

ISSUE 32

November 2009  
[www.auqa.edu.au](http://www.auqa.edu.au)



# AUQA News

Australian Universities Quality Agency  
Level 10, 123 Lonsdale Street  
Melbourne 3000  
Tel: +61 3 9664 1000  
Fax: +61 3 9639 7377

# Welcome



Welcome to the final auditor newsletter for 2009 and best wishes to all for 2010.

## Announcement: AUQA Symposium 31 March 2010

To celebrate AUQA's 10th Birthday, AUQA will host a Symposium in Melbourne on 31 March, including an international keynote speaker.

There will be a birthday celebration following the Symposium.

## TEQSA Update

At its meeting on 20 November, the Ministerial Council on Tertiary Education and Employment came to some agreements on the new Tertiary Education Quality and Standards Agency (TEQSA), which will be based in Melbourne. The meeting also agreed on national regulatory arrangements for the vocational education and training sector.

## Audit Update

### 2009 Audits

Audit reports for the following audits have become available since the last newsletter:

- University of Ballarat
- University of Southern Queensland
- University of South Australia
- Northern Melbourne Institute of TAFE (higher education)
- Sydney College of Divinity
- Insearch Ltd.
- Think: Colleges Pty Ltd.

Other 2009 audits are proceeding on schedule.

### Audit Progress Report

Progress reports for the following audits are now available:

- Southern Cross University
- Swinburne University of Technology
- University of Newcastle
- Christian Heritage College
- Monash College Pty Ltd.

Information on audit schedules, Audit Reports and Progress Reports is available from the AUQA website at: [www.auqa.edu.au/qualityaudit/index.php](http://www.auqa.edu.au/qualityaudit/index.php)

## AUQA Board News

The AUQA Board met on 24 November 2009. The Board was pleased to note that MCTEE has decided that TEQSA will be based in Melbourne, and discussed matters that it would need to address to ensure a well-planned transition between AUQA and TEQSA, including maintenance of the planned audit schedule for 2011. AUQA will continue to inform the sector of relevant developments.

AUQA Board member Professor Jeanette Hacket has been named the winner of the 2009 Excellence



Professor Hacket

in Leadership in International Education Award, presented by International Education Association of Australia.

## AUQA Staff News

Dr Jasen Burgess joined AUQA as an Audit Director on 19 October. Jasen will work mainly on NSAI audits in 2010.



Liesha Northover rejoined AUQA on 26 October as NSAI Operations Manager. The role has been established to develop systems and processes to support the NSAI audit program across all of AUQA's NSAI audit support activities. Liesha Northover will initially work two days per week.

The long term secondment to AUQA for Dr Rudi Lidl has ended. Rudi's last day at AUQA was on 28 October. AUQA heartily thanks Rudi for his work over the last two years. We are pleased that he will continue to be involved with AUQA in the 2010 audit program.

Recruitment has commenced for a person to fill in for Naomi Constantine, Audit and Administration Assistant, who will commence maternity leave in January 2010.

And, concerning former staff, the RMIT College of Business Innovation Unit won the 2009 national Business/Higher Education Round Table Award for Best Vocational Education and Training Collaboration for the RMIT Business Plan Competition. The Innovation Unit team includes former AUQA staff member, Elizabeth Burke.



## Advisory Group on Academic Standards in Australian Higher Education

The seventh meeting of the Advisory Group on Academic Standards in Australian Higher Education was held by teleconference on 14 September 2009 with an increased membership, including more nominees of university networks.

The Group received information on some proposed projects following the 50-plus submissions that were made in response to the Group's discussion paper. There was discussion of possible or intended work by ACER, ALTC, ATN and AUQA. Topics included learning outcomes and academic standards, a framework for standards, principles of achievement standards and disciplined based academic standards.

AUQA will monitor developments and whether there is scope for it to usefully take some of this work further.

## In the media

In addition to coverage of AUQA audit reports, AUQA has featured in various media articles, including:

Uni's bright rating, *Inner West Courier*, 18 August 2009

Standardising the market for quality?, *International Focus: Issue 44*, 19 August 2009

Accreditation is not a dirty word, (Roger March), *Campus Review*, 17 August 2009

Finding a meaningful response to standards, (Julie Hare), *Campus Review*, 17 August 2009

Letters to the Editor, The Bottom line is academic integrity comes at a price, (Malcolm Saunders), *The Australian Higher Education Supplement*, 12 August 2009

In pursuit of high standards, (Stephen Matchett), *The Australian Higher Education Supplement*, 12 August 2009

More Aussie students to come for internships, *The Star/Asia News Network (Singapore)*, 11 August 2009

UNE parties hard following audit, *Northern Daily Leader*, 7 August 2009

Letter to the Editor, Bottom feeders slur, (John Rickard, CQU VC and President), *The Australian Higher Education Supplement*, 5 August 2009

A Reforming frame of mind, (Julie Hare), *Campus Review*, 28 September 2009

Quality still a vexed issue, (Gavin Moodie), *The Australian Higher Education Supplement*, 30 September 2009

No to national standards, (Bernard Lane), *The Australian Higher Education Supplement*, 23 September 2009

2009 ACPET National Conference Panel Presentation: Managing quality through regulation-priorities and possibilities, *NARA News*, September 2009

The Don't of higher ed reform, (Robert Zemsky), *Inside Higher Ed*, 4 September 2009

Australia-India: quality agencies cooperate, *University World News*, Issue 91, 6 September 2009

Ramsden joins PhillipsKPA, *Campus Review*, 20 October 2009

Private bid by Melbourne Institute of Technology for deregulation dividend, (Andrew Trounson), *The Australian Higher Education Supplement*, 14 October 2009

Transnational education isn't taking over exports: new study, (John Ross), *Campus Review*, 12 October 2009

AUQA positives ignored, (David Woodhouse), *The Australian Higher Education Supplement*, 7 October 2009

Planning begins to prevent future academic workforce shortage, *Voxy.co.nz*, 29 September 2009  
Quality assurance and TNE, *International Focus*, Issue 47, 4 November 2009

## AUQA Project in Timor Leste

Timor Leste, with just ten years of independence, is experiencing phenomenal changes in all aspects of its development including higher education. AUQA has a six month contract with the Ministry of Education of Timor Leste in a World Bank supported project to establish a national quality assurance body, the National Commission for Academic Assessment and Accreditation (NCAAA). David Woodhouse visited Timor Leste briefly in September (taking advantage of a speaking engagement in Darwin) and Antony Stella is leading the project, which is progressing well amidst the challenging higher education landscape of the country.

In 2008 and 2009 the higher education institutions of Timor Leste were accredited by an international panel resulting in nine accredited higher education institutions and two that are under probation for a period of one year. Building on that experience, the NCAAA will implement program and institutional accreditation processes starting from 2010 involving both national and international reviewers.

The NCAAA has begun to recruit staff, and AUQA is now consulting Australian universities to run some capacity development programs for the institutions.

## AuQF2010 & Auditor Meeting

The theme for the Australian Quality Forum: Higher Education 2010 (AuQF) is *Quality in Uncertain Times*.

The 9th annual forum is to be held at Sofitel Gold Coast Broadbeach, 30 June – 2 July 2010.

Program and forum developments will be regularly updated here [www.auqa.edu.au/auqf/2010/](http://www.auqa.edu.au/auqf/2010/) With Call for Contributions opening Monday 30 November

The AUQA Auditor Meeting will be held on Day 1 of the forum on Wednesday 30th June.

# Workshops

## Quality Audit & Auditor Training

The regular annual Auditor Training took place in Melbourne on 9–10 November 2009.

Once again there was a high demand for places on the workshop. Among the 38 participants there were: newly appointed auditors participating in training as a prerequisite for registration on the AUQA Auditor Register; representatives of non self-accrediting institutions; representatives from Australian universities; and several international participants (India, United States and New Zealand).

Participant evaluations were very positive about the quality of the sessions and practical nature of the exercises.

The next Auditor Training workshop is planned for November 2010.

## Intensive Workshop for QAC Auditors, Hong Kong

On 23 and 24 September 2009 AUQA jointly with the Quality Assurance Council (QAC) of Hong Kong organised an induction workshop for prospective auditors, and an intensive training workshop for auditors in Hong Kong.

Dr Rudi Lidl of AUQA conducted the training program at the QAC facilities.

The program is similar to auditor training offered in Australia and consists of short presentations and extensive role play that simulates the various stages of the audit process of an institution. Participants indicated that they found the workshops very useful.

## Auditing Overseas Activities

A workshop under this title was presented by AUQA as part of a series of workshops at the Australian International Education Conference (AIEC) at Sydney's Convention & Exhibition Centre on 13 October 2009.

The workshop was well attended and created substantial interest from the private college sector and government departments.

The workshop was opened by Dr David Woodhouse and coordinated by Dr Rudi Lidl from AUQA. Professor Kevin McConkey, Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Academic and Global Relations) of the University of Newcastle, spoke from the perspectives of an auditor and an institutional leader about transnational education and offshore audits and led a role-play session.



Quality Audit & Auditor Training participants, 9 and 10 November 2009



# Publications

A new publication will shortly be available on the AUQA website at: [www.auqa.edu.au/qualityenhancement/publications/occasional/publications/](http://www.auqa.edu.au/qualityenhancement/publications/occasional/publications/)

Entitled 'The Tertiary Student Experience: A Review of Approaches based on the First Cycle of AUQA Audits 2002–2007', the publication was prepared by Carole Alcock, Joan Cooper and Joyce Kirk, with Kaitlin Oyler.

Two publications are planned for 2010, in addition to the Proceedings of AuQF2010. One is on non self-accrediting higher education institutions and the other is on quality assurance in research training.

## Good Practice Database

Batch 12 of the GPDB will be published in December.

The batch includes submissions from:

- Avondale College
- University of Western Australia

The topics include: Students, Support Service and Teaching and Learning.

[www.auqa.edu.au/gp](http://www.auqa.edu.au/gp)

## INQAAHE News

### Quality Assurance Program

INQAAHE has brought to a conclusion a major piece of work, namely a curriculum for a graduate qualification in QA. This is being given almost in its entirety by the University of Melbourne and New York University, and the source material is available on the INQAAHE website for public use. The program will be launched on 21 November in Copenhagen at the European QA Conference.

### Small States

Small states have particular challenges in QA (just think to what extent we use peer review from elsewhere in the country). INQAAHE is just publishing a major report on the QA needs of small states and how they might be addressed. This has been written by Dr Antony Stella of AUQA. Additional information on both these projects is included as an attachment to this newsletter.

### AfriQAN

Development of quality networks in Africa is proceeding slowly, and INQAAHE has offered its support.

### Clearinghouse

INQAAHE is well advanced in creating a Clearinghouse of QA policies, procedures and practices, covering 50 agencies. The development has been over-ambitious and hence slower than desired, but we hope that we have now struck the right balance, and the basic Clearinghouse will be in operation quite soon.

### APQN 2010

The 2010 APQN Conference, Enhancing Quality of Higher Education in the Developing World, and Annual general meeting will be held in Bangkok, Thailand, from 3 to 5 March. Dr Antony Stella is chair of the Conference program Committee. Further information is available at [www.apqn.org/events/](http://www.apqn.org/events/).

# Cooperation with Indian Quality Agency

On 27 August, AUQA and the Indian national quality agency, the National Assessment and Accreditation Council (NAAC) renewed their Memorandum of Co-operation (MoC) for three years at a one-day seminar organised by NAAC in Bangalore.

In addition to three presentations by NAAC staff and Board members, David Woodhouse, spoke on 'Quality for diversity: the role of quality audit', and Antony Stella, Audit Director, spoke on 'QA of new forms of education: the transnational dimension'.

Over 40 invited guests attended the seminar, including many current and former vice-chancellors of Indian universities and policy makers. Under the MoC, staff of NAAC have had attachments to AUQA in Melbourne, AUQA staff and auditors have worked with NAAC in Bangalore, and the seminar will be used as the basis for a publication.

In the next phase of the MoC, emphasis will be given to including Indian good practices in quality assurance in the AUQA Good Practice Database.



L to R: B. S. Ponmudiraj, H Ranganath (Director), Antony Stella, David Woodhouse, Jaganath Patil, Sujata Rao, M.S. Shyamasundar

## India News

In 2008, the Australian and Indian governments established a Joint Working Group (JWG) to discuss various education-related matters, including quality.

The group met for several days in Delhi during the second week of October, led by Joint Secretaries Mr Sunil Kumar and Mr SC Khuntia (India) and Mr Colin Walters, Australian Education International and Dr David Woodhouse, AUQA (Australia).

The JWG discussed the developments in quality assurance in tertiary education in India and Australia. India is planning legislation to provide a statutory basis for quality assurance and for the admission of foreign providers to the Indian higher education system. The JWG agreed on a study of issues in transnational education, to be led by Antony Stella, AUQA.

Other agreements include collaboration between the National Board for Accreditation and Australian VET regulators to be pursued through the new Indian-Australian Bureau for Vocational Education Collaboration, collaboration over the improvement of standards in university teaching through Academic Staff Colleges (India) and ALTC, and collaboration on issues concerning quality in distance education with INQAAHE and the ICDE.

# **Situational Analysis on Quality Assurance in Small States**

## **Executive Summary**

Small states is a term applied to a diverse group of sovereign developing countries—some quite wealthy, some very poor; some islands or groups of islands; some land locked; many with populations of 1.5 million or less ([www.worldbank.org](http://www.worldbank.org)). Most of the small states share the common challenges of remoteness and/or isolation, susceptibility to natural disasters and environmental changes, limited diversification in their economic activities, and limited capacity to respond to the challenges and opportunities of globalisation. Inadequate skilled human resource and limited financial resource are major problems for many developing small states. These common challenges require a different way of thinking about the strategies that would work well in the small states context including options for quality assurance (QA).

Although the challenges of small states have received increasing attention in recent years, in many international discussions small states still find that their special needs are pushed to the periphery by the competing demands of bigger, richer, and often more powerful countries. International and intergovernmental organisations such as the UNESCO, Commonwealth of Learning (COL) and World Bank have recognised the special attention the small states require and have been working on capacity development in areas that will improve the conditions of people of small states. Building on the work of the initiatives of these partners, the International Network for Quality Assurance Agencies in Higher Education (INQAAHE) wanted to explore different models of quality assurance, including those which promote the building of quality assurance capacities of higher education institutions (HEIs). To achieve this, INQAAHE established a project that was steered by a Task Force. The project received some funding from the Global Initiative for Quality Assurance Capacity (GIQAC).

Considering the lack of information on quality assurance developments in small states, the Task Force identified the survey method as the way forward to carry out a situational analysis. The survey was administered in 45 small states (population of 1.5 million as the criterion, including the developed countries) and four other states that are invited to the Small States Forum by the World Bank due to the common challenges these countries face (Appendix 1). The response rate was above 50% (25 respondents including the one that reported of 'no QA activity in the country'). Wherever possible inputs obtained from the online forum on QA for small states conducted by the International Institute for Educational Planning (IIEP) (2009) and the case studies commissioned by UNESCO (2007) were incorporated.

### **The Situational Analysis**

The situational analysis revealed that the quality assurance landscape in small states is marked with the following features and trends:

- Ongoing policy reforms that recognise the need for quality education

- Strong role of the governments in establishing, funding and monitoring quality assurance structures
- New quality assurance units doing multiple roles and serving multiple purposes
- Quality assurance applicable to both public and private with varying levels of emphasis and more monitoring of privates in general
- New challenges presented by low quality cross border education providers and profit motive private providers including the distance education providers
- Encouragement to use new technologies for distance learning and new forms of education but widening policy gaps and consequent challenges in monitoring new forms of education
- Inadequate resources (human and finance) to support the full implementation of quality assurance systems
- Regional developments that require alignment with regional guidelines
- Existing national QA systems that can provide leadership in collaborative QA strategies
- Successful multi state collaborations in increasing access to higher education
- National drive towards self sufficiency that at times comes in conflict with collaborative efforts

The analysis highlighted a number of challenges to the full implementation of the quality assurance mechanisms and the top four are:

1. Lack of breadth of experience in the system
2. Lack of 'spare' capacity in the higher education system to implement quality assurance
3. Scarcity of financial resources devoted to quality assurance arrangements within the higher education budget
4. Small size of the system and the consequent lack of objectivity (everyone knowing everyone else)

### **QA Options**

With this information, this report made an attempt to identify various QA options for small states. Although the options are many, how well a particular QA option will be able to fulfill the expectations of the individual small states and what the underpinning principles are need a lot of reflection. This report has made an attempt to highlight a few possibilities.

A full report will soon be available on the INQAAHE website.

# *Program for Quality Assurance Professionals in Higher Education (QAP)*

## **Introduction**

The massive increase in external and internal quality assurance (QA) activity over recent decades, together with the associated thinking about it, have created a new profession that requires a structured academic discipline and programs to educate quality assurance professionals, stimulate research, and produce new initiatives.

However, there is very little education and training for the QA profession and its professionals. INQAAHE has now begun to fill this gap through the creation of a comprehensive program for the training and professional development of QA professionals. INQAAHE, through the considerable expertise of its members, has created materials that are available free on its website at <http://www.inqaahe.org/qap>. The materials are intended as public advice and assistance in capacity-building in quality assurance and were developed by experts from around the world. INQAAHE developed these materials with the assistance of a grant from the World Bank and with support from UNESCO, which were provided to underscore the importance of developing new quality assurance systems through international cooperation among new and established quality assurance agencies.

## **INQAAHE**

The International Network for Quality Assurance Agencies in Higher Education (INQAAHE) is a world-wide association of some 200 organisations that are active in the theory and practice of quality assurance in higher education. <http://www.inqaahe.org>

## **Who can benefit from these free materials?**

- Personnel of private and governmental external quality assurance agencies, both existing and emerging
- Higher education personnel charged with ensuring internal quality assurance, such as administrators, faculty, and institutional researchers
- Graduate students, as a specialization within their field of study
- Researchers in quality assurance
- Individuals seeking to enter the field of quality assurance with university-level credentials (Bachelor's degree in U.S.)
- Members of governing boards of quality assurance agencies and of higher education institutions
- Evaluators reviewing higher education institutions

## **What is the content of the INQAAHE material?**

Four modules are included in the program:

1. Higher Education in a global world: The context of quality assurance
2. External quality assurance: What is quality and how has it been implemented in different countries?
3. Operating an external quality agency: Practical training in the structure and management of quality assurance agencies around the world
4. Maintaining quality inside the institution: assessing learning, conducting a self-study, and using data

## **University Graduate-Level Credentials**

Beginning this spring 2010, two well-known universities with expertise in the area of quality assurance in higher education will be offering graduate-level programs online for those who wish to deepen their knowledge of quality assurance theories, policies, and practices while earning university graduate credit. Taught by distinguished faculty / academic staff, these courses provide greater in-depth exploration, discussion, and analysis of quality assurance topics. Both university programs incorporate the INQAAHE-developed materials in their course curricula.

The Steinhardt School of Culture, Education, and Human Development and the School of Continuing and Professional Studies at New York University are jointly offering a sequence of four graduate courses online leading to a Professional Certificate in Quality Assurance in Higher Education. For further information, visit [scps.nyu.edu/qualityassurance](http://scps.nyu.edu/qualityassurance).

The LHMartin Institute of the University of Melbourne will offer a Graduate Certificate in Quality Assurance within the program for the Master of Tertiary Education Management beginning in 2009 <http://www.lhmartininstitute.edu.au>

Both universities permit students to take individual courses or units without enrolling for a degree or certificate.

## **Other Use of the INQAAHE Material**

INQAAHE's free online materials are available to anyone interested in quality assurance in the field of higher education, and users should give due acknowledgement to INQAAHE. However, no degree or certificate should be represented as being endorsed by INQAAHE without prior consultation and agreement.