faculties, boards of studies and related service units to ensure quality delivery of research and teaching.

Arising from the 2005 Cycle 3 self-assessment, the University had a recommended action (2.1) regarding the development of a systematic institution-wide quality assurance plan. The Cycle 3 audit report contained a recommendation (R 3) in support of this action, recommending clear roles, responsibilities and performance indicators to monitor effectiveness. The Portfolio for this present audit observed that instead of developing a quality assurance plan, the University had developed a *White pages* on-line access to policies, guidelines and regulations; an academic delegations schedule; and an Academic Quality Assurance Unit plan. There was no mention of monitoring the effectiveness of either the delegations or the implementation of policies, guidelines and regulations.

In interviews during the site visit, much emphasis was placed by the University on the five-year cycle of reviews of academic programmes, and the processes associated with accreditation of professional qualifications. The panel was told that the Academic Quality Assurance Unit provides oversight for the programme reviews, but plays no part in the administration of the reviews. The Faculties take responsibility for post-review action on recommendations. The Portfolio recognised that the effectiveness of programme reviews varies, but that these activities may be improving because of clearer focus on the terms of reference. The Portfolio also reported that while recommendations cannot always be adopted (for example, those that might require resources which are not currently available), most recommendations provide a useful direction for action. Recommendations are reported against by the Faculty to the Academic Administration Committee and thence to the Academic Board within twelve months of the review. The panel understands that the Assistant Vice-Chancellor (Academic) – who provides

the institutional academic leadership in quality assurance – commissions the reviews and sets the terms of reference. Because of that, and because of that person's role as Chair of the Academic Administration Committee, the Assistant Vice-Chancellor (Academic) has the institutional responsibility for further follow-up work if recommendations are not addressed, and if changes deemed necessary have not been made. The panel was told that, to date, all reviews have been responsibly actioned and no further follow-up has been required.

The panel noted the intention of the University to do more to promulgate and share good practice, with University Action 1 proposing that *'The Academic Quality Assurance Unit should take a leading role in establishing a benchmarking process based on programme reviews in order to disseminate good practice to Pro Vice-Chancellors and Faculties'*.

This raises the more general issue of the use of information and the feedback of information to the relevant University communities. As identified in section 1.3 of this report, the panel found it difficult to obtain information as to how the data provided by key performance indicators and the statements of service performance were being fed into the planning process. In section 2.4 of this report, mention is made of limited information being provided to students based on prior student evaluations surveys of courses and teaching.

During the site visit, the panel became aware of instances throughout the University where the feedback loop is incomplete; where expectations that data and information will be used are not accompanied by transparency and monitoring of information used to ensure improvement of the quality of activities (research, teaching and learning, community engagement); and where there is little or no feedback to appropriate personnel about actions taken on the basis of information gathered.

The University acknowledges that the follow-up to this academic audit will be important for the institution. The self-assessment process involved 14 working groups who presented reports which were used as the basis of the Portfolio. These groups carried out detailed work and, taken together, the reports they produced provided 160 recommendations for action. The panel was told that once the 'Project STAR' restructuring is completed and appointments made, the working groups' reports and their recommendations will be revisited. The effectiveness of the 'Project STAR' restructuring should also be monitored to ensure that the advantages and gains claimed in the communications to the University community are actually achieved.

The panel is of the view that a process is needed to ensure adequate and consistent consideration by appropriate University agencies of the recommendations and the effectiveness of any actions taken arising from recommendations in reports arising from any and all reviews, including reviews of the University's processes and management systems, as well as internal and external audits.

Recommendation

R 11 The panel recommends that the University ensures there is an effective systematic central follow-up on all reviews, internal and external academic audits, and surveys; on the recommendations contained in the reports arising from such activities; and on the implementation and effectiveness of actions taken arising from the consideration of the information and any recommendations they contain in enhancing the core activities of the University.

With respect to professional accreditation, it is acknowledged that accreditation is to assure the professions about the fitness of the programmes for employment purposes. Similar reviews of

individual discipline areas in non-professional qualifications are at the discretion of the Colleges and Schools/Departments, and lack central oversight.

Other processes reported in the Portfolio included Graduating Year Reviews required by the Committee on University Academic Programmes for new programmes at the time the first cohort had graduated; the scrutiny of courses with low enrolments; the review of academic regulations on an 'as needed' basis; and the review of the 'UC Policy Library' on a scheduled basis. Much of this activity is in response to change.

In the area of teaching quality, the Portfolio stated that teaching is expected to be research-informed; that student evaluations of courses are expected to be undertaken every three years; that there was limited evidence of actions taken following student evaluation surveys; and that courses with high and low teaching scores are to be reviewed by the Colleges or Schools/Departments concerned. It acknowledges that there is no central monitoring of improvements and changes made.

The panel noted that fifteen of the twenty University Actions in the Portfolio, resulting from the self-assessment, proposed actions that 'should' be undertaken, rather than actions that must be undertaken. In site visit interviews, there was much emphasis on expectations of staff as professionals. The panel was also interested to note that the Cycle 1 academic audit report in 1995 commented (page 7) that there were few mechanisms to monitor and thereby ensure things happen; that there was little compulsion even on key issues; and that the University culture could be described by the word 'should', not 'shall'.

The present panel is of the view that there must be a point at which persuasion and consensus must give way to decisions and actions. It is also of the view that there should be a systematic monitoring of compliance with University regulations, policies and procedures in the areas associated with teaching and learning in particular, rather than a reliance on a reactive approach to problems that arise from non-compliance as is evidenced in cases of academic grievance. This is particularly important given the changing funding environment and signalled changes based on indicators of student performance, as has already happened with funding decisions springing from the Performance-Based Research Fund exercise.

Recommendation

R 12 The panel recommends that the University implements a set of required policies in areas of direct relevance to the maintenance of quality in research, teaching and learning across the University, and that compliance with those policies be monitored through internal reviews as well as internal and external audits.

7

Management and administrative support

7.1 Goals and objectives

Key strategic area no.8: Governance, leadership and management

To have governance, leadership and management capabilities and processes that ensure the achievement of strategic goals.

Charter goal

To provide responsive and cost-effective management, administration and support services in order to ensure that the responsibilities of the University are discharged efficiently and effectively within the resources available.

Targets

- *Develop and implement effective strategies to build governance, leadership and management capability across the University.*
- *Further develop and maintain high quality infrastructural support appropriate to research, teaching, learning and administrative needs across the University.*
- *Devise and implement robust and effective communication processes that will assist in building and sustaining an internal culture that supports the achievement of strategic goals.*
- *Advance the University's sustainability planning and integrate socio-ecological sustainability principles and practices throughout the University's activities.*

7.2 How does the University know that its management and administrative support are fit for purpose?

Upon his appointment in early 2009, the Vice-Chancellor initiated discussions leading to the acceptance of a statement of strategic intent to be used as a framework for the development of College and School/Department plans. The Vice-Chancellor then turned his attention to the management and administrative structure and the services in support of the teaching of students and the conduct of research. As a result, Project STAR [STAR = 'supporting teaching and research'] was initiated, and was still in progress at the time of the panel's site visit. Project STAR is a review of structures and services provided by the University, considering how they might be improved to be more effectively aligned to the University's research and teaching aspirations, and what funding might be freed to be better spent on research and teaching.

The panel was of the view that Project STAR is a direct response to the question as to whether the University knows that its management and administrative support are fit for purpose. Project STAR has been a top down review, beginning with the structure of the Senior Management

Team and the composition of its portfolios. Staff and unions have been consulted over the proposed new structure in an effort to reduce fragmentation and duplication in service delivery, flatten reporting structures to reduce complexity and improve communications, be sustainable, and allow for a greater investment in teaching and research.

At the beginning of the site visit, the panel was given an update on progress with Project STAR, and received a set of structural diagrams as at that time. Those members of staff interviewed by the panel during the site visit indicated that they were aware of the main features of the new structure, and that they were awaiting the final version of the restructure and details of its implementation.

It was clear to the panel that the Vice-Chancellor and Senior Management Team were sensitive to issues of timing and speed in managing the change, to knowing when consultation should be replaced by action, and to the need for continuous communication about changes. It was recognised that good, clear communication was key, that more has to be done to counteract misinformation on the restructuring, to ensure the correct information about change was being received and understood by everyone, and to provide avenues for feedback and the input of useful ideas. The Senior Management Team was also aware that every member of the University community must understand the need for change. It was clear to the panel that at the time of the site visit, staff in the University were waiting for the restructuring to be completed so that they could know of the implications for each of them.

The 'Project STAR' proposals examined by the panel indicated that the Senior Management Team will comprise the College Pro-Vice-Chancellors, along with the Vice-Chancellor, Deputy Vice-Chancellor, other Pro Vice-Chancellors (International and Student Services, Learning Resources), Assistant Vice-Chancellor Māori, the Director of Human Resources, the Chief Financial Officer and the Registrar.

From the latest structural diagram given to the panel, it would appear that outside of the Senior Management Team are the two key positions with pan-University responsibilities for the day-to-day quality and standard of core activities of the University – research, teaching and learning. These positions – the new position of Assistant Vice-Chancellor (Research) and the position of Assistant Vice-Chancellor (Academic) respectively – will interact with the Pro Vice-Chancellors, Deans, and Heads of School and Department with regard to the development, implementation and monitoring of quality and standards but will report to and receive information from the Senior Management Team through the Deputy Vice-Chancellor. The panel was of the view that these two positions have key roles to play in quality, and saw their absence from the Senior Management Team as potentially problematic. The panel was assured by the Vice-Chancellor that they would have access to him, and that they would be invited to Senior Management Team meetings when their input was essential to the particular items under consideration.

The panel was told that the impact and effectiveness of the changes arising from Project STAR would be monitored, and the panel is of the view that the processes that are to be employed should be well publicised and transparent.

8

Community engagement

8.1 Goals and objectives

Key strategic area no. 5: Community engagement

To maintain strong, collaborative and mutually beneficial relationships with external communities and thus contribute to economic, social and cultural development, regionally and nationally.

Charter goal

To develop and nurture strong collaborative and mutually beneficial links with business, industry, professional bodies and local and central government, as well as our external communities of interest, including graduates, alumni, schools, other tertiary institutions and research organisations.

Targets

- *Foster links and collaborative relationships with a broad range of local, national and international communities of interest.*
- *Nurture effective relationships with Pacific, Asian and other key communities and support their educational aspirations.*
- *Develop strong and mutually beneficial relationships with schools in the Canterbury region and beyond.*
- *Develop strong and mutually beneficial relationships with commercial entities in the Canterbury region and beyond.*
- *Engage with alumni, friends and supporters nationally and internationally in mutually supportive and productive relationships.*

8.2 How does the University know that research and teaching benefit from community engagement?

The Portfolio noted that the University knows that it has benefited from community and stakeholder engagement as a function of incorporating advice from stakeholders into academic programmes, as research collaborations result in successful grant proposals and as stakeholders assist with funding new initiatives, and in internships required for professional programmes. Field work in a number of disciplines takes the University into contact with local communities, and performances, events, courses and study tours administered by the Centre for Fine Arts, Music and Theatre and by Community and Bridging Education engage with community groups and often use community resources. Senior management regularly engages with local, national and international groups, to improve both the University's understanding of the strategic

directions favoured or promoted by local and national government and other agencies, and the stakeholders' understanding of University's response as indicated in its statement of strategic intent and various planning documents.

From interviews during the site visit, the panel became aware of activities by Council and Schools/Departments to foster community engagement, and to involve community groups in understanding the University and contributing to the core activities. At a senior level, Council and the Senior Management Team meet in various ways with key stakeholders at very senior levels to discuss the University and to ensure follow-up to those activities. However, the University is aware that it does not monitor the wider community engagement as well as it should, and that it must increase its engagement with the community and be able to meet with community expectations if the University is to succeed in its work.

The panel met with a large group of stakeholders who expressed a high level of satisfaction with their interactions with the University and their ability to have input into curriculum, though some felt this occurred later rather than earlier in the programme development process. Clearly, the University is working hard to strengthen links with stakeholders in education, industry, and the service sector and has, in general, succeeded in gaining stakeholder and community respect and co-operation.

Commendation

C 7 The panel commends the University for its support for strong relationships and engagement with stakeholders in education, industry and the service sector.

9

External academic collaborations and partnerships

9.1 Goals and objectives

Key strategic area no. 1: Research and creative work

To consolidate and maintain the University's status as a top research-led university.

Target

- *Pursue national and international research collaborations with other leading tertiary institutions and research organisations.*

9.2 How does the University know that curriculum, standards and outcomes for learners are enhanced by external academic collaborations?

As in many universities, most external collaborations and partnerships entered into by the University tend to remain hidden from public view. However, the University can identify a number of external collaborations and partnerships, most of which arise from professional relationships with scholars and researchers in other academic and research institutions. Some of those professional relationships take on a wider significance to the University and lead to memoranda of understanding which facilitate exchange of personnel and ideas for research and curriculum development.

As with community and stakeholder engagement, the Portfolio reported that the University knows that it has benefited from collaborations and partnerships as academic programmes incorporate advice from stakeholders, as research collaborations result in successful grant proposals, and as stakeholders assist with funding new initiatives and in internships required for professional programmes.

The University points in particular to the benchmarking relationship with the University of Adelaide which initially included teaching evaluation and assessment in Science; it also points to joint teaching programmes with other New Zealand universities. Visiting Erskine and Visiting Canterbury Fellows are required to report back to the University on the academic programmes of their host Schools/Departments; and external members of review panels bring new perspectives to curriculum, standards and outcomes.

The University recognises that the monitoring of collaborations and partnerships in recent years has been neglected. One of the tasks of the new Pro Vice-Chancellor (Student Services and International) is to review partnerships to develop more meaningful and active collaborations with fewer universities and institutes around the world that are better aligned with the

University's new strategic direction. It is intended to build on the University of Adelaide model in that the agreements will facilitate comprehensive and in-depth engagements – involving staff and student exchange related to research and academic programmes – and curriculum development. The panel understands that the Pro Vice-Chancellor (Student Services and International) will oversee a systematic process to evaluate the range and ongoing effectiveness and impact of these activities.

Acknowledgements

The panel thanks in particular Dr Rod Carr (Vice-Chancellor), Professor Ian Town (Deputy Vice-Chancellor), and Eleri Nugent (Academic Quality Assurance Advisor) 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 Academic Quality Assurance Unit attended to the requests of the panel during the site visit with efficiency and good grace. 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 Luanna Meyer
Victoria University of Wellington

New Zealand academic members of the Panel

Emeritus Professor Peter Holland
University of Otago

Professor Margaret Mutu
University of Auckland

New Zealand non-academic member of the Panel

Roger Atkinson
Consultant, Christchurch

Overseas academic member of the Panel

Emeritus Professor Beryl Hesketh
University of Western Sydney, Australia

In attendance:

John M. Jennings
Secretariat to the panel

Appendix 1

University of Canterbury enhancement actions

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 Unit's indicative framework for Cycle 4 audit.
- The numbering of the sections in this listing is the number of the sections of this report.
- The numbering of the University Actions is as used in the Portfolio.

1 General

Benchmarking

University Action 13

The University should continue to use its relationship with the University of Adelaide for benchmarking and learning, including postgraduate experience survey procedures and the implications of these for learning and teaching.

2 Learning and teaching

Graduate profiles

University Action 3

The work that has been undertaken in some Faculties (for example, Science, Commerce) to match student learning and assessment with the graduate profiles of awards should be emulated across all Faculties and for all awards. Faculty Deans should take responsibility for ensuring that graduate profiles are coherent and embedded in staff and student academic culture.

Enhancing teaching

University Action 4

Pro Vice-Chancellors should ensure that College budgets have provision (similar to that for research initiatives, including study leave) for sharing best practice and supporting new initiatives to enhance teaching and student learning.

Feedback from surveys

University Action 2

The Deputy Vice-Chancellor's Office should develop procedures to ensure that feedback from students on course quality is acted upon, and that students are informed of the outcomes.

University Action 7

The Australasian Survey of Student Engagement [AUSSE] should be used more explicitly as a basis for benchmarking performance against other Australasian institutions. Key outcomes from the AUSSE should be the subject of considered review by teaching staff.

Teaching and learning spaces

University Action 9

The Director of Learning Resources must ensure that users of refurbished teaching and learning spaces have opportunities for input to design, and Pro Vice-Chancellors should be responsible for promoting active learning options in these spaces.

E-learning support

University Action 8

The Director of Learning Resources should carry out a formal risk assessment and develop a risk management plan for MOODLE/LEARN.

Academic grievance

University Action 10

Informal procedures for the low level resolution of academic grievances must be reinstated in some form as a matter of urgency.

Students at risk

University Action 12

The University needs to focus institutional research and support provision in such a way that students with high potential but who are 'at risk' can be identified and assisted at an early stage.

Student success

University Action 11

The University must continue efforts to refine key data with respect to retention, achievement, progression and completion such that more reliable analyses can be completed to inform academic advice and interventions for at-risk students.

3 Research environment

Support for research students

University Action 14

The University must ensure data relating to postgraduate students are available in appropriate forms from the University Student Management System, to facilitate meaningful progression analysis and advice to students.

Interaction between teaching and research

University Action 15

Programme convenors should consider how the teaching-research nexus is given effect in their disciplines and ensure this is communicated to students, in particular by drawing their attention to graduate profiles and learning outcome statements.

University Action 16

Programme convenors, supported by Pro Vice-Chancellors, should encourage inquiry-based learning and active learning as ways of introducing a research-grounded orientation to undergraduate studies.

Critic and conscience of society

University Action 20

A Senior Management Team member should be given responsibility for developing guidelines to assist staff in discharging their critic and conscience role, including development of a clear and broad concept of what is understood by ‘critic and conscience’; provision of advice or training for Heads [of Schools/Departments] in supporting staff; availability of media training for all staff; and explicit recognition in position descriptions and promotions criteria. Māori staff should be consulted as to the most appropriate expression of the critic and conscience role for and about Māori.

4 Te Tiriti o Waitangi

Māori leadership

University Action 18

In reviewing the Assistant Vice-Chancellor (Māori) role, the Vice-Chancellor should note the recommendations made by the audit working group, especially with regard to building capability and understanding across the whole University.

Cultural awareness

University Action 19

Pro Vice-Chancellors, assisted by the Assistant Vice-Chancellor (Māori) should provide opportunities for all staff to discuss the obligations posed by Te Tiriti o Waitangi and in particular how these might be met appropriately in curricula, teaching and research.

5 University staff

Staff induction

University Action 5

The Vice-Chancellor should establish expectations for all new staff to attend academic induction programmes and set targets to encourage increasing numbers of staff to gain appropriate tertiary teaching qualifications.

Staff development

University Action 6

All teaching staff should be required to engage in a specified number of teaching development activities either as a condition of employment or as a prerequisite of consideration for promotion.

Professional Development and Review

University Action 17

Human Recourses should make available more extensive training for Heads [of Schools/Departments] around Professional Development and Review and promotions processes.

6 Institutional quality assurance

Programme reviews

University Action 1

The Academic Quality Assurance Unit should take a leading role in establishing a benchmarking process based on programme reviews in order to disseminate good practice to Pro Vice-Chancellors and Faculties.

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

Note: The evaluation questions used in this audit of the University of Canterbury are as agreed in January 2009.

	<i>Topics</i>	<i>Activities</i>
1	General	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.
2	Teaching and learning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ How does the university identify the needs of learners? ▪ How does the university know that programmes and activities match the needs of learners and stakeholders? ▪ How does the university know that teaching is effective? ▪ How does the university know that learners are guided and supported effectively? ▪ How does the university ensure there are reflective processes for determining objectives and outcomes? ▪ How does the university know that learners achieve stated objectives and outcomes? ▪ How does the university know that the outcomes have value for key stakeholders including learners?
3	Research environment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ How does the university know that research activities and research policies are aligned with each other and with external contexts? ▪ How does the university know that research students are guided and supported effectively? ▪ How does the university know that there is an effective interaction between teaching and research? ▪ How does the university know that it is effectively fulfilling the role of critic and conscience of society?
4	Te Tiriti o Waitangi	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ How does the university ensure an understanding of the principles of Te Tiriti o Waitangi? ▪ How does the university know that it is effectively applying the principles of Te Tiriti o Waitangi?
5	Academic and support staff	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ How does the university determine the appropriate staff profile and resourcing to fulfil its core purposes and functions? ▪ How does the university know that the staffing strategies around recruitment, appointment, induction, retention, workload, professional development and appraisal are effective?
6	Institutional quality assurance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ How does the university know that the maintenance and enhancement of standards of research, teaching and student learning have benefited from institutional quality assurance?
7	Management and administrative support	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ How does the university know that its management and administrative support are fit for purpose?

	<i>Topics</i>	<i>Activities</i>
8	<i>Community engagement</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ How does the university know that research and teaching benefit from community engagement?
9	<i>External academic collaborations and partnerships</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ How does the university know that curriculum, standards and outcomes for learners are enhanced by external academic collaborations?