

February 2007

AUQA News

A Quarterly Newsletter on the Activities of AUQA

Australian Universities Quality Agency

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## 1. Audit Update

### 2006 and 2007 Audits

Since November 2006, reports have been published for the remaining 2006 auditees, as follows:

- The Flinders University of South Australia
- Monash University
- Victoria University
- University of Western Sydney
- University of the Sunshine Coast.

The Audit Report for the Australian College of Theology has also been published (see item 3 below).

### Progress Reports

Audit Progress Reports from the first audit cycle are being added progressively to the AUQA website.

Progress Reports are accessible at [http://www.auqa.edu.au/qualityaudit/sai\\_reports/index.shtml](http://www.auqa.edu.au/qualityaudit/sai_reports/index.shtml).



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## 2. AUQA Audit Cycle 2

### Audit Manual

A new version of the AUQA Audit Manual (version 4.0) has been prepared for self-accrediting institutions (SAIs), addressing Cycle 2 audits and first-time audits of SAIs. The AUQA Board has agreed that SAIs to be audited in 2008, including those with performance portfolios due in late 2007, should follow version 4.0 of the Manual.

Version 4.0 will be available on the AUQA website shortly. Version 4.0 is **only available online**, as it is expected to require updating by mid-2007 to incorporate new information, i.e. to reflect advice from the Cycle 2 Reference Group and updated information on audits of NSAs.

### First Cycle 2 Audits

A Cycle 2 briefing meeting for all self-accrediting institutions was held on 13 December 2006.

At its final meeting for 2006, the AUQA Board approved the selection of the following institutions for audit, with audit visits to be scheduled in 2008:

- The University of Adelaide
- Australian Catholic University
- Curtin University of Technology
- Griffith University
- University of Newcastle
- The University of Notre Dame
- The University of Queensland
- RMIT University
- Southern Cross University
- Swinburne University of Technology.

All these institutions were audited in 2002 or 2003. Planning for the first Cycle 2 audits has commenced.

### Cycle 2 Reference Group

In Cycle 2 audits 'evidence of setting, maintaining and reviewing institutional academic standards and outcomes will be expected (eg relating to student progress, student achievement, graduate attributes, research achievements), together with evidence of the institution's comparative national and international performance, and evidence that professional accreditation requirements are being met'. The AUQA Board decided in June 2006 to set up a Reference Group to advise on these matters.

Broadly, the Terms of Reference are to develop a set of guidelines for AUQA in addressing the issue of 'academic standards and outcomes and their measurement'. This will be done in a phased manner where phase 1 will focus on the immediate requirements to guide 2008 audits and is due to be completed by May 2007. AUQA is required to report to MCEETYA in mid-2007 on progress in developing standards-related and risk-related plans and procedures. The Reference Group met for the first time on 31 January 2007.

### 3. NSAI Audits and Workshop for NSAI's

The first AUQA audit of a non-self accrediting higher education provider (HEP) in accordance with requirements of the Commonwealth *Higher Education Support Act 2003* (HESA) has been completed, with the release of the Audit Report of the Australian College of Theology on 7 February 2007.

To reach this stage the Report had not only been through the standard AUQA audit report writing and Board approval processes, but, being a 'pilot audit of a NSAI', had been cleared for publication by the Australian Government Department of Education, Science and Training (DEST) after being reviewed by the DEST-appointed Observer. The audit was carried out in accordance with advice in the DEST Handbook for Pilot Quality Audits of Higher Education Providers, which uses four 'Quality Audit Factors' (QAF) developed to ensure consistency in HEP for HESA quality audits, regardless of whether the auditing body is AUQA or a State or Territory accrediting agency.

AUQA held a one-day workshop for non-self-accrediting higher education providers on 12 February 2007. With 45 participants, the workshop was fully subscribed. A highlight of the workshop was a presentation from the Reverend Dr Mark Harding on the Australian College of Theology audit.

A further workshop for HEPs is planned for later in 2007.

### 4. Board News

The Board of AUQA will hold its first meeting for 2007 on 1 March. The terms of the following AUQA Board members are due to end on 31 March 2007:

- The Reverend Dr Mark Harding
- Professor Ingrid Moses
- Professor Millicent Poole
- Professor Deryck Schreuder
- Mr Terry Werner

Processes are in train for the nomination of persons to fill these positions.

### 5. AUQA Staff News

AUQA said farewell to Audit Director **Robyn Adams** at the end of January 2007. Robyn has completed a one-year secondment to AUQA and is returning to her substantive position as Principal Consultant, Quality, at RMIT. We thank Robyn for being an excellent colleague and for her professional insights and contributions, which have been greatly valued.

**Alexandra Maligeorges** joined AUQA as part-time administration assistant from 5 February.

## 6. Australian Higher Education Quality Award 2007

Nominations for the 2007 Australian Higher Education Quality Award close on **20 April 2007**. The Australian Higher Education Quality Award was established by the Board of AUQA to celebrate the achievements of individuals in quality assurance in the higher education sector. The Award comprises a certificate and a cheque for \$3000. A record of the award and the citation is permanently posted on the AUQA website. The fundamental criterion for awarding the Australian Higher Education Quality Award is meritorious service to quality advancement in Australian higher education. Professor Paul Ramsden was the inaugural recipient of the Award in 2006.

Recipients of the Award can be a person or a group. The Award can be based on work and achievements over a long period or a single but particularly notable event, project or concept. The 2007 Award will be presented during AUQF2007, which is being held in Hobart from 11 to 13 July. The nomination form is at: <http://www.auqa.edu.au/qualityenhancement/qualityaward/index.shtml>.

## 7. AUQF2007: Proposals due by 12 March 2007

AUQF2007 will take place in Hobart on 11–13 July 2007. The Call for Contributions is available on the AUQA website at: <http://www.auqa.edu.au/auqf/2007/contributions/index.htm>. The closing date is **12 March 2007**.

Registration for AUQF2007 is expected to open in late March or early April. Keynote speakers include:

- **Professor Robert Zemsky**, Chair of The Learning Alliance in the USA and a member of the US Commission on the Future of Higher Education, which released its report in 2006
- **Professor Roger Brown**, Vice-Chancellor and Professor of Higher Education Policy, Southampton Solent University and, and formerly Chief Executive of the Higher Education Quality Council.

**Dr Andrée Sursock** of the European University Association will join a plenary session on international developments. There will be a number of invited workshops, including workshops by **Professor Tom Angelo** and **Professor Geoff Scott**, as well as plenary sessions on ‘Guidelines for Revised National Protocols’, ‘Impact of Audit’ and ‘Converging Pathways’.

### Pre-Forum Workshop

The annual pre-forum workshop will be held in Hobart on **11 July** from 1.00 to 4.00pm. The topic of the workshop is Cycle 2 audits and preparation of a portfolio. The workshop will primarily be aimed at university quality managers.

## 8. AUQA Publications

In early January, AUQA released another title in its Occasional Publications series. The new publication, ‘*Quality Audit and Assurance for Transnational Higher Education*’, is available at: <http://www.auqa.edu.au/qualityenhancement/publications/occasional/publications/index.shtml>.

## 9. AUQA Good Practice Database

At 31 December 2006, the Database contained 160 individual good practices which had been accessed over 40,000 times. From November 2006, the AUQA Good Practice Database began collaborating with the Global University Network for Innovation (GUNI) and AUQA's Database is now linked to GUNI's Observatory on Good University Practices.

## 10. Asia-Pacific Quality Network (APQN)

### 2007 APQN Conference and AGM

The 2007 APQN Conference and Annual General Meeting was held in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia, on 4–7 February 2007 and hosted by Lembaga Akreditasi Negara (the National Accreditation Board). The theme was 'Emerging Challenges, Emerging Practices: Sharing a Global Vision of Quality Assurance in Higher Education'. The program and copies of papers from the parallel sessions are available at: <http://www.lan.gov.my/apqn2007/programfinal.cfm>.

### New APQN Board

APQN's newly elected Board took office after the Annual General Meeting.

#### Elected members

President: **Peter Cheung**, Hong Kong Council of Academic Accreditation, Hong Kong -China

Vice-President: **Concepcion V. Pijano**, Philippine Accrediting Association of Schools, Colleges and Universities, the Philippines

Secretary/Treasurer: **Dorte Kristoffersen**, Australian Universities Quality Agency, Australia

**Akihiko Kawaguchi**, NIAD-UE, Japan

**Zita Mohd Fahmi**, National Accreditation Board (LAN), Malaysia

**Jiang Yanqiao**, Shanghai Educational Evaluation Institute, People's Republic of China

**Nuanthip Kamolvarin**, ONESQA, Thailand

#### Co-opted members

**Jagannath Patil**, National Assessment and Accreditation Council, India

**Colin Peiris**, Quality Assurance and Accreditation Council of Sri Lanka

**Antony Stella**, Australian Universities Quality Agency, Australia

## 11. Visitors to AUQA and Other Meetings

Over the period November 2006 to February 2007, AUQA has hosted a number of international and national visitors including a delegation from the Chilean equivalent of the CSIRO (CONICYT) and the Chilean Program for the Improvement of the Quality and Equity of Tertiary Education and a delegation of researchers from Norwegian universities. Professor Paul Ramsden from the Higher Education Academy visited AUQA, as did Professor Richard Johnstone of the Carrick Institute for Learning and Teaching in Higher Education.



*Dr David Woodhouse and Dr Antony Stella with the delegation from the University of the South Pacific, December 2006*

AUQA hosted several visitors on Australian study tours, including Dr Jan Botha of Stellenbosch University and Dr Shyamasundar and Dr Kondapilli Rama of the Indian National Assessment and Accreditation Council. In December, AUQA provided a professional development placement for Mr Fang Le of the Shanghai Educational Evaluation Institute. AUQA also provided extended training in self-review for a delegation from the University of the South Pacific.

Invited presentations by AUQA included: Antony Stella, GUNI 3<sup>rd</sup> International Conference on Higher Education, Barcelona; David Woodhouse, 1st International Conference on Assessing Quality in Higher Education, Lahore; Jeanette Baird, Professions Australia Accreditation Forum, Canberra; Rob Carmichael, Evaluation Forum, Western Australia; and Dorte Kristoffersen, OAQ 2nd Conference on Internal Quality Assurance Arrangements at Higher Education Institutions, Switzerland. Dorte was also an observer at the European Consortium of Accreditation's annual meeting in Paris.