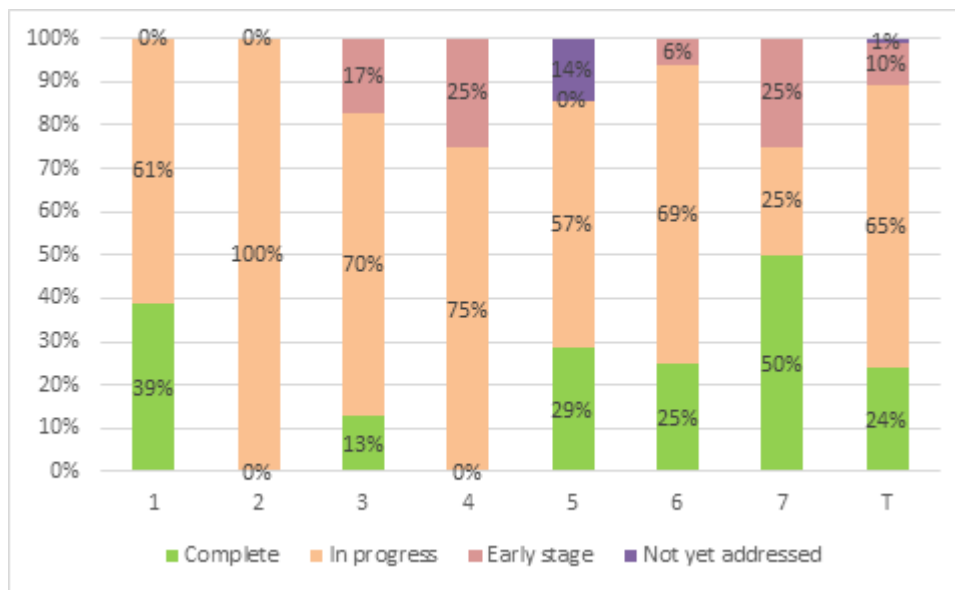


Response to Cycle 5 Audit Recommendations

Assessing the impact of quality assurance activities is a perennial challenge. For well performing systems with strong internal quality processes it may be that external quality assurance has relatively little impact as it reinforces or supports internal quality assessments and planned enhancements. The complexity of university environments also makes it difficult to isolate impacts of external quality assurance from other influences on improvements in quality processes and systems. However, examining universities' responses to external quality assurance recommendations is part of public accountability for both universities and quality assurance bodies. The table below summarises progress on recommendations by Cycle 5 academic activity themes.



Key to X-axis

- 1 Leadership and Management of Teaching and Learning
- 2 Student Profile: Access, Admission and Transition Processes
- 3 Curriculum and Assessment
- 4 Student Engagement and Achievement

- 5 Student Feedback and Support
- 6 Teaching Quality
- 7 Supervision of Research Students
- T Total

continued on page 2

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.

Response to recommendations continued

As part of Cycle 5, universities provided a one-year follow-up report to the AQA Board on their progress in addressing recommendations. AQA has used these reports to gain a sense of how universities are responding to recommendations. Universities' responses have been categorised as either 'complete' with no substantive work remaining, 'in progress', at an 'early stage' or 'not yet addressed'.

Audit panels in Cycle 5 made 83 recommendations in total. Overall, and as might be expected, most recommendations were at the in progress stage at the time of the one-year follow-up reports. However, 24% of recommendations were considered to be complete and 10% of recommendations were considered to be at an early stage. Only one recommendation was considered to be not yet addressed.

Within the Cycle 5 academic activity themes, higher proportions of responses are considered to be complete in the leadership and management of teaching and learning and supervision of postgraduate students sections. More recommendations were considered to be at an early stage for recommendations in the curriculum and assessment academic activity theme. This is not surprising given the time required for curriculum changes. For a small number of recommendations (7) across Cycle 5, audit panels indicated that these recommendations should be addressed urgently. Of these, 3 were complete at the time of the one-year follow-up reports and the others were in progress.

Counting percentage responses of recommendations needs to be treated with caution. Recommendations differ in scope, scale and complexity and significant change which may affect how a university responds to a recommendation is ongoing. Nonetheless, this analysis indicates that overall, New Zealand universities have been responsive to the recommendations made in their Cycle 5 academic audit reports.

As this analysis is based on reports submitted by universities one-year after the publication of their Cycle 5 academic audit reports, it does not reflect progress at a particular point in time. Universities report again on their response to Cycle 5 recommendations in the mid-cycle reports between Cycles 5 and 6 and any recommendations which are not fully addressed at the time of the mid-cycle reports will be included in Cycle 6 academic audits.

Cycle 6

The AQA Board has appointed the first cohort of auditors and reviewers to the Cycle 6 Register of Auditors and Reviewers. The call for auditors and reviewers for Cycle 6 academic audits remains open and more information can be found at <https://www.aqa.ac.nz/about-us/auditors> AQA would particularly like to receive applications from potential auditors who can bring a Māori perspective, a Pasifika perspective or that of a student or recent graduate.

Self-review workshops for Cycle 6 academic audit will be held in Wellington on 3 December 2019 and Auckland at the beginning of February 2020. All universities are welcome to attend any of the workshops. A third workshop will be scheduled before the end of June 2020.

The AQA Board has accepted the mid-cycle report from the University of Waikato.

AQA's 2018-19 **annual report** is available on the AQA website at <https://www.aqa.ac.nz/annualreports> The Chair's report highlights the development and publication of resource materials for the sixth cycle of academic audit, further work in support of the student voice, more on the enhancement theme, receiving mid-cycle reports, and strengthening international relationships. Changes in Board membership and AQA staffing are also noted in what was another busy and productive year for AQA.

AQA International relationships and visitors

AQA has agreed Memorandum of Understanding with the Commonwealth of Australia as represented by the Tertiary Education Quality and Standards Agency (TEQSA) and renewed its Memorandum of Understanding with the Hong Kong Council for Accreditation of Academic and Vocational Qualifications (HKCAAVQ) and Memorandum of Arrangement with the Taiwan Assessment and Evaluation Association (TWAEA).



AQA gave a presentation to a Vietnamese delegation interested in quality assurance arrangements for New Zealand universities.



Members of Fiji National University (FNU), in particular the College of Humanities and Education led by its Dean, Dr Eci Nabalarua, visited Auckland recently to take part in a workshop on self-review for academic programmes and together with the PVCL&T, Professor James Pounder representing the VC, signed an MoU between FNU and AQA.

Student Voice

Contributed by Lukas Kristen, National President, New Zealand International Students' Association



In New Zealand, international students have had little representation at the decision-making table, despite supporting one of New Zealand's biggest industries. In 2017, NZISA developed an executive and representative council of international student leaders throughout New Zealand. In 2018, NZISA brought together over 100 international student leaders to discuss mental health and

wellbeing in our communities. As President, it has been my privilege to grow the community and forge connections with our fellow partner associations (Te Mana Ākonga, NZUSA, and Tauria Pasifika). This year NZISA has focused on helping international students step up to the challenge of being an advocate. A problem NZISA identified is the lack of formal training for international student leaders around advocacy and university governance, probably because of a lack of representation on academic boards and university committees. Working with AQA and NZUSA, we aim to upskill our international student leaders to be better equipped for improving academic quality and making a difference at academic board meetings within their institutions. We hope that the joint Universities Student Voice Summit between NZUSA, Te Mana Ākonga, Tauria Pasifika and NZISA (hosted by AQA) promotes a culture of collaboration and results in sharing strategies around academic quality within the university sector.

Have You Seen This?

New Zealand readers will be aware of the range of discussion papers and consultations relevant to academic quality that are underway in New Zealand. They include the Tertiary Education Strategy and Statement of National Education and Learning Priorities, Tertiary Student Voice and the New Zealand Qualifications Framework.

<https://conversation.education.govt.nz/conversations/tertiary-education-strategy/>

<https://conversation.education.govt.nz/conversations/tertiary-student-voice/>

<https://www.nzqa.govt.nz/about-us/consultations-and-reviews/review-nzqf/>

Staying in New Zealand, Ako Aotearoa has released a Guide on mitigating assessment anxiety in first-year university students

<https://ako.ac.nz/assets/Knowledge-centre/RHPF-s1601-Understanding-assessment-anxiety/a5aa1c89c0/Mitigating-Assessment-Anxiety-in-First-Year-University-Students.pdf>

The European Association for Quality Assurance in Higher Education (ENQA) publishes both the self-review and external review for member quality assurance bodies on its website at

<https://enqa.eu/index.php/reviews/review-reports-and-decisions/> Recently released reviews include Ireland (QQI), Italy (ANVUR) and Portugal (A3ES)

The OECD Education at a Glance 2019 was released earlier this month

<http://www.oecd.org/education/education-at-a-glance/>

Meetings and Conference Calendar

31 October in Wellington AQA Quality Forum
<https://www.aqa.ac.nz/node/295>

1 November 2019 in Wellington
Enhancement Theme Symposium
<https://www.aqa.ac.nz/node/296>

1-13 November 2019 in Hobart, Tasmania
Australasian Association for Institutional Research (AAIR) Forum: Institutional Research – the Devil is in the Detail
<https://airforum.com.au/>

14 November 2019 in Wellington
Student Voice Summit
<https://www.aqa.ac.nz/node/294>

27-29 November 2019 in Melbourne
4th Annual TEQSA Conference: Partnerships driving quality
<https://www.teqsaconference.org.au/>

8 – 11 December 2019 in Dunedin
2019 Australian and New Zealand Student Services Association (ANZSSA) Conference
<https://www.anzssa.com/annual-conference/2019-anzssa-conference/>

16-19 April 2020 in Singapore
Asia-Pacific Quality Network Academic Conference
Quality Assurance for Higher Education 4.0 in the Asia-Pacific Region
<https://www.apqn.org/>



AQA | Academic
Quality Agency
For New Zealand Universities

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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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