

Cycle 6 Academic Audit

The reports for the Cycle 6 academic audits of **Te Whare Wānanga o Waitaha | University of Canterbury** and the **University of Waikato** are now available on the **AQA website**.

The report for Te Whare Wānanga o Waitaha | University of Canterbury made 17 commendations, 13 affirmations and 13 recommendations. In common with other universities, the COVID-19 pandemic has had a profound impact on thinking about how teaching, learning and support services are delivered. The Panel was impressed by the University's coherent and collaborative approach to responding to changes.

The report for the University of Waikato made 19 commendations, 15 affirmations and 11 recommendations. The Panel recognised that the University's partnerships and operations in China had provided early information and experience for responding to the COVID-19 pandemic. The University of Waikato was able to learn from this experience when it needed to move its teaching online.

Following the publication of these two reports, AQA has undertaken a mid-cycle analysis of commendations, affirmations and recommendations made in the reports to date, with the intention of identifying emergent themes (see below).

The panel for the Cycle 6 academic audit of Te Whare Wānanga o Aoraki Lincoln University has held its first meeting. The site visit is scheduled for 4-6 March 2024 and the report is anticipated mid-June 2024. The first planning meeting has been held with the University of Otago and engagement is about to commence with AUT. Waipapa Taumata Rau, University of Auckland is anticipated to submit its one-year follow-up report shortly, followed by Te Herenga Waka —Victoria University of Wellington in the first quarter of 2024. At the end of 2023, academic audit activity is underway with all universities.

Mid-Cycle Analysis

This mid-cycle analysis of commendations, affirmations and recommendations (CARs) is based on the first five reports published in the Cycle 6 academic audit. All reports, together with summaries, are available on the **AQA website**.

The overall pattern of CARs made across the first five academic audit reports is fairly evenly balanced, with 64 commendations, 60 affirmations and 66 recommendations (Figure 1). Section A—Leadership and management of teaching and learning and academic quality—has the highest number of commendations, followed by Section B—Student life cycle, support and wellbeing.

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AQA | About

The Academic Quality Agency for New Zealand Universities (AQA) was established in 1993 to carry out audits of the processes in universities which underpin academic quality. The mission

of AQA is to contribute to high quality New Zealand university education by engaging as a leader and advocate in the development of universities based on high quality, internationally acceptable,

academic practices, and by providing quality assurance and quality enhancement services which assist universities in facilitating excellent student experience and learning outcomes.

Section C—Curriculum, assessment and delivery—has the highest number of affirmations, closely followed by Section A. Section D—Teaching quality— has the highest number of recommendations.

Half of the commendations made in Section A were made for either Guideline Statement (GS) 1 (Planning and reporting) or GS 6 (Progress on the enhancement theme for Māori students). Panels commended coherent strategic planning frameworks and use of data to support decision making (GS 1). With respect to GS 6, Panels commended the establishments of the Āwhina initiative at Te Herenga Waka—Victoria University of Wellington, and capability building to become a good Te Tiriti o Waitangi partner at Massey University Te Kunenga ki Pūrehuroa) and focus on closing gaps and improving access and achievement for Māori students. Commendations in Section B centred on three GS – Transitions (GS 9), Learning support (GS 12) and Safety and wellbeing (GS 13).

Affirmations in Section C centred on GS 18 (Assessment), with all universities audited to date having initiatives underway to develop, progress or review assessment policies, frameworks or guides. Guideline statements with higher frequencies of affirmations in Section B are Student voice (GS 2), Teaching and learning environments (GS 3) and Progress on the enhancement theme for Pacific students (GS 7). Affirmations with respect to GS 2 reflect universities’ plans to develop or implement student voice, engagement or partnership agreements or frameworks. Four of the universities audited to date are undertaking work in this area, with the fifth already having a partnership agreement in place at the time of the audit. Affirmations for GS 3 reflect development of learning management systems and the connectedness of digital components of teaching and learning environments. To date, progress on the enhancement theme seems less well consolidated for Pacific students and affirmations made with respect to GS 7 reflect ongoing efforts to strengthen whole-of-university focus on success and sense of belonging for Pacific students.

Recommendations in Section D centre on Staff recruitments (GS 22), Induction and ongoing expectations (GS 23) and Teaching development (GS 24). For GS 22, panels made recommendations about aligning recruitment and workforce development with strategic direction. Common themes in recommendations made in GS 23 include ensuring that access to induction programmes is equitable, and that the induction programmes themselves are tailored to the needs of specific groups of staff. For GS 24, the common themes include establishment or development of clear expectations of teaching performance.

A small number of CARS have been made outside the sections of the audit framework. These refer either to universities’ responses to the COVID-19 pandemic or overall approaches to leading and managing change. The 3 commendations that have been made with respect to the audit framework (AF) are to do with the Te Tiriti o Waitangi underpinning component of the AF. It should be noted however, that Te Tiriti o Waitangi is also reflected in CARs made in other sections of the audit framework.

The individual guideline statements that have attracted the most attention across commendations, affirmations and recommendations are GS 1, GS 2 and GS 23. These indicate particular points of focus for universities in Cycle 6 to date.

In summarising the CARs made in audit reports, it is important to remember that audits occur at a point in time and activity, particularly with respect to affirmations, will have moved on since the audit (site visit) occurred. It is not possible to examine the impact of academic audit until the one-year follow-up reports have been completed.

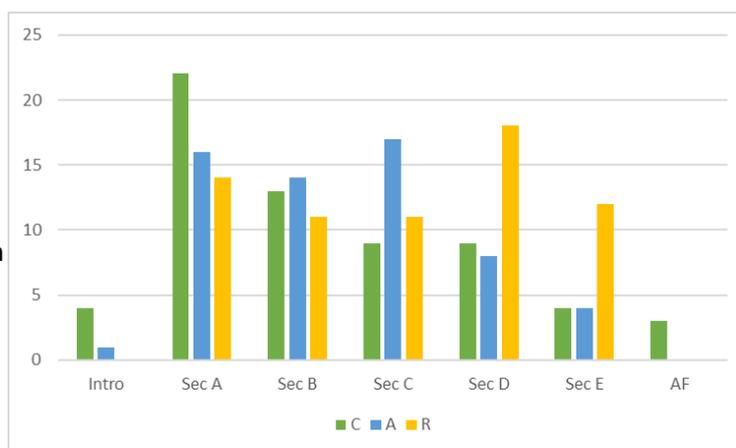


Figure 1: Commendations, affirmations and recommendations in the first five academic audit reports in Cycle 6

Audit Panels

Six audit panels have been appointed to date in Cycle 6. All audit panels have included a Māori Panel member, an international panel member, and a student panel member, and three panels have included a Pacific panel member. Five of the internal panel members have come from Australia, with the sixth from Samoa. The University of Otago and Te Herenga Waka—Victoria University of Wellington have contributed the most panel members, with two chairs of panels each. Waipapa Taumata Rau, University of Auckland and Massey University Te Kunenga ki Pūrehuroa have contributed the fewest members of audit panels to date. Only one-third of panel members appointed are male. This last point merits further investigation in terms of how academic quality roles and contribution reflect gender.

Quality Enhancement

The annual Quality Managers' meeting was held in Wellington on 16 November, followed by the 8th Student Voice Summit on 17 November. The meeting covered current developments in academic quality in universities, preliminary trends and one-year follow-up reporting for Cycle 6 academic audit, with other discussions focused on implementing policy around academic reviews and assessment, institutional survey policies and CUAP developments.



The Student Voice Summit was organised by NZUSA, Te Mana Ākonga and the National Disabled Students' Association. The day began with a workshop led by Rosa Hibbert-Schooner, outgoing Tumuaki of Te Mana Ākonga who utilised a te ao Māori framework to reflect on where student voice in Aotearoa New Zealand had come from, its challenges and opportunities. The workshop carried this framing throughout the day to the final session on setting priorities for the year ahead. Other contributions to summit came from across the tertiary sector with speakers from universities, Te Pūkenga, ACE Aotearoa, NZQA and Fair Way. Thanks to Massey University Te Kunenga ki Pūrehuroa for hosting the Summit.

Access to TEQSA Masterclass: Contract cheating and deterrence

Staff at universities in Aotearoa New Zealand with a university email address now have access to **TEQSA's online masterclass on contract cheating and deterrence**. Please contact your university's academic integrity office or AQA for further information. Our sincere thanks to TEQSA for providing access to these materials which were developed by leading academics and practitioners in the field.

Note: some university email systems may block the confirmation email when you first register for the masterclass. TEQSA check this regularly and will allow access. If you don't receive a confirmation email to finalise registration, you will still be able to access your account within 1-3 days.

Office Move

AQA is moving office, along with Universities New Zealand – Te Pōkai Tara. From 15 January 2024, our new office can be found at **Level 3, 69 The Terrace, Wellington**. The PO Box address, phone numbers and email addresses are all unchanged.

Have You Seen This?

A **special issue** of the *Student Success* journal focuses on educator wellbeing. It argues that educator wellbeing makes a “vital contribution” to student success and examines ways in which educator wellbeing can be improved.

The *Journal of the Australian and New Zealand Student Services Association* (JANZSSA) team have released **Volume 31, Issue 2**. This issue explores the three central themes of cross-institutional and interdisciplinary collaboration, widening participation and the need for tailored student services models, and the importance of student voice. Submissions for the April 2024 issue are now open. More information can be found on the **JANZSSA website**.

The Australian Government is **consulting on two initiatives** from the Australian Universities Accord Interim Report – a Draft Action Plan Addressing Gender-based Violence in Higher Education and a National Student Ombudsman, “which would be a single point of contact for higher education students to escalate complaints if they are not satisfied with their provider’s response”.

The Asia Pacific Quality Network (APQN) held their annual conference at the American International University-Bangladesh in Dhaka, Bangladesh in November 2023. A conference report is available on the **APQN website**.

Videos from the 2023 TEQSA **Conference** are now available.

A forthcoming book to look out for is Martin Betts’ ***Changing Higher Education for Good***.

Meetings and Conference Calendar

23-25 January 2024

Monterrey, Mexico and online

Institute for the Future of Education (IFE)

Conference - Education in the Era of Artificial Intelligence

29 January – 1 February 2024

Washington DC

CHEA/CIQG Annual **Conference** - Quality Assurance Matters

21-24 May 2024

Gatineau – Ottawa, Canada

Joint International **Conference** on Ethics and Integrity in Academia: Plagiarism, Prevention and Pedagogy in a New Digital Era

10-12 June 2024

Bucharest, Romania

INQAAHE **Forum** - Transforming Society: Social Responsibility through Quality Assurance of Tertiary Education

1-3 July 2024

Melbourne

Student Success **Conference**

Submissions close 4 March 2024

8-11 July 2024

Adelaide

HERDSA **Conference**

14-16 November 2024

University of Twente, Netherlands

European Quality Assurance **Forum** (EQAF)

Ngā mihi o te tau hou

AQA would like to wish everyone who has worked with us this year a peaceful and healthy break. We look forward to working with you again in 2024.



AQA

Academic
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We welcome feedback on this newsletter and the AQA website, along with news and suggestions for newsletter items.

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