

February 2005

AUQA News

A Quarterly Newsletter on the Activities of AUQA

Australian Universities Quality Agency

1. AUQA signs Memorandum of Co-operation with the Hong Kong Council of Academic Accreditation

On Monday 31 January 2005, AUQA signed a Memorandum of Co-operation with the Hong Kong Council of Academic Accreditation (HKCAA). The Memorandum covers such areas as: exchange of information; mutual understanding; and, staff development and collaboration. The signing of the Memorandum coincided with the inaugural meeting of the **Asia-Pacific Quality Network (APQN)** held in Hong Kong, and the signing ceremony was attended by the Australian Consul General in Hong Kong, Mr Murray Cobban.



(From the left: Mr Edward Yau, Deputy Secretary, Education and Manpower; Mr Peter Cheung, Executive Director of HKCAA; Dr David Woodhouse, Executive Director of AUQA; Mr Murray Cobban, Australian Consul General in Hong Kong; Ms Dorte Kristoffersen, Audit Director AUQA)



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2. New Staff Appointments

AUQA is delighted to welcome Ms **Fiona Gunn** to its staff. Fiona will provide administrative assistance for two important projects – the AUQA Good Practice Database and the Australian Universities Quality Forum.



Dr Jeanette Baird joins the staff in the position of Audit Director, replacing Robyn Harris who has moved to a position at Monash University. Jeanette has a strong background in higher education and public sector management. Prior to joining AUQA, for several years Jeanette was with the Australian Government Department of Health and Ageing in Canberra, and prior to that, the Australian National Audit Office. From 1993 to 1998 she was General Manager, Research and Graduate Studies, at Swinburne University of Technology and participated in the implementation of the University's quality management system there. Previous employers include the University of Melbourne and the Melbourne Business School, the University of Tasmania and the Victorian Department of Human Services.

Jeanette has an MBA and in 2004 completed her PhD on discourses of governance among members of Australian university governing boards. Her research interests include critical discourse analysis, accountability and performance monitoring in public organisations. In her leisure time, Jeanette enjoys going to the beach, opera, and planning various yet-to-be-written novels set in nineteenth century Australia.

3. Seeking Contributors to the Australian Universities Quality Forum

The AUQF Joint Steering Group (JSG) is pleased to announce that the annual Australian Universities Quality Forum (AUQF2005) will be held in Sydney from 6-8 July 2005. Registration for this event will open in late-March/early April.

The theme of AUQF2005 is 'Engaging Communities'. Communities may be defined in various ways including internal communities within institutions, local and Indigenous communities, relations with industry and the international community. The JSG will consider proposals in the form of papers, workshops (preferably with an online component) and posters. Some topics could include: linking research with communities, involving industry and employers in curriculum, student placements, universities as good neighbours and corporate citizens, and auditing engagement. Submissions are especially sought on audit-related topics and quality issues for Australian and international higher education, particularly where these topics intersect with the community theme.

The deadline for all submissions is **Wednesday 23 March** 2005. A copy of the Call for Contributions, including Instructions for Authors & Facilitators, can be downloaded from the AUQF2005 website www.auqa.edu.au/auqf/2005 or by emailing your request to Fiona Gunn at f.gunn@auqa.edu.au

AUQF2004 Proceedings Online

The full proceedings from the 2004 Australian Universities Quality Forum (AUQF) are now available online. The third AUQF was held on 7-9 July 2004 at the Hyatt Regency, Adelaide, and attracted over 230 delegates. The theme of the Forum was 'Quality in a Time of Change'.

To download a full pdf version of the proceedings, please visit www.auqa.edu.au/auqf/2004. Alternatively, individual abstracts, papers and workshop notes may be accessed by linking through the AUQF2004 Program.

4. AUQA Good Practice Database

The AUQA Good Practice Database (GPDB) is now an international database of good practices in higher education. On 22 December 2004, fourteen new entries were added to the database including three from Massey University in New Zealand, eight from the University of New England (UNE), and three from RMIT University.

Entries contributed to the AUQA Good Practice Database in December included several with an Indigenous theme – one by Massey University called ‘Maori@Massey Strategy’ and one on the TRACKS Indigenous Tertiary Preparation Program at UNE. Other new good practices cover topics such as Ombuds, online information literacy materials, plagiarism policy, regional access centres, a research supervision development program, a schools recommendation admission scheme, and staff workloads policy.

Seven new good practices from the University of Western Australia will be available in February, and the next batch of good practices have been invited from institutions in the last round of audits including Charles Sturt University, University of South Australia and Edith Cowan University.

A Good Practice is a discrete system or activity that has been identified through the audit process of AUQA or NZUAAU as adding commendable value for the institution, and that may be beneficially transferable to other organisational settings. The GPDB now contains 63 good practices, covering a range of topics, contributed by 16 organisations including Australian and New Zealand universities, other Australian self-accrediting institutions, and Australian state and territory higher education accrediting agencies.

AUQA is about to discuss with the Indian National Accreditation and Assessment Council (NAAC) the possibilities of including some good practices emerging from the audits of Indian Universities.

The AUQA Good Practice Database can be visited, at no charge, at www.auqa.edu.au/gp

5. Update on AUQA Audit Schedule

Audit reports released since November edition include the University of Sydney and Charles Sturt University. The remaining 2004 reports for La Trobe University, Bond University, the NSW Department of Education and Training and Deakin University will be published shortly.

All but three panels for the 2005 audits are now confirmed and details are available on the website. Panels yet to be appointed are for the Queensland Office of Higher Education/Northern Territory Department of Education, Employment and Training; Central Queensland University and the University of New South Wales. Audit Visits will commence in mid April.

Progress Reports from institutions and agencies audited in 2002 are beginning to be received.

6. Asia-Pacific Quality Network

The Asia-Pacific Quality Network, a grouping of quality assurance agencies, held its first meeting of members recently. AUQA acts as the Secretariat for the Network. Further information on APQN activities is available from the recently launched website: www.apqn.org.

7. Membership of SHEAC for AUQA Executive Director

The Singapore Government recently established the Singapore Higher Education Accreditation Council (SHEAC) to oversee the operation of private higher education providers in Singapore. The Council has six members, five being Singaporeans, and David Woodhouse has been appointed as the sole international member of the Council. SHEAC is chaired by Professor Wang Gungwu of the National University of Singapore, and formerly Vice-Chancellor of Hong Kong University.

8. Contacting AUQA

Further information about any items in this newsletter or about AUQA more generally may be obtained from:

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The AUQA website provides background information about all areas of the Agency's activities, including the AUQA Audit Manual and Audit Reports (www.auqa.edu.au).