AUSTRALIAN UNIVERSITIES QUALITY AGENCY

Report of an Audit of
The University of Queensland

July 2009
AUQA Audit Report Number 74

ISBN 978 1 921561 08 5

© Australian Universities Quality Agency 2009

Level 10, 123 Lonsdale Street
Melbourne, VIC 3000
Ph 03 9664 1000
Fax 03 9639 7377

admin@auqa.edu.au

http://www.auqa.edu.au

The Australian Universities Quality Agency receives funding from the Australian Government and State and Territory Governments of Australia.

The views expressed in this report do not necessarily reflect the views of these governments.
CONTENTS

1 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY ................................................................................................................................. 1
  1.1 Audit Findings ............................................................................................................................................... 1
  1.1.1 Main Points ............................................................................................................................................. 1
  1.1.2 Matters from Cycle 1 Audit .................................................................................................................... 2
  1.1.3 Theme 1: Quality of Teaching .............................................................................................................. 2
  1.1.4 Theme 2: Academic Quality Assurance – Curriculum and Assessment .............................................. 3
  1.1.5 National Protocols .................................................................................................................................. 4
  1.1.6 Other External Reference Points ........................................................................................................... 4
  1.2 Institutional Context ..................................................................................................................................... 4
  1.3 Commendations, Affirmations and Recommendations ............................................................................... 5
  ........................................................................................................................................................................ 5
  1.3.1 Commendations ..................................................................................................................................... 5
  ........................................................................................................................................................................ 5
  1.3.2 Affirmations ............................................................................................................................................ 6
  ........................................................................................................................................................................ 6
  1.3.3 Recommendations ............................................................................................................................... 7

2 MATTERS FROM CYCLE 1 AUDIT ................................................................................................................. 8
  2.1 Recommendation 1 ....................................................................................................................................... 8
  2.2 Recommendation 3 ....................................................................................................................................... 8
  2.3 Recommendation 8 ....................................................................................................................................... 9
  2.4 Recommendations 10, 11 and 12 .................................................................................................................. 10
  2.5 Improvements to Internal Quality Assurance ............................................................................................ 10
  ........................................................................................................................................................................ 10
  2.5.1 Quality Assurance ................................................................................................................................. 11
  ........................................................................................................................................................................ 11
  2.5.2 School-based Performance Framework .................................................................................................. 11
  ........................................................................................................................................................................ 11
  2.5.3 Risk Management ..................................................................................................................................... 12
  ........................................................................................................................................................................ 12

3 THEME: QUALITY OF TEACHING .............................................................................................................. 13
  3.1 Strategic Objectives ...................................................................................................................................... 13
  3.2 Graduate and Student Outcomes ................................................................................................................ 14
  3.3 Priorities for Improving Student Outcomes ............................................................................................... 15
  3.3.1 Improving Retention ............................................................................................................................. 15
  ........................................................................................................................................................................ 16
  3.3.2 Research-led Teaching ......................................................................................................................... 16
  ........................................................................................................................................................................ 17
  3.3.3 Increasing Access and Engagement .................................................................................................... 17
  ........................................................................................................................................................................ 18
  3.4 Academic Leadership and Governance for Improved Teaching ..................................................................... 18
  ........................................................................................................................................................................ 18
  3.4.1 Roles and Responsibilities ..................................................................................................................... 18
  ........................................................................................................................................................................ 19
  3.4.2 School Teaching and Learning Committees .......................................................................................... 19
  ........................................................................................................................................................................ 19
  3.4.3 Reflection on Quality of Teaching and Curriculum at School Level .................................................... 19
  ........................................................................................................................................................................ 20
  3.5 Strategic Targeting of Australian Learning and Teaching Council Funding .............................................. 20
  ........................................................................................................................................................................ 21
  3.6 Academic Support for Improved Teaching and Learning ............................................................................ 21
  ........................................................................................................................................................................ 21
  3.6.1 Teaching and Educational Development Institute .................................................................................. 21
  ........................................................................................................................................................................ 21
  3.6.2 New Centres to Support Teaching ......................................................................................................... 21
  ........................................................................................................................................................................ 22
  3.7 Academic Staff Recruitment and Preparation for Teaching .......................................................................... 22
  ........................................................................................................................................................................ 22
  3.7.1 Recruitment, Induction and Preparation for Teaching ............................................................................. 22
  ........................................................................................................................................................................ 22
  3.7.2 Support for Tutors and Other Teaching Staff ........................................................................................ 22
  ........................................................................................................................................................................ 23
  3.7.3 Teaching-focused Academics .................................................................................................................. 23
  ........................................................................................................................................................................ 24
  3.7.4 Academic Staff Performance Management and Development ............................................................ 24
3.8 Student Evaluation of Teaching and Courses .................................................. 24
3.9 New Learning Spaces .................................................................................. 25
3.10 Other Support for Student Learning ............................................................ 26
3.10.1 Peer Assisted Study Sessions .................................................................. 26
3.10.2 Support for International Students ......................................................... 26
3.11 Overall Assessment for Quality of Teaching .............................................. 27

4 THEME: ACADEMIC QUALITY ASSURANCE – CURRICULUM AND ASSESSMENT .......... 28
4.1 Strategic Directions ...................................................................................... 28
4.2 Implementation and Review of Curriculum and Assessment Policies ........ 28
4.3 School and Program Reviews ...................................................................... 29
4.3.1 School Reviews ....................................................................................... 29
4.3.2 Program Reviews and Curriculum Renewal .......................................... 29
4.3.3 Professional Accreditation ...................................................................... 30
4.4 Program Design and Approval .................................................................... 30
4.4.1 Program Approval Process ...................................................................... 31
4.4.2 Stakeholder Engagement ........................................................................ 31
4.4.3 Electronic Course Profiles ...................................................................... 32
4.4.4 Graduate Attributes ................................................................................ 32
4.4.5 Cultural Diversity and Indigenous Perspectives in Curricula .................. 33
4.4.6 Internationalisation of the Curriculum ................................................... 33
4.4.7 Work-integrated Learning and Student Mobility .................................... 34
4.5 Assessment Design and Practice .................................................................. 34
4.5.1 Improvements to Assessment Practices .................................................. 35
4.5.2 Moderation ............................................................................................. 35
4.5.3 Feedback on Assessment ........................................................................ 36
4.5.4 Grade Distribution .................................................................................. 37
4.5.5 Academic Progress and Identification of and Support for Students at Risk .. 37
4.5.6 Credit Transfer and Recognition of Prior Learning ................................ 38
4.5.7 Student Appeals and Grievances ............................................................. 38
4.6 Academic Integrity and Plagiarism ............................................................... 38
4.7 Overall Assessment .................................................................................... 40

5 DATA ............................................................................................................... 41

APPENDICES ....................................................................................................... 49
APPENDIX A: THE AUDIT PROCESS .................................................................. 49
APPENDIX B: AUQA’S MISSION, OBJECTIVES, VISION AND VALUES .................. 51
APPENDIX C: THE AUDIT PANEL .................................................................... 53
APPENDIX D: ABBREVIATIONS AND DEFINITIONS ........................................ 54
1 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

1.1 Audit Findings

The scope for the 2009 audit of the University of Queensland (‘UQ’ or ‘the University’) is the two themes of ‘Quality of Teaching’ and ‘Curriculum and Assessment’, together with follow-up of selected recommendations from the 2003 AUQA Audit Report. This Report includes comments on other significant matters, including the University’s compliance with the MCEETYA National Protocols for Higher Education Approval Processes.

AUQA’s detailed findings on the University’s actions to quality assure and improve its standards and outcomes are contained in sections 2 to 4. Data that support the findings are provided in section 5. Information on the conduct of the audit is at Appendix A.

1.1.1 Main Points

The University has a robust academic quality assurance system, a key element of which is its sustained and thorough use of school and program reviews to improve curricula and learning. The new School-based Performance Framework (SBPF), now part of this system, together with a revised Curriculum and Teaching Quality Appraisal (CTQA) process, ensure that academic schools play a central role in accountability for performance and in planning for improvement.

AUQA finds that the University of Queensland has made substantial progress towards its goal of raising the professionalism, visibility, and status of teaching and learning across the University. Among other actions, the University is commended for its ResTeach scheme, which reinforces research-led teaching while also fostering collaborative relationships between its research institutes and academic schools.

With respect to curriculum and assessment, AUQA commends the University for its use of school and program reviews to drive curriculum renewal and change and for the sustained attention given by the University over the past two years to improving assessment processes. AUQA observes that these improvements will require ongoing monitoring. UQ is encouraged to gather more consistently and systemically examples of local good practice to improve University-wide policies and guidelines.

While there are many examples of good practice in teaching and curricula, the University must give greater attention to ensuring that all staff have sufficient experience and adequate preparation to teach well. UQ has been slow to act on a recommendation from the 2003 AUQA Audit Report that it review and improve its processes for student evaluation of courses and teaching quality. Some other recommendations are only now being thoroughly implemented. The University also needs to address a concern held by students in some schools that plagiarism or copying is tolerated, a matter that AUQA recommends be addressed in the University’s forthcoming review of its policy on plagiarism.

Overall, AUQA considers that the University is committed to improving the practices of academic units where they are weak, to ensure that appropriate standards of performance are achieved consistently. UQ has effective procedures to address problems that arise, while consistently encouraging the achievement of excellence in teaching and learning.
1.1.2 Matters from Cycle 1 Audit

Many of the recommendations from the 2003 AUQA Audit Report are addressed under the two themes of this audit. Among the other recommendations chosen for follow-up were the use of benchmarking, the relationship between research institutes and academic schools, and the understanding of what internationalisation means for UQ.

UQ conducts standard benchmarking with other Group of Eight (Go8) institutions but has identified as a priority improvement the undertaking of further structured benchmarking, which will include specific activities with Monash University and the University of Sydney and which AUQA affirms. The University has improved its data reporting but AUQA recommends that it develop a more active approach to mining existing data, to allow hypotheses about problematic issues to be tested, and to guide the collection and analysis of additional information.

UQ is commended for the actions it has taken to ensure strong relationships between research institutes and schools, which facilitate research-led teaching and academic collaboration.

AUQA finds that there is not yet a well-developed understanding among all staff about the University’s desired directions for internationalisation and urges the University to address this, affirming an intention to address internationalisation of student learning as a priority.

On quality assurance systems, the University is commended for its thorough and effective implementation of key elements such as school and program reviews. The University has augmented these elements through new methods for engaging schools in annual reflection that draw attention to the comparative outcomes being achieved. The new School-based Performance Framework is commended. AUQA affirms the University’s intention to review its Strategic Risk Management Plan, suggesting that its central risk register take greater account of environmental and academic risks.

1.1.3 Theme 1: Quality of Teaching

On Course Experience Questionnaire (CEQ) data to 2007, the University has been mostly above the Go8 cohort and the sector average ratings for good teaching, generic skills and overall satisfaction as reported by graduates. International students report high levels of satisfaction with the University’s teaching, staff expertise, assessment and library compared to students in other Australian and international institutions that participate in International Student Barometer™ surveys.

The University wishes to reduce its attrition rates to the mean for the Go8 universities and is focusing on improvements to the first year experience. In this regard, the University is commended for the planning it has undertaken with its residential colleges to provide programs and support for non-residential students.

AUQA commends the University of Queensland for having made substantial progress towards its goal of raising the professionalism, visibility, and status of teaching and learning across the University. Among the ways in which UQ has achieved this are the strategic targeting of Australian Learning and Teaching Council (ALTC) awards, which has raised the profile of teaching both internally and externally, and its commitment to the Teaching and Educational Development Institute (TEDI). UQ is commended for both of these, and also for its thoughtful development of new collaborative learning spaces. The Audit Panel finds that good teaching is embraced by many academics not only as a matter of importance but as a matter of pride. The
University has demonstrated in a range of ways that it values academic staff for good teaching as well as for good research, thus reinforcing a strong academic culture.

The University has also enhanced the ways in which it ensures that research-led teaching is part of the student experience. In addition to initiatives such as the UQ Summer Research Scholarships, the University has provided substantial funding for the ResTeach scheme, which enables research-only staff to undertake teaching on a fractional appointment. UQ is commended for this scheme, which is cleverly designed and highly valued within academic units. The University needs however to clarify the role of its teaching-focused academic positions.

AUQA finds that UQ needs to take stronger action to ensure that all staff, particularly tutors, are experienced enough and adequately prepared for teaching. The Audit Panel found examples of poor practice in some areas, suggesting that a recommendation concerning tutors from the 2003 AUQA audit has not yet been fully addressed. Another recommendation from the 2003 audit, concerning the need for improvements to student evaluation of courses and teaching, has not yet been implemented. AUQA’s recommendation in this audit is that the University systematically evaluate the quality of teaching in all courses and ensure that students’ perceptions are known by heads of school and course coordinators.

Increased engagement is an important strategic objective for the University, which is commended for the work it has undertaken with communities in and around its Ipswich Campus. Other actions, such as more opportunities for student placements, are still new and AUQA finds the University could do more to engage external stakeholders in support of enriched student learning experiences.

1.1.4 Theme 2: Academic Quality Assurance – Curriculum and Assessment

AUQA affirms the University’s intention to strengthen the role of school teaching and learning committees, to provide greater leadership in curriculum renewal and effective assessment. As part of this process, local good practices need to be more readily and consistently channelled upwards, to inform improvements to University-wide policies.

The University has appropriate academic governance structures to assure the quality of its curricula, although scrutiny of program proposals could be improved by requiring evidence of the ways in which priorities, such as research-led teaching and internationalisation of the curriculum, are embedded.

The strength of the University’s school and program review process has been mentioned above and is commended as good practice in advancing curriculum renewal and improvement. The implementation of consistent, reviewed, electronic course profiles by UQ is commended as well.

The University acknowledges that internationalisation of the curriculum is ‘a work in progress’. AUQA’s earlier affirmation concerning internationalisation also acknowledges the need to focus on the internationalisation of student learning, which includes student mobility as well as curricula. AUQA further recommends that the University explore ways to include Indigenous perspectives in health, education and other human service programs.

Improvements to the processes for assessment of students’ learning are currently under way. AUQA commends the attention given by the University to improving assessment processes over the past two years, and affirms current improvements to moderation processes, noting that their implementation should be closely monitored. In affirming as well the University’s emphasis on better formative assessment, AUQA asks the University to take steps to ensure the provision
of timely feedback to students. In a further affirmation, AUQA endorses the University’s intention to review its mechanisms to assist coursework students at risk, suggesting that earlier identification and intervention may be beneficial.

One matter that the University needs to address is a concern held by students in more than one school that plagiarism, including copying from other students, is tolerated. Such a perception represents a significant academic and reputational risk for the University. AUQA endorses the University of Queensland’s scheduled review of its policy on plagiarism and recommends that this review include the development of strategies to dispel any such perception.

1.1.5 National Protocols

The 2007 National Protocols for Higher Education Approval Processes require all universities to meet a range of criteria, in particular nationally prescribed criteria A1 to A10 and D1 to D5. At AUQA’s request, the University provided a self-assessment against the Protocols as part of its Performance Portfolio.

On the evidence considered by the Panel, UQ satisfies the criteria in the National Protocols.

1.1.6 Other External Reference Points

The University has also made use of a number of other external reference points to ensure the compliance and quality of its provision, including:

• Australian Qualifications Framework
• AVCC (now Universities Australia) 2005, *Provision of Education to International Students: Code of Practice and Guidelines for Australian Universities*
• AVCC (now Universities Australia) 2001, Policy Guidelines on Cross-sector Qualification Linkages
• AVCC (now Universities Australia) 2005, *Universities and their Students: Principles for the Provision of Education by Australian Universities*
• *Education Services for Overseas Students Act 2000* (Cwlth) (ESOS Act) and the National Code.
• *Higher Education Support Act 2003* (Cwlth) and associated regulations.

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

1.2 Institutional Context

The mission of the University of Queensland, as stated on its website, is:

> to enable our students and staff to positively influence the society in which they live by creating a Learning and Discovery environment in which they can develop and fulfil their aspirations, that rewards excellence, openness and innovation and encourages widespread Engagement with our state, national and international communities.

The University, which was established in 1909, is the longest-established in the State of Queensland and has the highest level of research output. It is a member of the Group of Eight Australian research-intensive universities and a member of Universitas 21. The University’s financial position is sound, with an operating surplus of $73m for 2007.
UQ has seven faculties and six research institutes. The faculty executive deans and the institute directors serve on the University Senior Management Committee (USMC). A brief statistical profile of the University is below.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>University of Queensland</th>
<th>2004</th>
<th>2008</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Revenue</td>
<td>$732m</td>
<td>$1,049m</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total University research income</td>
<td>$155m</td>
<td>$244m</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total student EFTSL</td>
<td>29,329</td>
<td>29,758</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>International student EFTSL (and % of total)</td>
<td>4,950 (17%)</td>
<td>6,078 (20%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total undergraduate student load</td>
<td>23,061</td>
<td>23,418</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total postgraduate student load</td>
<td>6,268</td>
<td>6,285</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total FTE staff</td>
<td>5,081</td>
<td>5,814</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total FTE academic staff (and % of total)</td>
<td>2,096 (41%)</td>
<td>2,407 (41%)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: PF p1

The University has campuses at St Lucia (Brisbane), Ipswich and Gatton. UQ also has a medical, teaching and research campus at Herston (Brisbane). The University does not currently undertake any teaching offshore.

1.3 Commendations, Affirmations and Recommendations

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

The themes for Cycle 2 audits are chosen for their risk potential and at least one theme reflects the institution’s own assessment of its developmental and strategic needs. For this reason, Cycle 2 audit reports may contain more recommendations and affirmations than commendations. As was the case with AUQA’s Cycle 1 audits, this Report aims to assist the University to enhance the quality and standards of its operations.

Commendations

1. AUQA commends the University of Queensland for the actions it has taken to ensure strong academic relationships between research institutes and faculty-based schools........................................10

2. AUQA commends the University of Queensland for thorough and effective implementation of the main elements of its quality assurance framework. .................................................................11

3. AUQA commends the University of Queensland for the development and implementation of the School-based Performance Framework, which has been well-received by academic schools........................................................................................................12
4. AUQA commends the University of Queensland for planning in partnership with its residential colleges the implementation of initiatives to improve support for non-residential students.

5. AUQA commends the University of Queensland for its use of the ResTeach fellowships, which serve both to improve research-led teaching for undergraduate students and to ensure close relationships between research institutes and schools.

6. AUQA commends the University of Queensland for its increasing engagement with communities at Ipswich.

7. AUQA commends the University of Queensland for strengthening the profile of teaching and learning within the University through measures including a strategic focus on external support from the Australian Learning and Teaching Council, supplemented by internal teaching grants.

8. AUQA commends the University of Queensland for its commitment to the support of academic teaching through the Teaching and Educational Development Institute and for its refocusing of the role of TEDI to align effectively with current priorities.

9. AUQA commends the University of Queensland for its thoughtful development of new collaborative learning spaces and redevelopment of existing teaching spaces.

10. AUQA commends the University of Queensland for the substantial progress it has made towards raising the professionalism, visibility, and status of teaching and learning at UQ.

11. AUQA commends the University of Queensland for its commitment to a highly effective system of reviews of schools and programs to drive curriculum renewal and change and the achievement of appropriate standards.

12. AUQA commends the University of Queensland for its thorough implementation of Electronic Course Profiles to improve the curriculum information available to students, including its process for review and approval of course profiles before they are published.

13. AUQA commends the University of Queensland for the ongoing attention given to addressing assessment issues and policy since 2007 and encourages the University to continue to give priority to staff training and support in assessment design.

**Affirmations**

1. AUQA affirms the University of Queensland giving priority to the further improvement of benchmarking, including implementing new agreements with Monash University and the University of Sydney and ensuring that regular reviews make effective and systematic use of benchmarking.

2. AUQA affirms the University of Queensland’s intention to focus on the internationalisation of student learning and urges it to ensure that all staff have a good understanding of the University’s desired directions for internationalisation.

3. AUQA affirms the University of Queensland’s intention to review its Enterprise Risk Assessment and Management Plan, including updating its central Risk Register, and encourages the University to ensure the Register addresses a broader range of academic and environmental risks.
4. AUQA affirms the University of Queensland’s intention to strengthen the role of school teaching and learning committees to provide leadership in enhancing student learning through curricula and teaching improvements. ............................................................................................................................19

5. AUQA affirms the intention of the University of Queensland to undertake a review of its graduate attributes in 2009, and suggests this review address not only their appropriateness but also ways in which the incorporation of graduate attribute objectives in course design can serve most effectively to improve student learning. .........................................................................................32

6. AUQA affirms the University of Queensland’s commitment to improving moderation practice across the University, noting that it will be important to monitor the implementation of new moderation requirements. .........................................................................................36

7. AUQA affirms the University of Queensland’s priority emphasis in its assessment guidelines on giving more attention to assessment for learning and providing good feedback and encourages the University to ensure the provision of timely feedback to students. .........................................................37

8. AUQA affirms the University of Queensland’s intention to review its mechanisms to identify and assist coursework students at risk and suggests the University develop strategies for earlier intervention and support. .................................................................................................................38

Recommendations

1. AUQA recommends that the University of Queensland capitalise on the improvements it has already made in data management and reporting by developing a more active approach to the interrogation of existing data sets and collection of additional data, in order to identify the causes of matters of concern and emerging issues. .............................................................................................................9

2. AUQA recommends that the University of Queensland take stronger action to ensure that all those who teach on its programs are adequately prepared and supported to meet the teaching responsibilities expected of them. ..............................................................................................................23

3. AUQA recommends that the University of Queensland build on its existing policy documentation to clarify further the nature of ‘teaching-focused’ academic positions, and afford consideration of the career paths that will be open to teaching-focused academics seeking positions internationally. ..............................................................................................................24

4. AUQA recommends that the University of Queensland extend its proposed requirement that all courses be evaluated every semester to include evaluation of the quality of teaching (i.e. TEVALs) and that UQ introduce mechanisms to allow heads of school and course coordinators to review students’ perceptions of the teaching quality as part of standard operational procedure. ..............................................................................................................25

5. AUQA recommends that the University of Queensland explore ways to include Indigenous perspectives and a stronger appreciation of cultural diversity in health, education and other human services programs. ..............................................................................................................33

6. AUQA recommends that, when conducting its forthcoming review of policy and guidelines concerning plagiarism, the University of Queensland undertake an audit of current practices within schools, and develop strategies to dispel the possible student perception that plagiarism or copying may be tolerated within any areas of the University. .........................................................39
2 MATTERS FROM CYCLE 1 AUDIT

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

As well, AUQA seeks evidence of the increasing effectiveness of the institution’s quality assurance and improvement system/framework.

In its Performance Portfolio, the University provided an updated report on progress in implementing the 16 recommendations from the 2003 AUQA Audit Report. (The category of ‘affirmation’ had not been introduced at the time.) Matters relevant to many of these recommendations are addressed in sections 3 and 4 of this Report. The Audit Panel selected six other recommendations for follow-up, to test the effectiveness of their implementation, including a group of three recommendations relating to internationalisation.

2.1 Recommendation 1

The 2003 AUQA Audit Report contained a recommendation that UQ provide induction material and explicit student-oriented introductions for students who are appointed or elected to committees, boards and panels. Examples of the information kits provided to student representatives on faculty-based committees indicate that some faculties provide background information material explicitly for student members, while others provide generic information for new members. Student representatives on Senate (the governing body) and the Academic Board receive personal briefings. The Panel is satisfied that this recommendation has been addressed but encourages the University to seek feedback from student representatives to improve the briefing of student representatives on faculty-based committees.

2.2 Recommendation 3

The 2003 AUQA Audit Report contained a recommendation that UQ undertake further structured benchmarking with peer institutions, in particular comparing processes and identifying examples of good practice as a stimulus to continual improvement. In its Performance Portfolio the University identified a range of outcome and process benchmarking activities that are now in place or commencing, including extensive benchmarking of outcomes with other Go8 institutions. More extensive agreements have been entered into with Monash University and the University of Sydney but these have yet to lead to specific activities. The Panel finds the University has yet fully to address the second part of this recommendation.

The University participates in established sectoral benchmarking activities for library and IT services and for international student recruitment and support, while the Equity Office has led an International Equity Benchmarking Project.

The University has a structured approach to benchmarking that encompasses internal as well as external benchmarking and uses benchmarking information to set performance standards, as exemplified by the School-based Performance Framework (section 2.5.2) and Curriculum and Teaching Quality Appraisal process (section 3.4.3).

Reporting and review processes such as the SBPF and CTQA make extensive use of available comparative data on student outcomes presented in ‘dashboard’ format. From these processes,
and tools such as the UQ Reportal, it is evident the University has improved its capacity to synthesise and use large amounts of information. The University has identified more systematic use of benchmarking in program, school and unit reviews as a priority for improvement over the next year.

**Affirmation 1**

AUQA affirms the University of Queensland giving priority to the further improvement of benchmarking, including implementing new agreements with Monash University and the University of Sydney and ensuring that regular reviews make effective and systematic use of benchmarking.

Additionally, AUQA encourages the University now to develop a more active approach to mining existing data, to allow hypotheses to be tested, and to guide the future collection and analysis of additional information when standard data sets do not have the information that is needed. Such an approach will assist the University to better address some current areas of concern, such as student retention (section 3.3.1).

**Recommendation 1**

AUQA recommends that the University of Queensland capitalise on the improvements it has already made in data management and reporting by developing a more active approach to the interrogation of existing data sets and collection of additional data, in order to identify the causes of matters of concern and emerging issues.

Sections 3.10.2 and 4.4.1 of this Report contain some suggestions for additional process benchmarking and data analysis that could be undertaken by the University. The University is encouraged to seek the best available examples of effective processes, wherever they are found.

### 2.3 Recommendation 8

The 2003 AUQA Audit Report contained a recommendation that *in line with expressed intent, UQ better define the relation between research centres and schools in order that the presence of the centres and their staff enhance the student experience and the research opportunities of non-centre staff.*

The University has four types of research centres: school, faculty, university and institute. The first three types are located within schools and faculties, while the six major research institutes report through their directors to the Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Research) and are able to directly enrol research higher degree students. Academic and resource issues, including the relations between centres and schools are addressed in University policy. The Audit Panel explored the relations in practice between the institutes and schools, and in particular the extent of the interaction between institutes, students and school academic staff.

AUQA finds that there is a close and supportive relationship between research institutes and schools that goes beyond the formal requirements and is able to enhance the student experience. There are multiple forms of interaction among academics in institutes and schools. Institute directors, who are members of the University Senior Management Committee, are keenly aware of their obligations to enhance UQ’s teaching and learning. These responsibilities are reflected in key performance indicators for institutes. Many academic positions are joint institute/school appointments and some institutes teach full courses (units), while the ResTeach
fellowships (section 3.3.2) provide research-only staff with opportunities to teach. Other opportunities for students to be involved in the work of the institutes are discussed in section 3.3.2.

**Commendation 1**

AUQA commends the University of Queensland for the actions it has taken to ensure strong academic relationships between research institutes and faculty-based schools.

### 2.4 Recommendations 10, 11 and 12

The 2003 AUQA Audit Report made three recommendations on internationalisation, including a recommendation that the University determine its desired direction in respect of international activities and finalise its internationalisation plan (Recommendation 10) and a recommendation that it develop guidelines and procedures for the implementation of international agreements (Recommendation 11). A further recommendation was for the University to continue and extend its program of education to develop a general understanding of internationalisation, and to draw attention to the meaning and significance of an internationalised curriculum (Recommendation 12).

The first two of these recommendations have been addressed. The University defined its international directions in the 2005–2009 Internationalisation Plan, which will be reviewed in 2009. It has implemented policies for international agreements and collaborative academic programs, which are supported by online guidelines and resources.

Regarding the third recommendation, AUQA finds that there is not a well-developed understanding among all staff concerning the University’s desired directions for internationalisation. The University acknowledges that internationalisation is on a ‘developmental trajectory’ and that this recommendation has not been fully implemented. Research linkages and international student recruitment have been the most prominent features of internationalisation until recently. In 2009, UQ is implementing specific initiatives to increase student mobility and staff awareness of cultural diversity and plans to focus on internationalisation of the curriculum (section 4.4.6). Increased understanding of the University’s proposed directions for internationalisation will need to be addressed in the implementation of the next Internationalisation Plan.

**Affirmation 2**

AUQA affirms the University of Queensland’s intention to focus on the internationalisation of student learning and urges it to ensure that all staff have a good understanding of the University’s desired directions for internationalisation.

Support for international students is discussed in section 3.10.2.

### 2.5 Improvements to Internal Quality Assurance

The University has a well-established strategic planning cycle that continues to function effectively. Its Strategic Plan is underpinned by six portfolio plans, including the Teaching and Learning Enhancement Plan, and enabling operational plans for faculties and research institutes.
The Audit Panel finds that the University’s approach to planning and review is robust and supports forward planning.

To improve clarity and facilitate synergies among its various high-level plans, the Audit Panel suggests the University align the terminology used across the plans and seek consistency in documentation. The use of shared KPIs and strategies across the differing domains would also assist in ensuring that strategic intentions are readily understood.

2.5.1 Quality Assurance

The University’s long-standing quality assurance framework has been augmented since the 2003 AUQA audit. The five key elements of the framework are:

- annual, rolling strategic and operational planning and reporting processes
- an ongoing and comprehensive cycle of reviews of programs, schools and other organisational units
- a new annual School-based Performance Framework (section 2.5.2)
- annual monitoring for both research and teaching
- annual performance appraisal for academic and general staff.

From the evidence seen by the Panel, a major strength of this process is its systematic and thorough implementation. Many Australian universities have similar frameworks but it is uncommon to find such compelling evidence of consistent implementation leading to improvements. This strength is particularly evident in school and program reviews (section 4.3), which are expected to and do drive strategic change within the University.

Commendation 2

AUQA commends the University of Queensland for thorough and effective implementation of the main elements of its quality assurance framework.

2.5.2 School-based Performance Framework

Recognising the crucial role played by academic schools in achieving its strategic objectives, the University has developed and implemented a School-based Performance Framework, to assist in identifying and improving school performance against identified capabilities in the form of KPIs. The SBPF identifies levels of achievement under the three headings of: operational excellence; impact; and esteem. Minimum standards and performance expectations have been set for the KPIs, which include CEQ results and measures of attrition. Performance charts showing how a particular school is performing are generated annually and are now being used by heads of school to focus discussions within schools and to guide future planning. In 2009, the University plans to integrate further the SBPF with other elements of its quality assurance framework and to extend the framework to research institutes and centres. Greater contextualisation of the KPIs is also planned, better to reflect realistic expected output and outcome levels for different academic disciplines.

Heads of school to whom the Audit Panel spoke were strongly positive about the new framework, which sets clear performance expectations for schools and provides them with a helpful tool for discussion and the identification of priorities. Faculty executive deans and others also expressed positive views about the SBPF. The next stage will be for the University to ensure that the SBPF and its companion, the CTQA (section 3.4.3), are consistently used by schools in ways that engage a wide range of academic staff in collegial planning processes.
Commendation 3

AUQA commends the University of Queensland for the development and implementation of the School-based Performance Framework, which has been well-received by academic schools.

2.5.3 Risk Management

Monitoring of University risks and their management is undertaken by Senate’s Audit Committee and Risk Management Committee, supported by Audit and Risk Management Services, which conducts a rolling program of internal audits. An annual corporate Enterprise Risk Assessment and Management Plan was last approved in November 2007 (for 2008). Preparation of the 2009 iteration had not been undertaken at the time of the Audit Visit due to delays in filling the position of Manager, Enterprise Risk Management.

The Audit Panel examined the existing Risk Register, which contains a list of 10 major risk events, and observed that it appeared rather inwardly-focused, not identifying risks from external environmental issues, such as a loss of investment income. Academic risks, such as a failure to maintain academic integrity or maintain standards, also were not among those listed. Faculty risk registers do identify a number of these matters.

The University has advised that review of the Enterprise Risk Assessment and Management Plan is a priority for 2009. AUQA encourages the University to ensure effective vertical integration between faculty and University risk registers and suggests the University Risk Register address a broader range of academic and environmental risks.

Affirmation 3

AUQA affirms the University of Queensland’s intention to review its Enterprise Risk Assessment and Management Plan, including updating its central Risk Register, and encourages the University to ensure the Register addresses a broader range of academic and environmental risks.
3 THEME: QUALITY OF TEACHING

The two themes for this audit are Quality of Teaching and Academic Quality Assurance: Curriculum and Assessment. These interrelated themes were each proposed by the University and were selected by AUQA after a consideration of academic risks, including recommendations from the Cycle 1 audit report and the significance of the theme to the University’s strategic priorities. The quality of teaching has been the focus of significant policy change and increased activity at the University since the 2003 AUQA audit.

The scope of this theme includes: scholarship of teaching and pedagogy; evaluation of teaching and impact on learning; enhancement of skills; professional development; recruitment of staff; performance management. The Audit Panel also considered facilities for teaching.

3.1 Strategic Objectives

The University’s Strategic Plan 2009–2013 concentrates on three strategic objectives: Learning, Discovery and Engagement. Under ‘Learning’, the University aims to:

achieve the highest levels of excellence in all aspects of learning and teaching, and to secure its position as a genuinely world-class higher education institution that is the destination of choice for the very best domestic and international students.

To achieve this objective, the University states that it will ‘support and reward teaching excellence, and raise the professionalism, visibility, and status of teaching and learning at UQ’, goals which are central to its revised 2008–2010 Teaching and Learning Enhancement Plan.

In addition to this initiative, the University lists a range of other actions to achieve its objectives for ‘Learning’. The University states that it will:

- Attract and retain the most able undergraduate and postgraduate students and act to achieve social inclusion and diversity in the student population.
- Build an understanding of and commitment to the distinctive features of the UQ student experience, the ‘UQ Advantage’, and support initiatives to enrich this experience, including the benefits that derive from the University’s diversity, its research reputation and capacity, its international links and its strong links with industry and the professions.
- Increase the number of students who gain international experiences; and support opportunities for students to develop global and inclusive perspectives.
- Enrich all aspects of students’ learning experience with priorities on the development of state-of-the-art teaching and learning spaces and an integrated ‘blended’ learning environment.
- Promote and support innovative teaching practices that actively engage students, enhance the quality and rigour of assessment practices, and improve retention rates.

The University’s progress in implementing these initiatives is examined in this section and in the next section of the Report.
3.2 Graduate and Student Outcomes

The University’s progress rate for commencing domestic students has been declining and its attrition rate rising since 2004 (data items 5.1 and 5.2). Its progress rate for bachelor students in 2007 was higher than the sector average but below the cohort average. The attrition rate is acknowledged by the University to be a concern: UQ’s first year attrition rate in 2006 was just better than the sector average but worse than the cohort average. Attrition rates for commencing international students are in the middle of the cohort (Data item 5.3).

On CEQ data to 2007, the University has been mostly above the Go8 cohort average and the sector average ratings for good teaching, generic skills and overall satisfaction as reported by graduates (data items 5.4 to 5.6). Ratings on these measures for the Go8 cohort have been increasing over the past few years and the gap between UQ and cohort performance appears to be narrowing accordingly. UQ has set a performance expectation for all schools in the SBPF of 80% overall satisfaction, a result achieved by 63% of schools in 2008.

The University obtains CEQ scores well above the cohort and sector for student support (Data item 5.7) and ‘learning community’ and has also scored comparatively well on graduate qualities (Data item 5.8). Positive CEQ results for good teaching compared to the sector and cohort were most evident in the fields of information technology, architecture and building, health (excluding nursing), education, and management and commerce (Data item 5.9). The Audit Panel suggests that UQ give further attention to increasing CEQ response rates.

From Graduate Destination Survey (GDS) data, the proportion of UQ graduates in full-time work has been above the average for the cohort and sector but dipped to just below the cohort average in 2007 (Data item 5.10). The proportion of UQ graduates in full-time study from GDS data is below the cohort average but above the sector average (Data item 5.11).

UQ received the highest allocation nationally in 2006 and the second highest in 2007 from the Learning and Teaching Performance Fund (LTFP) but has received a smaller proportion of national funding since then. For the 2009 LTFP allocation, UQ received excellence funding for the discipline group Business Law and Economics (Band A2). Its total 2009 LTFP funding for excellence was the second-lowest among the Go8. UQ also received improvement funding for three bands: its total funding for improvement was fifth among Go8 universities. The University has successfully reduced student/staff ratios in recent years, and has deliberately used LTFP funding for this purpose.

On equity group indicators, the University has the highest proportion of all Go8 institutions of students from regional and low socio-economic status areas (Data item 5.12). Its proportion of Indigenous students is lower than four other universities in the Go8. For Indigenous students, UQ has retention rates that are above the sector average and comparable to the average for Queensland, and success rates that are above the averages for the sector and the State (data items 5.13 and 5.14). Policy relating to Indigenous students and staff is noted in section 4.4.5.

The University rates highly on several measures from the Australasian Survey of Student Engagement compared to other participating Go8 and Australian institutions, including higher order thinking and average overall grade, but not as well as other Australian institutions on the item concerning non-graduating students’ intentions to return to study in the following year. The UQ Student Experience Survey (UQSES), which is a biennial survey of all first year undergraduates, final year undergraduate and honours students, and coursework postgraduates, shows broadly similar results across these categories, with about 70 per cent
student agreement on the item concerning teaching quality. Ratings for the item concerning research-led teaching (section 3.3.2) were lower, especially for first year students.

The University participates in the International Student Barometer™ (ISB) survey. Its results for 2008 show that international students are very satisfied with the quality of their teaching, the expertise of staff and their assessment, compared with students in other participating Australian and international institutions. Students are outstandingly satisfied with the library facilities. They are less satisfied with opportunities for work experience, careers advice, language support, the cost of living and opportunities to make Australian friends.

Student evaluation of teaching at UQ is discussed in section 3.8.

### 3.3 Priorities for Improving Student Outcomes

UQ’s 2008–10 Teaching and Learning Enhancement Plan addresses the three broad headings of:

- delivering on the UQ Advantage
- supporting and rewarding teaching excellence
- enriching the teaching and learning environment.

The ‘UQ Advantage’ is the University’s way of encapsulating the most enriching aspects of experience it wishes UQ students to have, building on its heritage, facilities, good teaching, and strong research performance. International linkages and industry and professional engagement are other elements that the University intends to develop further.

While the University appears committed to realising the UQ Advantage rather than using the term only as a marketing tool, prospective and current students will need to see stronger evidence that the concept of the UQ Advantage is meaningful for them in terms of outcomes and their personal development. Students to whom the Audit Panel spoke were consistently complimentary about the UQ campuses and about campus life. AUQA encourages the University to clarify for students the contribution to student learning of the distinguishing features of the UQ Advantage.

Considering its CEQ and other outcomes, the Teaching and Learning Enhancement Plan identifies several priority targets for improvement including: an increase in student retention; ‘enhancing the quality of the UQ student experience through alignment with UQ’s research reputation’ (relevant to a recommendation from the 2003 AUQA Audit Report); and increasing participation by students from equity groups. As some of these improvements relate to the quality of teaching and student preparation as well as to improvements to curricula, they are discussed in this section.

#### 3.3.1 Improving Retention

As noted above, the University is concerned to reduce attrition rates and increase student retention. There are many views within UQ on the specific reasons for increased attrition within particular discipline areas and there may be multiple causes. The Audit Panel found that some academic staff did not understand that the definition of attrition used by DEEWR does not include students who change courses within the same institution. These staff would not be likely fully to realise the implications of the University’s current performance on attrition.

No convincing causal explanations are available, as there has been little testing of hypotheses using data already available and no systematic collection of data that may be more helpful. As
noted in section 2.2, the Audit Panel considers the University could make more purposeful use of the information it has to test hypotheses and thus better identify strategies for intervention.

Although the causes of increased attrition are not clear, the University is developing strategies for targeting areas of high attrition. In 2009, the University states that it is again targeting the first year experience as its main intervention, following on from projects undertaken in 2006. An academic position in the Teaching and Educational Development Institute (section 3.6.1) provides assistance to faculties and schools, while efforts to provide undergraduate students with exposure to leading research activities are continuing (section 3.3.2).

The Teaching and Learning Enhancement Plan states that UQ will review its orientation and transition arrangements in 2009, including mechanisms for identifying at risk students (section 4.5.5), and establish a FirstYear@UQ website. The Audit Panel encourages the University to pursue and promote these initiatives as a matter of priority.

One of the initiatives already being developed is a series of programs run by the University’s residential colleges for non-residential students, to allow non-resident undergraduate students to have access to some of the benefits of college life. The University notes that attrition rates for college students are lower than for non-college students. One program is currently being piloted and others will be supported in 2009. The Audit Panel was informed that the residential colleges consider themselves to be a resource that the University can effectively use in this way and that college principals support this scheme.

**Commendation 4**

AUQA commends the University of Queensland for planning in partnership with its residential colleges the implementation of initiatives to improve support for non-residential students.

### 3.3.2 Research-led Teaching

As part of a longstanding aim to ensure that teaching and learning at UQ reflect the research-intensive character of the University, and now as an element of the UQ Advantage, increasing the opportunities for student learning to be infused by an awareness of research is a priority for UQ. The enhancement of such opportunities also is expected to assist in increasing student retention.

The most substantial initiative made by the University in pursuit of this aim is the ResTeach scheme established in 2006, which facilitates the involvement of research-only staff in teaching, through 10% or 25% fractional teaching appointments for periods of between one and three years. Schools, centres or institutes are reimbursed for the agreed fractional salary plus on-costs and a transaction cost allowance. The program guidelines make it clear that the primary purpose of ResTeach is to improve the learning experience of students, not to be a source of funds for centres or institutes or the operating budgets of schools. Host schools must approve the appointment of the individual who applies (usually after informal discussions with the school) and the performance of ResTeach fellows is assessed through the usual student evaluation process.

Since its introduction, over 200 research staff have been involved in teaching through ResTeach. The Audit Panel finds that the scheme is generally being used as intended. It is strongly embraced by research-only staff and by heads of institutes and schools, and appears to generate
mutual benefits. An informal evaluation of the scheme was conducted in 2008 and the University has provided $4m in its 2009 budget to continue support of the scheme.

The Audit Panel agrees with the University that it will be important to continue to monitor the scheme’s success in achieving its objectives, noting that its mode of operation may need adjusting from time to time. Overall, however, the Panel finds the ResTeach scheme to be a creative approach that has proven very successful in enriching UQ’s capacity for research-led teaching.

**Commendation 5**

AUQA commends the University of Queensland for its use of the ResTeach fellowships, which serve both to improve research-led teaching for undergraduate students and to ensure close relationships between research institutes and schools.

The University introduced for 2008–09 a coordinated UQ Summer Research Scholarship scheme, which is supporting over 200 students to work in a wide range of research settings across fields that include science, engineering, humanities, health, and business. Students receive a weekly stipend, and there is a capacity to use the research experience gained by students for course credit. Scholarships are available in a variety of schools, research centres and institutes during the summer vacation period (from mid-November to mid-February).

Arising from a recommendation in the 2006 review of the Bachelor of Science (BSc) program, the University also supports an informal undergraduate science students’ research network program that aims to help students understand scientific research and the excitement that accompanies new discoveries. In its first year of operation, in 2008, 134 undergraduate students were involved in a variety of activities and events with 32 researchers from 13 organisational units across UQ. The network is continuing in 2009, with the formation of mini-networks within discipline-specific areas of research.

These two initiatives provide additional evidence of the University’s commitment to research-led teaching.

### 3.3.3 Increasing Access and Engagement

As part of its aim of attracting high achieving domestic students and increasing its engagement with the community, the University aims to increase the access rates for identified equity groups, particularly low SES students. (The University also aims to broaden the profile of its international students.)

Among the strategies being pursued is the creation of stronger links with selected schools through outreach programs in comparatively disadvantaged schools, accompanied by a range of other initiatives for school students, and a more purposeful engagement strategy for the UQ Ipswich Campus.

The University has given considerable attention to its future academic profile at the Ipswich and Gatton Campuses, recognising that attrition rates are higher at Ipswich and Gatton than at St Lucia and median tertiary entrance scores are generally lower. A review of the Ipswich Campus strategy was undertaken in 2007, after it was evident that planned levels of enrolment were not being achieved. The University is implementing the review’s recommendation to refocus UQ offerings at Ipswich to address areas of community need and to balance load. This will be
achieved through a strengthening of health sciences offerings, including the location of a cohort of medical students at the Ipswich Campus.

The profile of the Gatton Campus will be enhanced through its redevelopment as the major centre for the Faculty of Natural Resources, Agriculture and Veterinary Science and as a co-location for external research providers, following the transfer of the veterinary science program to Gatton from 2010. The move, which will provide new veterinary facilities, appears to have been carefully planned.

The Audit Panel observes that future plans for these two campuses have been developed with care and, when realised, should assist the University better to balance its profile.

The appointment of a Pro-Vice-Chancellor based at Ipswich has been instrumental in the University improving its engagement with relevant stakeholders in the Ipswich region. Plans now under way, such as the co-location of a state high school next to the Ipswich Campus, should assist the University to meet its goals for widening access and participation.

Commendation 6

AUQA commends the University of Queensland for its increasing engagement with communities at Ipswich.

Several reviews to be undertaken in 2009 will assist the University in redeveloping strategies to improve access through the Student Recruitment Strategy Committee. These include reviews of the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Studies Unit and UQ’s equity scholarships and an audit of UQ’s outreach activities.

3.4 Academic Leadership and Governance for Improved Teaching

3.4.1 Roles and Responsibilities

Strategic direction and leadership of teaching and learning at the University is the responsibility of the Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Academic), who chairs the Teaching and Learning Committee of the Academic Board, the eLearning Subcommittee of the Teaching and Learning Committee, and the University’s Teaching and Learning Space Committee.

The President of Academic Board, an elected position, chairs the Committee for Academic Programs Policy (CAPP, section 4.2) and the Assessment Subcommittee of the Teaching and Learning Committee.

Each executive dean appoints a representative from the faculty teaching and learning committee to the Academic Board’s Teaching and Learning Committee. Normally this person is the faculty associate dean (academic). In 2008 the University clarified and strengthened the roles and responsibilities of associate deans (academic), who chair both their faculty teaching and learning committee and their faculty board of studies.

Associate deans (academic) are expected to take a lead role in the development and review of degree programs. While boards of studies are primarily responsible for program development and approval, faculty teaching and learning committees are expected to ‘promote and recognise teaching excellence, support and encourage innovative teaching and learning practices’, and oversee the annual CTQA and academic program review processes (PF p25).
Chairs of school teaching and learning committees are normally appointed as school representatives on faculty teaching and learning committees.

The Audit Panel considers this ‘nesting’ of committee responsibilities through their chairs to be working well in ensuring good communication of new University policies and guidelines. As noted elsewhere, the University might now encourage a greater upwards flow of initiatives developed within schools, through school and faculty committees. Such gathering of examples of local good practice can be used to guide improved University-wide policy and practice.

The DVC(A) also facilitates an informal network of faculty and school chairs of teaching and learning committees to encourage ongoing interaction and sharing of views. The Audit Panel consistently heard very positive comments from faculty and school teaching and learning committees, and from many others, on the effective leadership the DVC(A) has demonstrated in improving the profile of teaching at UQ.

3.4.2 School Teaching and Learning Committees

One of the themes emerging from the University’s consideration of school review reports is a need to strengthen the role of school teaching and learning committees, given the pivotal responsibilities of these committees in academic quality assurance and enhancement. Members of school teaching and learning committees are usually involved in program or course coordination and thus are able directly to influence how University policies are translated into academic practice.

The Audit Panel observes there are varying expectations of the role of teaching and learning committees across different schools, which will influence the extent to which these committees are able to exercise a leadership rather than a largely administrative role. Support from heads of school is also an important factor.

The University is currently drafting a university-wide position description for chairs of teaching and learning committees. This useful development should enhance the ability of committee chairs to bring about improvements in the student learning experience. A similar document will also be prepared for course coordinators.

Affirmation 4

AUQA affirms the University of Queensland’s intention to strengthen the role of school teaching and learning committees to provide leadership in enhancing student learning through curricula and teaching improvements.

3.4.3 Reflection on Quality of Teaching and Curriculum at School Level

The University’s revised policy on Curriculum and Teaching Quality Appraisal and Academic Program Review introduces improved processes at school level, replacing the teaching quality appraisal process that had been used since 1997.

The new processes focus on local improvements to teaching and learning practice, through annual review and reflection by school staff on readily available data concerning school performance and outcomes. In this review, schools must identify areas in which they are not among the top three of the Go8 on the key CEQ scales, identify strategies and report on the outcomes of the strategies in the following year’s CTQA. Schools must also report on the success of programs introduced in the previous two years.
Faculty funds linked to teaching quality are distributed to schools on the basis of the CTQA outcomes, including consideration of the initiatives proposed by schools to address areas for improvement. Summaries of the CTQA reports are submitted by associate deans (academic) to the DVC(A) for consideration by Academic Board’s Teaching and Learning Committee.

Although the revised CTQA process is fairly new and not yet known to all academic staff, it shows promise. One example viewed by the Audit Panel showed insightful comment and suggestions for improvement. As with the SBPF, the University recognises that the implementation process will likely result in some refinements. Further refinement of the CTQA process is being undertaken to ensure that the CTQA is more closely linked to University KPIs for teaching and learning. The Audit Panel suggests it may be useful to use the CTQA process to enhance the dissemination and adoption of good practices identified through ALTC and UQ Teaching and Learning Strategic Grant projects.

3.5 Strategic Targeting of Australian Learning and Teaching Council Funding

The University has sustained a strategic focus on gaining external support from the Australian Learning and Teaching Council (ALTC) and its predecessor, the Carrick Institute, for projects and positions. UQ’s success in attracting competitive ALTC support (Data item 5.15), and in gaining teaching awards, is impressive. This external success highlights the importance of teaching in a way that is familiar to active researchers and provides both internal and external recognition, as well as supporting the University’s own projects to improve the quality of learning and teaching. A number of improvements to University policies and practices that have been or are being informed by ALTC support are mentioned in this Report.

The University complements ALTC support through its own Teaching and Learning Strategic Grant scheme, currently funded from LTPF allocations, at $2.5m over two years (2007 and 2008). The scheme has supported 65 small and 13 large projects, the latter requiring leveraging of University funding by other external or internal support.

The University has provided awards for teaching excellence since 1988. It currently awards up to five teaching excellence awards, up to four awards for the enhancement of student learning and up to 25 citations each year.

The University uses a range of events and activities internally to disseminate the project knowledge and outcomes of ALTC and internal grants to improve teaching. In common with other institutions, it does not always find that these efforts are effective. The Audit Panel encourages the University to explore ways to increase internal dissemination and take up so as to ensure that the impact of these projects is maximised.

Commendation 7

AUQA commends the University of Queensland for strengthening the profile of teaching and learning within the University through measures including a strategic focus on external support from the Australian Learning and Teaching Council, supplemented by internal teaching grants.
3.6 Academic Support for Improved Teaching and Learning

3.6.1 Teaching and Educational Development Institute

The Teaching and Educational Development Institute (TEDI) was established by UQ in 1969 as the Tertiary Education Centre. A 2006 externally-led review of TEDI, the first since 1994, commended the University for the breadth, depth and innovation of the range of educational resources, professional development programs, tools and training aids supported and produced by TEDI. The review nevertheless recommended an urgent refocusing of the roles of TEDI better to align its work with the University’s Teaching and Learning Enhancement Plan.

This recommendation has now been implemented. A new academic director has been appointed and there has been a strengthening of TEDI’s Higher Education Research and Scholarship (HERS) unit, which provides academic development and support to enhance teaching scholarship and practice. Other units within TEDI are responsible for University-wide staff development programs, evaluations (section 3.8) and the provision of educational resources. Under its new leadership TEDI has improved links between HERS and associate deans (academic), with the aim of developing joint projects to meet faculty goals in teaching and learning. An increased emphasis on the use of multifunctional teams across faculties and central units is also evident in recent plans for the evaluation of some of the University’s teaching and learning initiatives. HERS is continuing its support for staff to attract external competitive funding for strategic projects to improve teaching and learning at UQ and more widely.

The Audit Panel finds that TEDI is very well-regarded within the University. Its services and support are valued by those who have drawn on them and by associate deans (academic) and others responsible for leading improvements in teaching and learning within faculties and schools.

Commendation 8

AUQA commends the University of Queensland for its commitment to the support of academic teaching through the Teaching and Educational Development Institute and for its refocusing of the role of TEDI to align effectively with current priorities.

3.6.2 New Centres to Support Teaching

The University has established two centres to stimulate innovation and fresh approaches in technology-mediated teaching practice, aiming to be ahead of, rather than reacting to, the possibilities offered by new technologies.

One of the early tasks of these centres and TEDI, working with the eLearning Subcommittee of the Teaching and Learning Committee, will be to develop a comprehensive eLearning strategy for the University to facilitate an integrated blended learning environment for the University. This is an area which the Audit Panel agrees needs further attention by UQ and which may require a substantial change management strategy. The University has invested in technology-enhanced learning spaces (section 3.9) but could do much more to enhance student learning through improved use of the current learning management system.

The University is using an innovation cycle model for the trial and selection of potential new learning technologies. The Centre for Educational Innovation and Technology (CEIT), which was established in 2008, is intended to lead the ‘R&D’ phase of experimentation and incubation for...
new technologies with the potential for widespread adoption at UQ. In addition, an Educational Innovation Faculty Fellows program, modelled on that of the US Carnegie Academy of Scholarly Teaching and Learning, will be introduced to encourage fellows to implement substantive changes in at least one course they teach.

The second centre, the Centre for Professional Learning, which has grown from a successful Centre for Health Innovation and Solutions, will be responsible for providing models for continuing professional development (CPD) programs that are scaleable for delivery to large numbers of people not necessarily on campus and which can provide pathways to the University’s coursework awards. The new Centre for Professional Learning will build on existing good practices in CPD across various areas to develop a university-wide approach.

These two new centres, CEIT and the Centre for Professional Learning, will collaborate with TEDI and will be co-located with TEDI although they currently are independent entities. The Audit Panel observes that it will be important to develop a management structure that ensures effective alignment of and cooperation between the centres, to ensure easy access by academics to relevant expertise, to facilitate effective transfer of ideas and to coordinate initiatives.

3.7 Academic Staff Recruitment and Preparation for Teaching

3.7.1 Recruitment, Induction and Preparation for Teaching

The University’s overall student:academic staff ratio has, for some time, been better than the ratios for the Australian university sector (whether sessional staff are included or excluded) and this ratio has improved in recent years.

The University has standard practices for the recruitment of new staff and makes it clear that junior academic staff appointed to teaching and research positions are expected to develop their teaching practice as well as their research profile. A review of induction processes is now under way after the University identified induction as an area for improvement. Specifically, the University wishes to ensure that all academic staff are able to receive an appropriate academic induction, and that this is tailored to suit the needs of specific groups including international staff.

TEDI offers a wide range of short courses and workshops for academic staff professional development in teaching: in 2007, there were more than 600 enrolments in these courses. Recently-appointed academic staff appear to be aware of these courses and are encouraged to attend them. UQ has offered a Graduate Certificate in Higher Education since 1993 through its School of Education and subsidises academic staff participation.

3.7.2 Support for Tutors and Other Teaching Staff

Recommendation 14 from the 2003 AUQA Audit Report was that the University enhance the training provided for graduate students and other sessional staff acting as tutors.

The Audit Panel finds that this recommendation has not been thoroughly addressed by the University, although action is in progress. The University has developed a tutors’ website to provide information on administrative and teaching matters for tutors. Two UQ Teaching and Learning Strategic Grants are also exploring ways better to support tutors in particular schools, such as learning circles and training in research-led teaching.
UQ requires schools to conduct tutor training. However, an audit of tutor training for a UQ Teaching and Learning Strategic Grant has revealed:

- variable quantity and quality of tutor training, resources and support
- a diversity of tutor-related practices, policies and pay rates
- a lack of clarity around the role and responsibilities of a tutor
- insufficient recognition of tutors and their contribution to student learning
- a related need for better support of sessional staff.

These findings accord with those of the Audit Panel, which in turn echo findings from the 2003 AUQA audit. More particularly, the Audit Panel notes that in at least one school, undergraduate students are appointed as course tutors without any appropriate training or support for their roles. Significantly greater commitment is needed by the University to ensure that policies permit only the appointment of tutors and other staff who are experienced enough and adequately prepared to meet the teaching responsibilities expected of them.

The need for enhanced tutor training has been recognised at senior levels of the University and a more centralised University-wide approach to tutor training is being planned.

Strong action will be necessary for the University to ensure that there is enough support for all staff to prepare them for teaching, together with ongoing feedback and opportunities for professional development. Moreover, if students who are appointed as tutors have difficulty in understanding their lecturers, it is hardly surprising they do not feel able to lead their fellow students effectively in tutorials. In a multicultural environment, the University has a duty to ensure that staff as well as students are supported to enhance their communicative capability.

**Recommendation 2**

AUQA recommends that the University of Queensland take stronger action to ensure that all those who teach on its programs are adequately prepared and supported to meet the teaching responsibilities expected of them.

### 3.7.3 Teaching-focused Academics

In 2007 UQ introduced a new category of academic staff, teaching-focused academics, and has since made teaching-focused academic appointments from Levels A to E. The University’s policy on Academic Roles provides for three role categories: teaching and research; teaching-focused; and research-only. Academics may move from one role to another, involving a change in the mix of their duties.

Teaching-focused academics are not intended to be ‘teaching only’ positions but they are intended to provide a pathway and role expectations for academics and professional staff who wish to advance in their careers through focusing on teaching and on teaching-related scholarship, which may include a significant contribution to professional practice. At the time of the Audit Visit there were over 80 staff in such positions, mostly at Levels A to C and mainly in the health sciences.

Academics to whom the Audit Panel spoke were very positive about this development and it is evident that the contribution of teaching-focused academics is highly valued within schools. The Panel finds there is strong support within the University for the intent of providing greater flexibility in academic contributions to UQ and a career path that emphasises the scholarship of teaching.
However there is not a consistent understanding concerning the nature of these positions. There is also considerable uncertainty whether such positions will continue to be ‘teaching focused’ or may evolve to be seen as ‘teaching only’, and also concerning how they will affect future academic career prospects outside UQ. Many junior academics may find the option too risky to choose until these matters are clarified and there is stronger evidence of how a career can be built as a teaching-focused academic.

Recommendation 3
AUQA recommends that the University of Queensland build on its existing policy documentation to clarify further the nature of ‘teaching-focused’ academic positions, and afford consideration of the career paths that will be open to teaching-focused academics seeking positions internationally.

The University may also wish to consider whether it needs a more flexible approach to the mix of achievements in teaching and in research that can be considered for promotion purposes.

3.7.4 Academic Staff Performance Management and Development
Continuing academic staff (Levels A to D) have a five-year probationary appointment. The University introduced new policies for academic staff career development in 2008, including an updated Academic Portfolio of Achievement, and revised processes for performance appraisal with a stronger emphasis on career development. There are new procedures for midterm review, confirmation of appointment and promotion.

The University has well-established processes for the conduct and recording of annual performance appraisals. From these records, the University is aware that in 2007, 83 per cent of teaching and research academics and 89 per cent of teaching focused academics undertook an annual performance appraisal but only 73 per cent of research-only academics were appraised. The University advises that it will closely monitor adherence to the requirements for annual appraisal and will take additional measures to improve the compliance with University policy of supervisors of research-only staff.

The University has had a workload policy since 2002 and in 2009, in consultation with staff, will begin the process of reviewing the policy.

3.8 Student Evaluation of Teaching and Courses
The University has been slow to act on a recommendation in the 2003 AUQA Audit Report that UQ review the TEVAL/CEVAL system of teaching and course evaluations to enhance its effectiveness, having regard in particular to how deficiencies revealed by the surveys can be addressed and improvements can be communicated to the students in order to give them more confidence in the process.

The current instruments used for student evaluations are iCEVAL (for courses) and TEVAL (for teaching), with a combined instrument being used in the Faculty of Business, Economics and Law. Both are administered by TEDI and both are currently paper-based. iCEVALs are currently required to be conducted at least once per course every three years. The report is provided to the course coordinator, while aggregated school reports are distributed more widely and used in CTQA reviews. TEVALs are voluntary, though the University reports that 2502 TEVALs were ordered in semester 1 of 2008, indicating a quite substantial amount of use.
The University only commenced its review of these instruments in 2008 and at the time of the Audit Visit was still finalising its recommendations. An external study of stakeholder perceptions found that both students and staff view the instruments and processes for student evaluation as inadequate, in line with the conclusion from the 2003 AUQA audit. The external study commented that the ‘purpose, use, processes and outcomes of evaluation are not understood by students and are often not communicated to students’. Few students or staff had seen the UQSES and its objective was unclear. The TEVAL instrument was seen as shorter, clearer and more relevant than the iCEVAL, although still problematic.

Outcomes of the review will include better mechanisms for obtaining course and teaching evaluations, tools for obtaining incremental feedback and for advising students on changes resulting from their feedback, and a streamlined UQSES.

The Audit Panel believes that the University is now serious about improving its mechanisms for students to provide feedback on learning and teaching during their programs. One remaining major concern is the voluntary nature of TEVALs, which formally are undertaken and disclosed to others only as the academic staff member chooses to do so, eg for purposes of promotion. There is an evident expectation in some schools that TEVALs should be undertaken for all courses, and it may be time for the University to formalise this in policy. For staff development and quality assurance purposes, the Panel considers that heads of school and course coordinators need to be able to see TEVALs for all courses as part of normal operations.

**Recommendation 4**

AUQA recommends that the University of Queensland extend its proposed requirement that all courses be evaluated every semester to include evaluation of the quality of teaching (i.e. TEVALs) and that UQ introduce mechanisms to allow heads of school and course coordinators to review students’ perceptions of the teaching quality as part of standard operational procedure.

### 3.9 New Learning Spaces

Another of the University’s strategies for achieving the objectives for Learning in its Strategic Plan is to ‘enrich all aspects of students’ learning experience with priorities on the development of state-of-the-art teaching and learning spaces and an integrated ‘blended’ learning environment’. UQ’s commitment is reflected in its leadership on an ALTC project on Next Generation Learning Spaces and is manifest in various new teaching spaces which have been commissioned over the past several years and which are continuing to be developed. The University has two learning centres, for first year engineering and science. As well, it has established three Collaborative Learning and Teaching Centres (CLTCs), which foster collaborative group-based learning in smaller and larger configurations. Each new Centre builds on knowledge gained from the operations of the previous CLTCs.

The University has recently completed the Advanced Concept Teaching Space, a 100-seat experimental lecture theatre conceived as ‘a concept and technology demonstration space to support research into teaching and learning infrastructure’. To support staff to use the new space and to evaluate its impact, an Advanced Concept Learning Space Grants scheme has been put into place, building on a similar initiative that was used for the CLTCs. The Audit Panel agrees with the University that it will be important to now evaluate the success of these investments to ensure they are providing real improvements in teaching quality and learning outcomes.
UQ has cleverly refitted a number of standard lecture spaces to promote more flexible use and greater interactivity among students, after considerable and careful planning. The Audit Panel finds that UQ is continuing to explore ways in which to increase the functionality of existing classrooms and encourages the University to continue this program of refurbishment.

Commendation 9

AUQA commends the University of Queensland for its thoughtful development of new collaborative learning spaces and redevelopment of existing teaching spaces.

3.10 Other Support for Student Learning

3.10.1 Peer Assisted Study Sessions

The University has offered peer assisted study sessions (PASS) since the 1990s within a number of schools and faculties. PASS is a formal system of organising peer-led study groups related to a particular course and is commonly used in large first-year courses. High-achieving second and third year students are able to volunteer to facilitate regular and structured small group study. Leaders generally re-attend the course lectures to refresh their content knowledge and help plan their sessions. PASS leaders are paid and in many cases receive training and the support of an academic supervisor.

In 2009 and 2010, the University aims to extend the scheme to a wider range of programs and to improve it by creating a network of PASS coordinators and providing enhanced training for PASS leaders. The Audit Panel endorses these improvements to this scheme, which enriches the learning opportunities for UQ students.

3.10.2 Support for International Students

The proportion of international students at UQ has been gradually rising and now is around 20 per cent. As noted in section 3.2, results from the 2008 ISB™ survey indicate the University should pay greater attention to improving international student satisfaction with work experience, careers advice, language support, and opportunities to make Australian friends. In response, UQ’s new Office of Undergraduate Education will be addressing work placements and the University states that the Careers Hub is being strengthened. As well as events designed to enrich the international student experience, the University has established Mates@UQ specifically to encourage interaction between domestic and international students through various social opportunities for people with similar interests.

The University has mainstreamed its support services for international students. Responsibility for recruitment and some follow-up of international students lies with the International Office, while Students Services provides other support, such as a comprehensive arrival guide and International Student Advisers, together with services common to all students. The University has procedures in place to evaluate international students’ satisfaction with Student Services, and these reveal satisfaction levels to be high. Given its duty of care responsibilities, it is important for the University also to ensure that its processes for monitoring the safety and well-being of international students are robust. In this respect, the University might benefit from process benchmarking with institutions that, for this purpose, have developed protocols to ensure regular contact with each international student.
The Audit Panel was informed that some international students were disappointed to find post-arrival that courses within programs that they had particularly wished to take were not available. There is a need for stronger coordination among the International Office, Student Services and academic units, to ensure that international students are fully aware, before they enrol, of the courses that will be available and that the potential for breaches of the ESOS Act through inadvertently misleading promotional material is minimised.

The University has established a new English language bridging program in support of diversified pathways for entry into UQ programs and provides various forms of English language support. However, there is a perception among some staff that support for students to develop their English language proficiency has lessened in recent years. In 2008, UQ introduced a trial program to provide a funded IELTS test to graduating international students from non-English speaking backgrounds. International students are able to register without charge to take an IELTS test within a period of three months before or after their graduation.

Given the growth in numbers of international students at UQ, AUQA finds that the University should revisit its approach to mainstreamed services, to ensure that the specific needs of international students are reliably met, so that all international students at UQ know they will be well-supported to gain rich experiences inside and outside the classroom.

3.11 Overall Assessment for Quality of Teaching

From the Audit Visit, the Panel concludes that the University has achieved considerable success in raising the profile of teaching and learning across UQ. As has been noted, the University needs to make a greater commitment to ensure that all academic teaching staff are appropriately prepared for and supported in their teaching roles, to ensure good learning outcomes for students. However, it is clear to the Audit Panel that good teaching is embraced by many academics not only as a matter of importance but also as a matter of pride. The University has demonstrated in a range of ways that it values academic staff for good teaching as well as for good research, thus reinforcing a strong academic culture.

Commendation 10

AUQA commends the University of Queensland for the substantial progress it has made towards raising the professionalism, visibility, and status of teaching and learning at UQ.
4 THEME: ACADEMIC QUALITY ASSURANCE – CURRICULUM AND ASSESSMENT

The second theme for this audit was chosen to complement the theme of Quality of Teaching, after a risk assessment by AUQA and advice from the University, which stated that it had recently implemented a number of strategic initiatives and policies on this theme and would welcome an opportunity ‘to reflect on the success of these changes at the same time as considering related quality assurance issues’.

The scope for this theme includes: course profile and planning; curriculum development, design and review; graduate attributes; workplace learning; academic integrity; course approval/accreditation process; assessment, design and practice, including moderation; course and discipline renewal, and professional accreditation. Some comments in this section relate to teaching matters not addressed in section 3.

4.1 Strategic Directions

In 2007, the University reappraised its curriculum review and teaching quality assurance policies. It is continuing to implement recommendations from this review, including the streamlining of curriculum review processes and better alignment between teaching quality assurance and University-wide key performance indicators for learning and teaching.

Relevant strategies in the 2008–2010 Teaching and Learning Enhancement Plan include:

- supporting the introduction of capstone experiences in undergraduate programs
- strengthening the University’s profile in postgraduate coursework
- improving student mobility
- improving practice on assessment
- rationalising dual degrees and profiling ‘flagship’ dual degrees
- exploring options for Honours degrees and recognition of student achievement in undergraduate degrees.

4.2 Implementation and Review of Curriculum and Assessment Policies

University policies are readily and publicly available online in the Handbook of University Policies and Procedures. The University has demonstrated that it regularly reviews and updates these policies, a practice which supports effective academic quality assurance and allows the evolution of policies to be demonstrated. Policies relating to awards and to student admissions are found in the General Award Rules for students.

In addition to a review of teaching quality assurance policies, in 2007 the University addressed its curriculum review and assessment policies. Improvements resulting from these reviews are being implemented.

The University’s formal structures for policy-making and approval of curricula on teaching and learning have been outlined in section 3. The main University committee for the consideration of curriculum matters is the Committee for Academic Programs Policy (CAPP), which will report to the University Teaching and Learning Committee from 2009. Matters concerning assessment are addressed by the Assessment Subcommittee of the Teaching and Learning Committee. The new structure may facilitate the integrated consideration of curriculum and assessment
matters. The Audit Panel observes that the Assessment Subcommittee will need more actively to monitor the implementation of policies on assessment and the prevention of plagiarism than it may have done in the past.

For curricula and assessment, faculty boards of studies play a major role in program approval and review, and in the review of assessment. School teaching and learning committees are expected to be responsible for academic standards in curricula and assessment, as well as for the quality of teaching and learning.

The policy framework for assessment allows a degree of customisation and tailoring at faculty and school level, which is appropriate for a large devolved institution. However, the flow of ideas on policy and practice is still largely top-down, from the central committees, rather than bottom-up, from schools to faculties. The degree of attention given by faculty committees to considering initiatives originating within schools that could be adopted more widely is highly variable. The Audit Panel considers that the introduction of more systematic mechanisms to ensure a consistent upwards flow of ideas from schools would assist in the dissemination of good practice and a proactive approach to policy improvement.

4.3 School and Program Reviews

As noted in section 1, the conduct of regular program and school reviews is a key element of the University's quality assurance framework for learning and teaching. The Audit Panel sampled several school and program review processes and found them to all be rigorous, yielding reports that are taken seriously at all levels of the University, and recommendations that are extensively followed-up.

4.3.1 School Reviews

Academic schools are reviewed on a rolling seven-year cycle. The University has well-defined and documented processes for the conduct of reviews, including requirements for monitoring of action taken on review recommendations. The reviews, which involve presentation of a self-assessment by the school, include benchmarking with at least two other Go8 institutions and with one other member of Universitas 21. Schools are required to provide 18-month implementation reports, and may also have to provide six-month implementation plans. Progress against recommendations is monitored by the Academic Board Standing Committee, but is also reviewed at school and faculty level. Reviews of schools since 2005 have identified 81 recommendations on teaching, learning and curriculum issues which in some cases have led to substantial change.

The Standing Committee periodically examines recent reviews to identify any common themes, a process which the University will undertake from 2009 for program reviews as well. Action on thematic issues for teaching and learning is the responsibility of the Teaching and Learning Committee.

4.3.2 Program Reviews and Curriculum Renewal

The University currently conducts program reviews for all programs not subject to external professional accreditation, including generalist programs. From 2003 until 2009, large cross-school programs such as the BA and BSc were reviewed every seven years, while other programs were reviewed annually, triennially and in the context of school reviews. After a review of the policy on academic program reviews in 2007–08, the University has agreed to rationalise the process and from 2009 academic programs will be reviewed every five years. (Major generalist
degrees will continue to be reviewed every seven years but their majors will be reviewed every five years.) These reviews will be aligned with external accreditation reviews as far as possible and will require external membership for all programs not subject to external accreditation. The annual CTQA process will assist in providing data on performance over time.

As examples of program reviews leading to major change in curricula, teaching and assessment, the University points to the 2005 review of the BA, which has the largest number of enrolled students in any BA program in Australia, and the 2006 review of the BSc. It is evident that the BSc review, combined with greater input from research institutes, has led to substantial renewal of the undergraduate science curriculum and the use of new teaching and assessment approaches across several schools.

**Commendation 11**

AUQA commends the University of Queensland for its commitment to a highly effective system of reviews of schools and programs to drive curriculum renewal and change and the achievement of appropriate standards.

As an improvement, the Audit Panel considers the University could align the terms of reference of school and program reviews more closely with the University’s goals for student learning, eg features of the UQ Advantage, graduate attributes, and internationalisation of the curriculum. Systematic consideration of these issues through the review process would focus attention on them and assist the University to assess progress. The Panel notes that some of these elements have already been taken into account in the proforma for the new academic program review process.

4.3.3 Professional Accreditation

The University states that it is committed to professional accreditation for all professional programs. While faculties and schools have been responsible for implementing the requirements of external accreditation reviews, the University has recognised the need for stronger coordination between its own program reviews and external accreditation reviews and for closer monitoring of accreditation review outcomes. To this end, the accreditation reviews are included in the scheduling for the new academic program review process and associate deans (academic) will need to report on accreditation review outcomes.

Professional accreditation processes are not designed to ensure that matters specific to the University’s objectives and strategies are considered. The University should examine how curricula, assessment and effective student learning contribute to achievement of these objectives, as an internally-led addition to the professional accreditation process.

4.4 Program Design and Approval

The University’s program review and design processes are closely linked, as program reviews are used to drive changes in overall program design, as in the BA and BSc reviews.

As noted above, one of the goals of the current Teaching and Learning Enhancement Plan is to rationalise the University’s dual degrees. Fewer dual degrees should allow the University better to profile its dual degrees to school leavers and better to manage their provision. An initial rationalisation in 2007 and 2008 reduced the number of dual degrees offered by UQ from 71 to 54. The University proposes to discontinue a further 10 dual degrees from 2010.
4.4.1 Program Approval Process

The policy and process for program approval were reviewed in 2004 and further refined in 2007. UQ’s policy sets out the standardised workload and program units to be used in program and course design. A series of pro formas is used for new program proposals and for changes, including changes to program rules, structural changes and discontinuations. The University provides training for staff involved in preparing the documentation. Once proposals have been developed within schools, they are subject to review at faculty level and then to review by the USMC for strategic and budgetary aspects in the case of new and major proposals. Once endorsed by USMC, new and major proposals are considered by CAPP. Although recent changes are intended to streamline the process, the Audit Panel heard that approval by CAPP can be quite slow.

University policy requires that submissions to USMC for new or major program developments should, among other matters, justify the initiative, estimate demand, indicate overlap with other programs, and describe the relevant consultation processes. However, the Audit Panel observes that the current pro formas do not indicate any requirement for documentation of the rationale for the program, market demand and competing programs, stakeholder consultation, contribution to the UQ Advantage, or conformance to Australian Qualifications Framework requirements. The pro formas do not require any discussion of how priorities for the University, such as research-led teaching and internationalisation of the curriculum, will be addressed in the proposed program.

The program approval process and change processes could be strengthened through the addition of these elements to the pro formas used by staff, to ensure appropriate alignment between University objectives and program development. The Audit Panel suggests the University undertake some process benchmarking with other institutions to ensure its program approval processes allow for full consideration of these matters. The Panel also suggests that CAPP take more active steps to consider these points when scrutinising program proposals.

4.4.2 Stakeholder Engagement

UQ does not mandate program advisory committees, although a significant number of schools do have external advisory boards. As is often the case, some members of external advisory boards are uncertain if their input is really sought and valued by the school.

The University states that external stakeholder and student input are sought when program proposals are being developed at school level. However, as noted above, it is not clear how the University monitors whether or not this has occurred at program approval stage. The academic program review process usually will examine how external stakeholder input into the program’s development is obtained and the processes in place to maintain the program’s currency.

The Audit Panel formed the view that external stakeholders would be very willing to engage more closely with the University on coursework and program matters but that the current attitude of some schools does not encourage or facilitate this. Given UQ’s strategic objective of Engagement and its desire to increase work placements, AUQA suggests the University develop measures to encourage more proactive school and staff engagement with external stakeholders in support of specified outcomes, in conjunction with the new Office of Undergraduate Education (section 4.4.7).
4.4.3 Electronic Course Profiles

To ensure that students receive consistent and complete information about the courses within each program of study, as well as to aid course designers and coordinators, UQ requires that an Electronic Course Profile (ECP) be prepared for each course. The profile includes course aims and learning objectives for the course mapped to the University’s graduate attributes, learning resources and methods, assessment tasks and relevant policies, such as the policy on plagiarism. The process of completing profiles is likely to have reinforced the understanding of academic staff of the various options for teaching and assessment and of relevant University policies.

The University’s ECP system is a web-based system for developing, delivering and archiving all course profiles, which allows the University to feel confident that it is meeting obligations to students contained in its course profile policy. UQ plans to evaluate the success of the ECP system, but early signs are favourable. The system integrates with the student information system, the prospective students’ website and the University’s eLearning management system (Blackboard™). Nearly all courses now have ECPs. One of the strengths of this process is the school level review of each profile before it is able to be published, by a designated reviewer of all ECPs, which provides additional quality assurance.

Commendation 12

AUQA commends the University of Queensland for its thorough implementation of Electronic Course Profiles to improve the curriculum information available to students, including its process for review and approval of course profiles before they are published.

4.4.4 Graduate Attributes

The University has had a set of graduate attributes since 2001 and attributes for postgraduate coursework students since 2004. Graduate attributes were mapped to all undergraduate courses and programs by 2005 and to postgraduate coursework programs by 2008. UQ’s statement of graduate attributes will next be reviewed in 2009.

Evaluating the impact of embedded graduate attributes is by no means straightforward, although UQ has gathered some evidence to suggest that students are aware of the graduate attributes it aims to develop. The ECPs are one way to ensure students are aware of the graduate attributes a course is expected to develop. As noted in section 3.2, the University’s CEQ results for generic skills have generally been above cohort and sector means. The University notes that in the 2007 UQSES, final year students were more likely to report that they had attained the graduate attributes than first-year students. It also points to a gradual increase in the proportion of iCEVAL courses where 70% or more respondents agreed they had developed the attributes the course was designed to develop. Nevertheless, the Audit Panel formed the view that while many students had heard of graduate attributes, fewer had a clear idea how particular attributes were being developed during their learning. The University is encouraged to consider how the objectives for particular graduate attributes can best be embedded in the design of courses to improve student learning and students’ awareness of this learning.

Affirmation 5

AUQA affirms the intention of the University of Queensland to undertake a review of its graduate attributes in 2009, and suggests this review address not only their appropriateness but also ways in which the incorporation of graduate attribute objectives in course design can serve most effectively to improve student learning.
4.4.5 Cultural Diversity and Indigenous Perspectives in Curricula

One of the University’s graduate attributes for bachelor students is ‘knowledge of other cultures and times and an appreciation of cultural diversity’. The mapping of graduate attributes for programs provides the University with information on the extent to which development of this attribute is intended to be reflected in individual courses. While such a perspective is clearly able to be developed in some programs at UQ, this graduate attribute is only weakly addressed in others, notwithstanding the resources available on the TEDI website on cultural diversity and inclusive practice.

Indigenous perspectives in curricula are provided through the courses taught by the University’s Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Studies Unit and are embedded in some core courses in disciplines such as Education, Music and Political Sciences. The recently-approved statement Educational Principles in Indigenous Australian Matters (EPIAM) is a positive development but one that will need considerable support to implement, as academics to whom the Audit Panel spoke were generally not aware of it. AUQA encourages the University’s senior leaders to work closely with the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Studies Unit to ensure the engagement of academic staff with EPIAM.

There is less evidence that Indigenous perspectives routinely form part of the curricula in health and human services disciplines subject to professional accreditation, which may be due to a lack of emphasis by specific professional accreditation bodies in Queensland on Indigenous knowledge. AUQA encourages the University to review the inclusion of Indigenous perspectives in these programs, noting that this could be facilitated by a request for this matter (or EPIAM more broadly) to be considered through program reviews.

**Recommendation 5**

AUQA recommends that the University of Queensland explore ways to include Indigenous perspectives and a stronger appreciation of cultural diversity in health, education and other human services programs.

4.4.6 Internationalisation of the Curriculum

Attention to the meaning of an internationalised curriculum is a recommendation from the 2003 AUQA Audit Report that is yet to be fully implemented. The University acknowledges it needs to build a stronger understanding of an internationalised curriculum in the context of enhanced awareness of internationalisation at UQ, as discussed in section 2.4.

Associate deans (academic) in all faculties have been asked to take a stronger role in promoting internationalisation of the curriculum. Attention to cultural diversity in curricula, as suggested in section 4.4.5, will assist in fostering broader international perspectives among students.

The University has put in place several other measures to foster internationalisation through the curriculum, including establishing a position within TEDI to assist academic staff specifically on internationalising the curriculum and a new staff development program on internationalisation and inclusive teaching. From 2009, UQ students will be able to participate in the Universitas 21 Global Issues program, a concurrent undergraduate award.

AUQA expects the University of Queensland will now proceed rapidly to progress its aim of building a stronger institutional understanding of an internationalised curriculum, noting that equipping students to operate globally is likely to be considered in the review of graduate attributes.
4.4.7 Work-integrated Learning and Student Mobility

The University has identified industry and international linkages as two areas that contribute to the UQ Advantage but recognises that it needs to ensure that more students are able directly to participate in work-integrated learning and international exchange. To this end, UQ is establishing an Office of Undergraduate Education that will focus on these two areas.

At present, most work-based learning for UQ students occurs in professionally accredited courses that have placement requirements and is undertaken in accordance with the University’s comprehensive Placement Courses policy. The Audit Panel heard that many students, and especially international students, would welcome opportunities for more work-based learning. A role of the Office will be to review undergraduate opportunities for industry placements and identify mechanisms to increase industry and the professions’ involvement in UQ programs.

Increasing student mobility will be the other main activity of the Office. From 2009, the Office will take over from the International Office the management of student mobility programs, including exchange and study abroad.

The University wishes to increase the proportion of UQ undergraduates who spend a period of time studying overseas to 25% by 2015. This will require a step change, as the current target in the Internationalisation Plan is 5% by 2009. The Audit Panel notes that UQ will need to have well-established pathways with partners if an increase of this magnitude is to be achieved.

The University has provided funding for student exchange programs since 2005. Very high levels of student mobility have been achieved in the undergraduate medical program, which received an Excellence in Outward Mobility Award in the 2008 Queensland Education and Training International (QETI) awards.

A review of UQ student mobility, completed in March 2009, indicates that among the barriers to student mobility are low levels of awareness among students and staff, a lack of program flexibility, and cost. The review makes a number of recommendations including increased University funding, improved data collection and tracking, a more visible location for UQ Abroad, and more support for mobility within faculties and schools. The University states that it will implement the review recommendations from 2010.

The Office of Undergraduate Education was only just being established at the time of the Audit Visit, so it is too early to comment on its effectiveness in promoting these initiatives at UQ. The Office will need to work closely with schools to develop further opportunities for industry placements and facilitating opportunities for industry stakeholders to engage more actively with the University. The Audit Panel suggests the new Office might usefully examine the satisfaction of international students with the placement opportunities available to them in Australia in professional as well as non-professional programs.

The University may wish to consider the most appropriate name for the Office, as its current title does not appear to reflect and clearly communicate its actual responsibilities.

4.5 Assessment Design and Practice

The University changed its assessment policy from norm-referenced to criterion-referenced assessment following a review in 1997. Assessment is required to be aligned with course objectives, as evidenced by the ECP system.
A consolidation of assessment rules and policies was commenced in 2007. From this, the Assessment Subcommittee identified a range of issues that required further attention, and the ongoing review of assessment policies has been a major task of the Subcommittee for the past two years. This review has included a comparative analysis of the clarity of UQ’s assessment policies against those of RMIT University and the University of Technology, Sydney, the latter two institutions having conducted such an analysis for the Australian Technology Network Academic Standards Framework project.

4.5.1 Improvements to Assessment Practices

A revised set of General Award Rules governing assessment and examinations was approved by Senate in 2007, and the new assessment policy was approved in November 2008. In addition to policy consolidation, matters addressed through this process include:

- clarification of the University Rules relating to central and school-based examinations, particularly in respect of special and supplementary examinations
- improved guidelines on the release of examination papers to students, prompted in part by the large numbers of requests for exemptions from the requirement for release
- revised requirements for moderation (section 4.5.2), and the incorporation of quality assurance requirements for moderation into the academic program review process
- revised guidelines on formative assessment (section 4.5.3).

AUQA endorses the University of Queensland’s strengthening and clarification of its assessment policy and practices.

The University is developing activities to ensure the new assessment policy is fully implemented. Guidelines for good practice in the appropriate use of supplementary assessment are being developed, while implementation of new guidelines on moderation will be a major focus in 2009 (section 4.5.2). The courses, training and advice provided to academic staff by TEDI in the design and conduct of assessment will be an important aspect of this process.

Some remaining problematic issues concerning assessment will be further considered by the Assessment Subcommittee in 2009. The report of an UQ-led ALTC project on the impact of assessment policy on practice, which includes a review of the amounts of summative assessment students are expected to complete, will inform future policy development.

Commendation 13

AUQA commends the University of Queensland for the ongoing attention given to addressing assessment issues and policy since 2007 and encourages the University to continue to give priority to staff training and support in assessment design.

The University of Queensland has not conducted a risk audit of assessment but internal audits have periodically reviewed the security of systems for examinations and recording of results leading to an award.

4.5.2 Moderation

In the course of reviewing the assessment policy, the University identified its policy on moderation as being in need of significant updating. The new policy includes a clear definition of
what is entailed in moderation and specifies that the minimum routine requirement for course coordinators is that moderation of all assessment be undertaken both within each course and across different classes/groups within a single course.

As a further strategy, the University intends to require that a chief examiner be appointed in all schools and will take steps to ensure that the responsibilities of this chief examiner position are clarified and communicated. While noting that UQ will need to manage the workload implications, the Audit Panel supports this suggestion as the responsibilities of a chief examiner are not consistently well-specified or understood across the University.

To commence the implementation process for moderation, guidelines on the timing and function of moderation activities are available on the University’s Teaching and Learning web site. Several good practice examples are already available within the University, such as the use of external examiners by the School of Pharmacy.

For quality assurance, the University is building in requirements relating to moderation as part of the academic review process. In undergraduate programs not subject to external accreditation, the external panel member on the review will be required to benchmark assessment outcomes as a form of external moderation. This practice will be strongly encouraged for reviews of postgraduate coursework outcomes.

The Audit Panel finds that school teaching and learning committees are aware of new requirements for moderation and many have begun to consider how they may be implemented. The University plans to run workshops on assessment for school and faculty teaching and learning committee chairs. The University recognises a need for flexibility to accommodate discipline-specific requirements, and the Audit Panel encourages schools to bring examples of tailored approaches to the attention of the Assessment Subcommittee, which should actively monitor implementation of the new guidelines.

**Affirmation 6**

AUQA affirms the University of Queensland’s commitment to improving moderation practice across the University, noting that it will be important to monitor the implementation of new moderation requirements.

### 4.5.3 Feedback on Assessment

The University has recognised that the provision of timely formative feedback to students on assessment tasks is an area for improvement. Despite improving iCEVAL scores over time on a range of items, the proportion of courses where there was less than 70% agreement on ‘helpful feedback in reasonable time’ has remained consistently below 50% and in 2008 was around 40%. In response the University has indicated that it will give priority to emphasising feedback for learning in its revised assessment policy and guidelines. Specific strategies to address the problem will need to be developed by schools and program leaders and AUQA urges the University to ensure that school teaching and learning committees monitor the action that is being taken. The Audit Panel observes that Electronic Course Profiles may be able to play a role in establishing and managing student expectations for timely feedback by indicating the latest date when feedback on assessment items will become available.
4.5.4 Grade Distribution

The University’s course grades use a scale of 1 to 7, with a grade of 3 as the highest failing grade and University-wide grade descriptors apply. Pass rates and grade distributions are reviewed within schools as part of the CTQA process (section 3.4.3).

The Assessment Subcommittee monitors trends in grade distribution. Overall data on the percentage of grades awarded between 2003 and 2007 show that a higher proportion of grades of 6 and 7 is awarded to students in postgraduate than in undergraduate programs, but the distributions have been stable over time. Grade distributions for domestic and international students are similar.

There are some differences in grade distribution across campuses and the Assessment Subcommittee plans to conduct a more detailed analysis of the data in 2009 and to discuss the findings with the network of faculty and school teaching and learning committee chairs. The Subcommittee is encouraged to consider also how grade distributions differ by discipline.

UQ has not undertaken any direct benchmarking with respect to honours or other grade distributions. The University notes that professional accreditation bodies typically scrutinise high achieving, pass, and failing standards of submitted work. Grade distributions may be an area for UQ to examine in its benchmarking activities with other Go8 members.

4.5.5 Academic Progress and Identification of and Support for Students at Risk

The University’s current processes for students at risk are governed by its Enrolment and Academic Progression Rules, which were revised in 2007 to provide a better system to identify students at risk. The Rules provide for a ‘warned’ status for students who fail to achieve a grade point average of less than 3.5 in any one study period. Information on students with a ‘warned’ or ‘refused enrolment’ status is available on the student information system. The new Rules are designed to comply with the provisions of the ESOS National Code and require executive deans to direct ‘warned’ students to seek advice and assistance or to attend an interview to develop a remediation plan.

The University’s student services are working with schools to provide better advice to students, including running workshops embedded in courses. This strategy appears to be having some success in reducing student failure rates.

The University plans to review its mechanisms to identify and assist students at risk in late 2009 to measure progress. The Audit Panel is satisfied that the Rules provide clear guidance but agrees that the planned review is timely, to ensure that they are being effectively implemented. Further, the Panel suggests the University may wish to consider whether having lecturers review the student grades obtained from early semester assessments could provide an opportunity for more timely intervention and support, without waiting until the end of a semester when a student’s formal status is assessed.
### Affirmation 8

AUQA affirms the University of Queensland’s intention to review its mechanisms to identify and assist coursework students at risk and suggests the University develop strategies for earlier intervention and support.

Concerning progress for research students, the University’s policy on Research Higher Degree Candidature Progression and Development was reviewed in 2008. Changes were due to be fully implemented by April 2009. Under the policy, there are milestones to be achieved for the following stages of candidature: confirmation, mid-candidature review, and thesis review.

#### 4.5.6 Credit Transfer and Recognition of Prior Learning

The University makes use of relevant external reference points in its policy on Credit for Previous Studies and Recognised Prior Learning. UQ has a formal articulation agreement with TAFE Queensland and lists on its website the credit that will be given for students from specific TAFE institutions for particular programs. The University has a small number of additional guaranteed credit transfer arrangements. Other applications for credit transfer and recognition of prior learning are assessed case by case, using guidelines in the University’s policy, and recorded on the student administration system.

The University should consider the development of University-wide precedent recording for credit transfer. The University’s aim to broaden access for domestic and international students may result in increased numbers of applications for credit transfer and a precedent database could reduce the workload associated with the processing of these applications while also ensuring appropriate consistency.

#### 4.5.7 Student Appeals and Grievances

The University’s policy on assessment sets out the grounds for re-marking of student assessment, while the Student Grievance Resolution policy and flowchart sets out the steps to be followed for different types of grievances for coursework and research students. The main committee for a number of student grievances is the Student Appeals Committee, a committee of Senate whose members are mostly internal to the University. A separate policy on Student Appeals to Senate outlines the role of the Committee and processes for students to appeal to it, while other policies address issues such as privacy, harassment and discrimination. Various other forms of grievance have different processes, outlined in an easily accessible flowchart.

UQ has also developed a Code of Ethical Practice and Associated Guidelines for Provision of Full-fee Courses to International Students designed to comply with the ESOS Act and National Code.

Although the Student Grievance Resolution policy was reviewed in 2007, AUQA suggests the University might further consider the extent to which its current practices provide enough guidance to students who have complex grievances and enough assurance for students that those who hear their grievance do so from a position of independence, in line with emerging good practice across the sector. The University provides for an independent arbiter to consider matters relating to the University’s obligations under the ESOS Act.

#### 4.6 Academic Integrity and Plagiarism

The 2003 AUQA Audit Report contained a comment that the University should ensure that its procedures for addressing plagiarism ‘are active and effective’. UQ reviewed its plagiarism policy in 2004 and adopted Turnitin™ in 2004, together with tools such as MOSS (Measure of Software
Similarity) for computing assignments. UQ provides references and educative resources on the avoidance of plagiarism for staff and students in several places on its website and conducts a range of education programs for staff on academic integrity, while the Library and Student Services provide further guidance and support to both students and staff.

The current policy will be reviewed in 2009. Despite intensive efforts to educate students on the seriousness of plagiarism, including the development of online tutorials, the University acknowledges that concerns remain. Some of these concerns appear likely to result from inconsistent handling of alleged instances of plagiarism across different schools. University policy provides for cases of suspected plagiarism, i.e. where there is believed to be an intention to gain an unfair advantage, to be reported by the staff member to the head of school. If the evidence indicates such an intention, the case is classified as misconduct and enters the University’s formal processes, which are well-documented and which ensure that cases and their resolution are recorded. However, the initial judgment on whether the plagiarism has resulted from poor academic practice or represents intentional deception is made by the marker. The policy allows considerable discretion in the treatment of cases determined to be poor academic practice, so additional guidance on decision-making is likely to be required to ensure consistency.

Course coordinators to whom the Panel spoke expressed confidence that any possible cases of plagiarism identified by academics would be drawn to their attention, but as the University is also aware, a recent survey of course coordinators revealed they were not entirely confident about dealing with plagiarism classified as misconduct.

The Audit Panel finds there is a perception by students in more than one school that plagiarism, including copying from other students, is prevalent and that little action has been taken by staff to reduce its incidence. Even if this perception is localised within a few schools, and even if this perception is inaccurate, such a view represents a significant academic and reputational risk for the University.

AUQA endorses the University of Queensland’s reviewing its policy and guidelines on plagiarism and making additional efforts to raise awareness of the issue but considers there is a need for more concerted attention to address current perceptions. While TEDI has offered workshops in 2008 on the design of assessment to reduce plagiarism, UQ should provide additional training, as the Panel found widely differing knowledge among academic staff about strategies to prevent plagiarism.

The University needs to develop strategies to address the concerns that have been expressed and should consider an audit of current practices within schools. Additionally, UQ needs to ensure that schools actively monitor the use of good assessment design to minimise plagiarism. Once the policy review is completed and guidelines have been clarified, course coordinators should receive comprehensive training in handling allegations of plagiarism.

Recommendation 6

AUQA recommends that, when conducting its forthcoming review of policy and guidelines concerning plagiarism, the University of Queensland undertake an audit of current practices within schools, and develop strategies to dispel the possible student perception that plagiarism or copying may be tolerated within any areas of the University.
4.7 **Overall Assessment**

The University has robust academic quality assurance systems for its major academic processes and its senior leaders are energetic in identifying opportunities for improvement. While there are some instances of poor practice on one or more elements of the two audit themes in the sample schools, the Audit Panel encountered many examples of good practices and improvements in teaching, curriculum and assessment across the University. Clusters of good practices together with a drive for continuous enhancement are evident in some schools, such as the School of Biological Sciences (one of the schools included in the audit sampling process).

The Audit Panel considers that the University is committed to improving the practices of academic units where they are weak, to ensure that appropriate standards of performance are achieved consistently. The Panel is satisfied that the University has effective procedures that will address problems that arise, while consistently encouraging the achievement of excellence in teaching and learning.
5 DATA

Notes
The University of Queensland’s comparator cohort as defined in their 2007 Institution Assessment Framework Portfolio is the Group of Eight universities: Australian National University, the University of Adelaide, Monash University, the University of New South Wales, the University of Melbourne, the University of Queensland, the University of Sydney and the University of Western Australia. The sector is defined in the UQ 2007 Institution Assessment Framework Portfolio as consisting of the higher education Table A providers as listed in the Higher Education Support Act 2003 section 16-15.

Item 5.1: Commencing bachelor domestic students progress rates of Go8 universities 2002-2007

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>2002</th>
<th>2003</th>
<th>2004</th>
<th>2005</th>
<th>2006</th>
<th>2007</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The University of Queensland</td>
<td>89.66</td>
<td>90.69</td>
<td>91.67</td>
<td>90.23</td>
<td>88.08</td>
<td>86.63</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Australian National University</td>
<td>85.36</td>
<td>87.77</td>
<td>90.10</td>
<td>92.20</td>
<td>92.42</td>
<td>90.37</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Monash University</td>
<td>86.55</td>
<td>87.75</td>
<td>86.97</td>
<td>87.24</td>
<td>89.93</td>
<td>89.17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The University of Adelaide</td>
<td>80.75</td>
<td>82.89</td>
<td>85.84</td>
<td>84.86</td>
<td>86.70</td>
<td>87.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The University of Melbourne</td>
<td>91.30</td>
<td>91.58</td>
<td>92.46</td>
<td>92.32</td>
<td>93.21</td>
<td>92.95</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The University of New South Wales</td>
<td>88.10</td>
<td>89.78</td>
<td>89.46</td>
<td>89.26</td>
<td>89.13</td>
<td>89.05</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The University of Sydney</td>
<td>90.02</td>
<td>90.32</td>
<td>92.08</td>
<td>90.78</td>
<td>91.13</td>
<td>91.05</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The University of Western Australia</td>
<td>89.55</td>
<td>89.76</td>
<td>90.85</td>
<td>89.85</td>
<td>89.38</td>
<td>89.13</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Item 5.2: Commencing bachelor domestic students attrition rates of Go8 universities 2002-2006

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>2002</th>
<th>2003</th>
<th>2004</th>
<th>2005</th>
<th>2006</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The University of Queensland</td>
<td>16.85</td>
<td>16.94</td>
<td>15.33</td>
<td>16.57</td>
<td>17.49</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Australian National University</td>
<td>17.78</td>
<td>13.81</td>
<td>11.11</td>
<td>11.54</td>
<td>11.23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The University of Adelaide</td>
<td>18.1</td>
<td>18.14</td>
<td>16.3</td>
<td>17.25</td>
<td>15.27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The University of Melbourne</td>
<td>10.27</td>
<td>9.13</td>
<td>8.92</td>
<td>8.64</td>
<td>8.61</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The University of New South Wales</td>
<td>12.4</td>
<td>11.06</td>
<td>11.81</td>
<td>11.89</td>
<td>11.96</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The University of Sydney</td>
<td>14.06</td>
<td>13.1</td>
<td>11.65</td>
<td>11.24</td>
<td>11.19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The University of Western Australia</td>
<td>12.36</td>
<td>12.58</td>
<td>12.16</td>
<td>12.66</td>
<td>12.31</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Item 5.3: Commencing bachelor international students attrition rates of Go8 universities 2002-2006

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>University</th>
<th>2002</th>
<th>2003</th>
<th>2004</th>
<th>2005</th>
<th>2006</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The University of Queensland</td>
<td>5.63</td>
<td>7.06</td>
<td>5.05</td>
<td>5.75</td>
<td>6.51</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Monash University</td>
<td>8.81</td>
<td>8.62</td>
<td>9.69</td>
<td>9.11</td>
<td>8.65</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Australian National University</td>
<td>5.7</td>
<td>7.16</td>
<td>10.54</td>
<td>7.39</td>
<td>7.11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The University of Adelaide</td>
<td>7.53</td>
<td>6.4</td>
<td>8.1</td>
<td>7.67</td>
<td>4.80</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The University of Melbourne</td>
<td>29.62</td>
<td>28.63</td>
<td>27.09</td>
<td>5.3</td>
<td>4.71</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The University of New South Wales</td>
<td>5.43</td>
<td>6.2</td>
<td>5.92</td>
<td>5.98</td>
<td>5.36</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The University of Sydney</td>
<td>7.4</td>
<td>7.49</td>
<td>6.75</td>
<td>7.03</td>
<td>6.68</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The University of Western Australia</td>
<td>8.7</td>
<td>8.98</td>
<td>5.75</td>
<td>7.67</td>
<td>4.88</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Data for Items 5.1, 5.2 and 5.3 are taken from the higher education statistics collections of the Department of Education, Employment and Workplace Relations (DEEWR) website. http://www.dest.gov.au/sectors/higher_education/publications_resources/profiles

Item 5.4: The University of Queensland Good Teaching Scale mean response, compared to the sector and cohort 2004–2007

![Good teaching graph](Image)
Item 5.5: The University of Queensland Generic Skills Scale mean response, compared to the sector and cohort 2004–2007

![Generic skills chart]

Item 5.6: The University of Queensland Overall Satisfaction mean response, compared to the sector and cohort 2004–2007

![Overall satisfaction chart]
Item 5.7: The University of Queensland Student Support Scale mean response, compared to the sector and cohort 2004–2007

![Student support graph]

Item 5.8: The University of Queensland Graduate Qualities Scale mean response, compared to the sector and cohort 2004–2007

![Graduate qualities graph]

Source: Data for items 5.4 to 5.8 is sourced from the Course Experience Questionnaire, managed by Graduate Careers Australia, and was publically available in 2008 from the Universities Australia website.
Item 5.9: UQ CEQ percentage agreement by field of study – Good Teaching Scale

Source: UQ Performance Portfolio Supporting Material

Item 5.10: University of Queensland graduates in full-time work as a proportion of those available for full-time work, compared to the sector and cohort 2004–2007
Item 5.11: University of Queensland graduates in full-time study as a proportion of total graduates, compared to the sector and cohort 2004–2007

![Chart showing graduation rates for University of Queensland (UQ) compared to sector and cohort from 2004 to 2007.]

Source: Data for items 5.10 and 5.11 are from the Graduate Destination Survey section of the UQ 2008 Institution Assessment Framework Portfolio.

Item 5.12: Equity group percentage of total student numbers of Go8 universities 2007

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>University</th>
<th>Non-English speaking background %</th>
<th>Students with a disability %</th>
<th>Indigenous students %</th>
<th>Students from regional locations %</th>
<th>Students from remote locations %</th>
<th>Students from areas of low socio-economic status %</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The University of Queensland</td>
<td>3.2</td>
<td>3.0</td>
<td>0.7</td>
<td>15.1</td>
<td>1.2</td>
<td>14.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The University of Melbourne</td>
<td>2.4</td>
<td>3.2</td>
<td>0.6</td>
<td>10.9</td>
<td>0.1</td>
<td>6.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Monash University</td>
<td>6.0</td>
<td>3.5</td>
<td>0.3</td>
<td>13.9</td>
<td>0.2</td>
<td>11.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The University of Adelaide</td>
<td>2.5</td>
<td>5.0</td>
<td>0.9</td>
<td>10.8</td>
<td>1.0</td>
<td>13.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The University of Western Australia</td>
<td>3.9</td>
<td>4.4</td>
<td>1.1</td>
<td>8.6</td>
<td>1.7</td>
<td>5.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The University of NSW</td>
<td>7.1</td>
<td>0.8</td>
<td>0.9</td>
<td>6.0</td>
<td>0.3</td>
<td>7.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The University of Sydney</td>
<td>8.6</td>
<td>3.1</td>
<td>0.5</td>
<td>7.5</td>
<td>0.3</td>
<td>7.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Australian National University</td>
<td>4.5</td>
<td>6.6</td>
<td>0.8</td>
<td>11.4</td>
<td>0.3</td>
<td>3.8</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Item 5.13: The University of Queensland Indigenous students retention ratios, compared to the sector and State (QLD) 2003–2007

Item 5.14: The University of Queensland Indigenous students success ratios, compared to the sector and State (QLD) 2003–2007

Source: Items 5.12, 5.13 and 5.14 are taken from the UQ 2008 Institution Assessment Framework Portfolio.
**Item 5.15: The University of Queensland ALTC fellowships and grants 2006–2008**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Program</th>
<th>2006</th>
<th>2007</th>
<th>2008</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Associate and Senior Fellows</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Competitive Grants</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Discipline-based Initiatives</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Leadership</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Priority Projects</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>8</strong></td>
<td><strong>8</strong></td>
<td><strong>3</strong></td>
<td><strong>19</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Adapted from the UQ Performance Portfolio, Table 18.
APPENDICES

APPENDIX A: THE AUDIT PROCESS

In 2008 the Australian Universities Quality Agency (AUQA) appointed an Audit Panel to undertake a quality audit of the University of Queensland. Within the scope of the particular audit, AUQA’s Cycle 2 audits emphasise institutional standards and performance outcomes, with attention to benchmarking activities and their effect on standards and outcomes.

In addition to the National Protocols for Higher Education Approval Processes, relevant external reference points for this audit are:

- Australian Qualifications Framework
- AVCC (now Universities Australia) 2005, Provision of Education to International Students: Code of Practice and Guidelines for Australian Universities
- AVCC (now Universities Australia) 2001, Policy Guidelines on Cross-Sector Qualification Linkages
- AVCC (now Universities Australia) 2005, Universities and Their Students: Principles for the Provision of Education by Australian Universities
- Education Services for Overseas Students Act 2000 (Cwlth) (ESOS Act) and the National Code.
- Higher Education Support Act 2003 (Cwlth) and associated regulations.

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

The mission, objectives, values and vision of AUQA are shown in Appendix B, membership of the Audit Panel is provided in Appendix C and Appendix D defines abbreviations and technical terms used in this Report.

Full details of the Cycle 2 audit process are available in the AUQA Audit Manual.

On 12 December 2008, the University of Queensland presented its submission (Performance Portfolio) to AUQA, including 161 supporting materials. The Audit Panel met on 22 January 2009 to consider these materials.

The Audit Panel Chairperson and Audit Director undertook a Preparatory Visit to the University of Queensland on 2 April 2009. During that visit, the answers to questions and additional information requested by the Panel were discussed, as well as the Audit Visit program.

The Audit Visit to the University’s St Lucia Campus took place between 30 March and 2 April 2009.

In all, the Audit Panel spoke with around 210 people in the course of the audit, including the Vice-Chancellor, the Chancellor, senior management, academic and general staff, external stakeholders, and undergraduate and postgraduate students (including international students). Open sessions were available for any member of the University community to meet the Audit Panel and 9 people took advantage of this opportunity.

AUQA expresses its appreciation to Professor Debbie Terry, Ellen Juhasz, Carole Tate and others at the University for their professional and willing assistance throughout the audit process and for their excellent organisation of the audit visit.
AUQA also thanks the University for its ready production of additional information and for granting the Panel secure access to its intranet for the period of the audit.

This Report relates to the situation current at the time of the Audit Visit, which ended on 2 April 2009, and does not take account of any changes that may have occurred subsequently. The Report records the conclusions reached by the Audit Panel based on the documentation provided by UQ as well as information gained through interviews, discussion and observation.

While every attempt has been made to reach a comprehensive understanding of the University’s activities within the scope of the audit, the Report does not identify every aspect of quality assurance and its effectiveness or shortcomings.
APPENDIX B: AUQA’S MISSION, OBJECTIVES, VISION AND VALUES

Mission

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

Objectives

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

Specifically, the objectives of AUQA are as follows:

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

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

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

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

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

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

Values

AUQA will be:

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

AUQA’s Mission and Objectives were revised in March 2007, as recommended by MCEETYA.
AUQA’s Vision and Values have been modified accordingly.
APPENDIX C: THE AUDIT PANEL

Dr Jeanette Baird, Audit Director, Australian Universities Quality Agency
Emeritus Professor David Beanland AO
Sir Graeme Davies, Vice-Chancellor, University of London, United Kingdom
Professor Colin MacLeod, Professor of Psychology, University of Western Australia (Chair)
Professor Robyn Quin, Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Education), Curtin University of Technology
APPENDIX D: ABBREVIATIONS AND DEFINITIONS

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

ALTC.......................................... Australian Learning and Teaching Council
AUQA ........................................ Australian Universities Quality Agency
BA ............................................. Bachelor of Arts
BSc ............................................ Bachelor of Science
CAPP ......................................... Committee for Academic Programs Policy
CEIT.......................................... Centre for Educational Innovation and Technology
CEQ .......................................... Course Experience Questionnaire
CLTC .......................................... Collaborative Learning and Teaching Centre
CPD ........................................... continuing professional development
CTQA......................................... Curriculum and Teaching Quality Appraisal
DEEWR...................................... Australian Government Department of Education, Employment and Workplace Relations, formerly DEST
DEST .......................................... Australian Government Department of Education, Science and Training
DVC(A) ...................................... Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Academic)
ECP........................................... Electronic Course Profile
EFTSL......................................... equivalent full-time student load
EPIAM ....................................... Education Principles on Indigenous Australian Matters
GDS ........................................... Graduate Destination Survey
Go8 ........................................... Group of Eight
HERS ....................................... Higher Education Research and Scholarship, a unit of TEDI (q.v.)
IAF ........................................... Institution Assessment Framework, a portfolio of institutional information finalised between a university and DEEWR (q.v.)
ICEVAL....................................... UQ Institutional Course Evaluation instrument
IELTS.......................................... International English Language Testing System
ISB ........................................... International Student Barometer™
LTPF .......................................... Learning and Teaching Performance Fund
MCEETYA .................................. Ministerial Council on Education, Employment, Training and Youth Affairs
PASS ........................................ Peer Assisted Study Sessions
PF p ........................................... Performance Portfolio page reference
Portfolio..................................... Performance Portfolio
SBPF .......................................... School-based Performance Framework
TEDI......................................... Teaching and Educational Development Institute
TEVAL....................................... UQ Teaching Evaluation instrument

54  © Australian Universities Quality Agency 2009
University ..................................The University of Queensland
UQ..............................................The University of Queensland
UQSES ........................................University of Queensland Student Experience Survey
USMC.........................................University Senior Management Committee