AUSTRALIAN UNIVERSITIES QUALITY AGENCY

Report of an Audit of
Central Queensland University

February 2011

CONTENTS

1 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

1.1   Audit Findings

The scope for the 2010 audit of the Central Queensland University (CQU or the University) is the two themes of 'Quality of Teaching' and 'International Activities', together with the follow-up of selected recommendations from the 2006 Australian Universities Quality Agency (AUQA) Audit Report. In addition, this Report includes comments on the University's compliance with the MCEETYA *National Protocols for Higher Education Approval Processes*, other external reference points, and on academic standards.

AUQA's findings are contained in sections 2 to 4. A selection of data that supports the findings is provided in section 5. Information on the conduct of the audit is contained in Appendix A.

1.1.1   Main Points

Central Queensland University has been undertaking significant changes since the Cycle 1 AUQA audit. These changes include the acquisition of full ownership of C Management Services Pty Ltd (CMS) in 2008; personnel changes to senior leadership and rearranging leadership portfolios and organisational structures; strengthening of academic governance; and reconfiguration of international activities, including terminating the majority of transnational education (TNE) partnerships. AUQA commends the Vice-Chancellor and the leadership team for specifying a strategic direction which is endorsed and supported by CQU staff.

The University must continue to take decisive steps and sustain its effort, as outlined in its Renewal Plan: to strengthen the quality of learning and teaching; focus its approach to international activities; intensify its efforts to develop the research profile of the University in selected areas; and use its 'power of place' to engage with its regional communities. AUQA recommends that the University foster reflective practice across academic and administrative activities to enhance a culture of continuous quality improvement.

The University must develop and strengthen its understandings of quality assurance beyond staff adhering to the procedure manuals and complying with external regulatory requirements. The University is encouraged to fully implement its 'information dashboard' which will provide data for planning, quality and monitoring purposes, and support decision making and management processes.

AUQA finds that the University has only recently begun to give serious attention to the reasons for its high domestic and international student attrition rates. Trend data shows that this is a problem that has persisted for some years. The University must investigate the reasons for the high attrition rates and take urgent action to reduce them.

Several good practices in international education have been identified by AUQA, including the University's robust support for international students, but there is room for improvement in the quality of learning and teaching. AUQA recommends that CQU consider the future relationship with its fully owned entity, CMS, as part of the long-term approach to fulfilling the overall strategic goals of the University.

1.1.2   Matters from Cycle 1 Audit

Implementation of many of the recommendations from the 2006 AUQA Audit Report are addressed under the two themes of this audit. Among the other recommendations chosen for follow-up were the academic oversight by the University Council, the University risk management framework, the planning and reporting framework, the quality assurance system, benchmarking, the use of institutional data, and workforce planning.

AUQA recognises that the University Council has strengthened its academic governance oversight, but finds that there needs to be stronger monitoring of student attrition. Council is demonstrating good practice through implemented processes for review of its performance and induction for new members.

Attention has been given to the alignment of risk management processes between CMS and the University, but greater alignment and integration with planning are needed. The University also needs to be more proactive in identifying and managing academic risks.

AUQA finds that the University needs to expand its quality framework to improve staff understanding and participation in the quality system. A dimension of this is developing a benchmarking framework for the University that is aligned to strategic objectives, and the completion of the University information dashboards for planning, monitoring and improvement purposes.

The University must develop a comprehensive workforce plan that is aligned to strategic priorities and that takes into consideration the complexity of the two employment agreements which are in operation for the regional campuses and the metropolitan campuses.

1.1.3   Theme 1: Quality of Teaching

The University recognises that it needs to strengthen learning and teaching. It is taking action to improve the quality of teaching by addressing the functioning of academic governance structures, establishing the role of dean of school with greater accountability, and setting up an Office for Learning and Teaching to centralise and coordinate learning and teaching functions under the leadership of the Pro Vice-Chancellor (Learning and Teaching). A Learning and Teaching Education Research Centre is intended to advance the scholarship of teaching and provide an education research resource for the University. AUQA commends the University for a number of these initiatives.

The University is beginning to give concerted attention to identifying the causes of, and introducing remedies for, the high rates of domestic and international student attrition. The University must improve domestic and international student progress rates and use the results of the Course Experience Questionnaire for that purpose. The University's cohort average ratings for good teaching, generic skills and overall satisfaction are below those of the sector. AUQA encourages the University to address these issues in an integrated way.

AUQA finds that the University has not made effective use of student evaluations, due partly to its instruments and partly to the low student response rates. Student evaluations were the subject of a recommendation in the 2006 AUQA Audit Report which has not been fully addressed. The University is making use of its new learning management system to improve student responses to course and teacher evaluations, but has yet to finalise and to fully integrate this evaluation process into its quality assurance procedures. This approach has yet to deliver improved response rates. AUQA urges the University to give priority to ensuring that

student evaluations response rates are improved and that the data is used for monitoring and educational improvement purposes.

AUQA commends the University for the breadth and effect of its enabling programs, the quality of its academic support services, the quality of the library and information technology division services, and the monitoring of academic progress of at-risk students. The University makes significant use of learning technologies and integrated learning systems and is in the process of completing a project on academic support systems to enhance learning and teaching. AUQA finds that the University needs to ensure that all academic staff are trained in, and make appropriate use of, technology to facilitate learning and enhance the quality of teaching. While there are professional development opportunities provided to full-time and casual staff, they need better coordination, integration and monitoring.

1.1.4   Theme 2: International Activities

CQU is commended for obtaining full ownership of C Management Services Pty Ltd (CMS), thereby enhancing overall strategic oversight and management by the University. The change of ownership has brought the administration and academic functions of CMS and the University closer together, notably through greater faculty oversight and enhanced management responsibility for learning and teaching at the metropolitan campuses. While enormous progress has been made in bringing CMS into greater alignment with the University, AUQA recommends that CQU carefully consider the future role that CMS, as a wholly University-owned entity, will have within the internationalisation strategy and its effect in shaping the objectives of the metropolitan campuses.

The University is commended for the academic support services provided by the metropolitan campuses through the academic skills units and the training, employment and career service. The University is also commended for its development and use of the education agent management portal. The establishment of the International Education Research Centre, as a resource for learning and teaching and international education research, is already providing evidence of meaningful debate around internationalisation and application of its research to CQU educational practice.

AUQA finds that international activities at the University have been hindered by a lack of strategic and effective leadership and coordination, although the most recent Strategic Plan and Renewal Plan map out a detailed direction for the internationalisation of the University. There is a need to develop a shared understanding of internationalisation among staff that goes beyond expansion of international student numbers and revenue, to include research, internationalising the curriculum and the student experience. Although there are pockets of good practice at the University, internationalisation of the curriculum requires consistent development across the faculties.

The University has discontinued all but one of its transnational education partnerships mainly due to reasons outside the University's control, such as political instability, and is strategically focusing on one small partnership in Singapore. This partnership is operating effectively but there are some areas for improvement, including ensuring the equivalence of laboratory provision to the TNE students in the Bachelor of Biomedical Science program.

1.1.5   National Protocols for Higher Education Approval Processes

The *National Protocols for Higher Education Approval Processes* (National Protocols) require all universities to meet a range of criteria, in particular nationally prescribed criteria A1 to A10 and D1 to D5. CQU provided a self-assessment against the National Protocols prior to the

audit. This was supported by evidence of the extent of CQU's compliance with each of the criteria in Protocols A and D. The desk review was considered by AUQA in developing the scope of the main Audit Visit and it also informed the Panel's attention to the audit scope. The Panel chose to track through the Audit Visit the extent to which the University complied with the Protocols related to scholarly activity (A8 and D1).

On the evidence considered by the Audit Panel, CQU complies with the National Protocols.

1.1.6   Other External Reference Points

The University has also made use of a number of other external reference points to ensure the compliance and quality of its provision, including:
* Australian Qualifications Framework
* AVCC (now Universities Australia) 2001, *Policy Guidelines on Cross-Sector Qualification Linkages*
* AVCC (now Universities Australia) 2005, *Universities and their Students: Principles for the Provision of Education by Australian Universities*
* DEST 2007, National Code of Practice for Registration Authorities and Providers of Education and Training to Overseas Students (the National Code 2007)
* *Education Services for Overseas Students Act 2000* (Cwlth) (ESOS Act) and associated and subordinate legislation and regulations, including the National Code 2007
* *Higher Education Support Act 2003* (Cwlth) and associated schedules and regulations
* MCEETYA 2005, *Good Practice Principles for Credit Transfer and Articulation from VET to Higher Education*.

CQU also participates in the following benchmarking processes within particular operational areas:
* Association of Commonwealth Universities Benchmarking Program
* Australasian Council on Open, Distance and E-Learning
* Australasian Survey of Student Engagement
* Australian Universities HR Benchmarking Program
* Australian Universities International Directors Forum
* Council of Australian University Directors of IT
* Council of Australian University Librarians
* EDUCAUSE
* Excellence in Research for Australia (ERA)
* Helpdesk Association of Australia
* Tertiary Education Facilities Management Association.

The audit did not identify any matters of concern regarding the University's compliance with these external reference points.

1.2   Institutional Context

1.2.1   Institutional Profile

Initially established as the Queensland Institute of Technology (Capricornia) in Rockhampton in 1967, Central Queensland University rebranded its image in 2008 and is now known as CQUniversity Australia. The University comprises six regional campuses located in the central part of the state of Queensland and four Australian International Campuses, also known as metropolitan campuses, in Sydney, Melbourne, Brisbane and the Gold Coast. Approximately half of student enrolments are international students who are located on the metropolitan

campuses. About 40 per cent of student enrolments are in the distance education mode, comprising both domestic and international students.

In the period 2006–2009 the University terminated its remaining five TNE programs and established a new partnership in Singapore in 2009.

The University belongs to the non-aligned group of universities and is benchmarked against its choice of institutions (section 5).

The Strategic Plan 2011–2014 outlines a bold plan (p4) for the University in the next 10 years:

> CQUniversity will attract more students through academic offerings which are flexible, adaptable and responsive to the needs of our students, communities and of future employers. Through "blended learning", we will combine the best features of the face-to-face classroom with the use of information and communication technology, to provide an engaged and interactive learning experience for our students – wherever they may be.
>
> **From 2011, we will be financially sustainable.**
> CQUniversity will continue its financial growth, maximising funding through philanthropy, commercialisation, industry and community partnerships and negotiations with government.
>
> **By 2014, CQUniversity will be a great regional university and be sustainable on our regional operations alone.**
> CQUniversity will become a strong regional university meeting the needs of our diverse communities, through growing multi-city campuses. We will reconfigure and reposition our regional campuses to be the heartbeat of their local communities by opening more widely our campuses to community involvement.
>
> **By 2019, CQUniversity will be one of Australia's great universities.**
> CQUniversity will be one that is respected and a role model to other universities throughout the world. We will become the university of choice in our heartland of Central Queensland, and the employer of choice within the sector. CQUniversity will be the most engaged university in Australia.

This plan is informed by the Vice-Chancellor's Renewal Plan (August 2009) which provides strategies and actions to enable the University to 'recover from its present financial and reputational position' in the three stages identified above. Major actions for the University include engaging with its region through its 'power of place'; engagement with TAFE; curriculum refreshment and development of new degrees; increasing international enrolments on the regional campuses; improved marketing; development of current campuses; staff development; and growth in research.

From a $5.5million deficit in 2007, the University produced an operating surplus of $6.5million in 2008. Like many other Australian universities, CQU faces the risk from declining student fee revenue, particularly international student fees during 2007 and 2008. The University recognised that it was exposed to high risk in not diversifying sufficiently its international student enrolments base, instead relying on a selected limited number of source countries. The University is actively addressing these issues.

The University has two faculties (responsible for programs across 10 campuses), 10 schools, and two research institutes comprising 12 research centres. A summary statistical profile of the University is shown below.

Central Queensland University	2009
Operating revenue	$231.5m
Total Australian EFTSL in 2009	6492
International EFTSL (and % of total)	5951 (48%)
EFTSL undergraduate student numbers (includes enabling programs)	12,949
EFTSL postgraduate student numbers Research by higher degree Course work	 294 4,131
Total FTE staff (excluding casual, as at 31 March 2009) CMS CQU	 533 956
Total FTE full and fractional time academic staff (excluding casual, as at 31 March 2009) CMS CQU	 288 345

Source: Central Queensland University.

1.2.2   Strategic Context

The audit of CQU occurs in the context of significant changes since the 2006 audit. Major restructuring of international activities in 2006 resulted in the mainstreaming of activities supporting international students and the alignment of the University's international objectives under the portfolio of a deputy vice-chancellor. In 2008, the Council decided to make CMS a wholly-owned entity of the University through the buy-out of the private partner. This has led to a number of changes in the relationship between CMS and the University.

A new Vice-Chancellor took office in August 2009. Coinciding with this was the retirement of four senior executives, which enabled the formation of a new management and organisational structure. Within a short time after his arrival, the Vice-Chancellor presented to the University a Renewal Plan, which has subsequently shaped the most recent Strategic Plan 2011–2014.

It is against this background that a number of the audit comments and conclusions need to be read.

1.3   Commendations, Affirmations and Recommendations

This Report contains commendations, affirmations and recommendations. A commendation refers to the achievement of a stated goal, or to some plan or activity that has led to, or appears likely to lead to, the achievement of a stated goal, and which in AUQA's view is particularly significant. A recommendation refers to an area in need of attention, whether in respect of approach, deployment or results, which in AUQA's view is particularly significant. Where such matters have already been identified by the University, with evidence, they are termed 'affirmations'. It is acknowledged that recommendations in this Report may have resource implications.

The themes for Cycle 2 audits are chosen for their risk potential and are likely also to reflect the institution's own assessment of its developmental and strategic needs. As for Cycle 1 audits, AUQA aims to assist the University to enhance the quality and standards of its operations.

Commendations

Affirmations

Recommendations

2   MATTERS FROM CYCLE 1 AUDIT

Appreciating the importance of quality enhancement and improvement, the Cycle 2 audit considers whether the recommendations and affirmations in the Cycle 1 AUQA audit report have been addressed. A sample of recommendations and affirmations is selected and checked.

In addition, AUQA seeks evidence of the effectiveness of the institution's quality assurance and improvement system.

The Cycle 1 AUQA audit report had three categories of audit conclusions – commendations, affirmations and recommendations. In its Performance Portfolio submitted in 2010, CQU provided details of action taken to address the four affirmations and the 19 recommendations. Matters relevant to many of these recommendations are addressed in sections 3 and 4 of this Report. The Audit Panel selected three recommendations for follow-up.

Several changes have taken place at the University since the 2006 audit: changes to leadership and the senior executive group, an external review of the Academic Board, and the change of ownership of CMS which has become a wholly-owned entity of the University. Some changes are being implemented, such as a planning and reporting framework for all operations of the University, the school structure, the development of regional campuses, and the 'curriculum refresh' activity to discontinue some programs and identify new ones.

The University is now in a period of dynamic development which is shaped by its location (referred to as the 'power of place'), multi-campus context, and the existence of the now wholly-owned CMS which has responsibility for the majority of international students on the metropolitan campuses (Australian International Campuses). This is a complex operational environment which needs to take into consideration external factors such as the University's location and engagement with local and regional communities.

Underpinning the change program of the University has been the development of the Strategic Plan 2011–2014 which describes the purpose of the University to '… attract more students through academic offerings which are flexible, adaptable and responsive to the needs of our students, communities and of future employers.' There are seven priority areas: engaged learning and teaching; engaged research and innovation; community engagement; international engagement; student access, participation and success; people and performance; and resources, systems and infrastructure. The Panel was provided with some key performance indicators (KPIs) related to prior strategic plan priorities (2009–2012 Key Performance Indicators) and the 2010 Corporate Plan. In finalising its KPIs, the University should consider reducing or refocusing the nature and number of high level KPIs to ensure that the objectives of the strategies are easily identified and understood by staff. Much of the detail in the KPIs could be contained in the range of lower level strategies and operational plans.

There is a broad understanding and optimistic commitment by staff to the strategic direction set by the Vice-Chancellor and his leadership team. There is a preparedness by staff to participate in implementing the Renewal Plan by building on the strengths of the University and overcoming the constraints and weaknesses of the past. Staff morale is high and there is positive regard for the University in the wider community.

Commendation 1

AUQA commends Central Queensland University's Vice-Chancellor and leadership team for setting a strategic direction for the University that is receiving University-wide and community-wide support and endorsement by staff.

A review of the extent to which the University has responded to the affirmations and recommendations of the 2006 AUQA Audit Report shows that there is unevenness in both the extent and timeliness with which they have been addressed. Many of the recommendations appear to have only begun to be addressed in the past couple of years. Some have yet to be comprehensively addressed and implemented, for example, Recommendation 6 on generic skills and attributes, Recommendation 11 on the review of the student evaluation system and Recommendation 17 on reviewing and aligning the University's website. The Panel is of the opinion that, given the importance and impact of a number of the 2006 AUQA Audit Report recommendations for the core educational processes and CQU's reputation, the University should have acted with greater decisiveness and speed in tackling the affirmations and recommendations.

2.1   Recommendation 2: University Council

The 2006 AUQA Audit Report contained a recommendation that *Central Queensland University Council develop strategies to ensure it is able to inform and balance its fiduciary governance responsibilities with its academic governance responsibilities* (Recommendation 2). Since 2003 Council has undertaken annual internal reviews of its performance, and commissioned in October 2009 an external evaluation of Council's performance. A number of improvements were proposed, including the content and type of academic documentation provided to Council, and appointing an external Council member to the Academic Board. A comprehensive induction process in 2010 has been implemented for new members of Council.

In February 2008, an external academic governance review was commissioned and 16 major recommendations were made that included the University quality system, the academic governance structure, the functioning of the Academic Board, program and course approval processes, and the use of KPIs to enhance the Board's functioning. All the recommendations were implemented. In mid-2009, the Academic Board and its committees changed their operations to ensure alignment with their committees' terms of reference and their reporting functions. This has improved Academic Board reporting to Council on academic matters, including reporting against a range of strategic and operational plans.

The Panel is satisfied that the recommendation has been largely addressed, but finds that Council does not appear to fully appreciate the significance of the high student attrition rates and comparatively low progress rates. The Council has not sufficiently monitored the extent of action taken to identify and address the reasons for attrition rates, lower progress rates and student course experience evaluation data.

The University Council's approach to governance is sound and the Council is demonstrating good practice in the processes that it has adopted for the annual review of its performance (including peer review) and in its comprehensive induction of new Council members.

2.2   Recommendation 3: Comprehensive Risk Management Framework

Recommendation 3 from the 2006 AUQA Audit Report is that *Central Queensland University Council develop a more comprehensive risk management framework incorporating the current*

legislative compliance framework and also strategic and operational risks across the spectrum of University activities. The University updated its Risk Management Policy and Risk Management Framework and Guidelines in 2009 to be consistent with good sector practice and with the Risk Management Standard AS/NZS OSI 31000:2009. University Council approved the policy in May 2010 and the framework was approved by the Vice-Chancellor's Advisory Committee (VCAC) in June 2010. The University intends to make available the University's upgraded governance, risk and compliance software to faculties and divisions. The Academic Board has begun to take a greater role than previously in monitoring academic risks. In order to strengthen current risk management processes, faculties and divisions will be required to identify their three top risks and risks of lost opportunities.

Council monitors the identification and management of risks across the University, including CMS. Several key administrative and academic processes are closely monitored for risk, for example, in the provision of ICT and in examination processes.

The Panel notes that while the University had a number of existing risk management processes in place at the time of the 2006 AUQA audit, it did not act in a timely manner to address Recommendation 3. Given the recentness of the updating of the documentation and embedding the improved risk management process across the University, the Panel is unable to establish the effect of the implementation of the Recommendation.

The University is encouraged to ensure that there is adequate understanding of and compliance with the approach to risk, particularly the identification and management of academic risk, for example, student attrition. As noted earlier, neither the University Council nor the CMS Board appears to have fully appreciated the significance of the high student attrition rates and lower progress rates. The Panel concurs with the University that it must review its current risk management effectiveness, particularly as it relates to academic risks, and align it better with the University planning processes and, in particular, that 'more work is required to improve planning and risk management at the faculty level and in Responsibility Centres'(PF p12).

> **Affirmation 1**
>
> **AUQA affirms Central Queensland University's need to review the effectiveness of its risk management and achieve a better alignment with the University planning processes.**

2.3   *Recommendation 5: Integrated Planning and Reporting Framework*

Recommendation 5 from the 2006 AUQA Audit Report is that *Central Queensland University develop an integrated planning and reporting framework, in conjunction with the strategic plans for C_MS, aligned to the risk management and quality assurance frameworks and incorporating appropriate external benchmarking; and that the various structural entities with quality and risk management responsibilities be integrated so as to more effectively support this framework.* The Division of Strategy, Quality and Review was established in 2008 under the Corporate Services area, with the Internal Audit and Risk Office located under this portfolio. However, in 2010 a Corporate Strategy and Planning unit was to be established under the portfolio of the Chief Financial Officer. University Council approved a Planning and Reporting Policy in September 2010. The VCAC approved a revised integrated planning framework 'to further improve organisational clarity around reporting lines, analysis and review' (PF p10).

Since CMS became a wholly-owned University entity in 2008, with majority University senior executive representation on its Board (including the Vice-Chancellor), there is stronger alignment of planning processes. The Deputy Vice-Chancellor (International), who is also the CEO of CMS, is a member of the VCAC. The management agreements between the University and CMS stipulate the formation of a Services Committee (the CQU/CMS Strategic Management Group) which is responsible for strategic planning, review of performance, and items referred by user groups (eg Information Technology) that manage service level agreements.

The Panel noted that the University has addressed a number of the issues raised in Recommendation 5, primarily those related to CMS planning and reporting mechanisms. Furthermore, CQU has undertaken a number of reviews commissioned by the University or required by the Queensland state government. The University recently approved a policy and planning framework to ensure better alignment, analysis and review of the planning and reporting framework. Given the recent nature of the approval, the Panel is unable to comment on the framework's effectiveness. The University recognises that it still has to bring risk management (section 2.2) into greater alignment with these frameworks. The Panel also formed the view that the University needs to bring about greater alignment between the quality system and its approach to risk management (section 2.4).

2.4   Matters Related to Quality Assurance

2.4.1   Quality Assurance

The University '… is committed to a process of planning, decision-making, implementing and reporting for monitoring its performance and quality assurance'(PF p12). An updated Quality Policy was approved on 3 September 2009. The main feature of the quality system at the University is centred on a 'plan, do, check, act' approach and besides this there is little discussion of the approach to, or other dimensions of, quality. The University has a decentralised approach to quality management, with each staff member responsible for quality assurance and enhancement. The Quality Committee of the Academic Board was established in April 2008 and had its terms of reference reviewed in June 2010 by the Academic Board. The Committee's main functions include identifying and recommending improvements to the University's quality management system, overseeing implementation of quality related projects, overseeing program approvals and review, and monitoring institutional data and benchmarking.

A number of staff who were interviewed referred to the quality cycle as the main feature of the quality system at the University, but most referred to quality as following the 'Manual' or Roles and Responsibilities document. Most staff at CMS (both professional and academic) indicated that CMS takes a 'Manual-driven' approach to quality. Similarly, at the regional campuses there appeared to be a lack of shared understanding of an approach to quality assurance which takes account of the particularities and nuances of higher education academic quality. In February 2008, the Review of Academic Governance Report recommended that CQU urgently improve its quality management system.

The Panel noted that a greater reflection by staff on quality practice is needed across the University that goes beyond compliance with internal and external regulation. The Panel noted insufficient awareness and reflective engagement by staff on important issues at the University, for example, engaging in a relevant quality discourse at the local level to improve practice, or an analysis of student attrition to identify the types of academic and support strategies and interventions that are needed (section 3.6). Besides these discussions, the

University must ensure that quality processes and strategies are seen to be tied to enhancing performance and the pursuit of academic excellence.

Recommendation 1

AUQA recommends that Central Queensland University foster a culture of reflective practice among academic and administrative staff to enhance a culture of continuous quality improvement.

In order to embed a culture of quality across the University, the discussion on quality must be taken beyond the use of rhetoric (eg the 'quality cycle') to develop a shared understanding by staff of the benefits of having a robust quality system that is informed by the use of data and its analysis, and underpinned by sound benchmarking and a regular cycle of comprehensive reviews.

Beyond listing the elements of the quality cycle and the seven guiding principles of quality management, the Quality Policy should be revised to detail the University's definition of quality and its features, as well as its approach to it. The Quality Management Framework document mentioned in the Quality Policy could not be located by the Panel on the University website and was not provided to the Panel for the audit. As this document is the 'principal quality document for the University that interfaces with the Quality Management Systems of the organisational units and aligns with the CQUniversity Strategic Plan, management plans and key policies' (Quality Policy 4.1), it is important that it is available to staff to ensure their understanding of, and participation in, the strengthening of the University-wide quality system and culture. Besides the Quality Committee of the Academic Board, which has a primary remit to ensure academic quality, and the Quality Advisory Action Group for staff, with quality assurance duties from across the University, it is not clear to the Panel how effectively quality is assured and integrated across all of the University's planning, management and monitoring processes. As well as using quality systems to improve practice, staff also need to see quality as an integral component of academic activity rather than as a compliance activity. For the quality system to be effective, the Quality Policy and the associated framework must be known and embedded across all academic and administrative areas, including CMS.

Recommendation 2

AUQA recommends that Central Queensland University review and make more comprehensive its Quality Policy and related documentation and improve staff understanding of and participation in the University's quality system.

In order to ensure consistent implementation of quality management across the University, consideration should be given to leadership development activities that support all managers (academic and administrative) to meet their quality responsibilities. The University should also ensure that the Strategy, Quality and Review Unit has the necessary leadership, skills and capabilities to support the developing University-wide quality assurance functions.

The University should consider developing a systematic and University-wide framework for the identification and monitoring of professional and academic service standards. Such a framework should include a benchmarking component.

2.4.2   Benchmarking

A benchmarking register is available on the University's website '… as a resource to assist performance-benchmarking assessments' (PF p12). The website provides several examples of

benchmarking models used in the higher education sector such as those devised by ACODE, CAUL and ERA. As a non-aligned university, CQU collects and compares a range of data against the sector and selected universities. As an acknowledged area for improvement, the University recognises the need for the development of a University-wide benchmarking, reporting and monitoring process, including its resourcing and management.

The Learning and Teaching Management Plan describes a number of strategies aimed to enhance learning and teaching outcomes, but benchmarking is not included. The Portfolio, in its treatment of program and course development, accreditation, enhancement and review, provides no direct link to benchmarking as a quality measure. Many of the staff interviewed by the Panel understood the value and purpose of benchmarking as a quality process, but they were unable to demonstrate its systematic or strategic application. The benchmarking examples provided to the Panel during interviews related to processes, for example, compliance with the Australian Quality Framework, but did not show systematic and formalised attempts to compare outcomes from CQU degrees with those of other universities. There was evidence of a reasonably strong approach to the benchmarking of the support services, but less evidence of benchmarking guiding academic quality.

The Panel finds that there is an uneven level of awareness of the value and practice of benchmarking in both academic and administrative functions, including a narrow view of the possible types of benchmarking to support the achievement of the University's strategic objectives. Benchmarking was included in two of the 2006 AUQA Audit Report recommendations (5 and 17). The University should consider the development of a benchmarking framework and policy, which integrates the approach, rationale and types of benchmarking activities.

> **Recommendation 3**
>
> **(urgent) AUQA recommends that Central Queensland University consider the development of a benchmarking framework that ensures that benchmarking activities are integrated and aligned with the University's strategic objectives and enhance its academic standards.**

2.4.3   Use of Institutional Data for Planning and Monitoring Purposes

Beginning in 2008, the University has developed a University 'dashboard' to provide strategic and operational information and data for use by the University executive, senior and middle management, and academic staff. Academic staff will be able to use the dashboard (provided by the Information Technology Division's Business Intelligence Project as part of the Academic Support Systems Project (ASSP)) to monitor program and course performance and evaluate relevant data trends.

The Panel heard that the analysis and use of data to drive strategy and educational improvements should be improved. A number of dashboard data items are still being developed or modified, and comprehensive training is yet to be provided to all relevant academic staff. Some academic managers and academic staff in faculties are beginning to adopt a quality culture that makes regular and effective use of data analysis and monitoring to inform educational practice and improvement interventions. Adequate investment in staff development must be made to realise the full potential of the ASSP to monitor and review performance and outcomes in ways which incorporate the setting of KPIs, and reporting and accountability at various levels across the University.

The Panel acknowledges the scaffolding provided by the ASSP as a positive development, including the establishment of the dashboard and the extent of information it provides, and the potential of the dashboard to deliver timely information to users. The University should consider the inclusion of relevant information (eg student evaluation data) to enable systematic and purposeful use for direct teaching and learning improvement, and to assist academic staff to understand how the range of data can inform learning and teaching decisions.

Affirmation 2

AUQA affirms Central Queensland University's plan to fully implement the 'information dashboard' and provide training for academic staff in the use and analysis of data.

The University recognises that policy review is an important aspect of assuring quality. This includes regular reviews and consistency between and across policies in line with strategic and operational changes at the University. As the University has been in the process of making a number of strategic, structural and operational changes, some policies have required updating. For example, enhancing the use of educational technologies has led to the recent updating of the plagiarism procedures.

Maintaining the policy register and the currency of policies is a critical quality process. There is some inconsistency in the extent of completeness of policies and procedures, including documentation approval, amendment and review dates. Redundant policies should also be removed from the register. The University is encouraged to ensure compliance with external requirements and to use its policy framework to enhance the overall quality of policies in its templates, including promoting good practice in policy development and review.

Affirmation 3

AUQA affirms Central Queensland University's plan to develop and implement the necessary processes to ensure the alignment and currency of University policies and procedures.

2.4.4   Workforce Planning

The University identified as an area for improvement the development of a workforce plan that is aligned to strategic priorities. Since the 2006 AUQA Audit Report, the University has been managing its academic and professional staff profile, but without a framework to guide workforce planning. The need for alignment with sector trends in academic and professional staff ratios resulted in an administrative staffing review. The review was accompanied by a formal change management process.

The Portfolio identified workforce imbalances in three areas, namely the size of the professoriate, improvement of gender and equity staff representation, and raising the number of staff with doctoral qualifications. The Panel concurs that these are areas for urgent attention, recognising that these workforce planning issues constituted components of advice given by AUQA in the Cycle 1 AUQA audit report. The executive deans, deans of schools and the research centre leaders are in the process of implementing strategies to increase professorial appointments and increase the proportion of academic staff with doctoral qualifications. Less clear to the Panel is the formal action being taken to increase gender and equity representation across the University. It is important that as the University formulates its workforce plan it:

- develops and implements a plan for the recruitment and development of academic staff at senior levels, including giving priority to attracting and retaining high quality teaching academics
- considers the provision of leadership training opportunities, specifically academic leadership to develop all academic staff
- investigates and addresses causes of low levels of representation of women at senior academic levels in the University.

Affirmation 4

(urgent) AUQA affirms Central Queensland University's intention to develop a comprehensive workforce plan which is aligned with its strategic priorities and educational and research objectives.

3   THEME: QUALITY OF TEACHING

The first theme for this audit is 'Quality of Teaching'. It was proposed by the University and selected by AUQA after a consideration of academic risks related to the theme, noting the recommendations from the 2006 AUQA Audit Report and the significance of the theme to the University's strategic priorities.

CQU places the student at the centre of the learning-teaching process. It focuses on student outcomes and how all stakeholders are involved to ensure a successful student learning journey from recruitment to graduation, and beyond. This includes academic governance and leadership; curriculum design and program development and review; academic integrity; teaching practice and its evaluation; the use of educational technology; academic and pastoral support; the use of student surveys; academic standards and student academic performance data. The Panel also included under this theme the facilities for teaching in a multi-campus context, including their integration of technology into the educational setting.

3.1   Strategic Priorities

The University's Strategic Plan 2011–2014 identifies seven objectives. The first is 'Engaged Learning and Teaching' which focuses on local engagement with an aim to:

> … attract and retain more students, helping them to achieve their educational goals. We will provide a stimulating learning environment that promotes learner engagement, is supported by appropriate technology, infrastructure and services and which helps all students realise their unique potential. CQUniversity will also have a reputation for producing workplace ready successful graduates.

The Learning and Teaching Management Plan 2010 has three priorities under the strategic objective of learning and teaching and they are articulated as follows:
- Meeting diverse needs: Our academic offerings will meet the needs of our diverse student profile, industry and community, attracting and retaining more full-time students including those from under-represented backgrounds.
- Enhancement: Our learning support services and resources will assist our students to become active learners, technologically empowered, and to reach their educational goals.
- Teaching excellence: We will support learning and teaching excellence through support and development of our staff.

The Strategic Plan 2011–2014 revised the priority of enhancement of learning and teaching to include the provision of:

> … quality learning experiences for all our students by enhancing our academic offerings through systematic student and staff evaluations of our programs and courses, benchmarking our performance against other institutions in the higher education sector and gathering feedback from our industry and community partners.

It is intended that by 2014 the University will:
- increase its market share [of students]
- rank in the top 20 of Australian universities for good teaching, generic skills and overall satisfaction
- improve student retention and progression rates

- increase the number of ALTC grants, citations and excellence awards
- attract additional funding through government initiatives such as the Education Investment Fund.

The University's progress in implementing some of these initiatives is investigated in this section and the next.

3.2   Graduate and Student Outcomes

The University's median tertiary entrance scores are below those of the sector and the state, but are slightly higher than those of its comparative cohort (data items 5.1 and 5.2). This pattern is reflected across most fields of education.

The University's progress rate for commencing domestic students in the period 2002–2008 was below the cohort average (data item 5.3). Similarly, the commencing overseas student progress rates are below the cohort average (data item 5.4). The overall attrition rates for the period 2002–2007 are significantly higher than for the cohort (data items 5.5 and 5.6). The University acknowledges that the progress and attrition rates are a cause for concern.

The Course Experience Questionnaire (CEQ) data from 2003–2009 shows that the University has been below the sector and cohort mean response for good teaching, generic skills and overall satisfaction (data items 5.7 to 5.9).

Exceptions to the good teaching scale data are found in the fields of education, IT (data item 5.10) and nursing (data item 5.11) which show ratings either above the mean or improved ratings against the sector and cohort. CQU was also below the sector and cohort mean response for the ratings of clear goals and standards, student support, appropriate workload and appropriate assessment. The Audit Panel suggests that the University give consideration to increasing CEQ response rates of its graduates.

Graduate Destination Survey (GDS) data from 2004–2008 shows the proportion of domestic graduates in full-time work to be consistently higher than that of the sector or cohort (data item 5.12). The proportion of graduates in full-time study is well below that of the sector and just below the cohort. The response rate to the GDS has been consistently high, with a 77 per cent return in 2008.

The Learning and Teaching Performance Fund (LTPF) allocated $643,978 in 2009 to CQU. This was the first year that the University has received an LTPF allocation. The funding was received for improved results for student satisfaction in two discipline groups: Group 1 (Science, Computing, Engineering, Architecture and Agriculture) and Group 4 (Health).

On equity group indicators, the University has the highest proportion of the sector and the state of students from regional, remote, low socio-economic status areas, including disability. Its proportion of Indigenous student participation is higher than the state and sector averages (data item 5.13). The retention rate for Indigenous students decreased in the period 2004–2008, and is below the state and sector rates, and significantly lower in 2007–2008.

CQU rates above average in a number of measures of Australian universities in the 2009 Australasian Survey of Student Engagement, including work-integrated learning and supportive learning environment, but scored lower on aspects of campus life.

Student evaluation of courses and teaching are discussed in section 3.5.

3.3   *Leadership, Management and Academic Governance*

3.3.1   Roles and Responsibilities

Several initiatives have been taken to strengthen learning and teaching at the University. The restructured senior management team enhanced the focus on learning and teaching through the appointment of a Pro Vice-Chancellor (PVC) (Learning and Teaching). Structures have been realigned to bring together a number of areas related to learning and teaching in an office of learning and teaching under the leadership of the PVC (Learning and Teaching).

Executive deans provide leadership to the faculties, which are made up of a number of schools. The position of dean of school (with a five-year term of office) was established in 2010 to provide greater strategic leadership and management accountability at school level. To achieve the spread of leadership across campuses, some deans of school are located at campuses other than Rockhampton. Associate deans (learning and teaching) provide faculty-wide leadership and strategic support in learning and teaching to faculty leadership and program heads and course coordinators. It is expected that while the Deputy Vice-Chancellor (DVC) (Academic and Research) has overall management responsibility for learning and teaching, and Academic Board has overall governance responsibility, each individual lecturer is expected to take responsibility for academic quality.

Faculty education boards had their terms of reference amended in early 2009. One of their major functions is the review of program proposals. While there is evidence that the faculty education boards are functioning more effectively since the amendment, the Panel considers that the boards must still give attention to the overall integration of all their identified areas of responsibility besides the necessary approvals, to include the advisory, promotion, oversight and monitoring functions of faculty academic activities, for example, mentoring of new staff and promoting scholarly activity.

In a further formalising of the management of learning and teaching, in May 2010 the University approved the responsibilities for head of programs and course coordinators which are to be read in conjunction with the Academic Roles and Responsibility Manual. The role and responsibility of the course coordinator was the subject of a 2006 AUQA Audit Report recommendation. There are actually three Academic Roles and Responsibilities Manuals which are adapted to: the regional campuses and learning sites (amended in August 2010); the Australian International Campuses (amended August 2010); and Melior Business School (now known as Melior International College) and was approved August 2009. While the three documents contain largely the same information, they provide for local differences. Consideration should be given to producing an integrated University document to ensure consistency of information provided. For example, the latter two documents give minimal attention to the role of the head of program, and the Melior Manual has not been updated in line with the two other documents.

In addition to the role of course coordinator, there is a lead lecturer role, which is contingent on the number of students enrolled at a site, responsible for course delivery and supervision of the teaching team (ie other lecturers, tutors, casual markers etc).

As one part of the overall improvement to the function of learning and teaching, the Panel considers that the new approach to academic leadership shows potential. It will give greater focus and direction to learning and teaching at the University, particularly by employing a distributed management model which includes increased levels of individual accountability.

3.3.2   Academic Governance

In July 2007, the University Council commissioned a review of academic governance at the University and acted on all 16 recommendations. These recommendations addressed the program approval process, the need for systematic benchmarking, and the development of an Academic Board annual work plan. In mid-2009, the Academic Board and its committees reviewed the extent to which their terms of references were covered by the Board and its committees.

The Panel heard from interviewees that the Academic Board and its committees are working better, with an improvement in leadership, approval, monitoring and reporting processes. While the University is increasingly making better use of data for academic planning, management and approval processes, there is still room for better integration, analysis and use of data to improve academic outcomes.

The Quality Committee of the Academic Board is responsible to provide advice on '… academic planning, quality assurance and enhancement, and relevant management information. Providing advice on corporate planning processes is included in its functions and responsibilities. As it is effectively the overarching quality committee of the University it must ensure that it does not deal only with operational matters and the necessary compliance with policy and procedure, but that it takes a major role in providing advice on the shaping of the conceptual aspects of the University's quality agenda (section 2.4.1).

3.3.3   Office of Learning and Teaching

As a consequence of a resignation and the disestablishment of the Division of Teaching and Learning Services in late 2008, the University's academic professional development, governance, planning, and quality assurance of learning and teaching were managed across a number of portfolios, divisions and centres. Together with the PVC (Learning and Teaching), staff from the Academic Staff Development, Curriculum Design and Development Unit, IT Division, and Division of Strategy, Quality and Review met in April 2010to consider a proposed model for a centralised office of learning and teaching (OLT). The objectives for the OLT contained in the July 2010 proposal include:

- Develop a systematic University-wide approach to learning and teaching to ensure academic consistency, reduce duplication and establish better collaboration across the University.
- Enhance the quality of learning and teaching across the University and raise the profile of learning and teaching within and outside the University.
- Centralise the strategic planning and managing of funds for learning and teaching support, activities and initiatives.

As noted in section 3.3.1, the OLT is in the process of being established. The new structure includes the functions of curriculum design and development, academic staff development, learning quality assurance, and multimedia support for learning and teaching. There is general support by academics for the OLT. The Panel observed that OLT's functions have yet to be explicitly linked to the University's strategic priorities and nor is it clear the ways in which OLT will address faculty objectives within the framework of University priorities.

The Panel noted that the approach to learning and teaching, and the functions which support learning and teaching, require better systematisation and coordination, for example, better linking of the analysis of student evaluations to curriculum design, academic interventions and staff professional development programs. The Panel explored the extent to which staff could articulate their knowledge of the nature and needs of the range of students who enrol at CQU

and the ways in which the University conceptualises and puts into practice its learning and teaching framework, and academic and pastoral support mechanisms. The Panel noted that there was not a strong shared knowledge by staff of the characteristics of enrolled students. The University is encouraged to ensure that there is ongoing and general discussion and reflection by a larger number of academics around the conceptualisation, development and implementation of its learning and teaching approach in the context of knowing about and understanding of, beyond impressions or assumptions, the type of enrolled students. This includes consideration of providing programs that adequately cater for the diversity within and between student cohorts at CQU. As a focus for matters related to learning and teaching, the Panel considers that the OLT has the potential to bring into focus key issues and significantly influence the approach to learning and teaching across the University by a stronger evidence-based approach.

The University must give attention to the role that the Head of Educational Development will play in leading innovation and facilitating good practice in learning and teaching. As the OLT is made fully operational, consideration must be given also to ensuring that its services, in particular the learning design and resource development staff, provide support that is proactive. Equally, the University should ensure that in an environment of scarce resources the services of the OLT are planned, coordinated and aligned with the overall learning and teaching objectives, and avoid delivering reactive and ad hoc services based on individual requests.

3.4   Program and Course Development, Management and Review

3.4.1   Program Approval and Review

The Academic Board approved the Program and Course Policy in 2008. There is a three-step governance arrangement for program and course development, accreditation, review and enhancement, which involves approvals at the Faculty Education Committee or Pathways Education Committee, followed by the Education Committee of the Academic Board or Research Higher Degree Committee, and final approval by the Academic Board.

The Panel noted that the program development and approval processes have been strengthened in recent years, but considers that there needs to be greater use of institutional data and its analysis to inform program development processes. In order to ensure appropriate course curriculum and materials, those writing course materials must have access to information on the profiles of students who will take the course (eg rural, mature age, social background, international), including the possible locations and modes of delivery. Given the recency of the strengthened program approval and review process, the Panel is unable to comment on the effectiveness of the process as a quality mechanism to ensure curriculum currency, the impact of learning and teaching on students, and monitoring for improvement of programs and courses.

A 2009 audit of program reviews showed that the five-year cycle of reviews had not been completed for all programs. This presents a high risk for the University. In the cases where there is no external program accreditation, the University must ensure that the review templates provide adequate criteria or guidelines for the review of content, that there are explicit requirements for benchmarking and academic standards at the discipline level, that there is sufficient training provided to staff, and that adequate resources are made available to conduct the reviews.

In addition, as the management and monitoring of courses has been largely dependent upon course coordinators, the University must ensure in its new requirement that regular systematic course enhancement reviews are sufficiently rigorous, formal and documented. Such reviews should give consideration, for example, to the extent of casual staff activity, including the amount of marking and teaching done by casual staff, and the impact of this on learning and teaching, and on student success.

Affirmation 5

AUQA affirms Central Queensland University's decision to have regular annual course enhancement reviews and robust program review.

There was limited evidence of institutionalised or programmed approaches to using the University information dashboards as part of formal review processes. Formalised and deliberate use of the dashboard at program and course level would enable CQU to investigate and reflect on learning and teaching outcomes in ways that could target identified areas of need and opportunity (section 2.4.3).

The University must also ensure that there are monitoring mechanisms in place during the implementation phase of new programs and courses, including the quality of course profiles.

Recommendation 8 of the 2006 AUQA Audit Report recommended that CQU *encourage a more collegial approach to curriculum development, which will both stimulate and incorporate scholarship and research and philosophical discussions about quality education.* The University has been slow to act on this Recommendation, with most initiatives taken only recently, including the course coordinator duty statement, the establishment of the Heads of Program Network, the establishment of the International Education Research Centre and the Learning and Teaching Education Research Centre, and professional development activities. These activities are too recent for the Panel to be able to judge their effect. Making use of scholarship and research, together with philosophical discussions about quality education across campuses and schools, is yet to be fully implemented across the University.

Greater alignment and consistency of learning and teaching practice are needed across all campuses.

3.4.2   Learning Management System

As one of the three priorities in the Learning and Teaching Management Plan 2010, the enhancement of student learning is supported by the use of technology. In 2009, the University opted to replace two learning management systems (LMS) in favour of Moodle from the beginning of 2010 to provide a consistent LMS platform across the University. Procedures have been put in place to assure the quality of the sites and materials. For example, minimum service standards have been developed for course delivery and Moodle review by an academic peer and the head of program or dean of school before sites are put on the system. It is intended that as the functions of Moodle are fully implemented there will be overall enhancement to learning and teaching quality.

Staff and students are positive about the new LMS. There has been a laudably seamless migration from the two previous systems to the new LMS in a short time frame in a manner that engaged University staff and caused minimal disruption to staff and students. A strength of the LMS is its potential to support student engagement and learning across all modes of learning and to accommodate a range of student learning styles and needs.

The Panel closely reviewed a number of Moodle sites and noted that the current use of the LMS by staff is variable. The '10 Best Moodle sites' is a first step to identifying and supporting good pedagogic practice. However, there is also variability of site quality and use of the range of tools and functions. The Panel suggests that the University consider establishing technical and pedagogic standards that go beyond Chickering and Gamson's 'Seven Principles for Good Practice in Undergraduate Education'[1] to provide clear and specific guidance to good practice in using technology to support learning and teaching. The University has yet to realise the implications of technology in fostering active learners who are engaged through curriculum, learning design and assessment. This includes considering what it means to engage students in learning and how it would be evidenced.

Affirmation 6

AUQA affirms Central Queensland University's plan to use technology to promote and support the active engagement of students for academic success.

The University is encouraged to ensure the adequacy of the training and monitoring for those who use the range of teaching technologies (ie the integrated learning system and Moodle).

The University should assess the pedagogic strengths and limitations of current technologies and their application in use at the University and establish explicit strategies to mitigate the weaknesses, for example, limited interaction opportunities for students who participate through video linked integrated learning system (ISL) sessions. While the ISL is frequently used to deliver lectures between campuses, lecturers are not always able to engage students at remote locations. There appears to be a difference in the quality of students' learning experience depending upon where the lecturer is physically located. This does not seem to be something lecturers, or the University as a whole, recognise and formally address.

The Panel noted that there is some confusion about—and lack of consistency of use among staff of—the definition of the term 'flex' to describe students in the range of modes of delivery alongside face-to-face delivery. A consistent University-wide understanding of the term would enable greater clarity about student needs and the types of learning and support mechanisms that must be provided to flex students.

3.4.3   Graduate Attributes

An approach to embed the eight graduate attributes was developed in 2009 and the Office of Learning and Teaching or Education Development Team is assisting academics to map them in programs, including engaging with academics in their development and contextualisation at program level. As part of the ASSP, it is intended that course profiles will be modified to link the graduate attributes with learning outcomes, learning interactions and assessment in order to facilitate the explicit engagement by staff and students in the educational process.

The Panel encourages the University to complete the process of mapping and embedding the graduate attributes in the curriculum and ensuring that these attributes are acquired by, and recognised as being acquired by, graduates. There needs to be some systematic form of monitoring undertaken to ensure that where graduate attributes are embedded, the learning and teaching processes intentionally develop, as well as assess, the achievement of the attributes.

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[1] Chickering, AW & Gamson, ZF 1987, *AAHE Bulletin*, v39, n7, pp3-7.

Affirmation 7

AUQA affirms Central Queensland University's mapping of graduate attributes in programs and their explicit links to learning outcomes, learning interactions and assessments.

3.4.4   Academic Integrity and Plagiarism

The University's approach to academic integrity is addressed in the Student Misconduct and Plagiarism Policy and the Plagiarism Procedures document. As part of the introduction of Moodle in term 1 2010, originality checking software Turnitin℠ was introduced. Staff training in the use of the software was provided through videos and guidelines. The University considers that the software is not 'plagiarism detection software' in itself and that a final determination of plagiarism requires academic evaluation on the part of teaching staff.

While Turnitin was not compulsory for online submission when it was first introduced, the Education Committee recommended to the Academic Board at its September 2010 meeting that online submissions of written assignments (including draft assignments) in courses using Moodle should occur through Turnitin. This recommendation enables the software to be used as an educational tool rather than as only a punitive measure. Students are informed about academic honesty issues both at orientation and in the classroom, and course outlines alert students to the relevant policy.

The Panel heard of inconsistent practice in the application of academic honesty information and testing across the faculties. Turnitin software is being used inconsistently for plagiarism detection purposes. Staff and students who were interviewed expressed their awareness of the issue of academic integrity and the penalties related to plagiarism, but confirmed that it is inconsistently used depending on individual academics.

The Panel believes that the recent decision by the Academic Board is a positive development. The Board mandated the use of plagiarism detection software, where appropriate, as an educational tool in preventing plagiarism and in assisting students to develop the necessary academic skills of scholarly research or to recognise examples of plagiarism. It will be important for the Academic Board to monitor consistently across the University the application of the software as a learning tool, to record instances of known plagiarism and impose appropriate penalties. The Panel encourages the University to consider further ways to mitigate the risks posed by plagiarism so that reasons for breaches of academic honesty are analysed and dealt with, including designing educational interventions and training staff in their use. Consideration could be given to the oversight of these processes and how to assess their success in influencing and guiding appropriate behaviours in relation to academic integrity.

3.4.5   Moderation

The Assessment of Coursework Policy articulates the approach, principles and procedures to design, implement and review both formative and summative assessments. There are integrated and tested mechanisms in place to ensure equivalence and comparability of results across the campuses and learning sites. Instances of irregularity, for example, where there was marking variance in the nursing program by casual staff, are quickly identified and addressed. This was confirmed by staff during interviews.

While the Panel noted robust evidence of quality measures that assure internal consistency and reliability of outcomes, formal requirements and processes involving external standards

and benchmarks should be considered. The University should also consider developing an explicit requirement for benchmarking as a means of demonstrating equivalence and comparability of learning outcomes across courses and programs. There needs to be a more sophisticated and consistent understanding of what constitutes good practice in the identification and monitoring of academic standards, particularly in relation to other providers in the higher education sector.

The Panel recognises the robustness of the chosen moderation processes across the University that support an equivalence of learning outcomes across the different campuses of the University, but concurs with suggestions by CQU staff that the University explore the use of external examiners, as a form of external benchmarking, to strengthen and assure its academic achievement standards.

3.5   *Student Evaluation of Courses and Teaching*

The University has been slow to make progress on a recommendation in the 2006 AUQA Audit Report that CQU *review its student evaluations of teaching and course systems with a view to maximising their strategic benefits* (Recommendation 11). The Panel finds that while the record reflects that some attempts were made in 2006 to shift to online evaluations, the Recommendation has yet to be effectively addressed, either in the evaluation systems or in the use of the data for strategic benefit. With the recent shift to Moodle, it is hoped that some pilot initiatives to collect student feedback will improve the student response rate. The University has been unable to make meaningful use of data which, according to some staff, is based on response rates between 3 and 5 per cent. The enabling programs are the exception where student evaluations receive a response rate between55 to 65 per cent and the next cohort of students is formally provided with feedback on changes that have been made as a result of previous student evaluations.

Besides the enabling programs, it appears that there is a widespread lack of interest among students to complete evaluations. Students reported to the Panel that there is no widespread student awareness of their evaluations having an influence on practice across CQU. The University has yet to realise its aim of successfully implementing a University-wide system for seeking student satisfaction, or use of other forms of data, in relation to course and teacher performance.

The current system (the use of a 'red button') is limited in the extent of information sought. The red dot system provides space for a single Likert-scale item concerning satisfaction with the course and a single free-text field for students to offer open-ended feedback. It was reported that CEQuery software is available for staff to analyse free-text responses, but is not yet fully implemented. A myCEQ-type form is being trialled to secure student satisfaction feedback at the program level. It is yet to be embedded in mainstream practice.

CQU results from the CEQ survey for items related to teaching show satisfaction levels consistently below sector average and no patterns of improvement. There is little evidence of any systematic approach to exploring qualitative and quantitative CEQ data to address these results and to seek ways to improve the outcomes (section 3.2).

The Panel supports as a strong priority the University's intention to gain and fully use student feedback, noting also the need to improve student response rates, and to ensure that students understand the impact of their feedback. The University must consider a review of the strategies used to provide feedback to students on the outcomes of the evaluations used and

their frequency of use. This includes drawing conclusions from the CEQ and course evaluation data and making improvements.

The Panel noted that different course and teaching evaluations are used in the University, with the regional campuses using one evaluation instrument, the metropolitan campuses another and the transnational education (TNE) partner, a third. The University must consider the implications of such an approach in using the results for comparative analysis, improvement and strategic planning purposes. Furthermore, it is important for the University to stabilise the instruments and response rates so that longitudinal data can be gathered and used for trend analysis. The discussion on the use of student feedback as a means of enhancing learning and teaching indicates that the University is yet to realise its aim of implementing a University-wide system for seeking student satisfaction in relation to courses and teacher performance.

It is important that greater systematic use is made of student feedback in staff performance reviews to raise awareness of any issues relating to the quality of teaching and thus identify professional needs. The University must also address, and respond through interventions, the results of the CEQ which indicate a long-standing dissatisfaction of CQU graduates with teaching quality and generic skills acquisition (section 3.2). The Panel notes that the OLT, under the leadership of the PVC (Learning and Teaching), is tasked to address a number of these areas.

> **Affirmation 8**
>
> **(urgent) AUQA affirms Central Queensland University's plans to address student evaluation instruments and the low response rates, and to make strategic use of the resulting data to achieve quality learning and teaching improvements.**

The Panel heard inconsistent messages from both students and staff about the quality of teaching by academic staff (full-time and sessional across all campuses) and their monitoring. While there is presently general satisfaction with the quality of teaching, current students would like to see better monitoring of teaching, particularly of sessional staff. Some staff expressed concern that the high use of casual staff in the academic workforce, especially at the metropolitan campuses, could impact on overall academic quality and University scholarship of research.

The University is encouraged to consider the implementation of a systematic surveying of major employer groups on their satisfaction with CQU graduates. This would add further information to the data received from the Graduate Destination Survey and ad hoc feedback from employers on the quality of CQU graduates.

3.6   Attrition

Senior leadership and managers recognise that attrition for both domestic and international students is a cause for concern. As noted in section 3.2, since 2005 attrition rates have remained consistently above the sector and cohort averages. The discussion in the Portfolio recognises the seriousness of this data and describes projects and processes undertaken to address the issue, for example, the attrition project led by the Academic Registrar, and the use of a 'dashboard and traffic light' system to monitor rates. Despite the considerable recent interest and effort made in the area, as well as the identification of possible causes for the high rates, activities have yet to demonstrate significant improvements.

The success rates of commencing undergraduate domestic and international students, the attrition rates, and the CEQ data show that the University must explore urgently the overall causes leading to these results with a view to identifying their reasons and possible remedies.

Staff suggested to the Panel a range of causes of attrition and, in a number of cases, thought that the University had no major attrition problem or that there were valid and mitigating circumstances for this. Many of the responses were no more than impressions of some contributory factors for student attrition. It appears that, in large part, it is only senior managers who recognise and understand what the attrition data may be revealing about the state of learning and teaching (or other reasons that must be made explicit) at the University. The University must ensure that staff have access to the data and understand the implications of it for their schools and programs, for the success of students, and for the reputation of the University. Taking a view of all the data available to the University in the past six years, it is of some concern to the Panel that besides the lack of awareness of the data, academic staff are not sufficiently engaged in the kind of discussions needed at school and program level to interrogate and, where necessary, make interventions at a range of academic and support levels to enhance overall domestic and international student academic success. The newly implemented academic management structure and the leadership provided by the PVC (Learning and Teaching) and OLT provide an opportunity to close this gap.

Given the importance of student progress and attrition rates, and CEQ data, to inform the University's performance, there should be no reduction in attempts to explore the causative factors and improve these rates.

The Panel supports as a high priority the University's intention to further address the causes and to remediate the long-standing and high levels of attrition in domestic and international student cohorts. Attention also needs to be paid to improving the success rates of undergraduate students.

> **Affirmation 9**
>
> **(urgent) AUQA affirms Central Queensland University's intent to analyse and take steps to address the high student attrition rates.**

3.7   *Student Support and Monitoring Academic Progress*

The University has a range of successful student support systems in place across all of its campuses, including student orientation, the student mentorship and leadership program, the CareerHub, and the Training, Employment and Career Coaching service. The Panel heard consistently from staff and students about the positive and helpful services provided in the area of student support.

There is a comprehensive range of support mechanisms for Indigenous students. The Panel noted the evident commitment of staff from the Nulloo Yumbah Indigenous Learning, Spirituality and Research Centre to support Indigenous students. In spite of this there has been a small drop in Indigenous student indicators. The University must monitor closely Indigenous student data, understand the reasons for its fluctuations and take steps, where needed, to maintain and improve student success. CQU is encouraged to ensure that the centre is adequately staffed and managed to meet its mandate.

3.7.1   Academic Learning Services

Staff and students were unanimous in their praise for the support, quality and commitment of the University's Academic Learning Services, including the Communications Learning Centre, the Mathematics Learning Centre and the Learning Skills Units at the metropolitan campuses. A collaborative partnership has been developed between the Communications Learning Centre and the metropolitan campuses' Learning Skills Units. The University is encouraged to ensure that seamless services are provided to students across all campuses and modes of learning, and that there is regular sharing of good practice and expertise across each of these centres and units.

Commendation 2

AUQA commends Central Queensland University for the high quality service and academic support provided by the Academic Learning Services, the Communications Learning Centre, the Mathematics Learning Centre and the Learning Skills Units.

While there are specific challenges related to a multi-campus, multi-mode provision, full-time and part-time students, and different age cohorts of students, the Panel suggests that the University consider ways to improve the social experience of students, particularly on the regional campuses, and to find ways to engage students in understanding its value and to enhance their participation in all aspects of the student journey. This includes finding ways to ensure that the student association on each campus is active.

3.7.2   Monitoring Academic Progress

The process of monitoring academic progress (MAP) provides systematic support for students who are identified from course results as being at risk of failure. Available data shows large numbers of students being captured through MAP. Extra support is provided to students through the Get Optimistic About Study program provided as part of the MAP support, although it is taken up by only 80 to 100 students out of the possible 4500 who are eligible. Students who are identified as being academically at risk in more than half of their courses are required to complete a learning agreement with the Student Support Centre to improve academic performance. The agreement details actions to be taken and assessed to measure student improvement.

The Panel confirmed that MAP provides an important support to enhance student academic success. Part of its success is the improvement activities undertaken by the Student Support Centre to monitor its effectiveness and identify areas for enhanced intervention.

Commendation 3

AUQA commends Central Queensland University for the continued success of and support provided by the Monitoring Academic Progress program.

The Panel noted that there is an apparent contradiction between significant and robust student support systems with committed and competent staff and trend data which shows low student progress and high student attrition rates. The University is encouraged to investigate the reasons for this seeming paradox.

While recognising the continuing strength of the MAP program to monitor academic progress and noting the work that is being undertaken in using learning management system metrics to monitor student engagement, the Panel encourages the University to continue to develop

identifying parameters for early interventions to prevent more students from failure. Given the very large number of students who are identified by the MAP process (and the high attrition rates), there appears a need for more proactive measures to influence symptoms rather than to respond to outcomes. The MAP thematic analysis indicates some possible measures for early identification of students at risk of failing.

The Panel heard that a pilot component of the Moodle project is gathering data on student use of the Moodle site as an intervention strategy and this appears to be a sound way to address at-risk students proactively. Another proposal is to consider using the metropolitan campus practice of monitoring assignment submissions and attendance. It was reported that when the metropolitan campuses adopted the Customer Relations Management (CRM) system it would be available to also monitor international students on regional campuses, with the extended benefit of using it to monitor domestic students' academic progress as well. This, in turn, would enable a more rapid response time to supporting at-risk students.

Further enhancement to the identification and support of at-risk students could also include consideration of:
- how the benefits of MAP could be utilised by the enabling programs
- providing information to the Office of Teaching and Learning or Educational Development Team which currently has no formal access to data and is unable to offer support to this process or use its findings when developing new programs
- fine-tuning student support services referral systems to the Communications Learning Centre, the Mathematics Learning Centre, course coordinators and program advisers
- providing academics with program level data (at-risk, retention, etc) that presents a holistic view of overall student and cohort performance and which can be analysed and explored to seek a better understanding of patterns and trends.

3.8   Enabling Programs

The University has a number of enabling programs that cover a range of academic pathways into university studies for groups such as women, school leavers and Indigenous students. These programs include the Skills for Tertiary Education Studies, Women into Science and Technology, Tertiary Education Program, Lifting the Boundaries to University, Foundation Studies, Start University Now and the Equity Outreach Program. These programs are regarded by staff and students as valuable and successful programs. The Panel recognises the University's approach to facilitating transition to higher education and recognises the regard in which these programs are held.

> **Commendation 4**
>
> **AUQA commends Central Queensland University for the scope, extent and effect of its enabling programs.**

The Panel supports the University's plan to strengthen these programs following the completion and implementation of the current review of the enabling programs.

Academics teach in the enabling programs, which allows for their significant alignment with the University programs. Changes to programs are submitted to the Pathways Education Committee, a committee reporting to the Education Committee of Academic Board. It is intended that the review of the enabling programs will bring greater efficiency of resources and staff expertise in the courses and provide a better aligned suite of programs. Discussions are underway to see that good teaching practice and student support, for example study skills support, can be made available to support struggling first year University students.

There is no formal system to track the academic performance of students who have entered the University through the enabling programs, except for Indigenous students. Enabling programs staff indicated that while the University dashboard is a very helpful tool, it currently provides limited information on the success of these programs. It is essential for improvement purposes to track progress and attrition data for students who have entered the University through the enabling programs against students who entered through other ways.

> **Recommendation 4**
>
> **AUQA recommends that Central Queensland University formally track the academic performance of students who have entered the University through all enabling programs.**

3.9   *Academic Staff Induction, Professional Development and Performance Management*

Section 4.3 discusses issues relating to staffing at the metropolitan campuses.

3.9.1   Academic Staff Induction

Full-time staff at the regional campuses are required to participate in an online and face-to-face induction program. New full-time academic staff are required to attend a CQU-focused four-day Foundations of University Learning and Teaching (FoULT) program. A half-day FoULT program has been customised for sessional staff. Recently appointed and early career staff are encouraged to enrol in a cross-university collaborative Graduate Certificate in Tertiary Education. Other professional programs are available for staff to improve their skills, such as ACADEME (a six-week general development program for academics which includes leadership, career development and reflective practice). To enhance learning and teaching skills, recently appointed teaching staff receive support through the educational development team, and through 'Moodle mentors' (academic staff who act as champions for Moodle educational development).

The Panel is satisfied that induction for academic staff is adequate.

3.9.2   Professional Development

Academic professional development follows the staff terms of employment at CQU at the regional campuses and at CMS (the metropolitan campuses), respectively. While there may be some minor differences in operational aspects, the underlying principles are the same. For professional development activities run out of the regional campuses, the aim is to run video linked integrated learning system (ISL) sessions to as many campuses as requested. The University also offers all CQU professional development events to staff across all regional and metropolitan campuses.

The University does not differentiate between recently appointed and established staff for academic professional development. All programs are open to interested staff. These programs have no associated cost to the staff member or faculty.

Participants are surveyed after each professional development activity. Until July 2010, the manager for workforce planning and professional development monitored the evaluation results. This function has now been transferred to the OLT for all academic professional development activities.

The Panel noted that while there are a number of successful programs available to staff they have not been sufficiently integrated and linked. For example, in recognising the distinction

between professional and personal development objectives, the University should ensure that the professional development objectives of academic staff relating to learning and teaching data and outcomes should be collated and analysed to inform the provision of professional development. A coordinated approach to the provision of professional development by all parts of the University that have a responsibility for this would ensure an integrated approach that delivers a consistent message about quality learning and teaching and would contribute to the development of CQU as a learning organisation.

The teaching skills of casual and sessional staff in areas of instruction, assessment and provision of feedback must be systematically addressed. Training and staff development of sessional staff should also be informed by student feedback and developments in the ASSP, including the course review process. The University should consider developing a University-wide systematic approach to professional development for sessional staff.

The University has processes and incentives in place to promote the scholarship of teaching. The University must ensure that the notion and practice of the scholarship of teaching is well understood by all staff, including those teaching at the TNE partner (section 4.5).

A Staff Renewal Program Working Group is to develop an action plan for staff renewal that will incorporate professional development for established academic staff and provide direct input to the Voice survey action plan. In order to achieve its strategic goals for learning and teaching, the Panel concurs with the University that attention must be given to ensure the currency of learning and teaching skills of established academic staff.

3.9.3   Performance Management

The Performance Review, Planning and Development (PRPD) process at the regional campuses is designed to provide feedback on job performance, help with workload planning and plan professional development activities. Part of this is learning and teaching activities, but this is hampered by the low student survey response rate on course and teaching evaluations.

Teaching excellence is recognised and rewarded by the University. The Strategic Plan 2011–2014 makes explicit reference to recognising excellence in learning and teaching. Onerous application processes were simplified in 2010 to encourage staff to apply for recognition and reward.

The University recognises that while a large proportion of staff complete the PRPD process, further improvements can be made to ensure appropriate linkages with the University's strategic and corporate plans. The form and procedures are to be reviewed during 2010 in consultation with staff and unions to ensure the linkages are clear and effective. The Panel encourages the University to give attention to ensuring that all staff participate in the process.

While positively recognising the operation of the PRPD process and its link to professional development, the Panel believes that the University would benefit from a more systematic approach to the identification of priority needs for development to enhance staff capability to teach for learning. There is a particular need for the University to address the skills of casual staff in an integrated professional development strategy for all academic staff, and for this strategy to be linked to the PRPD process.

Recommendation 5

AUQA recommends that Central Queensland University systematise its professional development process (including for sessional staff) and ensure

that it is aligned to the Strategic Plan, informed by institutional data and integrated with the Performance Review, Planning and Development process.

3.10   *Education Research Centres*

The University recognised the need for strengthened educational research and established the Learning and Teaching Education Research Centre (LTERC) and the International Education Research Centre (IERC) in 2009. Both centres are intended to strengthen research and practice in teaching and learning at CQU.

The LTERC is intended to provide research-informed knowledge base to inform theory, policy and practice in education, and to facilitate, disseminate and aggregate learning and teaching research of academic communities at CQU. LTERC sponsors special interest groups and the university's academic communities of practice, for example, the collaborative teams, the interdisciplinary activities, the generation of research-informed teaching, and the increased number of staff publishing and actively engaging in learning and teaching research.

As IERC has been in operation for less than 18 months, it has not yet produced a critical volume of influential research output. There are, however, examples of research that has been conducted. Researchers have developed social and academic integration opportunities for international students at CQU. This has resulted in a wider range of social and academic activities available at the metropolitan campuses, including an orientation DVD produced in 2010 that focuses on student wellbeing, acculturation and transition into Australian university teaching and learning. A recently completed and associated project was research into the relationship between individual student support (MAP) and retention. A further project currently underway, Trading Places, explores the effects of a cross-campus and cross-cultural immersion and seeks to enhance social and academic integration between domestic and international students at CQU. Research is also being conducted into the attitudes of CQU staff to the challenges of internationalisation.

The Panel supports the University in its establishment of the LTERC and IERC and recognises that these bodies have the potential to improve the teaching and research nexus and contribute to the research profile of the University. There is significant potential to enhance the scholarship of learning and teaching through strategically aligned investigations in areas of interest and concern to the University, but this will require effective management and focused direction of activity. The University should be clear about balancing the activities of these two groups between external facing research and research that address questions of specific interest to CQU.

> **Commendation 5**
>
> **AUQA commends Central Queensland University for the establishment of the International Education Research Centre and the Learning and Teaching Education Research Centre to enhance educational research and inform learning and teaching practice.**

The Panel believes there would be merit in considering how these centres can be represented on key academic governance committees. Representation on academic governance structures would, for example, facilitate the 'commissioning' of investigation into areas of student academic performance, and learning and teaching that would inform the improvement of practice across the University. It would also provide a vehicle for the application of the findings of the studies conducted by both centres.

Recommendation 6

AUQA recommends that Central Queensland University consider the ways that the International Education Research Centre and the Learning and Teaching Education Research Centre can be represented on key academic governance structures to improve learning and teaching practice.

It is not clear to the Panel the nature and extent of the intended collaboration between the LTERC and the IERC, but the University is encouraged to see that the collective strengths of both centres are utilised. The Panel also urges the University to ensure that there is a formal link between the IERC and the PVC (Learning and Teaching) to ensure integration and maximum benefit for the achievement of strategic learning and teaching and research priorities.

3.11   *Postgraduate and Higher Degree by Research Students*

Postgraduate students and higher degree by research (HDR) students expressed general satisfaction with the quality of educational provision. They were satisfied with the overall quality of courses and supervision, but suggested some improvements, such as: better monitoring of the quality of sessional staff teaching postgraduate courses; dedicated facilities for use by postgraduate and HDR students; enhanced mechanisms within the University to capture the postgraduate student voice (eg a postgraduate association); making known and enforcing formal criteria to become a supervisor and criteria to remain on the supervisor register; formal ongoing supervisor training; and tracking supervisors' availability to students. Students were positive about the services provided by the research office, but suggested that its assistance with funding and approval processes could be more efficient and transparent.

The Panel endorses the University's use of its metropolitan campuses to facilitate the supervision of HDR distance students in city areas.

3.12   *Library Resources and Services*

The Library provides services across all campuses and modes. Since 2005 the Library has proactively implemented initiatives to enhance services for staff and students. In a benchmarking exercise, the Library set a new benchmark in some areas and performed in the top quartile of all performance categories.

There has been significant harmonising of policies and processes with the metropolitan campus libraries, but there still remain challenges with respect to the allocation of library budget at the metropolitan campuses and ensuring adequate professional development for metropolitan campus librarians.

The Library has put considerable effort into providing appropriate services to distance (flex) students, though streamlining policies and processes and looking for ways to provide support that is aligned to distance education student needs.

Staff and students expressed their overall high satisfaction with the quality of services and support provided by the library staff.

Commendation 6

AUQA commends Central Queensland University for the consistently high quality of services provided by the University Library.

3.13   IT Systems and Services

The Information and Technology Division (ITD) has overall responsibility for the maintenance and support of all IT systems across the University, including the learning management systems and the ILS. There is effective collaboration between the regional campus' ITD team and the CMS-IT team. The University has significantly improved its rankings in a sector-wide ICT benchmarking report in 2009 to be in the top five institutions. The University has taken a whole-of-institution approach to integrating the governance, management and development of online and physical teaching technologies.

The Panel acknowledges the capacity of ITD to effectively and efficiently manage major projects, including the successful introduction of Moodle. Users reported that on the whole the transition to Moodle was seamless, with minimal disruption.

Commendation 7

AUQA commends Central Queensland University for the effectiveness and efficiency of the Information Technology Division and its project management process which successfully enabled the implementation of the new learning management system.

4   THEME: INTERNATIONAL ACTIVITIES

The second theme for this audit, 'International Activities', was selected by AUQA. Transnational education (TNE) constitutes a known high-risk area and was selected for audit in the universities audited in 2010. It is pertinent, given CQU's large onshore international footprint at the metropolitan campuses. Under this theme, AUQA has checked the implementation of the affirmations and recommendations related to international activities in the 2006 AUQA Audit Report.

The scope of this theme includes the arrangements for teaching and learning of international students in Australia; the arrangements for teaching and learning of international students offshore; the internationalisation of the curriculum and overall student experience; and other international activities, such as research collaboration.

4.1   *Internationalisation Strategy*

The Strategic Plan 2011–2014 sets out the internationalisation strategy as a central feature of the University's mission and includes the following:
- Internationalisation of the curriculum and offering international opportunities for domestic students, as well as providing an Australian cultural and social experience for international students.
- Build staff capability in learning and teaching related to international students, especially curriculum design and culturally inclusive teaching practices which meet the needs and expectations of international students and which contribute to internationalisation at home for domestic students.
- Establish priorities and encouraging engagement in research through the International Education Research Centre (IERC) that informs international education in areas of policy, systems, planning, pedagogy and others.

A definition of internationalisation, revised in May 2010, is provided in the International Activities Framework Statement:

> A valued process that is encompassed in the University's goals and strategies and directed towards its vision of local relevance, regional commitment, national leadership and international connectiveness. Embedded within this vision are the concepts of 'engagement' and 'place' where we endorse and embrace the importance of intercultural understandings and indigenous perspective, multicultural diversity, international perspectives and global partnerships. These concepts and values drive and underscore CQUniversity's education, research and service provision for the benefit of all stakeholders.

The statement notes that internationalisation has become multi-pronged and includes internationalisation of the curriculum and student outcomes which are socially and culturally inclusive, internationalisation of the student population, internationalisation of the staff culture, staff and student mobility, and research collaborations. The Panel heard that there is also a recently developed 12-point CMS Internationalisation Project which is underway.

The Panel supports the University in its intention to broaden the concept of internationalisation to include aspirations regarding wider internationalisation of the curriculum and research collaboration. The University sees the need to commence a dialogue with staff to conceptualise internationalisation beyond the recruitment of international students.

There is an increased understanding at senior management level of the need to express internationalisation through the curriculum, research, and staff and student representation and exchanges. Apart from some individuals, the Panel did not find among staff, either on the metropolitan or regional campuses, a well conceptualised and shared understanding of the notion of internationalisation. For many staff, internationalisation has been linked mainly to recruitment of international students and increasing the international student revenue stream for the University. There is awareness that the curriculum must be internationalised, but only a minority of academics were able to express a shared understanding of its implications for practice, including preparing students with the skills to operate in an international environment. In order for the University to attain its strategic and renewal plans there appears to be a strong need for a well-managed discussion by staff across all campuses of the wider notion of internationalisation and its implications for learning, teaching, research and community engagement, including how internationalisation is embedded in the programs.

Recommendation 7

AUQA recommends that Central Queensland University embed internationalisation across the University, which would include staff discussion and development on the extent to which it has demonstrated impact on learning, teaching, research and community engagement.

There are some plans that appear consistent with this broader vision. For example, the student experience for both international and domestic student cohorts is intended to be enhanced by the University's plan to increase the number of international students at regional campuses, and to provide services for domestic students at metropolitan campuses through high quality distance education. The Panel supports the plan to increase international student enrolments at the regional campuses as it has potential benefits for international and domestic students, staff and local communities.

At present, the student cohort at the metropolitan campuses is almost entirely international and the opportunity for these students to mix with their domestic counterparts would have positive mutual benefits. As part of moving in that direction, the Panel supports the plan of the University to expand its support and services to distance education (flex) students at the metropolitan campuses. A part of this is the recognition of specialised staff development needs in supporting distance education students and the inclusion of this in the learning design of programs.

Another example of broadening the scope of internationalisation at the University is the Trading Places pilot project between the Sydney and Rockhampton campuses where some students have participated in campus exchange visits to bring greater interaction between the metropolitan and regional campuses. It is intended that Trading Places will be extended to include staff exchanges. While presently it is a pilot project on a modest scale, it is seen as a positive initiative to promote a number of purposes, including strengthening the links between staff and students across the metropolitan and regional campuses, and advancing the internationalisation objectives of the University.

4.2   *Leadership, Management and Governance*

4.2.1   C Management Services Pty Ltd (CMS)

The 2006 AUQA Audit Report recommended that 'CQU restructure the governance arrangements for its partnership with CMS in a manner that is sufficiently transparent and robust to enable Council to effectively exercise its governance responsibilities for the

University's entire affairs'. The University took full ownership of CMS in 2008 and the University Council appointed a new board with an independent director to chair the CMS Board. Consequently, Council has adequate governance control over CMS as a wholly-owned entity which constitutes over 40 per cent of enrolments at the University. The University created a post which combines the responsibilities of the DVC (International) and those of the CEO of CMS to bring greater coordination and alignment to the internationalisation objectives at both the metropolitan and regional campuses. The intent of assuming full ownership of CMS in 2008 was to:

- eliminate duplication of process and procedure
- facilitate an alignment of senior management direction between CQU and CMS leadership
- align strategies for risk management and risk mitigation
- strengthen communication between both entities.

The Panel considers that the changed status of CMS in relation to CQU has brought about positive changes. It is recognised across the University that the strength of CMS is its experience in providing onshore international education. Significant progress has been made since 2008. Management arrangements have been enhanced, increased attention has been given to the management and oversight of risk at University level, and there are improved interactions between staff and the sharing of good practice between the metropolitan and regional campuses. There is also evidence of greater oversight and management by faculties of the learning and teaching at the metropolitan campuses.

There are formal monthly management meetings (usually by video conference) between the metropolitan campuses and the Rockhampton Campus. There is also regular academic ILS contact, learning and teaching showcases, metropolitan campus student representation on academic committees, University-wide leadership conferences, the University international week, and the annual Chancellor's sporting event. CMS participates more fully in the University planning processes. It was reported that there was greater user-group collaboration (IT, administration, etc) across all University campuses.

There is evidence of the sharing of good practices, including adoption by CMS of the regional campus model of the first year experience and the student mentoring and leadership program. The University has benefitted from CMS's marketing expertise and CMS's use of operational manuals to support key functions.

> **Commendation 8**
>
> **AUQA commends Central Queensland University for obtaining full ownership of CMS, which has enhanced oversight and increased faculty responsibility for learning and teaching processes and outcomes.**

The Panel noted that the CMS/CQU relationship is still in transition. CMS was described as a commercial operation that is flexible and responds quickly to market trends, and is a proven business model. Most interviewees had no strong view about where they thought the CMS/CQU relationship is going or should go, or whether to continue in parallel or merge CMS completely into the University. Senior CMS staff argued in favour of the continued existence of CMS as an entity separate from the University, based on financial, efficiency and international education experience. The Panel considered that while these reasons were important, there may be other factors which need consideration.

The Panel has noted that there are two parallel organisational and operational cultures with some overlap. However, the main difference is at the human resources or staffing policy levels (ie full-time and casual staff contract conditions) and in some operational level procedures

(probably due to CMS's corporate environment which is ISO-driven, although staff generally did not refer directly to their ISO accreditation or its impact on their work or approach).

The University appears to be at a point where it will need to consider how the CMS/CQU relationship will develop in the next five years. A number of factors will need consideration. A balance will need to be found between the commercial and academic imperatives with respect to the future of CMS and the strategic advantages that will need to be gained, retained and enhanced, including a continuing role for metropolitan campuses in the provision of expertise for international student education and an ongoing focus of regional campuses on regional and Indigenous issues. The Panel believes that as the University considers CMS's long-term plans it should give consideration to the improvement of the quality of learning and teaching by eliminating duplication with the regional campuses, the pursuit of scholarship, and the advancement of research activity at the metropolitan campuses.

> **Recommendation 8**
>
> **AUQA recommends that Central Queensland University consider the future role that CMS, as a wholly-owned controlled entity, will have within the University.**

Underpinning and supporting the management of the international activities at the metropolitan campuses is the use of a management agreement and detailed service level agreements between CMS and each area of activity at the regional campuses. The management of learning and teaching occurs through the use of the Academic Roles and Responsibilities Manual. A services committee (CQU/CMS Strategic Management Group) meets regularly for planning purposes and to provide operational oversight of the service level agreements. The Panel noted that the arrangements appear to work well.

4.2.2   Leadership and Management

One of the gaps noticed by the Panel in the Portfolio was the ways in which internationalisation is understood and occurs outside of CMS at the regional campuses. Documentation provided to the Panel was written predominantly from the perspective of CMS rather than providing a University-wide view. There are a number of important initiatives which are happening at faculty and school levels, but have yet to be made better known, aligned and integrated into the overall University plan.

The University must ensure that the Strategic Plan and related operational plans bring about an integrated and coherent approach to internationalisation which comprehensively overcomes the previous conceptual and operational separations of CMS from the University. The Panel encourages the University to consider the benefits of horizontal integration (of the regional and the metropolitan campuses, and of the faculties with the metropolitan campuses) and vertical integration (between the faculties and CMS, and between both and the senior leadership). The supervision and management roles of deans of schools will need to be made more visible. The University is yet to achieve faculty level integration and coordination of international activities, where the University operates in a unified and coordinated way. While there has been significant progress, there is still the need for better communication and collaboration across the CMS/regional campuses, which could be enhanced by encouraging staff transfers, secondments, shared professional development in cultural literacy, etc. This is all the more important as the University intends to increase the enrolment of international students at the regional campuses.

The Panel noted the creation of the combined role of the DVC (International) and the CEO of CMS into one position. It was reported that this position had provided the opportunity to change priorities linked to the internationalisation of learning and teaching, research and innovation, engagement, and so on. The Panel considers that a number of these areas have yet to be fully explored, aligned and implemented. The Panel encourages the University to monitor that the 2008 buy-out objectives are fully implemented University-wide and support the strategic and internationalisation goals of the University.

4.3   *Staffing, Induction and Professional Development*

(This section should be read in conjunction with section 3.9.)

CMS has well-developed recruitment and induction processes in place for CMS staff, both full-time and sessional. There is some variance across the metropolitan campuses in some aspects, but regular communication ensures that good practice is shared. The campus Associate Dean Academic (ADA) is responsible for employing academic staff, with sign-off from the faculty. The Panel noted that, as part of a pilot project at the Sydney Campus, short-listed candidates were expected to make a PowerPoint presentation on teaching international students as part of the interview process. It is intended that if the pilot is successful it will be considered for implementation across the University. Another pilot project at the Sydney Campus is the observation of new staff by peers in their first term of teaching. If successful, it will also be considered for implementation across the University.

Metropolitan campus staff are required to attend a staff induction in their first term and then additional updates at least once a year after this. These induction sessions cover the operational requirements of their academic role. The mandatory induction program for metropolitan campus staff effectively replaces the FoULT program and covers the essential elements to an equivalent extent. CMS also provides training specifically focused on the needs of staff teaching international students.

Metropolitan campuses hold annual professional development sessions covering a range of educational issues, including plagiarism, student evaluations, course design and teaching strategies. Full-time academic staff are required to attend these sessions, with casual staff attendance strongly encouraged. Data available to the Panel indicates that the uptake by casual staff of professional development days across the campuses is inconsistent. CMS should consider ways to encourage greater participation, such as paying for casual staff to attend.

Academic professional development is aligned with CMS's employment conditions. The University also offers professional development events to staff across the regional and metropolitan campuses. For professional development activities run by the regional campuses, the aim is to be inclusive, for example by running video linked ILS sessions to as many campuses as needed. Activities include Academe 2010, the Professional Staff Showcase and Learning and Teaching Showcase, and professional development workshops such as ALTC's grant writing workshops.

Sessional staff are not required to be involved in the Performance, Review, Planning and Development process, but are monitored as part of the fixed term/casual contract process and participate in Course and Teaching evaluations which form part of the monitoring process. Concerns about the quality of teaching by academics which are brought to the ADA's attention, or through student evaluations, are discussed by the ADA with the individual lecturer. This may be an area which will require further attention and formalisation.

The Panel confirmed that in general there was adequate induction and professional development offered to academics. However, the Panel encourages the University to consider the implications of having two sets of employment conditions and agreements (for the staff on the regional campuses and for CMS staff) for the strategic outcomes of the University for example, for any significant staff mobility between the metropolitan campuses and the regional campuses, and for involvement of staff in research activities which could affect employment conditions.

Recommendation 9

AUQA recommends that Central Queensland University consider and review the model of retaining two sets of employments conditions at CMS and the University within the context of achieving its strategic goals.

While recognising the value of employing casual academics for the currency of their industry experience, the University must ensure through monitoring and intervention, if necessary, that the use of a large number of casual academic staff at the metropolitan campuses does not compromise academic quality.

4.4   CQU College

(This section should be read in conjunction with section 3.8.)

CQU College (the College) was introduced in 2009 to provide a pathway for students unable to have direct entry into the University. CQU College is registered as a College under the University. In 2010, there are about 150 diploma students located on the Gold Coast, Sydney and Melbourne campuses of the College. CQU College diploma students use the same services and facilities as the other students on the campuses. Diploma students attend the same lectures as first year students, but their tutorials are separate. The diploma course work is 'similar' to the first year courses, but the assessment is different.

The Panel considers that not providing instructional and educational input and support specifically appropriate to the diploma level may pose a risk, for example, in common lectures with first year students. CQU should consider the implications of such an approach and ensure that student learning and academic standards are not compromised. The University must ensure that there is adequate support for students to enable them to meet second year requirements, including consideration of requirements to enter second year at CQU, such as grade point average hurdles. Furthermore, CQU must make it clear in its marketing material that students who enrol in CQU College programs do not attend a distinct physical college with separate infrastructure to the rest of the metropolitan campus.

The Panel noted that there is no systematic academic performance tracking done on diploma graduates who continue their studies at CQU. The use of data to monitor the progress, retention and attrition rates of CQU College graduates is important for monitoring and improvement purposes of diploma programs. The Panel supports the scheduled review of the College in 2011.

Affirmation 10

AUQA affirms Central Queensland University's planned review of CQU College in 2011.

4.5   *Transnational Educational Partnerships*

CQU has discontinued its TNE partnerships for a range of reasons, including events outside the University's control such as political instability and change of partner ownership. The Renewal Plan provides for a period of consolidation and the current TNE strategy is to maintain a single new TNE partner, Melior International College (MIC).This partnership was initiated in 2009 and arose out of a previous partnership.

The Audit Panel visited MIC in Singapore and selected the Bachelor of Biomedical Science program to sample the University's quality assurance arrangements. The educational model is one of supported distance education delivery partnership, which was previously associated with another education provider from which Melior evolved. Five programs are offered through MIC and at the time of the visit there were 95 enrolled students, with a small team of administrative staff and a small number of casual academics.

The campus is compact and well organised. MIC is required to meet the Singapore higher education regulation accreditation requirements through EduTrust. There are monitoring processes in place through the agreement with CQU to ensure equivalence of service and educational provision and support. The main document which is used to ensure academic equivalence, consistency and adherence to CQU policies and processes includes the Melior Academic Roles and Responsibilities Manual (section 3.3.1).The Marketing and Recruitment Operations Manual sets out the nature and scope of TNE marketing and recruitment. The offshore Melior Operations Group is responsible for operational issues outside the scope of University service level agreements.

The Panel sampled a number of areas to check the quality assurance mechanisms, including adherence and suitability of academic and language requirements and admission processes, Moodle access and functionality, assessment and moderation processes, the examination process, the adequacy and efficiency of communication of students and staff with CQU administration and faculties, adequate localisation of course material, the use of MIC student evaluations, administration processes, and student support mechanisms. The Panel found that the processes are adequate. The University should consider how it will harmonise the use of CQU student evaluations with MIC student evaluation processes so that common data can be analysed across learning sites and used for improvement purposes.

The Panel noted areas which could be considered for improvement, including:
- The adequacy and support for local academics to improve their teaching practice in alignment with Chickering and Gamson's 'Seven Principles for Good Practice in Undergraduate Education' and professional development in teaching (section 3.4.2). There seemed to be little or no formative information provided to local academics on CQU's educational philosophy and teaching approach.
- Ensuring the competence of the local partner's Academic Board to monitor teaching quality in disciplines in which they have little expertise.
- Ensuring consistency of the quality of teaching, and avoiding the overuse of PowerPoint slides (which sometimes are too many) for the class time allocated.
- Access by MIC staff to CQU comparative cohort performance data.
- Feedback is not encouraged from local academics at moderation, including their suggestions for the improvement of course material.

The Panel heard from academic staff and students about one course where they expected to do practical laboratory work but it was not provided. Students are expected to use the laboratory results that are placed on the Moodle site by students who are enrolled in the course in Australia and complete the actual practical laboratory exercises. It was reported to

the Panel during the Rockhampton Audit Visit that students at MIC are expected to have completed their laboratory work at second year level as a prerequisite for entry into the program. The Panel was unable to confirm whether a variation to the program had been approved by the Academic Board through the Education Committee. The University must confirm either that students who enrol at MIC are informed at enrolment that there will be no laboratory work, or ensure equivalence of provision in the course for students regardless of learning site or mode of delivery. It was not clear to the Panel whether the laboratory work constitutes a core element of the capabilities and skills expected for the third year level, or whether these skills are presumed to be met at a lower level.

Recommendation 10

AUQA recommends that Central Queensland University ensure that there is equivalence of provision for the Bachelor of Biomedical Science students at the transnational education partner through clarifying the requirements for practical laboratory work, and ensure that all requirements are clear to students at the time of enrolment.

4.6   Student Support

4.6.1   Support for International Students

Support provided to international students includes a comprehensive orientation program, including transitional support services for students new to Australia, English language support, the Learning Skills Unit, and the support offered through the Training, Employment and Career Coaching service.

There is a range of pastoral support services available for students. Use is also made of the student mentor program that benefits both new students and student mentors.

Students (both undergraduate and postgraduate) confirmed the high level of student and academic support which they receive and singled out the Learning Skills Units at each of the metropolitan campuses for their high quality staff, range of support mechanisms and helpfulness of staff. It was reported by students that they appreciated it when Learning Skills Unit staff made occasional presentations and provided skills development during class time (Commendation 3). Students were also enthusiastic about the support provided through the Training, Employment and Career Coaching area.

Commendation 9

AUQA commends Central Queensland University for the support provided to international students on the metropolitan campuses through the Training, Employment and Career Coaching service.

The metropolitan campuses have a robust process in place to monitor student progress through the use of the student portal which gathers data on student performance in the classroom, attendance data, academic performance, etc. Students who are identified to be at risk are identified to meet with the student counsellor, who has access to the data on the student portal. The system is also used to ensure compliance with the ESOS Act.

While many students indicated that they were aware that they were studying on an international campus with other international students, they suggested that CQU explore ways to provide greater interaction with Australian students. Some students had the expectation

when they came to study on the metropolitan campuses that they would have significant interaction with Australian students. The Panel recognises that international students have an international experience by studying with students who are enrolled from countries outside Australia and opportunities to interact with local communities through community engagement and social activities. However, besides the examples provided in sections 3.10 and 4.2.1, CQU is encouraged to explore further ways to enhance interaction between international and Australian students.

4.6.2   English Language Support

Underlying all these support programs is the University's recognition that an adequate International English Language Testing System (IELTS) or Test of English as a Foreign Language entry score represents important baseline proficiency but that second language students benefit from structured opportunities for further English development during their studies.

The International Activities Working Group undertook a review of the University's activities against the Good Practice Principles for English Language Proficiency for International Students in Australian Universities. In view of the high proportion of international students, the Panel strongly encourages the University to continue monitoring its performance against these Principles, with a view to continuous improvement.

As an early intervention strategy the University has also introduced the English Language Measurement and Placement test (Learn.ed Solutions) at the Sydney Campus. While the Panel considers this to be an important initiative, especially in the light of the revision of the IELTS entry requirements, simply adding a test may not be sufficient to ensure student success. Further coordinated interventions and support in the courses must be considered. The University is urged to consider this early intervention and the tracking of student academic performance as an ongoing strategy to monitor the extent to which English language is a factor in student attrition.

4.6.3   Education Agents

Individual education agents are managed by dedicated country recruitment managers. Interactions are recorded in the Agent Management Portal. Agent performance is reviewed for their professionalism and effectiveness. Agent contracts are reviewed every two years and reports are placed in the Agent Management Portal for review by senior managers. The Agent Management Portal provides a database of agents, their contracts, payments, training and audits, as well as a record of visits and other communications.

A recently developed student marketing survey is completed by all new students and students rate their level of satisfaction with the services provided by education agents in a series of questions. The Panel reviewed the results which were disaggregated per metropolitan campus and provided useful information for the management and improvement of agent services.

The Panel confirmed that agent management processes are robust and concurs with the report of an external audit for ESOS compliance which confirmed that the Agent Management Portal is an example of good practice in the sector.

> **Commendation 10**
>
> **AUQA commends Central Queensland University for its development and use of the Agent Management Portal for the effective management of education agents.**

4.7 *Student and Staff Mobility*

All exchange and study abroad agreements are University agreements and are managed through CQUniversity International and occur through faculty linkages. The International Relationship Management Global Partner strategy informs and supports academic and research staff in identifying university partnerships that are aligned to the strategic goals of the University. The University has some limited international teaching staff exchange opportunities. It is intended that outbound student opportunities will make use of the international partnership networks.

The first outbound scholarships were awarded to Australian students in 2007. A student who spends a term abroad studying a full-time load receives up to $5000. Scholarships of $1000 are awarded for shorter international experiences on condition that the student is eligible for at least one course credit. The Panel encourages CQU to develop and expand student and staff mobility as part of its overall internationalisation of the University.

Affirmation 11

AUQA affirms Central Queensland University's intention to increase its student and staff mobility in the context of implementing its International Relationship Management Global Partner strategy.

5   DATA

Notes

The CQU cohort as defined in its 2009 Institution Performance Portfolio (IPP) consists of the non-aligned universities: Australian Catholic University, Charles Sturt University, Deakin University, Edith Cowan University, Macquarie University, Southern Cross University, Swinburne University of Technology, The University of New England, University of Ballarat, University of Canberra, University of the Sunshine Coast, University of Tasmania, University of Western Sydney, University of Wollongong, Victoria University, and the University of Southern Queensland.

The sector is defined in the CQU 2009 IPP as consisting of the higher education Table A providers as listed in the *Higher Education Support Act 2003* section 16–15.

Item 5.1: CQU median tertiary entrance (TE) scores compared with sector and state (QLD), 2002–2008
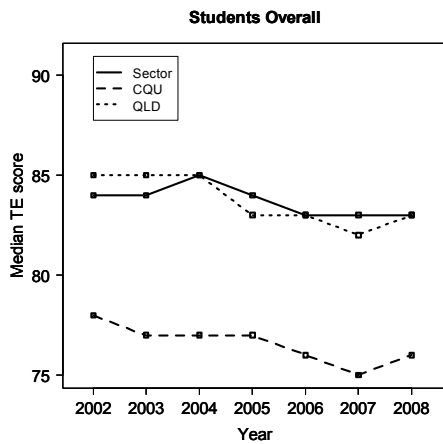
Source: Higher education statistics collections of the DEEWR website.

Item 5.2: CQU median tertiary entrance (TE) scores compared with cohort, 2002–2008
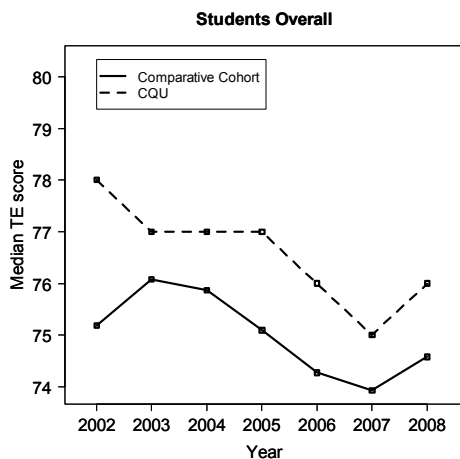
Source: Higher education statistics collections of the DEEWR website.

Item 5.3: CQU commencing domestic student progress rates compared with cohort, 2002–2008

Domestic Students
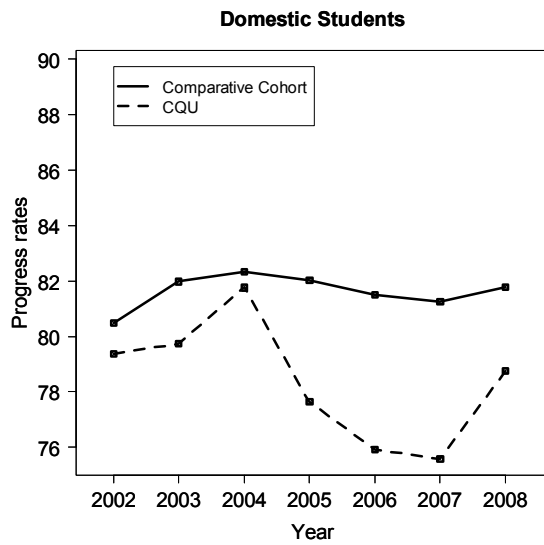
Source: Higher education statistics collections of the DEEWR website.

Item 5.4: CQU commencing overseas student progress rates compared with cohort, 2002–2008

Overseas Students
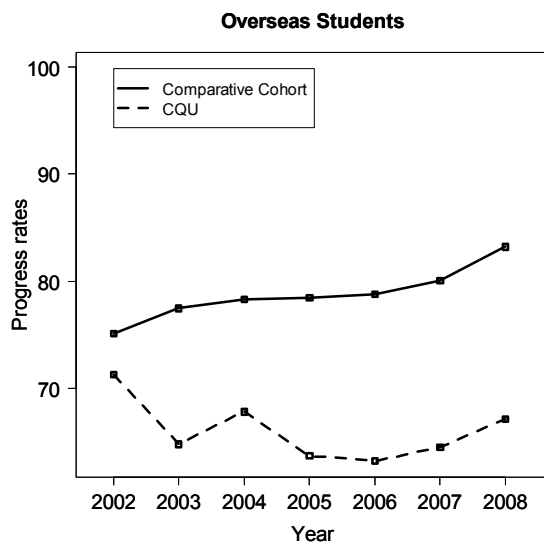
Source: Higher education statistics collections of the DEEWR website.

Item 5.5: CQU commencing domestic student attrition rates compared with cohort, 2002–2007
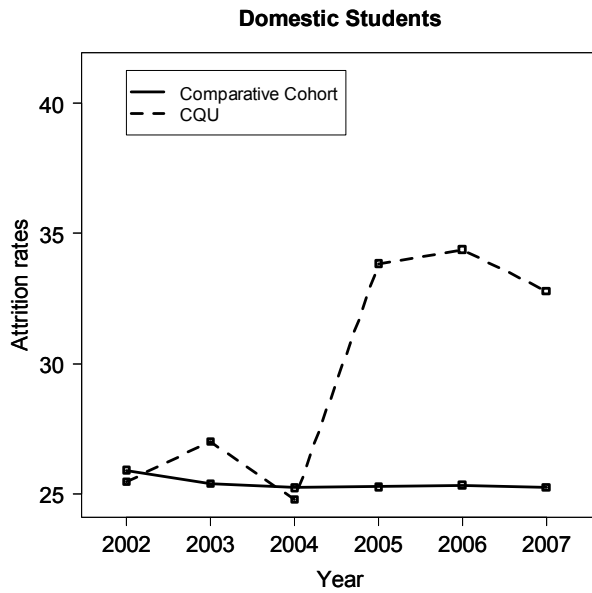
Source: Higher education statistics collections of the DEEWR website.

Item 5.6: CQU commencing overseas student attrition rates compared with cohort, 2002–2007
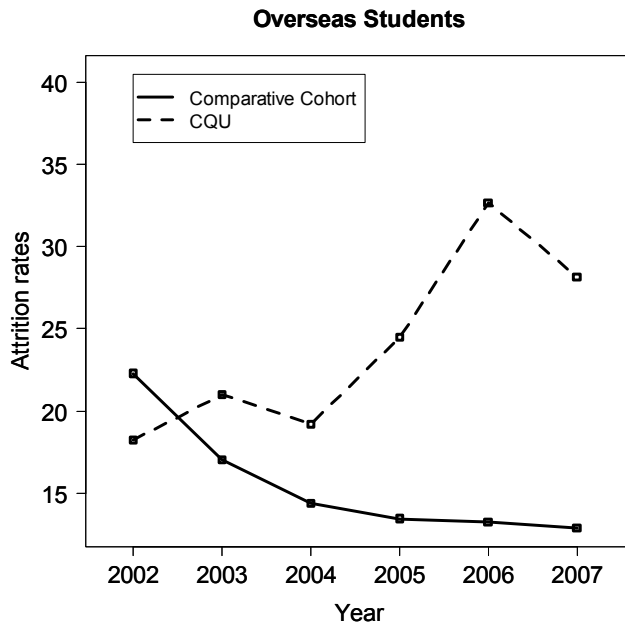
Source: Higher education statistics collections of the DEEWR website.

Item 5.7: CQU Good Teaching scale mean response compared with sector and cohort, 2003–2009
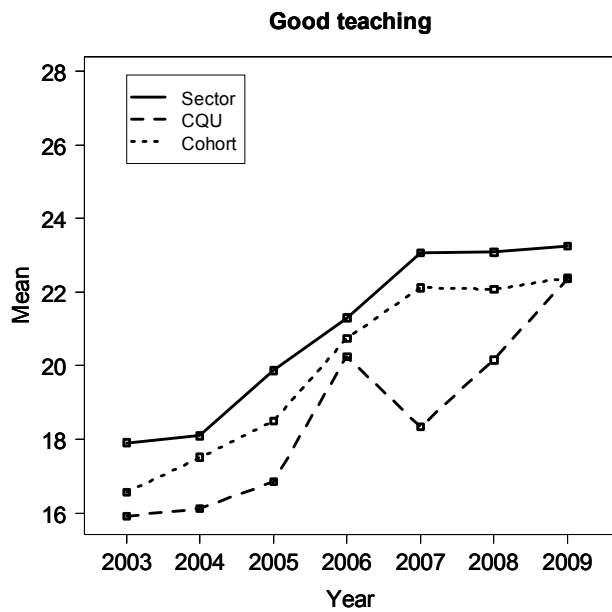
Source: Course Experience Questionnaire, managed by Graduate Careers Australia.

Item 5.8: CQU Generic Skills scale mean response compared with sector and cohort, 2003–2009
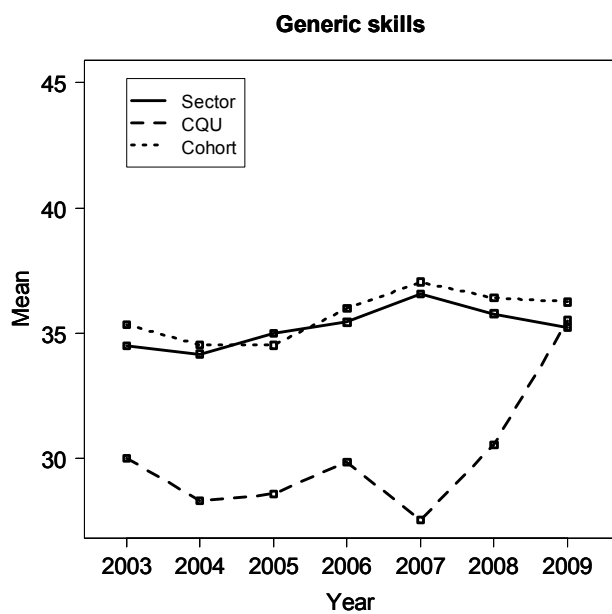
Source: Course Experience Questionnaire, managed by Graduate Careers Australia.

Item 5.9: CQU Overall Satisfaction mean response compared with sector and cohort, 2003–2009

Overall satisfaction
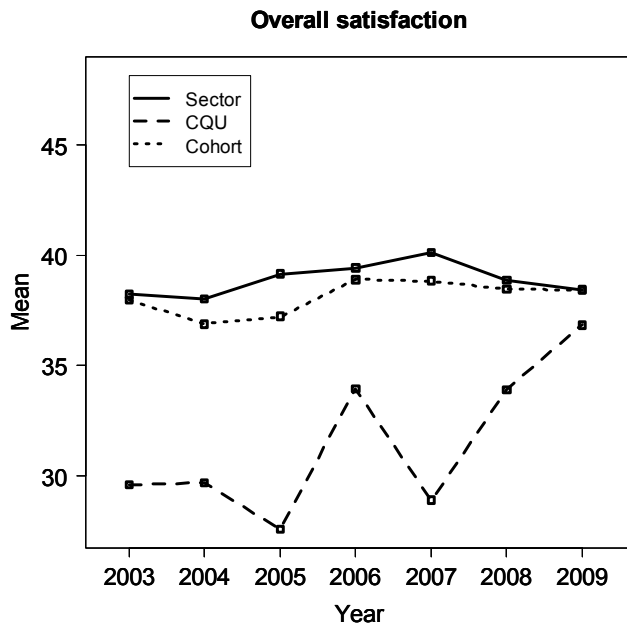
Source: Course Experience Questionnaire, managed by Graduate Careers Australia.

Item 5.10: CQU Information Technology Good Teaching scale mean response compared with sector and cohort, 2003–2009

Good teaching: Information Technology
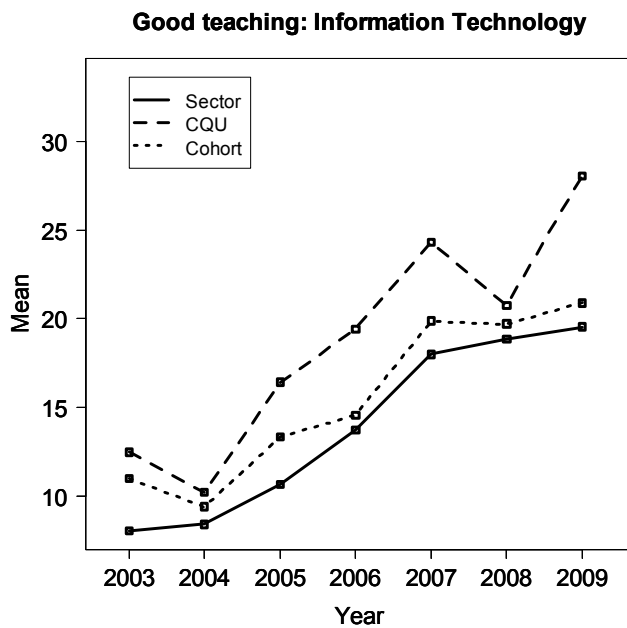
Source: Course Experience Questionnaire, managed by Graduate Careers Australia.

Item 5.11: CQU Nursing Good Teaching scale mean response compared with sector and cohort, 2003–2009

Good teaching: Nursing
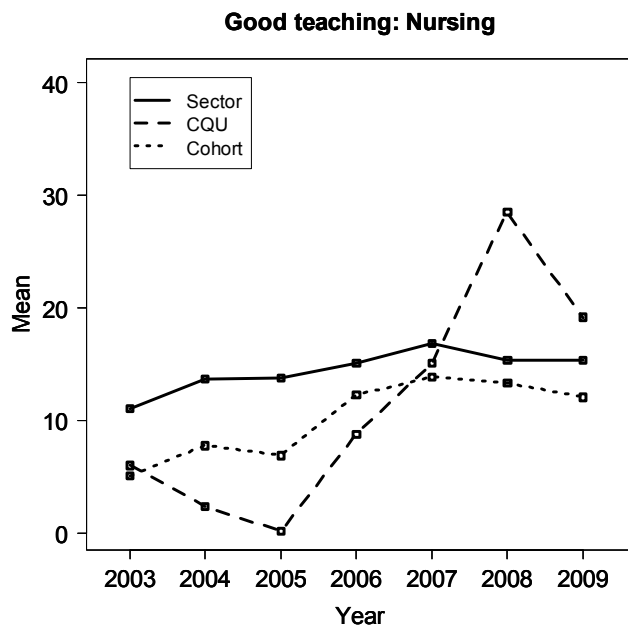
Source: Course Experience Questionnaire, managed by Graduate Careers Australia.

Item 5.12: CQU graduates in full-time work as a proportion of those available for full-time work compared with sector and cohort, 2004–2008

Graduates in full-time work
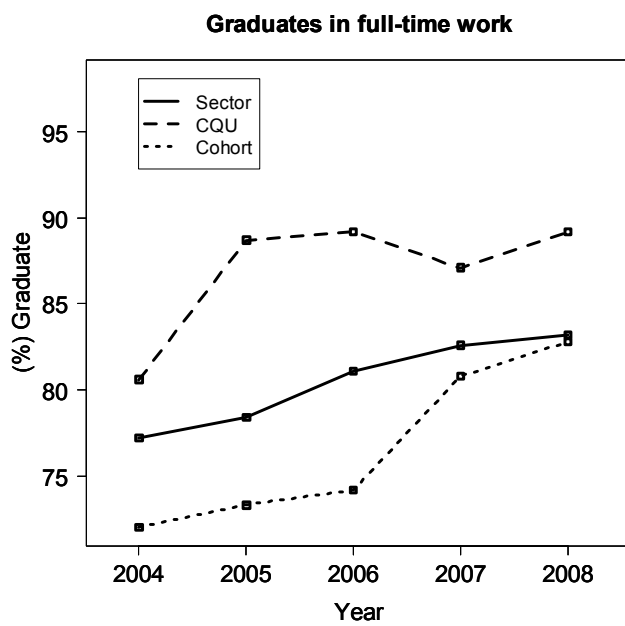
Source: Graduate Destination Survey section of CQU's 2009 Institution Performance Portfolio.

Item 5.13: CQU 2008 equity group percentages from total domestic compared with sector and state (QLD)

Equity Group Percentages
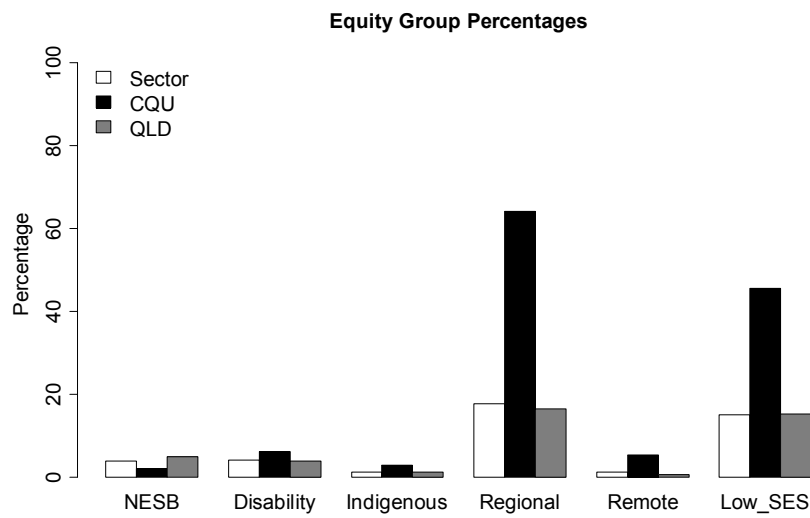
Source: Higher education statistics collections of the DEEWR website.

APPENDICES

APPENDIX A: THE AUDIT PROCESS

In 2010 the Australian Universities Quality Agency (AUQA) appointed an Audit Panel to undertake a quality audit of Central Queensland University (CQU or the University). Within the scope of the particular audit, AUQA's Cycle 2 audits emphasise institutional standards and performance outcomes, with attention to benchmarking activities and their effect on standards and outcomes.

Quotations taken from the Performance Portfolio are identified in the Report as (PF p). The mission, objectives, vision and values of AUQA are shown in Appendix B, membership of the Audit Panel is provided in Appendix C, and Appendix D defines abbreviations and technical terms used in this Report. Full details of the Cycle 2 audit process are available in the AUQA Audit Manual.

AUQA preselected the theme of 'International Activities' for the audit of the University, taking into account: the presence of offshore programs (a known high-risk area of university operations); the percentage of international students studying CQU programs (40.7 per cent in 2009); and recommendations from the Cycle 1 audit (eg recommendations 4 and 19).

The University proposed three themes and from these AUQA selected the theme of 'Quality of Teaching' in view of its significance for the University's core activity of learning and teaching.

The Audit Panel selected for follow-up a recommendation related to the University Council; a recommendation linked to risk management, and a recommendation linked to the development of an integrated planning and reporting framework.

On 9 July 2010, the University presented its submission (Performance Portfolio) to AUQA, including 86 supporting materials. The Audit Panel met on 30 July to consider these materials.

The Audit Panel's Chairperson and Audit Director undertook a Preparatory Visit to CQU on 17 August. During that visit, the answers to questions and additional information requested by the Panel were discussed, as well as the program for the Audit Visit. The University provided a further 90 responses to questions and 54 documents to the Panel.

A visit to CQU's four metropolitan campuses (also known as the Australian International Campuses) and to the single TNE partner in the delivery of offshore programs (Melior International College, Singapore) was conducted from 13 to 15 September and from 27 to 28 September. Written reports of these activities were circulated to the full Audit Panel prior to the main Audit Visit. A visit to one of the University's regional campuses, at Mackay, was held at the beginning of the Audit Visit on 18 October. The main Audit Visit to the University's Rockhampton Campus took place between 19 and 22 October.

In all, the Audit Panel spoke with around 415 people in the course of the audit, including the Vice-Chancellor, the Chancellor, senior management, academic and general staff, external stakeholders, undergraduate and postgraduate students (including external, Indigenous and international students), and offshore partner. Open sessions were available for any member of the University community to meet the Audit Panel and one person took advantage of this opportunity.

AUQA expresses its appreciation to Professor Jennelle Kyd, Ms Jo Miller and others at CQU for their assistance and cooperation throughout the audit process. AUQA also expresses appreciation to the University for its ready production of additional information and for providing the Panel secure access to its intranet for the period of the audit.

This Report relates to the situation current at the time of the Audit Visit, which ended on 22 October 2010, and does not take account of any changes that may have occurred subsequently. The Report records the conclusions reached by the Audit Panel based on the documentation provided by the University as well as information gained through interviews, discussion and observation.

While every attempt has been made to reach a comprehensive understanding of the University's activities within the scope of the audit, the Report does not identify every aspect of quality assurance and its effectiveness or shortcomings. To keep the audit within reasonable bounds, the Panel did not visit all of the regional campuses.

APPENDIX B: AUQA'S MISSION, OBJECTIVES, VISION AND VALUES

Mission

AUQA is the principal national quality assurance agency in higher education with the responsibility of providing public assurance of the quality of Australia's universities and other institutions of higher education, and assisting in enhancing the academic quality of these institutions.

Objectives

AUQA is established to be the principal national quality assurance agency in higher education, with responsibility for quality audits of higher education institutions and accreditation authorities, reporting on performance and outcomes, assisting in quality enhancement, advising on quality assurance; and liaising internationally with quality agencies in other jurisdictions, for the benefit of Australian higher education.

Specifically, the objectives of AUQA are as follows:

1. Arrange and manage a system of periodic audits of:
   - the quality of the academic activities, including attainment of standards of performance and outcomes of Australian universities and other higher education institutions;
   - the quality assurance arrangements intended to maintain and elevate that quality;
   - compliance with criteria set out in the National Protocols for Higher Education Approval Processes; and
   - monitor, review, analyse and provide public reports on the quality of outcomes in Australian universities and higher education institutions.

2. Arrange and manage a system of periodic audits of the quality assurance processes, procedures, and outcomes of State, Territory and Commonwealth higher education accreditation authorities including their impact on the quality of higher education programs; and monitor, review, analyse and report on the outcomes of those audits.

3. Publicly report periodically on matters relating to quality assurance, including the relative standards and outcomes of the Australian higher education system and its institutions, its processes and its international standing, and the impact of the National Protocols for Higher Education Approval Processes on Australian Higher Education, using information available to AUQA from its audits and other activities carried out under these Objectives, and from other sources.

4. Develop partnerships with other quality agencies in relation to matters directly relating to quality assurance and audit, to facilitate efficient cross-border quality assurance processes and the international transfer of knowledge about those processes.

Vision

To consolidate AUQA's position, as the leading reference point for quality assurance in higher education in and for Australia. Specifically:

- AUQA's judgements will be widely recognised as objective, accurate and useful, based on its effective procedures, including auditor training and thorough investigation.
- AUQA's work will be recognised by institutions and accrediting agencies as adding value to their activities, through the emphasis on autonomy, diversity and self-review.
- Through AUQA's work, there will be an improvement in public knowledge of the relative academic standards of Australian higher education and an increase in public confidence in Australian higher education.
- Through AUQA's work with other quality assurance agencies, the international quality assurance requirements for Australian higher education institutions will be coherent and rigorous, avoiding duplication and inconsistency.
- AUQA's advice will be sought on quality assurance in higher education, through mechanisms including consulting, training and publications.
- AUQA will be recognised among its international peers as a leading quality assurance agency, collaborating with other agencies and providing leadership by example.

Values

AUQA will be:

- *Rigorous*: AUQA carries out all its audits as rigorously and thoroughly as possible.
- *Supportive*: AUQA recognises institutional autonomy in setting objectives and implementing processes to achieve them, and acts to facilitate and support this.
- *Flexible*: AUQA operates flexibly, in order to acknowledge and reinforce institutional diversity, and is responsive to institution and agency characteristics and needs.
- *Cooperative*: AUQA recognises that the achievement of quality in any organisation depends on a commitment to quality within the organisation itself, and so operates as unobtrusively as is consistent with effectiveness and rigour.
- *Collaborative*: as a quality assurance agency, AUQA works collaboratively with the accrediting agencies (in addition to its audit role with respect to these agencies).
- *Transparent*: AUQA's audit procedures, and its own quality assurance system, are open to public scrutiny.
- *Economical*: AUQA operates cost-effectively and keeps as low as possible the demands it places on institutions and agencies.
- *Open*: AUQA reports publicly and clearly on its findings in relation to institutions, agencies and the sector.

AUQA's Mission and Objectives were revised in March 2007, as recommended by MCEETYA.

AUQA's Vision and Values have been modified accordingly.

APPENDIX C: THE AUDIT PANEL

Dr Maria Fiocco, College Director and Principal, Curtin International College

Dr Mark Hay, Audit Director, Australian Universities Quality Agency

Professor Denise Kirkpatrick, Pro Vice-Chancellor (Learning, Teaching and Quality), The Open University, United Kingdom

Professor Ron Oliver, Pro Vice-Chancellor (Teaching and Learning), Edith Cowan University

Professor Charles Webb, Senior Deputy Vice-Chancellor, Charles Darwin University (Chair)

Observer:

Dr Iring Wasser, Audit Director, Australian Universities Quality Agency

APPENDIX D: ABBREVIATIONS AND DEFINITIONS

The following abbreviations and definitions are used in this Report. As necessary, they are explained in context.

ACODE .... Australian Council on Open, Distance and E-Learning

ADA .... Associate Dean Academic

AIC.. Australian International Campus

ALTC... Australian Learning and Teaching Council

ASSP .... Academic Support Systems Project

AUQA .... Australian Universities Quality Agency

AVCC .... Australian Vice-Chancellors' Committee (now Universities Australia)

CAUL .... Council of Australian University Librarians

CEO .... Chief Executive Officer

CEQ .... Course Experience Questionnaire

CMS.. C Management Services Pty Ltd

DEEWR .... Australian Government Department of Education, Employment and Workplace Relations

DEST... Australian Government Department of Education, Science and Technology

DVC .... Deputy Vice-Chancellor

EFTSL....................................... equivalent full-time student load

ERA... Excellence in Research for Australia

ESOS... Education Services for Overseas Students

ESOS Act .... *Education Services for Overseas Students Act 2000* (Cwlth)

FoULT....................................... Foundations of University Learning and Teaching

FTE .... full-time equivalent

GDS .... Graduate Destination Survey

HDR.. higher degree by research

IELTS... International English Language Testing System

IERC.. International Education Research Centre

ILS .... integrated learning system

IPP... institution performance portfolio, a portfolio of institutional information finalised between a university and DEEWR (qv)

IT .... information technology

ITD.. Information Technology Division

KPIs .... key performance indicators

LMS .... learning management system

LTERC .... Learning and Teaching Education Research Centre

LTPF .... Learning and Teaching Performance Fund

MAP .... monitoring academic progress

MCEETYA ....Ministerial Council on Education, Employment, Training and Youth Affairs (now disbanded)

MIC ....Melior International College

National Protocols ....*National Protocols for Higher Education Approval Processes*

NESB ....non-English speaking background

OLT...Office of Learning and Teaching

PF p ....Performance Portfolio page reference

Portfolio...................................Performance Portfolio

Protocols..................................*National Protocols for Higher Education Approval Processes*

PRPD process...........................performance, review, planning and development process

PVC ....Pro Vice-Chancellor

QLD ....Queensland

SES ....socio-economic status

TE ....tertiary entrance

TNE ....transnational education

VCAC...Vice-Chancellor's Advisory Committee

NOTES

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