

PROGRESS REPORT

TO THE

AUSTRALIAN UNIVERSITIES QUALITY AGENCY

IMPLEMENTATION OF AUQA RECOMMENDATIONS AND AFFIRMATIONS

MARCH 2011

INTRODUCTION

The University of New England was audited by the Australian Universities Quality Agency in 2009. The University submitted its Performance Portfolio in April, which was followed by an Audit visit to the two Sydney-based partners (the International School of Business and Technology (ISBT) and Top Education) occurring on 15 June 2009. The Chancellor and Council members were interviewed on 13 July, and the main Audit visit to UNE to interview staff, students and stakeholders occurred from 20 – 23 July 2009.

The AUQA Audit Report was released on 22 December 2009 with 9 commendations, 6 affirmations and 12 recommendations. Led by the Senior Deputy Vice-Chancellor and Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Academic), an action plan for the implementation of the AUQA recommendations was developed in consultation with the Senior Executive Team, with the goal of full implementation of all recommendations if possible to coincide with the submission of this Progress Report to AUQA in December 2010. The action plan was endorsed by the Vice-Chancellor's Committee on 18 March 2010 and by Academic Board on 12 April 2010. The action plan specified the:

- action to be taken against each recommendation;
- person(s) responsible for the implementation; and
- indicative timeframe for completion.

The University Community was kept up to date on progress toward implementation through the following means:

- updates posted to University email lists;
- updates provided on the UNE intranet;
- monthly updates to the management team;
- presentation and feedback sessions with each of the ten Schools;
- regular progress reporting to Vice-Chancellor's Committee and Academic Board; and
- submission of two progress reports to Audit and Risk Committee of Council.

This report outlines the progress made toward implementing the 12 recommendations and 6 affirmations of the AUQA Audit Report.

Since the audit was undertaken in June 2009 the University has undergone a number of changes. Professor James Barber took up the position of Vice-Chancellor and Chief Executive Officer of the University of New England in February 2010. Since taking up the role as Vice-Chancellor he has initiated a number of strategic projects designed to position the University for the challenges of 2012, such as the introduction of trimesters. New partnerships have been forged with the University of Sydney, the University of Western Sydney and TAFE which should broaden the student market. As part of Project 2012, a programme of work arising from previous planning as the e-University project was initiated in 2010 as UNE Flexible and Online. The project is tasked with delivering transformational change through three key streams, each containing approximately ten sub-projects. The programme includes delivery of a new learning and teaching model, new standards for online delivery, systematic student support and the delivery of a secure IT platform for teaching and learning.

PROGRESS AGAINST RECOMMENDATIONS

Recommendation 1: AUQA recommends that UNE review its administrative procedures and practices and ensure that the intent is aligned with the administrative load.

Status: Complete

The review of administrative procedures is complete, with all of the administrative areas reporting on systems improvements of procedure to the Vice-Chancellor and there is ongoing work to apply improvements across the institution as described in the following.

Project 2012: UNE Flexible and Online (the renamed 'e-University' project) incorporates a project to look extensively at the current business processes and administrative procedures across the university. The purpose of this analysis is to determine process and procedure inefficiencies and design new processes to help make the institution more streamlined, responsive and both more efficient and effective.

Work is in hand to examine the current state of procedures against a set of best practice models to determine where work can be conducted. In particular, the following areas are currently undergoing analysis: Procurement, Financial Flow, Budget Management, Human Resources Processes. Alongside the analysis a team is looking at the usage of systems in line with key business processes to determine whether extra functionality can be developed to assist in introducing efficiencies.

In line with its quality management system the University undertakes periodic reviews of all of its administrative and academic units, with one of the outcomes being the identification of opportunity for efficiency gains and improvements in business processes. For example the review of Student Administration has resulted in a significant improvement in processing and turn-around times of student enquiries through solutions such as self-service through Ask UNE and the introduction of the Future Students Team. Reviews of Schools and Directorates are ongoing and for 2010 include: School of Environmental and Rural Science, School of Law, University Library and Heritage Centre, Student Administration, Information Technology and Research Services.

An example provided by AUQA in relation to this recommendation was the Integrated Project Management system and the associated Joint Procedures Manual used in partnership operations. A Desk Review of these has been undertaken by the Chief Development Officer to improve effectiveness and efficiency which pointed to the need for a central partnership hub where insight could be shared across partnership operations and the need for transparency in relation to costs.

The Vice-Chancellor has initiated a system of User Groups in all administrative areas and directorates to continuously review administrative activities in order to ensure that they are necessary, constantly improving and meeting user needs.

Council has reviewed the delegation of approvals of courses and units and accepted the recommendation brought forward from Academic Board. Council retains the authority to approve new courses and withdrawals of courses, the authority to approve amendments to courses, new units, and articulation agreements has been delegated to the Academic Board and its committees.. A project is currently underway to bring the unit and course approvals process online with streamlined approval process through the University Project Management Panel and Academic Program Committee.

Recommendation 2: AUQA recommends that the Council of UNE consider the terms of reference and composition of the Academic Board and its committees to ensure it fulfils its responsibilities (UNE Act 1993, section 15) (UNE By-Law 2005).

Status: In Progress

Expected Completion Date: April 2011

The Vice-Chancellor requested that the Chair of Academic Board and Senior Deputy Vice-Chancellor and Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Academic) consider the current Academic Board structure, in particular its committees, to improve the ability of the Academic Board to discuss and make recommendations on major academic change initiatives and developments, projects, programmes and policy issues. A proposal was developed and went before Academic Board Teaching and Learning Committee (5 May), Standing Committee of Academic Board (10 May) for feedback, and to Academic Board (7 June) at which in principal support was received. A revised draft was subsequently provided to the 16 August meeting of Academic Board and was withdrawn and the decision was made to employ an external consultant to conduct such a review. The consultant interviewed members of Academic Board and the Senior Executive during 2-4 February 2011 and the final report is currently being prepared and is expected by 21 March 2011.

Recommendation 3: AUQA recommends that UNE capitalise more on its rural and regional strengths in selecting its research foci and centres.

Status: Complete

Allocation of 6 strategic postdoc/research lectureships in areas of existing research strength, including local government sustainability (strategic focus on rural sustainability); management of fresh water systems (strategic focus on managing water and other natural resources and rural sustainability); rural and regional education (including QuickSmart) (strategic focus on rural and regional education); society, sexuality and sexual health (strategic focus on rural sustainability); soil carbon (strategic focus on environmental & agricultural sustainability & change and rural sustainability); and precision agriculture (strategic focus on environmental & agricultural sustainability & change and rural sustainability). These positions were strategically targeted across the faculties and research centres to areas where high performing researchers (research leaders with strong track records) were best placed to leverage value from them. Such leverage could include succession planning for research leadership, positioning for enhanced Australian Competitive Grant success, positioning for an ARC Centre of Excellence and enhanced opportunities to generate high-quality publication outcomes as well as research impact.

An Expression of Interest has been submitted for a DIISR-funded Collaborative Research Network (CRN) in partnership with the University of Newcastle, Sydney University, La Trobe University, University of NSW and the Hunter, New England Area Health Service. The CRN project is focused on mental health and well-being in rural regions investigating questions around citizen and health workforce self-care which include suicide risk, resilience, sexuality, well-being, healthcare and diagnosis. The goal is to develop UNE research capacities and intensify the area of rural mental health by building upon our already strong relationships with partner universities. This will expand links with rural communities and health service providers in Northern Inland NSW and beyond, widen research reach of UNE and partners and assist extension of findings into policy processes, health practice, and teaching.

UNE is pursuing the development of the New England Research Gateway in conjunction with the NSW Department of Premier and Cabinet to provide a platform for joint research engagement and collaboration in rural and regional communities.

UNE is now an Essential Participant, by invitation, in the CRC for Remote Economic Participation (the new manifestation of the Desert Knowledge CRC). Research through this CRC will have a strong indigenous focus as well as a focus on economic, educational, health and social improvements in rural and remote communities and businesses.

UNE is embarking on an eResearch Project, funded by the Australian National Data Service, and supported by INTERSECT, to get UNE's unique herbarium collections (held in the NCW Beadle Herbarium) into the national Data Commons so that the information in the collection can be accessed for sharing by researchers nationally and internationally.

Recommendation 4: Noting the new system for thorough external cyclic reviews of schools, as set out in the Academic Quality Management policy, AUQA recommends that UNE ensure that clear and effective agreed action plans are established; and that actions are monitored to completion by the Academic Board.

Status: Complete

Clear and effective action plans have been established for the School Reviews completed to date and each action plan has been monitored by the Vice-Chancellor's Committee and Academic Board. Further to this, the School Review process is well defined in the Academic Quality Management policy <http://www.une.edu.au/policies/pdf/academicqualitymanagementpolicyandguidelines.pdf> and although at the time of the audit there had only been one School Implementation response brought forward, the University through Academic Board, has continued to monitor progress with respect to implementation of the findings of School Review reports. For example, the 12 month follow-up reports on implementation of the action plans for the Schools of Education and Humanities went to Vice-Chancellor's Committee on 9 June and to Academic Board at its next meeting on 16 August. As at March 2011, 6 (of 10) School Reviews have been undertaken, with 4 reports and action plans having been approved by Council and one 12 month follow-up report been approved by Council.

Recommendation 5: AUQA recommends that UNE build on the processes and policies already in place to ensure that there are adequate mechanisms for setting and monitoring standards of student academic achievement.

Status: Complete

At international and national levels UNE is playing an important role in current developments regarding standards. The International Council for Distance Education chose UNE (from '12 strong proposals from around the globe') to develop Regulatory Frameworks for Distance Education. Nationally UNE has been chosen by ALTC to participate in the Teaching Standards Framework and UNE is also a member of the ACODE international cross-institutional benchmarking exercise in e-Teaching and Learning.

At the institutional level, the Unit Monitoring process has established quality standards at the unit level against which units across the university are monitored. The first cycle of a new system of Unit Monitoring was completed for each teaching period for 2009 and subsequently. Units are identified on metrics for commendations and for action plans – improvement arising from the action plans is monitored by the SDVC-DVCA. At course level an annual Course Monitoring process based on standards related to quality measures comprises part of the Course Profile setting process. New online teaching standards have also been developed to coincide with the introduction of a new virtual learning platform in Semester 2, 2011. The standards articulated in the framework:

- › respond to student feedback by increasing the use of UNE's online learning environment in a consistent and convenient manner;

- › reinforce the strategic importance of flexible and online learning to the University;
- › consolidate the delivery of flexible and online learning to a single, cost effective and sustainable learning management system that is well supported, secure and extensible.

Minimum Online Standards for all UNE units, regardless of mode (internal/external) have been developed with the view to ensuring a consistently high quality student learning experience.

UNE has participated in the normal range of Professional Accreditation visits and endorsements by a variety of Professional Accreditation bodies. It has also instituted the extension of an existing form to provide much greater detail and project planning for new Professional Accreditation requirements and has instituted an Accreditation Working Group that meets regularly to oversee accreditation matters.

Recommendation 6: AUQA recommends that UNE ensure that there are disciplinary advisory boards or other mechanisms that enable external members to provide input to course development and renewal.

Status: In Progress

The management of course advisory groups has been written into the policy and position description for Course Coordinators. Where Course Advisory Groups are appropriate (it is more appropriate in some circumstances to have 'grouped course' or School Advisory Boards) and are not yet in existence, PVC Deans are working with Heads of School to establish these and this is monitored through SDVC-DVCA Portfolio Group meetings.

At present there are disciplinary advisory boards for the following courses with external membership:

- Psychology undergraduate and postgraduate clinical training program
- Bachelor of Urban and Regional Planning
- Bachelor of Engineering Technology
- Computer Science courses
- School of Health has Course Advisory Committees for each of the disciplines, these engage with industry partners
- Master of Arts Management
- Arts New England

Disciplinary Advisory Boards are currently being formed for:

- Bachelor of Arts
- Bachelor of Historical Inquiry and Practice
- Bachelor of Pharmacy
- Bachelor of Science
- Bachelor of Sports Exercise Science and Bachelor of Exercise Physiology
- Graduate Certificate in History Curriculum
- Undergraduate Psychology courses

Reviews of following courses had external membership:

- Bachelor of Communication Studies
- Graduate Certificate in Writing
- Computer Science and Information Technology courses

The School of Environmental and Rural Science is in the process of establishing Industrial Liaison Panels for its core courses to provide guidance on course development for industry ready

graduates. Furthermore, the recent School of Law Review recommended that an advisory board be established as a matter of urgency, with membership from industry and the legal profession.

The following Schools also have Advisory Boards with external membership:

- School of Environmental and Rural Science
- School of Business, Economics and Public Policy

Recommendation 7: AUQA recommends that UNE ensure that there is adequate coordination and central monitoring so that the mainstreaming of international activities does not result in a lack or fragmentation of action, which detracts from achieving its international goals.

Status: Complete

The Chief Development Officer ensures that international activities are coordinated through a range of standard business processes including:

- The Senior Executive, including the Vice-Chancellor, Senior Deputy Vice-Chancellor and Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Academic), Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Research), Chief Operating Officer, Chief Governance and Planning Officer and Chief Development Officer regularly consider matters of international significance in a systematic and coordinated forum with each senior executive responsibility regarding international matters being considered as a part of the whole.
- International affairs represent a standing item on the Vice Chancellor's University Marketing Committee to consider issues such as recruitment, strategy and progress for advanced standing etc.
- The Vice-Chancellor's chairing of the Vice-Chancellor's Committee ensures that new international activity is strategically aligned.
- Reports are generated from senior staff and the Chief Development Officer who attend University Committees such as Academic Board Teaching and Learning Committee on issues such as: decision-making on requests for articulation of English for Academic Purposes programs offered by private providers, maintenance and updating of the English Language Requirements for Admission Policy/Rule and support (particularly academic support) for international students. Other issues requiring participation in discussion and reporting back arise from time to time and include international marketing, admissions and enrolment procedures for international students, domestic and overseas pathway/advanced standing partnership, assessment of students, evaluation of teaching and programs etc.
- There are regular meetings of senior staff from across the international portfolio to ensure alignment of activity with the goals as set out in the International Plan.

Recommendation 8: AUQA recommends that UNE identify an academic leader for the international activities with overall responsibility for the achievement of UNE's International Intent.

Status: Complete

The Senior Deputy Vice-Chancellor and Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Academic) is responsible for the academic leadership for international activities and the Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Research) for international aspects relating to research. They work in collaboration with the Chief Development Officer who has responsibility for international business development.

Recommendation 9: AUQA recommends that UNE review its implementation model with onshore domestic partners to ensure that it is achieving intended outcomes and that the risk profile is manageable.

Status: In Progress

The UNE Council retreat held in March 2010 marked a change in the international strategy embraced by Council and Executive and changes are being explored in relation to onshore domestic partners. AUQA Commended the University for its *attention to the management of quality in its partnership arrangements through the Integrated Project Management Framework, with a Joint Procedures Manual and a Project Team for each project*. The IPM framework enables the review of each partnership arrangement, including the risk profile, and where the intended outcomes of partnerships are not being achieved appropriate action is initiated. Using this framework, the onshore domestic partnership model has been reviewed, a new strategy developed and is being implemented.

There has also been a review of the administrative support of the Partners at the Integrated Project Management level (cross-matrix support team) which has displayed that the processes and systems in train are robust and need only minor modifications. The University has made a decision to change the Chair of the Joint Management Committees: the PVC Dean of the relevant Faculty now chairs the Partner Joint Management Committees to ensure academic oversight of academic operations.

Recommendation 10: AUQA recommends that the full time UNE staff member stationed with a domestic partner for liaison and oversight have prior personal experience of working at UNE Armidale.

Status: Complete

UNE has adopted the recommendation made by AUQA and HR position descriptions will be changed to ensure the induction and/or recruitment processes allow for a new-hire to have suitable time/experience with UNE prior to accepting a role as Program Director with a UNE Partner.

Recommendation 11: AUQA recommends that UNE identify all of the components of flexible delivery and blended learning across the University, and bring them together, with clear reporting relationships, timeframes and implementation and review plans, and that this be clearly communicated to all in the University.

Status: In Progress

Expected Completion Date: December 2011

The Project 2012 initiative of the Vice-Chancellor includes a component: UNE Flexible and Online, which is the implementation stage of what was developed during 2009 as the e-University Project. This 2 year project has been fully scoped, with implementation in progress to 2011 which will complete the recommendation. The work is progressing well, overseen by Steering Committee to provide overall governance and guidance. The three streams of the project (Revitalising Learning, Transforming Technology and Working Together) each comprise approximately 10 projects with full project plans, management and funding. Reporting to the Steering Committee is a Programme Working Group (PWG) whose membership will include elected academic, general staff and undergraduate/postgraduate student members. The PWG reports against milestones for the full program of work together with issues and risks, using PRINCE 2 Programme Methodology from the Office of Government Commerce. Leading the project is the SDVC-DVCA and reporting to him are the Academic Director and Programme Director, who respectively lead the educational/academic aspects of new course development, delivery and support, and IT and business systems development.

Recommendation 12: AUQA recommends that UNE strengthen the involvement of the Oorala Centre in the development of the various e-learning activities, including the e-university, and the proposal to expand the participation of Indigenous students.

Status: Complete

Throughout the e-University project, Oorala Centre was represented on the key working groups, including:

- Organisational Capacity Working Group;
- Student and Staff Capacity Working Group; and
- Courses Working Group. Specifically, the Course Working Group considered Pathways for students and enhancing Indigenous participation.

The representation of Oorala Centre, and all stakeholder groups across the University is again central in the approach being used in delivering on Project 2012: UNE Flexible and Online with Oorala Centre being represented on the following key working groups.

- Program Working Group
- Change Champions network
- Integrated Student Support Working Group

Further to this, a focus on the Aboriginal Diploma in Health is being undertaken with the School of Health and Project 2012: UNE Flexible and Online.

The TRACKS Tertiary preparation program has been developed into an on-line program to assist Indigenous students in the transition to University and provide experience in the utilisation and expectations associated with the on-line environment.

In order to expand the participation of Indigenous students in the UNE e-learning environment, a specialised orientation program was implemented in 2010 to introduce Indigenous students into the university environment, including an introduction to all aspects of the on-line environment. On-going assistance is provided through a specialised mentor located in the College system. Furthermore, the reformed Indigenous Access and Participation Committee provides advice to Advisory Boards on issues specific to the increased participation of Indigenous students.

PROGRESS AGAINST AFFIRMATIONS

Affirmation 1: AUQA affirms UNE's recognition of the need to refine, focus and target its plans, with identifiable and measurable KPIs, and to ensure that the lines of accountability are clear and working.

Status: Complete

During 2010, UNE has examined and reviewed its planning framework with the intention of creating a clear and coherent linkage between the strategic objectives of the University and its operational activities, and of aligning planning processes with key business processes such as course profile planning and the budget cycle. A Business Plan is being written to provide firm and relevant targets and activities linked to budget and updated on an annual basis. Institutional key performance indicators have been overhauled in light of the University's strategic priorities. A Directorate has been established which provides oversight of the planning process.

In 2010 UNE identified the establishment of a Planning, Policy and External Relations Directorate as an essential resource in strategic planning, in meeting government priorities and in making

submissions to government and other external bodies. This Directorate incorporates policy resources with business intelligence and planning and institutional research capacity. It reports to the Chief Governance and Planning Officer. Among other things, the Directorate addresses the requirements for authoritative planning data, information and methodologies from which to support robust reporting for statutory and other external requirements, business planning, and operational decision making, and to embark on refreshed strategic plans and the compilation of business plans and a planning cycle for UNE.

UNE considers that it is vital that all parts of the organisation understand the “drivers” and the priorities to meet strategic objectives and government funding requirements. To this end a realignment of the planning framework has occurred. An informing principle in assembling the planning framework is that it should be well understood at all levels, and should enable UNE to prioritise its strategic aims with appropriate budget allocations. It guides in a practical sense and aligns core business, budget, and priorities with strategic directions.

The proposed hierarchy of plans falling from the planning framework includes:

- Strategic Plan
- Business Plan
- Operational Plans
- School and Group work plans
- Individual work plans

The plans seek to guide and align strategy and target setting down to school, group and individual work plan level, and coordinate activities to corporate goals. The links from the Strategic Plan to the Business Plans, together with resource allocation and management priorities including the management of risk, should be well-described and effective. It is intended that the new planning framework rationalise the number and the presentation of previously existing Plans such that they are clearly explicable for staff, and provide clear lines of accountability.

The Strategic Plan is a whole of university plan that incorporates teaching, research, commercial and international activities. The current UNE Strategic Plan establishes a top level vision and university-wide priorities on a four year cycle.

Two Senior Management Retreats have been scheduled (and one completed to date) and two Council Retreats undertaken to consider aspects of the University’s strategic planning and direction. This has given capacity for greater coordination and cohesion in strategic planning. In the case of the Senior Management Retreat in particular, it has presented the opportunity to brief senior staff comprehensively on the University’s new planning framework and the role of the Business Plan.

UNE’s Business Plan is currently being drafted parallel to the Budget. The role of the Business Plan is to operationalise strategic objectives by linking activities with budget, and to focus levels of management from the senior executive down on the ways in which strategic objectives can be met. It is intended to provide a linkage between the Strategic Plan and ongoing planning activities by operational Units, Faculties and Schools, and to guide individual contribution to the overarching objectives. The Business Plan is to contain:

- Strategic and operational priorities for the year, including student load and financial targets
- Operational budget
- Significant capital plans
- Key Performance Indicators (KPIs)

Whereas the Strategic Plan will continue to inhabit a multi-year time frame (five years is proposed) the Business Plan will have a 3 year outlook but is to be updated annually using the UNE Planning Cycle. It will be aligned to the budget process. It is intended that the Strategic Plan will be refreshed for 2011 – 2015, and that UNE’s first Business Plan will apply from 2011.

Focused institutional KPIs speak to a number of core strategies derived from the Strategic Plan and UNE's other strategic positioning, including with respect to the Government's agenda. UNE's KPIs for 2011 have been developed, and are in key result areas that relate to strategic priorities, with relevant and measurable results. The University has made significant effort to engage employees in these institutional KPIs and to ensure their relevance. Recently, the Senior Executive of the University were engaged in a process to align their key activities with these key performance indicators. In addition, senior management staff have been engaged to provide feedback and other initiatives that relate directly to these KPIs at their Senior Management Retreat.

Affirmation 2: AUQA affirms UNE's intention to review the research and research services area, and a number of associated processes, with a view to strengthening its research and research training.

Status: In Progress

Expected Completion Date: December 2010

The review of Research Services was conducted 20-28 October 2010 by a panel consisting of external and internal members. The Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Research) is currently preparing an action plan to implement the recommendations made in the report. Once this is made available it will go to Vice-Chancellor's Committee for approval.

Affirmation 3: AUQA affirms UNE's recognition that, as a predominantly distance education institution, it needs an energetic, comprehensive and coherent approach to the widespread use of e-technologies, expressed in the term 'e-university'.

Status: In Progress

Expected Completion Date: December 2011

Establishment of an energetic, comprehensive and coherent approach to the widespread use of e-technologies has been completed through the initiation of the UNE Flexible and Online Project.

UNE Flexible and Online is a comprehensive change program that provides a coherent framework for moving the University towards the new higher education environment of 2012. The work is progressing well, overseen by Steering Committee to provide overall governance and guidance. The three streams of the project (Revitalising Learning, Transforming Technology and Working Together) each comprise approximately 10 projects with full project plans, management and funding. Reporting to the Steering Committee is a Programme Working Group (PWG) whose membership will include elected academic, general staff and undergraduate/postgraduate student members. The PWG reports against milestones for the full program of work together with issues and risks, using PRINCE 2 Programme Methodology from the Office of Government Commerce. Leading the project is the SDVC-DVCA and reporting to him are the Academic Director and Programme Director, who respectively lead the educational/academic aspects of new course development, delivery and support, and IT and business systems development.

A range of engagement and communication strategies are in place. This includes both dissemination and impact through various FOL programme committees, a website, regular UNE official communications, a Change Champions network and other representation throughout the University committee structures. Significant funds have been allocated across the programme of work. Substantial amounts have been directly allocated to the revitalisation of several courses identified as having market advantage. This approach aims to steer the University towards building capacity and capability to meet the needs of building increased flexibility and online presence so it can be prepared in the new 2012 competitive environment.

Affirmation 4: Noting the need for a new e-taxonomy and to categorise units based on the tools used, AUQA affirms UNE's development of standards for flexible delivery/online delivery, and for the creation and provision of online learning materials.

Status: Complete

UNE is playing an important role in current developments regarding standards at both national and internal level. The International Council for Distance Education chose UNE (from '12 strong proposals from around the globe') to develop Regulatory Frameworks for Distance Education. Nationally UNE has been chosen by ALTC to participate in the Teaching Standards Framework and UNE is also a member of the ACODE international cross-institutional benchmarking exercise in e-Teaching and Learning.

Project 2012: UNE Flexible and Online will develop a set of 'standards' to replace the existing taxonomy based on the new Distance Education Learning Model. The standards will form a framework for informing policy, procedures and learning by distance at UNE. The UNE standards for flexible and online learning will describe the various academic purposes an online presence and will serve to support students' unit-based learning through:

- *Interaction* between students and teachers;
- *Resources* to support students' independent learning and study;
- *Support*: administrative and procedural information;
- *Collaborative* learning among students and with discipline and other communities;
- *Support* for students for learning, administration, technical and social issues.

Affirmation 5: Noting the need to ensure students are aware that their evaluations have some effect, AUQA affirms UNE's intention to make student evaluation publicly available on-line, with responses from schools.

Status: Complete

Unit Student Evaluation information is currently available internally at School, Faculty and University level. The Senior Deputy Vice-Chancellor and Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Academic) sends regular communications to all students regarding the outcomes of the unit monitoring process, which relies on student evaluation data. When the requisite systems have been well established UNE remains committed to providing this information in a fully open online format..

Affirmation 6: AUQA affirms UNE's recognition that its attention to the e-dimension, which includes the Global e-university concept, the comprehensive review of the virtual learning environment, the revision of the online principles and the DEHub, must be user driven and pedagogically based, not technology driven.

Status: Complete

Project 2012: UNE Flexible and Online provides attention to the total virtual learning environment through three strands: Revitalising Learning, Transforming Technology and Working Together. These three strands of work encompass software and hardware associated with the learning environment, business processes associated with learning and UNE back-office and systems and structures for supporting staff and students including workforce planning. Underpinning, driving and locating this work is a new pedagogical model which is used to define standards for all other areas. This new pedagogical model has as its primary focus the Student Learning Experience. Four key areas of the student learning experience drive the pedagogical model upon which the learning environment is predicated, these are:

- effective and engaging interaction between students and teachers;
- resources to support students' independent learning and study;
- collaborative learning among students and with discipline and other communities; and
- support for students for learning, administration, technical and social issues.

DEHub

DEHub is an outward looking research collaboration and user driven across the key partner universities: University of Southern Queensland, CQU, Charles Sturt University and Massey University. Funded by the Federal Government, DEHub is a research centre which aims to enhance reputation and has the following four Goals:

- Goal 1: Build a future focus research capacity to become recognised as (a) leader/s of research in distance education.
- Goal 2: Develop resources to support and promote research, practice and development in/of distance education.
- Goal 3: Demonstrate leadership through collaborative and future focussed research activities nationally and internationally.
- Goal 4: Disseminate research to inform and influence policy and improve practice.

DEHub additionally aims to:

- Create a leadership profile for UNE (and partners)
- Aggregate research
- Build reputation for UNE as a 'Global e-University'.
- Work collectively on issues and challenges
- Demonstrate collaboration
- Create the research agenda
- Connecting with the International scene

DEHub partners adhere to the following principles:

Principle	Descriptor
Collaborative advantage	Partners create/co-design new value together as opposed to mere exchange. Partners are strengthened by their involvement in the DEHub project
Strategic	The relationship fits major strategic objectives of the partners
Alignment	There is alignment between the vision, mission and goals with the activities of the partners
Interdependence	Partners need each other with their complementary assets and skills
Investment	There is evidence of long-term commitment through financial and resource allocation in the relationship. Partners are resourced appropriately.
Communication	Partners share ideas in the spirit of collaboration
Transparency	Partners have a clear understanding of the management, decision-making and financial allocation of the project
Integration	Partners develop synergistic ways of working with each other
Multi-disciplinary	Partners develop connections between diverse people at many organizational levels within their institution
Institutionalization	Partnership is given a formal status within the Institution. There are clear responsibilities and transparent decision-making processes
Integrity	Partners work with each other in the spirit of mutual trust and respect