

La Trobe University Continuous Quality Improvement Framework

La Trobe University will promote critical inquiry, advance and share knowledge, and support the practical application of knowledge for the benefit of all.

La Trobe University's values guide our research, scholarship, teaching and organisational practices, and we commit to them:

Responsibility

- social justice, equal opportunity, cultural diversity and environmental sustainability;

Relevance

- education as a lifelong and interactive experience that produces responsible global citizens;

Critical enquiry

- freedom of expression, rigorous enquiry, and dialogue with the society at large;

Integrity

- adherence to the highest ethical standards and mutual respect;

Participation

- active involvement of staff and students in decision-making processes that are transparent and effective;

Excellence

- commitment to high quality, high impact teaching and research .

1. Principles

In line with the University values, the principles of the CQI Framework are:

Responsibility Central leadership and encouragement, devolved responsibility - pursuing quality outcomes is the professional responsibility of all staff

Relevance Activity aligned to University purpose and values, recognising stakeholder needs

Critical Enquiry Use of internal measures and external standards to identify and respond to opportunities for continuing improvement in all activities

Integrity Honest and thorough interpretation of evidence in self evaluation

Participation Engage with staff, students and other community members in developing processes, identifying standards and enhancing outcomes

Excellence Commitment to high quality, high impact teaching and research linked to external standards and benchmarks

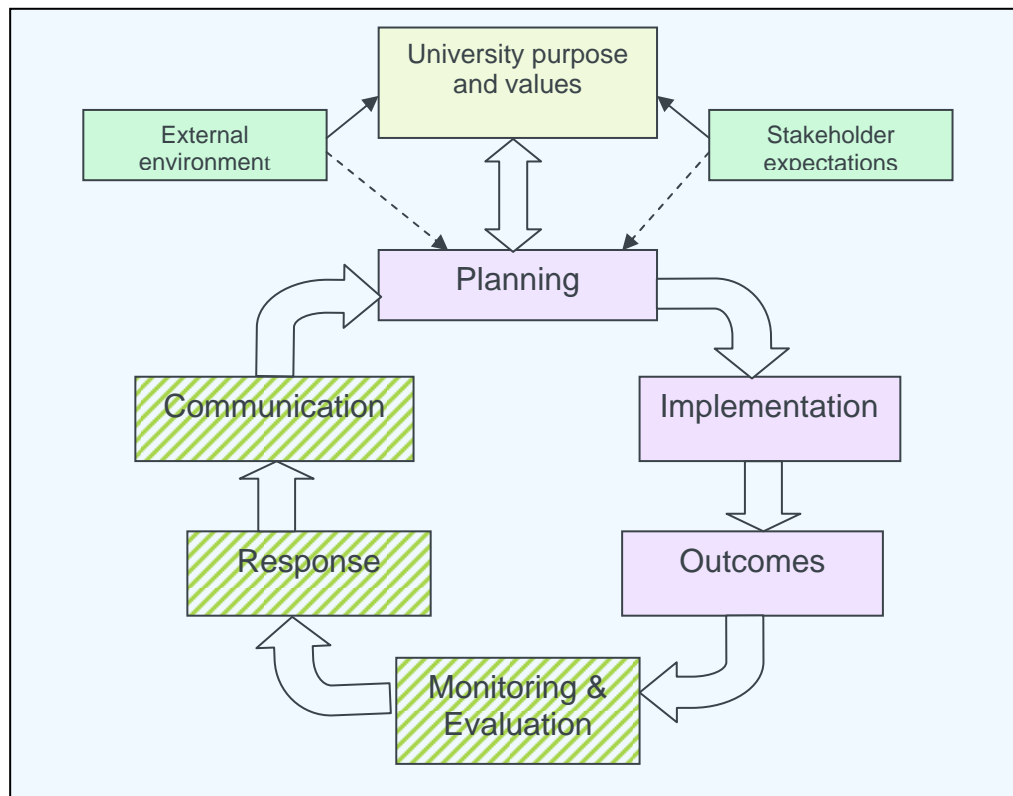
2. Scope




Research and research training, teaching and learning, community engagement, internationalisation and enabling activities including governance, management/organisation, staff, resources, marketing and communication, infrastructure

3. Continuous Quality Improvement as Institutional Practice

In 2003, the La Trobe University Council approved a quality management framework for the University intended to embed continuous quality improvement as institutional practice. The diagram below represents this framework, updated to the current context. The renewed CQI Framework is integrated into the planning and review processes of the University. Its key elements operate within the planning context, stated University purpose and values, and its governance structures.

PLANNING, REVIEW AND CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT



-  Continuous improvement and quality enhancement
-  Planning context
-  Governance

3.1 Planning

A suite of aligned strategic and operational plans setting University direction, objectives, strategies and targets and, deriving from the University Strategic Plan, functional plans including Teaching and Learning, Research and Research Training, International Engagement, Equity and Diversity, Community and Regional Engagement and other relevant plans in enabling units. Faculty and administrative operational/management plans derive from the higher level plans.

3.2 Implementation

The supporting policy framework, management and decision making structures and committees including risk management considerations, to facilitate the application of human, financial and physical resources to achieve objectives

3.3 Results - Outcomes, Monitoring and Evaluation

Assessment, reflection and reporting on achievements against objectives and targets, supported by review and monitoring cycles and high quality management information, including stakeholder feedback

3.4 Improvement – Response and Communication

Responding to performance indicators, benchmarking and reviews to enhance quality; communication of results into future planning and to the University community

4 Processes/Elements of the CQI Framework

Means for maintaining and enhancing quality within institutional practice will include:

- A robustly independent, well briefed and well qualified Council to effectively oversee and support the activities of the University
- A planning and budget cycle, with plans providing clear strategic directions that are appropriately supported by the budget
- Reviews against these plans and budgets including annual operational monitoring and five yearly strategic review of major organisational units
- Data and evidence based decision making supported by high quality, accessible management information
- Organisational (Academic, administrative and committee) structures with clear responsibilities and accountabilities, including those for quality assurance
- Policies, procedures and processes supporting the fulfilment of the strategic plan
- A robust risk management framework integrated into University planning and review processes
- Well articulated governance role for Academic Board in academic quality assurance (policy approval, monitoring of academic reporting and reviews)

- Rigorous approval processes, monitoring and review of units and courses, including student feedback to inform improvements
- Student academic and personal support services and monitoring of student grievances, using these to inform quality improvements
- Transparent and thorough staff performance management processes for all members of staff and support for professional development
- Wide communication of quality improvements in response to evaluations of all kinds
- A strong service culture across all levels of the institution

5 Monitoring the CQI Framework

The CQI Framework presents a multi-layered approach to continuous quality improvement in the University. The improvement cycle of Planning, Implementation, Results, Improvement operates at all levels of activity ranging from the teaching of individual subjects and performance management of individual staff, through development and monitoring of courses and research programs, and management of organisational units to the highest level strategic planning and direction setting. At all of these levels monitoring will be undertaken by the relevant management or governance authority, specified in University organisational structures and the policy framework, based on quantitative and qualitative evidence.