Report of the 2017 Review of the Committee on University Academic Programmes

Review undertaken by the Academic Quality Agency for New Zealand Universities

July 2017

Te Pokapū Kounga Mātauranga
mō ngā Whare Wānanga o Aotearoa

AQA | Academic
QualityAgency
For New Zealand Universities

Review Report:
Committee on University Academic Programmes (CUAP)

July 2017

This Review Report was commissioned by Universities New Zealand – Te Pōkai Tara for the Committee on University Academic Programmes

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1. Introduction

In March 2016, Universities New Zealand - Te Pōkai Tara invited the Academic Quality Agency for New Zealand Universities (AQA) to conduct a Review of the Committee on University Academic Programmes (CUAP). CUAP had previously been reviewed by NZUAAU in 1996, 1999, 2005 and 2011.[1]

The Terms of Reference for the 2017 Review, as endorsed by the New Zealand Vice-Chancellors, were as follows:

1. Assess the effectiveness of CUAP's response to recommendations in its 2011 Review.
2. Determine how effectively CUAP has met its Terms of Reference as set out in 2.2 of the CUAP Handbook and including CUAP's Additional Responsibilities as set out in 2.3.
3. Determine the extent to which CUAP processes and practices reflect, or should reflect, international best practice (using the INQAAHE Guidelines of Good Practice as a framework).
4. Recommend changes or improvements in CUAP's quality assurance processes.
5. Provide comment on CUAP's Terms of Reference and the composition of the committees, including comment on profile, engagement, future activities, structures or goals.

1.1 CUAP's Role in the Quality Assurance of New Zealand Universities

New Zealand universities have worked together collegially to maintain academic standards across the whole university sector for more than fifty years.[2] Under Section 159AD of the Education Act 1989, the New Zealand Vice-Chancellors' Committee (operating under the name Universities New Zealand – Te Pōkai Tara) is established as "the body primarily responsible for quality assurance matters" in universities. Universities New Zealand (UNZ) discharges this responsibility through the Committee on University Academic Programmes (CUAP), and through the Academic Quality Agency for New Zealand Universities (AQA). AQA is operationally independent and undertakes institutional quality assurance, while CUAP is a committee of the New Zealand Vice-Chancellors' Committee and is responsible for programme approval and accreditation, as well as being advisory to the New Zealand Qualifications Authority (NZQA) on University Entrance standards.

CUAP and AQA share a set of principles underpinning their quality assurance, namely that quality assurance is:[3]

- Developed by the universities
- Evidence-based
- Enhancement-led
- Founded on self-review
- Assured by peer review
- Collective and collegial
- Individually binding

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[1] www.aqa.ac.nz/CUAP2011 accessed 020517.
[2] CUAP Handbook, p7.
[3] Academic Quality Assurance of New Zealand Universities, pp4-5.

- Internationally endorsed
- Independently operated
- Publicly accountable.

The two bodies (AQA and UNZ) are co-located in premises in Wellington.

Section 253A of the Education Act 1989 provides for the New Zealand Vice-Chancellors' Committee to exercise for universities the powers of course approval and accreditation exercised by NZQA for non-university tertiary provision.[4]

The above sections of the Education Act give legitimacy to CUAP (acting for the Vice-Chancellors' Committee) as the programme approval body for universities in New Zealand. In practice, CUAP approvals are recommendations to the Vice-Chancellors, who ratify the final decision.

Currently CUAP comprises a current Vice-Chancellor as Chair, a Deputy Chair, representatives of the eight New Zealand universities, and a student representative. The programme approval model adopted by CUAP means that New Zealand's eight universities work collectively as peers to maintain standards for the New Zealand university sector as a whole. It might be argued that while the individual universities are not self-accrediting, the sector as a whole is. This model is unusual internationally, though elements of it occur in other jurisdictions.[5]

1.2 CUAP's Terms of Reference

Section 2.2 of the CUAP Handbook refers to CUAP's Terms of Reference. These Terms of Reference list "Functions" (Terms of Reference 1-4), "Composition" (Terms of Reference 5-11), "Standing Procedures" (Terms of Reference 12-19) and "Secretariat" (Term of Reference 20).

Section 2.3 of the CUAP Handbook refers to Additional Responsibilities of the Committee, in particular the Joint Consultative Group (JCG), the subcommittee on University Entrance, and relationships with other bodies.

The 2017 Review Term of Reference 2 (above) refers mainly to CUAP's "Functions" (CUAP's Terms of Reference 1-4). These were the main focus of the Review Panel (the Panel). The Review Term of Reference 5 refers to CUAP's Composition and Standing Procedures which were addressed by the

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[4] Education Act 1989, 2011 amendment. S253A (2): The powers of the Authority [i.e. NZQA] as far as they are applicable to universities may, subject to this section, be exercised by the Vice-Chancellors Committee in relation to universities. ….
(3) The Vice-Chancellors Committee in exercising the powers of the Authority must apply the relevant Rules made under section 253.
(5) The Vice-Chancellors Committee may—
(a) list or arrange for the listing of university qualifications on the Qualifications Framework; and
(b) correct any errors or omissions in the listing of the qualification on the framework.
1 March 2017 Reprint accessed 020517.
[5] For example, in Ontario - the jurisdiction of one of the Panel members.

Panel in the context of operational effectiveness and risks to the effectiveness and integrity of CUAP operations. The full CUAP Terms of Reference are reproduced in Appendix 1.[6]

To minimise confusion between the Terms of Reference of the 2017 Review and the Terms of Reference of CUAP, this report uses the terms "Functions", "Standing Procedures" or "Committee Composition", as appropriate. Unless otherwise stated, the use of "Terms of Reference" in the report refers to the 2017 Review.

1.2.1 The Programme Approval and Accreditation Process

In practice, approval of a programme to be offered by a university includes accreditation of that university to offer the programme. Otherwise CUAP's accreditation role comes into play primarily where a university applies to offer a programme from another provider, in which case the university must be accredited to do so.[7] The majority of CUAP's work relates to programme approval. The following summarises usual practice for universities and for CUAP with respect to programme approval or accreditation, acknowledging that individual variations of practice might occur.

Within a university an individual university department may initiate a proposal for a new qualification or programme or for material changes to an existing programme.[8] These proposals are developed and reviewed internally. Proposals are accompanied by supporting evidence such as a business case and the outcome of external and professional body consultation, where relevant. The university's faculty or college, Academic Board, and then Council, approve the proposal and forward it (without the business case) to CUAP. Proposals are required to address the criteria for approval and accreditation as established by NZQA (in consultation with CUAP), referred to as the Rules, and published in the New Zealand Gazette.[9] CUAP then sends the proposals out to the other New Zealand universities for comment and critique.

Universities select suitably qualified reviewers within their institution to review the proposals and offer comments. Where there are few or no relevant reviewers within the universities, CUAP may seek comment from international experts. Universities exchange comments about matters in proposals that need clarification or are of concern. This is done electronically via the Proposal Management System. Initially comments are between individual universities and the proposer only and are visible only to them; later in the process all comments are visible to all universities.

The end-point of this consultation might result in informal electronic approval by all universities, with such approvals simply requiring ratification at the next CUAP meeting. Any proposals identified as having outstanding issues become agenda items for the next CUAP meeting. At this meeting, the remaining issues are discussed and, if resolved, formal resolutions of approval are passed. Proposals

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[6] www.universitiesnz.ac.nz/aboutus/sc/cuap/cuap-handbook pages 10-12. accessed 020517.

[7] The CUAP Handbook, pp17-18 differentiates requirements for approval and for accreditation. In summary, accreditation assumes the qualification type, title, aims delivery methods and learning outcomes have already been determined and approved.

[8] See CUAP Handbook pp39-41 for definitions of changes which require CUAP approval.

[9] www.nzqa.govt.nz/assets/Providers-and-partners/Registration-and-accreditation/caa-guidelinespdf.pdf accessed 020417.

with outstanding issues may be revised and reconsidered by a correspondence process or may be resubmitted to the next round. CUAP may vote to reject proposals, although in practice the iterative peer review process usually leads to eventual approval or to the voluntary withdrawal of proposals considered unsatisfactory.

As part of its moderation process, CUAP requires every new qualification or new subject to undergo a Graduating Year Review at a specified time following its introduction (usually at the point of the first cohort's graduation). These reports are sent to CUAP and then reviewed by two CUAP members. CUAP is empowered to seek remedial action where this is warranted. Where it may have had some initial concerns, CUAP may also require a university to report on implementation and the progress of a new qualification at the end of the first and second years of offering.

While the CUAP model of programme approval differs from the accreditation and approval processes used by the New Zealand Qualifications Authority for the non-university sector locally[10], or other international organisations such as TEQSA in Australia[11], the Ontario Universities Council on Quality Assurance in Canada[12], or the (UK) QAA Quality Code[13], the elements of the approval process and the criteria to be addressed are shared in principle. The Panel therefore considered that in addition to focusing on how well CUAP meets its own objectives (Terms of Reference) an assessment against good practice elsewhere was also appropriate to the Review.

1.3 INQAAHE Guidelines of Good Practice

The International Network for Quality Assurance Agencies in Higher Education (INQAAHE) Guidelines of Good Practice in Quality Assurance (commonly referred to as GGP), referred to in Review Term of Reference 3, reflect the professional practices that INQAAHE believes should be embedded in all external quality assurance agencies (EQAAs).[14] The Guidelines include 53 criteria. The Panel found the Guidelines to be a useful framework for the Review. The Panel's summary evaluation against these criteria is listed in Appendix 2. The report refers in more detail only to those criteria where it believes CUAP needs to take some action. The Panel noted that not all criteria apply to CUAP, in particular those that refer to institutional assessment (GGP section 2.3).

1.4 The 2017 Review Process

A three-person Panel was appointed by AQA to carry out a Review of CUAP in January-March 2017. As agreed with Universities New Zealand, the Panel consisted of a senior New Zealand academic with experience in managing or developing programmes in a university but without recent or

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www.nzqa.govt.nz/providers-partners/approval-accreditation-and-registration/programme-approval-and-provider-accreditation/ accessed 040417.

[11] www.teqsa.gov.au/hesf-domain-3-teaching accessed 040417.

[12] oucqa.ca/program-approvals-menu/program-approval-process/ accessed 040417.

[13] www.qaa.ac.uk/en/Publications/Documents/Quality-Code-19-Expectations.pdf accessed 040417.

[14] The International Network for Quality Assurance Agencies in Higher Education (INQAAHE) is a world-wide association of approximately 300 organisations active in the theory and practice of quality assurance in higher education. http://www.inqaahe.org/sites/default/files/INQAAHE_GGP2016.pdf accessed 010417.

extensive involvement with CUAP; an international member with experience of programme approval and accreditation; and a Chair who had experience as a senior university academic manager but without any direct involvement with CUAP. As the current Executive Director of AQA had been a recent member of CUAP, it was agreed that AQA's former Director would provide secretariat support to the Review, assisted for the site visit by the AQA Finance, Communications and Operations Manager.

Panel members were provided with a self-review portfolio prepared by CUAP. The self-review report was descriptive rather than evaluative, which made it difficult for the Panel to assess the extent to which CUAP had undertaken a self-evaluation or how it determined its own effectiveness.

The self-review report was structured according to the INQAAHE Guidelines (rather than the Review Terms of Reference). While the content of the GGP overlapped with the processes underpinning the Terms of Reference for the Review, these did not align precisely. The Panel considered that its own obligation was to report against the Terms of Reference for the Review and this report is structured accordingly.

The Panel reviewed a wide range of supplementary materials provided by Universities New Zealand, including minutes of meetings, samples of programme proposals and graduating year reviews.

Letters and emails inviting submissions were sent to CUAP members, New Zealand universities, the New Zealand Union of Students' Associations, and external stakeholders, including professional bodies and relevant organisations. Seven universities, three organisations and seven individuals responded to this request with a written submission (see Appendix 3).

At the time of the CUAP Review the tertiary sector in New Zealand was the subject of a major review undertaken by the Productivity Commission.[15] While the final report was imminent, the Panel was not privy to its contents.[16] However the Panel did review the first draft of the report and the responses made by universities and by Universities New Zealand to that draft. The submissions were in some cases provided to the Panel as part of universities' written submissions to the CUAP Review; others were accessed from the Productivity Commission website. Several of the issues raised by the Productivity Commission submissions, in particular pertaining to the programme approval process and potential for self-accreditation, were pertinent to the Review of CUAP.

The site visit for the Review took place in Wellington from 12-15 March 2017. During this time, the Panel was provided with a demonstration of the current electronic Proposal Management System by staff at Victoria University of Wellington. The Panel interviewed 59 representatives of various participant and stakeholder groups, in person or by phone or teleconference.

In its discussions the Panel found there was often ambiguity as to whether Universities New Zealand or the New Zealand Vice-Chancellors' Committee (NZVCC) *as a committee* was the body being

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[15] www.productivity.govt.nz/inquiry-content/2683?stage=4 accessed 020417.
[16] The final report was published on 21 March 2017, www.productivity.govt.nz/inquiry-content/2683?stage=4 accessed 020517.

referred to in documents and discussions. Sometimes the two names were used interchangeably. The Panel notes that Universities New Zealand is the operational name of the organisation which was established as the New Zealand Vice-Chancellors' Committee, NZVCC. The legislation refers to the New Zealand Vice-Chancellors' Committee as the body responsible for university quality.[17] With respect to the business of CUAP, NZVCC as the committee of Vice-Chancellors is the decision-making body. CUAP is a subcommittee of NZVCC. In some situations, operational decisions which impact on CUAP may be made by Universities New Zealand.

In order to clarify which body is being referred to, this Review report uses the term Universities New Zealand (or Universities NZ) when referring to operational and staffing matters. It uses the term NZVCC, or the Vice-Chancellors' Committee, when referring to decision-making or deliberations which would be a responsibility of the Vice-Chancellors collectively in accordance with the legislation. In some cases both bodies might be involved in development or implementation of a practice or process.

At the end of the site visit, the Panel met with representatives from Universities New Zealand and CUAP to provide initial feedback and indicative findings from the Review. This report presents the Panel's findings based on the evidence it has considered. The Panel has commended areas of effective or good practice which have or should result in enhancements to the quality assurance system for New Zealand universities. It has made recommendations for areas where improvement is considered necessary or desirable.

A draft of this report was submitted to the Board of the Academic Quality Agency for a quality assurance check on 9 May 2017 and to Universities New Zealand and the Deputy Chair of CUAP for factual checks on 14 June 2017.

This report is released under the authorisation of the AQA Board. All enquiries regarding the report should be directed to Universities New Zealand contact@universitiesnz.ac.nz.

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[17] Education Act 1989, 2011 amendment, S159 AD(2): The Qualifications Authority (or, in the case of universities, the New Zealand Vice-Chancellors Committee) is the body primarily responsible for quality assurance matters in the tertiary education sector.

2. Response to Recommendations in the 2011 Review of CUAP

> **2017 Review Term of Reference 1**
> Assess the effectiveness of CUAP's response to recommendations in its 2011 Review.

On the basis of the documentation provided and the information gained from interviewees, the Panel drew the following conclusions regarding the 2011 recommendations (in bold).

1. **The Panel *recommends* that CUAP, in the interests of further strengthening the postal resolution process, develop guidelines for peer review drawing upon good practices already within the system and upon ethical guidelines such as those in the American Productivity and Quality Center (APQC) Benchmarking Code of Conduct.**

This recommendation has partly been met. The new online system has assisted in providing universities with guidance and individual universities manage this, in most cases, effectively. However it was clear to the Panel that some heterogeneity remains and further guidance drawing on good practice both across the sector and elsewhere would assist. See pages 14-15.

2. **The Panel *recommends* that the ToR 1a (*setting up and applying inter-university course approval, accreditation, and moderation procedures*) be amended to read: "setting up and applying inter-university course approval, accreditation, and moderation procedures, which ensure that the quality of course developments is consonant with high academic standards and mindful of the nation's interests."**

This recommendation has been met. However the 2017 Panel has further comments to make regarding this Term of Reference (Function 1a). See pages 10-13.

3. **The Panel *recommends* that the ToR 1c (*promoting the coherent and balanced development of courses of study within the New Zealand university system and ensuring that the quality of course developments is consonant with high academic standards*) be deleted from CUAP's Terms of Reference, and subsequent items be reordered accordingly.**

This recommendation was not agreed to by the NZVCC. The 2017 Panel accepts the reasons provided. It suggests the imperative underpinning this 2011 recommendation needs to be re-examined by CUAP. The Panel has further comments on this Term of Reference (Function 1c). See pages 17-18.

4. **The Panel *recommends* that the ToR 1d (*facilitating cross-credit arrangements for students transferring between programmes and institutions*) be amended to read: "promoting the development of courses of study within the New Zealand university system that will facilitate the transfer of students between programmes and institutions".**

This recommendation has been met. The 2017 Panel has further comments to make regarding this Term of Reference (Function 1d). See page 18-19.

5. **The Panel *recommends* that the TOR 2d (*in obtaining for NZQA university representatives on bodies, Panels and committees*) be amended to read: "In obtaining university representatives for NZQA approval Panels, committees and other similar bodies, as required".**

This recommendation has been met.

6. **Noting the importance of recurring programme review, the Panel *recommends* that UNZ, under advice from CUAP, establish guidelines for institutional periodic programme review.**

This recommendation has partly been met. The 2017 Panel has further comments to make regarding this matter. See page 12.

7. **The Panel *recommends* that, recognising CUAP has until now required universities to "advise CUAP annually of reviews they have undertaken" (Functions and Procedures 2011-2012, section 4.7), and recognising further that this has not been a particularly effective step in the quality assurance process, UNZ request NZUAAU to ensure that as a fixed feature of its audit process, it review a university's programme review schedule and, where necessary, refer significant non-compliance with this schedule or unsatisfactory programme performance identified through these reviews to CUAP for further consideration.**

This recommendation has been met by AQA. The Cycle 5 audit framework included evaluation of university programme review processes. The AQA submission to the 2017 CUAP Review provided an overview of audit findings for all universities. The 2017 Panel has further comments to make regarding this issue. See page 12.

8. **Noting that all universities undergo various forms of accreditation of programmes by internationally represented bodies, the Panel *recommends* that CUAP should use the outcomes of these reports as an indication of international benchmarking.**

This recommendation has not been met. The Panel notes that it is the individual universities, not CUAP, which use accreditation reviews for benchmarking purposes. The 2017 Panel considers it appropriate that this remains a university responsibility.

9. T**he Panel *recommends* that CUAP's template for programme proposals be amended to demonstrate that the proposed programmes have been assessed by universities in terms of giving effect to the principles of the Treaty of Waitangi.**

This recommendation has been met. The 2017 Panel has further comments to make regarding this matter. See pages 12-13.

10. **The Panel *recommends* that the programme proposal template, and the emphasis of CUAP's deliberations in the peer review process, give more explicit attention to the relationship between research and the programme proposal.**

This recommendation has been met.

11. **The Panel *recommends* that CUAP's programme approval process includes the power for CUAP to seek and/or receive input as deemed necessary from other parties (e.g., professional bodies), with the expectation that this provision would only be used under extraordinary circumstances.**

This recommendation has been met.

12. **The Panel *recommends* that CUAP further develop its website in order to enhance the profile of the approval and accreditation processes and improve ease of access to information for key stakeholders.**

This recommendation has been met. However the 2017 Panel notes that a number of users and visitors to the website have reported that it is cumbersome to use and is not particularly informative. The Panel understands that a refresh of the website is in progress.

13. **The Panel *recommends* that the CUAP programme approvals process be managed online, preferably with a web browser interface, enabling electronic submission, processing, monitoring and reporting of proposals.**

This recommendation has been met. The 2017 Panel has further comments to make regarding this matter. See pages 10-11.

14. **The Panel *recommends* that, in the interests of attending to the full scope of CUAP's responsibilities and in the interests of providing effective continuity, CUAP be supported with a staffing of two positions comprising a senior position (Executive Officer) to coordinate policy matters and an administrative assistant to coordinate the programme approval processes and website.**

This recommendation has been met. However the 2017 Panel was told that the second person works on CUAP matters only one day a week and that the senior officer has duties in addition to CUAP. If the role of CUAP is extended (see pages 25-26) then the current staffing complement may need to be reviewed.

In addition to a second staff member, which to some extent mitigates risk from single point failure, Universities NZ has improved documentation around CUAP processes. The Panel notes that Universities NZ also has a designated staff member responsible for website management (for all of Universities NZ).

3.   CUAP's Terms of Reference and Additional Responsibilities

> **2017 Review Term of Reference 2**
> Determine how effectively CUAP has met its Terms of Reference as set out in 2.2 of the CUAP Handbook and including CUAP's Additional Responsibilities as set out in 2.3.

In evaluating how effectively CUAP meets its own Terms of Reference the Panel had to rely on the views of interviewees and those who provided submissions, since CUAP's self-review portfolio did not address this matter directly. The Statement of Service Performance of Universities New Zealand reports on CUAP activities under Output 1 – Academic Quality Assurance.[18] The Panel understands that the format required for the Universities New Zealand Annual Report is not conducive to full reporting against CUAP's Terms of Reference. The Panel suggests that if CUAP's Terms of Reference are to be meaningful in guiding its activities then CUAP should report against these to the Vice-Chancellors' Committee on an annual basis. Such reporting should be a matter for discussion by CUAP at a meeting of the Committee (see page 25).

This Chapter refers only to CUAP's Terms of Reference 1-4, defined by CUAP as its Functions.

3.1   CUAP Function 1a

> 1a. To act for Universities New Zealand and on behalf of the New Zealand community of universities by setting up and applying inter-university programme approval, accreditation, and moderation procedures, which ensure that the quality of programme developments is consonant with high academic standards and mindful of the nation's interests*.*

The Panel explored in some detail the procedures used by CUAP and the universities for approval, accreditation and moderation of new programmes and qualifications, as well as changes which require CUAP approval. The majority of written submissions also addressed this. At the Panel's request, a demonstration of the on-line Proposal Management System was provided by staff at Victoria University of Wellington. The on-line system is also used for managing Graduating Year Review (GYR) submissions.

The procedures to be followed for approval and moderation (the Graduating Year Review), templates, timelines and criteria are laid out in the CUAP Handbook, available in hard copy and on the Universities New Zealand website.[19] Some submissions referred to the usefulness of the Handbook in providing guidelines on application of the criteria.[20] In particular, it was appreciated that the guidelines differentiate those matters which are a CUAP concern and those which are the concern of the individual universities. Such guidance assists in ensuring consistency. The Panel considered the documentation in the Handbook to be clear and comprehensive. It notes that some users suggested that terminology might be simplified or clarified (see page 31).

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[18]   Universities New Zealand Financial Statement for Year ended 30 June 2016.
[19]   www.universitiesnz.ac.nz/aboutus/sc/cuap/cuap-handbook accessed 030417.
[20]   CUAP Handbook pp19-24.

A range of views was expressed about the online system for distributing and discussing proposals among universities and their internal peer reviewers. Users were unanimous that it was a considerable improvement on the previous paper-based and email system. However some users suggested that refinement is needed, in particular to facilitate streamlining of internal systems. Universities reported that the online system, while more efficient in the stage where universities commented on proposals, nevertheless did not appreciably reduce internal workload. For instance, some reported needing to cut-and-paste from internal emails into the system where previously such emails might have been forwarded directly to the relevant parties. The universities dealt with workload matters individually, some more effectively than others. The Panel noted that there is potential for sharing good practice and that CUAP could exert some leadership in facilitating this.

> **Commendation:** *The Panel **commends** CUAP and Universities New Zealand for the successful introduction of the online Proposal Management System.*

> **Recommendation:** *The Panel **recommends** that CUAP, with the assistance of Universities New Zealand staff responsible for online development, facilitate a discussion with university users of the online Proposal Management System, to identify current challenges, and that a plan then be developed to refine the system to ensure greater ease and efficiency of use.*

The Panel reviewed some programme proposals, nominated by the Panel, which had been considered by CUAP. It concluded that the documentation provided was thorough and addressed all relevant criteria. These proposals confirmed the robustness of the proposal requirements and the manner in which the sample universities had responded to them.

To the extent that the universities collectively assess proposals against their own standards of quality, and that the peer reviewers are particularly concerned with protecting the standards of their disciplines (which in most cases in turn reflect international standards and expectations, sometimes including professional accreditation standards), the Panel is satisfied that the procedures used by CUAP "ensure that the quality of programme developments is consonant with high academic standards".

CUAP's main mechanism for moderation is the Graduating Year Review (GYR), normally required at the time of graduation of the first cohort from a new programme or qualification. CUAP also has the authority to require a report on progress at an earlier point if it has some particular concerns about implementation of a programme (a review assessment). GYRs focus on the original objectives of a proposal and whether these have been met.

The Panel reviewed the GYR schedule and outcomes for recent years. It noted that the process had been refined since the last CUAP Review, to now have each GYR allocated to two specific CUAP members who are expected to deliberate on these in detail and report satisfaction or otherwise to the Committee. CUAP may ask for further reviews if it has concerns. The Panel found no evidence that this overall system of review is inadequate but it did have a concern that the new procedures limited the opportunity for cross-sector discussion. By individualising the assessment of GYRs to just two members of the Committee there is a risk that systemic issues might be overlooked. One

university also commented that where changes to a programme are made incrementally over several years CUAP currently has no mechanism for assessing whether it has deviated significantly from what was originally approved or whether the fitness-for-purpose has been compromised or improved.

The 2011 CUAP Review recommended (R7) that CUAP ask [then] NZUAAU (now AQA) to audit programme review schedules within individual universities. AQA did this. The Panel was surprised, however, that it was AQA in its submission to the Panel (rather than CUAP in its self-review report) that recounted its findings regarding programme reviews. The Panel gained no evidence that CUAP had discussed or reflected on the AQA audit findings, even though AQA's regular institutional reviews and the universities' professional programme reviews are the major means whereby universities ensure ongoing programme quality and fitness-for-purpose. Appendix B of the CUAP Handbook provides guidelines on the process of university programme review, but not on what should be covered in a review. In its response to the 2011 recommendation, CUAP stated that it requires universities to report the number of programme reviews it undertakes annually. The Panel was told that in some cases an executive summary covering a university's programme reviews might be submitted. CUAP minutes viewed by the Panel indicate that normally such reports are "received" by the Committee with little, if any, discussion. The Panel is of the view that a document simply listing a number of reviews neither ensures moderation of quality nor facilitates enhancement. Neither does it facilitate an understanding by CUAP of progressive changes to programmes, which might individually not require CUAP approval, but over time potentially evolve a programme away from what was originally approved.

> **Recommendation:** *The Panel **recommends** that CUAP discuss how institutional and professional programme reviews might best be used by CUAP for moderation purposes, and that it develop and implement a process whereby the outcomes of institutional programme reviews are reported and analysed by or for CUAP so that issues and good practice of potential sector impact may be identified.*

An issue which was raised by several interviewees related to the timing of feedback from professional bodies on proposals which might involve accreditation or registration of graduates. In some cases a profession prefers to "approve" a programme prior to it being offered while for others it is the outcome (i.e. the graduate outcomes achieved) which is subject to scrutiny. According to the CUAP procedures, individual universities are responsible for gaining this stakeholder input at the proposal stage. In some cases a programme change might be prompted by the accreditation body, but is still dependent on the provider university seeking CUAP approval. The Panel could see no simple resolution of the different professional approaches, though it notes that one professional body, recognising the problem, was willing to offer an indicative, non-binding, "opinion" on proposals. The Panel encourages CUAP to maintain dialogue with key professions about the process issue.

The 2011 Review of CUAP recommended (R9) that attention be paid to obligations under Te Tiriti o Waitangi (The Treaty). CUAP's response was to include an item on the proposal template where

universities confirmed that they had considered possible implications for Māori.[21] From its interviews, the Panel deduced that universities addressed this requirement in various ways, most commonly by forwarding proposals to a DVC(Māori) or other Māori staff for comment. In some cases the internal university committee responsible for approving proposals includes a designated Māori member. The Panel concluded that this consultation was carried out diligently and that a number of universities had developed sophisticated engagement processes to give effect to the 2011 Review recommendation.

> **Commendation:** *The Panel **commends** CUAP's success in ensuring all universities engage Māori in the development of proposals, as appropriate to the discipline.*

With regard to the requirement that quality of programme development be "mindful of the nation's interests", the Panel was unable to determine whether CUAP procedures, *per se,* are able to ensure that the requirement is met. The Panel found no evidence either of what "the nation's interests" are or how these might reasonably be determined. While some proposals might aim to respond to labour market demand or perceptions of social need, the notion of "the nation's interests" lacks clarity. Furthermore, having peer reviewers focusing on what they perceive to be the nation's interests would likely detract from their academic focus and, in most cases, would be beyond their areas of expertise. The Panel suggests that this clause be removed from Function 1a in CUAP's Terms of Reference.

From its investigations the Panel was convinced that the success of CUAP's peer review process of approval relies heavily on the commitment and work of a large number of people across the universities, both academic and professional staff.

> **Commendation:** *The Panel **commends** CUAP and the staff of Universities New Zealand and New Zealand universities who, through their commitment, expertise and dedication in many ways contribute to a successful, effective and stable process for national programme approval and accreditation**.***

3.2 CUAP Function 1b

> 1b To act for Universities New Zealand and on behalf of the New Zealand community of universities by granting or refusing approval under the agreed procedures to new qualifications and courses of study, or changes in qualifications and courses of study for which approval is required, and for which due application has been made by a university.

CUAP meets the expectations of this Function. In considering a proposal CUAP may:

- Approve it unconditionally
- Approve it conditionally
- Defer a decision pending review and resubmission of the proposal by the submitter
- Decline approval.

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[21] Criterion 4 of proposal requirements. CUAP Handbook p17.

Universities New Zealand provided data which showed that for the period mid 2012-mid 2016, 99.7% of proposals put to CUAP were approved; 0.3% (three proposals) were either withdrawn or approval was declined.

Most submissions and interviewees expressed strong support and praise for CUAP stating, for example, that CUAP "performs a vital function for universities", it "provides a valuable service" and that "it allows stakeholders (particularly students) to have confidence in the appropriateness, relevance and standards of university education". The Panel was also made aware that the processes whereby CUAP meets the Function might be enhanced by attention to some apparent weaknesses.

The current approval or refusal process relies on a system of peer review of proposals which takes place within the universities. Scrutiny involves two aspects: (1) assessment against the gazetted criteria (the Rules), and (2) assessment against disciplinary standards. Many submissions and interviewees noted that peer review is a strength of the CUAP process. All universities have staff whose areas of expertise include generic programme requirements. Where there is no disciplinary expertise in New Zealand outside the proposing university (for example, with dentistry, veterinary science) then CUAP may seek international comment. A situation which challenges the current system occurs when several universities propose a jointly-awarded programme, such that the number of review universities is reduced. Such a situation might also justify seeking overseas reviewers.

Several matters regarding peer review were raised with the Panel. It was noted that for some new programmes which were outside of or spanned conventional disciplines there might be few if any true "discipline experts" available. This might particularly be the case with innovative developments. Peer experts made best attempts at evaluation on the basis of existing knowledge. The Panel notes that in at least one other jurisdiction this expert opinion is sought by the university proposing the programme, and reported, prior to the approval body's deliberations. The responsibility thus shifts to the proposer, rather than the reviewing university.

One submission suggested that CUAP appoint panels of expert reviewers, who might become experts as reviewers as well as in their disciplines, and who might be paid for their service. The Panel is aware that such systems exist in some other jurisdictions. However these draw their expertise, and funding, from a much bigger university base. The Panel raised the suggestion with interviewees but gained no enthusiasm for the idea, both because of cost and because of the potential size and complexity of the task in appointing and managing panels.

The Panel heard from several interviewees that better guidance to reviewers is needed, particularly in ensuring focus is strictly on curriculum, teaching and assessment and not on such matters as marketability or potential competition. One submission commented that this potential conflict of interest is a "fundamental weakness" in the current process. The Panel was told CUAP had paid attention to these risks when the new on-line processes were being developed. Yet it appears that they still need to be addressed more explicitly than is currently the case.

It was suggested that guidance is also needed to ensure that non-discipline matters are assessed by people familiar with the criteria though other interviewees stated that the guidance already given is adequate and that in some cases internal guidance had been developed. This is an area where the Panel concluded that variability probably reflected individual university experience and practice more than it did CUAP procedures or guidance. However the Panel suggests that opportunity might be found for universities to share their usual practice and learn from each other's good practices and challenges. It notes that R1 from the 2011 Review, to codify good practice, has not been fully addressed. Given the implications of expert assessment, which is fundamental to ensuring programme integrity, the Panel believes this recommendation should be revisited.

> **Recommendation:** *The Panel **recommends** that CUAP revisit R1 from the 2011 Review, to review relevant codes of practice for expert reviewers, and adopt an appropriate set of guidelines for reviewers of New Zealand university programmes for which CUAP approval is sought.*

The Panel notes the importance of moderation of reviewers' comments by senior quality assurance staff before these are passed on to other universities.

An issue raised by several interviewees and submissions as of major concern is the timeline taken for approval. Basically, approval prior to implementation involves three steps: university approval (through, typically, department, faculty/college, academic committee, Academic Board, Council); CUAP approval; approval by the Vice-Chancellors' Committee. One submission asked that CUAP and NZVCC meetings be timed to be closer to each other; another suggested that if the ratification (by Vice-Chancellors) could be brought forward by at least a month for the final approval round this would be better aligned with university enrolment periods. It was also suggested that the eight week period for reviewer comment and response dated from when this process was conducted by mail and could now be shortened.

Several universities noted that the total time taken to develop and approve a new proposal is in large part internal to the university and would occur irrespective of CUAP processes. Nevertheless, the Panel concluded that an expedited process could be adopted given the electronic system for the deliberations on programmes and the potential for video or teleconference meetings of the Committee. The Panel suggests firstly, that a rolling approval system is feasible, that is not restricted to two meetings a year of the Committee but where proposals which receive no objections might be subject to electronic approval by the Committee; secondly, that CUAP might consider having more frequent shorter meetings to address specific issues or proposals, using video conferencing, teleconferencing, or other appropriate technology; and thirdly, that the time lag between CUAP approval and NZVCC approval could be minimised by better timing of meetings and/or requesting electronic approval from the Vice-Chancellors.

> **Recommendation:** *The Panel **recommends** that CUAP and Universities New Zealand consider introducing electronic approval, both by CUAP and subsequently by the Vice-Chancellors' Committee, for proposals which receive no objections.*

Recommendation: *The Panel **recommends** that if electronic approval is considered feasible, then CUAP allows for proposals to be submitted at any time, with the understanding that any proposal for which objections are outstanding will be held as an agenda item for a formal meeting of the Committee.*

While the Panel accepts that university activities, including internal programme approval processes, tend to be cyclic, adoption of a rolling process by CUAP would offer choice and a more nimble process overall.

Several submissions raised with the Panel the issue of whether or not New Zealand universities should be self-accrediting, thereby removing the role of CUAP in the programme approval process. The Panel explored this matter through the submissions and with interviewees. While a minority supported the concept in principle, arguing for greater agility and autonomy for individual universities, the majority argued against it. The majority's arguments implied that if the purpose of self-accreditation was to expedite programme approval and delivery then it was based on false premises. Reasons offered to the Panel included:

- The majority of the time taken to develop and approve a proposal is internal to the university, not due to a CUAP requirement;
- Time spent in development and approval internally is appropriate for a "product" which has high value and which, if it failed, would have serious consequences for many people (particularly students);
- If a university was self-accrediting it might well take longer to approve its programmes since it would be likely to have to carry out for itself functions currently undertaken by CUAP (e.g. external review);
- Universities which are self-accrediting would be very likely to be subject to additional quality assurance regimes in order to validate their self-accreditation status.

The issues identified with regard to CUAP were largely ones of efficiency and timeliness rather than a fundamental concern with effectiveness.

The data referred to above (page 14) show that in the period mid-2012 to mid-2016 only 0.3% of proposals were declined approval by CUAP, thereby negating any suggestion that CUAP holds up the process by declining to approve. Rather, several interviewees noted that the CUAP process adds value to many proposals by the improvement steps taken during review. This claim is borne out by the data which showed, for example, that in two approval rounds (2015 and 2016) of 214 proposals submitted, 37 underwent some amendment as a consequence of reviewer comments before being approved.

The Panel also learned that CUAP already has processes in place to manage approvals presented under urgency. Situations cited included instances where an existing provider was unable to offer a programme and a new provider was approved urgently to protect the interests of students; where approval of programmes was required urgently to meet external requirements such as off-shore

delivery requirements. In such situations approval is normally processed within a two-week timeframe with delivery effective immediately.

Almost all of the submissions stated explicitly that CUAP's processes are a strength of the New Zealand university system. Mostly the processes work well and there is a commonly held view that the collegiality and open discussion between a community of peers adds academic value as well as providing a benchmarking mechanism across the universities. Interviewees commented that CUAP respects the autonomy of universities. One non-university submission, having reviewed alternative accreditation and approval systems in other jurisdictions, commented that the *status quo* (i.e. CUAP) would appear to offer the most advantages in terms of effectiveness and efficiency. A university submission commented that self-accreditation would mean each university replicating activity that is currently undertaken by CUAP. Another external stakeholder commented that CUAP facilitated consideration of a wider range of views than would be achieved easily by any single university. However, yet another stakeholder suggested that university internal systems are sufficiently robust to not require an additional step of external approval. There was a suggestion that CUAP could focus on exceptions to current provisions, where there might be no rules or a risk to quality (MOOCs were given as an example).

From the arguments outlined above, the Panel concludes that there is minimal support within the sector for the argument that self-accreditation would enhance programme approval in universities. Rather, the Panel reiterates that opportunities exist currently to enhance current processes to counter any residual criticisms about timeliness or agility. The Panel also comments that although the universities currently are not self-accrediting, they are self-moderating in that beyond the Graduating Year Review all programme monitoring is conducted individually at universities' discretion.

3.3 CUAP Function 1c

> 1c. To act for Universities New Zealand and on behalf of the New Zealand community of universities by promoting the coherent and balanced development of courses of study within the New Zealand university system and ensuring that the quality of programme developments is consonant with high academic standards.

The 2011 Review recommended (R3) deletion of this term of reference (Function). The Panel was told that the Vice-Chancellors' Committee decided to retain it. Submissions and interviewees had mixed views about what this Function is intended to mean, whether it remains appropriate and if or how CUAP might fulfil it. One submission suggested that accreditation by CUAP of sub-degree vocational provision contravened the intention of this Function.

The consultative and iterative process of programme approval is the basis of universities' confidence that CUAP is effective in "ensuring that the quality of programme developments is consonant with high academic standards". This confidence is reinforced by accreditation of a number of professional programmes by organisations which are international or which reflect international standards (for

example, AACSB; IPENZ). Professional accreditations, however, are individual university initiatives, though for some programmes CUAP may require evidence of provisional or indicative acceptance.

The clause of Function 1c "ensuring that the quality of programme developments is consonant with high academic standards" is now covered in Function 1a, as recommended by the 2011 Panel. It does not need to be repeated in 1c.

The issue which is contentious with Function 1c relates to "promoting the coherent and balanced development of courses of study …". As in 2011, interviewees expressed views that this is not a CUAP responsibility; that it would be difficult for CUAP to achieve this; that a focus on this would detract from dispassionate peer review which should properly emphasise academic issues.

On the other hand, however, some individuals indicated the imperative behind this Function is important. The Panel heard that CUAP could assist towards the aim of this clause by providing a forum where issues related to national provision could be discussed and potentially addressed. A recent example cited was the provision of language programmes where most universities found them financially unsustainable to provide individually, but where sharing of teaching responsibility across several universities facilitated provision. The Panel was told that joint teaching arrangements were an outcome of CUAP deliberations.

> **Recommendation:** *The Panel **recommends** that CUAP discuss Function 1c of its Terms of Reference and revise the wording to reflect more accurately what is properly and feasibly CUAP business.*

A possible wording that might be considered by CUAP is:

1c. To act for Universities New Zealand and on behalf of the New Zealand community of universities by providing a forum where issues related to national provision may be discussed and potentially addressed.

3.4 CUAP Function 1d

> 1d. To act for Universities New Zealand and on behalf of the New Zealand community of universities by encouraging the development of courses of study within the New Zealand university system that will facilitate the transfer of students between programmes and institutions.

The Panel considered that CUAP meets the intent of this Function. The criteria for programme approval include outcome statements which would facilitate the identification of relevant credit.[22] The Panel was told that during its deliberations CUAP does ensure that the possibility of credit transfer is evident in proposals. CUAP also has clear guidelines on cross-crediting and recognition of

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[22] CUAP criteria reflect the "Rules" for programmes articulated in the Education Act S253 1(a) for which NZQA is responsible but which, under the provisions of the Act, NZVCC assumes responsibility for with respect to universities. The Criteria are listed in the CUAP Handbook, pp19-24.

prior learning (Handbook Section 5.3 "Definitions, principles and guidelines for cross-crediting and transfer of credit"). All universities have regulations related to credit transfer. In the past CUAP also addressed and resolved differences in credit point systems which had impeded some credit recognition.

The peer review process for new programmes and qualifications inevitably considers equivalence between what is proposed and what might be offered elsewhere in New Zealand and, in some cases, overseas. CUAP also pays attention to nomenclature of qualifications in an endeavour to ensure common understanding of the content and level. All qualifications must meet the requirements of the New Zealand Qualifications Framework (NZQF).[23]

The Panel notes the view of one submission that there is little incentive for universities to "encourage" transfer between institutions given the current completion, progression and retention focus in the Tertiary Education Commission (TEC) performance model.[24] It is possible that the wording of this Function is misleading as to what CUAP can actually do. Rather than "*encouraging the development ….*" it might be more accurate to phrase this as "*ensuring new programmes developed .. do not impede the transfer of students".* The Panel notes that the Rules for approval and accreditation which all New Zealand institutions must satisfy include regulations referring to credit recognition and transfer and to recognition of prior learning.[25]

The Panel heard that CUAP might play a role in ensuring greater transparency of potential credit transfer arrangements. It is not obvious to the Panel how CUAP might do this but the Panel suggests CUAP might be a forum for discussion of situations where credit transfer arrangements were difficult or failed.

3.5 CUAP Function 2a

2a. To act for Universities New Zealand as the body which the New Zealand Qualifications Authority (NZQA) will consult about policies and criteria for the approval of courses of study and their accreditation in the universities.

The Panel was satisfied by its discussions with both Universities New Zealand and NZQA staff that this Function is met. It is noted that this happens formally and also informally, through the Joint Consultative Group (see section 6.10). University representatives who referred to this role affirmed its importance and were satisfied that it was carried out adequately.

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[23]www.nzqa.govt.nz/providers-partners/approval-accreditation-and-registration/listing-qualifications-on-the-nzqf/ accessed 040417.

[24] www.tec.govt.nz/funding/funding-and-performance/performance/teo/ accessed 040417.

[25] CUAP Handbook p17.

3.6 CUAP Function 2b

> 2b. To act for Universities New Zealand through its subcommittee on university entrance, as the body which is consulted by NZQA on the standards to be established for entrance to university, and which makes recommendations to NZQA on such standards.

The subcommittee on University Entrance comprises the Deputy Chair of CUAP (who is Chair of the subcommittee), eight university representatives, two representatives from secondary schools (one state and one private) and one member from university student recruitment administration. The subcommittee has an executive of three members. The committee meets once a year and carries out most of its business by email.

Most comments made to the Panel reflected satisfaction that this Function is met. The Panel was satisfied that this work is done well.

More than one interviewee or submission advised the Panel that CUAP and Universities New Zealand are heavily reliant on the current Deputy Chair of CUAP for leadership with respect to university entrance and engagement with NZQA more generally (see page 33).

3.7 CUAP Function 2c

> 2c. To act for Universities New Zealand in establishing, through its subcommittee on University Entrance and after consulting with NZQA, criteria for provisional entrance and *ad eundem* admission at entrance level.

The Panel was advised that this Function is met. It was pointed out to the Panel that the term "provisional entrance" is obsolete and should be replaced with "discretionary entrance". The subcommittee's role in ensuring common standards for qualifications such as International Baccalaureate and Cambridge qualifications and overseas qualifications is important given that once a student is admitted via this route to one university the student may then transfer to any other New Zealand university. In 2014 the subcommittee had reviewed admission qualifications from over 28 countries to ensure equivalence with the updated New Zealand entrance standard.

The functions of the subcommittee on University Entrance are broad, covering the school curriculum and secondary/tertiary interface matters as well as a range of matters pertaining to entrance to university (e.g. assessment of foundation programmes and international entrance-level qualifications; forms of admission).[26] One of the objectives of Universities New Zealand in its Statement of Service Performance (SSP) is "to contribute to the process of curriculum development and examination in the senior secondary school". The most recent SSP reports that the subcommittee on University Entrance does this. The subcommittee is also a forum for monitoring achievement outcomes of students admitted via different routes, to ensure acceptability and equivalence across the sector. The Panel queries why a stand-alone Function is required to address

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[26] CUAP Handbook pp56-57.

two specific forms of admission but does not refer to other functions of the subcommittee. A revision to Function 2c is recommended.

> **Recommendation:** *The Panel **recommends** that Function 2c of CUAP's Terms of Reference be amended to read: To act for Universities New Zealand in establishing, through its subcommittee on University Entrance and after consulting with NZQA, criteria for <u>discretionary</u> entrance and ad eundem admission at entrance level <u>and to determine whether international qualifications and local foundation programmes meet these criteria</u>.*

> **Recommendation:** *The Panel **recommends** that CUAP consider whether its role in understanding and communicating issues related to school curriculum and the secondary/tertiary interface are sufficiently germane to its purpose as to warrant a specific Function within its Terms of Reference, and if so to draft accordingly a new Function 2d with current 2d becoming 2e.*

> **Commendation:** *The Panel **commends** the work of the subcommittee on University Entrance, and in particular its Chair, in ensuring university interests are communicated well to NZQA and ensuring that admission criteria are established and evaluated in a robust manner.*

3.8 CUAP Function 2d

> 2d. To act for Universities New Zealand in obtaining university representatives for NZQA approval Panels, committees and other similar bodies, as required.

The Panel was advised that this happens infrequently, but procedures are in place to meet requests if these are received.

3.9 CUAP Function 3

> 3. To provide advice and comment on academic developments across the university system to institutions, professional bodies and agencies*.*

Several submissions argued that this Function is increasingly important to universities and the activity should be strengthened. CUAP, or a committee of Deputy/Assistant Vice-Chancellors (Academic)[27], was seen by some as potentially providing leadership in discussions of such emergent issues as the future of written examinations; management of academic integrity; processes for academic benchmarking; risks to universities' critic and conscience role. The Panel was told that CUAP, as a committee, does little between meetings. Stakeholders noted that CUAP comprised a significant resource of member experience and knowledge that more use could be made of. CUAP did not appear to have any significant profile outside the universities and, according to one stakeholder, made little contribution to public comment or strategic discussion among universities.

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[27] Reference is to the senior academic manager. The title of this role varies across universities.

It was suggested that CUAP could provide much better communication about academic developments to universities and other stakeholders, for example in regular newsletters or via webinars or online video resources. A formal communique summarising decisions and discussions soon after each CUAP meeting was suggested. One submission commented that discussion papers prepared by or on behalf of CUAP are usually well received by universities.

Non-university stakeholders commented that it was difficult to find where or how CUAP provided comment or advice. The Panel was told that there is little interaction with professional bodies beyond that required for programme approval (see page 34). On the other hand, the Panel was told that CUAP was "rarely asked" for advice or comment on academic developments by institutions, professional bodies or agencies. Where there was interaction it appeared to be at the level of individual initiative.

The Panel was told that currently it is mostly the Deputy Chair of CUAP or Executive Director of Universities New Zealand who are asked for and give advice or comment. While this is no doubt appropriate, the Panel agreed that there is opportunity for CUAP either as a committee or through its secretariat to be proactive on some issues and to provide leadership to the university sector in discussing academic matters of concern.

> **Recommendation:** *The Panel **recommends** that CUAP and Universities New Zealand explore ways in which CUAP or a similar group (such as the DVC(A)s) might provide leadership to the university sector in raising and discussing emergent academic and professional issues and issues of concern to the sector, and in facilitating the sharing of good practice.*

In reflecting on the above recommendation, the Panel also observes that Universities New Zealand currently appears to have no oversight or consideration of pedagogical matters beyond those raised during programme approval. CUAP's mandate could well extend to include these.

3.10 CUAP Function 4

> 4. To undertake specific tasks as may be requested of it from time to time by Universities New Zealand.

The Panel was provided with examples of activity which happened on request, for example participation in working groups and presentations to visiting delegations. The Panel noted that much of this activity is undertaken by the Deputy Chair.

The Joint Consultative group (JCG), is a group including staff of NZQA, AQA and Universities New Zealand plus two CUAP members which meets quarterly. JCG is intended to "provide a forum for regular consultation on matters of mutual interest and shared responsibilities".[28] It provides an opportunity for a "heads up" on any emerging issues and for informal consultation on emerging issues. CUAP members said it provided a forum for views to be put strongly if necessary, without

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[28] CUAP Handbook, p13.

these having to be formalised into a submission. NZQA members considered the group to be effective and commented that more actual work involving the parties jointly happened outside JCG rather than in it. Current examples included work on the review of university entrance requirements; aligning school curriculum subjects in Māori medium and an upcoming review of NCEA to be led by the Ministry of Education. A suggestion was raised that JCG might be more forward-thinking in its discussions. The Panel was told that JCG was considering including a student member. The Panel would support this proposal.

Standing Procedure 17 within CUAP's Terms of Reference states that the Committee (i.e. CUAP) shall have the power to establish subcommittees. The Panel was apprised of the establishment of a subcommittee of two CUAP members (including the Deputy Chair) to assess international matters, for example proposals to have off-shore delivery of established programmes. The Panel learned that this subcommittee worked effectively and efficiently to expedite decisions.

Function 4 appears to be met. The Panel was not told of any requests which CUAP had not fulfilled.

4. Adherence to the INQAAHE Guidelines of Good Practice[29]

> **2017 Review Term of Reference 3**
> Determine the extent to which CUAP processes and practices reflect, or should reflect, international best practice (using the INQAAHE Guidelines of Good Practice as a framework).

A summary of the evidence provided by CUAP and the Panel's summary evaluation against each of the INQAAHE Guidelines is provided in Appendix 2. Preceding sections of this report address many of the Guidelines.

Unless otherwise stated, the Panel agrees that CUAP meets the Guidelines, though in some cases a lack of evaluative information prevents the Panel from assessing how well this is done.

This section of the report highlights specific guidelines where the Panel had concerns. The Panel notes that section 2.3 of the GGP, external review, is not normally CUAP's role since it implies institutional review and the scope of CUAP's quality assurance activities relates only to programme approval, accreditation and moderation and excludes institutional quality assurance. However GGP 2.4 related to self-evaluation can be understood to include programme reviews undertaken within universities. CUAP has taken that approach in its self-review report. As CUAP is an external quality assurance committee the principles of the other guidelines are relevant.

4.1 The Structure of the EQAA (i.e. CUAP)[30]

> GGP 1.1.2 The EQAA takes into consideration relevant guidelines issued by international networks and other associations, in formulating its policies and practices.

CUAP stated that its membership of INQAAHE and attendance at INQAAHE conferences satisfied this guideline. It was confident its practices are in harmony with international best practice but provided no evidence of this. The Panel explored benchmarking with interviewees. It was told that it was difficult to benchmark CUAP because its practice (i.e. approval by peer review and consensus by universities) was unusual.

The Panel considers that such arguments fail to recognise the principles of programme approval and accreditation which apply in any jurisdiction, including the accreditation activity of a number of professional bodies. They also fail to recognise that elements of a process (for example, peer review) can be benchmarked against organisations which might well differ in purpose. The Panel was repeatedly told that CUAP processes are effective and efficient, because they work. Few submissions or interviewees made reference to other local or international systems for the purposes of benchmarking comparisons. The Panel could not determine how CUAP, or Universities New Zealand, knows that its practices reflect good international practice.

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[29] See p4.
[30] External Quality Assurance Agency.

Recommendation: *The Panel **recommends** that CUAP, with Universities New Zealand, identify potential benchmarking processes or partners and develop a strategy for evaluating CUAP processes against recognised good practice internationally.*

The Panel comments that professional accreditation bodies and the INQAAHE register of organisations which have met its Guidelines might provide a starting point for identification of organisations demonstrating good practice.[31]

> GGP 1.3.4 The EQAA has a strategic plan that helps it assess its progress and plan for future developments.

CUAP argued that a strategic plan was not appropriate given it is a subcommittee of the Vice-Chancellors' Committee. The Panel disagrees. Furthermore, several submissions pointed to areas where CUAP could be proactive and exert some leadership. In the Panel's view a strategic plan or some strategic objectives would assist in this.

The objectives related to quality assurance embedded within Universities New Zealand's Statement of Service Performance (SSP) provide some guidance on measurable outputs but, as is appropriate to the nature of the SSP document, do not address strategic matters.[32] Furthermore, if CUAP is to meet the "Enhancement-led" principle it ascribes to (with AQA - see pages 1-2) it would benefit from clear objectives as to how this is to be achieved. Published annual strategic objectives would also assist in informing both university and external stakeholders about CUAP's role.

Recommendation: *The Panel **recommends** that CUAP discuss with Universities New Zealand the form and content of a set of strategic objectives or a strategic plan for the Committee, emphasising areas where CUAP might take a leadership role in assisting the university sector in understanding potential future developments and in meeting their academic objectives.*

4.2 Staffing

> GGP 1.4.1 The EQAA has a well-trained, qualified staff able to conduct external evaluation effectively and efficiently in accordance with its mission statement and its methodological approach

In the context of the Guideline, which refers to experts carrying out the external evaluation, CUAP is well served by the peers in universities who do this work voluntarily. Extrapolating from the number of proposals out for review in any given round it is clear that the number of expert reviewers involved is significant. Most do this work out of loyalty to the New Zealand universities and commitment to their discipline. Its value should not be understated.

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[31] www.inqaahe.org/aligned-agencies accessed 050417.
[32] www.universitiesnz.ac.nz/files/NZVCC%20Financial%20Statements%2030%20June%202016.pdf accessed 030517.

Commendation: *The Panel **commends** the academic staff in universities who carry out peer review of proposals for their commitment and willingness to share their expertise for the betterment of the sector as a whole.*

Submissions referred to secretariat support as effective. Stakeholders and university administrators appreciated the assistance provided. Some university staff requested more timely turnaround of decisions and minutes and more proactive leadership in preparation of discussion papers. The Panel was satisfied that the staffing provided is currently adequate to serve the Committee but suggests that if CUAP is to take on new responsibilities as suggested in this Review report (such as developing a communications strategy or being proactive in leading discussions or workshops) then a review of staffing capacity, expertise and professional development will be needed.

The Panel comments elsewhere on the heavy reliance on the CUAP Deputy Chair for carrying out the Committee's responsibilities (see pages 20 and 33).

4.3 Decision-making (GGP 3.1)

One submission critiqued the CUAP decision-making process which relies on consensus but when consensus is not reached a conclusion is determined by majority decision (Standing Procedure 15). The submission argued that a simple majority vote risked treating as equal all universities, whether or not they have expertise in the discipline or field of study in question. The Panel concluded that the process is not inappropriate and that all CUAP members who are senior academics, should have the expertise to evaluate arguments made regarding the proposal. In any event, a final decision would remain protected by an appeal process (see below).

The Panel did, however, support a request for clarification of the inconsistency between Standing Procedure 15 that specified a majority decision and Guideline 6.7.2 on pp 47-48 of the CUAP Handbook which states that "*all* CUAP members are [to be] in favour" of a decision on a deferred proposal.[33]

> **Recommendation:** *The Panel **recommends** CUAP checks, and makes amendments if necessary, to ensure there is consistency between the requirements for decision-making specified in the Standing Procedures and those reproduced in the CUAP Handbook.*

4.4 Appeals and Complaints (GGP 3.2)

3.2.1   The EQAA has procedures in place to deal in a consistent way with complaints about its procedures or operation;

3.2.2   The EQAA has clear, published procedures for handling appeals related to its external review and decision-making processes;

3.2.3   Appeals are conducted by a Panel that was not responsible for the original decision and has no conflict of interest; appeals need not necessarily be conducted outside the EQAA.

[33] Emphasis added.

In light of INQAAHE GGP 3.2, the Panel concluded that CUAP's Standing Order 16 needs attention.

CUAP Standing Order 16:
Any dispute as to whether a particular decision of the Committee has been properly taken within the Terms of Reference shall be referred to Universities New Zealand whose decision shall determine the dispute.

In its self-review CUAP cited Standing Procedure 16 in support of the above Guidelines but commented that GGP 3.2.2 did not apply. The Panel disagrees that 3.2.2 does not apply to CUAP. If the universities and external stakeholders are to have confidence in CUAP's processes then these should be public, including its appeal procedures. One external submission also commented on this.

The Panel has several other concerns.

Standing Procedure 16 states that Universities New Zealand shall make any decision but the self-review report (page 24) states that it is the Vice-Chancellors' Committee who would decide. This confusion might well reflect ambiguity in terminology, given that "Universities New Zealand" is the operating name of the New Zealand Vice-Chancellors' Committee.[34] However from the style of the text the Panel assumes the self-review refers to the *committee of* Vice-Chancellors, not the staff of Universities New Zealand. While Universities New Zealand might receive any complaint or appeal, it is not appropriate for Universities New Zealand to determine the dispute if it emanates from a decision of its staff or a committee.

The Panel was told of a case where a decision of CUAP had been challenged. From the reports provided to the Panel, the process met CUAP's Standing Procedure 16 but nevertheless appeared to be *ad hoc*, and did not fall within the expectations of the INQAAHE Guidelines 3.2.1 or 3.2.3.

The Panel considers that CUAP is at risk if clear complaints and appeals procedures are not articulated, published and followed.

> **Recommendation:** *The Panel **recommends** that CUAP urgently develop and publish a clear complaints and appeals procedure which must be followed when any decision of CUAP is challenged. To avoid ambiguity, such procedures must differentiate clearly any role of Universities New Zealand as an operational organisation and the Vice-Chancellors' Committee as a decision-making committee of Vice-Chancellors.*

Once the above procedures are confirmed, Standing Procedure 16 should be amended to clarify the role of Universities New Zealand in the appeals and complaints process.

The Panel comments that appropriate examples of complaints and appeal procedures might be accessed from other quality assurance agencies.[35]

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[34] See explanatory note on terminology, p6
[35] For example, www.qaa.ac.uk/en/AboutUs/Documents/Consolidated-Appeals-Procedure-Aug-15.pdf accessed 050417;

4.5   Other Public Reports

> GGP 4.2.1   The EQAA discloses to the public the decisions about the EQAA resulting from any external review of its own performance.
>
> GGP 4.2.2   The EQAA prepares and disseminates periodically integrated reports on the overall outcomes of QA processes and of any other relevant activities

GGP 4.2.1 and 4.2.2 require EQAAs to publish the reports of their own external reviews. The Panel noted that since a 2012 meeting subsequent to the 2011 Review, there appears to have been no further discussion of the 2011 recommendations by the Committee, even though some actions remain in progress. Some submissions received by the Panel also noted that since 2012 there had been no follow-up report. The Panel advises CUAP to ensure that action reports and status reports are prepared in response to recommendations from the 2017 Review.

CUAP addressed GGP 4.2.1, by stating that the report of the 2011 Review was on the AQA website.[36] The Panel considered that, as a quality assurance body, CUAP should itself take responsibility for making the report available to the public, rather than relying on another organisation, albeit a "sister" organisation.

> **Recommendation:** *The Panel **recommends** that Universities New Zealand publish the report of the 2017 Review and any future reviews on its website as a quality assurance item.*

4.6   Quality Assurance of the EQAA

> GGP 5.1.2   The EQAA has in place mechanisms that enable it to review its own activities in order to respond to the changing nature of higher education, the effectiveness of its operations, and its contribution towards the achievement of its objectives.
>
> GGP 5.1.3   The EQAA periodically conducts a self-review of its own activities, including consideration of its own effects and value. The review includes data collection and analysis, to inform decision-making and trigger improvements.

From the submissions and interviews, the Panel concluded that CUAP has no formal mechanism outside the five-yearly external review, for monitoring the effectiveness of its own performance. Reference is made in the self-review report to Universities New Zealand's Statement of Service

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www.hkqaa.org/cmsimg/1481594605G061-HKO-3E-OB%20Complaint,%20Dispute%20and%20Appeal%20Procedure%20for%20ISO14064_UNFCCC%20CDM%20Validation%20and%20Verification%20Service.pdf accessed 050417;
www.teqsa.gov.au/for-providers/provider-obligations/review-teqsa-decisions accessed 050417;
www.aqa.ac.nz/sites/all/files/AQA%20Constitution%20March%202013.pdf section 3.3 accessed 050417.

[36] www.aqa.ac.nz/reports-and-papers?keys=CUAP&field_publication_report_date_value_1%5Bvalue%5D%5Byear%5D= accessed 050417.

Performance, but there is no indication of how this information is analysed by CUAP or used as a basis for decision-making or enhancement of activity.

Furthermore, CUAP members provided differing responses to questions about their input to the current self-review, some saying they could have input if they wanted to, some saying they had seen the draft review report and others saying the draft report had prompted little discussion by the Committee and had had no wider input from the universities. The Panel concluded that the self-review and the resultant report for this 2017 Review was done for the Committee rather than by it.

The lack of any formal self-review mechanism does not mean a lack of enhancement activity by CUAP. The Panel is aware that CUAP has introduced a number of initiatives to its processes (for example, the revised system for managing GYR reports; the online approval system) in recent years. What is missing is opportunity for reflection and assessment of *how well* CUAP is discharging its overall responsibilities. More than one submission suggested that one meeting a year, or part of a full-day meeting, should be set aside for considering strategic issues affecting the university sector). Such an arrangement could also apply to self-evaluation. An external facilitator could be desirable to assist with this process.

> **Recommendation:** *The Panel **recommends** that CUAP discuss the form and frequency whereby it conducts its own self-evaluation and puts in place a schedule for this to happen*.

4.7 Links to the QA Community

> 5.2.1 The EQAA is open to international developments in quality assurance and has mechanisms that enable it to learn about and analyse the main trends in the field.
>
> 5.2.2 The EQAA collaborates with other QA agencies where possible, in areas such as exchange of good practices, capacity building, and review of decisions, joint projects, or staff exchanges*.*

CUAP responded to this GGP by noting that it gains information through JCG and through the Universities New Zealand membership of INQAAHE and that collaboration is more applicable to AQA than to CUAP. The Panel considers this response is inadequate. The Panel is aware that CUAP does collaborate with another agency, namely NZQA, on various working groups (for example, in review of the entrance standard). It is also aware that CUAP members and the secretariat have collaborated with AQA staff for presentations and conference workshops which provide opportunity for learning about good practice and trends.

Overall the Panel gained the impression that CUAP, including both its members and its secretariat, have not been inclined to seek out good practice elsewhere. This does not appear to be due to complacency but rather to confidence that the system in place works well and is the most appropriate for New Zealand universities. Analyses of other systems might reinforce that confidence, or might reveal better practices. The Panel's views about the potential for benchmarking, which

would meet the expectations of GGP 5.2.1, have been provided under GGP 1.1.2 above. On the basis of the evidence provided, the Panel concluded that apart from its relationships with AQA and NZQA, CUAP is not well connected to the QA community in any meaningful way.

5   Additional Changes to CUAP's Quality Assurance Processes

> **2017 Review Term of Reference 4**
> Recommend changes or improvements in CUAP's quality assurance processes.

From the submissions and interviews the following suggestions for improvements were made. The Panel has made recommendations on matters it considers most important and places no weighting on these additional suggestions, but draws them to the attention of CUAP.

- CUAP could facilitate discussion of how universities, collectively, might provide opportunities for students in discipline areas which individual universities may find difficult to sustain (e.g. physics; European languages).

- CUAP could develop a standard process for gaining approval from professional bodies.

- Greater clarification of what differentiates a Category 6 from a Category 7 proposal.

- Greater clarification of the differences between level 8 and level 9 expected outcomes.

- Clarification of the guidelines for off-shore delivery and modification of the template to suit various off-shore arrangements.

- Guidelines for quality assurance of multi-provider proposals.

- Review section 5.3 of the Handbook to provide greater clarity.

- Provide guidelines on programme reviews and an opportunity to discuss good practice. (The Panel notes a workshop on this matter facilitated by CUAP in 2015).

- Clarification of what is meant by "sign-off" in the proposal review process and whether or not a university which has signed off may later rejoin the deliberations.

- A review of the Handbook to ensure consistency and clarity of terminology.

- Ensure that when discussion papers are circulated their status is clear as to whether they will be the basis of decision-making or whether they are simply for comment or reflection.

6. CUAP's Terms of Reference, its Committees, Profile, Engagement, Future Activities, Structures or Goals.

> **2017 Review Term of Reference 5**
> Provide comment on CUAP's Terms of Reference and the composition of the committees, including comment on profile, engagement, future activities, structures or goals.

6.1 CUAP's Terms of Reference

The Panel's comments on CUAP's Functions, as listed in its Terms of Reference, are given in Chapter 3. The other sections of CUAP's Terms of Reference cover Committee Composition, Standing Procedures and the Secretariat. Some of these have been discussed in preceding sections.

6.1.1.   Committee Composition, clauses 5-11

CUAP comprises a representative of each university (usually a senior academic manager such as a Deputy Vice-Chancellor); a nominee of the New Zealand Union of Students' Associations (NZUSA), a Vice-Chancellor as Chair and a Deputy Chair. The term of each member is three years in the first instance (though in practice the student member commonly changes each year or every two years).

Composition clause 6a states that the Chair of CUAP is "appointed by Universities New Zealand, currently a member of that committee or a member of the staff of a university". The term "that committee" is ambiguous; it presumably refers to the committee of Vice-Chancellors. The Panel suggests 6a be stated more specifically. If *in practice* the Chair is normally a Vice-Chancellor or a member of the staff of a university appointed by the Vice-Chancellors, then it would be helpful for 6a to say so.

Similarly, from clause 6b it is also unclear whether the Deputy Chair is appointed by Universities New Zealand (as an operational organisation) or by the Vice-Chancellors. The clause should be specific on this matter.

The Panel formed the view that the Committee is effective overall. The Panel was told that Committee effectiveness requires that the university members are people empowered to make decisions on behalf of their university. It notes that the majority of members have been in the role for some time. However student members commonly change more frequently, sometimes on an annual basis. This turnover, combined with the small number of meetings a year, means that appropriate induction is critical to student effectiveness. NZUSA provide support but if the most recent CUAP student member is not available there can be a gap in continuity of "meeting memory".

The Panel heard that notwithstanding the above constraints, student members routinely make a very valuable contribution to deliberations. They have full access to the online Proposal Management System and can comment on any proposal. They have also been responsible for raising issues with CUAP (the differentiation of 180 and 240 point Master's degrees was cited). It was suggested that without a student voice at the CUAP table there is a risk that the impact on students

of some proposals (e.g. off-shore delivery) might not be fully recognised. Interviews with members of NZUSA confirmed that the student voice is taken seriously by other Committee members. Students would appreciate some letter or statement from CUAP at the end of their tenure to acknowledge their contribution.

> **Recommendation:** *The Panel **recommends** that CUAP prepare an induction resource which is available to all new Committee members, that it provides an individual induction for new student members, and that it provides student members with an attestation of their service.*

Some submissions raised the possibility of CUAP including an external (i.e. non-university) member, including the suggestion from an external stakeholder that an independent Chair with appropriate expertise would assist in mitigating any perceived conflicts of interest on the Committee, and that an independent member would assist in conveying the impartiality and independence which is normal in a regulatory body. One submission suggested an external member could assist with assessing proposals in terms of non-academic matters, such as market demand. Others, however, argued this is not CUAP business.

The Panel explored the proposal for an external member during interviews. Overall it gained no strong support for this, with some questioning what value might be added by a single external member, who most likely would have a narrow perspective on proposals and could lack university-wide experience. The Panel notes that the subcommittee on University Entrance does include relevant external stakeholders. On balance the Panel accepts that the *status quo* serves university needs adequately.

One matter which concerned the Panel and has been alluded to throughout this report is CUAP's reliance on the Deputy Chair. One submission noted, "CUAP is absolutely dependent on the leadership and work of the [current] Deputy Chair". The Panel is concerned about risk given the wealth of knowledge and experience of the current incumbent of the Deputy Chair role. From its enquiries the Panel concluded that neither CUAP nor Universities New Zealand has formally considered succession planning for this role.

It was also drawn to the Panel's attention that the current incumbent of the Deputy Chair position does not meet the Committee requirements, specifically clause 6b (currently a member of CUAP or a member of the staff of a university) and 7 (that persons who cease to be members of Universities New Zealand or to be employed by relevant universities will be deemed to have resigned as members of CUAP). This comment is not intended to undermine the contribution of the incumbent but rather to remind Universities New Zealand of its own specifications.

> **Recommendation:** *The Panel **recommends** that the Vice-Chancellors' Committee review Committee Composition clause 6b within CUAP's Terms of Reference to ensure it is not constrained unreasonably in its appointment of a Deputy Chair of CUAP, and that urgent consideration be given to succession planning for this role.*

Commendation: *The Panel **commends** the commitment and overall contribution of time, knowledge and expertise of the current Deputy Chair of CUAP to CUAP's function and effectiveness and to the wider tertiary sector.*

The Panel considers membership of the subcommittee on University Entrance is appropriate.

6.1.2 Standing Procedures

Apart from issues related to appeals (Standing Procedure 16), discussed in Chapter 7, the Panel heard no evidence that the Standing Procedures 12-19 are inappropriate or are compromised in practice.

6.2 Engagement with Stakeholders

The 2011 Review referred to a previous and ongoing focus on CUAP's engagement with professional bodies and affirmed the establishment of the LEAD Professions Group.[37] As in 2011, the 2017 Panel appreciated the challenges in working with professional bodies which had differing requirements and ways of working. While ten professional bodies were invited to make submissions to the 2017 Review, only one did and one other agreed to be interviewed. Those who responded to the Panel indicated that, when required, their interaction with the CUAP secretariat had been satisfactory, though one commented that the website was not useful in conveying to non-university members what CUAP did.

The Panel noted efforts by CUAP to engage with professions by holding a social occasion. Attendance had not been high and the Panel was unable to gain any view from invitees as to whether the occasion was seen as useful or relevant.

While it agrees with the 2011 Panel that most engagement with professions occurs at individual university level, the 2017 Panel also affirms CUAP's ongoing efforts to engage professions in its work. It is suggested that if the idea of a newsletter or an enhancement to the website is adopted this might also assist in informing these important stakeholders.

6.3 Relationship between CUAP and AQA

One submission raised a question as to whether CUAP and AQA might be part of a single organisation. The Panel was aware that it is customary practice internationally (and within NZQA in New Zealand) for institutional quality assurance and programme quality assurance (i.e. approval, accreditation and moderation) to be in a single organisation.

The Panel explored this possibility with interviewees. There was no enthusiasm from university interviewees for the suggestion. However interviewees appeared to assume this would necessarily mean a change to CUAP processes, rather than CUAP processes being carried out under the

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[37] 2011 Report of Audit of CUAP, pp 18-19. The 2017 Panel understands that this group, comprising lawyers, engineers, accountants and doctors, was not set up by CUAP but by the professions themselves. As such, it is not under CUAP direction.

umbrella of AQA, with shared governance. Most interviewees simply said both organisations currently did their job well and they saw no need for change. Some commented that separation was important to preserve AQA's independence and to enable it to make decisions which might not necessarily suit the Vice-Chancellors, whereas CUAP did not need the same degree of independence. The AQA submission reported on a number of initiatives which involved the CUAP secretariat with AQA. The document "Quality Assurance of New Zealand Universities", dating from 2011, emphasises their commonality of philosophy and purpose (see pages 1-2). The Panel encourages the collegial interaction between staff of the two bodies which it sees as valuable at an intellectual level.

7. Conclusion

The 2017 Review of CUAP has indicated strong support within the sector and from stakeholders who were consulted by the Panel that CUAP is operating effectively. Its processes of programme approval and accreditation, and moderation through the Graduating Year Reviews (GYR), are considered to be robust. The introduction of an online proposal management system has been a significant improvement, though further development is desirable to reduce workloads within universities and to enhance usability. The Panel recommends that CUAP develop its approach to moderation beyond the GYR, using outcomes of institutional programme reviews to identify good practices and systemic challenges.

While there is consensus across universities and within Universities New Zealand on CUAP's effectiveness, the Panel concluded that this confidence is not grounded in any kind of benchmarking and that there is opportunity for CUAP to explore processes in other jurisdictions, whether to validate its own confidence or to identify potential enhancements. More active interaction with agencies in other jurisdictions is encouraged.

There was little support from submissions or interviewees for a system of self-accreditation by New Zealand universities. Arguments for self-accreditation which the Panel learned of related to aspects of the programme approval process which are either internal to universities and not a CUAP responsibility or which might be easily addressed by CUAP or Universities New Zealand. In particular, the Panel has recommended changes which would expedite approval timing and responsiveness, such as more frequent submission of proposals and electronic approval of those proposals which are not problematic.

Peer review is considered by universities to be a strength of the approval process, but also poses some risks. The Panel has recommended introduction of more precise guidance for peer reviewers. At the same time the Panel has commended the commitment of peer reviewers (and other staff) and the time and expertise contributed to the approval process.

The Panel evaluated CUAP's activity against the INQAAHE Guidelines of Good Practice. In most cases the relevant INQAAHE criteria are met, or partly met. However two significant areas require attention by CUAP. Firstly the Panel gained no evidence that CUAP formally monitors its own performance: the self-review report for the current review contained no evaluation and systematic self-evaluation was not evident in CUAP processes. Also, there did not appear to be any mechanism whereby CUAP feeds back to the sector and wider stakeholders the outcomes of external evaluation or its response. The Panel has recommended that these matters be addressed.

Secondly, CUAP's current procedures for addressing complaints and disputes or appeals do not reflect good practice. There is an urgent need to formalise these processes, to ensure they are robust, impartial and have external credibility.

The Terms of Reference for CUAP are appropriate and are met or at least partly met. The Panel has recommended that the wording of some of the Functions needs to be reviewed or revised so that

they reflect actual practice more accurately and are realistic in the context of CUAP's responsibilities. The Panel also identified some areas where terminology should be clarified, to differentiate responsibilities which lie with the staff of Universities New Zealand from those which are the business of the Vice-Chancellors' Committee.

In the Panel's view there is opportunity for CUAP, or a comparable group of Deputy Vice-Chancellors (Academic) (or equivalent), to take a strategic leadership role for the sector. This would assist CUAP to meet the "enhancement-led" principle to which it ascribes, with AQA, for university quality assurance. It would require CUAP to develop some strategic objectives and organise its activity to facilitate discussions on emerging issues within the sector. Related to this, the Panel conveys a desire by universities and other stakeholders for improved communication; some strategies for doing this have been suggested by the Panel.

The Panel reviewed CUAP's strategies for interacting with professional bodies. It concluded that these are currently appropriate but better communication, as outlined above, would enhance understanding. The Panel acknowledges the challenges faced by CUAP in accommodating the different professional requirements related to programme approval.

It was clear to the Panel that the subcommittee on University Entrance does an excellent job for the sector and functions efficiently. The Panel has recommended that the relevant CUAP Functions be reviewed to reflect some of the subcommittee's key work more accurately. An *ad hoc* subcommittee to deal with international matters pertaining to approval was also reported to be effective.

CUAP's interaction with other local agencies appeared to be satisfactory. The Joint Consultative group with NZQA and AQA fulfils a communication and informal consultation function. The Panel supports a suggestion that NZUSA be represented on this group; the Panel learned that student contributions as members of CUAP are valued and effective. There is a desire by students for more detailed induction and for a formal recognition of service.

From its review of the membership and work of CUAP and the subcommittee on University Entrance it was apparent to the Panel that both committees place significant reliance on the Deputy Chair of CUAP for knowledge, experience and time. While this contribution has been commended by the Panel, the Panel also identifies a risk for Universities New Zealand and encourages development of succession planning for the role.

In the Panel's view the current staffing to support CUAP is adequate but it is noted that if CUAP adopts broader responsibilities then staff support will need to be reviewed.

The Panel has made 6 commendations and 17 recommendations.

Commendations:

C1   The Panel **commends** CUAP and Universities New Zealand for the successful introduction of the online Proposal Management System. (page 11)

C2   The Panel **commends** CUAP's success in ensuring all universities engage Māori in the development of proposals, as appropriate to the discipline. (page 13)

C3   The Panel **commends** CUAP and the staff of Universities New Zealand and New Zealand universities who, through their commitment, expertise and dedication in many ways contribute to a successful, effective and stable process for national programme approval and accreditation. (page 13)

C4   The Panel **commends** the work of the subcommittee on University Entrance, and in particular its Chair, in ensuring university interests are communicated well to NZQA and ensuring that admission criteria are established and evaluated in a robust manner. (page 21)

C5   The Panel **commends** the academic staff in universities who carry out peer review of proposals for their commitment and willingness to share their expertise for the betterment of the sector as a whole. (page 26)

C6   The Panel **commends** the commitment and overall contribution of time, knowledge and expertise of the current Deputy Chair of CUAP to CUAP's function and effectiveness and to the wider tertiary sector. (page 34)

Recommendations:

R1.   The Panel **recommends** that CUAP, with the assistance of Universities New Zealand staff responsible for online development, facilitate a discussion with university users of the online Proposal Management System, to identify current challenges, and that a plan then be developed to refine the system to ensure greater ease and efficiency of use. (page 11)

R2.   The Panel **recommends** that CUAP discuss how institutional and professional programme reviews might best be used by CUAP for moderation purposes, and that it develop and implement a process whereby the outcomes of institutional programme reviews are reported and analysed by or for CUAP so that issues and good practice of potential sector impact may be identified. (page 12)

R3.   The Panel **recommends** that CUAP revisit R1 from the 2011 Review, to review relevant codes of practice for expert reviewers, and adopt an appropriate set of guidelines for reviewers of New Zealand university programmes for which CUAP approval is sought.[38] (page 15)

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[38] R1 from the 2011 Report: The Panel recommends that CUAP, in the interests of further strengthening the postal resolution process, develop guidelines for peer review drawing upon good practices already within the system and upon ethical guidelines such as those in the American Productivity and Quality Center (APQC) Benchmarking Code of Conduct.

R4. The Panel **recommends** that CUAP and Universities New Zealand consider introducing electronic approval, both by CUAP and subsequently by the Vice-Chancellors' Committee, for proposals which receive no objections. (page 15)

R5 The Panel **recommends** that if electronic approval is considered feasible, then CUAP allows for proposals to be submitted at any time, with the understanding that any proposal for which objections are outstanding will be held as an agenda item for a formal meeting of the Committee. (page 16)

R6 The Panel **recommends** that CUAP discuss Function 1c of its Terms of Reference and revise the wording to reflect more accurately what is properly and feasibly CUAP business. (page 18)

R7 The Panel **recommends** that Function 2c of CUAP's Terms of Reference be amended to read: To act for Universities New Zealand in establishing, through its subcommittee on University Entrance and after consulting with NZQA, criteria for discretionary entrance and ad eundem admission at entrance level and to determine whether international qualifications and local foundation programmes meet these criteria. (page 21)

R8 The Panel **recommends** that CUAP consider whether its role in understanding and communicating issues related to school curriculum and the secondary/tertiary interface are sufficiently germane to its purpose as to warrant a specific Function within its Terms of Reference, and if so to draft accordingly a new Function 2d with current 2d becoming 2e. (page 21)

R9 The Panel **recommends** that CUAP and Universities New Zealand explore ways in which CUAP or a similar group (such as the DVC(A)s) might provide leadership to the university sector in raising and discussing emergent academic and professional issues and issues of concern to the sector, and in facilitating the sharing of good practice. (page 22)

R10 The Panel **recommends** that CUAP, with Universities New Zealand, identify potential benchmarking processes or partners and develop a strategy for evaluating CUAP processes against recognised good practice internationally. (page 25)

R11 The Panel **recommends** that CUAP discuss with Universities New Zealand the form and content of a set of strategic objectives or a strategic plan for the Committee, emphasizing areas where CUAP might take a leadership role in assisting the university sector in understanding potential future developments and in meeting their academic objectives. (page 25)

R12 The Panel **recommends** CUAP checks, and makes amendments if necessary, to ensure there is consistency between the requirements for decision-making specified in the Standing Procedures and those reproduced in the CUAP Handbook. (page 26)

R13 The Panel **recommends** that CUAP urgently develop and publish a clear complaints and appeals procedure which must be followed when any decision of CUAP is challenged. To avoid ambiguity, such procedures must differentiate clearly any role of Universities New Zealand as an operational organisation and the Vice-Chancellors' Committee as a decision-making committee of Vice-Chancellors. (page 27)

R14 The Panel **recommends** that Universities New Zealand publish the report of the 2017 Review and any future reviews on its website as a quality assurance item. (page 28)

R15 The Panel **recommends** that CUAP discuss the form and frequency whereby it conducts its own self-evaluation and puts in place a schedule for this to happen. (page 29)

R16 The Panel **recommends** that CUAP prepare an induction resource which is available to all new Committee members, that it provides an individual induction for new student members, and that it provides student members with an attestation of their service. (page 33)

R17 The Panel **recommends** that the Vice-Chancellors' Committee review Committee Composition clause 6b within CUAP's Terms of Reference to ensure it is not constrained unreasonably in its appointment of a Deputy Chair of CUAP, and that urgent consideration be given to succession planning for this role. (page 33)

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Acknowledgements

The Panel wishes to thank the Executive Director and other staff of Universities New Zealand – Te Pōkai Tara for their warm welcome and for the support provided before and during the site visit. The assistance of Victoria University of Wellington staff in facilitating a demonstration of the online Proposal Management System is particularly appreciated.

The Panel also thanks those who contributed to CUAP's self-review portfolio and assisted with requests for additional information, particularly the Manager, Academic Programmes and the Deputy Chair of CUAP. The Panel is grateful for the constructive comments and observations of all individuals and organisations that provided a written submission and/or gave their time to talk to the Panel.

Dr Jan Cameron

for
Academic Quality Agency for New Zealand Universities

Appendix 1: CUAP's Terms of Reference[39]

Functions

1. To act for Universities New Zealand and on behalf of the New Zealand community of universities by:

    a. setting up and applying inter-university programme approval, accreditation, and moderation procedures, which ensure that the quality of programme developments is consonant with high academic standards and mindful of the nation's interests;

    b. granting or refusing approval under the agreed procedures to new qualifications and courses of study, or changes in qualifications and courses of study for which approval is required, and for which due application has been made by a university;

    c. promoting the coherent and balanced development of courses of study within the New Zealand university system and ensuring that the quality of programme developments is consonant with high academic standards;

    d. encouraging the development of courses of study within the New Zealand university system that will facilitate the transfer of students between programmes and institutions.

2. To act for Universities New Zealand:

    a. as the body which the New Zealand Qualifications Authority (NZQA) will consult about policies and criteria for the approval of courses of study and their accreditation in the universities;

    b. through its subcommittee on university entrance, as the body which is consulted by NZQA on the standards to be established for entrance to university, and which makes recommendations to NZQA on such standards;

    c. in establishing, through its subcommittee on university entrance and after consulting with NZQA, criteria for provisional entrance and ad eundem admission at entrance level;
    Note: Before setting such standards, NZQA is required to consult the Council of each university as well as Universities New Zealand.

    d. in obtaining university representatives for NZQA approval Panels, committees and other similar bodies, as required.

3. To provide advice and comment on academic developments across the university system to institutions, professional bodies and agencies.

4. To undertake specific tasks as may be requested of it from time to time by Universities New Zealand.

Composition

5. The committee shall be a committee of Universities New Zealand.

6. The membership of the committee shall be as follows:

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[39] www.universitiesnz.ac.nz/files/2015%20CUAP%20Handbook%20-%20Jan-17.html accessed 020517.

a. a chairperson appointed by Universities New Zealand, currently a member of that committee or a member of the staff of a university.

b. a deputy chairperson appointed by Universities New Zealand, currently a member of CUAP or a member of the staff of a university.

c. one representative of each university, currently a member of the staff of that university.

d. one nominee of the New Zealand Union of Students' Associations.

7. Persons appointed under 6 a., b. and c. above who cease to be members of Universities New Zealand, or who cease to be employed by the relevant universities will be deemed to have resigned as members of the committee from the dates on which that membership or employment ceased.

8. The term of appointment of each member shall be 3 years in the first instance.

9. Those appointed to replace members who have resigned their appointments will be eligible to serve a full 3 years.

10. Those completing a term of appointment may be reappointed for a 3-year term subject to their eligibility.

11. A member who is unable to attend a particular meeting may nominate another representative of the university or body concerned, subject to appropriate notification to the chairperson before the meeting.

Note: The effectiveness of the committee depends on continuity between meetings and it is important that members attend all meetings wherever possible. Approval of substitutes will not be made for any one university or body on a continuing basis.

Standing procedures

12. The committee will establish and make known such detailed rules of procedure as it judges necessary to the regular conduct of its business, particularly in the discharge of its functions as set out in paragraphs 1 and 2 above.

13. The committee will carry out its work within the terms of reference as approved by Universities New Zealand, and through consultation with each of the participating universities. Changes to the terms of reference may be initiated by Universities New Zealand or by the committee by way of recommendation to Universities New Zealand.

14. Each university represented on the committee is deemed to have agreed to recognise the standing of the committee in decisions taken within its terms of reference and undertakes to submit all relevant course and programme proposals to the committee.

15. Where necessary decisions will be made by simple majority vote of the members, the chairperson having a casting vote, but no deliberative vote. Except when acting as the chairperson, the deputy chairperson does not have a vote.

16. Any dispute as to whether a particular decision of the committee has been properly taken within the terms of reference shall be referred to Universities New Zealand, whose decision shall determine the dispute.

17. The committee shall have the power to establish subcommittees (whose members need not be members of the committee) on a continuing or ad hoc basis to deal with specific matters arising from its functions. All such subcommittees will be responsible to the committee and through it to Universities New Zealand.

18. The committee will meet twice yearly for the purposes of programme approval and accreditation and at other times as it may determine.

19. Expenses incurred by members attending meetings of the committee or approved meetings of any of its subcommittees shall be met as follows:
    a. the expenses of members appointed under 6(c) above shall be met by the universities under the current policy of Universities New Zealand for equalising such expenses between universities.
    b. approved expenses of members appointed under 6(a), (b) or (d) above shall be met by Universities New Zealand.

Secretariat

20. The committee shall be serviced through Universities New Zealand under the overall direction of the Executive Director.

Appendix 2: The INQAAHE Guidelines of Good Practice: Summary of CUAP Evidence and Panel's Assessment

INQAAHE Guideline	Evidence cited by CUAP	Panel assessment
1. THE STRUCTURE OF THE EQAA		
1.1 Legitimacy and recognition		
1.1.1 The EQAA has an established legal basis and is recognised by a competent external body.	Education Act (1989), S159AD, S240, S241, S253, S253A; CUAP Handbook 2015	Met
1.1.2 The EQAA takes into consideration relevant guidelines issued by international networks and other associations, in formulating its policies and practices.	Full membership of INQAAHE	Partly met
1.1.3 The EQAA has a clear and published policy for the prevention of conflicts of interest that applies to its staff, its decision-making body, and the external reviewers.	Universities NZ Conflict of Interest Policy (Appendix 2)	Met
1.2 Mission and purposes		
1.2.1 The EQAA has a written mission statement and a set of objectives that explicitly provide that external quality assurance of higher education is its major concern, describe the purpose and scope of its activities and can be translated into verifiable policies and measurable objectives.	CUAP Handbook 2017, Terms of Reference s.2.2, Universities NZ Statement of Service Performance year-ending June 2016, Academic Quality Assurance Outcomes	Met
1.3 Governance and organisational structure		
1.3.1 The EQAA has a governance structure consistent with its mission and objectives and adequate mechanisms to involve relevant stakeholders in the definition of its standards and criteria.	CUAP Handbook s.1.1, s.3, s.2.2, s.4. Education Act(1989) s.253A,	Met
1.3.2 The EQAA's composition and/or its regulatory framework ensure its independence and impartiality.	CUAP Handbook s.1, s.2	Partly met
1.3.3 The EQAA's organizational structure makes it possible to carry out its external review processes effectively and efficiently.	CUAP process flowchart, CUAP Handbook s.2.1	Met
1.3.4 The EQAA has a strategic plan that helps it assess its progress and plan for future developments.	N/A, see commentary on self-monitoring and self-improvement	Not met
1.4 Resources		
1.4.1 The EQAA has a well-trained, qualified staff able to conduct external evaluation effectively and efficiently in accordance with its mission statement and its methodological approach.	CUAP Handbook s.2.1, s.2.4	Met

INQAAHE Guideline	Evidence cited by CUAP	Panel assessment
1.4.2 The EQAA has the physical and financial resources needed to fulfil its goals and carry out the activities that emerge from its mission statement and objectives.	CUAP Handbook s.2.2 (standing procedures). Universities NZ cost-share policy	Met
1.4.3 The EQAA provides systematic opportunities for the professional development of its staff.	N/A.	Partly met
2. THE EQAA FRAMEWORK FOR THE EXTERNAL REVIEW OF QUALITY IN HIGHER EDUCATION INSTITUTIONS		
2.1 The relationship between the EQAA and higher education institutions		
2.1.1 The EQAA recognises that institutional and programmatic quality and quality assurance are primarily the responsibility of the higher education institutions themselves, and respects the academic autonomy, identity and integrity of the institutions and programs.	CUAP Handbook s.1.1, s.2.1, CUAP process flowchart,	Met
2.1.2 The EQAA promotes the development and appropriate implementation of internal quality assurance processes in accordance with the understanding that the primary responsibility for assuring quality resides with the institutions and its programs.	Academic Quality Assurance of New Zealand Universities brochure (key principles). CUAP Handbook s.3 item 7	Met
2.1.3 The EQAA bears in mind the level of workload and cost that its procedures will place on institutions, and strives to make them as time and cost effective as possible.	See commentary on online Proposal Management System	Met
2.2 The definition of criteria for external quality review		
2.2.1 The EQAA recognises and values institutional diversity, and translates this valuation into criteria and procedures that take into account the identity and goals of higher education institutions.	Education Act (1989) s.253A, CUAP Handbook s.4	Met
2.2.2 Standards or criteria developed by the EQAA have been subject to reasonable consultation with stakeholders and are revised at regular intervals to ensure relevance to the needs of the system.	See commentary on Master's degree definition changes, CUAP 2016 paper on Master's degrees	Met
2.2.3 Standards or criteria take into consideration the specific aspects related to different modes of provision, such as transnational education, distance or online programs or other non-traditional approaches to higher education as relevant to the context in which they operate.	Offshore delivery Rules, CUAP Handbook Appendix G	Met

INQAAHE Guideline	Evidence cited by CUAP	Panel assessment
2.2.4 Standards or criteria explicitly address the areas of institutional activity that fall within the EQAA's scope, (e.g. institutional governance and management, program design and approval, teaching and learning, student admission, progression and certification, research, community engagement) and on the availability of necessary resources, (e.g. finances, staff and learning resources).	CUAP Handbook s.4 (e.g. s.4.4 and s.4.6)	Met as relevant to CUAP
2.2.5 Criteria or standards and procedures take into account internal follow up mechanisms, and provide for effective follow up of the outcomes of the external reviews.	CUAP Handbook s.3 Rule 7, Portfolio Manager's Job Description	Met
2.2.6 The EQAA procedures specify the way in which criteria will be applied and the types of evidence needed to demonstrate that they are met.	CUAP Handbook s.3, s.4, s.6.4.1, s.6.4.3, s.6.10	Met
2.3 The external review process		
2.3.1 The EQAA carries out an external review process that is reliable and based on published criteria and procedures. It follows a self-assessment or equivalent, and includes an external review (normally including a site visit or visits), and a consistent follow up of the recommendations resulting from the external review.	N/A.	N/A.
2.3.2 The EQAA has published documents, which clearly state what it expects from higher education institutions, in the form of quality criteria or standards and procedures for self-assessment and external review.	N/A.	N/A.
2.3.3 The external review process is carried out by teams of experts consistent with the characteristics of the institution/program being reviewed. Experts can provide input from various perspectives, including those of institutions, academics, students, employers or professional practitioners	N/A first section. CUAP Handbook s.2.5, s.6.4.6, s.6.5.1	Met as relevant to CUAP
2.3.4 The EQAA has clear specifications on the characteristics and selection of external reviewers, who must be supported by appropriate training and good supporting materials such as handbooks or manuals.	N/A.	Partly met
2.3.5 External review procedures include effective and comprehensive mechanisms for the prevention of conflicts of interest, and ensure that any judgments resulting from external reviews are based on explicit and published criteria.	Universities NZ Conflicts of Interest Policy. CUAP Handbook s.3 and s.4.	Met

INQAAHE Guideline	Evidence cited by CUAP	Panel assessment
2.3.6 The EQAA's system ensures that each institution or program will be evaluated in a consistent way, even if the external panels, teams, or committees are different.	CUAP Handbook s.2.2 Composition, see Self-review 'Note'.	Met
2.3.7 The EQAA carries out the external review within a reasonable timeframe after the completion of a self-assessment report, to ensure that information is current and updated.	N/A.	N/A.
2.3.8 The EQAA provides the higher education institutions with an opportunity to correct any factual errors that may appear in the external review report.	N/A.	N/A.
2.4 The requirements for self-evaluation	N/A	
2.4.1 The EQAA provides clear guidance to the institution or program in the application of the procedures for self-evaluation, the solicitation of assessment/feedback from the public, students, and other constituents, or the preparation for external review as necessary and appropriate.	CUAP Handbook s.6.4.1 and s.6.10 (Proposal and GYR templates), s.4 Rule 7	Met as relevant to CUAP
3. DECISION MAKING		
3.1 The decision-making process		
3.1.1 The EQAA's decisions take into consideration the outcomes of both the institution's self-assessment process and the external review; they may also consider any other relevant information, provided this has been communicated to higher education institutions.	Mostly N/A. CUAP Handbook s.6	Met
3.1.2 The EQAA's decisions are impartial, rigorous, and consistent even when they are based on the reports of other quality assurance bodies.	CUAP Handbook s.2.5	Met
3.1.3 The EQAA's decisions are based on published criteria and procedures, and can be justified only with reference to those criteria and procedures.	CUAP Handbook s.2.2, s.3 and s.4	Met
3.1.4 Consistency in decision-making includes consistency and transparency in processes and actions for imposing recommendations for follow-up action.	CUAP Handbook s.6	Met
3.1.5 The EQAA's reported decisions are clear and precise.	CUAP minutes, NZQF	Met
3.2 The EQAA's process for appeals and complaints		
3.2.1 The EQAA has procedures in place to deal in a consistent way with complaints about its procedures or operation.	CUAP Handbook s.2.2 para 16	Partly met

INQAAHE Guideline	Evidence cited by CUAP	Panel assessment
3.2.2 The EQAA has clear, published procedures for handling appeals related to its external review and decision-making processes.	CUAP Handbook s.2.2 para 16	Not met
3.2.3 Appeals are conducted by a panel that was not responsible for the original decision and has no conflict of interest; appeals need not necessarily be conducted outside the EQAA.	CUAP Handbook s.2.2 para 16	Not met
4. THE EQAA AND ITS RELATIONSHIP TO THE PUBLIC		
4.1 Public reports on the EQAA's policies and decisions		
4.1.1 The EQAA provides full and clear disclosure of its relevant documentation such as policies, procedures and criteria.	Universities NZ website, CUAP Handbook	Met
4.1.2 The EQAA reports its decisions about higher education institutions and programs. The content and extent of reporting may vary with cultural context and applicable legal and other requirements.	Universities NZ website, NZQF	Met
4.1.3 The EQAA has mechanisms to facilitate a fair understanding of the reasons supporting decisions taken.	CUAP Handbook s.2.1, online Proposal Management System, Portfolio Manager, CUAP minutes	Met
4.2 Other public reports		
4.2.1 The EQAA discloses to the public the decisions about the EQAA resulting from any external review of its own performance.	AQA website CUAP Review 2011	Partly met
4.2.2 The EQAA prepares and disseminates periodically integrated reports on the overall outcomes of QA processes and of any other relevant activities.	Universities NZ website, NZQF	Partly met
5. ACCOUNTABILITY OF THE EQAA		
5.1 Quality Assurance of the EQAA		
5.1.1 The EQAA operates with transparency, integrity and professionalism and adheres to ethical and professional standards.	CUAP Handbook s.2.2 (Composition and Standing Procedures)	Met
5.1.2 The EQAA has in place mechanisms that enable it to review its own activities in order to respond to the changing nature of higher education, the effectiveness of its operations, and its contribution towards the achievement of its objectives.	CUAP periodic audits, including self-reviews. Definitional changes, e.g. master's degrees (master's degree paper for CUAP)	Partly met

INQAAHE Guideline	Evidence cited by CUAP	Panel assessment
5.1.3 The EQAA periodically conducts a self-review of its own activities, including consideration of its own effects and value. The review includes data collection and analysis, to inform decision-making and trigger improvements.	CUAP periodic audits, including self-reviews.	Partly met
5.1.4 The EQAA is subject to external reviews at regular intervals, ideally not exceeding five years. There is evidence that any required actions are implemented and disclosed.	CUAP audits, 'Response to Report of the Audit Panel' document	Met
5.2 Links to the QA community		
5.2.1 The EQAA is open to international developments in quality assurance and has mechanisms that enable it to learn about and analyse the main trends in the field	Mostly N/A. JCG.	Partly met
5.2.2 The EQAA collaborates with other QA agencies where possible, in areas such as exchange of good practices, capacity building, and review of decisions, joint projects, or staff exchanges.	Mostly N/A. JCG.	Partly met
6 THE QA OF CROSS BORDER HIGHER EDUCATION		
6.1 Criteria for cross border higher education		
6.1.1 The EQAA in a sending country makes clear that the awarding institution is responsible for ensuring the equivalent quality of the education offered, that the institution understands the regulatory frameworks of the receiving countries, and that the institution provides clear information on the programs offered and their characteristics	Education Act (1989) s.253, s.253A, NZQF Offshore Programme Delivery Rules 2012 (Appendix 7), CUAP Handbook Appendix G	Met
6.1.2 Students and other stakeholders receive clear and complete information about the awards delivered	CUAP Handbook Appendix G and I, NZQF Offshore Programme Delivery Rules 2012 (Appendix 7)	Met
6.1.3 The rights and obligations of the parties involved in transnational education are clearly established and well known by the parties	CUAP Handbook Appendix G, NZQF Offshore Programme Delivery Rules 2012 (Appendix 7), Offshore submission template (Appendix 7a)	Met
6.2 Collaboration between agencies		
6.2.1 The EQAA cooperates with appropriate local agencies in the exporting and importing countries and with international networks. This cooperation is oriented to improve mutual understanding, to have a clear and comprehensive account of the regulatory framework and to share good practices	JCG, NZAG, ENZ, Universities NZ's Committee on International Policy	Met

INQAAHE Guideline	Evidence cited by CUAP	Panel assessment
6.2.2 The EQAA seeks ways to cooperate in the external quality assurance in transnational education provision, for example through mutual recognition	JCG, NZAG, ENZ, Universities NZ's Committee on International Policy, MQA	Met

Appendix 3: Interviewees and Correspondents

Participant groups whose representatives met with the Review Panel and/or made a written submission:

- Current CUAP members and a former Chair of CUAP
- Universities New Zealand
- Auckland University of Technology
- Lincoln University
- Massey University
- University of Auckland
- University of Canterbury
- University of Otago
- University of Waikato
- Victoria University of Wellington
- Academic Quality Agency for New Zealand Universities
- Institution of Professional Engineers of New Zealand
- New Zealand Social Workers Registration Board
- New Zealand Union of Students' Associations
- Tertiary Education Commission
- New Zealand Qualifications Authority
- Ako Aotearoa National Centre for Tertiary Teaching Excellence
- Several individuals also provided submissions.

Appendix 4: Acronyms

AACSB	Association to Advance Collegiate Schools of Business
AKO	Ako Aotearoa National Centre for Tertiary Teaching Excellence
AQA	Academic Quality Agency for New Zealand Universities
CUAP	Committee on University Academic Programmes
DVC(A)	Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Academic)
ENZ	Education New Zealand
EQAA	External Quality Assurance Agency
GGP	INQAAHE Guidelines of Good Practice in Quality Assurance
GYR	Graduating Year Review
IB	International Baccalaureate
INQAAHE	International Network for Quality Assurance Agencies in Higher Education
IPENZ	Institute of Professional Engineers of New Zealand
MQA	Malaysian Qualification Authority
NZAG	New Zealand Advisory Group
NZQF	New Zealand Qualifications Framework
NZQA	New Zealand Qualifications Authority
NZUSA	New Zealand Union of Students' Associations
NZVCC	New Zealand Vice Chancellors' Committee
SSP	Statement of Service Performance, required by the Office of the Auditor General
TEC	Tertiary Education Commission
UNZ	Universities New Zealand, Te Pōkai Tara

Appendix 5: The Academic Quality Agency for New Zealand Universities

The Academic Quality Agency for New Zealand Universities (AQA) was established by New Zealand universities in 1994, as the New Zealand Universities Academic Audit Unit. It is an independent body whose purpose is to contribute to the advancement of university education by:

- Engaging as a leader and advocate in the development of academic quality;
- Applying quality assurance and quality enhancement processes that assist universities in improving student engagement, academic experience and learning outcomes.

The AQA helps support universities in achieving standards of excellence in research and teaching by conducting institutional audits of the processes in universities which underpin academic quality and by identifying and disseminating information on good practice in developing and maintaining quality in higher education. Activities include a quarterly newsletter and regular meetings on quality enhancement topics.

The AQA interacts with other educational bodies within New Zealand and with similar academic quality assurance agencies internationally. The Agency is a full member of the Asia-Pacific Quality Network (APQN), and of the International Network for Quality Assurance Agencies in Higher Education (INQAAHE). AQA has been assessed as adhering to the INQAAHE Guidelines of Good Practice in Quality Assurance.

Further information is available from the AQA website: www.aqa.ac.nz.

Principles for Academic Audit Process

Key principles underpinning academic audits and reviews carried out by AQA are:

- peer review
- evidence-based
- externally benchmarked
- enhancement-led.

Audits and reviews are carried out by Panels of trained auditors who are selected from universities' senior academic staff and other professionals with knowledge of academic auditing and evaluation, and who have been approved by the AQA Board. Each Panel includes at least one overseas external auditor. An audit begins with a process of self-review leading to an audit portfolio that the university uses to report on its progress towards achieving the goals and objectives related to the focus of the audit. The audit Panel verifies the portfolio through documentary analysis, interviews and site visits.

Final audit reports of New Zealand universities are publicly available. Reports commend good practice and make recommendations intended to assist the university in its own programme of continuous improvement. For New Zealand universities, progress on the recommendations is submitted to the AQA Board in a follow-up report 12 months later. A further report on progress in

implementing the recommendations of the previous audit also forms part of the self-review process in the next audit round.

AQA has also managed five-yearly reviews of the Committee on University Academic Programmes (CUAP), applying the same principles as are applied to university audits.