

*New Zealand Quality in HE Conference May 2013*

# **Successful quality management & change leadership in 21<sup>st</sup> century higher education**

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# Summary

*“Good ideas with no ideas on how to implement them are wasted ideas”*

*“Change doesn’t just happen but must be led, deftly*

- The emerging context and standards agenda for higher education
- Key terms – need for shared understanding
- A validated HE quality and standards framework
- Map of the current NZ audit themes against this framework
- Key lessons on effective implementation and continuous quality improvement in post-secondary and higher education
- Change doesn’t just happen – it must be led, and deftly
- Change leadership myths



# The emerging context & standards' agenda for Higher Education

- How best to balance growth with quality; access with excellence; mission with market
- Growing competition within and beyond each country—tackling patchy standards, assuring 'academic integrity' & the HE 'export market'
- A new consumer and demand driven system – 'user pays'
- Rapid developments in ICT-enabled learning
- Who should determine standards and decide what constitutes 'excellence' in such a context?
- How do we determine *what* should be given focus in this new context and then *how* to make sure it is implemented consistently and effectively

# The emerging context & standards agenda cont'd

- **Developing a shared picture of what the key role of higher education (c.f. VET) is in such a context. Is it to produce:**
  - ‘Work ready’ graduates;
  - Graduates who are sustainability literate; inventive; change implementation savvy and ethically robust;
  - Graduates who have come to a considered position on the tacit assumptions driving societies and individuals in the C21<sup>st</sup>
  - Something else
- **Clarifying what is a valid standard and way to measure the capabilities of our graduates**
- **Figuring out how best to balance a focus on proving vs improving quality**
- **Working efficiently & productively with national HE standards to ensure accreditation and re-accreditation**

# Some key terms

- ***Standard*** – a level of achievement with clear criteria, indicators and means of testing
- ***Quality*** – fitness for purpose/fitness of purpose and performance to an agreed standard
- ***Assurance*** – process of ensuring that activities and outcomes meet an agreed standard
- ***Management*** – organisation and coordination of the activities of an enterprise in order to achieve agreed objectives and outcomes successfully and consistently
- ***Strategy*** – linking relevant, desirable and clear ends to the most feasible means necessary to achieve them
- ***Evaluation*** – making judgements of worth about the quality of inputs and outcomes

# Aspects of New Zealand HE you see as working 'successfully' & key areas for improvement

- **Best aspects – evidence to justify**
- **Priorities for improvement - reasons**



# UWS as a case study: performance trends on L&T since 2005

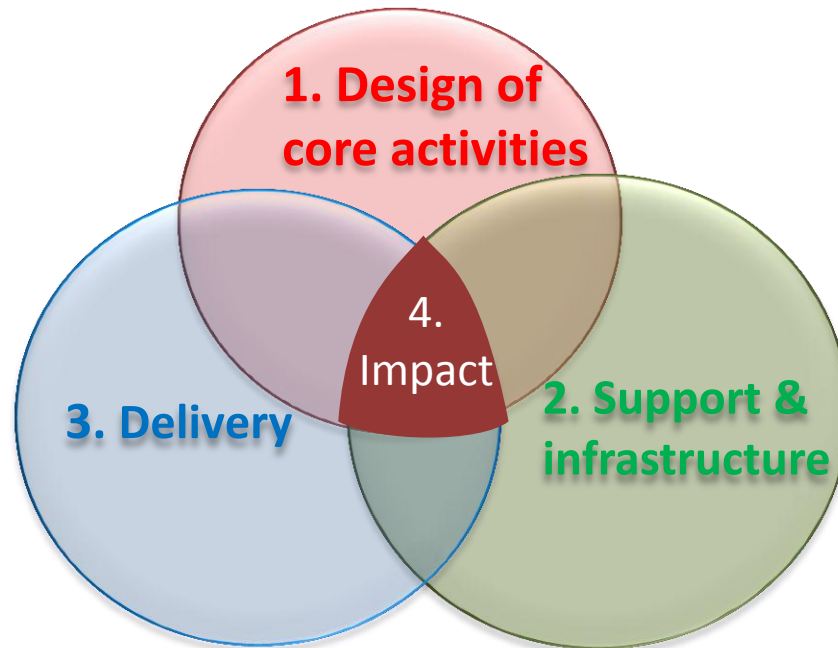
- Overall satisfaction up 25%
- Retention up 4%
- L&T awards
  - 12 ALTC/OLT awards including Teacher of the Year in both 2011 and 2012 (Nil in 2005)
- Commissioned report to Bradley
- Significant increase in requests to visit
- Commended in its cycle 2 audit by AUQA for its Academic Quality & Standards Framework for L&T
- The UWS Tracking & Improvement System for L&T is on the AUQA good practice database
- National assessment moderation project is underway

# How has this improvement been achieved?

- **A focus on the right combination of ‘what’ and ‘how’**
- **Building a change capable culture**
- **Culture = ‘how we do things around here’**



# Higher Education Quality & Standards Framework



**Underpinning governance, strategy, quality  
management & resourcing system**

# Higher Education Quality & Standards Framework

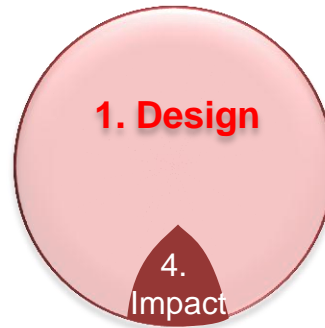


## 4. Impact

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- Provider standing
- Validated standards
- L&T– +ve demand, retention, assessment outcomes, progress, graduate success
- Research - +ve ERA, awards, grants, stakeholder impact
- Engagement - +ve feedback from partners & impact

# Higher Education Quality & Standards Framework



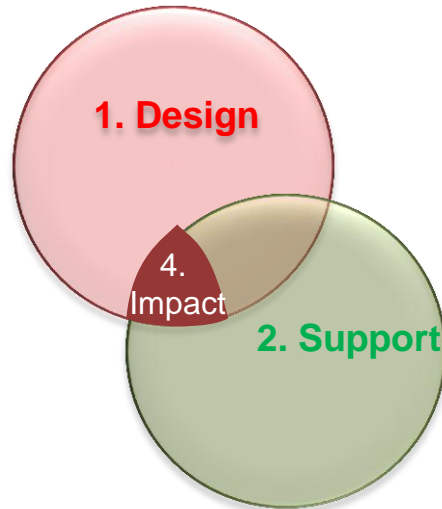
## 1. Design standards

- Relevance to mission & stakeholders
- L&T - Active Learning including eLearning, Theory-practice links, Expectations & direction clear, Capabilities that count are the focus, Learning pathways are flexible, quality assessment, capable staff, aligned support, convenient access.
- Research – relevant, desirable, deliverable, monitored, ethically confirmed, safe, compliant; HDR student support matches PREQ Priorities
- Engagement – two-way, mission and regionally aligned, deliverable

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# Higher Education Quality & Standards Framework



## 2. Support/infrastructure standards

- Admission/articulation
- Transition
- Library
- Student services/safety/support
- ICT, eLng & eResearch support
- Staff selection, performance management & development
- Research management
- Aligned facilities & administration which adds value
- Certification

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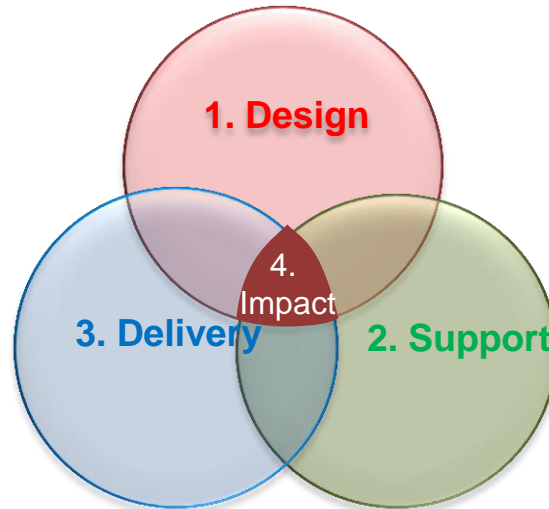
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# Higher Education Quality & Standards Framework

## 3. Delivery standards

- Staff matched to needs, quality, accessibility, responsiveness and skills
- Consistency and quality of delivery of core activities & support systems
- Performance standard on surveys 3.8/5 = good practice; <3.2/5 = improvement needed



## 2. Support standards

- Admission/articulation
- Transition
- Library
- Student services/safety/support
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# Key reference points for learning standards: whose voice counts most/least?

- The National Qualifications Framework
- The University's mission and its desired graduate attributes
- Learning outcome standards determined by ALTC discipline groups the UK subject benchmark process, AHELO etc
- External professional accreditation standards (when applicable)
- Employer feedback; input from External Course Advisory Committees
- Results from inter-institutional benchmarking
- Academic input, peer review and moderation
- Key capabilities identified by successful early career graduates
- The results of School/Department Reviews
- The learning outcomes for courses of the same name in other places
- Government policy and funding incentives
- What parents, prospective students & others rate as most important
- Plus?



# Governance, resourcing, quality management & strategy standards

## Governance

**Governing body's composition; QA for this body; TORs, charter and constitution; its risk management system, liability coverage, business continuity plans; valid and effectively implemented and monitored suite of policies for core and support activities with clear accountabilities**

## Resourcing:

**Financial viability, relationships, audited financial statements, income/expenditure, marketing**

# Governance, strategy, quality management & resourcing standards cont'd

## Quality management of all activities

**Consistent use of a valid QM framework; tracking and improvement system for core and support activities in place and acted upon; evidence of benchmarking across the sector; third party QA; assurance of consistency & equivalence between campuses; comprehensive and effective review system; assurance of academic integrity; composition, roles, effectiveness of Academic Board**

## Strategy

**Relevant, desirable, feasible & succinct strategic plan covering core & support activities ; all staff are clear on this & their role in implementing its key directions**



# **Your framework for assuring standards & quality**

- **What is your framework and where is it similar or different to this one?**
- **Which aspects of that framework do you track – locally or nationally?**
- **How do you ensure that staff act on the key areas of improvement that emerge?**

# Mapping the current NZ audit themes against this framework

- **Leadership and Management of L&T** (QMS)
- **Student Access, Transition and Admission** (Support)
- **Curriculum** (Design)
- **Assessment and achievement** (Impact)
- **Student Engagement** (Impact)
- **Student Feedback** (QMS)
- **Student support** (Support)
- **Teaching Quality** (Delivery)
- **Supervision of Research Students** (Delivery)

# The 'how': key lessons on the effective implementation & continuous quality improvement

- **Consensus around the data not around the table – evidence-based decisions**
- **A small number of agreed priorities for action**
- **Ready, fire, aim not ready, aim, aim, aim...**
- **Steered engagement around a small number of agreed priorities – e.g. retention**
- **'Why don't we' not 'why don't you'**
- **Change is learning**

# The 'how': key lessons on the effective implementation & CQI cont'd

## How staff like to learn is how students like to learn

- Motivators are both extrinsic (TEQSA/*My University*/promotion) and intrinsic (moral purpose/student response)
- RATED CLASS A
- Just-in-time and just-for-me solutions to experienced gaps
- From successful travellers down the same change path
- Peer group counts
- Knowing where I fit and getting acknowledgement for a job well done

# The 'how': key lessons on the effective implementation & CQI cont'd

## Learning from others

- targeted benchmarking with like universities & networked learning with a common framework and evidence

## Knowing what external auditors are looking for

- Consistency & equivalence
- Outcomes not just inputs
- Evidence to back up claims
- Action on agreed improvement areas
- Understanding where I fit, what has been achieved and still needs to be done
- Using critical friends to assess the veracity of your claims

# UWS system for Tracking & Improving L&T (TILT)

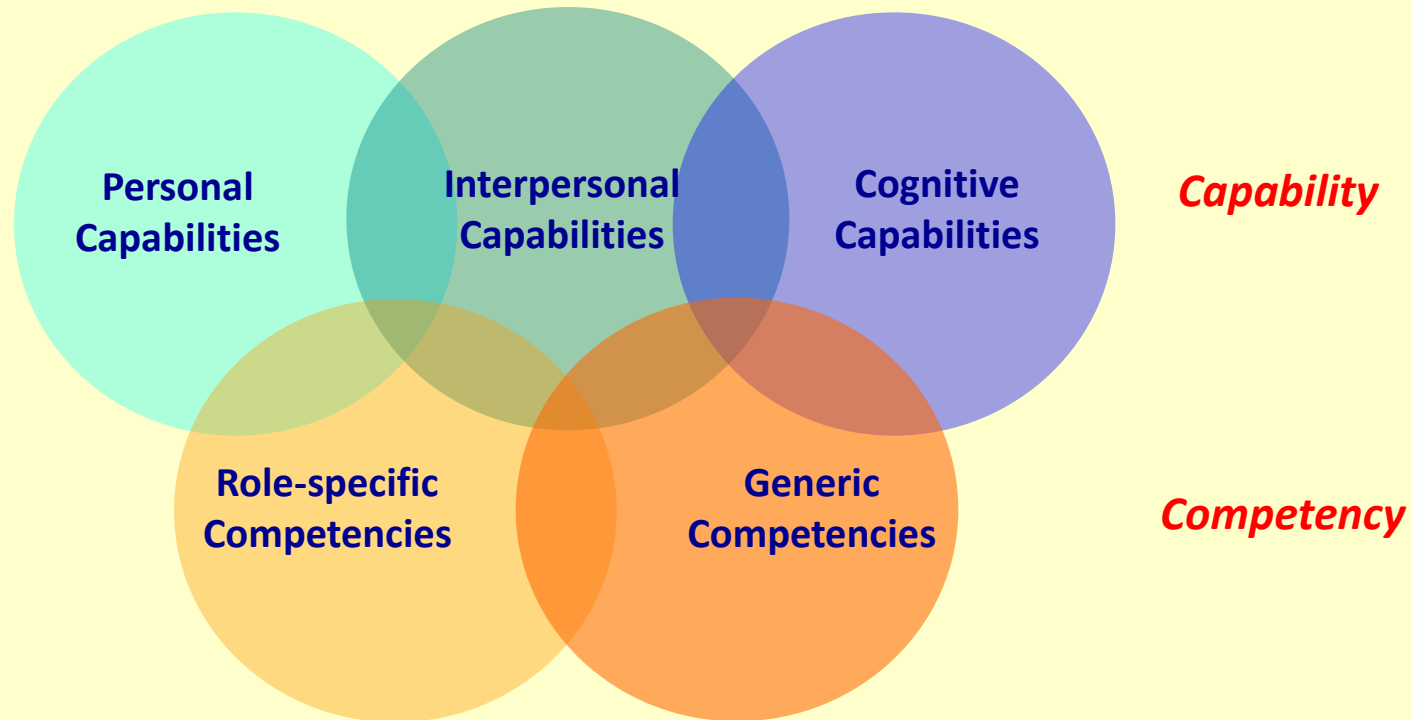
- Items focus on what counts – L&T design & support standards
- Importance as well as performance
- Clear performance standard of 3.8/5 (70% explicit satisfaction)
- Qualitative as well as quantitative (500,000 UWS *CEQuery* comments)
- Annual course diagnostic reports & action plans
- First class tell students actions being taken
- Benchmarking for improvement at the unit level with clear roles

# Quality improvement doesn't just happen – it must be led

## the Learning Leaders research (n=500)

- Listen, link then lead – ‘steered engagement’
- Model, teach and learn
- A change capable culture is built by change capable leaders
- Everyone is a leader in their own area of expertise and responsibility
- Most challenged when things go wrong – this is when you learn
- Key findings are available for every L&T role

# Higher education leadership capability framework





# Change leadership myths to watch out for

- The knight on the white charger myth
- The brute sanity myth
- The restructure myth
- The inputs = quality myth
- The information is learning myth
- The change event myth
- The why don't you myth
- The learning only occurs in the traditional classroom myth

# What next?

- **One key insight you have taken from this presentation**
- **One key area you would like to follow-up**
- **One area you would like to clarify further**

# Further reading

- Fullan, M & Scott, G (2009): *Turnaround Leadership for higher education*, Jossey Bass, San Francisco
- Scott, G (2008): *University student engagement & satisfaction*, commissioned report to the Bradley Review
- Scott, G, Coates, H & Anderson, M (2008): *Learning leaders in times of change*, ALTC
- Scott, G, Tilbury, D, Sharp, L & Deane, E (2013): *Turnaround leadership for sustainability in higher education*, OLT, Sydney
- Scott, G (forthcoming): 'Improving learning & teaching quality in higher education', *South African Jnl of H.E.*
- Scott, G & Hawke, I (2003): Using an external quality audit as a lever for institutional change, *Assessment & Evaluation in Higher Education*, 22 (3)