

ACADEMIC BOARD

Report title Australian Universities Quality Agency quality audit of La Trobe University
Action Plan in response to Recommendations and Affirmations

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Date 24 May 2010

1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

1.1 Background

The AUQA quality audit of the University was conducted during 2009 with a series of audit visits to four offshore locations, the Bendigo campus and the Bundoora campus during August and September. The audit focussed on responses to affirmations and recommendations of the last audit, as well as the two themes of 'Internationalisation' and 'Research and Research Training'.

The final report of the audit was released on January 20, 2010. The attached Action Plan outlines La Trobe University's responses to recommendations and affirmations contained in the report.

1.2 Summary

The report contained eleven affirmations, and eight recommendations which are consistent with planned initiatives for the future. The Action Plan contains planned responses to recommendations and affirmations as well as responsibilities and timelines. Planned responses include work already commenced by the DVC (IFS) and the DVC(R) and other senior portfolio holders. Most are included in relevant operational plans.

1.3 Issues (including any financial, legal or compliance issues)

We will be required to present a progress report on our Action Plan in January 2011. As the new quality agency TEQSA is likely to be created on January 1 2011, the process for submission of the progress report is not fully clear at this stage.

1.4 RECOMMENDATION

That Academic Board **endorse** the AUQA Audit Action Plan 2010

2. LIST OF DOCUMENTS ATTACHED

AUQA Audit Action Plan 2010

AUQA Audit Action Plan 2010

This Action Plan documents the planned responses of the University to affirmations and recommendations contained in the AUQA Audit Report of January 2010.

The University will report to AUQA/TEQSA in January 2011 on its progress against this Action Plan. Future quality audits are also likely to review recommendations and affirmations made in the previous audit cycle and to monitor the effectiveness of any responses.

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Matters from Cycle 1 Audit

Source	AUQA Affirmation/Recommendation	LTU Action	In relevant Operational Plan? (Y/N)	Responsibility	Timelines & Milestones
Affirmation 1	AUQA affirms La Trobe University's explicit commitment in the Regional Strategic Plan 2009–2012 to integrate regional campuses for the benefit of Victoria.	Develop a community engagement strategy, including a process to document, measure and manage the University's community engagement activities. Develop programs to promote and reward outstanding community engagement activities.	Y (Uni)	PVC(R) DVC(IFS) ED(OVC)	Strategy to PRC for authorisation in July 2010 Establishment of an Engagement Office within M&E: June 2010
		Review membership and purpose of Regional Advisory Boars with a view to expanding the role of the Boards in University promotion and policy development.	Y (Uni)	PVC(R) Campus Directors	External and internal consultation April-July 2010 Proposal to PRC in August for adoption from Jan 2011
		Develop and implement a strategy to establish course advisory boards that provide adequate regional representation.	Y (Uni)	Deans PVC(R)	Consultation with Deans April-July; proposal to PRC in August Revised course advisory boards to be in place from Jan 2011
		Develop a strategic regional marketing plan, aligning major marketing activities with regional strategy objectives, including alumni strategies.	Y (Uni)	ED (M&E) PVC(R)	August 2010
Affirmation 2	AUQA affirms La Trobe University's implementation of the new planning and budget model, and encourages its further development and refinement in relation to risk management and the use of data for management decision making.	Implement and refine the La Trobe University Planning and Review Cycle	Y (Uni)	ED(OVC) DPIP	2010 planning and review timelines have been set and integrated with budgeting timelines. Quarterly monitoring of Planning and Review Cycle implementation. First quarterly report considered by SEG at 24 March meeting.

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Source	AUQA Affirmation/Recommendation	LTU Action	In relevant Operational Plan? (Y/N)	Responsibility	Timelines & Milestones
		Develop an integrated data management strategy to support the University's Planning and Review Cycle.	Y (Uni)	DPIP	New position, Director Planning and Institutional Performance, to direct this initiative. To commence June 2010
		Develop and implement an integrated student load planning model to support the University's Planning and Review Cycle and annual budget development process.		DVC(IFS) ED(FRP) DPIP DLTI Manager, Load Planning	Course and Load Planning Subcommittee (CALPS) of the PRC established Sep 2009, responsible for coordinating the development of the University load plan and providing input into planning and budget processes. Process includes at least annual course load reviews to begin in 2010 (April and November). Manager Load Planning to commence June 2010
Affirmation 3	AUQA affirms La Trobe University's implementation of the Curriculum Renewal Project: Design for Learning, and its linking of research and teaching in the learning approach.	Finalise the Design for Learning Undergraduate Curriculum Framework, with all Bachelors level programs clearly mapped with Cornerstone, Mid-Point and Capstone plans in place for 2011 launch.	Y (Uni)	DVC PVC(CAP)	Dfl UG curriculum design policy approved Apr 2010; All Bachelors-level programs mapped Oct 2010; Dfl Year 1 implementation begins Feb 2011
		Finalise the LTU Graduate Capabilities Framework within and across Faculties, including standards for achievement of graduate capabilities (Inquiry/research is one of the six La Trobe University graduate capabilities, specifically placing research at the heart of curriculum, teaching and learning)	Y (Uni)	DVC PVC(CAP)	LTU Graduate Capabilities (GC) Policy approved Apr 2010; GC Standards set by Dec 2010; Implementation begins Feb 2011

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Source	AUQA Affirmation/Recommendation	LTU Action	In relevant Operational Plan? (Y/N)	Responsibility	Timelines & Milestones
		Design and trial for 2011 implementation key performance indicators and targets to inform and structure curriculum and program review.	Y (Uni)	DVC PVC(CAP)	KPIs agreed Jun 2010; Targets agreed Oct 2010; KPI trial begins Feb 2011
Affirmation 4	AUQA affirms La Trobe University's approval of an Academic Promotions Policy which is in the process of being fully implemented.	Conduct an evaluation of the new process, including feedback from successful and unsuccessful candidates, Deans and Heads of School		DVC	Early 2011 Report to relevant committees April 2011
Recommendation 1	(urgent) AUQA recommends that La Trobe University clarifies management roles and accountabilities, and ensures that the matrix management approach is understood and implemented across the University.	Develop a Matrix Management Implementation Framework for La Trobe University that articulates an approach to understanding matrix management, identifies a set of agreed principles for its implementation, and defines the processes for putting in operation matrix reporting arrangements, including scope of application, key steps, accountabilities, work program, timelines and resources.		Vice-Chancellor, PRC	First draft of Framework due end June 2010 (for endorsement at SEG 15 July 2010). This Framework will identify the key milestones from August 2010 to January 2011.
Recommendation 2	AUQA recommends that La Trobe University review its strategy, approach, senior leadership coordination and support for Indigenous education to ensure better integration and optimal use of University resources for the benefit of Indigenous students and staff, and local Indigenous communities.	Develop a University Indigenous Strategy to increase participation and success for Indigenous students as a Core Activity Plan supporting the Strategic Plan 2010 – 2015	Y (Uni)	PVC(ESS) Director, Indigenous Education	Strategy to be completed mid 2010 To be presented to Council semester 2 2010
		Implementation of a new Indigenous Employment Strategy focussing on increased recruitment and retention of Indigenous staff across all levels and locations of the institution	Y(Uni)	Director, Indigenous Education ED(P&C)	Strategy to be completed mid 2010 To be presented to Council semester 2 2010
Recommendation 3	AUQA recommends that La Trobe University take steps to ensure that the Continuous Quality Improvement Framework is understood by staff, and	Continue the communications strategy to promote the University CQI framework and evidence based decision making and further educate the University community about 'closing the loop'		PVC(QE)	Ongoing

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	fully implemented across all divisions, campuses and faculties.	Implement and refine the La Trobe University Planning and Review Cycle (as a fundamental component of the University's CQI framework)	Y (Uni)	DPIP	DPIP to commence June 2010
		Develop an integrated data management strategy to support the University's Planning and Review Cycle. Ensure that appropriate management information is widely available to inform continuous improvement	Y(Uni)	DPIP PVC(CAP)	DPIP to commence June 2010
		Ensure that improvements in response to performance indicators and stakeholder feedback are widely communicated		All	2010 and ongoing
Recommendation 4	AUQA recommends that La Trobe University develop and implement an integrated institutional data strategy to support the planning, management, monitoring and improvement of University activities.	Develop an integrated data management strategy to support the University's Planning and Review Cycle. Ensure that appropriate management information is widely available to inform continuous improvement	Y (Uni)	DPIP DPIP PVC(CAP)	New position, Director Planning and Institutional Performance, to direct this initiative. To commence June 2010

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Other Matters contained in Chapter One

Section 2.1	... reviews should be extended to other University committees. A number of these, which are lower in the organisational structure, are less clear about their purpose, their place, or even in some cases, their own composition and meeting schedule.	The former International Committee of the Academic Board has now become a sub committee of the Planning and Resources Committee. The Board has brought forward the review of its other key policy committees.		Chair, Academic Board	AB review to be presented in mid 2010.
Section 2.6.3	The Panel encourages the University not to delay in developing a benchmarking framework aligned to strategic priorities.	La Trobe University is leading a Benchmarking initiative with the IRU		PVC(QE)	Scoping presentation to IRU July 2010. If approved full development July 2010 onwards
Section 2.6.5	The Panel encourages the University to consider further ways to mitigate the risks posed by plagiarism so that reasons for breaches of academic honesty are analysed and dealt with, including designing educational interventions and training staff in their use.	The Academic Integrity Policy has been updated and approved by the Academic Board in April 2010. Through the implementation of Design for Learning, improved education about academic integrity and plagiarism will be included in Cornerstone subjects.		PVC(QE) DVC PVC(CAP) Deans ADAs HOS	April 2010 Full implementation in 2011

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Research and Research Training

Source	AUQA Affirmation/Recommendation	LTU Response	In relevant Operational Plan? (Y/N)	Responsibility	Timelines & Milestones
Affirmation 5	AUQA affirms La Trobe University's plan to implement a regular review of research centres and institutes to ensure accountability and consistency across the University.	Rigorous evaluation of research centres, institutes, Faculties and Schools in their research on a regular basis, aggregating results to judge performance in our strengths, adopting criteria from ERA.	Y (Uni) Y (Res)	DVC(R) Deans Directors of Institutes	According to timetable in Research Plan. Cross-Faculty cross-disciplinary Research Institutes – each to demonstrate 1 major grant success (including in embedded centres when related to the work of the Institute), 1 major research, interdisciplinary, cross-Faculty activity (eg symposium or conference or book) and active participation of at least 30 staff.
		Implement Reviews according to the schedule in the Research Plan 2009-2012 including Review of Human Ethics, with action following the scheduled Reviews.	Y (Uni)	DVC(R) Deans	Reviews to be completed according to the schedule. Success to be measured by Academic Board and PRC adopting recommended changes after the reviews.
Affirmation 6	AUQA affirms that La Trobe University's Research Support Services Change Project identifies the functions, resources and staffing requirements to support the Research Plan.	Conduct workshops with Faculties to establish in detail workflows and roles.		DVC(R) Director, Research Services	April-May 2010
		Organisational Change Impact Statement to be prepared		DVC(R) Director, Research Services	June 2010
		New model and functions to be implemented		DVC(R) Director, Research Services	September 2010

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Source	AUQA Affirmation/Recommendation	LTU Response	In relevant Operational Plan? (Y/N)	Responsibility	Timelines & Milestones
		Conduct an evaluation of the effectiveness of the changes to Research Services including obtaining client feedback at the end of 2010 to compare with feedback about 2009.	Y(Uni)	DVC(R) Director, Research Services	Survey end 2010. Intended outcome - Research Services support rated as adequate or better by 10% more academic and research staff at end of 2010 compared to 2009.
Affirmation 7	AUQA affirms La Trobe University's plan to improve the quality and outcomes of research training by establishing a Pro Vice-Chancellor (Graduate Research) position to ensure research training consistency across the University.	Devise and implement research supervisor training programs and extend training courses for postgraduate research students	Y (Uni)	DVC(R) PVC(GR)	Supervisor training will be informed by the review of supervisor register and fully implemented mid 2011 Training programs for research candidates in place 2010
		Schemes to identify, recognise and reward outstanding supervision and outstanding research candidature performance to be developed and implemented	Y (Res)	DVC(R) PVC(GR)	Supervision awards to be developed after the review of the supervisor register – planned implementation late 2011. Awards for publication during candidature are in place
Affirmation 8	AUQA affirms La Trobe University's commitment to improving the higher degree by research (HDR) student experience through increasing financial allocations and the number of scholarships, as well as improving resources and support for HDR students.	A greater proportion of first-class honours and equivalent applicants to be assured of a postgraduate scholarship.	Y (Res)	DVC(R) PVC(GR)	Scheme commenced in 2009 Continuing implementation
		Development and implementation of supervision enrichment scheme	Y (Res)	DVC(R) PVC(GR)	This will be managed through the research progress panels, established in 2010. Academic Board March 2010

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		Development and implementation of research postgraduate enrichment program	Y (Res)	DVC(R) PVC(GR)	This will be managed through the research progress panels, which were established in 2010. Academic Board March 2010
		Introduction of novel and attractive research higher degree programs with broad coursework offerings	Y (Res)	DVC(R) PVC(GR)	Planning in 2010 for implementation 2011
Recommendation 5	(urgent) AUQA recommends that La Trobe University ensure that implemented processes for the management, approval and monitoring of human and animal research ethics are well understood and that comprehensive training is provided to the relevant ethics committees and support structures.	Devise and trial a new suite of training programs for AEC members and researchers new to animal work. Establish a skills check and refresher training for existing animal researchers.	Y (Uni)	DVC(R) Director LARTF Animal Welfare Officer PVC(GR)	All members of AEC have attended a one day training session in March 2010. All new animal researchers are receiving 2 days of training commencing April 2010 30% of existing animal users have undergone skills check and (as required) refresher training early 2010.
		Implement key aspects of review of animal usage, in particular installing and implementing new comprehensive animal record keeping system.	Y (Uni)	DVC(R) Director LARTF PVC(GR)	A new system will be operational end 2010
		Implement new human and animal ethics processes and systems		DVC(R) Director LARTF PVC(GR)	September 2010

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Source	AUQA Affirmation/Recommendation	LTU Response	In relevant Operational Plan? (Y/N)	Responsibility	Timelines & Milestones
		Implement Reviews in Research Plan 2009-2012 due in 2010 including Review of Human Ethics with action following the scheduled Reviews.	Y (Uni)	DVC(R) Deans	Reviews of human and animal ethics to be completed end 2010 as part of the full implementation of the Australian Code for Responsible Conduct of Research.
Recommendation 6	AUQA recommends that La Trobe University review its use of the supervisor register and associated procedures to ensure the provision of quality supervision of higher degree by research students.	Review the management of the supervisor register, establishing clear criteria for eligibility for supervisor status. New processes for monitoring supervision performance to be put in place via the Research Progress Panels		DVC(R) PVC(GR)	Review to be completed July 2010 New processes for implementation 2011

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Internationalisation

Source	AUQA Affirmation/Recommendation	LTU Response	In relevant Operational Plan? (Y/N)	Responsibility	Timelines & Milestones
Affirmation 9	(urgent) AUQA affirms La Trobe University's plan to undertake a comprehensive review of the number, and performance, of agents as it implements a new strategic direction for internationalisation.	Conduct a comprehensive review of all aspects of the University's agent management practices, with an emphasis on the development and implementation of minimum standards covering at least; the selection, appointment, contract management, induction and training, performance management and termination of agents.	Y (LTI)	DVC(IFS) Director, LTI	Report to International Strategy Committee by 31 May 2010
Affirmation 10	AUQA affirms La Trobe University's decision and plans to review all transnational education partnerships at the strategic, implementation and monitoring levels.	Conduct a thorough academic, strategic and financial review of all offshore teaching programs with a view to determining which programs should continue to operate.	Y (Uni)	DVC(IFS)	Report to International Strategy Committee by 31 May 2010
		Develop a revised set of policies and procedures governing the introduction, review and termination of offshore teaching programs.	Y (Uni)	DVC(IFS) PVC(QE)	Revised policies and procedures approved by end of July, 2010
Affirmation 11	AUQA affirms La Trobe University's enhancement of processes to enable earlier identification of and support for at-risk students.	Finalise the Design for Learning Undergraduate Curriculum Framework, with all Bachelors level programs clearly mapped with Cornerstone, Mid-Point and Capstone plans in place for 2011 launch.	Y (Uni)	DVC PVC(CAP)	See Affirmation 3
		Design and trial for 2011 implementation key performance indicators and targets to inform and structure curriculum and program review.	Y (Uni)	DVC PVC(CAP)	See Affirmation 3
		Develop a First Year Experience Plan for 2011 implementation, involving coordinated and targeted University-wide welcome, orientation, transition, diagnostic assessment and academic support programs.	Y (Uni)	DVC PVC(CAP) PVC(ESS)	FYE Policy approved Apr 2010; FYE Coordinators appointed Apr 2010; All FYE plans completed Nov 2010; FYE Implementation begins Feb 2011

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Source	AUQA Affirmation/Recommendation	LTU Response	In relevant Operational Plan? (Y/N)	Responsibility	Timelines & Milestones
Recommendation 7	(urgent) AUQA recommends that La Trobe University undertakes a comprehensive review of the internationalisation plan, and ensures that policies and processes are aligned with institutional strategic goals.	Develop a new Internationalisation Plan 2010 - 2013 for consideration and approval by the University by 30 June 2010. The Plan to include an internationalisation communication structure to be implemented during 2010 to ensure coordination of internationalisation activities among all areas of the University.	Y (Uni and LTI)	DVC(IFS) Director, LTI	Draft objectives of Internationalisation Plan 2010 – 2013 to International Strategy Committee (ISC), Dec 2009. First draft of Plan to ISC by end April 2010.
Recommendation 8	(urgent) AUQA recommends that La Trobe University investigate and remedy the causes of the breakdown in relationship with Vietnam National University and with the Doctor of Education students at that location.	Investigate the relationship and ensure that all students are able to complete their doctorate.		DVC(IFS) Dean, FE	Dean's visit in 2009, DVC(IFS) visit in March 2010 and ongoing attention
		Develop a revised set of policies and procedures governing the introduction, review and termination of offshore teaching programs.		DVC(IFS) PVC(QE)	Revised policies and procedures approved by end of July, 2010