



June 2020

Te Pokapū Kounġa Mātauranga mō ngā Whare Wānanga o Aotearoa

## Cycle 6 Academic Audit Updates

### 12 Month Deferral of Cycle 6 Audits

In response to requests from universities, AQA has deferred the audit schedule for Cycle 6 by 12 months. This deferral recognises the extraordinary circumstances of the global COVID-19 pandemic and is consistent with responses from other Quality Assurance bodies internationally. No other changes are anticipated to either the audit framework or audit process at this point. Further information on the Cycle 6 audit framework and process is set out in the Guide to Cycle 6. This is available on the AQA [website](#) or please contact AQA for a hard copy.

The indicative, revised schedule is set out in the table below. The specific audit timeline for each university will be agreed between AQA and the university.

University	Self-review portfolio due	Site visit	Report published
The University of Auckland	March 2022	June 2022	October 2022
Victoria University of Wellington	May 2022	August 2022	November 2022
Massey University	October 2022	March 2023	June 2023
University of Canterbury	March 2023	July 2023	October 2023
University of Waikato	May 2023	September 2023	December 2023
Lincoln University	October 2023	March 2024	June 2024
University of Otago	March 2024	July 2024	October 2024
Auckland University of Technology	May 2024	September 2024	December 2024

AQA will undertake an interim review of Cycle 6 at the end of 2022 to confirm that audit processes are performing as anticipated. This will include examining whether the two guideline statements arising from the enhancement theme are eliciting the expected information. The review of Cycle 6 will take place in 2025.

### Auditor Recruitment and Training

AQA will also defer auditor training and advise dates once these have been determined. However, AQA is continuing to seek applications, particularly from Māori and from Pasifika Peoples, to the Cycle 6 Register of Auditors and Reviewers. Criteria for appointment can be found [here](#) or please contact [Sheelagh.matear@aqa.ac.nz](mailto:Sheelagh.matear@aqa.ac.nz) to discuss an application. AQA will continue to receive applications throughout Cycle 6.

### Short Course – Introduction to Cycle 6 Audit and Preparation for Self-Review

AQA has partnered with the Open Polytechnic of New Zealand to develop a short course on the iQualify platform. The course covers topics discussed during the face-to-face workshops at the end of last year and start of this year. Please contact the Executive Director to ‘enrol’.

#### 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.

## Quality Enhancement

### Enhancement Theme

The report from the second Enhancement Theme Symposium is now available on the Enhancement Theme website

<https://www.enhanceunz.com/>



AQA would like to thank all staff, tauiira (students) and stakeholders who participated in the Symposium and its development.

Photos of Māori and Pasifika student and staff panels engaging in discussion with the attendees and small group sessions at the Enhancement Theme Symposium.

### Good Practice Assessment

AQA will undertake a *good practice assessment* of online teaching in universities during the COVID-19 period and identify lessons for the future. This *good practice assessment* will focus on the pivot to and experience of online teaching. Universities are asked to highlight the elements of good practice in their own *good practice assessments* of their response to the COVID-19 pandemic. University *good practice assessments* will be shared with AQA by 29 January 2021, or earlier if possible and are expected to address:

- What universities did to move from face-to-face/on campus to online delivery.
- How academic quality was and has been maintained for online delivery.
- Key success factors and challenges.

Lessons for the future will be developed to guide:

- preparation for future 'shocks' and sudden risks to academic continuity
- future development of teaching and learning and support for students and staff
- management of academic quality in rapidly changing and novel disruptive contexts.

### AQA External Review

The 'site visit' for the 2020 external review of AQA took place from 15-18 June 2020 and was conducted remotely. AQA would like to thank the External Panel and everyone who met with the Panel or provided a submission. These were difficult times in which to undertake a review. We look forward to receiving the Panel's report.

### Lincoln University Inter-Cycle Report

The AQA Board has reviewed and accepted the inter-cycle report from Lincoln University. These reports were previously referred to as 'mid-cycle' reports. However, discussion since the components of Cycle 6 were agreed has indicated that 'inter-cycle' would be a preferable term.

### Review of Teacher Education Programmes at Fiji National University

AQA has published a review of teacher education programmes at Fiji National University and acknowledges the willingness of Fiji National University to engage in international quality assurance. The report is available on the AQA website at <https://www.aqa.ac.nz/node/338>

## Student Voice

*Contributed by Mamaeroa Merito, Tumuaki Takirua, Co-President.*

Kia ora e te whānau, ngā mihi nunui to AQA for letting Te Mana Ākonga (The National Māori Tertiary Students' Association [TMĀ]) utilise this space to kōrero about our Taura during this tumultuous time.

Just recently we released a report which details the educational and wellbeing impacts of the COVID-19 lockdown on Māori university students. We put a karanga out nationally to Māori students at each of the eight universities of Aotearoa and our Taura gracefully shared their kōrero with us.



“This project was for our taura, an opportunity for their voices and their stories to be seen and heard. Their lived-experiences matter and it is our duty to ensure that they have a platform to be listened to” notes our TMĀ Pou Hauora/Project Lead - Zaine Akuhata-Huntington (Ngāti Tūwharetoa, Tūhoe, Ngāi Te Rangi, Ngāti Kahungunu ki Te Wairoa).

Key points that this report presented to us is that our Taura struggled financially, adapting to learning online was a challenge and mental health and wellbeing was negatively impacted.

Financial struggles were a key theme with more than half of our Taura reporting increased financial stress. 1 in 5 students reported having dependents who relied on them financially, and more than a third agreed that lockdown had made it more difficult to afford essential bills.

Online learning also proved challenging. 1 in 4 students did not have access to strong, reliable WiFi or internet for online learning. 55% of students reported their experience of online learning to be negative and nearly three-quarters of students reported the overall impact on their education had been negative.

The lockdown also took its toll emotionally. 52% of students reported feeling more sad than before lockdown, 76% more anxious, and 84% reported feeling worried about their academic progress. 52% indicated they did not feel valued as a student by their institution.

We're grateful that our Taura had the strength & resilience to share their kōrero with us. As a result our report includes strong recommendations on how the government and universities can better support and enable Māori students both post-COVID and in the future. A clear expectation TMA has is that Māori students are involved in all aspects of action.

Our report identified a number of impacts that the lockdown had on students, however we believe that this report only shows the tip of the iceberg. Universities need to ensure they act to mitigate the negative impacts COVID-19 has had on Māori students.

We are also working to understand similar impacts on Māori in Institutes of Technology and Polytechnics (ITPs), in Industry Training Organisations (ITOs) and Private Training Establishments (PTEs) thanks to strong support from the Ministry of Education. TMA hopes that collectively these will paint a full picture of the challenges and opportunities Māori face post-COVID, allowing us to better advocate for all Māori in tertiary education.

To read the full report:

<https://www.temanaakonga.org.nz/nga-puka>



**TE MANA ĀKONGA**

National Māori Tertiary Students' Association

## Have You Seen This?

This have you seen this column is prompted by the Te Mana Ākonga study of “Impacts of the COVID-19 Lockdown on Māori University Students” <https://www.temanaakonga.org.nz/nga-puka> and collates other recent releases and reports by and regarding students.

Sparqs in Scotland and the QAA and NUS in England have produced guidance for student associations to support university-student engagement. See <https://www.sparqs.ac.uk/news-detail.php?page=897>

Still in Scotland, sessions and other resources from the online Enhancement Themes conference can be found [here](#). They include a student panel discussion and materials covering inclusion, kindness and well-being.

[PhD Life – the UK Student Experience](#) is another student authored study of student experience, by PhD student Bethan Cornell and published by HEPI.

Other work in the UK has looked at the [impact of the COVID-19 lockdown on early career researchers](#).

Back in New Zealand, the Education Review Office is also undertaking work to learn lessons from the COVID-19 lockdown experience. Their report on well-being and experiences of learning and teaching over the lockdown period is available [here](#).

### Meetings and Conference Calendar

Most conferences and meetings are still either moving online or being deferred. The following may be of interest.

#### **8 July, INQAAHE Webinar**

[Access to, success and challenges in higher education amid COVID-19 and beyond.](#)

#### **July and August, virtual events**

Higher Ed Services in Australia, with the Higher Education Quality Network (HEQN) and the Council for Australasian University Leaders in Learning and Teaching (CAULLT) are running a series of virtual events from July. The event topics include: *The Leader’s Challenge: Dilemmas in Strategic Decision Making: Learning and Teaching Quality Post Covid-19; and Achieving Sustainable Academic Quality and Compliance Outcomes in the face of Covid-19.* See <https://www.hes.edu.au/heqn-virtual-events> for registration information.

#### **12-13 November 2020, online**

The [2020 European Quality Assurance Forum](#) will be an online event. Submissions are due 27 July 2020.

AQA will be in touch with New Zealand universities to discuss preferences and options for the 2020 Quality Forum and Student Voice Summit.



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

Sheelagh Matear  
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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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