Report of the 2015 Academic Audit of the University of Waikato – Te Whare Wānanga o Waikato

Cycle 5 academic audit undertaken by the Academic Quality Agency for New Zealand Universities

October 2015

Te Pokapū Kounga Mātauranga mō ngā Whare Wānanga o Aotearoa

AQA | Academic **Quality**Agency
For New Zealand Universities

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Foreword

The 2015 audit of the University of Waikato is the fifth academic audit of the University carried out by the Academic Quality Agency for New Zealand Universities (AQA). The University was last audited in 2010, as part of the Cycle 4 audit of New Zealand universities, by a Panel of auditors from the (then) New Zealand Universities Academic Audit Unit.[1]

The current (fifth) audit cycle focuses on teaching and learning and student support, including postgraduate.

The methodology adopted for the 2015 audit of Waikato is that used for all New Zealand universities in this cycle of audits. The methodology is based on a framework of 40 Guideline Statements which are expressions of the qualities or standards that a contemporary university of good international standing might be expected to demonstrate. The Guideline Statements were developed after extensive discussion with New Zealand university staff and Vice-Chancellors and consultation with other stakeholders, including students and academic auditors. The Guideline Statements are informed by comparable frameworks in other jurisdictions, in particular the QAA (UK).

AQA academic audits draw on a university's self-review and the supporting documentation it provides, publicly accessible pages of the university's website and interviews with staff, students, Council members and, where appropriate, external stakeholders. The University of Waikato submitted its Self-review Portfolio, including a report and key supporting documentation in both print and electronic form, at the beginning of May 2015. The Self-review Report included hyperlinks to documents on the University's public website and also references to documents organised by the University in an electronic depository for the purpose of the audit. These processes ensured the audit Panel had a large amount of information available to it. Further documents were provided on request as needed. In addition, the University provided some more recent reports during and a short time before the site visit. These included an update on recent and proposed restructuring of senior management roles at the University.

These various sources enabled Panel members to triangulate claims made by the University and to ensure the Panel's own conclusions do not rely on a single source of evidence. The Panel has used the current 2014–2017 Strategic Plan and associated planning documents to provide the context for this audit.

The Chair of the audit Panel and the AQA Director visited the University for a pre-audit planning meeting in July 2015, when they met with the Vice-Chancellor, Deputy Vice-Chancellor, PVC (Education) and other staff.

The full Panel of five auditors, including an international auditor, came together in Hamilton on 17 August for the site visit on 18–21 August 2015. In total, during the site visit the Panel spoke to 106 staff and 20 students, as well as four members of the University Council.

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[1] The New Zealand Universities Academic Audit Unit changed its name to the Academic Quality Agency for New Zealand Universities from 1 January 2013.

This report presents the Panel's findings, based on the evidence it has considered. The AQA's conclusions are phrased as recommendations, affirmations and commendations, defined as follows:

Recommendations - refer to areas where the audit Panel believes the University would benefit from making some improvements or changes. Recommendations alert the University to what the Panel believes needs to be addressed, not to how this is done. The Panel may indicate some priority for recommendations by noting a need for action as urgent.

Affirmations – refer to areas which the University has already identified for itself in its Self-review Report or during the site visit as requiring attention, and about which the University has already taken action but does not yet have sufficient outcome to evaluate impact. Affirmations are in effect a validation by the audit Panel that something needs to be done and that the approach taken is likely to be effective.

Commendations – refer to examples of exceptionally good practice, or to examples of effective innovative practice, in areas which have or should result in enhancements to academic quality or to processes underpinning academic quality and which should produce positive impacts on teaching, learning and student experience.

The report is released under the authorisation of the AQA Board.

Dr Jan Cameron
Director
Academic Quality Agency for New Zealand Universities

October 2015

Executive Summary

Established in 1964, the University of Waikato is located in Hamilton, in the rohe of Waikato Tainui. The University also has a base in Tauranga, where it has offered papers since 1998, and teaches some papers online. The University's motto *Ko te Tangata* (for the people) reflects its philosophy that the University is "in, of and for the community".

In 2014, the University had a total enrolment of 12,232 students (9,904 EFTS) and 1,483 full-time equivalent staff. Waikato's academic offerings span a wide range of programmes from foundation to doctoral level.

The University was audited by the Academic Quality Agency for New Zealand Universities (AQA) in 2015. The current audit follows the methodology used for all New Zealand universities in the fifth cycle of academic audits. It focuses on teaching and learning and student support, including postgraduate. The AQA audit methodology incorporates a framework of 40 Guideline Statements which articulate the qualities or standards which a contemporary university of good standing internationally might be expected to demonstrate.

Prior to 2015, Waikato was most recently audited by AQA (as the then New Zealand Universities Academic Audit Unit) in 2010. The University provided an update against the findings of that audit and the Panel is satisfied that appropriate action has been taken to address the 2010 recommendations. In particular, the Panel noted that the University has made considerable progress in its provision for Māori and Pasifika students.

At the time of the 2015 audit, the University had recently appointed a new Vice-Chancellor. It was in the process of reformulating the senior management structure and responsibilities.

One of the University's major strategic initiatives is the Curriculum Enhancement Programme. In the Panel's view this project has the potential to be transformative if it addresses the full spectrum of pedagogical dimensions, including curriculum, graduate outcomes, assessment and delivery. A number of the Panel's recommendations are intended to assist the University with its curriculum enhancement objectives.

The Panel explored a range of academic activities from a perspective of consistent application and equitable impact. It concluded that the federated model of provision across a number of areas posed a risk to the University. In some cases there was potential replication of activity (for example provision of institutional academic advice; support of priority groups of students); in other cases there is a risk that services to both staff and students are not delivered equitably (for example, student learning support; induction support for staff; variation in practice regarding appeals and management of academic integrity). In the Panel's view, this model is currently not conducive to sharing, whether of good practice or of local challenges. The Panel recommends that the University undertakes a thorough review of a range of different academic activities in order to identify where there is potential for unnecessary replication, inconsistency and/or inequity to occur. The Panel also recommends that once it has undertaken this review the University develops guidelines, procedures

or policies (as appropriate) to ensure practices facilitate consistent quality of support for both staff and students.

The Panel was impressed by some of the University's recent and planned space developments and it was made aware of various activities available to staff to develop their teaching. The Panel concluded that the University needs to more proactively encourage staff to take advantage of the expertise available to them, in particular from the Waikato Centre for eLearning (WCEL) and the Teaching Development Unit. It is suggested that relocation of the management of the Centre for Tertiary Teaching and Learning out of a faculty would assist in this objective.

There are robust processes in place to ensure academic staff who are appointed are appropriately qualified and experienced. However the Panel was concerned that ongoing evaluation of teaching performance appears weak, since formal evaluation results normally are private to the individual concerned. The Panel recommends that the University reviews this practice and ensures that academic line managers receive performance data for the staff for whom they are responsible to inform the professional development reviews they undertake with these staff.

The University employs a range of processes for gathering feedback from current undergraduate students. The Panel recommends that the University develops a mechanism for gaining feedback from graduates, aligned with its current postgraduate exit survey. This will become increasingly important as the University implements the new graduate profile articulated within the Curriculum Enhancement Programme.

Processes and support in the postgraduate area are a strength of the University. The Panel supports the establishment of a School of Graduate Research. It commends the University on its overall management of postgraduate research and on the documentation pertaining to supervision. The intention to impose greater institutional oversight of faculty-based master's research is endorsed.

The University provides excellent support for Māori and Pacific students. It has some promising initiatives in place to support other groups who might face particular challenges in attending or succeeding at university, for instance rural students and those who are first-in-family. The Panel cautions that any significant growth in numbers of international students is likely to prompt an increasing need for support, particularly to assist students to overcome non-academic challenges.

The Panel encourages the University to develop work on benchmarking initiated in 2010, in particular by addressing which academic activities would most benefit from benchmarking, for what purpose, and including the identification of relevant comparator institutions.

On the basis of its assessment of the University's activities the Panel has made five commendations, seven affirmations and eleven recommendations. The University is expected to report on its response to the recommendations made by the Panel in twelve months' time (late 2016 or early in 2017) and again at the time of the next academic audit.

Contents

List of Key Terms and Acronyms

AQA	Academic Quality Agency for New Zealand Universities
AUSSE	Australasian Survey of Student Engagement
BLUE	Evaluative software/database used by Waikato for evaluating teaching quality
CEP	Curriculum Enhancement Programme
CTTL	Centre for Tertiary Teaching and Learning
CUAP	Universities New Zealand Committee on University Academic Programmes
EFTS	Equivalent Full-Time Student(s)
EPI	Educational Performance Indicator
FTE	Full-time Equivalent (staff)
ITS	Information Technology Services
KPI	Key Performance Indicator
Moodle	The University of Waikato's centrally supported Learning Management System
NZQA	New Zealand Qualifications Authority
Panel	Unless otherwise specified, "the Panel" refers to the Academic Audit Panel engaged by AQA to conduct the 2015 audit of University of Waikato
PVC	Pro Vice-Chancellor
SD	Supporting document (forms part of the University's Self-review Portfolio)
SR	Self-review Report
SSP	Statement of Service Performance
STAR	Secondary Tertiary Alignment Resource
TDU	Teaching Development Unit
TEC	Tertiary Education Commission
Te Puna Tautoko	A network of specialist support staff for Māori students from across the University
Te Ropū Manukura	A committee of Council which includes one member appointed by each of the eighteen iwi authorities within the University's broad catchment area
TESOL	Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages
WSU	Waikato Students' Union
WaiBoost	A three-day programme aimed at undergraduate students whose grades do not reflect their academic potential. (2Boost is a Tauranga version of WaiBoost)
WaiConnect	A service involving Student Learning, Library, Student and Academic Services, and the Waikato Students' Union to provide an academic and social workshop programme for Pacific and international students
WCEL	Waikato Centre for eLearning

Preface

Established in 1964, the University of Waikato is located in Hamilton, in the rohe of Waikato Tainui. The University also has a base in Tauranga, where it has offered papers since 1998, and offers some papers online. The Tauranga delivery is underpinned by a relationship with the Bay of Plenty Polytechnic which has operated for more than a decade. Articulation agreements with Wintec and with Waiariki Institute of Technology enable some University papers to be offered at these polytechnics. In addition to these domestic arrangements, long-standing agreements with the Shanghai International Studies University and with the Zhejiang University City College facilitate joint delivery of programmes and guaranteed credit from these Chinese institutions.[2]

University Profile

In 2014, the University had a total enrolment of 12,232 students (9,904 EFTS) and 1,483 full-time equivalent staff.[3] Of the University's 9,904 EFTS in 2014, 79% (7,824 EFTS) were enrolled in undergraduate degree-level programmes, approximately 3% in pre-degree programmes, 12% in taught postgraduate programmes and 6% in postgraduate research programmes. The majority (88%) of Waikato students are domestic.

Just over 2,000 students identified as Māori and just over 500 as of Pacific ethnicity.[4] While the proportion of Māori EFTS who are recent school leavers has been relatively stable at around 13%, the proportion of postgraduate students who are Māori has increased since 2010, in particular in taught postgraduate programmes.[5] The proportion of EFTS who identify as Pacific students has been relatively stable at around 6%.[6]

Of the 1,483 staff (FTE) reported in 2014, 636 (43%) were teaching and research staff. The student to staff ratio in 2014 was 15.9, slightly lower than it had been in 2012 (16.3).[7]

Waikato's academic offerings include over eighty qualifications in 200 different subjects ranging from foundation to doctoral level. At the time of the audit the University was considering a proposal which includes a redesign of undergraduate comprehensive degrees.[8]

The University of Waikato is structured academically as six faculties plus the School of Māori and Pacific Development, each of which is headed by a Dean. The 2015 proposal for restructuring the Senior Management Team includes a new positon of Dean of Engineering, within the Faculty of Science and Engineering. Most faculties comprise several schools or departments. Structurally schools and departments are differentiated by departments being primarily constituted as single

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[2] Self-review Report, pp 50-51. (Henceforth referred to as SR).
[3] Annual Report 2014, pp 46; 48. (Henceforth referred to as AR).
[4] AR pp 44; 45; 48. See also, Chapter 2.
[5] Statement of Service Performance, KD6a, p56. (Henceforth referred to as SSP).
[6] SSP, p57.
[7] AR, pp 46-47.
[8] The Curriculum Design Framework 19 August 2015, which is part of the Curriculum Enhancement Programme referred to in this audit report.

disciplines whereas schools are mostly collations of allied disciplines. In the documents provided to the Panel the Faculty of Management is also referred to as the Waikato Management School. The Waikato Pathways College provides preparation, bridging and English language programmes.

In addition to the Vice-Chancellor, the senior leadership team of the University during the time that the Panel was engaged on the audit comprised:
- the Deputy Vice-Chancellor;
- five Pro Vice-Chancellors (Māori; International; Education; Research; Postgraduate);
- two Assistant Vice-Chancellors (Executive; Operations);
- seven Deans;
- seven service Heads/Directors plus the Librarian and the Tauranga Partnership Liaison Manager.

Proposed changes to the team (some of which had already been finalised at the time of the site visit), include:[9]
- appointment of a Senior Deputy Vice-Chancellor;
- new positions of Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Research) and Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Academic);
- a new position of Pro-Vice-Chancellor (Teaching and Learning);
- a new Dean of Engineering, a new Associate Dean of Health and Human Performance and a new Dean of the School of Graduate Research;
- a new Assistant Vice-Chancellor (Student and Information Services) and a new Director of Student Services;
- a new Group Manager of External Engagement.

In the proposed new structure a number of reporting lines are changed and most, but not all, service Heads/Directors will report to the Senior Deputy Vice-Chancellor.

The University has a comprehensive "Academic Committee Directory" which covers all committees and boards.[10] The academic committee structure flows from the Academic Board (a committee of Council). Key committees are:

> Research Committee
> Education Committee (which has eight committees covering student discipline; admission appeals; education quality assurance; curriculum; student experience; teaching development; special consideration and scholarships – the latter jointly with the Research Committee)
> Faculty Boards (7).

Sixteen "Advisory Committees" include the Library Committee, Ethics Committee and Staff Awards Committee. The majority of the Advisory Committees report to the Vice-Chancellor; some report to relevant senior managers.[11] While termed "advisory" committees and in most cases having

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[9] Note: Confidential document as at July 2015.
[10] Key Document (KD) 2.
[11] KD2, p81.

responsibility for making recommendations to the Vice-Chancellor, the terms of reference for the committees make it apparent that some have decision-making authority (for example, the Animal Ethics Committee is "to exercise the powers and responsibilities as set out in the University's Code of Ethical Conduct for the Use of Animals for Research, Testing and Teaching" and the Code specifies that this committee is responsible for approving protocols involving research, testing and teaching in which animals are to be used.[12])

Vision, Mission and Strategic Plan

The Vision, Mission and Strategic Plan discussed below refer to the Plan provided at the time of the submission of the Self-review Portfolio.[13]

The University's Mission is *to combine the creation of knowledge through research, scholarship and creative works with the dissemination of knowledge through teaching, publication and performance.* The University states that its mission is "complemented and qualified" by its motto *Ko te Tangata* (for the people), reflecting its philosophy that the University is "in, of and for the community". The document "Strategy 2014-2017" states "We are committed to connecting strongly with our region and nation".[14]

The University's Vision is *to achieve excellence, distinctiveness and international connectedness*. In order to achieve its vision, the 2014–2017 Strategic Plan specifies six "strategic actions":
1. Provide a relevant, future-focused curriculum and world-class student experience;
2. Conduct world-leading research and develop innovative researchers;
3. Strengthen engagement and partnerships regionally and nationally;
4. Implement a comprehensive programme of internationalisation;
5. Embed a culture of innovation, entrepreneurship and leadership across the university;
6. Ensure sustainable practices in all aspects of university activity.

Within the Strategic Plan a further series of actions flows from each Strategic Action. With respect to the first Strategic Action, a relevant and future-focused curriculum and world-class student experience, the following actions are specified (in summary):
- Investment in teaching and learning and delivery modes which is responsive to student and societal needs;
- Delivery of world-leading, research-informed, responsive curricula that form part of a network of learning pathways;
- Alignment of graduate outcomes with social and market drivers;
- An excellent, distinctive, responsive student experience;
- Partnership with Māori and Pacific peoples to contribute to their educational aspirations;
- Enhanced student progression and transition rates;
- Work-based internships and overseas study opportunities;

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[12] www.waikato.ac.nz/__data/assets/pdf_file/0017/230903/Code-of-Ethical-Conduct-for-the-Use-of-Animals-for-Research,-Testing-and-Teaching.pdf accessed 28.07.15, Clause 6.1.
[13] Strategy 2014-2017, KD4.
[14] Strategy, p18.

- Inter-institutional collaborations for joint postgraduate qualifications, nationally and internationally.

Other Strategic Actions include activities pertaining to the focus of this audit, for example:
- Investment in "the best" academic staff and infrastructure, supporting and nurturing emerging researchers including postgraduate students (Strategic Action 2);
- Leading professional and community education and extending research and teaching collaborations with tertiary providers and iwi (Strategic Action 3);
- Strategic international student recruitment and embedding an international perspective in academic curricula, promoting cross-cultural competence and creating a multi-cultural campus environment (Strategic Action 4);
- Pursuit of innovation in teaching and development of leadership in staff and students (Strategic Action 5); and
- Academic programmes which are sustainable, future-focused and relevant (Strategic Action 6).

The operationalisation of these various activities flows through to other plans. One common thread in these plans is that they also reflect the University's ongoing commitment to the Treaty of Waitangi. Of the plans specifically relevant to this academic audit, the Academic Plan is overarching. It is described as a "functional document" to guide curriculum development and inform strategic planning and the key aspects of the Teaching and Learning, Research, Māori, Pacific and International Plans. The Academic Plan is informed by and also expected to influence the Workforce Plan, Student Plan, Stakeholder Engagement and Reputation Plan.[15] The Academic Plan includes summary plans for each Faculty which in turn inform faculty budget-setting.

A major initiative in progress at the University is its Curriculum Enhancement Programme (2014-2016).[16] This three-phase project covers analysis of current approaches to teaching, learning and student experience; consideration of future options including new curriculum developments and workforce considerations; and implementation. Enhancement initiatives are being considered in four areas:
- Transition to University, including "rethinking" the structure of the academic year;
- Undergraduate programmes, including recognition of non-academic activities;
- Postgraduate masters programmes (including taught postgraduate);
- Postgraduate doctoral programmes.

The University's Self-review Report states that the Curriculum Enhancement Programme is "expected to help the University crystallise its thinking around the distinctiveness of its teaching and research, which will in turn flow through to how the University promotes and positions itself, recruits students, and attracts research funding and philanthropy."[17]

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[15] Academic Plan 2012-2016, p1.
[16] SR, pp 3-4.
[17] SR, p3.

The University profile and strategic framework provide the context in which this audit was carried out. In addition, the University specifically invited the audit panel to provide feedback on its initiatives within the Curriculum Enhancement Programme.[18] These are considered within relevant sections of this report.

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[18] SR, p4.

1.   Leadership and Management of Teaching and Learning

As indicated in the Preface, Waikato at the time of the audit had a management structure similar to those of other New Zealand universities, led by a Vice-Chancellor who is supported by a senior leadership team of senior academic managers and directors or heads of support services. The new Vice-Chancellor commenced his appointment in February 2015 and a process of reformulation of the senior management structure and responsibilities was underway at the time of the audit.

The evaluative discussion in this audit report is based on the structure at the time of the self-review and site visit. However actions to be taken by the University in the future will need to fit in with the new responsibilities and roles.

1.1   Delegations

Universities should have clear delegations for decision-making related to teaching and learning quality and research supervision, and for accountability for quality assurance of programmes and courses.

The University states that the delegations below the level of Council are described in the terms of reference for various committees and are communicated to staff via several avenues: the "Governance and Management Guidelines" which refer to the delegations from Council held by the Vice-Chancellor; the Committee Directory; the Policy Framework which lists all policies; and the University Calendar.[19] The Delegations of Powers Statute identifies where specific delegated authorities lie.[20] There does not appear to be a document that specifies by what principles an authority may be delegated, and to whom. However this is being addressed by the Vice-Chancellor's review of key responsibilities; position descriptions and Calendar regulations outline the delegations.

At the time of the audit, the particular responsibilities for monitoring and delivering outcomes related to teaching and research lay with the Deputy Vice-Chancellor. In the new structure this will be the Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Academic) with respect to teaching-related outcomes and the Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Research) with respect to research-related outcomes. These positions are also responsible for developing and coordinating the plans whereby outcomes will be achieved and have delegated authority to make decisions within their areas of responsibility.

Deans are similarly responsible for developing plans and monitoring and delivering outcomes for their faculties. Deans have some decision-making delegations, and may delegate some procedural responsibilities to senior staff within their faculties.

Under new structural proposals the University signalled creation of a Dean of Engineering position, in addition to the Dean of the Faculty of Science (as well as possibly maintaining Heads of Schools of Science and of Engineering). The Panel was concerned that should this eventuate then it could cause issues in regard to delegated authorities. The Panel noted that this point had been recognised by some staff in their responses to the proposal. The Panel appreciated these ideas were still in

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[19] SR, p9; supporting documents CH 1-2 to 1-5.
[20] http://calendar.waikato.ac.nz/archive/2008/delegationofpowers.html accessed 01.09.15.

development at the time of the site visit, but urged the University to proceed with caution and, as part of the deliberation, to consider all consequences with regard to delegation.

The Panel was satisfied that delegations are currently articulated and conveyed clearly, and anticipates they will potentially become more explicit when the new management responsibilities are all in place.

1.2   Strategic and operational planning
Universities should have appropriate strategic and operational planning documents which include objectives related to student achievement and teaching quality, with key performance indicators which inform academic quality assurance processes.

The University presents its planning framework as a pyramid of seven "layers" flowing down from the Charter and up from budgets, infrastructure, staff and students.[21] The key strategic documents to guide the University's activities relevant to this audit are the Academic Plan 2012-2016 and the Teaching and Learning Plan 2013-2016. Other plans, for example the Student Plan and the Māori Advancement and Pacific Plans, which sit under the Academic Plan, also include activities which relate to the focus of this audit.

The Panel read a number of the plans and heard about others. It came to the view that the range, number and variety of these plans could lead to some inconsistency at department or school levels – for instance, the discipline-based variations on the Teaching and Learning Plan which the Panel heard about, while pertinent to the individual academic unit, also risked producing a degree of complexity which impeded the institution's ability to pull plans and outcomes together coherently.

The Panel recognises that the Academic Plan is coming to the end of its life (2012-2016) and that to some extent the proposals in the Curriculum Enhancement Programme (CEP), initiated in 2014, refocus the high-level goals for teaching and learning (see Chapter 3). The Panel was told that the CEP activities and consequences means that the next Academic Plan might well differ substantially from the current one.

The Goals of the current Teaching and Learning Plan (2013-2016) are consistent with what will be required for the CEP to be successful (for example, use of innovative pedagogies; a strategy for continuous improvement in teaching). However the Panel was not confident that the monitoring of all plans is underpinned by robust relevant data. For instance, most of the KPIs for the Teaching and Learning Plan are the Educational Performance Indicators (EPIs) required by TEC; these give little indication of how achievement of the actual Goals of the Teaching and Learning Plan will be assessed or reported. The traffic light reporting system is effective for the quantitative KPIs, and the identification of risks to achievement with potential mitigations is useful, but in the monitoring reports seen by the Panel only a small number of the actions under each goal were reported against.[22]

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[21] www.waikato.ac.nz/about/corporate/strategicplanning.shtml accessed 31.07.15.
[22] SD 1.1.3a October 2013; 1.1.3b April 2014.

Similarly, the Student Plan (2013-2015) has only three KPIs, two of which are reliant on survey results which because of low response rates might have questionable validity (see section 5.5). The Panel was told that the University aims not to have too many KPIs, that these must be outcomes and that they should align with the KPIs in the Statement of Service Performance (SSP). Nevertheless, the documentation provided to the Panel gave little indication of how the University assures itself of progress in the many areas and activities which underpin these high level indicators.

The Goals of the high level academic plans (specifically, Teaching and Learning; Student; Māori Advancement; Pacific; International and Research) are not inconsistent but collectively they are numerous. The Panel suggests that the University puts processes in place to ensure that individual plans can be tested against a future Academic Plan and University Strategy.

The Panel viewed Plans and planning data sets for individual faculties.[23] The Panel understands that one of the main purposes of faculty plans and reports is to inform annual budget setting. Interviews led the Panel to the opinion that accountability for achievement of some institutional KPIs (in particular, those related to retention and student achievement) also needed to be cascaded beyond senior managers to other academic managers, such as Deans and Heads of School/Department, who share a responsibility (individually and collectively) for their achievement.

Overall, the Panel confirms that the University has appropriate planning documents and that there are key performance indicators in place. The Panel also heard of a robust review process for policies and the University's adoption of the ComplyWith software to monitor compliance with legislation. The Panel's concern is with the number of plans and also with potential difficulty of aligning so many plans and strategies to ensure that they support each other as well as the high-level objectives of the University.

The Cycle 4 audit recommended that the University urgently establishes a quality assurance system that includes planning, monitoring and review. In response, the University reviewed its committees and established the Education Quality Assurance Committee. As part of this audit the Panel has considered a range of different policies and processes pertaining to academic quality. Comments on some of these are made in later sections of this report but overall the University appears to have robust quality systems in place, though operationalising them is at times fragmented. The Academic Quality Assurance Manual provided by the Waikato Management School could be a model for the institution in bringing quality processes together in one place.[24]

In the course of this audit the Panel has identified a number of areas where it is concerned that the federated model of institutional planning and operation poses a risk to the University of delivering inconsistent academic advice, support or decisions and, as a consequence, risks providing inequitable treatment of staff and students across the University. The Panel has also become aware that there are positive initiatives and good practices in different parts of the University which might be communicated and adopted more widely. The Panel suggests that more centralised oversight of

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[23] SD CH 3-17; SD 1.1.3c May 2014.
[24] SD CH 3-28.

core academic functions might be achieved without necessarily diminishing attention to disciplinary particularities nor disrupting the institutional delegations model.

> **Recommendation: The Panel *recommends* that the University reviews those institutional academic practices for which faculties, schools and departments currently have responsibility in order to identify instances of inconsistency or inequity and to identify good practices which might be shared; and that the University develops institutional policies, procedures and/or guidelines which ensure that practices facilitate consistent quality of support for staff and students, particularly with respect to:**
> **Provision of academic advice to currently-enrolled students;**
> **Appeals and academic grievances;**
> **Management of academic integrity;**
> **Support of priority groups of students;**
> **Identification and support of students at risk of under-achieving;**
> **Follow-up of student feedback on student engagement;**
> **Staff induction and workloads of staff new to academic work.**
> **(Refer to sections 2.3; 3.8; 4.1; 4.2; 4.4; 5.1; 6.1)**

> **Recommendation: The Panel *recommends* that when it reviews its Academic Plan the University also maps against it (or its replacement) the other institutional plans related to curriculum and student experience to ensure consistency and connectedness of objectives, measures and indicators.**

1.3   Student input
Universities should facilitate student input to planning, policy development and monitoring of key academic activities.

The University relies on its class representative system, student surveys and student members of committees to gain student input to planning, policy and monitoring. In addition to Academic Board, there are student members on all Faculty Boards and on many academic and advisory committees.

Recent initiatives to improve the recruitment, training and support of student committee members include provision of a dedicated support person. The University has identified a need to ensure more equitable representation across (in particular) Māori, Pacific, international and distance cohorts and also students studying at Tauranga. The University has indicated it intends to recognise student committee membership by recording this and other non-academic activities on their transcripts.[25] The Panel supports this initiative.

Students who were class representatives were generally satisfied that they made a useful contribution, both at class level and in some cases to University committees, but were not convinced that their input effected change. Students who spoke with the Panel did not seem aware of the University's deliberations on future curriculum, suggesting to the Panel that they might not be very

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[25] SR, pp 15-16.

well connected, as a group, with wider university policy or planning. Unfortunately the only students interviewed by the Panel who were not class representatives were students studying in Tauranga. It was thus difficult to ascertain how satisfied non-rep students were with student input. Tauranga students did not feel well connected to this process (see section 4.1).

The strategies adopted by Waikato are mostly consistent with those adopted elsewhere in New Zealand. While the Panel acknowledges the challenges for a university in gaining systematic, effective student input, it suggests that possibilities for improvement should be kept in sight, as well as the importance of closing the loop on responses to feedback. (See also section 5.5)

1.4   Infrastructure
Universities should have strategies and/or use processes for ensuring that their teaching and learning spaces and facilities are appropriate for their teaching and learning needs.

The Panel heard of University-wide consultation about space use and learned of efforts made by Facilities Management and Information Technology Services staff to inform themselves of developments in teaching methodologies and how these might influence space developments. The Panel was aware of the achievements in the Library (see section 1.5) , but despite these efforts and some specific achievements, the Panel found it difficult to verify systematic processes whereby informed perspectives on innovative pedagogy emerging across the world are translated into thinking and planning for on-campus developments.

The Self-review Report states that at a strategic level there are connections between developing pedagogies and facilities planning, and that links between the academic committees and operational committees ensure that "a variety of perspectives inform the University infrastructure and facilities investments".[26] While the Teaching and Learning Plan states that the Capital Assets Committee must "receive appropriate input from teaching and academic staff", the support of pedagogies referred to in this Goal of the Teaching and Learning Plan is focused on technologies, with no explicit mention of space.[27] Neither do the terms of reference of the Capital Assets Committee refer explicitly to pedagogical input to space decisions.[28] The Teaching Development and Support Committee is charged with making recommendations to the Capital Assets Committee "in support of high quality teaching and learning".[29] The Panel was not confident that these various terms of reference, in themselves, would ensure a strong pedagogical basis for space development or refurbishment. The Self-review Report refers mainly to space *allocation,* and to staff and student satisfaction with the condition of buildings, though it does state that the University will trial innovative teaching and learning spaces "where an emerging need is identified".[30]

In light of the transformative potential of the Curriculum Enhancement Programme, the Panel urges the University to be more proactive in exploring the potential for space development to facilitate

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[26] SR p17.
[27] TLP, Goal 4, 4.2.
[28] KD2, Capital Assets Committee, terms of reference, p95.
[29] KD2, Teaching Development and Support Committee, terms of reference, p63.
[30] SR, p18.

student learning and the different modes of teaching which are likely to evolve. This is an issue that would benefit from strong academic leadership and strategic institutional benchmarking which might feed into the Strategic Buildings and Infrastructure subgroup which has been established to consider the needs of the campus(es) of the future for the University.[31]

> **Recommendation: The Panel *recommends* that the University explore how it might make more effective use of knowledge about current best practice and emerging innovative pedagogies in a systematic way to ensure infrastructure planning, development and refurbishment is directed by current and anticipated teaching and learning practices.**

1.5 Information resources

Universities should use processes for ensuring that their information resources are appropriate and sufficient for research-informed teaching and learning.

At the time of the Cycle 4 audit the new Student Centre – Te Manawa, which includes the Library, was being completed. The Panel was pleased to hear and read of the ongoing evaluation of Library usage.[32]

Comments from both students and Library staff confirmed that the space design is effective and library resources are appropriate. Undergraduate students indicated they made extensive use of the Library's space and resources. The only matter raised as a criticism was that it is not open for longer hours. Library staff agreed that space and hours were constrained, though extended hours have been provided. Staff noted their attempts to match furniture and spaces to learning styles, for example having spaces that can be used to practise presentations. Research postgraduate students spoke appreciatively of the support provided by Library staff, in particular of subject librarians who appear to reach out proactively to students and staff in the faculties. Some subject librarians are located within the faculties and are consulted during the development of new programmes or papers. The Panel was told that the Librarian tries to ensure Library staff meet individually with every new PhD student.

Students from Tauranga reported that arrangements for accessing Library resources were not ideal for them individually. However the Panel is confident the University Library makes strong efforts to service these students and staff. The University Library has a service-level agreement with Bay of Plenty Polytechnic and also has a physical collection of books located there. Materials are provided on line and (physically) on request. Hamilton-based Library staff travel to Tauranga and there is a staff exchange between the University and the Polytechnic libraries.

The Panel was told that the Library is involved in the Curriculum Enhancement Programme, in particular in developing information literacy, research skills and academic integrity content. Centre for Tertiary Teaching and Learning (CTTL) staff have also been involved in discussions around the Curriculum Enhancement Programme in the context of embedding eLearning into programmes. The

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[31] Annual Report 2014, p15.
[32] SR, p20.

University uses Moodle, MyWeb™, EdLinked and Panopto to provide students with course-related material and to support their learning.[33] The Waikato Centre for eLearning (WCEL) monitors such services as wireless access points and network usage. The Panel heard of the challenges WCEL has in providing leadership in technology use given it is mainly serving the needs of staff already committed to using technology in teaching and there is a lack of programme-wide approaches to the use of digital technologies. It appeared to the Panel that WCEL endeavours to provide solutions to teaching needs but that this is largely *ad hoc*. A lack of "deep conversation" about educational technology in the University community was noted. The federated model of IT provision to staff in the faculties would appear to exacerbate this, contributing to WCEL generally providing a reactive rather than proactive service. The issue of fragmented support initiated mainly by individual users will need to be addressed and clearer direction provided to ITS and the CTTL if the objectives of the Curriculum Enhancement Programme are to be realised. (See also section 6.4)

There also appear to be some impediments to the effective support of staff at Tauranga. CTTL staff are looking to new ways, such as workshops provided via Adobe Connect, to engage Tauranga staff in eLearning development. The Panel noted that IT resources in Tauranga are provided by the Bay of Plenty Polytechnic, not the University. This requires careful monitoring to be alert to any risks associated with ensuring provision is appropriate for Waikato University students and staff and their work.

> **Commendation: The Panel *commends* the University on the success of the new (2011) Student Centre, incorporating the Library and student learning space, and of the systematic ongoing evaluation of Library usage.**

> **Recommendation: The Panel *recommends* that the University reviews its processes for decision-making around provision of digital learning support to ensure that teaching enhancements are in line with the University's objectives, including those of the Curriculum Enhancement Programme. Strong encouragement should be given to academic staff to avail themselves of the expertise available within the Centre for Tertiary Teaching and Learning.**

1.6   Risk management
Universities should have recovery plans and procedures which are designed to facilitate continuity of teaching and learning in instances of infrastructure system failure.

The Panel reviewed business continuity plans and the 2013 Guidelines for developing these. It heard about activities involving support services to develop, test and enhance procedures to be used in the event of an emergency, disaster, pandemic or other disruption. This University's risks appear to be less related to natural disasters than to critical incidents or emergencies, and planning and testing undertaken to date tend to reflect this. Staff are mindful of the risks posed by a physically open campus.

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[33] SR, p19.

Overall responsibility for emergency planning rests with Facilities Management. Beyond that, a suite of plans down to faculty level is intended to address business continuity during infrastructure failure and all divisions and faculties are expected to have a staff member with designated responsibility for business continuity management. This network connects with a central coordinator. Deans were well aware of risks and likely responses. The Panel was told that procedures are well documented and have been tested both through component tests (e.g. sirens; Moodle recovery tests) and through tabletop scenarios. Some "false alarms" had also tested procedures. Faculty managers have a responsibility to undertake tabletop testing for their areas. The University is yet to align its campus planning with local community procedures, in particular around tolerance of outages.

Faculty responsibility is currently particularly critical for IT systems which are managed by faculties and whose recovery systems are not therefore managed centrally. The Panel learned that central IT systems have a high level of redundancy built in. The cloud is used as a data repository and while access to this might still be vulnerable to a total IT outage, it provides a level of protection for storage of both business and research data. The Panel encourages the University to ensure all faculty data, especially those on different systems from central data, are backed up appropriately.

The University is aware of potential communication challenges (e.g. if there is cellphone network overload and electricity outages impact landline use).

The Panel was pleased to hear that ITS staff also took responsibility for managing other forms of risk, for example cyberbullying and being safe online.

The Panel is satisfied that the University is well aware of the most likely risks to business continuity and has dedicated staff, procedures and activities to manage this in the event of disruption. The Panel supports the University's stated intention to review organisational resilience and assess staff confidence in disaster management and recovery procedures.[34] No evidence was provided of systematic academic responses proposed to address a disruption situation, in particular a situation which is ongoing (such as a pandemic, which might impact on examinations or teaching continuity, for example). The Panel encourages the University to learn from the experiences of other universities, both in New Zealand and overseas, as it builds its capability in risk management.

> **Affirmation: The Panel *affirms* the University's developing risk management and business continuity processes, which are proportionate to the nature of likely risk events, and encourages the University to continue building capability in infrastructure, personal and academic responses.**

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[34] SR, p23.

2.   Student Profile: Access, Transition and Admission Processes

Waikato's student profile in 2014 was:[35]

	All students	%
	Headcount	
Total students, Headcount	**12,232**	
Total students, EFTS	**9,904**	
Total students	**Headcount**	
Domestic students	10,815	88%
International students*	1,417	12%
Total students (by ethnicity)**	**Headcount**	
Pākehā/European students	5,472	45%
Māori students	2,254	18%
Pasifika students	570	5%
Indian and Chinese students	1,699	14%
Other students	2,237	18%
Total students	**EFTS**	
Pre-degree students	335	3%
Undergraduate students	7,824	79%
Taught Postgraduate students	1,168	12%
Research Postgraduate students	576	6%

*   Defined as "overseas"

**   Ethnicity is self-identified. Students may nominate up to three identities.[36]

2.1   Admission and selection

Universities' admission and selection policies and practices should be clear and publicly available to students.

The University refers to its Admission Statute as the reference for admission and selection policies.[37] The Admission Statute is accessible via the Calendar online.[38] However this is not obvious from the University home page; it seems unlikely that the regulations themselves would be searched by a potential new student. Information regarding admission, enrolment and course availability is linked directly by a single click from the University home page.[39] This leads to advice for new students and separately for international students, as well as to student logins for returning students. The home

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[35] Data from AR, pp 44-48.

[36] Statement of Service Performance, KD6a, p56.

[37] SR, p24.

[38] http://calendar.waikato.ac.nz/admission/admissionstatute.html accessed 25.08.15.

[39] https://sase.waikato.ac.nz/app/NewStudent/ApplicationToEnrol accessed 25.08.15.

page also includes a link to University of Waikato, Tauranga which includes guidance on offerings on the Bay of Plenty campus.[40]

While the Calendar also sets out criteria for admission to specific programmes, a prospective student is led through these requirements via progressive links from the home page which take a student to individual degrees, where information on programme requirements, special entry requirements, academic opportunities (e.g. scholarships; competitions) and career possibilities are outlined.[41]

The Student and Academic Services division has overall responsibility for ensuring admission and selection processes and related processes, such as appeals, are effective and conform to University policy. A proposed new student management system and online portal should assist in this process, in particular by bringing all University processes for managing applications and facilitating student information and feedback into a single system. The Panel read that this website is a recent redesign and was pleased to note that the website team monitors traffic to ensure the most commonly required information is easily accessible.[42]

Information about admission to postgraduate study is linked from the same page as for undergraduate study. This further directs students to the Postgraduate Studies Office page and thence to the Postgraduate Handbook for more detailed information, e.g. regarding supervision; appeals; events; workshops.[43]

Notwithstanding the absence of an obvious Calendar link from the webpage, the information available to students and prospective students is clearly accessible, comprehensive and written in plain language. The University also advised that faculty handbooks are available in print and online and that faculty undergraduate and graduate student advisers are available to assist with admission processes.[44] The Panel heard no adverse comments from students regarding admission and entry processes and notes that respondents in the New Students Survey from both Hamilton and Tauranga, and across all degree levels, were generally very satisfied with the university's application process (77% very satisfied) and pre-enrolment information (74% very satisfied).[45]

2.2   Access and Transition
Universities should use policies and/or procedures which are designed to assist the access and transition of equity groups or other priority groups.

The University has a standard portfolio of advice resources for prospective students, including open days; school visits; regional events; phone, email, in-person and online chats. A "Future Students

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[40] See http://papers.waikato.ac.nz/tauranga/subjects/ accessed 25.08.15.
[41] E.g. www.waikato.ac.nz/study/qualifications/llb.shtml; www.waikato.ac.nz/study/qualifications/bcgd.shtml accessed 25.08.15.
[42] SR, p27.
[43] www.waikato.ac.nz/sasd/postgraduate/ accessed 25.08.15.
[44] SR, p25.
[45] SR, pp31-32. SD CH2-21. The survey had an error of +/- 3.2%. However the survey notes that the majority of respondents were in their first year of study, were based on the Hamilton campus, and were skewed towards Pākehā and female students. The University also carried out a Decliners and No-returners survey SD CH2-22.

Team" is responsible for connecting with prospective students, and runs information sessions for prospective students in Hamilton, Tauranga, Rotorua and Auckland. Community-based information sessions extend to church groups and community events for Māori and Pacific groups, and incorporate tikanga in appropriate Māori settings.

The equity or priority groups identified by the University are those specified by TEC, namely Māori, Pacific, international and students with a disability. The University clarifies that it does not privilege or prioritise the admission of any of these groups.[46] However strategic commitment to providing targeted support for the above groups is indicated in the suite of plans sitting underneath the Academic Plan, in particular the Māori Advancement Plan, the Pacific Plan and the International Plan, as well as the University's Disability Policy. In addition, the Panel heard about some of the challenges for students transitioning from small rural schools. It learned of recent efforts to connect with potential students in Tokoroa and Putaruru, regional areas separated by distance from Hamilton and Tauranga and without a strong tradition of higher education participation.[47] The Panel supports these initiatives and the recognition that while such students might not be specified as priority groups, they nevertheless might have specific needs for support.

Existing outreach activities appeared to be effective. However some students who spoke to the Panel indicated that they needed more support before coming to university and that for them the help available was insufficient. The Panel suggests the University might maintain a watch on the sufficiency and appropriateness of pre-enrolment advice (see section 2.3). There also seemed to be a need for more proactive personal support, with some new students saying they felt lost or out of their depth with how the University operated. Exceptions to this experience were Māori students who did have additional structured help available. The Panel supports the University's proposal to extend the orientation period so that it starts before the semester start date, and encourages the University to consider whether the extra few days proposed will be adequate, especially for international students. The University provides a comprehensive pre-departure guide for international students.[48] Information on the webpage is provided in Chinese, Korean, Arabic, Spanish, Thai and Bahasa Indonesian languages.[49]

The University's partnership with Māori is strong, which the University says makes it easier for Māori students to transition to University.[50] Community activities, dedicated Māori student advisers and recruitment staff, faculty-based Māori mentoring units and special initiatives targeting Māori school students all contribute to encouraging engagement with the University. The Panel was told that local iwi are very proactive in endeavouring to build the capability of their people. Some iwi provide scholarships.

Provisions for Pacific students tend to parallel those for Māori students, with some dedicated staff, faculty-based strategies, Pacific mentoring and tutoring and a dedicated floor in one of the halls of residence, with resident advisors, for Pacific students. The latter initiative is deliberately intended

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[46] SR, p28.
[47] Te Ara ki Angitū: Pathways to Excellence, document provided to the Panel.
[48] www.waikato.ac.nz/students/international/before-you-come-to-nz/ accessed 26.08.15.
[49] www.waikato.ac.nz/students/international/language-translation.shtml accessed 31.08.15.
[50] SR, p28.

to help Pacific students adjust to university life.

The Panel heard favourable comments about individual department or school initiatives but a perception from students that provision was weak at an institution-wide level. The array of activities provided by faculties to support Māori and Pacific students did not appear to be well-connected, integrated or coordinated and the Panel found little evidence that these activities are evaluated in any systematic way to ascertain whether they are appropriate or effective. Such activities are discussed further in sections 4.1 and 5.2.

In addition to activities intended to smooth the transition of equity groups, the University provides a STAR (Secondary Tertiary Alignment Resource) programme for able year 13 school students to undertake university study, the Waikato Pathways College for students needing assistance to bridge into university study, and a postgraduate students' induction programme. The Panel was not made aware of any systematic tracking of Pathways student performance after they move on to degree level study. Post-pathways achievement is an important indicator of that programme's success.

The above observations are focused mainly on undergraduate transition. The Panel was alerted to challenges also encountered by some international postgraduate students, especially the need for assistance or support in managing changes not just to ways of study but to everything about living in a different culture and climate. While not directly the University's responsibility, visa issues also caused difficulty for some students. The Panel did not explore these matters further but brings them to the University's attention as issues which might be shared by a number of international students who do not form part of a beginning undergraduate cohort and which might be particularly challenging for international students who arrive with families. If such adjustments are a wider issue then they present a risk for the University that it will need to consider how to manage, particularly if numbers of international students grow.

The Panel supports the University's introduction of an academic foundation paper and the intention to require an academic integrity module for all first year students (see section 3.8) as "areas for development" intended to assist with student transition to university academic study.[51]

| **2.3   Academic advice** |
| Universities should use processes for providing academic advice and course information to both new and continuing students. |

The University cites the print and online Calendar as the authoritative resource for staff for academic advice.[52] The links directly from the University home page to information for students are both relevant and accessible. Dedicated webpages for Māori, Pacific, Australian, international, new, future and postgraduate students provide academic advice tailored to the specific needs of these students. There are also separate prospectuses, both online and in print, for undergraduates, international students and Tauranga students. Faculties provide advice via a number of avenues

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[51] SR, p32.
[52] SR, p33.

pertaining to their programmes. Some faculty staff also provide counselling and advice to cohorts of students transitioning between years of study.

The Panel asked those students who were interviewed where they would go for academic advice beyond that pertaining to a specific programme (for example, about aegrotat consideration or an appeal). The responses varied, including the faculty Dean, faculty registrar and the programme coordinator; some students had no idea where they would go. Given that these students were class representatives, the issue is possibly more significant than that reported to the Panel.

The University stated in its Self-review Report that the provision of advice involves "clearly designated places and people" and that quality is ensured by limiting the number of staff within a faculty who may approve a student's programme of study.[53] Notes on a student's record in the Student Management System also enable staff to track advice given.

Clearly the University does have avenues for provision of such academic advice but these are not always easily identified. The Panel heard of student dissatisfaction with both the ease of accessing advice and, in some cases, about being given "bad" advice. Avenues for advice were also unclear for students if their study spanned more than one faculty. This could be a high risk matter if the University increases its emphasis on interdisciplinary study.

The Self-review Report notes that some faculties use different systems for recording advice. This variation might not be a problem in itself for individual students studying in one faculty but does highlight an issue in there being limited coordinated central oversight. The Panel sees this as a risk which needs to be addressed in a way which acknowledges the discipline-specific knowledge residing in faculties but ensures the integrity of advice on other academic matters is not compromised by diverse approaches to advising. The Panel therefore urges the University to review its processes for academic advising and to develop a robust framework and practices to ensure that institutional-level advice and decisions on academic matters are managed consistently with central oversight, while also allowing for discipline-specific advice to be provided at faculty level. In both cases the advice should be well documented and communicated clearly and unambiguously to students and all staff. (See recommendation section 1.2.)

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[53] SR, p34.

3.   Curriculum and Assessment

Central to the University's academic focus during the time of the audit was the Curriculum Enhancement Programme (CEP)[54], approved by Council in 2014 and described in the University Strategy 2014-2017 as a "curriculum renewal process".[55] It has also been described as an 'innovative rethink" of all the University's offerings.[56] The Self-review Report summarises the objectives of the project under four headings:

- Transition to university
- Undergraduate programmes
- Postgraduate masters programmes
- Postgraduate doctoral programmes.[57]

In addition to the academic objectives, the University also intends the project to "assess and reduce costs associated with teaching the current curriculum".[58]

At the time of the audit, most of the activities within the four-part framework for the project were "initiated" or "developing"; only two tasks were designated "completed".[59] Memos provided to the Panel elaborated on progress, noting *inter alia,* the changing nature of rationales for action. The "Value Propositions" pertaining to curriculum however, remain consistent with the objectives outlined in the original documents (see section 3.2).

During the preparation time for the audit the Panel received a number of documents pertaining to this project, with the objectives and processes described in different ways.[60] In part this reflected the dynamic nature of the project. Where there are differences in language or variations in objectives, this audit report refers to the most recent consultation document. In particular, matters pertaining to undergraduate curriculum refer to the consultation document which was released while the Panel was undertaking the site visit.[61] The Panel also valued an interview with the consultant engaged as Director of the Programme and it spoke to a wide cross-section of staff about the objectives of the project and the implications for operationalisation.

Comments made in this and other chapters of the report commonly refer back to objectives of the CEP. The Panel also offers some overview comments about the project. In particular, the Panel observes the duality of the project, on the one hand including activities related to curriculum development and pedagogy (in particular) which might be considered normal business for a university and which, in some instances, are needed simply to bring the University in line with current practice in most New Zealand universities. On the other hand the Panel sees the project as

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[54] Also referred to in some documents as the Curriculum Enhancement Programme.
[55] Strategy 2014-2017, p9. Also, Annual Report 2014 refers to "renewing programmes", p12.
[56] Annual Report 2014, p15.
[57] SR, pp3-4.
[58] Internal memo, 26 May 2014. See also Investment Plan summary 2015-2017 p13.
[59] Internal memo, 12 June 2015.
[60] Curriculum Enhancement Programme documents 26 May 2014; March 2015; June 2015 Outcomes report; July 2015.
[61] Consultation document 19 August 2015.

potentially transformative. The Panel could see challenges for the University in ensuring that academic leadership is harnessed and developed to support the potentially far-reaching innovations and transformations, and that organisational energy is not distracted or consumed by work which should be routine. The Panel also observes that the focus on curriculum is not matched by a similar focus on the pedagogical or infrastructure developments which will be necessary if the curriculum is to be delivered in transformative ways. To this end the University is encouraged to think of curriculum in a broader range of formats than is currently implied in the CEP documents, including taking account of infrastructure, knowledge, pedagogy and assessment approaches. This observation is reflected in some of the Panel's comments in sections 1.4, 1.5 and 6.4.

3.1   Programme approval

The University should have consistent and robust internal course and programme approval processes which meet any national and professional expectations and which include opportunity for input from stakeholders where appropriate.

The Panel reviewed documentation related to course and programme approval, including the record of CUAP approvals, and was satisfied these processes are consistent with national expectations. The Panel heard from several staff about professional accreditation processes and noted these were successful. All programmes must demonstrate alignment with the Academic Plan (see section 1.2 regarding the relationship between faculty plans and the Academic Plan). The Panel heard of input from the Library to the development of new programmes. It notes that where a proposal spans more than one faculty a cross-faculty working party is formed to manage the development.

The University has a strong commitment to Māori input to programme development. This is supported by input from Te Ropū Manukura (a committee of Council which includes one member appointed by each of eighteen iwi authorities within the University's broad catchment area).[62] Proposals must include evidence of stakeholder consultation and strategies are reported for gaining student comment. Within the Curriculum Enhancement Programme work programme, the University states that it intends to increase the use of professional, stakeholder and employer advice in designing and changing academic programmes.[63]

The University describes its programme approval processes as "robust and effective" and the Panel found no evidence to the contrary. The Panel supports the University's initiative to develop an online portal for managing programme development and approval, and to further develop functionality when the current student management system is replaced.

The Curriculum Enhancement Programme, if proposals are approved, will involve a revision of undergraduate degree structures, including three core papers for all degrees. A review of paper sizes is also proposed. The Panel was pleased to learn of the benchmarking undertaken by the University with respect to these aspects.

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[62] KD2, Committee terms of reference. Te Ropū Manukura is "the body responsible with Council to give effect to the Treaty of Waitangi in the University".

[63] Curriculum Enhancement Programme document May 2014.

> **3.2   Graduate attributes**
> Universities should have clearly-defined intended graduate outcomes (graduate attributes) which are publically available and are accessible to students and staff.

At the time of the audit the University had graduate profiles for all individual qualifications. The Panel reviewed a selection of these, along with the Guidelines for Graduate Profiles. From staff interviews it concluded that the requirements of programme graduate profiles are well understood, especially by staff teaching professional and/or accredited programmes. Templates are available for the articulation of profiles and they are available to staff via the intranet. The Panel endorses the University's intention to ensure graduate profiles are publicly available online.[64]

The University does not currently have an institutional graduate profile, although various documentation includes aspiration statements of what attributes should characterise a Waikato graduate. The words most commonly used in this context include:

- Innovative[65]
- Entrepreneurial[66]
- Globally connected/internationalised[67]
- Leadership[68]
- Critical thinkers; future-focused; employable graduates.[69]

Documents also referred to the importance of the partnership with Māori and its impact on providing students with cultural awareness, as well as to "the Pacific dimension" of a Waikato experience.[70] The Investment Plan itemises additional values which might translate into graduate attributes, namely "acting with integrity" and "promoting creativity", as well as celebrating diversity and the partnership with Māori.[71]

The Academic Plan and other documents highlight one of Waikato's areas of distinctiveness as being about its partnership with Māori and also about a commitment to the needs of the region (i.e. Waikato and Bay of Plenty). These commitments were noted in the Cycle 4 audit report as a "real strength".[72]

The Panel endeavoured to find its way through these various descriptions of what might be loosely termed "graduate attributes" and tested them with a number of interviewees. It found recognition of institutional characterisations of graduate qualities (attributes) to be patchy, perhaps because these have never been formally articulated in a consistent way across the University. Furthermore, when specific qualities, such as being "innovative" or "creative" or "globally-connected" were raised with interviewees, the responses tended to be idiosyncratic. On the other hand, the Panel received

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[64] SR, p38.
[65] Strategy 2014-2017, p16.
[66] Strategy 2014-2017, p16.
[67] Strategy 2014-2017, p14.
[68] Strategy 2014-2017, p16.
[69] Academic Plan 2012-2016, p4.
[70] Strategy 2014-2017 p9; Vision and Way Forward (2005), p3.
[71] Investment Plan summary 2015-2017, p3.
[72] University of Waikato Academic Audit report Cycle 4, 2010, p5.

very clear indications that attention to Māori content or perspectives in papers is widespread and that both staff and students were cognisant of Māori tikanga, community interaction and commitment to Māori. Staff could also demonstrate how individual programmes provided an international perspective, though this is not necessarily the same as ensuring graduates are "globally connected" or have experienced "internationalisation". The Panel noted some confusion among staff about the differences between these concepts.

In this context of a relatively insecure set of current graduate descriptors, the Panel focused on the intentions of the Curriculum Enhancement Programme with respect to a future institutional graduate profile.

The first Action identified in the Curriculum Enhancement Programme is to "provide a relevant, future-focused curriculum and world-class student experience". Curriculum activities expected to help achieve this include:

- "world-leading, research-informed, socially and culturally responsive undergraduate and postgraduate curricula that form part of a network of learning pathways";
- alignment of graduate outcomes with changing social and market forces;
- work-based internships or overseas study as part of some academic programmes; and
- national and international inter-institutional collaborations for delivery of joint postgraduate programmes.[73]

The Curriculum Enhancement Programme also aims to embed an international perspective in all academic curricula and promote cross-cultural competence (Action 4). The University states that it intends that its curriculum will be developed around its areas of strength and strategic direction.

The consultation document released during the site visit and provided to the Panel includes a set of Draft University of Waikato Graduate Attributes. Six categories are proposed for discussion. The document makes it clear that opportunity to develop and demonstrate the attributes finally agreed to will be required in all undergraduate programmes.[74] The Panel notes that the draft list includes several of the characteristics which have been expressed in earlier documents (such as innovation; creativity; leadership).

> **Affirmation: The Panel *affirms* the University's attention to the development of institutional graduate attributes and encourages it to expedite the process of reaching a conclusion such that a clear Graduate Profile can be articulated and communicated to staff, students and the community and used as a basis for curriculum initiatives.**

3.3   Graduate outcomes
Universities should have processes for ensuring students have the opportunity to meet the intended graduate outcomes (graduate attributes) during their period of study.

Given that the University currently has no institutional graduate profile the Panel's discussion drew

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[73] Confidential document May 2014.
[74] Consultation document 19 August 2015, p9.

on staff and student experiences at the programme level. Some effective practices were described by staff in a number of areas (see section 3.2 above). Students, however, were less clear about what graduate attributes they might expect to acquire, or how these might be achieved. In general, staff teaching in professionally-related degrees were more able to discuss relationships between teaching and graduate profiles. The Panel heard little about how students currently achieve the attributes variously described in University strategic documents as defining its distinctiveness.

Part of the Curriculum Enhancement Programme involves a revised course architecture and degree structures, as well as newly defined curriculum design principles. These are intended to contribute to the design of a relevant, dynamic, world class curriculum which is articulated in the section of the project headed "Undergraduate Programmes". The principles underpinning this component include an expectation that all papers will provide students with experiences designed to enable the development and demonstration of the graduate attributes which are agreed to.[75]

The Panel encourages the University to find ways of identifying and sharing the good practices which might be occurring in some faculties and schools, particularly those practices which will support the graduate attributes decided upon arising out of the Curriculum Enhancement Programme.

> **Recommendation: The Panel *recommends* that as part of the Curriculum Enhancement Programme the University provides appropriate professional development opportunities to assist staff in providing students with learning activities which will facilitate the acquisition of attributes in the Graduate Profile, and in using modes of assessment whereby the University can assure itself the Graduate Profile is achieved.**

3.4   Programme review
Universities should have regular reviews of programmes and courses, including external accreditation reviews, which include input from students and other stakeholders and which are used to ensure curriculum quality.

In its Self-review Portfolio the University describes conventional programme review processes. The Panel appreciated a newly revised set of procedures that were provided during its deliberations, noting that the earlier 2007 guidelines had been developed in response to a Cycle 3 audit recommendation.[76] The programme review guidelines were signalled as an area for improvement in the Self-review Report.[77] The new guidelines are more clearly focused than the 2007 version. They are comprehensive, covering qualification reviews, academic unit reviews, accreditation reviews and *ad hoc* reviews requested by a member of senior academic management. The new guidelines specify where delegations lie for approving minor and major changes.

Qualifications are normally to be reviewed on a seven year cycle and Deans are instructed to prepare a seven year rolling plan, with programme review schedules ultimately being approved by

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[75] Consultation document 19 August 2015, p13.
[76] Guidelines for Programme Reviews August 2015, replacing the 2007 guidelines. Cycle 3 report, R7. www.aqa.ac.nz/sites/all/files/WaikatoCycle3.pdf accessed 28.08.15.
[77] SR, p44.

Academic Board. This is a change from the previous guidelines which specified a five year cycle. The frequency fits within the range suggested for New Zealand universities.[78] The Panel was pleased to note that the new guidelines extend processes which close the loop after reviews, both in terms of reporting on review outcomes and in the responsibilities around actions.[79] The Panel heard how programme review outcomes might feed into faculty plans and hence to the Academic Plan.

The Panel notes that programme reviews are to be conducted "in a way that is appropriate to the strategic relevance and size of the programme", with large programmes or those identified as of strategic importance (Category 1 reviews) required to have formal reviews involving external panel members. The responsibility for determining which type of review will be held rests with the relevant Dean.

The Panel was satisfied that review processes are in keeping with usual practice across New Zealand universities. However it is aware that the reviews of undergraduate degree structures which are part of the Curriculum Enhancement Programme might necessitate reviews with a slightly different focus. While proposed as structural reviews they will nevertheless include some content review, given the proposal to incorporate a set of core papers and also a stated strategic intention to offer a more "future-focused" curriculum, more interdisciplinary programmes and also to make cost savings on curriculum.[80] The Panel was alerted to the challenge of ensuring "hard decisions" are made, in particular about paper deletions. Reviews might also be needed if the University proceeds with proposals to make changes to master's and doctoral programmes. The University will need to determine how these out-of-cycle reviews are managed and ensure they do not result in an unreasonable heaping of reviews on a subsequent seven year cycle, allowing also that for some programmes accreditation reviews might demand additional time, effort and resources.

Bearing all these issues in mind, the University might consider developing a review schedule, such that the University can assure itself that reviews are staged appropriately across a time scale and plans are in place for their execution. Such a schedule might assist in reducing risks associated with different kinds of reviews being managed concurrently.

The Panel received lists of programme reviews for 2012-2015 and a list of graduating year reviews (GYRs) submitted to CUAP 2012-2015.[81] No issues had been identified with these.

3.5   Benchmarking programmes
Universities should use processes for benchmarking curriculum and assessment standards to ensure they are internationally appropriate. (See also 7.4 re thesis assessment)

Among the "actions required" identified by the University in preparation for the 2010 Cycle 4 audit was to "continue with the identification of benchmarks and indicators across all areas of teaching and learning." The current Panel was thus disappointed to find little evidence of academic

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[78] CUAP Handbook 2015, p58.
[79] Guidelines for Programme Reviews 2015, pp 16-17.
[80] Academic Plan 2012-2016, p13. Curriculum Enhancement Programme document May 2014.
[81] KD8; KD9.

benchmarking which is systematic, purpose-driven or potentially aspirational. The Panel heard of activities in this space but they appeared *ad hoc* and sometimes opportunistic or driven from individual initiatives or relied on occasional processes such as input to external programme reviews. The Panel heard of relationships with a small number of other universities in England and Australia but no examples where partners were actively investigated and sought for particular ends. Benchmarking of non-academic activity was apparent with the UK partners but these universities were not discussed as partners in academic benchmarking.

The Panel reviewed the University's 2010 Benchmarking report, produced by the Benchmarking Taskforce, which arose from a Cycle 4 recommendation related to the benchmarking of student feedback.[82] The Panel noted in particular the first principle, that the [Teaching Quality Committee] "define benchmarking as a learning process, structured to facilitate the comparison and evaluation of practice, process and performance to aid the systematic development and quality improvement of teaching, learning and student experience".[83] The 2010 report included insightful proposals related to the selection of benchmark partners and the purpose of engagement with respect to benchmarking.[84] The 2015 Self-review Report states that the University has been progressively implementing the proposals of the 2010 report "using a holistic approach of benchmarking with institutions of a similar age and which offer comparable programmes".[85] The Panel was provided with planning datasets which are intended, *inter alia*, to facilitate benchmarking. However neither the documentation provided nor the interviews convinced the Panel that the intentions of the 2010 proposals were being realised in any systematic way. The University appeared to lack an overriding direction of systematic identification of activities or processes or outcomes which should be benchmarked, or which institutions might provide meaningful comparators, or about how benchmarking activity might translate into the improvements signalled in the 2010 document.

The Panel suggests that the University might endeavour to be more aspirational in the partners it identifies, while nevertheless encompassing the distinctive elements which might be shared (for example, a particular focus on and reputation for commitment to an indigenous community). The Panel also comments that not everything that a university does needs to be benchmarked and activities do not all need to be benchmarked against the same institutional partners; rather both the objective and the comparators need to be clear and purposeful and aligned with the University's strategic goals. The Panel gained the impression that because of an apparent lack of direction in its benchmarking the University might be missing opportunities that present themselves for undertaking such a systematic approach. The University recognises that benchmarking is an area for improvement in its activities.[86]

While the above discussion relates to international benchmarking the Panel urges the University to also consider greater potential for local benchmarking.

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[82] Cycle 4 audit report, R10.
[83] SD CH3-16. Benchmarking for Teaching and Learning Quality, 2010, p2.
[84] SD CH3-16. Benchmarking for Teaching and Learning Quality, 2010, Proposals 10, 11, 12, p3.
[85] SR, p45.
[86] SR, p47.

Recommendation: The Panel *recommends* that the University revisits the 2010 benchmarking report and develops appropriate institutional benchmarking principles which encompass, *inter alia:* academic activities to be benchmarked; for what purpose; identification of relevant comparator institutions and procedures; avenues or responsibility for translating relevant good practices identified into local developments.

3.6   Assessment

Universities should use documented procedures for monitoring and moderating assessment processes and standards. (See also 7.4 re thesis assessment)

University assessment regulations, published in the Calendar, are accessible on the website via a search.[87] The Panel was provided with assessment handbooks for students and staff as well as the higher degrees handbook which covers requirements for thesis examination. Assessment issues were discussed with both staff and students. Students commented that the Student Assessment Handbook is hard to find. While the Student Assessment Handbook is accessible via a web search this would not be obvious if a student did not know such a handbook existed - the Panel accessed this via the Teaching Development Unit website, which is not a website students are likely to encounter or search for. [88] Assessment requirements for individual papers are included in paper outlines.

While the Staff Assessment Handbook articulates an intention to enhance staff understanding of moderation as a section under Goal 4 of the Teaching and Learning Plan, the handbook itself does not elaborate on this.[89] This suggests a need for the University to consider redeveloping the handbook for staff. The current handbook rightly sets out the rules and regulations for student assessment. However staff also need information about the principles of assessment that the University ascribes to.

The University provides evidence of monitoring and moderation of assessment for some professional programmes.[90] Faculty oversight of papers within a programme is exercised through faculty boards which are required to confirm all exam marks. The Self-review Report states that faculties vary in how they undertake moderation. For some individual subjects the Chairperson, in the role of Chief Examiner, has a moderating responsibility. He or she is required to approve all final examination papers and may request model answers. The guidelines for internal assessment and final grades also allow for the Chief Examiner to change a student's final grade and to impose conditions on further iterations of an assessment task.[91]

The new initiative to put all paper outlines online will facilitate greater levels of monitoring across the University. The Panel heard positive comments about the development of marking rubrics in some programmes. External moderation occurs as required for professional programmes but it was

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[87] http://calendar.waikato.ac.nz/assessment/assessment.html accessed 31.08.15.
[88] www.waikato.ac.nz/tdu/pdf/studentAssessment.pdf accessed 31.08.15.
[89] SD CH3-25. Staff Assessment Handbook, p9.
[90] SR, pp 48-49.
[91] Academic Quality Assurance Manual, pp 33-35.

not evident whether or not this happens for other undergraduate programmes: where these matters were discussed with staff it was usually staff in professional programmes who provided examples.

The Panel was particularly interested in how staff ensured programmes and outcomes are "world class" as promoted in the University's strategic documents. Staff rehearsed arrangements at postgraduate level whereby assessments (i.e. theses) are externally validated. International accreditation was also cited. Other staff though questioned whether "world class" was an appropriate term, in these cases citing relevant national benchmarks for assessment and outcomes, including graduate employability and acceptability at conferences, etc. The predominant focus of discussion about "world class" with a range of staff was about curriculum content, not objectives or assessment.

The Panel did not identify any practices or gaps in practice which compromise either the programmes or the integrity of academic outcomes for students. However the Panel's findings were consistent with the evidence provided in the Self-review Report, namely that it focused on professional programmes which must meet external moderation requirements. The Panel strongly encourages the University to undertake a check across faculties to ensure moderation is consistent and appropriate to the stage of study. Such a check would align with the University's stated enhancement to review procedures for internal assessment remarking and for processing special consideration requests for internal assessment.[92]

3.7   Equivalence of learning outcomes
Universities should have formal mechanisms to ensure that learning outcomes of students in programmes taught on other campuses and/or with partner institutions, including those which are in other countries, meet the standards expected by the university on its home campus.

The University of Waikato teaches into two programmes in China. As described to the Panel, the papers are accredited within the Chinese institution's framework and not that of the University of Waikato, but curriculum and teaching are overseen by University of Waikato staff, who also teach into the programmes. The oversight extends to assessment. Memoranda and cooperation agreements cover joint delivery and requirements for guaranteed credit into a Waikato programme by successful Chinese students. The Panel was told about exchanges which brought Chinese staff to Waikato, as well as about local staff going to China. The Panel has no concerns about the procedures in place for monitoring programmes and ensuring equivalence of outcome with these programmes.

The Panel was told that for most programmes, students at Tauranga were taking the same papers as those taken by Hamilton students and that these were thus subject to the same teaching and assessment regimes. The Self-review Report states that students studying at Tauranga are subject to the same policies, procedures and standards as are required on the Hamilton campus. However the Panel understands that some programmes are taught entirely at Tauranga, at least in first and second year; the Panel was less confident about processes for ensuring equivalence for such

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[92] SR, p73.

students studying solely at Tauranga. Block papers taught off-campus are also argued to require the same content and assessment as the same papers taught on-campus.[93]

The Panel heard of plans to develop the provision of papers in the Bay of Plenty. The University of Waikato is a member of the Bay of Plenty Tertiary Education Partnership, along with Bay of Plenty Polytechnic, Waiariki Polytechnic and Te Whare Wānanga o Awanuiārangi which plans to facilitate delivery of specific programmes in Tauranga at a University-led campus. The Panel therefore encourages the University to ensure its quality assurance processes are explicit about the means whereby equivalence is ensured for any University programmes to be delivered in Tauranga, whether at the new site or at Bay of Plenty Polytechnic.

> **3.8   Academic misconduct**
> Universities should use procedures for addressing academic misconduct, including plagiarism and other forms of cheating.

In its Self-review Report the University outlines its strategies for the prevention and detection of dishonest academic practice. These are included in both the Staff and Student Assessment Handbooks. Staff indicated that students receive "strong messages" about plagiarism during orientation and also within faculties. International students are also advised of expectations by International Student Services Office staff and are directed to learning support if needed.

The Staff Handbook offers suggestions for assessment approaches which help minimise opportunity for dishonest practice.[94] A briefing paper for new academic staff provides guidelines as to how a staff member might manage a case of suspected plagiarism. This document notes that some departments, faculties or schools might have internal policies or guidelines for dealing with academic dishonesty.[95] Such variability could be an area of risk for the University, in particular if it leads to inequity of treatment of students, including those whose programme spans more than one faculty. (See recommendation section 1.2.)

The Student Handbook includes advice about referencing, as well as defining "plagiarism" and "cheating" and detailing penalties for such offences.[96] The University expects all paper outlines to include information about the need to avoid plagiarism and about the discipline regulations.[97] The Panel was provided with summaries of decisions by the Student Discipline Committee, both with respect to alleged dishonesty and to penalties imposed.[98]

The University identifies a need to strengthen its approaches to promoting academic integrity. It provided the Panel with a variety of ideas of actions it might consider. From its scrutiny of University documents and its interviews with students the Panel concluded that the University's approach to

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[93] SR, p50.
[94] SD CH3-25. Staff Assessment Handbook, pp12-13.
[95] SD CH3-41 Plagiarism, Cheating and Student Discipline, pp1-2.
[96] SD CH3-24. Student Assessment Handbook pp9; 20.
[97] SR, p54.
[98] SD CH3-24. 2014 Annual Report of the Student Discipline Committee.

date has been primarily focused on detection and penalty. The Panel heard that staff use Turnitin but this appears to be used primarily as a tool for catching offenders rather than also as an educative tool. The Panel believes the University should identify and address any inconsistencies in the management of academic dishonesty which might lead to unfairness for students.

> **Affirmation: The Panel *affirms* the University's reconsideration of approaches to promoting academic integrity and managing dishonesty. It supports the intention to develop a mandatory module within all undergraduate programmes, as part of the Curriculum Enhancement initiative.**

3.9   Assessment in te reo Māori
Universities should have and, where appropriate, use procedures to facilitate assessment in te reo Māori.

The University of Waikato has expressed a major commitment to the development of capability in te reo Māori. The Māori Advancement Plan includes a goal "to integrate kaupapa, tikanga, reo and mātauranga Māori as natural elements of the University of Waikato experience".[99] This is given effect, *inter alia*, in the University's intensive total immersion language and teaching programme taught mainly in the Māori language, within the Bachelor of Arts and Bachelor of Māori and Pacific Development degrees.[100] The Panel is confident that the University is meeting its objective of being a sector leader in the development and use of Māori language.[101]

The University's Policy on the use of te reo Māori in assessment provides for both written and oral assessment in te reo Māori.[102] The Policy is comprehensive. Decisions as to whether assessment is in te reo Māori directly, or in translation, are the responsibility of the Professor of Reo and Tikanga. With respect to appeals, the Māori Language Commission is regarded by the Council as the final authority on the accuracy of a translation. The Panel notes that the Policy was about to be reviewed, and that this would include discussion with the University's Tainui Advisory Committee and as well as with Māori students.[103]

The University states that it seeks to have sufficient suitable staff employed or available to ensure that any work submitted in te reo Māori would be assessed in that language by staff competent in the subject under examination and in the Māori language.[104] Statistics provided to the Panel indicated 20 undergraduate assessment items submitted in te reo Māori in the last three years (these being work outside papers where students are required to submit in te reo Māori), and 11 master's theses and one PhD thesis completed in the last four years.[105] The Panel was told that there are 20 Masters theses in te reo Māori currently in progress, and that there had been a te reo Māori PhD completed in Education. The Self-review report indicates the difficulties of identifying and

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[99] SD CH1-17, Māori Advancement Plan 2015-2017, Goal 3.
[100] www.waikato.ac.nz/smpd/study/te-tohu-paetahi accessed 31.08.15.
[101] SD CH1-17 Māori Advancement Plan 2015-2017, Goal 3.4, p 4.
[102] http://calendar.waikato.ac.nz/assessment/useofMāori.html accessed 31.08.15.
[103] SR, p56.
[104] http://calendar.waikato.ac.nz/assessment/useofMāori.html accessed 31.08.15.
[105] SD 7.4.31 Research degree Completions in Te Reo, 2010-2015.

recruiting appropriate staff who can assess directly in te reo Māori and also recognises its obligations in developing a community of scholars to address this need.

During the site visit the Panel explored with staff the feasibility of making opportunities available for student work to be completed in te reo Māori. It also read that the University is considering appointing staff across all disciplines with capability in te reo Māori.

Commendation: The Panel *commends* the University on its initiatives to promote the submission of assessment in te reo Māori, its efforts to build capability in both students and staff and on the increasing amount of assessment being submitted either for assessment in te reo Māori or for assessment in translation.

4. Student Engagement and Achievement

> **4.1   Student engagement**
> Universities should use processes for monitoring and enhancing students' engagement with their study and learning.

The Panel read that the University invests considerable effort into assisting students to engage with their study and learning, especially as new entrants to university.[106] However apart from reference to preparation for specific groups (such as international students and students in the Pathways College who benefit from more personalised support), the Panel did not find extensive evidence to support the University's claim.

The Student Plan refers to student experience which is primarily focused on social, cultural and environment; less attention is paid to student engagement with study and learning.[107] The Teaching and Learning Plan refers to "learning opportunities" that foster student engagement (Goal 2) but this plan does not extend to what such engagement might look like or mechanisms for achieving it. The KPIs required seem to rely on basic academic performance measures (i.e. completion rates, etc.), highlighting a lack of more targeted indicators for engagement.

Student achievement data – namely retention, progression, pass rates and qualification completion – can be used as a proxy for the monitoring of student engagement by faculties, departments and schools but these do not capture such direct engagement processes as peer-to-peer learning or engagement using electronic and new media. Library usage statistics and log-in data for tools such as Moodle can enable monitoring at an aggregate level. The Panel was also provided with survey data, such as the results of the student barometer surveys (both domestic and international) and was pleased to see that summarised student ratings for satisfaction with learning experience provided as KPIs in the Statement of Service Performance are above global averages for these surveys.[108] While they do provide a form of monitoring, all of these data are retrospective and it was not clear how either academic or service units use such data to develop or enhance strategies which will support student learning engagement. The Panel has also identified the risks of reliance on survey data deriving from low or biased response sets (see section 1.2).

The Panel heard that faculties might identify students who are at risk of disengaging and are in need of support (for example, students who have not completed assignments or attended class might receive a phone call) but having identified them it was unclear what action is taken. It would appear that in many cases it is then the student's responsibility to seek assistance (see sections 4.2; 4.4). For some students this might be appropriate, but if a student is not well engaged with the University, some more overt encouragement might be needed. The University also needs to be alert to cultural issues where different groups engage in different ways. This issue is likely to become more evident

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[106] SR, p58.
[107] KD 12-8. Student Plan 2013-2015.
[108] KD6. Statement of Service Performance 2014, p61. The summary of findings of the domestic Student Barometer notes that because the University of Waikato is the first New Zealand university to use this survey there is no national average benchmark. (SD CH5-16, p1).

as various groups of different backgrounds enrol as domestic students, as well as as international students.

The Panel notes that one objective of the Curriculum Enhancement Programme is to require first year students to submit an assignment within the first three weeks of a semester and to follow-up those who do not. In June 2015 this action was developing. As noted above, the key issue will be what happens at, or as a consequence of, the follow-up.

The Panel learned that the new Student Experience Committee had discovered that postgraduate student experience varied across faculties and by distance from the campus. It was suggested that the newly approved School of Graduate Research would have a role in addressing this.

Exceptions to the above comments are apparent for Māori students and, to a lesser extent, for international students. Both groups are more closely monitored and support systems are available (see section 4.2). Overall, however, the University's focus with respect to this guideline statement was about monitoring rather than about enhancement. The Panel encourages the University to explore how faculties, schools and departments use information from surveys or from follow-up of non-engaged students to encourage student engagement. Arising from that review the University should develop a common policy, approaches and strategies for monitoring all students. (See recommendation section 1.2.)

4.2   Retention and completion
Universities should use processes for assisting the retention, academic success and completion rates for particular groups, including Māori and international students.

The University's commitment to Māori students and, separately, to Pacific students is evident in a range of strategic documents, in support services provided and in attention to the University environment and cultural space. Both the Strategy 2014-2017 and the Curriculum Enhancement Programme refer to "working in partnership with Māori and Pacific people to contribute to their educational aspirations".[109] The Academic Plan and the Investment Plan refer to objectives and activities intended to assist with meeting educational aspirations of both Māori and Pacific peoples.[110] Goal 1 of the Māori Advancement Plan is "to make unique and significant contributions to the educational success of Māori"; Goal 2 of the Pacific Plan is to "increase paper completion, qualification completion and retention rates for Pacific students" and Goal 4 is to "provide teaching and research that deliver outcomes relevant to the needs and aspirations of Pacific peoples".[111] With respect to Pacific peoples, the Panel notes the progress made since the Cycle 4 recommendation that the University recognise the needs and aspirations of Pacific people as a distinctive group.

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[109] KD4, Strategy 2014-2017, p8; Confidential document, 2014, p1.
[110] SD CH1-9, Academic Plan pp 20-22; SD CH1-21 Investment Plan Summary 2015, pp24-26.
[111] SD CH1-17 Māori Advancement Plan 2015-2017, p1; SD CH1-18 Pacific Plan 2012-2014, p1.

Institutional activities in support of the goals, objectives and aspirations pertaining to Māori and to Pacific students include:

- Te Puna Tautoko University-wide faculty-based Māori mentoring programme
- Te Ahurutanga leadership programme for Māori
- MAI ki Waikato mentoring and support for Māori postgraduate students
- Te Toi o Matariki Māori postgraduate excellence programme
- Edna Money scholarships for Pacific students
- Manumoana Pacific leadership and mentoring programme
- The Pacific Wide net programme aimed at connecting Pacific students with support services.

Recognising that Pacific students might be domestic students or from a Pacific nation, the University offers an intention to include Pacific students in the next iteration of the International Plan.[112]

While the University provides institutional level services and processes, and some staff to support these, the primary responsibility for monitoring and ensuring academic success of the different groups of students lies with faculties or, for pre-degree students, at the Pathways College. The Panel heard of efforts made by central Pacific student support staff to gain input from staff in the faculties as to the needs of Pacific students and also about faculty initiatives to assist them. For instance, some faculties have their own mentoring programmes or Pacific-focused tutorials.

The University website has specific pages for Māori and for Pacific students. However the information regarding support for Pacific students is limited to a contact phone number and email address.[113] The page for Māori students is slightly more helpful, including the institutional activities mentioned above and also links to the faculties, each of which has a Māori mentoring network.[114]

The Panel was told that the University is challenged to ensure Pacific recruitment translates into retention and academic success. The initiatives outlined in section 2.2 (for instance, Pacific tutors and dedicated space for Pacific students in the Halls of Residence) are intended to assist with this.

In addition to Māori and Pacific students, the University identifies international students and students with a disability as priority groups. International students are monitored as part of their visa requirements and in accord with the Code of Practice for Pastoral Care of International Students. Faculties are responsible for this monitoring, with support provided by dedicated staff in the International Student Services Office.[115] The webpage for international students links through to the University's general page for student support.[116] Some challenges identified by the University for international students suggest that more targeted support might be necessary.[117] While not defined

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[112] SR p61.
[113] www.waikato.ac.nz/students/pasifika.shtml accessed 31.08.15.
[114] www.waikato.ac.nz/students/Māori.shtml accessed 31.08.15.
[115] SR p77.
[116] www.waikato.ac.nz/students/international/study-in-nz/support.shtml accessed 31.08.15.
[117] SR, p63.

as a priority group, students from less advantaged backgrounds who are recipients of residential scholarships also receive dedicated monitoring and support.[118]

Disability support includes information, services, support staff and equipment intended to help such students overcome barriers to learning. A Handbook for Students with Disability is provided along with a brochure which is produced in te reo Māori as well as English.[119]

Overall the Panel considered that the University has some good learning support mechanisms for the above students in place at an institutional level, but that other activities are *ad hoc*, fragmented and do not link clearly to the University's strategic commitments regarding retention, progression and completion. The Panel was told how staff engage in University-wide monitoring of Māori student achievement but the University has itself identified a need to have institution-wide monitoring of Pacific student success.[120] Staff also identified risks associated with reliance on equity funding and a need for support strategies, for both Māori and Pacific students, to become embedded. There is a particular tension apparent with respect to Māori students in that the commitment to Māori people is evident across the whole University, and possibly as a result of this the support of Māori students might be considered to be everyone's responsibility, but the resultant risk is that no one assumes full oversight, or oversight is left to a few dedicated staff, and support is largely uncoordinated.

The Panel heard more than once, with respect to both Māori and Pacific students, that data are not used well or, as one person put it, there are a lot of data but not much information. The Panel endeavoured to find a way through the information it gathered, being mindful of the University's requirements to report to TEC on the achievement of these priority groups. It concluded that a number of the issues referred to above are about ownership of responsibility and ultimate accountability for success. The Panel strongly encourages the University to develop mechanisms for sharing practices and resources which support the achievement of priority groups of students such that delivery can be coordinated and systematic, minimising replication costs and maximising potential impact while also allowing for programme specific support where necessary. (See recommendation section 1.2.)

> **Recommendation: The Panel *recommends* that the University ensures that faculties, schools and departments are made aware of their responsibilities in jointly owning and assisting the University to meet the institutional KPIs pertaining to academic achievement of priority groups of students and are accountable for outcomes relevant to the students in their programmes.**

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[118] SR, p77.
[119] www.waikato.ac.nz/sasd/health/disability/handbook.shtml accessed 31.08.15.
[120] SR, p62.

> **4.3   Feedback to students**
> Universities should use processes for providing feedback to students on their academic progress (see also 7.3 re thesis students).

The University's assessment guidelines require that other than in exceptional circumstances all assessment should be returned to students within two weeks of the submission date and at least one week before any final examination.[121] The Staff Assessment Handbook also provides guidance on what is good feedback practice, as does a Teaching Development Unit booklet on assessment feedback.[122] Assessments are commonly submitted electronically (for example, on Moodle, MyWeb™ or EdLinked) and grades and feedback provided in similar ways.

The Panel heard no adverse comments from students. It considers that the new student management system should enhance potential for feedback on students' overall progress in programmes.

> **4.4   Under-achieving students**
> Universities should use processes for identifying and assisting students at risk of under-achieving.

Students identified as being ineligible to re-enter a programme because of academic failure or who are identified as being at risk of ineligibility are advised of the options available to them (such as withdrawing from papers). The University has clear requirements for re-entry to programmes.[123] Students deemed ineligible may appeal via the Admission Appeals processes if they wish to re-enrol.

As with a number of other academic processes, identification of other under-achieving students is determined by faculties individually, using a range of different mechanisms. There did not appear to be any institution-wide evaluation of which processes are more or less effective and as to whether the outcomes across faculties are equitable to students. The Panel strongly supports the proposal within the Curriculum Enhancement Programme for the University to introduce a University-wide framework for monitoring student achievement.[124] The Panel also encourages the University to consider imposing stronger direction or incentives for students who are identified as at risk of poor performance to access learning support services. (See recommendation section 1.2.)

The Panel learned about WaiBoost, a three day programme aimed at undergraduate students whose grades do not reflect their academic potential. WaiBoost covers time management, interpreting an assignment task, academic reading, creating notes from readings, taking notes during lectures, summarising and paraphrasing, academic argument, using the Library, and using digital technologies.

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[121]SD CH3-25 Staff Assessment Handbook, p15; SD CH3-24 Student Assessment Handbook, p8.
[122] SD CH3-25 Staff Assessment Handbook, p12; SD CH4-8 Assessment: Feedback to Promote Student Learning.
[123] http://calendar.waikato.ac.nz/admission/criteria.html#p3 accessed 29.10.15.
[124] SR, p69.

Students must attend all sessions to complete the programme and will be awarded a Certificate of Completion.[125]

The website states that student referrals to WaiBoost are made by the Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences, Faculty of Education, and the Faculty of Law. However the Panel was told that WaiBoost is not well used and also that staff who provide the programme are uncertain how effective it is, noting that students need various different ways to develop their learning and that WaiBoost is only one aspect of this. Furthermore, while WaiBoost is intended to respond to faculty referrals, the overall learning support initiatives provided by the University rely on self-referral. Staff indicated they have no way of looking across the whole University to monitor localised initiatives or impact.

The Panel understands that the University has limited learning support resources provided centrally. The Self-review Report states that there is a service to assist students with academic literacy or maths difficulties and it makes reference to WaiConnect, a service involving Student Learning, Library, Student and Academic Services and the Waikato Students' Union to provide an academic and social workshop programme for Pacific and international students. The website for student learning support does not indicate much beyond this and it was difficult to quantify the resource actually available.[126] (See recommendation section 1.2.)

4.5   High-achieving students
Universities should use processes for identifying and supporting high-achieving, and/or potentially high-achieving, students.

The University reported several initiatives for recognising high-achieving students, including scholarships, prizes, invitations to join the faculty's honours programme, invitations to join the Golden Key International Honour Society and participation in the Sir Edmund Hillary, Golden Jubilee School Leaver or Pacific Manumoana leadership programmes.

The University identifies and supports high performance athletes, providing advice, a management plan and the services of a High Performance Student Manager.[127]

The Panel was pleased to note that all faculties maintain a Dean's list of high-achieving students and that such students receive congratulatory letters. The Panel also observed displays of photographs of scholarship winners in different parts of the University. It concluded that the University has appropriate processes in place to recognise high-achieving students. It read that the University undertakes ongoing monitoring of students who receive University-managed scholarships.[128] This is a good initiative.

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[125] www.waikato.ac.nz/students/student-learning/waiboost.shtml accessed 31.08.15.

[126] SR, p68. See also www.waikato.ac.nz/students/student-learning/ accessed 31.08.15.
[127] SR, p71.
[128] SR, p77.

5. Student Feedback and Support

> **5.1 Academic appeals and grievances**
> Universities must have policies and/or procedures which they use to address academic appeals and grievances.

The academic policies and statutes reviewed by the Panel include appeal provisions.[129] The Delegation of Powers Statute specifies who has authority to make decisions regarding appeals on particular academic decisions. Appeals against an admission decision are made to the Admissions Appeal Committee, which is a committee of the Education Committee, under the Academic Board; subsequent appeals against discretionary or *ad eundem statum* admission decisions would be made to NZQA.[130] In addition to appeals against decisions related to academic regulations, the student complaints procedures state that any party to a student complaint who is dissatisfied with a decision by a Dean or Head, or equivalent, under the complaints procedures may appeal to the Deputy Vice-Chancellor.[131]

Complaints procedures are accessible from the home page via a search of policies.[132] A form for registering a complaint is also available online. Other links are found on faculty webpages.

The Panel reviewed a guide called "Student Rights and Responsibilities in Relation to Complaints" on the postgraduate website.[133] This guide is useful and deserves a more prominent link from general student webpages. The guide differentiates a concern from a complaint:

> A concern is where a student is seeking improvement in a situation using a direct and informal approach to the individual(s) concerned. The aim is to reach a resolution through informal consultation with the relevant staff member(s).

> A complaint is more serious than a concern, and may arise because a concern has been raised and explored with the staff member concerned but has not been dealt with to the satisfaction of the student. It may also arise where a student considers that the matter has had a significant impact on her/him and a more formal resolution process is required.

The guide also has clear information about appeals, what might be appealed and the procedures to be followed. In the Panel's view, this information, or a version of it, would be appropriate for all students (not just postgraduates).

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[129] See, for example, Assessment regulations http://calendar.waikato.ac.nz/assessment/assessment.html; appeals related to higher degrees http://calendar.waikato.ac.nz/regulations/higher/hdacr.html; appeals against a change of enrolment decision.
http://calendar.waikato.ac.nz/archive/2010/admission/changeofenrolment.html accessed 01.09.15.
[130] http://calendar.waikato.ac.nz/archive/2009/admission/admissionstatute.html accessed 01.09.15.
www.nzqa.govt.nz/qualifications-standards/awards/university-entrance/appeal-process/ accessed 17.09.15.
See Education Act s247.
[131] Noting the change in senior management roles, it is unclear whether going forward these appeals will be to the DVC(A) or to the Senior Deputy Vice-Chancellor.
[132] http://calendar.waikato.ac.nz/policies/studentcomplaints.html accessed 01.09.15.
[133] www.waikato.ac.nz/sasd/postgraduate/complaints_appeals.shtml accessed 01.09.15.

While the University's appeals and complaints procedures appear robust, accessing these might be challenging for students. Neither the procedures nor the complaints form are apparent under the two home page headers referring to Student Experience or Study at Waikato. It was not surprising therefore that students who spoke to the Panel did not appear to know what procedures existed or how to go about registering an appeal or a complaint. The Panel heard that most students who do complain or appeal approach a representative of the Waikato Students' Union (WSU) for assistance, who have been contracted by the University to provide support and advocacy.[134] The Panel was also told of cases which had become difficult because students had not sought assistance or advice at an early stage.

The Panel encourages the University to undertake a review of the processes whereby appeals and complaints are lodged, in particular paying attention to consistency of advice and the authority of persons giving advice, and to means whereby students are made aware of the options open to them. The Panel also suggests that on the basis of this review the University develops appropriate policies and practices where necessary and ensures these are clearly accessible to students. (See recommendation section 1.2.)

5.2   Learning support
Universities should provide opportunity for all students to access appropriate learning support services, including specialised learning support services for international students and others with particular needs. (See also 4.2 and 5.4)

As recounted in section 4.2, the University has some learning support available centrally for students, and other support available from faculties. There appears to be a gap where students might need help beyond their own discipline if that support is not provided centrally. As already noted, there is potential for duplication and wastage where similar support is replicated in more than one faculty.

The University cites its Student Learning staff within the Centre for Tertiary Teaching and Learning, and Library-based learning support services as the two central resources for students. As noted in section 4.2, the International Student Services Office also provides some learning support for international students.

Library staff offer specialised study and research support, including workshops and classes, research assistance and a variety of activities and guides intended to assist students to make effective use of Library resources.[135]

The Student Learning service is focused primarily on maths and academic literacy but does assist with generic study skills. A series of writing workshops is offered for doctoral students. The Panel was pleased to read that webcam sessions are used to provide face-to-face consultations with

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[134] SR, p74.
[135] SR, p76.

students studying off campus.[136] The advocacy service that WSU has been contracted to provide (see section 5.1) includes academic queries, learning-related matters and queries to faculties about grades.

The Panel was pleased to learn that Student Learning evaluates the services they offer and, if feedback indicates it is desirable, will redesign programmes or develop new initiatives. Such evaluation should pay attention to whether support is sufficiently targeted to those students most in need and how the University will know if targeted support is effective. In keeping with a number of other suggestions in this report, the Panel encourages the University to reflect on the manner in which support services are distributed across the University and whether there is an increasing need for more centrally-based provision that can address emerging needs from cross-discipline delivery models and disparate student groups.

The Panel is aware that Student and Academic Services, as well as the Library, are located within the Student Centre building and suggests that consideration be given to also locating student learning support services here, since it is a location which is central to student experience both physically and conceptually.

5.3   Personal support and safety
Universities must provide safe and inclusive campus environments and should provide opportunity for all students to access appropriate pastoral and social support services.

The Panel is confident the University pays close attention to physical safety on campus. As noted in section 1.6, there are some particular challenges on the Hamilton campus due to its open location. Students told the Panel they felt safe and were able to cite such facilities as emergency phones, lighting, safe vehicle escort services and helpful security staff. It was also noted that many students were not aware of the full extent of the 24 hour security services provided. The Panel suggests the University might publicise these more widely.

The University also advised on specific initiatives to ensure student safety, such as CCTV, provision of free buses during orientation week, promotion of safe alcohol practices, provisions for managing students with court-imposed restrictions, a 24 hour critical incident response service. University staff work with Hamilton Police, Waikato District Health Board and Hamilton City Council to try and ensure events on campus are safe.

Among pastoral support services the University provides chaplains and facilities for Christian and Muslim faiths. Other services include finance and budgeting, health, counselling and general pastoral care as provided in the Halls of Residence.[137] The Panel was told that each faculty has at least one staff member designated as an international student counsellor. It was not clear whether or how these staff linked to other counsellors or to the International Student Services Office.

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[136] SR, pp75-76.
[137] See www.waikato.ac.nz/students/student-support.shtml#38742 accessed 01.09.15.

The Panel read and heard about many events and activities which provide pastoral and social support for Māori students and assist with promoting inclusiveness for Māori staff, students and community members. Te Puna Tautoko is a network of specialist support staff for Māori students from across the University. The website for Te Puna Tautoko directs students to relevant support services.[138] Inclusiveness of non-Māori students in Māori tikanga and activities was appreciated by students who spoke to the Panel. The University provides Pacific support mentors and coordinators who address academic, pastoral and social issues. Less obvious to the Panel were activities which might assist inclusiveness of Pacific students. Also, the Panel heard that while a number of events are held to integrate international students, some nevertheless found the changes from their home environment and culture to be difficult to adjust to.

The Waikato Students' Union has a Gay Lesbian Bisexual and Transgender social and support group, UniQ, and a homophobia-free "Queerspace". WSU also has a nominated Lesbian Gay Bisexual Transgender representative to advocate on students' behalf.[139]

Results from student barometer surveys are used to monitor student user satisfaction with personal and pastoral support services.

A particular challenge noted by the University is a perceived increase in demand for mental health support. The University has collaborated with the Waikato Students' Union to run workshops aimed at addressing mental health wellbeing, on such topics as healthy relationships, anxiety reduction and coping strategies.[140] The Panel supports these initiatives.

The Panel is satisfied the University is providing appropriate pastoral support and care. It suggests that closer attention might be paid to the integration of international students, especially those who arrive during a semester rather than at the start of an academic year (see section 2.2).

5.4   Support on other campuses

Universities should have formal mechanisms to ensure appropriate learning and pastoral support is provided for students in programmes taught on other campuses and/or with partner institutions, including those which are in other countries.

The University has a service-level agreement with the Bay of Plenty Polytechnic to provide pastoral, social and learning support and advice to University students studying on the Polytechnic campus (see also section 1.5). Some Hamilton-based staff travel to Tauranga from time to time to assist University staff based at the Polytechnic. The University states that Tauranga students have the same access to support services on the Hamilton campus as do Hamilton students, including 2Boost workshops aimed at helping second and third year students to improve their grades. 2Boost is the local version of WaiBoost (see section 4.4). Evaluative information provided to the Panel indicated

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[138] www.waikato.ac.nz/tautoko/ accessed 01.09.15.
[139] www.waikato.ac.nz/students/student-support.shtml#38742 accessed 01.09.15.
[140] SR, p80.

positive outcomes for students from 2Boost workshops.[141] There is a dedicated Te Toka Kaiawhina to provide cultural, pastoral and procedural support, and assistance with academic issues for Māori students, along with six Māori mentors.[142]

Some faculties send staff to Tauranga for opportunities to provide academic advice and information.

The Domestic Student Barometer survey results indicate overall student satisfaction of Tauranga students, with support service satisfaction approximating that of Hamilton students (91% satisfaction for support overall for Tauranga students, compared to 93% for Hamilton domestic students and 91% for international students in 2014).[143]

Tauranga students interviewed by the Panel said there was support in Tauranga though they thought some services were not widely known about. It was suggested that there might be better integration for social activity between Hamilton and Tauranga campuses, for example with respect to clubs. The Panel did not explore the feasibility of such suggestions.

5.5   Feedback from students
Universities should use processes for gaining feedback on student satisfaction with teaching, courses and student services and should be able to demonstrate that feedback is used to inform improvement initiatives. (See also 7.5 re thesis students)

The University uses several surveys to gather feedback from students about teaching, papers, student experience and about specific activities (e.g. workshops – see section 5.4). A survey framework has been developed to identify core surveys and to try and coordinate them. Overall responsibility for the survey framework rests with Student and Academic Services.[144]

The University uses survey data to inform KPIs and support continuous improvement. Other feedback is gained via student representatives as class reps, on committees, from the Waikato Students' Union and other forms of consultation (see section 1.3). Students are consulted whenever strategic plans and policies are developed or renewed. Interviews with students provided positive accounts of how class representatives undertake their responsibilities but given that all students interviewed were in these positions the Panel was unable to determine the extent to which the voice of other students was heard or represented. It remains unsure, therefore, of how robust this system is for gaining feedback from students.

The Panel noted that paper outlines are expected to record any changes made as a result of student feedback and was pleased to find evidence of institutional improvements which were introduced as

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[141] SD CH5-12; CH5-13.
[142] SR, pp 81-83.
[143] SR, pp 80-81; SD CH 5-16 Summary of Findings from the 2014 Student Barometer, p11. Samples sizes for domestic groups were 263 from Tauranga and 2702 from Hamilton.
[144] SD CH5-14. University Student Survey Framework 2012.

a consequence of student feedback.[145] It supports the University's proposed enhancement to develop a student survey webpage accessible by both staff and students.[146]

The Panel reviewed survey data, including those derived from the International Student Barometer and the Domestic Student Barometer. The Panel expresses some concern about the reliability of data derived from small cohorts or potentially unrepresentative samples if these data are to be the basis of institutional KPIs. University staff indicated they are mindful of response rates and address this by triangulating data with other forms of feedback. The Panel was told that analyses of results from the student barometers and other surveys (other than teaching and paper evaluations) are referred to relevant committees for action.

The Panel was interested in the validity of decisions that can be made from data collected in student surveys. When response rates are low it is likely that the University will be less confident about the decisions it makes, or even whether a decision needs to be made. The Panel also acknowledges the "Boosting Response Rates Guide" produced by the Centre for Tertiary Teaching and Learning and the difficulty of increasing response rates to improve valid decision-making. It nevertheless recommends the University review strategies around the data-gathering to solicit from all stakeholders how returns could be improved.[147]

> **Recommendation**: **The Panel *recommends* that the University continues to review processes around data-gathering on student experiences and solicits ideas from all university groups (staff and students) about how feedback can be improved such that the basis of decision-making might be enhanced.**

5.6   Feedback from graduates
Universities should use processes for gaining feedback from graduates regarding their satisfaction with their university experience and learning outcomes and should be able to demonstrate that this feedback is used.

The only formal process for gaining feedback from graduates reported to the Panel is a graduate survey undertaken by the Waikato Management School. The Panel reviewed outputs from this survey and found it to be comprehensive and to demonstrate good practice. Otherwise the University relies on informal information gained through the Alumni Office.

The Panel considers the University is missing critical information by not having a systematic institutional graduate feedback mechanism. This will become even more important once a graduate profile is put in place and the University will need to be able to test its success in attaining these outcomes. The Panel suggests the overall success of the CEP is likely to be enhanced by such engagement with graduates. The University has also identified the need for a survey to track

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[145] SR, pp85-86.
[146] SR, p19.
[147] www.waikato.ac.nz/tdu/appraisal/summary.shtml accessed 17.09.15.

graduate employment and graduate outcomes.[148] As a benchmarking exercise, the University is encouraged to explore how other institutions maximise opportunities to gather information from their graduates.

Recommendation: The Panel *recommends* that the University introduces a graduate feedback mechanism aligned with the postgraduate exit survey, such that both address such matters as attainment of graduate attributes and assessment of student experience.

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[148] SR p119.

6.   Teaching Quality

In 2014 Waikato reported a staff profile as (FTE):[149]

Academic	636
Professional service staff	847
Total staff	1,483

The University reported the following proportions of Māori and Pacific staff:[150]

Māori academic staff, as proportion of all academic staff	9.9%
Māori general staff, as proportion of all general staff	10.1%
Pacific academic staff, as proportion of all academic staff	1.8%
Pacific general staff, as proportion of all general staff	1.3%

6.1   Staff recruitment and induction

Universities' processes for recruitment and induction should ensure that all teaching staff are appropriately qualified, according to the level(s) at which they will be teaching (i.e. degree level; postgraduate; sub-degree) and that all teaching staff receive assistance to become familiar with their university's academic expectations.

The Panel reviewed the University's recruitment processes and found these to be consistent with those of most other New Zealand universities. It notes the attention paid to confirming proof of qualification details. Employment policies are comprehensive.[151]

The Panel paid close attention to the induction of new staff. Induction expectations (also referred to in the Self-review Report as "requirements") are communicated to staff in a variety of ways, including the staff intranet, an information sheet for new staff, and in the University's Continual Professional Development Framework.[152] Line managers are expected to use the framework to help them build staff capability. The purpose of induction is summarised as being to ensure that all staff:

- are supported and encouraged to perform effectively when appointed to a new role or position;
- develop the necessary skills and knowledge for their roles;

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[149] AR, p48. Data include casual and sessional staff.
[150] Data provided on request 02.09.15. Data do not include casual or sessional staff.
[151] SR, pp90-91.
[152] SD CH6-6 www.waikato.ac.nz/pod/induction/ accessed 020915; SD CH6-5 Continual Professional Development Framework 2013-2015.

- establish effective working relationships across the University;
- receive the necessary information about the University including its vision, strategy, goals and organisational culture;
- understand the performance expectations of their new roles and the way in which their position can assist the University to achieve its vision and deliver on the University goals; and
- adapt and feel welcome at the University of Waikato.[153]

All new staff on contracts longer than two years are expected to have a personal induction programme developed with their line manager. According to the framework, the University's Professional and Organisational Development Unit will provide activities and resources to ensure all staff receive a suitable induction and are aware of the University plans, policies, procedures, practices, people, and expectations to enable them to perform their job effectively. However the University expects that most induction occurs within the new recruit's work area. After about three months, new staff are expected to have an initial professional goal-setting conversation with their line manager which is aimed at checking progress toward understanding and adjusting to the new role.[154] The Panel was told that handbooks for new staff are prepared at school level.

The Self-review Report refers to optional activities such as peer mentoring, a workshop on survival strategies for new academic staff and sessions on teaching technologies. The Panel was pleased to read of a tutors' day run two or three times a year in Hamilton and on request in Tauranga, but was surprised that some form of tutor training was not mandatory.[155]

The experiences offered by the staff who were interviewed by the Panel varied. They commented that the institutional induction was focused on administrative matters. Some, but not all staff, had a reduced teaching load, which was appreciated by those who did. It was noted, in contrast, that some new staff needed to carry significant responsibilities for very large classes, sometimes unassisted. Introduction to Māori protocols was also appreciated by staff.[156] Workshops, support groups and individual staff support were all recounted as being helpful. The University's framework refers to induction as a requirement, and that line managers shall report on induction activities. Deans are responsible for reporting annually on induction activity within their faculty and the Professional and Organisational Development Unit reports on institutional induction. Online forms are available for recording individuals' activity.[157] On the other hand, the University's own evaluation comments that activities are voluntary and that there is no follow-up to opportunities provided.[158] While it accepts that formal processes are in place, the Panel remains concerned that variability in approaches to induction could potentially lead to inequitable experiences for new staff (for example, whether or not they have a reduced teaching load). The University expects that the new Tertiary Teaching Development Framework expectations will assist with new staff induction (see section 6.4). However the Panel urges the University to review its induction requirements and determine how central

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[153] SD CH6-5 Continual Professional Development Framework, p3.
[154] www.waikato.ac.nz/pod/induction/staff.shtml accessed 02.09.15.
[155] SR, pp91-92.
[156] www.waikato.ac.nz/pod/induction/kanohi.shtml accessed 02.09.15.
[157] SD CH6-5 Continual Professional Development Framework, p4.
[158] SR, p92.

oversight might be achieved to ensure greater consistency across the institution in how all new staff are provided with academic information, opportunities and support as appropriate to their area of work. (See recommendation section 1.2.)

The Panel also explored how staff moving into new responsibilities are supported. It was given enthusiastic accounts of the Women in Leadership programme and also read about the Leadership and Management Development Programme which consists of a number of modules for both academic and general staff.[159] The Panel heard that EEO initiatives included an assessment of barriers to progression for equity groups (specifically Māori and female staff). Most senior staff who were interviewed indicated they had received little or no formal support or training for their management roles, though the Panel understands this has recently been introduced for heads. Some staff indicated that regular discussions within faculties or schools were helpful in developing their roles. The Panel heard that some cross-University meetings had recently been introduced for Deans. It considers this an essential initiative if the University is to develop a cohesive coordinated approach to its strategic developments, and in particular with respect to the Curriculum Enhancement Programme.

> **Affirmation: The Panel *affirms* the University's introduction of the Leadership and Management Development Programme and encourages the University to incentivise participation by current and prospective academic managers.**

6.2   Research-active staff
Universities' workload management processes should ensure that degree-level students are taught mainly by staff who are research-active.

The Self-review Report states that the University's expectations regarding staff research are described in the Teaching and Learning Plan and that there are KPIs associated with this objective.[160] The Panel was unable to see clearly how this plan addressed research expectations.

Position descriptions of continuing academic staff specify that they be research-active and for all positions teaching degree-level study there is a requirement that teaching be research-informed and that staff maintain an active research programme. The Panel reviewed the University's data on research and teaching distribution and was satisfied this is appropriate. It noted that tutors and teaching fellows are not required to be research active.[161] The University conducts its own formative research assessment between PBRF rounds which enables it to identify and address any areas of research weakness.[162]

The University Academic Workloads Policy, adopts a prescriptive 40/40/20 model of workload allocation across research/teaching/professional development and service on a three year basis. The

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[159] www.waikato.ac.nz/pod/leadership/index.shtml accessed 02.09.15.
[160] SR p93.
[161] SR p93.
[162] SR p94.

Policy includes cultural commitments as part of service. It requires senior managers to maintain spreadsheets to document staff work allocation and to make this information accessible to staff. Responsibility for ensuring an appropriate balance of teaching and research-related activities rests with Deans and/or Heads of Schools/Departments.

The Workloads Policy is currently being revised and may take the form of guidelines rather than a Policy, in particular to allow greater flexibility in how the 40/40/20 allocations is applied. The Panel endorses the University's commitment to such a revision. A refreshed approach to workload is likely to be necessary as the Curriculum Enhancement Programme initiatives are rolled out, given the professional development and curriculum work which is likely to fall to a number of staff, and possibly to fall unevenly across all staff. The University recognises this need.[163] It might need to be vigilant as to the impact on the ability of some staff to meet normal promotion criteria during the implementation of the changes.

As indicated in section 6.1, the Panel has some concerns about inequities in workload for new staff, particularly those just embarking on academic careers. The Panel read that the University is putting processes in place to support such staff and, in particular, to reduce the teaching loads for staff in the process of completing a doctorate.[164] The Panel endorses this approach.

6.3   Teaching quality
Universities should use processes for assessing teaching quality and for monitoring and enhancing individual teaching capability of all teaching staff. (See also 6.5, and 7.1 re thesis supervision)

The foundational strategic document to support teaching quality is the Teaching and Learning Plan. This sets out activities which are expected to support high quality teaching (and learning), including "a robust … academic quality assurance framework, using student feedback, that measures [the University's] performance against others within New Zealand and overseas."[165] Responsibility for the development of "plans, policies and processes associated with quality assurance in teaching and learning" rests with the Education Quality Assurance Committee, a committee of the Education Committee which is a committee of Academic Board.[166] The survey processes are managed within the Teaching Development Unit.

While the University states that it encourages staff to use a range of activities to gather formative feedback (such as peer review, student interviews, Moodle data collection of student opinion) it appears that most staff rely on formal institutional evaluation via surveys. The Panel reviewed survey processes in principle. It noted the University's response to Cycle 4 recommendations regarding the need to pay urgent attention to the quality assurance of teaching, student feedback

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[163] SR, p95.
[164] SR, p95.
[165] KD5 Teaching and Learning Plan 2013-2016, Goal 3, clause 3.1. The objective is also found in the Academic Plan, p15.
[166] SD CH1-3 Committee Directory and terms of reference, p49.

and the potential for benchmarking. The Panel read that actions were being introduced "in a staged manner" and include the survey framework (see section 5.5), the Benchmarking Task Force (see section 3.6) and the purchase of new evaluation software BLUE. The BLUE software generates surveys automatically and enables the University to monitor compliance with the survey policy. BLUE software operates on an "opt out" principle rather than "opt in". Initial evaluation of BLUE indicates a significantly higher percentage of teachers and papers being evaluated after its introduction though there was an anticipated decline in response rate.[167]

The Evaluation of Teaching and Paper Policy requires that paper convenors undertake a paper evaluation and a teaching evaluation for at least every second occurrence of each paper for which they are responsible.[168] Staff are advised that evaluation data are obtained from students via self-selected sampling and cannot be assumed to have a high degree of statistical accuracy; that data may be less reliable when the number of responses is small, and are not necessarily comparative across subjects from different disciplines; and that the University values both qualitative and quantitative evaluation data, and recommends that quantitative data are read in conjunction with qualitative comments.[169] The Panel saw redacted examples of evaluation reports and extracts from a sample portfolio.

In addition to ensuring that evaluations occur, Heads of Schools/Departments are required to take the aggregated evaluation data provided by the Teaching Development Unit for their department (or equivalent) into account in their discussions with staff about professional goal-setting and professional development opportunities. Beyond that, Deans see aggregated data for their programmes/departments and the institution receives aggregate faculty and school data.[170] The Self-review Report states that Deans are responsible for monitoring individual staff performance but both the Self-review Report and staff interviews confirmed that the only person who sees an individual's teaching evaluations is that individual, unless the individual is applying for promotion. The Panel has serious concern about this approach and the University itself indicated it is likely to review this policy in the near future. Information about an individual's teaching performance must reach the Head of School/Department at least to enable him or her to act constructively (whether to commend good teaching or to address any performance issues). So long as evaluation information remains only with the person being evaluated there is a substantial risk to the University that it is unable to detect or address unacceptable performance.

For applications for academic staff promotion or salary advancement, it is intended (starting in 2015) that in addition to each applicant's Academic Staff Portfolio being auto-populated with selected quantitative data direct from the BLUE database, staff will also be able to include contextual statements and students' qualitative comments.[171] The portfolio includes auto-generated information about a staff member's teaching activities and research outputs.

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[167] SD CH 6-12 Teaching and paper evaluations – Implementation of BLUE.
[168] SD CH5-15 Evaluation of Teaching and Paper Policy www.waikato.ac.nz/official-info/index/docs/evaluation-of-teaching-and-papers-policy accessed 02.09.15.
[169] SD CH6-11 Guidelines for the Evaluation of Teaching and Papers, p1.
[170] SR, p97.
[171] SD CH6-11 Guidelines for the Evaluation of Teaching and Papers, p3.

Recommendation: The Panel *recommends* that the University urgently reviews its reporting practice for teaching evaluation results to ensure academic line managers receive performance data and use these to inform the professional development reviews of their individual staff.

6.4 Teaching development
Universities should provide opportunities for staff to develop their teaching practice, including application of contemporary pedagogical research, use of learning management systems and use of new technologies.

In addition to professional development which is run by Professional and Organisational Development within Human Resources and which relates to personal development (for instance time management, communication, professional goal setting), the University provides teaching development opportunities from the Teaching Development Unit (TDU) and the Waikato Centre for eLearning (WCEL) within the Centre for Tertiary Teaching and Learning (CTTL).

The Panel heard that TDU offers a range of pedagogical units and that most of its work is in response to staff requests. TDU also teaches into the Postgraduate Certificate in Tertiary Teaching, supports staff applying for teaching awards, facilitates a teachers' network, produces an online magazine and provides a variety of other resources for staff. TDU offers one-on-one consultations and will undertake teaching observations for staff as part of their professional development.[172]

The Waikato Centre for eLearning supports staff in the use of the main University systems (e.g. Moodle, Turnitin, Mahara, Panopto, Adobe Connect and Google Apps) as well as assisting with eLearning design and the use of technologies in research. The Centre also hosts WCEL*fest*, where staff share ideas related to learning technologies.[173]

The Panel was advised of the University's intention to introduce a new Tertiary Teaching Development Framework.[174] The framework presents schematically the kinds of activities that might be expected of new staff and of continuing staff, linking objectives to University strategy and providing potential evidence checks of achievement of development outcomes. For new staff, the pathway includes an expectation of completion of the Postgraduate Certificate in Tertiary Teaching within three or four years of appointment (this would be negotiable for new staff who already hold relevant qualifications and/or experience). The Panel saw this intention, as presented, as a good aspiration.

In its explorations of the Curriculum Enhancement Programme through documentation and interviews the Panel repeatedly came to the view that to date insufficient attention had been given to the pedagogical implications if the project is to achieve the transformational kind of education which it proposes. It was surprised to hear that the Teaching Development Unit staff had not been specifically involved in project planning to date, and that this might be a consequence of the Centre for Tertiary Teaching and Learning being located within the Faculty of Education and therefore

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[172] SR, pp 99-100. www.waikato.ac.nz/tdu/ accessed 02.09.15.
[173] SR, p100.
[174] Document provided to the Panel at the site visit.

deemed to be represented by the faculty. In part the apparent absence of the Teaching Development Unit, in its own right, from institutional deliberations possibly also reflects a preoccupation to date with a narrow focus on curriculum rather than broader pedagogical issues associated with delivery. The Panel suggests that the Centre being administratively located in a faculty risks it being marginalised from the rest of the University and that such a service should be central and be seen to be central.

Most discussion pertaining to the pedagogical implications of the Curriculum Enhancement Programme related to online delivery, that is placing papers online. However in the Panel's view the project should be encouraging a wide range of pedagogical approaches which extend beyond just electronic delivery, including learning in the community (in keeping with the University's high level aspirations). If the University rises to the challenge implicit in the project then there is likely to be a significant need for support and assistance from teaching development and eLearning staff. Currently the number of staff in this area is small and these people appear to be already providing the University with a sizeable portfolio of activities and support.

> **Recommendation: The Panel *recommends* that the University provides clear leadership in the development of pedagogical expertise which: is consistent with the University's strategic objectives articulated in the Curriculum Enhancement Programme; facilitates student learning which is aligned with the graduate profile; and which ensures the staffing resources for meeting the professional development needs of teachers are adequate to provide this in a proactive way.**

6.5   Teaching support on other campuses
Universities should have formal mechanisms to ensure appropriate teaching support is provided for staff in programmes taught on other campuses and/or with partner institutions, including those which are overseas.

The University states that staff based at Tauranga are able to access the same professional development opportunities as can Hamilton staff. Some of these activities are available online or via video streaming and for some, the Hamilton staff go to Tauranga.[175] For instance, TDU offers its workshops in both Hamilton and Tauranga.[176] Some Tauranga staff have participated in the Postgraduate Certificate programme.

Tauranga staff who spoke to the Panel reported positive experiences with teaching development opportunities. The Panel supports the University's initiative in inviting staff of Te Whare Wānanga o Awanuiārangi to attend Tauranga workshops which might otherwise have a low number of Tauranga staff attending.

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[175] SR, p101.
[176] See, for instance www.waikato.ac.nz/tdu/events/staffworkshops.shtml accessed 02.09.15.

> **6.6   Teaching recognition**
> Universities' reward processes (promotion; special awards) should recognize teaching capability.

The University's promotion processes include recognition of teaching in a comprehensive way.[177] As noted in section 6.2, some flexibility on criteria might be desirable as the University implements the Curriculum Enhancement Programme. Evidence of teaching achievement is required in the form of a portfolio which includes teaching evaluation data and qualitative comments. Promotion up to or within the Senior Lecturer scale, or within Associate Professor or Professor ranks require a satisfactory or high level of performance and achievement with respect to the quality of their teaching, scholarship and research. For promotions to Professor, research achievement is privileged, with a high teaching standard expected to be accompanied by outstanding research.

The University provides various awards which recognise teaching excellence at both University and faculty level. These are long-standing and include special awards for Kaupapa Māori teaching, postgraduate supervision, eLearning and for early career academics. Teaching excellence awards carry a monetary reward and confer recognition within the University and its publications. Recipients might be nominated for national awards. The Panel heard that the University had recently amended its teaching awards criteria to enable staff to be nominated a second time for University awards, to facilitate eligibility for national awards.

The Panel was told that award winners often share their practices. They participate in an annual Celebrating Teachers day and also act as Teaching Advocates in faculties, sharing good practice and leading teaching conversations. The Panel heard positive reports of the contribution made by Teaching Advocates.

> **Commendation: The Panel *commends* the University on its Teaching Advocate programme and on the inclusive nature of its suite of awards which recognise teaching.**

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[177] SD CH 6-8 Academic promotions criteria, Section 2, definitions.

7.   Supervision of Research Students

In 2014 Waikato recorded the following profile of postgraduate students:

Taught postgraduate   1,168 ETFS
Research postgraduate   576 EFTS[178]

Of research postgraduate students,
Master's	438 (headcount)	
PhD	631 (headcount)	
DMA; SJD; EdD	15 (headcount)[179]	

This chapter focuses only on research students, i.e. master's thesis and doctoral students. All master's theses except the MPhil are managed by faculties. The MPhil and all doctorates are administered by the central Postgraduate Studies Office. The Postgraduate Research Committee (a committee of the Research Committee) has the responsibility to oversee and monitor implementation of policies and regulations pertaining to postgraduate research.[180] The Committee also has delegated authority from Academic Board to approve admissions, oversee progress, appoint examiners and determine such matters as suspension of enrolment.[181] The Committee currently does not have oversight of faculty master's degrees which are the responsibility of faculties, supported by the role of faculty Associate Deans. However the Committee includes representatives from all faculties who act as the point of contact within faculties for doctoral matters. The University reports that this system works well.[182] At the time of the audit the University was considering centralising aspects of the administration of master's theses (see below). Council approved the establishment of a School of Graduate Research at the time of the site visit. The Panel was pleased that the Graduate School would include master's as well as doctoral students. It was told that the School would not take over what faculties currently did regarding master's research but would have an oversight role to build consistency in administrative matters and student experience.

Overall the Panel considered the University has continued to provide the high quality research student experience that was commended in the Cycle 4 audit.[183] The Panel was impressed by the energy, enthusiasm and insight of staff who held postgraduate responsibilities, and by the positive experiences recounted by postgraduate students. The objectives of the Curriculum Enhancement Programme pertaining to postgraduate study include enhancements to postgraduate pathways and the introduction of transferable skills modules consistent with the University's intended graduate profile.[184] Realisation of these goals will require continued pan-University leadership.

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[178] AR, p45.
[179] Data provided by the University on request 12.10.15.
[180] KD2, Postgraduate Research Committee terms of reference.
[181] MPhil regulations http://calendar.waikato.ac.nz/regulations/higher/mphil.html; PhD regulations http://calendar.waikato.ac.nz/regulations/higher/phd.html accessed 03.09.15.
[182] SR, p107.
[183] Cycle 4 Audit Report, pp30-33.
[184] Confidential document, July 2014.

Affirmation: The Panel *affirms* the University's decision to create a School of Graduate Research to encompass both doctoral and research master's students.

7.1   Qualification of supervisors

Universities should use documented processes for ensuring staff supervising research students are appropriately trained and experienced as supervisors, including processes to enable new or inexperienced staff to gain experience as supervisors.

Higher degrees require a supervision team of a chief supervisor and one or more co-supervisors.[185] Supervision expectations are spelt out clearly in the University's Policy on Supervision.[186] The qualifications required to supervise are documented, with applications for inclusion on the register of supervisors requiring endorsement by both the Head of School/Department and the Dean's nominee for postgraduate studies. Provision is made for inclusion on a supervision panel for people from outside the University who might not meet all of the criteria required for continuing staff. Restrictions on supervision and examination (for instance of a close family member) are documented.

The risks of discontinuation of supervision are addressed in the policy, with an expectation that staff agreeing to fill a chief supervisor role should expect "to remain in the service of the University for the reasonable duration of the candidate's research". The Policy states that changes to supervisory panels are made only in exceptional circumstances.

Responsibility for appointing supervisors for master's research rests with the Head of School/Department, to criteria determined by the faculty. The University has identified a need to address the lack of clear documentation within faculties relating to master's supervision.[187]

The University has expressed concerns about its capacity to provide sufficient supervision if numbers of postgraduate students increase. The Panel was pleased to read that in addressing this a benchmarking exercise had been undertaken and some adjustments made to supervisor requirements as a result.[188]

The University expects that staff who supervise research degrees will undertake formal professional development in postgraduate supervision or participate in workshops and take advantage of other opportunities provided by the University to enhance their practices of supervision of postgraduate students. The oversight of these training programmes is a responsibility of the Postgraduate Research Committee. Workshops are provided by the PVC (Postgraduate); repeat attendances by staff suggest these workshops are considered useful. The Teaching Development Unit (TDU) also offers "conversations" around supervision, including invited speakers who are expert in an area.[189] The inclusion of questions about supervision in the staff survey (2009 and 2014) has enabled the

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[185] SD CH 2-10 Higher Degrees Handbook, p24.

[186] SD CH 7-1 www.waikato.ac.nz/sasd/postgraduate/supervision.shtml#policy accessed 03.09.15; SR pp 105-106.

[187] SR, p107.

[188] SR, p108.

[189] See www.waikato.ac.nz/tdu/events/pgconversations.shtml accessed 03.09.15; SR pp 107-108

University to track staff satisfaction with the support they receive to develop their supervisory skills. This had increased by 10% over the last five years but the data indicate there is more work that could be done on staff support.[190]

The Panel read that the University is in the process of developing an online register to record both doctoral and master's registered supervisors.[191] Such a register will help the University monitor supervision capacity and capability. The Panel supports this initiative.

The Panel was pleased to note that University Staff Awards include an award for postgraduate supervision (see section 6.6).

7.2   Resourcing of research students
Universities should use documented processes for ensuring research students are appropriately resourced to do their research.

The University developed a Statement of Expectations regarding resources for higher degree research (including the MPhil but not including other master's degrees) as a response to the Cycle 4 audit report.[192] The Panel was pleased to read that this was undertaken in consultation with the Postgraduate Students' Association.[193] Both the Statement of Expectations and the Higher Degree Regulations which refer to it are accessible on the postgraduate website.

In addition to the resources, including support services, available to all students, higher degree students will be provided with:
- an induction programme provided by the faculty and supported by induction by the Postgraduate Studies Office;
- space and furniture, with an expectation that postgraduate students will be located close to relevant academic staff if possible, and will have access to common rooms, tea facilities etc. shared with staff;
- access to computing, appropriate software, data storage, and a telephone;
- office consumables;
- a specified financial resource for research-related expenses contingent on satisfactory progress.

The Panel was told that supplementary resources, for instance where specialised equipment or consumables are required, are subject to negotiation with the Head of School/Department. Students are advised in the Statement of Expectations of the protocol for addressing resource concerns, via the Waikato Students' Union advocacy service in the first instance.

Doctoral students who were interviewed were clear about resource expectations, noting that processes were very transparent. These students spoke highly of the departmental support they received. No issues regarding resources were conveyed to the Panel.

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[190] SR, p108.
[191] SR, p108.
[192] SD CH 7-9 Resources for Higher Degree Research Students: Statement of Expectations.
[193] SR, p109.

The Panel was advised that resources for master's research are determined at department level and that information about this was not readily accessible. There are therefore risks around equity and monitoring of resource availability and use. A 2014 project collected information about faculty-based support for research students.[194] This survey records that not all of the resources outlined in the statement of expectations (see above) are in fact provided – for example, only three faculties recorded providing a faculty induction for doctoral students; three did not provide tea room access; two did not provide funding. The Panel accepts there might be good reason for variability. It supports the continuation of this information-gathering.

Apart from the resources outlined in the Statement of Expectations, the University also supports research students through various scholarships (including designated scholarships for Māori and Pacific students), as well as separate designated Moodle sites for doctoral and for master's students and various workshops, seminars and support services provided by the Library (see section 1.5).[195] The Panel also heard of the arrangements made to assist students who are required to negotiate with iwi in order to carry out their research. Postgraduate students who had experienced a cultural induction appreciated the opportunity to become more familiar with Māori tikanga and te reo Māori.

> **Affirmation: The Panel *affirms* the University's collation of information about resourcing of research students and encourages the University to use this as a basis for developing policies or procedures which are aimed at ensuring equitable approaches to resourcing across the University, for faculty-based master's students as well as for MPhil and doctoral students.**

7.3 Research supervision
Universities should use documented processes for ensuring supervision of research students is effective and that student progress and support are appropriately monitored.

The responsibilities of supervisors are documented in detail in the University Policy on Supervision.[196] For the chief supervisor these include not just administrative, academic and research matters but also extend to encouraging the student to play a full part in the social and intellectual life of the school/department and faculty and checking that health and safety requirements are met and that the student has appropriate training if required.

Faculty responsibilities for supervision cover ensuring the appropriate experience of supervisors and that reporting occurs to schedule. The faculty is also expected to provide for a person outside the school/department (usually the Dean's nominee for postgraduate studies) to be available to the candidate if he/she has problems that cannot be discussed with the supervisor(s), and to have a documented process for disputes resolution.

The University sees supervision as a shared experience. The Higher Degrees Handbook outlines not only the responsibilities of staff and the faculty but also the responsibilities of the postgraduate

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[194] SD CH 7-11 Faculty Support Services for Postgraduate Students.
[195] SR, p110.
[196] SD CH7-1.

student.[197] Staff in a number of roles play a part in ensuring supervision is effective: the Head of School/Department, faculty postgraduate representatives, the PVC (Postgraduate), Postgraduate Research Committee and Postgraduate Studies Office staff. The latter has a particular role in helping students who have concerns about their supervision.

Six-monthly progress reports are required for all doctoral and MPhil students. Procedures are clear on the postgraduate web page.[198] The Panel reviewed redacted reports, which include a student's self-evaluation as well as evaluations by both supervisors and comments by the dean's nominee.[199] The University intends the formative nature of progress reports to form a basis for supervision discussions. It notes that use of Skype and other technologies is encouraged to ensure students in remote locations remain connected. Facilitating online submission of reports and retaining these at six monthly intervals is believed by the University to provide for effective monitoring and to facilitate early detection of any problems.[200]

Faculties are responsible for overseeing supervision and student progress for master's students (other than the MPhil). General principles of regular meetings, feedback on student work and monitoring overall progress are an expectation of most faculties. The University Policy on Supervision includes guidelines for faculties on these processes. The Panel expects that assurance about consistency of approach will become one of the objectives of the new School of Graduate Research.

While the Panel is aware that the content of the University Policy on Supervision is not unusual, it considered the documentation to be exemplary.

The two student barometer surveys in 2014 provided some confirmation of satisfaction by students with their supervision experience.[201] Students who spoke to the Panel also reported very favourably on their supervision experience, and it was noted that problems experienced with a supervision arrangement were managed to a satisfactory outcome. In particular, students commented on the value of research groups and coffee meetings, supporting a perception gained from documentation that the University makes an effort to ensure academic inclusiveness of its research students.

> **Commendation: The Panel *commends* the University on its clear and comprehensive documentation pertaining to higher degree postgraduate supervision, including the clear statements of responsibilities of all parties, and the Panel supports the University's stated intention to enhance oversight of supervision processes related to faculty-based master's research.**

> **Commendation: The Panel *commends* the University on its overall management of postgraduate research study and in particular notes the various efforts made to encourage postgraduate research students to be active members of the University research community.**

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[197] SD CH 2-10, p26.
[198] www.waikato.ac.nz/sasd/postgraduate/progress_reports.shtml accessed 03.09.15.
[199] SD 7.3.2.1a-1c.
[200] SR, p111.
[201] SR, p116.

> **7.4   Thesis examination**
> Universities' thesis examination processes should ensure thesis standards are internationally benchmarked.

The examination processes adopted for PhD theses conform to standard New Zealand university practice. Examination of doctoral and MPhil theses is overseen by the Postgraduate Studies Office. Normally two examiners include one from outside New Zealand and one external to the University of Waikato. The University does not use internal (University of Waikato) examiners for either the PhD or the MPhil. However the Chief Supervisor does submit a written report at the time the thesis is submitted, verifying this is the student's work and identifying any other contribution and also commenting on the student's performance and the quality of the thesis.[202]

Guidelines for the appointment of examiners are intended to assist with identifying appropriate examiners and to ensure there is no conflict of interest between examiners and either the candidate or the supervisors. Nominations of examiners are approved by the faculty's Postgraduate Research Committee representative.[203] Requirements about examination of doctoral and all master's theses are documented in the Calendar, in the Higher Degrees Handbook, and in other resources provided by the Postgraduate Studies Office through its webpage.[204] These resources are easily accessible.

The Postgraduate Studies Office provides on its webpages information about steps in the examination process, including the content of examiners' reports, conduct of the oral examination, procedures for revision and resolution of differing views between examiners.

As noted in section 3.9, provision is made for students to submit theses written in te reo Māori. In this case the examiners must be capable of examining the thesis in te reo Māori; the oral examination will also be conducted in te reo Māori. Protocols are provided for conduct of the oral examination.[205] Whānau may attend the oral examination for any Māori student/candidate.[206]

Examination processes for master's theses (other than the MPhil) are administered by the central Assessment and Graduation Office but the actual examination is managed by the school or department. Two examiners are appointed, one of whom must be external to the University. The University reported that its own benchmarking had confirmed that processes conformed to those used in other New Zealand universities. In keeping with practice elsewhere, the University has recently decided to allow master's theses to be submitted initially as soft-bound documents, allowing for editorial amendments to be made if recommended by the examiners.[207]

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[202] www.waikato.ac.nz/sasd/postgraduate/external_examiners_reports.shtml accessed 03.09.15.
[203] SD CH7-17 Nomination of examiners Guidelines.
[204] SR, p113; SD CH7-15 http://calendar.waikato.ac.nz/assessment/dissertations.html accessed 030915; SD CH 7-1; SD CH 2-10; SD CH 7-16 http://www.waikato.ac.nz/sasd/postgraduate/examinations_index.shtml accessed 03.09.15.
[205] SD CH 7-19.; SD CH 7-20 Whanau information sheet.
[206] Clarification from the University that this provision extends not just to students presenting in te reo Māori. 12.10.15.
[207] SR, p115.

Overall the Panel is satisfied that thesis examination processes are consistent with New Zealand good practice and that inclusion of external examiners for both doctoral and master's theses provides for some form of national and, in the case of doctoral and MPhil, international benchmarking of standards. It is possible that some monitoring of master's thesis examination processes would be useful. The Panel understands that the School of Graduate Research will address this. The Panel suggests that at the time of the next audit the University reports on the effectiveness of the School of Graduate Research in enhancing the monitoring of faculty-based master's thesis research, including resourcing, supervision and examination.

7.5   Postgraduate student feedback
Universities should use processes for gaining feedback on student satisfaction with supervision and support for postgraduate students and be able to demonstrate that feedback is used to inform improvement initiatives.

The six-monthly supervision reports provide opportunity for student comment and feedback. These reports are reviewed by the Postgraduate Studies Office and the Postgraduate Research Committee but it was not clear whether either of these undertook any systematic analysis to identify trends of issues which might be systemic.

In addition to the supervision reports the University has a number of avenues for gaining feedback from postgraduate students, both formal and informal.

Student barometer surveys include questions relating to general student experience, student support and managing research.[208] The University sees the barometer results as a mechanism to benchmark itself against all of the other New Zealand universities and against international universities. The Panel read that reports are produced on the outcomes of this benchmarking. It was told that the 2015 barometer survey was to include additional questions specifically for postgraduate research students.

The Panel was told that an exit survey for postgraduate students had been introduced[209] and that data derived from the survey had been used as a basis for professional development workshops for supervisors.

Among the informal avenues for gaining postgraduate student feedback are a Facebook group (administered by the PVC (Postgraduate) and the Postgraduate Studies Office); use of the Waikato Postgraduate Students' Association as a forum for feedback; weekly research conversations run by the Teaching Development Unit; and seminars and social occasions at faculty level.

> **Affirmation: The Panel *affirms* the introduction of a postgraduate research student exit survey and encourages the University to include faculty-based master's students as well as MPhil and doctoral students in the survey.**

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[208] KD7 Domestic Student Barometer report 2014; SD CH 5-16 International Student Barometer report 2014.
[209] In the Self-review Report this survey is noted as an initiative to be introduced in 2015. SR, p117.

Conclusion

During the site visit the Panel interviewed 106 staff and 20 students. It found staff to be well versed in their portfolio areas and prepared to engage well with the Panel. Students spoken to were articulate and frank; they appreciated the opportunities offered by University of Waikato. The Panel also met with four members of Council.

The Panel reviewed the University's response to the 2010 Cycle 4 recommendations. While noting progress made the Panel is also aware that in some areas further work remains to be done.

At the time of the site visit the University had recently appointed a new Vice-Chancellor and some changes had already been made or proposed to the senior management team. A number of strategic documents were in the final or penultimate year of their application. The recommendations the Panel has made are intended to assist the University as it moves forward with the development and implementation of its new Strategic Plan and other projects. In particular, several of the recommendations are expected to assist the University to achieve the best possible outcomes from its Curriculum Enhancement Programme, which the Panel considers has the potential to transform not just the curriculum but also teaching and learning and student experience. The Panel has also focused several recommendations on the risks it sees emanating from devolved and/or dispersed support, advice and decision-making, with an objective of encouraging greater consistency in the quality of the outcomes of these activities. Several areas have been identified as demonstrating commendable practice and a number of the University's current initiatives have been affirmed.

The Panel had no issues of serious concern regarding conformity with the expectations expressed in the Cycle 5 Guideline Statements. The Guideline Statements either were met, in some cases at a high standard, or in other cases the University had itself identified challenges or areas for enhancement and there is work in progress towards improvement.

The University is expected to report on its response to the recommendations made by the Panel in twelve months' time (late in 2016 or early 2017) and again at the time of the next academic audit.

Commendations

GS 1.5   C1   The Panel **commends** the University on the success of the new (2011) Student Centre, incorporating the Library and student learning space, and of the systematic ongoing evaluation of Library usage.

GS 3.9   C2   The Panel **commends** the University on its initiatives to promote the submission of assessment in te reo Māori, its efforts to build capability in both students and staff and on the increasing amount of assessment being submitted either for assessment in te reo Māori or for assessment in translation.

GS 6.6   C3   The Panel **commends** the University on its Teaching Advocate programme and on the inclusive nature of its suite of awards which recognise teaching.

GS 7.3   C4   The Panel **commends** the University on its clear and comprehensive documentation pertaining to higher degree postgraduate supervision, including the clear statements of responsibilities of all parties, and the Panel supports the University's stated intention to enhance oversight of supervision processes related to faculty-based master's research.

GS 7.3   C5   The Panel **commends** the University on its overall management of postgraduate research study and in particular notes the various efforts made to encourage postgraduate research students to be active members of the University research community.

Affirmations

GS 1.6   A1   The Panel **affirms** the University's developing risk management and business continuity processes, which are proportionate to the nature of likely risk events, and encourages the University to continue building capability in infrastructure, personal and academic responses.

GS 3.2   A2   The Panel **affirms** the University's attention to the development of institutional graduate attributes and encourages it to expedite the process of reaching a conclusion such that a clear Graduate Profile can be articulated and communicated to staff, students and the community and used as a basis for curriculum initiatives.

GS 3.8   A3   The Panel **affirms** the University's reconsideration of approaches to promoting academic integrity and managing dishonesty. It supports the intention to develop a mandatory module within all undergraduate programmes, as part of the Curriculum Enhancement initiative.

GS 6.1   A4   The Panel **affirms** the University's introduction of the Leadership and Management Development Programme and encourages the University to incentivise participation by current and prospective academic managers.

GS 7   A5   The Panel **affirms** the University's decision to create a School of Graduate Research to encompass both doctoral and research master's students.

GS 7.2   A6   The Panel **affirms** the University's collation of information about resourcing of research students and encourages the University to use this as a basis for developing policies or procedures which are aimed at ensuring equitable approaches to resourcing across the University, for faculty-based master's students as well as for MPhil and doctoral students.

GS 7.5   A7   The Panel **affirms** the introduction of a postgraduate research student exit survey and encourages the University to include faculty-based master's students as well as MPhil and doctoral students in the survey.

Recommendations

GS 1.2   R1   The Panel **recommends** that the University reviews those institutional academic practices for which faculties, schools and departments currently have responsibility in order to identify instances of inconsistency or inequity and to identify good practices which might be shared; and that the University develops institutional policies, procedures and/or guidelines which ensure that practices facilitate consistent quality of support for staff and students, particularly with respect to:

        Provision of academic advice to currently-enrolled students;
        Appeals and academic grievances;
        Management of academic integrity;
        Support of priority groups of students;
        Identification and support of students at risk of under-achieving;
        Follow-up of student feedback on student engagement;
        Staff induction and workloads of staff new to academic work.
        (Refer to sections 2.3; 3.8; 4.1; 4.2; 4.4; 5.1; 6.1)

GS 1.2   R2   The Panel **recommends** that when it reviews its Academic Plan the University also maps against it (or its replacement) the other institutional plans related to curriculum and student experience to ensure consistency and connectedness of objectives, measures and indicators.

GS 1.4   R3   The Panel **recommends** that the University explore how it might make more effective use of knowledge about current best practice and emerging innovative pedagogies in a systematic way to ensure infrastructure planning, development and refurbishment is directed by current and anticipated teaching and learning practices.

GS1.5   R4   The Panel **recommends** that the University reviews its processes for decision-making around provision of digital learning support to ensure that teaching enhancements are in line with the University's objectives, including those of the Curriculum Enhancement Programme. Strong encouragement should be given to academic staff to avail themselves of the expertise available within the Centre for Tertiary Teaching and Learning.

GS3.3   R5   The Panel **recommends** that as part of the Curriculum Enhancement Programme the University provides appropriate professional development opportunities to assist staff in providing students with learning activities which will facilitate the

acquisition of attributes in the Graduate Profile, and in using modes of assessment whereby the University can assure itself the Graduate Profile is achieved.

GS3.5   R6   The Panel **recommends** that the University revisits the 2010 benchmarking report and develops appropriate institutional benchmarking principles which encompass, *inter alia:* academic activities to be benchmarked; for what purpose; identification of relevant comparator institutions and procedures; avenues or responsibility for translating relevant good practices identified into local developments.

GS4.2   R7   The Panel **recommends** that the University ensures that faculties, schools and departments are made aware of their responsibilities in jointly owning and assisting the University to meet the institutional KPIs pertaining to academic achievement of priority groups of students and are accountable for outcomes relevant to the students in their programmes.

GS5.5   R8   The Panel **recommends** that the University continues to review processes around data-gathering on student experiences and solicits ideas from all university groups (staff and students) about how feedback can be improved such that the basis of decision-making might be enhanced.

GS5.6   R9   The Panel **recommends** that the University introduces a graduate feedback mechanism aligned with the postgraduate exit survey, such that both address such matters as attainment of graduate attributes and assessment of student experience.

GS 6.3   R10   The Panel **recommends** that the University urgently reviews its reporting practice for teaching evaluation results to ensure academic line managers receive performance data and use these to inform the professional development reviews of their individual staff.

GS 6.4   R11   The Panel **recommends** that the University provides clear leadership in the development of pedagogical expertise which: is consistent with the University's strategic objectives articulated in the Curriculum Enhancement Programme; facilitates student learning which is aligned with the graduate profile; and which ensures the staffing resources for meeting the professional development needs of teachers are adequate to provide this in a proactive way.

Acknowledgments

The Panel thanks in particular Professor Neil Quigley, Vice-Chancellor of the University of Waikato, for his warm welcome to the University. Appreciation is also extended to the Waikato staff who hosted the Panel.

The preparation and submission of the University's Self-review Portfolio was managed by Professor Alister Jones, Professor Robyn Longhurst, and Ms Cassandra Beattie. AQA is grateful for their assistance throughout the audit process. The effort of all those who contributed to the University's self-assessment process, preparation of the Self-review Report and the organisation associated with the site visit is appreciated.

The Panel is most grateful for the open interaction and frank comments and observations of all those staff, students, Council members and stakeholders who gave their time to appear before it during the site visit. The Panel also appreciated the access the University provided to discussion papers which were at an early stage of development and, as such, were as yet confidential to the University.

Audit Panel

Professor Sheelagh Matear *Chair of the Panel*	Lincoln University
Emeritus Professor Bob Elliott	Queensland University of Technology, Australia
Darryn Russell	University of Canterbury
Professor Vernon Squire	University of Otago
Emeritus Professor Deborah Willis	Consultant, formerly Victoria University of Wellington

Secretariat

Dr Jan Cameron	Director Academic Quality Agency for New Zealand Universities
Heather Kirkwood	Deputy Director (Finance and Communications) Academic Quality Agency for New Zealand Universities

The Academic Quality Agency for New Zealand Universities

The Academic Quality Agency for New Zealand Universities (AQA) was established by New Zealand universities in 1994, as the New Zealand Universities Academic Audit Unit. It is an independent body whose purpose is to contribute to the advancement of university education by:

- Engaging as a leader and advocate in the development of academic quality;
- Applying quality assurance and quality enhancement processes that assist universities in improving student engagement, academic experience and learning outcomes.

The AQA helps support universities in achieving standards of excellence in research and teaching by conducting institutional audits of the processes in universities which underpin academic quality and by identifying and disseminating information on good practice in developing and maintaining quality in higher education. Activities include a quarterly newsletter and regular meetings on quality enhancement topics.

The AQA interacts with other educational bodies within New Zealand and with similar academic quality assurance agencies internationally. The Agency is a full member of the Asia-Pacific Quality Network (APQN), and of the International Network for Quality Assurance Agencies in Higher Education (INQAAHE). AQA has been assessed as adhering to the INQAAHE Guidelines of Good Practice in Quality Assurance.

Further information is available from the AQA website: www.aqa.ac.nz.

Cycle 5 Academic Audit Process

Key principles underpinning academic audits carried out by AQA are:

- peer review
- evidence-based
- externally benchmarked
- enhancement-led.

Audits are carried out by panels of trained auditors who are selected from universities' senior academic staff and other professionals with knowledge of academic auditing and evaluation, and who have been approved by the AQA Board. Each panel includes at least one overseas external auditor. An audit begins with a process of self-review leading to an audit portfolio that the university uses to report on its progress towards achieving the goals and objectives related to the focus of the audit. The audit panel verifies the portfolio through documentary analysis, interviews and site visits.

Final audit reports of New Zealand universities are publicly available. Reports commend good practice and make recommendations intended to assist the university in its own programme of continuous improvement. For New Zealand universities, progress on the recommendations is submitted to the AQA Board in a follow-up report 12 months later. A further report on progress in

implementing the recommendations of the previous audit also forms part of the self-review process in the next audit round.

Cycle 5 Academic Audit Framework

The Cycle 5 academic audit is framed around academic activities related to teaching and learning and student support. The key **Academic Activity Themes** which have been identified and which form the framework for both the self-review and the academic audit are:

1. Leadership and Management of Teaching and Learning
2. Student Profile: Access, Transition and Admission Processes
3. Curriculum and Assessment
4. Student Engagement and Achievement
5. Student Feedback and Support
6. Teaching Quality
7. Supervision of Research Students.

The audit framework covers activities and quality assurance processes which might be expected as fundamental in a contemporary university of good standing. The framework articulates these expectations in a series of Guideline Statements.

For each academic activity theme, universities are expected to address not just whether they do undertake the activities or processes identified in the Guideline Statements, but also evaluate how well they do so, and on what evidence they base their own self-evaluation. From their own self-evaluation, areas and strategies for improvement might be identified. The Cycle 5 Academic Audit Handbook provides more information on the kinds of evidence and indicators which may be appropriate for each expectation referred to in the Guideline Statements.

Throughout the academic activity areas identified in the framework, attention should be paid to such features as different modes of delivery and acknowledgement of learner diversity (e.g., international students; on-campus/off-campus). Unless otherwise stated, all activities and processes relate to postgraduate as well as undergraduate study. Where appropriate, specific attention might be paid to special student groups (e.g., Māori students, international students) but unless otherwise stated it is assumed processes discussed apply to all students similarly.