

# Handover Guide

## Education

November 2019  
New Zealand Union of Students' Associations

# Contents

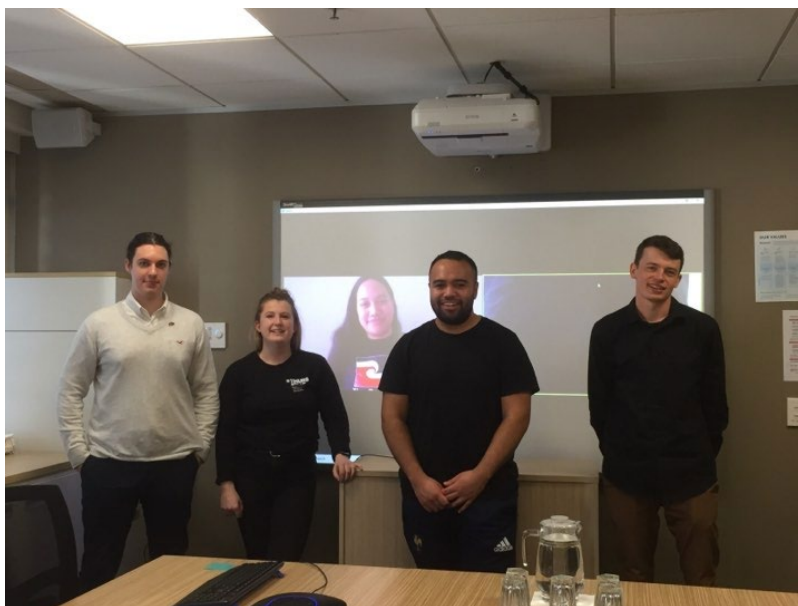
<b>Introduction</b>	3
New Zealand Union of Students' Association	4
Te Mana Ākonga	4
Tauira Pasifika	5
New Zealand International Students' Association	5
<b>Part Two   Our Vision for Tertiary Education in New Zealand</b>	6
Student Voice in Universities	7
Moving Forward: National Centre for Student Voice	8
<b>Part Three   Your Role as a Student Representative</b>	9
<b>Part Four   Understanding the Jargon and the System</b>	10
Key Terms, Acronyms and Abbreviations	10
Academic Board/Senate	11
Academic Quality Agency (AQA)	12
Cycle 6 Academic Audit Enhancement Theme	12
Cycle 6 Audit Framework and Student Auditors	13
Quality Assurance in New Zealand Universities	14
Ako Aotearoa	14
New Zealand Qualifications Framework (NZQF)	15
Committee on University Academic Programmes (CUAP)	15
Structure of CUAP	16
Academic Governance Structure	17
Useful links and further notes	18
Notes	19

## Introduction

This handover guide brings together the voices of the New Zealand Union of Students' Association (NZUSA), Te Mana Ākonga (TMA), Taura Pasifika (TP) and the New Zealand International Students Associations (NZISA). It is intended for student representatives who are involved in the academic decision-making structures of their respective universities. More specifically, it is intended for those representatives who sit on their university's Academic Board or Senate, and other related university/department-wide committees. Although it seeks to provide an operational overview to support these students, it also functions to unite student voices on education in Aotearoa. The aim of this guide is to demystify these structures and provide advice on how to be an effective student voice. After attending the Student Voice Summit this document can help to guide you during your year(s) of representation and can also be used to train others.

There are four parts to this document:

1. The first part provides an overview of the organisations that have contributed to this document.
2. The second part looks to our vision for education. It draws on international examples and good practice from within Aotearoa, to outline what a united vision for education could look like and achieved.
3. The third part focuses on your role as a student representative. It draws on examples from the sector and provides a national break down of the key issues of 2019.
4. The final part helps to explain the jargon and the system that can make the academic environment inaccessible and unwelcoming.



*Left to Right: Lukas Kristen, New Zealand International Students' Association; Caitlin Barlow-Groome, NZUSA; Mamaeroa Merito, Te Mana Ākonga; Ali Leota, Taura Pasifika/NZUSA; James Ranstead, NZUSA*

## **Part One | Who are your student representative organisations?**

### **New Zealand Union of Students' Association**

The New Zealand Union of Students' Associations (NZUSA) is the national voice of students in tertiary education. We are a collective of students' associations from universities and polytechnics across Aotearoa. Together, our job is to fight for a barrier-free education for all.

Our job, like yours, is to improve the lives of students so that they become well-supported, happy, successful and well-rounded graduates. We do by being an influential and inclusive voice for students from all walks of life.

Our value lies in our capacity to engage with government officials, MPs, Ministers and civil society on a daily basis, ensuring that students' interests are represented throughout the policy-making process.

Based in Wellington, our National Office team work hard on issues that are important to students, such as the rising cost of living, poor quality housing and poor mental health/wellbeing. We do this by undertaking research on these issues, campaigning to build public support for student issues, and lobbying politicians to advance student-friendly policies. We also provide support for member associations on matters such as governance, HR, media training and student voice/representation.

### **Te Mana Ākonga**

Te Mana Ākonga (TMA) is the National Māori Tertiary Students' Association and provides a voice for ākonga Māori on issues that impact on them within the tertiary-education environment. TMA focuses on assisting rōpū in advocacy, enhancing support services for ākonga Māori on campus, and keeping rōpū informed of issues that impact on them at a central government level.

Born out of the student protest movements of the 1970s, TMA joins a long line of individuals and rōpū who wanted to change the status quo of ākonga Māori. The first example of this begins with the likes of Tā Apirana Ngata, Te Rangihīroa and Tā Māui Pōmare - who were pioneers of their time. Whetu Tirikatene-Sullivan was the first president of the Federation of Māori Students during which time Emeritus Professor Whatarangi Winiata was also involved. Ngā Tama Toa included people like brothers Sid and Moana Jackson, and shortly after Te Mana Akonga was established.

We are whānau-based, and currently have rōpū (registered members) at all eight of the universities, and some polytechnics, in Aotearoa. The structure of TMA is made up of kaiarahi (representatives from each rōpū). These kaiarahi attend hui throughout the year at which they discuss issues, formulate actions and determine a work programme for the Tumuaki.

## **Tauira Pasifika**

Tauira Pasifika is the voice for Pasifika students in Aotearoa New Zealand's tertiary education sector. We were set up in 2019 by Pasifika students, for Pasifika students, as Pasifika students. As Pasifika is one of the priority learning groups identified by government, our aim is to ensure Pasifika student voice is well represented and supported across the sector. With this, Tauira Pasifika operates a leadership role to encourage and empower Pasifika student engagement in decision making across tertiary education.

Guided by the value of service, Tauira Pasifika is the Pasifika student movement working collectively across our three regional hubs: Northern, Central and Southern. We are governed by a national executive and currently have membership across many New Zealand universities and institutes of technology and polytechnics, and have recently developed relationships across the tertiary education sector.

Tauira Pasifika currently have representation on Universities New Zealand Enhancement Theme Steering Group for the Cycle 6 Academic Audit and Ako Aotearoa Pacific Peoples Caucus to raise issues that impact Pasifika students.

## **New Zealand International Students' Association**

The New Zealand International Students' Association ("NZISA") is an active international student body that was established in late 2016. NZISA represent the collective voice of international students in New Zealand. We are recognised as the largest international student voice in New Zealand and have members in the tertiary and secondary education sector. Our goal is to address issues faced by international students and to ensure that we see sustainable growth in the export education sector.

We act as the connecting bridge between students, policy makers, education providers and regional development groups. We believe that it is important that the voices of our international students are considered when the New Zealand government develops policies that concerns international students and temporary migrants. Thus, we strive to be the representing voice, influencing existing or new policies, and other factors that directly or indirectly affect international students.

NZISA acts as the student voice on the International Education Strategy and the International Student Wellbeing Strategy. These strategies guide the government's direction on international education. As the student voice we ensure that our student needs are balanced with commercial objectives of the export education sector. In the past we have worked on increasing international student post-study work visas to a length of three years, and worked alongside MBIE in reducing the labour exploitation of international students.

Our structure consists of a National Executive that is supported by our Representative Council. The National Executive handles day-to-day operations of the association and liaises with other stakeholders or the government. Each registered member association sits on our Representative Council and is able to voice their concerns directly to our National Executive.

## Part Two | Our Vision for Tertiary Education in New Zealand



Student leaders of Aotearoa believe that every New Zealander should have access to high quality, publicly-funded and publicly-owned tertiary education. We believe that tertiary education is a public good which means that the system belongs to all of us, and that we all benefit from it. Our role in fighting for this is embedded within our Constitutional objects, which are to:

- Ensure tertiary students are well represented and supported across the tertiary sector by NZUSA and local students' organisations, who are influential, visible, principled, well-resourced and informed
- Encourage world-class learning and teaching practices
- Promote outstanding student experiences and learning environments
- Develop adequate levels of student support
- Ensure there are no unfair barriers to education
- Promote equitable access and support for achievement
- Ensure students are valued members of an academic community that contributes to the creation and dissemination of knowledge

We believe that the issues of student welfare and quality education at universities are inextricably linked. Limited financial support and poor mental health are barriers to education success. Students' associations have done a great job at campaigning on the welfare issues, related to transport, housing, and health, that students face. In the current climate, it is really important that academic issues that students face are also remain integral parts of the work that NZUSA and individual students' associations engage in. This can range from student fees to class sizes, how the university performs its 'critic and conscience' role and quality assurance.

## **Student Voice in Universities**

Students are the primary stakeholders of the university and its decisions, so it only makes sense that we play our part in those decisions. This can be seen in a number of ways, including:

- Student representation on University Councils
- Student representation on Academic Boards / Senate
- Class-level student representation
- University's Investment Plans requiring them to demonstrate how they are supporting student voice
- Academic quality audits requiring that the university demonstrates that it supports student engagement in planning, policy development and the monitoring of key academic activities

The role of student voice is also evidenced in research in New Zealand and around the world on student partnerships in tertiary education settings. For example, in 2012 NZUSA and Ako Aotearoa (the National Centre for Tertiary Teaching Excellence) worked in partnership on a project called the "Student Voice in Tertiary Education Settings: Quality Systems in Practice".

One of the aims of the research was to identify pre-conditions for the effective operation of systems that allow/ facilitate a representative student voice to have an impact in quality enhancement. Those pre-conditions have now been summarised into a table of five practice features and indicators of good practice in action.

In addition the Student Voice research report has produced six sets of reflective questions (29 in total) that align to six major themes of the research:

1. Establishing the partnership in which the student voice is to be heard
2. Legitimising the student voice
3. Establishing clear roles for those delivering the student voice
4. Providing training for those delivering the student voice
5. Providing adequate resources for supporting the student voice
6. Hearing and heeding the student voice

**BOX: an example of good student representation practice from NZ uni**

## **International example: SPARQS**

## **Moving Forward: National Centre for Student Voice**

### **Our Vision for a National Centre for Student Voice**

The essential function of a NCSV would be to provide training and support to student representatives across Aotearoa. Ideally, this would look like:

Intensive annual training, focusing on areas such as governance, finance, organisational management and most importantly, student voice training.

Training would be catered to individual associations and training would be provided on campus, rather than one centralised training session

Continuing support throughout the year as a point of contact for student representatives who need assistance with a range of matters. This could be:

- Administrative assistance (i.e. dealing with invoices)
- Governance matters (i.e. help with using legal services)
- Point of contact for student Presidents dealing with confidential matters
- Advice on matters relating to the TEO's council
- Advice on matters relating to Associations' CEO or General Manager (i.e. pay negotiations)
- Ensuring student representatives receive remuneration for their service
- The student representative would need to be elected from the student body via elections run by students, not the TEO
- There are also several ways in which the NCSV could help address the financial independence issue that Students' Associations face post VSM.
- Act as arbitrators when the service level agreement is being decided between the TEO and Students' Association; or
- Charge the TEO a Student Voice levy that would then be redirected to Student Associations; or
- Collect funding from each students CSSF levy to directly fund associations
- Many students' representatives thought it would be useful for a NCST to be able to provide low cost auditing services. This would:
  - Help students' executives ensure they are well functioning;
  - Help smaller associations ensure their finances are in order;
  - Allow independent advice and recommendations to be give;
  - Seek advice on a consulting nature (i.e. process for hiring new CEO).



### Part Three | Your Role as a Student Representative

You're the Expert – what outgoing administrations wished they knew this time last year	How to be an effective member of academic committees

## Part Four | Understanding the Jargon and the System

### Key Terms, Acronyms and Abbreviations

AB	Academic Board
AQA	Academic Quality Agency for New Zealand Universities, Te Pokapū Kōunga Mātauranga mō ngā Whare Wānanga o Aotearoa
AUSSE	Australasian Universities Survey of Student Engagement
AVC	Assistant Vice-Chancellor
BoGS	Board of Graduate Studies (AU, OU)
BUGS	Board of Undergraduate Studies (OU)
CAD	Centre for Academic Development
CALT	Committee on/for Learning and Teaching
CARs	Commendations, affirmations and recommendations
CE	Continuing Education
CEQ	Course experience questionnaire
CRM	Customer Relationship Management (system)
CUAP	Committee on University Academic Programmes (UNZ sub-committee).
DVC	Deputy Vice-Chancellor
EFTS	Equivalent Full-Time Students
ELT	Executive Leadership Team
EPI	Educational Performance Indicator
ETSG	Enhancement Theme Steering Group
FTE	Full-time equivalent (staff)
GES	Guaranteed Education Score
GDS	Graduate destinations survey
GRS	Graduate Research School
GS	Guideline statement(s)
GYR	Graduating year review (part of CUAP processes)
ITS	Information Technology Services
KPI	Key performance indicator
LMS	Learning or Library Management System
MOOC	Massive Open Online Course
NZQA	New Zealand Qualifications Authority (non-universities)

NZQF	New Zealand Qualifications Framework
NZVCC	New Zealand Vice-Chancellors' Committee (statutory body responsible for QA in universities, operates as UNZ)
MoE	Ministry of Education
Panel	Panels engaged by AQA to conduct academic audits of universities
PVC	Pro Vice-Chancellor
QA	Quality Assurance
QE	Quality Enhancement
SAC	Student Achievement Component (funding)
SLC	Student Learning Centre
SLG/T	Senior Leadership Group/Team
SMS	Student Management System
SP	Strategic Plan
SSP	Statement of Service Performance (requirement for annual reports)
TEC	Tertiary Education Commission (funding)
TKA	Te Kāhui Amokura (UNZ Māori Committee)
UNZ	Universities New Zealand (operating name for NZVCC)
VCAG	Vice-Chancellor's Advisory Group (OU)

### **Academic Board/Senate**

The Academic Board (also known as Senate at some institutions) is a committee of the University Council's at each university. Among its functions is to "advise the Council on matters relating to courses of study, awards, and other academic matters". It approves new courses, significant changes to qualifications, discontinuation of courses and programmes and is the highest University body to approve new subjects or qualifications, which are then forwarded to CUAP for consultation with the other universities.

The structure of the Academic Boards at each university are different, but their function is essentially the same. The structure below the Academic Boards (i.e. the committees and sub-committees of Academic Board/Senate). Learning these structures, at your own and other institutions is highly recommended.

*Having a seat on university academic boards or senate is vital for the student voice to be heard. As an international student, it often feels as though we are overlooked and know nothing of the inner workings of the university. Starting out my time at university, I barely knew who to go to or where to go for help or assistance. Reflecting on the past year, I have learnt a lot about how a university functions, the work that goes into decisions made by the university, and the importance of having a representative student voice on a committee.*

- Sabrina Alhady, Otago University Students' Association International Officer 2019

### **Academic Quality Agency (AQA)**

The Academic Quality Agency for New Zealand Universities (AQA), previously known as the New Zealand Universities Academic Audit Unit, was established in 1993 by the New Zealand Vice-Chancellors' Committee to carry out audits of the processes in universities which underpin academic quality. These audits take place every 7-8 years.

After working together for several years, in 2017 NZUSA and AQA signed a memorandum of understanding. This formalised their partnership to enhanced student voice and the engagement of students in the academic audit process. The partnership objectives are set out in a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) between AQA and NZUSA.

AQA and NZUSA share an objective of having an authentic, enduring, diverse and effective student voice that contributes to academic quality and quality assurance in New Zealand universities. The MoU also supports a specific objective to include students, or recent graduates, as auditors in the sixth cycle of academic audit for New Zealand Universities.

### **Cycle 6 Academic Audit Enhancement Theme**

*'Access, outcomes and opportunities for Māori students and for Pasifika students: an enhancement theme approach.'*



*Members of the Enhancement Theme Steering Group at the STARS conference in July. Left to right: Professor Robyn Longhurst, Professor Giselle Byrnes, Dr Darryn Russell, Dr Tasileta Teevale, Ali Leota, Parekura Pewhairangi*

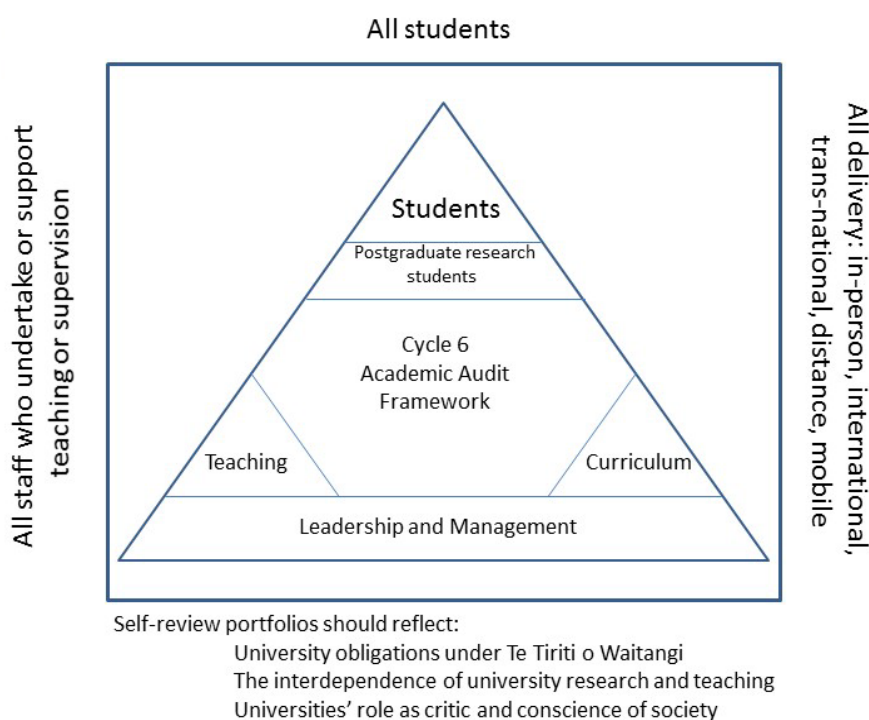
Enhancement-led quality assurance is part of the external academic quality framework for the New Zealand universities. The universities have drawn on the Scottish experience and introduced an enhancement theme into the Cycle 6 Academic Audit in which universities collectively address an issue which is a topic that is strategically important for each university and of national significance.

The enhancement theme is 'access, outcomes and opportunity: for Māori, recognising Te Tiriti o Waitangi and the bicultural foundation of Aotearoa; and for Pasifika, recognising the place of Aotearoa in the Pacific.'

The enhancement theme is overseen by an Enhancement Theme Steer Group (ETSG) which has membership from all eight New Zealand universities, Te Kāhui Amokura, Komiti Pasifika, New Zealand Union of Students' Associations' and Te Mana Ākonga.

### Cycle 6 Audit Framework and Student Auditors

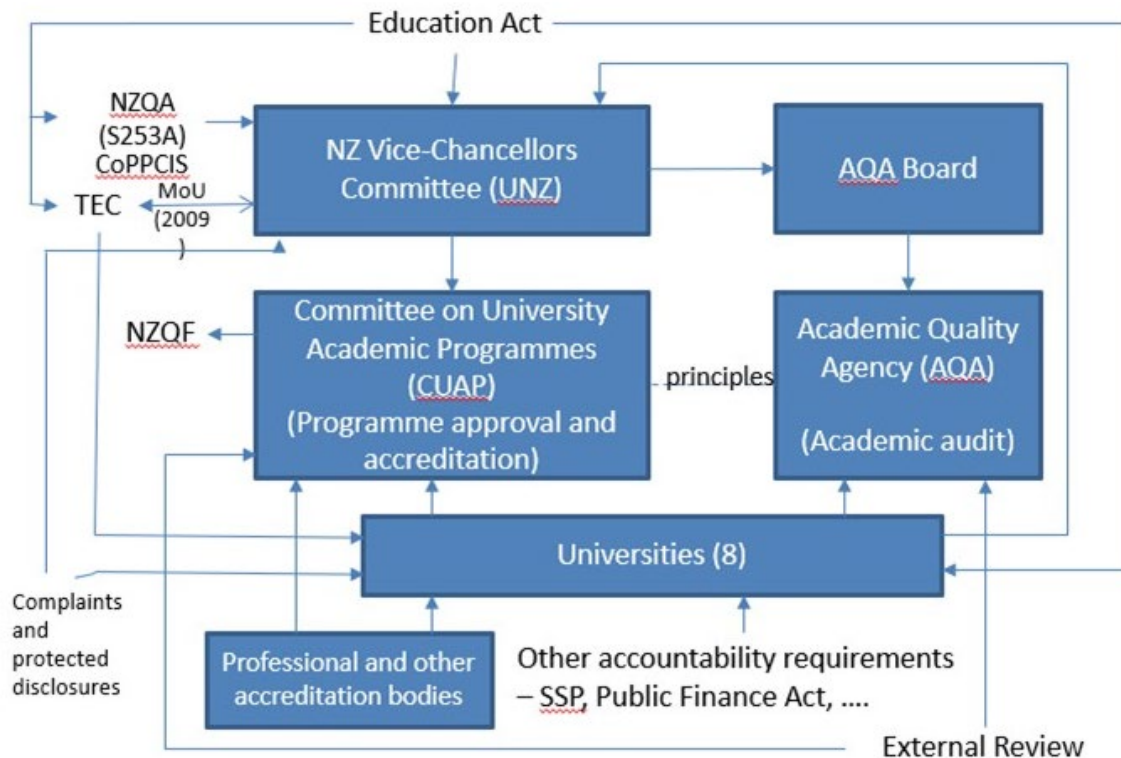
Once the Enhancement Theme finishes in 2020, the audit phase of Cycle 6 will start. Universities will be audited against a framework of 30 guideline statements.



*Cycle 6 Audit Framework*

Audit panels will include a student, or recent graduate. AQA is seeking students, or recent graduates, to be members of audit panels. See <https://www.aqa.ac.nz/about-us/auditors> for more information.

## Quality Assurance in New Zealand Universities



### Ako Aotearoa

Ako Aotearoa is New Zealand's National Centre for Tertiary Teaching Excellence. Established in 2007, Ako Aotearoa is a government-funded organisation committed to supporting New Zealand's tertiary sector teachers, trainer and educators be the best they can be.

Ako Aotearoa works alongside all parts of the tertiary sector with an emphasis on building education capability. The majority of its work is geared towards better understanding high quality teaching and using that information to improve tertiary teaching practice across Aotearoa New Zealand.

Fundamental to Ako Aotearoa is to support collaborative work that encourages learners to have their say about their tertiary education experience. Ako Aotearoa works closely with its advisory groups, that features a strong presence of student voice, to help identify issues relating to tertiary teaching and learning, set priorities and to contribute to building education capability.

## New Zealand Qualifications Framework (NZQF)

Level	Certificate	Diploma	Degree
10			PhD
9			Master's Degree
8	Postgraduate Certificate	Postgraduate Diploma	Honours Degree
7	Graduate Certificate	Graduate Diploma/ Diploma	Bachelor's Degree
6	Certificate	Diploma	
5			
4			
3			
2			
1			

For more information on the NZQF, see:

<https://www.nzqa.govt.nz/studying-in-new-zealand/understand-nz-quals/>

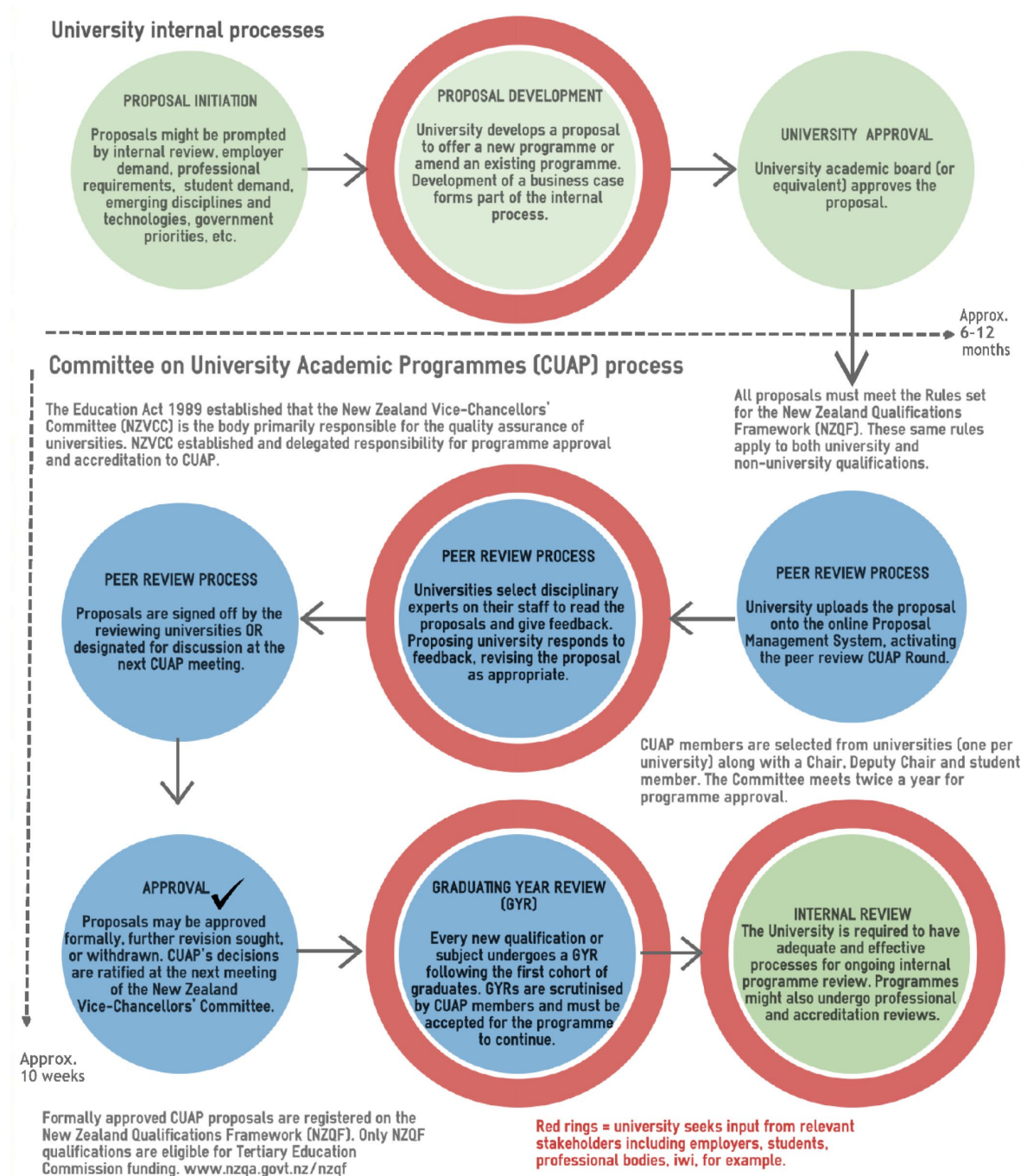
## Committee on University Academic Programmes (CUAP)

New Zealand's eight universities collaborate to ensure the quality of the country's university academic programmes. Instead of self-reviewing proposals and courses, university peer-review them. CUAP is the body that reviews the more significant types of academic proposals, including new or significantly amended qualifications, subjects, majors and specialisations. CUAP coordinates an inter-university review process that culminates in a set of recommendations made to Universities New Zealand, which are almost always accepted. When the proposals are for new qualifications, Universities New Zealand approves them on behalf of the New Zealand Qualifications Authority and notifies the Tertiary Education Commission so that funding may be enabled. There are two CUAP rounds per year, in May and in September. At Academic Boards or Committees 'CUAP', a lot of focus will be on ensuring that programmes are submitted to CUAP in time for either round 1 or 2 for approval. Courses will only be sent to CUAP once they have moved through the quality assurance structure at each university. CUAP is comprised of one representative from each university and a NZUSA representative. Normally the representative from the university will be the Deputy Vice Chancellor (Academic) or equivalent. The 'rules' of CUAP are contained

within the CUAP handbook found here:

[https://www.universitiesnz.ac.nz/sites/default/files/uni-nz/CUAP\\_Handbook\\_2018\\_Web.pdf](https://www.universitiesnz.ac.nz/sites/default/files/uni-nz/CUAP_Handbook_2018_Web.pdf)

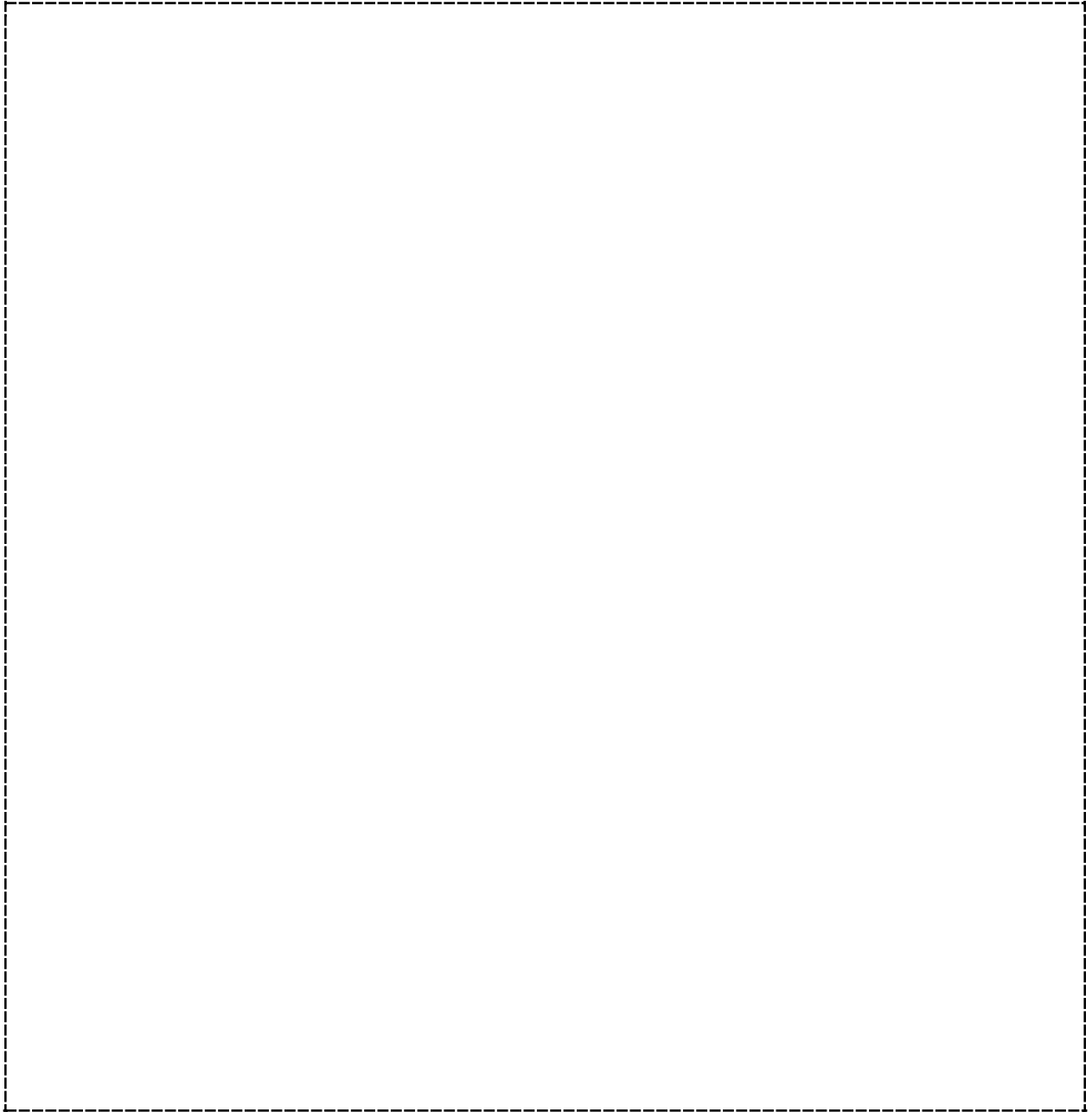
## Structure of CUAP





**Academic Governance Structure**

*Draw in the structure of academic governance at your institution. Note the names and positions of those that will be useful to your role next year.*

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## **Useful links and further notes**

Student Partnerships in Quality Scotland (sparqs)

<https://www.sparqs.ac.uk/index.php>

Memorandum of Understanding - AQA and NZUSA

<http://www.aqa.ac.nz/memorandum>

Academic Quality Agency for New Zealand universities (AQA)

<http://www.aqa.ac.nz>

Student Voice Australia

<http://studentvoiceaustralia.com/>

National Student Engagement Programme - Ireland

<https://studentengagement.ie/about/>

International Journal for Students as Partners

<https://mulpress.mcmaster.ca/ijsap>

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