

AUSTRALIAN UNIVERSITIES QUALITY AGENCY

Report of an Audit of the
Australian Institute of Public Safety

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OVERVIEW OF THE AUDIT

Background

In 2003 the Australian Government introduced the *Higher Education Support Act 2003* (HESA) to allow students in non self-accrediting higher education institutions to receive financial assistance for their tuition fees through the FEE-HELP program.

Non self-accrediting institutions (NSAIs) approved under the HESA for this purpose have become known as higher education providers, or HEPs. Although other institutions also provide higher education, the term 'HEP' is commonly used to denote only non self-accrediting higher education providers, and it is used in this sense in this Report. The HESA requires that HEPs in receipt of FEE-HELP funds must meet a range of quality and accountability requirements, including regular audit by a quality auditing body named in the Higher Education Provider Guidelines.

This Report of the audit by the Australian Universities Quality Agency (AUQA) of the Australian Institute of Public Safety (AIPS) provides an overview, and then briefly details the Audit Panel's main findings, and its commendations, affirmations and recommendations. This audit was conducted concurrently with a re-registration process under the auspices of the Victorian Registration and Qualifications Authority (VRQA). AIPS' mission, vision and principles are included at Appendix A; the mission, objectives, vision and values of AUQA are in Appendix B; membership of the Audit Panel is in Appendix C; and abbreviations and definitions used in this Report are in Appendix D.

The Audit Process

AUQA bases its audits of non self-accrediting HEPs on each organisation's own objectives, together with the MCEETYA *National Protocols for Higher Education Approval Processes* (National Protocols, available at: <http://www.mceecdya.edu.au/mceecdya>), the DEEWR *Audit Handbook for non self-accrediting Higher Education Providers* and other relevant legal requirements or codes to which the organisation is committed. The programs or courses of NSAIs are accredited by government accreditation authorities, so quality audits of HEPs do not include a detailed examination of the academic quality assurance processes for programs of study.

HEP audits under the HESA consider institutional actions and performance in relation to, firstly, the institution's objectives; and, secondly, a group of criteria collectively known as 'Quality Audit Factors' (QAFs). The four QAFs are set out in the Handbook referred to above (and in the AUQA Audit Manual). Their primary purpose is to provide the HEPs with a framework for the review of certain aspects of institutional performance. In the report of its self-review (the Performance Portfolio: Self-Review Report). AIPS reported against each of the QAFs. The chapters in this Report use the four main topic headings provided by the QAFs. Within each chapter, all the criteria for that QAF are addressed, but usually in an holistic way rather than criterion by criterion.

On 27 July 2009 AIPS presented its submission to AUQA, comprising a two-page introduction, and a 72-page report against the individual QAF criteria. There were also 11 attachments provided as evidence of claims. NSAI HEP audit panels generally meet by teleconference, but as all members of this Panel are based in Victoria, the Panel met in Melbourne on 1 September 2009 to consider these materials.

The Audit Panel determined at this meeting that additional material was required before the application for re-registration could be considered and identified other information required for audit purposes.

Because the process comprised a concurrent audit and re-registration, the additional information required for re-registration was requested first (on 7 September 2009). A second request for further information to assist the audit process was made on 25 September 2009. The outcome of the re-registration process is the subject of a separate report.

The Audit Visit took place at the AIPS campus in Melbourne on Tuesday 27 and Wednesday 28 October 2009.

In all, the Audit Panel spoke with nearly 50 people during the Audit Visit, including senior staff from AIPS, staff from Navitas Limited (the parent company of AIPS), academic and administrative staff, students and external stakeholders. A session was also available for any member of the AIPS community to meet the Audit Panel but no one took advantage of this opportunity.

This Report relates to the situation current at the time of the Audit Visit, which ended on 28 October 2009, and does not take account of any changes that may have occurred subsequently. At the time of the Audit Visit, AIPS had submitted a request to change its name to the Navitas College of Public Safety.

The Report records the conclusions reached by the Audit Panel based on the documentation provided by AIPS as well as information gained through interviews, discussion and observation. While every attempt has been made to reach a comprehensive understanding of the Institute's activities encompassed by the audit, the Report does not identify every aspect of quality assurance and its effectiveness or shortcomings.

The Report contains a summary of audit findings together with lists of 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 Institute with evidence, they are termed 'affirmations'. AUQA indicates that some recommendations and affirmations have a high priority. It is acknowledged that recommendations in this Audit Report may have resource implications.

Quotations taken from the Portfolio are identified as (PF p).

CONCLUSIONS

This section summarises the main findings and lists the commendations, affirmations and recommendations. Other favourable comments and suggestions are mentioned throughout the text of the Report. The findings of the concurrent registration process are in a separate report prepared and approved by the VRQA.

Introduction to Findings

Given the mission of AIPS and its professionally oriented educational philosophy, AUQA commends AIPS on its success in providing a degree program which is contributing to the workforce in criminal justice related areas. The Institute has established a dedicated teaching team, including a number of people who are currently practising in the field. It provides an environment which is conducive to student learning and incorporates a practical placement program designed to link theory with practice. The students are well supported in their learning and are generally satisfied with their experience.

Historically, AIPS has experienced strong and effective academic leadership from its founder and sole director, who established a comprehensive network of industry partners, who have contributed to program development, hosted placements and served on advisory committees. Since becoming part of Navitas Limited (Navitas), AIPS has plans to grow its enrolments in Melbourne and expand to Sydney and Brisbane. There is also an intention to recruit international students. This will require AIPS to address the issue of resourcing, especially for the appointment of more senior academic staff, and to ensure that infrastructure necessary for supporting international students is in place. In particular, it is important that AIPS appoints a full-time Dean of Studies.

AIPS has a thorough approach to the prevention and detection of plagiarism and staff and students are all aware of the importance of this policy. Assessment is generally conducted by AIPS staff and there is a requirement to second-mark high distinction and fail grades. There is some moderation of assessment but there is an opportunity for greater use of external markers.

Although there is a Board of Management and a Higher Education Board, the corporate and academic governance of AIPS require attention. AIPS has acknowledged that the roles, membership and powers of both bodies need to be reviewed. This process will need to include the levels and kind of academic delegations.

AIPS has in place a Skills Enhancement Program which ensures that all students have the skills necessary to successfully complete a higher education program. AIPS takes care to closely monitor the progress of all of its students, and has a process in place to support students at risk and also those students whose performance has slipped

Staff of AIPS are enthusiastic, very professional and concerned for the students' progress. There is a staff development budget which has been largely unexpended over the past two years. As AIPS is intending to make greater use of the Moodle open source learning management system, it is important that there is adequate staff development in the use of the technology and that staff are supported in course and material design. There is in place a policy on Peer Review of Teaching which has been trialled by some staff. AIPS is encouraged to extend this practice to all staff.

Because of the significant changes which are occurring at AIPS, it is difficult for all stakeholders to be fully briefed on new developments. A communication strategy would assist with this.

AIPS has not made full use of the data it collects. This may be addressed when a new student administration system from Navitas is introduced. AIPS is urged to review its current methodology for calculating attrition rates, in particular, and to improve its capacity to provide reports on student progress and outcomes.

The placement which is included in the degree program is a good learning experience, but AIPS is encouraged to consider how consistency in assessment can be assured for placements of varying duration and to ensure that there is a formal written report from placement hosts on the performance of every student.

AIPS' promotional material and website make reference to eight academic programs, although only one has been consistently offered, the Bachelor of Social Science (Criminal Justice). The Audit Panel considers that this information has the potential to mislead prospective students about the availability of programs and the scale of AIPS operations. AIPS should ensure that its promotional material makes clear the likelihood of an advertised program being offered and the locations in which it will be offered.

AIPS is an institution in transition. It would be advantageous for the Institute to develop a risk assessment and management strategy to mitigate the risks associated with major change and to ensure that the qualities which are valued in AIPS are not lost.

The Performance Portfolio provided limited information to the auditors and it was not evident that AIPS undertook a thorough self-review to inform its preparation. AUQA recommends that AIPS develop a systematic approach to self-review and benchmarking in order to form the basis for continuous quality improvement.

A summary of commendations, affirmations, and recommendations follows. They are listed below in the order in which they appear in the Report.

Commendations

1. AUQA commends AIPS for the strong support processes in place to provide support for students, and in particular for students at risk.....11
2. AUQA commends AIPS on its management of human research ethics issues in student research projects.....12
3. AUQA commends AIPS for the enthusiasm of its teaching staff and their commitment to the learning of their students.....13
4. AUQA commends AIPS for its strong approach to the prevention and detection of plagiarism.....13
5. AUQA commends AIPS for the development and implementation of the Skills Enhancement Program, which assists students in their transition to higher education studies.....14
6. AUQA commends AIPS for ensuring that students receive timely and detailed written feedback on their work.....14
7. AUQA commends AIPS on the inclusion of the placement program which provides students with practical experience of relevant workplaces.....16

Affirmations

1. AUQA affirms the Peer Review of Teaching policy introduced by AIPS and encourages AIPS to extend this to all teaching staff.17
2. AUQA affirms AIPS' practice of providing a budget for professional development for academic and administrative staff, while noting that AIPS needs to ensure that staff take advantage of this opportunity for funded professional development.18

Recommendations

1. (urgent) AUQA recommends that AIPS review the constitution and clarify the role, composition and powers of the governing body.9
2. AUQA recommends that AIPS review the composition and role of the Higher Education Board with a view to its having strong and senior membership commensurate with its important academic oversight.10
3. (urgent) AUQA recommends that AIPS fill the position of Dean of Studies with a full-time senior academic.10
4. AUQA recommends that AIPS takes steps to improve systems for the collection and analysis of data on student performance to enable the extraction of reports to assist decision making.12
5. AUQA recommends that AIPS develop and implement a policy on moderation of assessment taking into account the use by AIPS of external assessors, to ensure consistency in assessment practices.12
6. AUQA recommends that AIPS review the placement program to consider how consistency in student workloads, assessment and learning outcomes can be assured, given that placements are of varying duration.16
7. AUQA recommends that AIPS develop a communication strategy to inform stakeholders of changes to the Institute.17
8. AUQA recommends that AIPS check all advertising materials to ensure that the likelihood of an advertised program being offered and the locations in which the program will be offered is clear.19
9. AUQA recommends that AIPS identify the risks inherent in transition to new ownership and develop a risk management plan to mitigate these risks.20
10. AUQA recommends that AIPS develop a systematic approach to self-review and benchmarking to form the basis for continuous quality improvement.22

1 INTRODUCTION

The Australian Institute of Public Safety (AIPS) was formed in 1997 to provide a range of public safety education programs. AIPS currently offers both vocational education and training (VET) and higher education awards, although at the time of the audit, students were enrolled only in one higher education award program, the Bachelor of Social Science (Criminal Justice). One graduate certificate program appears to have had a single intake some years ago and AIPS advises that a small number of students have completed a double degree in criminal justice and public safety or security. The institution operates with the approval of the Victorian Registration and Qualifications Authority (VRQA).

Until recently, AIPS has operated as a private provider owned by a single director. The Institute was previously approached to enter into partnership arrangements with an Australian university, and more recently was acquired by Navitas Limited, a publicly listed company. On 4 July 2008, 75% of the issued share capital was acquired by Navitas Limited. AIPS' founder and sole director prior to the acquisition remains as General Manager/Program Director, with a 25% shareholding.

AIPS is now one of two higher education providers that come under the Navitas Workforce Division. A range of other institutions providing higher education pathways programs sit under the Navitas University Programs Division.

Enrolments at AIPS in 2008 were 281 (trimester 1), 258 (trimester 2) and 226 (trimester 3). The majority of students are female school leavers.

AIPS is an institution in transition and during the next year or two it is expected that there will be some change of culture. There are plans to expand to Sydney and Brisbane, but at the time of the audit, the only higher education program was offered in Melbourne.

Post acquisition, the management structures within AIPS have remained the same and the General Manager continues to be responsible for the Institute's operations. The Panel recognises the dedicated leadership on the part of the founder in establishing AIPS, developing the programs and establishing industry networks which have clearly built AIPS' reputation.

The Audit Panel reviewed the AIPS Portfolio and concluded that it did not provide evidence of a process of rigorous or reflective self-review, and in some cases provided information that was incorrect. For example, the Portfolio states that 'International students comprise approximately ten percent of the student population' (PF p53), when in fact AIPS has no international students enrolled. Although there were some policies included as attachments, there was no evidence provided for the implementation and outcomes of these or other policies. There was little evidence to support claims of improvement made and at the site visit, the Panel found very few people who had knowledge of the Portfolio or the process of its preparation. The Audit Panel formed the view that the Portfolio did not do justice to the actual performance of AIPS. A large amount of additional material was requested of AIPS, but even this left some gaps. This further material showed that some of the claims made in the Portfolio were not able to be substantiated with evidence.

Following the change of ownership of AIPS, some change to AIPS' institutional objectives and form of governance might be expected. While a process of change is underway, it has not been completed. Two key documents submitted by AIPS, namely the *Business Plan 2008–2013* (PF

Attachment 1) and the Regulations of the Australian Institute of Public Safety (PF Attachment 2) are dated 2008 and 2004 respectively, both pre-dating the acquisition by Navitas. The lack of updated information posed some problems for the Panel in reviewing the performance of AIPS over the past five years, whilst also taking account of the current ownership arrangements.

The Audit Panel understands that, under its new ownership, AIPS intends to continue to offer higher education programs in areas related to public safety and risk management, and would like to capitalise on the reputation which has been built by the Institute. The Audit Panel heard that new offerings may be directed towards the corporate or vocational education and training sectors, and if this occurs it will be important for AIPS to maintain a higher education culture for its higher education activities. AIPS is urged to recognise the importance of investing in quality staff to maintain and improve its academic culture for higher education. Resources for this are required now and should not be dependent on future growth, as it is evident that senior academics and managers are at their capacity to meet current demands.

AIPS' existing model of higher education is suitable for a small scale program that requires extensive industry and professional networks and a commitment to close interactions between staff and students. The Audit Panel observes that such a model may not be readily scaleable or transferable to other locations where no such networks have been established.

AUQA considers therefore that, should AIPS seek to rapidly expand its operations without careful attention to and management of the significant changes that will be involved, there will be a risk to the quality of its higher education operations. Risk management at AIPS is considered further in section 5.1.

2 INSTITUTIONAL AND EDUCATIONAL OBJECTIVES AND INSTITUTIONAL GOVERNANCE

2.1 *Institutional Objectives*

AIPS has stated the role it aims to play in the higher education sector in promotional material and on its website (additional comments on promotional material are in section 4.3). AIPS has clearly stated Strategic Objectives, which are included in the AIPS Business Plan 2008–2013, a document viewed by the Panel but which is marked as Commercial in Confidence. On the AIPS website there is an Institutional Mission and Vision, as well as a statement of purpose and an 'Educational Philosophy of the Institute'. These statements may be found in Appendix A of this Report. The statement of academic purpose is readily available to students and prospective students in the program brochure and on the web page.

The Audit Panel found that the Institute's educational objectives are known by staff. The current leadership, the teaching staff and the external stakeholders understand and share the vision of AIPS. The Panel heard from employers that graduates meet the purposes expressed in the institution's objectives. The destination of its graduates, in fields related to criminal justice and further study, are an indication of the success of the implementation of the statement of purpose (PF Attachment 9).

Section 4.1 contains comments on the need to inform stakeholders of proposed changes arising from the acquisition by Navitas. Such information should include details of any proposed change to the mission or educational philosophy of AIPS.

Whilst the vision and mission of AIPS remained unchanged at the time of the audit, AIPS now follows the Navitas strategic planning cycle (Part 1 of 2, Re-Registration Submission, p5, 11 September 2009).

2.2 *Educational Objectives*

AIPS has educational objectives which are aligned with its stated purposes. The stated purpose of the institution is 'to provide a learning environment in which staff and students can discover, examine, preserve and transmit knowledge, wisdom and values involving issues of public safety and related matters that will impact upon current and future generations'. The Portfolio includes an attachment which describes the 'Model of AIPS's Educational Philosophy' (PF Attachment 5) which is aligned with this purpose. The integration of theoretical input, personal growth, practical observation and professional development is the framework which underpins the student learning experience. The use of practitioners as lecturers and the inclusion of a placement (sections 3.5.1 and 3.5.7) are examples of this integration. The teaching staff and the external stakeholders share these objectives with enthusiasm and students are satisfied with the learning outcomes of the program. It seems that AIPS is satisfying a need in the market and its current operations demonstrate a commitment to student learning.

2.3 *Institutional Structure*

The senior managers at AIPS are a General Manager/Program Director, with a College Director, a part-time Dean of Studies and a Registrar. The College Director position, which is currently filled by a person who has experience of Navitas operations, has local operational responsibility and will have wider responsibilities as the Institute expands.

2.4 *Institutional Governance*

Until mid-2008, the Institute was owned by a single Director, with a Board of Management and a Higher Education Board, and control of its own academic and business operations. Since the acquisition, these arrangements have changed in part. For example, AIPS states that as part of the Navitas Group, it 'observes the reporting, risk management, brand management and human resources practices of the Group with centralised support'. Further, financial control is now under Navitas. AIPS maintains oversight of the delivery of the academic program and related student matters. This arrangement meant that, in framing its report, the Audit Panel needed to understand these responsibilities.

Although the Portfolio states that the current Board of Management is 'the governing body of the higher education provider' (PF p14), the Regulations of the Institute state that the Board of Management is 'the strategic advisory body to the company directors and has the direction and superintendence of the Institute subject to approval of the directors' (p5). The latter is the case. The Panel heard that the Board was initially established by the former director as a source of strategic advice. It is advisory only and has no legal status. The *Regulations* of the Institute of Public Safety are dated 1 January 2004, and so have not been updated to reflect the more recent acquisition by Navitas. That is, no new arrangements for governance are in place. AIPS acknowledges this is an area in need of attention but, at the time of the audit, there was no indication that the form of a new governing body had been widely discussed or was close to being determined.

Under Quality Audit Factor 1, it is expected that 'the governance of the institution is characterised by sound business management practices and exhibits an appropriate level of autonomy from any other business interests of a financial sponsor or owner'. At present, the institutional governance arrangements for AIPS are not clear.

AUQA finds that the composition and responsibilities of the governing body, including its level of autonomy, should be addressed as a matter of urgency.

Recommendation 1

(urgent) AUQA recommends that AIPS review the constitution and clarify the role, composition and powers of the governing body.

Navitas has introduced the use of control self-assessment questionnaires at AIPS from June 2009, which will enhance the robustness of internal financial and business practice monitoring.

2.5 *Academic Leadership and Management*

The Higher Education Board (HEB) is formally established under the 2004 Regulations and is responsible for many academic matters. However, there is a need to review the role and reporting arrangements of the HEB in the light of the new organisation.

The HEB is central to the academic governance of AIPS and the Audit Panel finds that it exercises care in overseeing many aspects of student and teacher performance. The appointment of a senior academic from a university as chair of the HEB provides external input to the academic governance of AIPS. The HEB meets once each trimester and approves program changes, approves results, monitors student progress, and receives reports on student satisfaction. It has several well-qualified external members. Internal members include the Program Manager, the Dean of Studies, the Registrar, a senior AIPS staff member and a student member.

There is an opportunity for the HEB to take a more proactive role in ensuring that the quality of programs is benchmarked, monitored and enhanced as appropriate. As the terms of reference are reviewed, care should be taken to address academic delegations from the Board of Management, the HEB membership, (which should include senior academics) and the power to request further information about the academic performance of AIPS.

Recommendation 2

AUQA recommends that AIPS review the composition and role of the Higher Education Board with a view to its having strong and senior membership commensurate with its important academic oversight.

The HEB relies for senior level academic leadership on the General Manager/Program Director, which is a full time position, and on the part-time Dean of Studies. The Dean of Studies plays a pivotal role in all academic matters. His areas of responsibility include: 'maintaining quality in degree programs; academic oversight of higher education programs; and responsibility for all matters associated with the delivery of higher education awards' (Application for Registration, Attachment 7.4). This lean academic management structure may have worked well when the Institute was small, but over the past year, there have been signs that the positions are overloaded. The General Manager has had to focus on issues concerning the acquisition by Navitas and other aspects of the business operations, while the part time nature of the Dean of Studies appointment is acknowledged by AIPS to no longer be sufficient.

With the change of ownership and an intention of expanding both locally and interstate, AIPS has recognised a need to strengthen the academic leadership of the Institute. The Audit Panel supports this intention, as more dedicated senior academic leadership is needed for current operations even without an expansion of operations. In the view of the Panel, the Dean of Studies position needs to be a full-time academic appointment, and should be filled as soon as possible by a senior academic with leadership experience.

Recommendation 3

(urgent) AUQA recommends that AIPS fill the position of Dean of Studies with a full-time senior academic.

As the role of the General Manager involves much work away from the campus and the Dean of Studies is part-time, a heavy responsibility for academic and administrative decisions rests with the Registrar. This poses both a short and longer term risk to the Institute. AIPS may also have a need for additional senior administrative personnel, especially during a time of transition.

The Registrar takes responsibility for a wide range of activities including the induction of staff, responding to the needs of teaching staff, and the transmission of policy. AIPS operates an electronic file management system which ensures academic policy documents are available to staff through a separate quality assurance drive. The Audit Panel notes that these practices may be a benefit of the use by AIPS of an ISO framework for quality assurance (section 5.2).

Changes to policies are said to be controlled by the Systems and Compliance Officer but there may have been some slippage in this process recently, as the Audit Panel saw one example where the policy in effect was not clear (section 3.5.1). AIPS is encouraged to more clearly identify the versions of policies in use and ensure that its own policies on control of policy documents are adhered to.

3 ACHIEVING EFFECTIVENESS IN TEACHING, LEARNING AND OTHER CORE FUNCTIONS

3.1 Admissions

AIPS has a comprehensive annual open day, attended by teaching staff, which provides detailed information for prospective students. AIPS has in place a policy on Selection of Students for Admission into Undergraduate Courses (PF Attachment 8), which was first approved in December 2004, and has been amended twice since then, most recently in May 2009. There is also a policy on Entry Requirements for Admission into Undergraduate and Graduate Courses (PF Attachment 7). While these policies are quite clear, the Panel observes they do not mention any consideration of students' suitability for undertaking the program, which could be a relevant consideration given the nature of some types of employment in the field of public safety.

AIPS uses the Victorian Tertiary Admissions Centre (VTAC) process for student admission to its higher education program, which is appropriate given the Institute's current profile of students. AIPS approves students for admission using details of applicants supplied by VTAC. A number of students apply to enter AIPS on the strength of word-of-mouth recommendations from family or friends.

The Audit Panel was informed that AIPS would be prepared to consider seeking additional information from students in regard to their suitability for the Bachelor of Social Science (Criminal Justice) program. AUQA suggests that AIPS take further steps to ensure that decisions on the admission of students and applications for credit are made under clear delegation from the HEB to administrative staff, with referral to academic staff when queries or possible setting of precedents arise.

Comments on AIPS marketing and promotional material are in section 4.3.

3.2 Student Progress and Retention

The Institute monitors the progress of students during and at the end of each trimester and careful attention is given by AIPS to students at risk, in accordance with the Institute's policy on Student Progress. Students who pass, but whose performance is below that expected, are also monitored. The monitoring process includes a meeting with the Registrar and the Dean of Studies and may include a formal Academic Review Panel meeting in cases of continued unsatisfactory progress. Advice and support are provided to assist students to improve their performance. Outcomes of the review of progress of all students, including students at risk, are considered by the Higher Education Board. The Audit Panel considers AIPS' practice in regard to monitoring of student progress to be soundly-based and focused on assisting students to improve their learning.

Commendation 1

AUQA commends AIPS for the strong support processes in place to provide support for students, and in particular for students at risk.

There appears to be quite a high level of student attrition. However, the data may not be accurately defined and clearly reported, as the perception of AIPS staff to whom the Panel spoke was that attrition was quite low. There were insufficient accurate data provided for the Audit Panel to be sure of the information about student recruitment, retention and completion. It may be that AIPS is counting deferred students in its attrition rate. Collecting comprehensive data on

students' performance and outcomes is an important principle of institutional management in higher education, as is the appropriate analysis and use of such data in decision making. Under new management arrangements, AIPS is expected to acquire a more sophisticated student management system, which should enable the efficient collection and analysis of data, together with the production of well-defined reports.

Recommendation 4

AUQA recommends that AIPS takes steps to improve systems for the collection and analysis of data on student performance to enable the extraction of reports to assist decision making.

3.3 Assessment of Students' Work

Students' work is marked by the sessional teaching staff and results are reviewed by the Board of Examiners, to which many teaching staff belong. Criterion-reference assessment is used and there is an AIPS marking guide. Grades are compared with those for previous periods and an example of marking is reviewed at the annual marking meeting. The Panel noted that papers receiving a High Distinction or a fail are routinely second marked. AIPS is considering the introduction of blind marking, which is another way of ensuring fair and equitable marking. Some subjects have two markers, ie one marker for different assessment items.

There is some good practice at AIPS in moderating assessment. For example, one unit co-ordinator briefs external assessors on the expectations of the assignment/examination, provides a marking scheme and includes a moderation process. However, it is not clear that this is widespread practice or that the moderation of assessment is uniformly addressed. In order to implement good practice in moderation, it must be policy driven and carefully monitored.

Recommendation 5

AUQA recommends that AIPS develop and implement a policy on moderation of assessment taking into account the use by AIPS of external assessors, to ensure consistency in assessment practices.

Comments on the feedback provided to students are contained in section 3.5.5. AIPS has well-developed administrative processes for the submission, assessment and return of assignments.

3.4 Critical Enquiry

Students in the Bachelor of Social Science (Criminal Justice) are required to undertake a research project, which includes gaining ethics clearance because the projects involve working with human subjects. Students are encouraged to work in small teams and develop a research proposal. Research projects are overseen by teaching staff and aim to develop critical and analytical thinking. These projects also link students with the industries in which they may find employment and the ethics clearance process is an important part of student learning. AIPS has established an Ethics Committee, chaired by an experienced external university academic. The Panel noted that this is a practical and sensible approach to what can be a complex area in a smaller institution. This practice also assists new academics at AIPS to become familiar with ethical requirements for research.

Commendation 2

AUQA commends AIPS on its management of human research ethics issues in student research projects.

3.5 Teaching and Learning

3.5.1 Principles of Teaching and Learning

The Panel finds that the teaching staff, current academic leadership and the placement hosts share a concern for students as learners. Because of the relatively small cohort of students and small classes, staff members know students individually, and students in turn express appreciation for the personal attention they receive. Most staff are also engaged professionally in the fields in which they teach and bring an enthusiasm to the student learning environment as well as a currency of knowledge of emerging issues and legislative or administrative requirements.

Most teaching staff are on short contracts. Many have been teaching with AIPS for some time and they report that they are well briefed on their teaching responsibilities. All contribute to the Board of Examiners and attend regular staff meetings, where there is opportunity to reflect on practice and issues. The Audit Panel notes the considerable commitment among AIPS staff to: the achievement of their students; developing their own teaching skills; participating in discussions on academic delivery; and sharing of good practice.

Commendation 3

AUQA commends AIPS for the enthusiasm of its teaching staff and their commitment to the learning of their students.

AIPS gives careful attention to the prevention and detection of plagiarism. There is an AIPS Plagiarism Policy (PF Attachment 6) but a different version of the policy, entitled Plagiarism and Academic Integrity, dated July 2009, is referred to in documents provide to the Panel (Re-Registration Submission, Attachment 2.3a). AIPS is urged to ensure that all staff have access to the most recent policy statement on plagiarism and to improve its version control for all policy documents, as noted in section 2.5.

In spite of this confusion, academic staff are aware of the importance of the prevention and detection of plagiarism. AIPS uses Turnitin™ as a detection tool. An understanding of the importance of the plagiarism policy is well embedded and students are frequently reminded of the importance of accurate referencing. AIPS advises that all confirmed instances of plagiarism are recorded but the Audit Panel could not confirm this and reminds AIPS of the need for such recording, to ensure appropriate and consistent treatment of students and to keep track of trends.

Commendation 4

AUQA commends AIPS for its strong approach to the prevention and detection of plagiarism.

3.5.2 Learning Management System

AIPS has made some use of the Moodle open source learning management system to support student learning. It is intended to expand the use of Moodle in order to move to a blended mode of delivery. This proposal appears educationally sound and will enhance the range of learning opportunities for students. AUQA observes that additional resources will be required to ensure that the online materials are well designed. The current practice of channelling all

Moodle alterations through the Registrar or IT contractor may prove unworkable. Further, all academic staff will require training and support in instructional design and the technological aspects of learning materials development.

3.5.3 Skills Enhancement Program

AIPS conducts a comprehensive orientation week, during which students are introduced, *inter alia*, to the City of Melbourne, provided with strategies for study and success, and introduced to pastoral and academic support available. They are briefed on the placement program, its importance and what to expect from the experience. A major part of the orientation is the Skills Enhancement Program (SEP), which is a hurdle requirement for all commencing students. This Program includes advice on, and practice in, learning skills such as preparing for tertiary studies, time management, learning styles, computer skills, effective reading skills, note-taking, academic writing and exam techniques. Public speaking and career advice are also included.

Even though the students have completed year 12 level or equivalent, they reported their strong support for this program. A number of students are mature-aged people who have not been in active formal education for some years. They reported that the SEP was very helpful for their particular needs in a higher education environment. The students mentioned the detailed information on referencing, study skills, avoiding plagiarism, and especially essay writing skills. They indicated that the program assists their performance throughout their degree.

Commendation 5

AUQA commends AIPS for the development and implementation of the Skills Enhancement Program, which assists students in their transition to higher education studies.

3.5.4 Teaching Innovation

AIPS has adopted a trimester model which enables students to choose to accelerate their program, but part-time enrolment is also catered for. This flexibility suits student needs and it seems that, while many students take advantage of part-time study, many also take advantage of the accelerated mode.

An important requirement for the success of a trimester model is the return of assignments in a timely manner so that students can benefit from feedback before the next task. Students understand that there is an expectation that the turn-around time for return of assessed tasks is two weeks, and this is the practice, with assessed work often being returned more rapidly. Feedback to students includes detailed individual written comments.

Commendation 6

AUQA commends AIPS for ensuring that students receive timely and detailed written feedback on their work.

3.5.5 Quality in Teaching and Student Satisfaction

AIPS claims that student satisfaction with the quality of the teaching and learning experience is 'consistently high' (PF p13). No evidence was provided to support this claim, although the Panel received a copy of a new questionnaire, the 'Student Barometer 2009'. At the top of the survey, it is stated that 'This survey is part of an internal and confidential process to track what you

expect and what you experience as a student here'. This survey will enable AIPS to collect a large amount of information on the characteristics of students and their learning experience.

Students to whom the Audit Panel spoke were generally very satisfied with their experience at AIPS. The Institute has a Student Consultation policy and teaching staff make themselves available to speak with students.

There is an active Student/Staff Consultative Committee and examples were given of instances where AIPS has responded to suggestions for improvement made by this Committee, including improvements to the physical facilities available for students. The Audit Panel considers these facilities to be adequate for the current higher education student population and notes that AIPS is upgrading these facilities.

3.5.6 Graduate Outcomes

The Portfolio included information on the internal monitoring by AIPS of graduate destinations from 2003 to 2009. These data provide a breakdown of percentages of respondents employed in the criminal justice field, seeking employment in the field, or undertaking further study. They indicate that of graduates from 2003 and 2004, approximately half of the respondents had found employment in the criminal justice field. The percentage of graduates in subsequent years was lower. In each year, a small number of graduates were undertaking further study. Some graduates are now employed as teachers in AIPS.

A number of students enrol with the aim of transferring from AIPS to other university programs and the Audit Panel received evidence indicating that some students do transfer, although AIPS advises that transfers usually occur on completion of a student's program at AIPS. Students who transfer during their program may add to the Institute's apparent rates of student attrition (section 3.2) but may indicate also the comparability of AIPS' academic standards with those of universities. AIPS is encouraged to monitor more closely transfers of students during their studies, to better understand the reasons for these transfers.

The Audit Panel did not see the instrument used to survey graduate destinations, nor did it have data on completions, although it had some information on enrolments by trimester. Without information on completion rates, it is difficult for AIPS to develop an understanding of its overall levels of student achievement and how they relate to graduate employment outcomes. AIPS has indicated that it would like to 'mitigate the poor response rate' to its graduate destination surveys. In both undergraduate and graduate surveys there is a need for AIPS to develop a more systematic methodology for data collection. As for other data, AIPS needs to develop its internal capacity to present analyses of results in ways that are clear and unambiguous.

3.5.7 Work Experience

The Bachelor of Social Science (Criminal Justice) is a professionally oriented program and includes a compulsory field placement. This involves spending time in a workplace in an area related to the degree, and there is a careful process of matching students and placements. The placements are overseen by the Field Placement Co-ordinator, who has an important role in ensuring the program is professionally conducted, including the management of risks to students and others. The success of this placement program relies on the fact that AIPS is well networked with related industries including some well-placed alumni. The Panel met some external stakeholders who provide advice on curriculum and host the placements. These external partners are satisfied with the students and the graduates and have in a number of cases, employed them, often after the placement. The placement is an important aspect of the

degree, linking theory with practice and students appreciate the learning experience. The Panel noted the thoroughness of the contractual arrangements with the hosts, the preparation of students and hosts for the placements, and the assessment requirements.

Commendation 7

AUQA commends AIPS on the inclusion of the placement program which provides students with practical experience of relevant workplaces.

The Audit Panel was provided with a copy of the form, 'Practical Placement Evaluation of Student's Performance'. AIPS advises that the field tutor or placement supervisor is expected to complete this form and return it to the Field Placement Co-ordinator. The Panel heard that not all placement hosts provide a written evaluation. As this is an important aspect of the student's assessment, AIPS needs to ensure that written reports are completed for every student. The Panel also notes that whilst the stated duration is two weeks (80 hours), there are some placements which are three to five weeks long. Some placement supervisors feel the longer placement is valuable. However, AIPS needs to consider how consistency and equity in assessment can be assured for placements of varying duration in order to ensure fair and comparable workload and outcomes for all students.

Recommendation 6

AUQA recommends that AIPS review the placement program to consider how consistency in student workloads, assessment and learning outcomes can be assured, given that placements are of varying duration.

3.6 Monitoring

There are various academic monitoring requirements expected of higher education providers. The HEB is tasked with monitoring student progress and results, but there was insufficient evidence provided to assure the Audit Panel that AIPS has processes in place to ensure that student achievement is consistent with its stated educational objectives.

Although the Institute claims that it monitors the satisfaction of its students with the quality of their teaching and learning experience through the use of formal student evaluations, the Audit Panel was not provided with any evidence of these data or the steps taken to make any enhancements (section 3.5.5).

The Audit Panel received a copy of the Student Support Unit Survey, which indicated that this survey will be implemented in November 2009.

It has been noted previously that AIPS monitors individual student performance carefully (section 3.2) but there needs to be analysis of cohort data in order to document trends in performance. Such analysis would enable AIPS to monitor improvements already made and identify possible problems at a program and institutional level.

AIPS has not made full use of the data it collects. This may be addressed when a new student administration system from Navitas is introduced. As noted above, there may be some problems with the methodology for calculating student attrition rates, as these may make the loss of students seem greater than it really is.

4 ORGANISATIONAL STRUCTURES, DECISION-MAKING PROCESSES AND RESOURCES TO SUPPORT TEACHING AND LEARNING AND OTHER CORE ACTIVITIES

4.1 *Organisational Structures and Decision Making*

The need for a review of the role of the Higher Education Board has previously been noted (section 2.5). To date its role has been to monitor and approve student progress, and to approve policies and changes to the academic program. Whilst the operation has been relatively small, the arrangements for decision making have been satisfactory. The teaching staff have been involved in some of these processes as members of the Board of Examiners, but since the acquisition by Navitas, there is a sense among these staff of not knowing what decisions are being made about future directions and plans. There is a need for AIPS to communicate more effectively with all stakeholders, internal and external, about the changes they can expect under the new ownership arrangements.

Recommendation 7

AUQA recommends that AIPS develop a communication strategy to inform stakeholders of changes to the Institute.

4.2 *Academic and Administrative Staff*

4.2.1 Staff Development

The Panel observes that AIPS' full-time and sessional teaching staff are well qualified academically for their teaching roles. AIPS has developed a Higher Education Teaching Staff Handbook, which is a useful guide to AIPS' educational philosophy and the ways in which learning and teaching are organised.

In May 2009 the HEB approved a policy on Peer Review of Teaching. The process involves a staff member nominating a colleague and discussing the context and intention of a class or classes. Following observation of the classes, the reviewer discusses his/her observations with the reviewee, the aim being to create an 'action learning cycle'. The policy is designed to benefit the staff members being reviewed, but some staff who have trialled the process report that it is of benefit to both parties. AUQA encourages AIPS to extend this policy and practice to all teaching staff.

Affirmation 1

AUQA affirms the Peer Review of Teaching policy introduced by AIPS and encourages AIPS to extend this to all teaching staff.

Some teaching staff have received support from AIPS for professional development. The AIPS 2007 and 2008 Annual Reports to VRQA indicate that there is a budget for professional development, but this budget was not fully expended in 2007 or 2008. The Panel observes that the amount of expenditure was said to be the same in both years. There is an opportunity for AIPS to develop a more systematic approach to staff professional development, especially in regard to innovations in teaching and learning. Recently, AIPS has supported some professional development for administrative staff. As an area for improvement (PF p9), AIPS has identified

the need to 'integrate educational objectives as performance measures in teaching staff performance plans'. AUQA endorses this proposal.

Affirmation 2

AUQA affirms AIPS' practice of providing a budget for professional development for academic and administrative staff, while noting that AIPS needs to ensure that staff take advantage of this opportunity for funded professional development.

4.2.2 Support for Student Learning

There is a culture of supporting students and monitoring their success at AIPS. The individual support for students at risk (section 3.2) and the availability of teaching staff contribute to this. Some student support, for example personal counselling, is outsourced to Melbourne University. Other support is provided as needed, often by AIPS teaching and administration staff. The Student Support Officer position combines supervision of all field placements with half-time student support duties.

The Portfolio describes plans for growth and expansion of AIPS programs to Sydney and Brisbane. There are already pressures on staff due to some current under-resourcing in the Melbourne operation. In order to position for growth, AIPS will need to ensure that adequate academic and support resources are allocated, in the first instance to support the current provision of programs locally in Melbourne.

Although no international students are enrolled at present, some AIPS are students from a non English-speaking background. The Panel heard that steps are to be taken to market the higher education program internationally. If AIPS pursues recruitment of international students there need to be adequate resources and support networks in place to ensure that the Institute is able to meet the requirements of the *Education Services for Overseas Students Act 2000* and of the *National Code of Practice for Registration Authorities and Providers of Education and Training to Overseas Students*.

4.3 Information Resources

The Audit Panel considers that the AIPS library opening hours provide adequate access for students, although weekend access is very limited. The holdings include a number of data bases which students can access from home. The library is an important source of student advice for study and search skills, and the services and learning support provided by the AIPS Librarian are highly valued by students and staff. The new management is seeking advice from the AIPS Librarian about setting up a higher education collection and library services in Brisbane and Sydney.

The Panel viewed AIPS promotional brochures and also the AIPS website and found that there are eight accredited programs listed, including undergraduate and postgraduate programs, only one of which has ever run regularly, with one other having had a single intake some years ago. Some AIPS brochures state there are campuses in Sydney or in Sydney and Brisbane, which may lead prospective students to believe that the programs are also offered in Sydney and Brisbane, although there are no higher education programs offered in these locations. The information on the range of programs and campus locations is regarded by the Audit Panel as likely to be misleading to prospective students, indicating a scope of programs and size of operation that is not possible under current organisational and staffing arrangements.

The Audit Panel heard that all the degrees are listed in the VTAC guide, and withdrawn late in the year if there are insufficient applications. This process may mislead prospective students into thinking AIPS has more comprehensive offerings than it really does. AUQA observes every effort must be made to ensure that program advertising is accurate and not subject to misinterpretation. The brochures otherwise offered clear advice to prospective students.

Recommendation 8

AUQA recommends that AIPS check all advertising materials to ensure that the likelihood of an advertised program being offered and the locations in which the program will be offered is clear.

5 MAINTAINING A COMMITMENT TO QUALITY IMPROVEMENT

5.1 *Risk Management*

AIPS has operated as a higher education provider for some years, successfully running one degree program. However, the Panel has found some inherent risks for AIPS' higher education program in the transition to the new arrangements under Navitas.

AIPS' systems, for example the student management system, may not be scalable if the institution expands as proposed to take more student enrolments, including international students, to offer more higher education awards, and to operate in new locations. It is important that adequate resources are provided to support these systems and the Panel notes that Navitas may already have the infrastructure to do so. This risk to scalability also applies to teaching arrangements. The small number of ongoing academic appointments, especially in leadership positions, is not adequate for a larger scale and more dispersed style of operation. It is evident that senior academic and management staff are working to capacity at present.

AIPS has a high level of reliance on individuals who hold much information that will not be transferrable without more formal documentation, accompanied by careful planning and preparatory work. This applies not only to internal processes but also to the Institute's strong industry links, which rely on the personal networks of the General Manager. The new organisation needs to formalise internal processes as a matter of urgency and give thought to how new networks can be established in the proposed new locations of Sydney and Brisbane.

Under its new ownership, AIPS intends to continue to offer higher education programs in areas related to public safety and risk management, and would like to capitalise on the reputation which has been built by the Institute. The Audit Panel heard that new offerings may be directed towards the corporate or vocational education and training sectors, and if this occurs it will be important for AIPS to maintain a higher education culture for its higher education activities.

AIPS has a Risk Management Policy dated 2007 (PF Attachment 7), but the Panel found no evidence that this was used in the preparation of the Portfolio. AIPS is presently facing a changing environment and there may be a risk that some of the things which are valued by students, staff and other stakeholders will not continue. Given the current situation, risk management for the higher education operations of AIPS should be given greater priority by AIPS and by those involved in governing the Institute. AUQA urges AIPS to develop a risk management plan to mitigate the risks of the transition to AIPS' existing higher education program and future higher education offerings.

Recommendation 9

AUQA recommends that AIPS identify the risks inherent in transition to new ownership and develop a risk management plan to mitigate these risks.

5.2 *The Quality Management System*

AIPS has a brief policy on Continuous Improvement (PF Attachment 4), which is dated July 2009. A Policy for Quality and Improvement dated February 2009 was provided to the Panel as well. This Policy describes the use of ISO 9001-2008, which is stated to apply to the higher education as well as to the VET operations of AIPS. The Institute has a Quality Officer who is responsible for

monitoring processes and policies and who reports quarterly to the General Manager. AIPS has a range of policies designed to ensure the privacy of student information and the accuracy of record-keeping.

It is stated in the Portfolio (PF p62) that 'The Institute has developed a Quality Framework, in draft form, which has been useful in guiding aspects of the self-review'. It may be too early to see the impact of this Framework, but Portfolio was structured around an Objectives-Approach-Deployment-Results-Improvement (OADRI) model, and did identify a number of issues for improvement. The Quality Framework is stated as using ISO 9001:2008 as an overall 'umbrella', under which sit four different approaches to and mechanisms for quality assurance. These mechanisms are:

- AS3806:2006
- OADRI (AUQA)
- Australian Quality Training Framework (AQTF) 2007 and the National Code (VET quality standards).

It was not clear to the Audit Panel how these approaches are integrated or relate to each other. It was not clear that staff of AIPS have considered the specific quality assurance processes needed for effective operation of higher education programs. AIPS needs to clarify how these ISO, AQTF and higher education quality assurance mechanisms can be integrated in practice, taking into account requirements for academic quality assurance for higher education programs.

5.3 Benchmarking and Self-review

The Portfolio indicates that AIPS has benchmarked the Bachelor of Social Science (Criminal Justice) program against all other similar bachelor programs in Australia. The benchmarking undertaken consists of a comparison of program structures across a range of higher education institutions offering similar types of programs. Program elements that were compared included: minimum duration of study; number of subjects; structure; nested exit points; modes of delivery; and English language entry requirements. Although useful as a means of comparing the forms of programs, this activity does not assist AIPS to compare the content or student learning outcomes of its programs with those of other institutions.

AIPS indicates that it intends to benchmark indicators such as retention and completion with the Australian College of Applied Psychology (ACAP), another higher education provider in the Navitas Workforce Division. The Audit Panel agrees this benchmarking would be a useful development. AIPS has identified some synergies between the counselling programs provided by ACAP and its public safety program, and there may be opportunities for further benchmarking of academic standards and program content in future. AUQA endorses the plans for a closer relationship between AIPS and ACAP in seeking to assess the effectiveness of their higher education programs.

Benchmarking of AIPS against other Navitas colleges in respect of financial performance is already occurring.

AIPS is encouraged to accept the importance of critical and reflective self-review and benchmarking for all aspects of its operations, including academic standards. Benchmarking may include the use of external assessors for a sample of student work and comparison of their assessment with local assessment. Self-review activities that AIPS is urged to adopt include systematic review of the academic program or programs, regular review of the performance of the HEB and the Board of Management (or new governing body), review of staff performance,

monitoring of student performance by entry cohort or other factors, and enhanced monitoring of graduate satisfaction and employment outcomes.

Recommendation 10

AUQA recommends that AIPS develop a systematic approach to self-review and benchmarking to form the basis for continuous quality improvement.

APPENDICES

APPENDIX A: THE AUSTRALIAN INSTITUTE OF PUBLIC SAFETY

The mission of the Australian Institute of Public Safety is:

To maintain excellence in the provision of services that will further enhance public safety.

With regard to higher education, this mission is based upon the Institute's premise that it is preparing students for a diverse and ever changing world where, in our educational environment:

- Students are able to access world-class learning facilities;
- Have equal opportunities to learn both within and beyond the classroom;
- Are exposed to leading-edge scholarship throughout their educational experience;
- Learn in an atmosphere of mutual respect; and
- Are challenged to advance, grow and achieve.

The vision of the Australian Institute of Public Safety is:

AIPS will maintain its reputation for quality delivery of programs and aims to further expand and develop a dynamic learning community recognised for distinctive achievements in teaching and research both locally and abroad

Purpose

The purpose of the Australian Institute of Public Safety is to provide a learning environment in which staff and students can discover, examine, preserve and transmit knowledge, wisdom and values involving issues of public safety and related matters that will impact upon current and future generations.

The Educational Philosophy of the Institute

The Australian Institute of Public Safety developed from a need to provide a more practical approach to higher education. To ensure this, the Institute promotes three key policies.

These policies are:

- To establish strong links between professional organisations and the Institute in the development of educational programs;
- To research world-wide for leading initiatives and best practice within relevant disciplines; and
- To engage suitably qualified practising professionals with appropriate teaching skills to participate in program delivery wherever possible.

Source: AIPS website

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

In its external relations, 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.

APPENDIX C: THE AUDIT PANEL

Dr Jeanette Baird, Audit Director, Australian Universities Quality Agency

Dr Barbara Cargill, Dean of International Programs, Trinity College, University of Melbourne (VRQA nominee)

Associate Professor Adam Sutton, Honorary Principal Fellow, School of Social and Political Sciences, University of Melbourne (VRQA nominee)

Professor Barbara van Ernst AM, Consultant (Chair)

Panel Support Officer:

Ms Sally Stafford, Senior Project Officer, VRQA

APPENDIX D: ABBREVIATIONS AND DEFINITIONS

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

ACAP	Australian College of Applied Psychology
AIPS.....	Australian Institute of Public Safety
AQTF	Australian Quality Training Framework
AUQA	Australian Universities Quality Agency
CEQ	Course Experience Questionnaire
DEEWR.....	Australian Government Department of Education, Employment and Workplace Relations
FEE-HELP	FEE-HELP is a loan given to eligible fee-paying students to help pay part or all of their tuition fees.
HEB	Higher Education Board
HEP(s)	higher education provider(s)
HESA	<i>Higher Education Support Act 2003</i>
the Institute	Australian Institute of Public Safety
IT	information technology
MCEETYA	Ministerial Council on Education, Employment, Training and Youth Affairs (now disbanded)
National Protocols	<i>National Protocols for Higher Education Approval Processes</i>
Navitas.....	Navitas Limited
NSAI(s)	non self-accrediting institution(s)
OADRI	Objectives-Approach-Deployment-Results-Improvement
PF p	Performance Portfolio page reference
Portfolio.....	Performance Portfolio
QAFs	Quality Audit Factors
VET.....	vocational education and training
VRQA	Victorian Registration and Qualifications Authority
VTAC	Victorian Tertiary Admissions Centre

