

## Progress Report on ACU National Action Plan

### **Progress Report on Recommendations for Improvement arising from the Quality Audit of Australian Catholic University, September 2002.**

The Australian Universities Quality Agency (AUQA), as part of a cycle of audits of Australian universities, conducted an audit of Australian Catholic University in September 2002 and presented a report of its findings in December of that year. The Report commended the University on 12 specific aspects of its work and made 19 recommendations for improvement, some of which the University had already begun implementing. The University considered the report carefully and responded to AUQA in April 2003, advising the action plan it proposed to adopt to meet AUQA's recommendations for improvement. AUQA responded in May 2003 indicating that it considered the action plan appropriate. The present report outlines progress against the action plan, as at the end of October 2004, for each of the AUQA recommendations.

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December 2004

## Recommendation 1:

That ACU review the relationship between the Mission, Strategic Plan, and the annual plans of the faculties and units to ensure that each higher level of planning provides a framework for planning at the next level, and that taken together the successful implementation of the faculty and unit plans will also be the successful implementation of ACU's Strategic Plan.

Action Proposed	Progress
<p>i. In 2003, the Strategic Review Committee (SRC) will review progress with the University's <i>Strategic Plan 1999-2008</i>, to revise objectives and priorities in the context of the Mission, for the second phase of implementation. The Plan will also be updated.</p> <p>ii. The faculties and units will adapt their existing Strategic Implementation Plans, including Quality Management Plans, ensuring that there is clear articulation of these plans to the revised Strategic Plan objectives and priorities for the institution. This task will be completed in 2003.</p> <p>iii. In accordance with the <i>Priority for Improvement 6.2.2</i> in the University's Performance Portfolio, the Quality Management Committee (QMC) will identify key performance indicators to be used by faculties and units in monitoring progress in relation to achievement of objectives in their Strategic Implementation Plans. Commencing in August 2003 data on each of these indicators will be made available on an appropriate cyclical basis to the QMC and SRC, to enable an evaluation of progress towards achieving the strategic objectives to be undertaken.</p>	<p>i. The Strategic Plan has been revised and was adopted in its updated form in September 2003. A review of the regional identity of the Canberra and Ballarat campuses was completed in 2003, after formulation of the Revised Plan, and this may lead to further changes in due course.</p> <p>ii. Faculties and units have been adapting their existing plans to ensure clear articulation with the Strategic Plan. The timeline of the end of 2003 was moved out to November 2004 because of the timing of release of the Revised Strategic Plan. To date, 10 of the 15 plans have been completed.</p> <p>The University's Teaching and Learning Plan and corresponding Faculty Plans have been updated in line with reforms in higher education and the Revised Strategic Plan.</p> <p>Plans for regional development of the University's Campuses in Ballarat and Canberra are being developed following reviews based on the Strategic Plan.</p> <p>iii. Key performance indicators have been identified in all areas of the University's work, with the exception of Community Engagement. Indicators for this area are not as well developed or as well accepted as in other areas of university work such as teaching and research. This is an important area for the University, and is currently being worked on by the Community Engagement Advisory Committee.</p> <p>One cycle of reporting on these indicators has been completed. The Strategic Review Committee considered the first report of the 'Culture of Evidence' Working Party and reported to Senate on this. A second cycle will begin in early 2005.</p>

## Recommendation 2:

That ACU consider how to enhance students' understanding of the nature and value of the national character of ACU, and formally engage the student body in the life of the University as a whole.

Action Proposed	Progress
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>i. The Dean of Students will liaise with student elected representatives to explore ways of engaging them more fully in the life of the University.</li> <li>ii. The Marketing Directorate will involve student representatives, Student Administration and Student Services to develop a heightened awareness of the benefits of the University's national character.</li> <li>iii. The Dean of Students will undertake discussions with each campus Student Representative Council, and with the ACU National Student Association, commencing in May 2003, with a view to developing proposals for revising the structural and procedural arrangements for student representation in the University. The process will be monitored by the Core Planning Group.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>i. A nationally organised student event ('The Big Event') was held in Sydney in September 2004, which brought together student representatives from all campuses to celebrate and explore the national character of the University. The Event is scheduled to be held at regular intervals.</li> <li>ii. The Marketing Directorate has taken a number of initiatives to heighten awareness of the University's national character, including production of a standard presentation to be used on all campuses for University-wide activities such as Orientation Week, Open Day and to appear on the University website; inclusion of national character in the training program for student ambassadors across the University; inclusion of students in focus groups run as part of the National Identity and Communication Strategy; seeking input from the Australian Catholic University National Student Association on various matters including development and distribution of ACU National merchandise; employment of students on national projects conducted by the Directorate.  Student Administration staff operate with a national focus, provide information where needed to students on all the University's campuses on courses offered, and seek to foster a national approach in all their interactions with Schools on the various campuses of the University.</li> <li>iii. The Student Representative Councils have been replaced by Student Associations. Student presidents and their management committees have an induction on each campus. Part of this induction is advising student associations which University committees seek student nominees and to how ensure students are represented on these committees. ACUNSA has its first meeting of the year in January and its members too are advised on how to participate on University committees.</li> </ul>

### Recommendation 3:

That ACU, as stated in its Performance Portfolio, further develop the channels of communication throughout the University.

Action Proposed	Progress
<p>As set out in Section 6.3 of the Performance Portfolio, specific communication strategies will be incorporated in the implementation plans for significant initiatives affecting a substantial number of staff and students. These strategies will include feedback mechanisms from the ‘clients’ of the initiative. This process will commence with any new initiatives planned for 2003 and be developed on the basis of experience.</p>	<p>Digests of discussions at Academic Board and Senate are made available by e-mail and on notice boards on all campuses. Broadcast email is used by the Vice-Chancellor and senior officers to keep staff in touch with events. The Academic Affairs’ website has been improved, a newsletter from the Institute for the Advancement of Teaching and Learning has been introduced, and wider use is being made of action sheets.</p> <p>Three new surveys are being implemented: University-wide course completion survey, student re-enrolment survey of academic, administrative and other support, and survey of staff perceptions of support for quality teaching and learning.</p> <p>The expansion of nursing project in North Sydney involves regular feedback to the campus on progress.</p> <p>Both WebCT and the student e-mail facility have been used, in targeted ways, to increase online communication with students.</p> <p>Student and staff input and feedback were used in the development of the University’s National Identity and Communication Strategy “Qualify for Life” completed late 2003. An external agency conducted focus groups with current students and staff. A report was produced and presented to the Executive Team. The strategy has been implemented in 2004, and will be tested and revised, if necessary, in 2005.</p> <p>The University has invested substantial resources in developing its electronic means of communication. All marketing campaigns have a heavy focus on using internet and email communications.</p> <p>Examples:</p> <p>(a) Further development and enhancement of <a href="http://www.acu.edu.au">www.acu.edu.au</a> to support marketing and communications strategies.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Development of specific campaign sites – Orientation, Open Day, “Qualify for Life”, Careers Advisers, Considering Nursing?</li> <li>• Development of specific URLs – Foundation, Nursing, International, Merchandise</li> <li>• Development of an “online” merchandise facility</li> </ul> <p>(b) Web governance structure developed March 2004 and currently under review by the Web Steering Committee.</p>

Action Proposed	Progress
	<p>(c) Further integration of print and online initiatives - feedback invited from staff and stakeholders and incorporated, where possible.</p> <p>Examples:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• ACU National Update – electronic internal communication tool for staff, circulated fortnightly. Staff invited to provide feedback – generally feedback is positive.</li> <li>• Media summaries/clippings – electronic distribution – staff invited to provide feedback – feedback generally positive. Individual staff request electronic copies of media clippings.</li> <li>• Events calendar – online/updated regularly at client request. Calendar has been modified through staff feedback.</li> <li>• ACU National Annual Report – online and print versions available. Online version for staff, online and print for external audiences (stakeholders and others).</li> <li>• The Chronicle – externally focused publication – recently reviewed by stakeholders – requested “online version” only. Staff feedback was for a print version to be made available for staff. Future issues will be both electronic and print.</li> </ul> <p>Student Administration produces regular weekly newsletters which are circulated to Heads of School, Course Co-ordinators and School administrative staff; these provide updates on developments relevant to students and academic staff.</p> <p>Schools/Faculties are engaged in a review of each major operational cycle for which Student Administration has responsibility.</p> <p>Each semester the Student Centres on all campuses initiate processes for collection of student feedback; such feedback is reviewed and appropriate action/changes initiated, as appropriate.</p> <p>Student Administration endeavours to build links with local student associations, as a means of obtaining student feedback. It also contacts Student Associations to obtain feedback on drafts of various communications to students.</p>

## Recommendation 4:

That ACU give more thought to how the budget mechanisms, for example financial incentives and performance-based elements, may be used to encourage the activities needed to achieve the Mission and goals.

Action Proposed	Progress
<p>The following actions will be initiated:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>i. An improved budget model has been approved by the Core Planning Group in 2003 to be operational for 2004. The model involves greater clarification in the distribution of annual income between the essential costs which will be taken 'off the top' and the funds to be distributed to the various organizational units. The revised model will provide incentives for strategic objectives.</li> <li>ii. The use of annual Strategic Initiatives Funds will be changed to provide more scope than previously, to allow the Vice-Chancellor and Core Planning Group to better facilitate the implementation of major strategic priorities.</li> <li>iii. In accordance with Section 14.4.2 of the Performance Portfolio, a revised Business Plan template for use by Faculties in course planning and review has been approved for implementation commencing in 2003.</li> <li>iv. A Budget Advisory Committee will be formed to offer advice on budget formulation and implementation.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>i. A new budget model was developed and implemented for 2004. It was reviewed in mid 2005.</li> <li>ii. Schemes now in place include Teaching and Learning Enhancement Scheme, DEST Points, Australian Research Council Incentives Scheme.  The latter, for example, provides financial rewards for applying for ARC grants, for the successful winning of such grants, and for being within the top 10% of unsuccessful applications.</li> <li>iii. The new Business Plan template has been in use since 2003.</li> <li>iv. The Budget Advisory Committee is now operating.</li> </ul>

## Recommendation 5:

That ACU, its faculties and operating units reflect annually or biannually on the major opportunities for and risks to their activities and plans, and on possible actions to act on the opportunities while minimising the risks and limiting adverse consequences.

Action Proposed	Progress
<p>The following actions will be undertaken in response to the recommendation:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>i. The review of the Strategic Plan, to be completed in 2003, will be followed by the development of revised <i>Strategic Implementation Plans</i> by each Faculty and major organizational units. These Plans will show the articulation of Faculty/unit planning with the University Strategic Plan objectives. The notion of risk culture will be discussed by Senate and by the University's Executive Committee.</li> <li>ii. The Plans will also be required to take account of relevant <i>Priorities for Improvement</i> in the Performance Portfolio as set out in Sections 6.2.2, 14.4.2 and 14.5.2, relating to the culture of evidence, budget planning priorities and risk management.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>i. Faculties and units are required to report their updated plans to the Quality Management Committee no later than March 2005.</li> <li>ii. <i>The Procedures for Course Approval, Amendment and Review</i> now require all course proposals to address risk. The Business Plan requirement for courses has been strengthened and Faculty Finance Officers provided a workshop to Heads of Schools on its implementation.</li> </ul> <p>A further workshop for Heads of School is being planned for 2005 following advice from the Audit Committee and Senate.</p> <p>Major ongoing projects of, for example, Student Administration include risk analysis and risk management strategies.</p> <p>International Education has been in discussion with the Audit Committee about aspects of ACU's activities. The Pro-Vice-Chancellor (Academic Affairs) and the Pro-Vice-Chancellor (Research and International) co-sign agreements with overseas providers to ensure academic and corporate risks are adequately covered.</p>

## Recommendation 6:

That ACU develop formal mechanisms, such as the adoption of project management tools, to assist in the implementation of all major strategies.

Action Proposed	Progress
<p>The University will use systematic methods for implementation of all major strategies. Where appropriate, these methods will include project management techniques suited to the environment of the University. Examples where the University is currently adopting elements of project management include the use of Business Plans in the course development and review procedures, and in the implementation of the new WebCT online learning software system, for which 'roll-out' commenced across campuses in January 2003. Such tools will also be used in the project for web enablement of the Banner student system.</p>	<p>Models for Business Plans and a Project Management Template have been reviewed by the Quality Management Committee.</p> <p>The rollout of WebCT continues to be monitored by the ACU National Online Committee, which meets four times per annum. Staff training has been linked systematically to the rollout. The Faculty of Arts and Sciences has conducted a staff survey on how WebCT is serving its needs, and planned new workshops based on this feedback.</p> <p>The expansion of nursing in North Sydney is being formally undertaken as a project with appropriate infrastructure.</p> <p>The Personnel Relations and Equal Opportunity Directorate uses a tailored and sustainable Project Management approach for its HRMIS Implementation Program.</p> <p>Student Administration undertakes cross-Section and where relevant cross-Directorate planning of major operational cycles and projects. Project Management Software is used, where relevant. For example, it is being used as a key tool in the implementation of the <i>Higher Education Support Act</i> reforms.</p>

## Recommendation 7:

That the requirements of faculty, school and unit strategic implementation plans in relation to quality assurance and improvement be more clearly specified by the Quality Management Committee, to ensure that all parts of ACU have a regular practice of identifying areas for improvement and good practices, and that a process be established for communicating good practice between faculties, schools and units.

Action Proposed	Progress
<p>In response to this recommendation, the University has revised the Terms of Reference of the Quality Management Committee (<i>Core Planning Group meeting Feb. 2003</i>), so as to strengthen the role of the Committee in monitoring progress of Faculties and major units in implementing their Strategic Implementation Plans. The Committee will also interact more closely with the Strategic Review Committee so as to assist in the regular monitoring of achievement of strategic objectives of the University. The QMC will also take steps to communicate exemplars of good practice among Faculties and units.</p>	<p>Meetings of the Executive Team have been combined with meetings of the Strategic Review Committee. Exemplars of good practice in project management and continuation of service have been distributed to Faculties and units.</p> <p>The Student Administration Strategic and Quality Management Plan includes specific provisions in relation to quality assurance and continuous improvement.</p>

## Recommendation 8:

That ACU investigate how it can best provide the technical and analytical support for an evidential approach to planning and review.

Action Proposed	Progress
<p>The University will give careful consideration to improving the technical and analytical support in relation to its identified priority for improvement set out in Section 6.2.2. The following initiatives are targeted for the future:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>i. A project has been undertaken, with financial support from the Strategic Initiatives Scheme, to establish an agreed set of key performance indicators relevant to monitoring progress annually in academic priority areas in teaching-learning, research, and community engagement.</li> <li>ii. A new HRMIS system is being implemented by the Personnel Relations and Equal Opportunity Directorate during 2003-4. This new system will provide more comprehensive and accessible data and associated statistical outcomes that will improve the capacity of the University to analyse data relating to all aspects of human resource management.</li> <li>iii. Implementation of the outcomes of the recent review of the operations of Research Services will facilitate the improved gathering and analytical use of data in relation to research student progression and research performance.</li> <li>iv. Improvements in the operational effectiveness of the administrative systems are being made on a continuing basis during 2003 and 2004. These</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>i. 'Culture of Evidence' Project has completed initial report in 2003, and further action is to be taken by the Working Party.</li> <li>ii. HRMIS Implementation is progressing with elements implemented for: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- organisation and structure;</li> <li>- employee details and entitlements;</li> <li>- enterprise agreement and award rules;</li> <li>- cost centres and general ledger; and</li> <li>- remuneration and payment.</li> </ul> <p>Elements approaching implementation are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- recruitment;</li> <li>- employee self-service.</li> </ul> <p>Elements proposed are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- training and development;</li> <li>- performance management;</li> <li>- OH&amp;S;</li> <li>- position classification.</li> </ul> <p>The implementation program is progressively providing a base from which comprehensive profiling data may be drawn.</p> </li> <li>iii. New positions created in Research Services, with Manager, Research Services now responsible for this role.</li> <li>iv. System improvements include upgrades of both the Banner Student Administration System and the Finance System.</li> <li>v. Research Services facilitates the administrative processing of matters involving higher degrees by research, research grants and contracts, and ethics. Research Services also has responsibility for maintaining the accuracy and timeliness of the research-related data on the Banner Database System. Exec Officer to Pro-Vice-Chancellor (Research and International) co-ordinates</li> </ul>

Action Proposed	Progress
<p>improvements will advance the technical support in relation to analysis of evidence relevant to the 'culture of evidence' priority, and to strategic management planning.</p> <p>v. Consideration will be given to the ways in which the Statistics Unit may be able to provide technical support for analytical purposes.</p>	<p>Department of Education Science and Training (DEST) and Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) Data Collection and preparation and submission of the respective reports to DEST, ABS and the University Research and Research Training Management Committee.</p> <p>In April and June 2004 three student recruitment staff were transferred from Student Administration to the Marketing Directorate. These staff are trained in monitoring and interpreting data captured from various sources.</p> <p>v. cont.</p> <p>The Marketing Directorate is accumulating and interrogating data that can be used to develop, implement and review effective strategies in undergraduate and postgraduate recruitment and in graduate relations. The Directorate regularly uses data to plan and review projects and activities adopting qualitative and quantitative methodologies.</p> <p>Student Administration assists in the provision of relevant student data both for the 'Culture of Evidence' project and to meet emergent requirements of the senior executive, Faculties, Schools and other organisational units.</p> <p>Student Administration has had to defer progressing implementation for web enablement of the Banner Student Administration System, due to workload associated with implementation of the <i>Higher Education Support Act</i>.</p>

## Recommendation 9:

That in implementing the new ‘Learning Paradigm’, ACU identify milestones, reporting requirements, resources needed, and appropriate teaching and learning indicators; and ensure that it is widely understood and comprehensively implemented.

Action Proposed	Progress
<p>The University will adopt a systematic approach to the implementation of the Learning Paradigm that will be consistent with Recommendation 9. Such an approach will also bring together, in a comprehensive set of strategies, several of the priorities for improvement in the Performance Portfolio, including those set out in Sections 6.2.2, 7.3.3 and 13.2. Specific initiatives being undertaken in 2003 are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>i. Formulation of a Teaching and Learning Plan, which sets out in considerable detail a wide range of operational principles and strategies intended to put into practical effect the Learning Paradigm, was referred to the Faculty Boards for comment. Advice from these Boards was further considered at the February 2003 Academic Board meeting, at which approval for adoption and implementation of the Plan was given. The Plan will be reported to the University Senate in early 2003.</li> <li>ii. To assist staff throughout the Faculties in their understanding of the elements of the Plan, staff induction and development activities relevant to the Teaching and Learning Plan will be ongoing – for example, a cross-Faculty project to develop an online staff induction module on Teaching and Learning at ACU commenced in January 2003.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>i. The University’s Teaching and Learning Plan has been updated in line with the University’s revision of the Strategic Plan and with higher education reforms. It is now in practice and organisational units will be asked on a regular basis to report progress.</li> <li>ii. The online induction unit on Teaching and Learning at ACU has been completed, demonstrated to Academic Board and Heads of Schools, and is being trialled across the Faculties in Semester 2, 2004. A rollout strategy is being developed by the ACU National Online Committee and the Institute for the Advancement of Teaching and Learning.</li> <li>iii. Training in WebCT and online pedagogy has been conducted in 2003-4 with over 200 staff having attended at least one workshop. The number of staff and students utilising WebCT has increased significantly. Bi-annual reports are prepared for the ACU National Online Committee.  The Institute for the Advancement of Teaching and Learning was established in April 2003 and has significantly enhanced staff development and data resources related to quality teaching and learning. The role of full-time Director has been advertised and a suitably qualified person has been selected.</li> <li>iv. The Institute for the Advancement of Teaching and Learning electronic newsletter has been introduced and enhanced resources have also been added to the Academic Affairs website.</li> </ul>

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| <p>iii. Training in the new WebCT online learning platform has been offered to 100 staff early in 2003; further workshops will be held in 2003-4. Following a review of the Academic Staff Development Unit in 2002, the re-structuring of the Unit into an Institute for the Advancement of Teaching and Learning is being proposed. Other resources planned to be associated with such an Institute include Academic Skills Advisers and ACU National Online.</p> <p>iv. It is intended that a website will be developed by the Institute to include resources and links relating to the implementation of the Learning Paradigm.</p> |  |
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## Recommendation 10:

That ACU review its current approach to evaluation, and systematically implement procedures for obtaining student feedback on teaching and learning, with data relating separately to unit design and teaching quality, and in such a way that data is comparable between different units and different occasions and campuses on which a unit is offered, and is available to heads of school for consistency and other quality assurance purposes.

Action Proposed	Progress
<p>This recommendation is consistent with the Priorities for Improvement in Section 7.3.3 of the Performance Portfolio. Section 6.2.2 of the Portfolio is also relevant. The Academic Board and Faculties have started to implement the following strategies designed to address this recommendation.</p> <p>i. The University has reconstituted its Course and Unit Evaluation Committee as the Teaching and Learning Evaluation Committee. This Committee, with its wider terms of reference, has initiated the development of new instruments and procedures to evaluate units and teaching respectively. The development process is being undertaken during 2003, with the instruments and procedures to be trialled in 2004.</p> <p>ii. Schools are now able to select a common core of items from the Unit Evaluation Program Item Bank to apply across specified units. Fourteen Schools have now implemented this approach, and other Schools are in the planning stage of choosing core items. It is anticipated that this and other approaches, designed to generate unit evaluation data, which will enable analysis across units, campuses and time periods, will progressively be adopted by Schools and Faculties over the next two years.</p> <p>iii. Use of external and cross-campus</p>	<p>i. A Policy on Evaluation of Teaching and Learning was approved by Academic Board in October 2004. The Unit Evaluation Item Bank is being reviewed and new evaluation instruments are under consideration.</p> <p>ii. 21 Schools out of 24 now monitor common core items. The Faculty of Education has selected items that are common across the Faculty. Faculty-wide and discipline data have been collated for publication on the ACU website by December 2004.</p> <p>The Faculty of Education has developed a schedule for the systematic evaluation of all units. The Teaching and Learning Evaluation Committee is drafting a University schedule for unit evaluation.</p> <p>iii. This strategy is continuing and is being expanded.</p> <p>iv. This ongoing strategy is being implemented systematically and effectively. Unit evaluation requirements are in place for probation and promotion.</p>

<p>moderators of marking in individual units will be extended, especially to assess the standards of final year units.</p> <p>iv. Unit evaluation and CEQ data will be used systematically in the regular review of units and courses.</p> <p>The above strategies have been incorporated into the University's Teaching and Learning Plan.</p>	
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### Recommendation 11:

That ACU develop a plan and related policies for on-line access to learning resources in undergraduate courses and ensure their effective communication and implementation.

Action Proposed	Progress
<p>The University will act in accordance with this recommendation, which is relevant to a number of Priorities for Improvement in the Performance Portfolio, as stated in Section 7.3.3 (increased use of ICT in teaching-learning, flexible modes of learning) and Section 7.2.2 (cost-effectiveness of courses). The University has commenced implementation of an online learning shell, WebCT, across the campuses. Plans are being developed for systematic utilisation of this online mode to enhance the use of ICT resources as a learning support in all undergraduate courses. The development of appropriate policies and plans and their communication to staff and students will be given high priority by the Academic Board and Faculties, commencing in 2003.</p>	<p>ACU National Online has been established to support WebCT operations and applications. Ongoing support and training activities are occurring across all campuses.</p> <p>Over 200 staff have been trained to date. A Policy on Quality Teaching and Learning Online is being drafted and a trial of online evaluation in WebCT is to be implemented.</p> <p>Student Administration has configured Banner to assist in the identification of units offered via WebCT and students enrolled in those units, and has developed procedures for managing on-line enrolments through ACUweb.</p>

## Recommendation 12:

That ACU develop a comprehensive system for deciding which off-shore activities to engage in, for planning, implementing and controlling them, and for incorporating an effective quality assurance system.

Action Proposed	Progress
<p>The recently completed Review of International Education has recommended the creation of an <i>International Policy Committee</i>, including the Pro-Vice-Chancellor (Research and International), Director of International Education and Deans in its membership. The Core Planning Group has accepted this recommendation. The Committee will be given the responsibility of developing a comprehensive system for deciding those offshore activities in which to engage, and for planning, implementing and controlling them with the incorporation of effective quality assurance systems. This process will commence in 2003 and will be ongoing.</p>	<p>An International Policy Committee has been formed, and has met on a number of occasions. It is currently working through the development of policies, and establishing priorities for International Education.</p>

### Recommendation 13:

That ACU regularly review ACUcom to ensure that the courses it conducts are of appropriate academic standard, and are consistent with ACU's Mission.

Action Proposed	Progress
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>i. ACUcom engages in professional development programs to meet the needs of professional personnel in education, health-care and business fields, in accordance with the Mission of the University. Staff employed by ACUcom to lead such programs will continue to be selected on the basis of their ability to meet these Mission goals, and will be provided with induction related to the Mission.</li> <li>ii. A Working Party of Academic Board has been established with membership including the Director (ACUcom) to examine the issue of academic standards of courses offered by ACUcom. Procedures have been strengthened for the approval of such courses, and the criteria for eligibility for credit or articulation with University award courses will be reviewed.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>i. Recruitment and selection procedures and induction procedures have been developed for ACUcom staff to ensure that they are aware of the University Mission, and meet required standards.</li> <li>ii. Diploma programs are now monitored through Academic Board, and Certificate courses through the relevant State-based Training Authority. A Non-Award Courses Committee has been established as a standing committee of Academic Board, and <i>Procedures for Non-Award Course Approval, Amendment and Review</i> have been developed. UniAccess programs and principles for the use of award units in ACUcom courses have been approved by Academic Board.</li> </ul>

## Recommendation 14:

That further attention be given to the criteria defining the different kinds of research centre and, in particular, to the relationship between the Flagship concept and research centres.

Action Proposed	Progress
<p>As foreshadowed in the Performance Portfolio (Section 8.4), a formal Review of Research was scheduled for April 2003. This has been conducted and was assisted by a specific review of Research Services completed in February, 2003. In accordance with the recommendation, the Terms of Reference for the Review included:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Evaluate the current designation of Flagships and Centres as reflecting the University's major areas of research strength.</li> <li>▪ Evaluate the appropriateness of the mechanisms for resourcing research for individuals and teams of researchers, with particular emphasis on research in Flagships and Research Centres. Consideration should be given to the roles of Pro-Vice-Chancellor, Deans, Heads of Schools and Directors in this allocation of resources and to the relationship of Flagships and Centres to Faculties.</li> </ul> <p>The Review will help define the different kinds of Research Centres and the relation between Research Centres and Flagships and where they sit in relation to Faculties. Following the Review, the University will more clearly delineate the various categories within the spectrum of its research strengths and initiate changes as appropriate.</p>	<p>Review of Research has been completed and recommendations considered by the University Research and Research Training Management Committee and Core Planning Group.</p> <p>Reviews of individual Flagships and Research Centres have been completed. Clearer differentiation between Flagships and Senate Research Centres and Faculty Centres has been established. Applications for new Flagship areas have been sought and new Flagships designated.</p> <p>Guidelines for various University grant schemes and secondment to the Institute of Advanced Research place greater emphasis on Flagship areas. Each Flagship area has been granted \$100,000 by the Vice-Chancellor to support major research infrastructure and staffing needs. New <i>Principles governing the Relationship between Faculties/Schools and University and Senate Centres/Flagships</i> have been promulgated. Flagship Directors are full-time appointments.</p>

## Recommendation 15:

That the teaching / research nexus be addressed explicitly, and possibly as part of a formal approach taken to the implementation of the learning paradigm.

Action Proposed	Progress
<p>This recommendation will be addressed through a series of initiatives commencing in 2003 as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>i. Following the inclusion in 2002 of a specific criterion relating to the teaching/research nexus in the University Policies and Procedures for Promotion, advertisements for appointment of academic staff now also include a statement in relation to the same requirement.</li> <li>ii. An online induction module <i>Teaching and Learning at ACU</i> under development will introduce new staff to the importance of the nexus between teaching-learning and research and scholarship.</li> <li>iii. The development of the nexus has been incorporated into the recently approved <i>Teaching and Learning Plan</i> for the University. During 2003, Faculties will develop plans for implementing the Teaching and Learning Plan at Faculty level.</li> <li>iv. The Pro-Vice-Chancellor (Academic Affairs) will prepare a listing of exemplars of staff demonstrating the nexus between teaching-learning and their research and scholarship, for placement on the Academic Affairs website during 2003.</li> <li>v. The University Research and Research Training Management Committee will give</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>i. All academic recruitment notices contain a reference to the research/teaching nexus. Academic promotion procedures have been reviewed to ensure that appropriate emphasis is being applied to this criterion.</li> <li>ii. The online induction unit on Teaching and Learning at ACU has been completed, demonstrated to Academic Board and HOS, and is being trialled across the Faculties in Semester 2, 2004. A rollout strategy is being developed by the ACU National Online Committee and the Institute for the Advancement of Teaching and Learning.</li> <li>iii. Faculty Teaching and Learning Plans have been developed.</li> <li>iv. Exemplars from 20 staff have been collated and placed on the Academic Affairs website.</li> <li>v. The University Research and Research Training Management Committee has introduced new research incentive and support schemes to develop further the nexus between research and teaching. More secondment places in the Institute for the Advancement of Research have been funded. An Australian Competitive Grants Index Incentive Scheme and a Publication Output Incentive Scheme have been introduced.</li> </ul>

<p>consideration to ways of supporting the development of the nexus. The review of Research will also give consideration to this aspect.</p>	
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## Recommendation 16:

That ACU consider the role of research centres and flagships in research student training and, in particular, make explicit the nature of their role in general provision outside their own research areas.

Action Proposed	Progress
<p>The Review of Research being undertaken in 2003 has a specific term of reference relevant to this recommendation, namely,</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Evaluate the effectiveness of the current postgraduate research supervision arrangements and support mechanisms, especially at Faculty, School and Flagship/Centre levels.</li> </ul> <p>Recommendations arising from the Review will be considered for implementation by the relevant research and academic committees of the University, commencing in the second half of 2003.</p>	<p>The University Research and Research Training Management Committee continues to work through the recommendations arising from the Review of Research.</p> <p>The University Research and Research Training Management Committee receives annually the results of the ACU PREQ and the Graduate Careers Council of Australia PREG Surveys. Annual Academic Progress Reports monitor student progress and frequency of meetings with supervisors.</p> <p>In consultation with the Deans and the Pro-Vice-Chancellor (Academic Affairs) an agreed protocol entitled <i>Principles governing the Relationship between Faculties/Schools and University and Senate Centres/Flagships</i> covering all aspects, including postgraduate student supervision, has been developed. Postgraduate students associated with Flagships or Centres are administered through the appropriate School or Graduate School.</p>

## Recommendation 17:

That ACU undertake more formal and strategic workforce planning to ensure that it can continue to achieve its Mission under changing employment patterns and conditions.

Action Proposed	Progress
<p>Developing a workforce management strategy for the University which is in harmony with its Mission and in line with the University's identified strategic initiatives and priorities for improvement. The following processes will be undertaken:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>i. Following implementation of the new HRMIS, the Personnel Relations Division will profile and monitor the University's workforce characteristics such as age, qualifications, classification level, gender, employment type, location and entitlements, so as to develop trend projections.</li> <li>ii. Associated with (i), relevant workforce management information will be identified and aligned with the academic-related key performance indicators being developed as part of the 'Culture of Evidence' Priority for Improvement.</li> <li>iii. Formal links will be established between workforce management and core business activities and other University initiatives.</li> <li>iv. The review of strategies already initiated for addressing emerging workforce issues will be continued, to monitor outcomes in regard to workforce profile.</li> <li>v. In accordance with change-management processes, and following formal reviews, the University will implement needed workforce changes.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>i. Plans have been laid; budget and resourcing proposals have been made and a suitable software system has been established as an add-on to the ACU HRMIS which will enable the effective analysis and provision of workforce data and provide capacity, over time, for developing institutional workforce related performance measures. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. ACU has joined the QUT sponsored national HR Benchmarking and expects to receive initial input through this initiative in late 2004.</li> <li>b. Members of the Personnel Relations and Equal Opportunity Directorate have, throughout 2004, been participating in a range of relevant human resource management seminars, conferences and master classes to acquire the knowledge and skill needed for the successful achievement of the workforce planning recommendation.</li> </ul> </li> <li>ii. In progress.</li> <li>iii. In progress.</li> <li>iv. Exit interviews are being conducted; a survey on work and retirement intentions is being considered; and relevant age-related initiatives are being planned for the enterprise bargaining process.</li> <li>v. This is occurring within context of current restructuring processes - Student Services, Personnel Relations and Equal Opportunity and Marketing.</li> <li>vi. Background research and information to underpin this initiative are being gathered through a comprehensive analysis of workforce strategy approaches in the Australian higher education sector. This and practical initiatives being planned in i., iv. and v. above will be drawn together to inform the development of the draft policy statement on workforce planning.</li> </ul>

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| <p>vi. A policy statement defining workforce management strategy for the University will be developed in 2004. This will strengthen an integrated University structure and workforce profile, to enhance efficiency and coherence while meeting the needs of local campus communities.</p> |  |
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### Recommendation 18:

That ACU work with the ACU National Students Association to develop a strong and effective role for the Association in decision-making and communication within ACU.

Action Proposed	Progress
<p>The Dean of Students, in consultation with the elected student Senate member and the ACU National Students Association (ACUNSA), will develop strategies designed to clarify the role of ACUNSA in relation to the Student Representative Councils on each campus, and to strengthen the role of ACUNSA in student affairs. This task will be commenced in 2003, with a conclusion date in 2004.</p>	<p>Meetings were held. Incorporated Student Representative Councils went through a process of reporting to relevant authorities and became unincorporated. All six campuses adopted a common Student Association constitution which was approved by Senate, and by the Vice-Chancellor for implementation. The common constitution clarifies the role of ACUNSA.</p>

## Recommendation 19:

That ACU ensure that library funding is sufficient to properly support the academic programs on each campus, and give consideration to how it builds library resources to support the developing e-learning strategy.

Action Proposed	Progress
<p>The following initiatives will be undertaken in response to this recommendation:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>i. The recommendation will be addressed by the Library Committee and its standing committee, the Collection Development and Document Delivery Committee. The latter develops the funding formula for distributing the Library budget across campuses. Issues for consideration will include further acquisition of databases and online resources, and participation in interlibrary licences and other co-operative schemes.</li> <li>ii. Further development of the digital library and enhancement of e-reserve will occur in 2003-2004.</li> <li>iii. The Library Strategic Plan, which was finalised in March 2003, includes strategies related to this recommendation.</li> <li>iv. In line with the University's cyclical reviews, a Review of the Library is scheduled for Semester 2, 2003. Its terms of reference will take account of the issues of Library funding and support for developing the e-learning strategy.</li> <li>v. A service level agreement with Information Technology and Communication Services, planned for 2003, should assist in optimising functionality of Library infrastructure.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>i. The recommendation has been addressed by the relevant committees. Funding for Library acquisitions will increase significantly over the next three years, rising to \$2,000,000 in 2007 (\$1,425,000 in 2004). All serials, print and electronic, will be funded centrally to provide better overall coordination of the serials budget. A subcommittee of the University Research and Research Training Management Committee has been established to look at improving Library support for research activities.</li> <li>ii. Improved access to the digital library and ereserve has been implemented with the installation of new authentication software, Ezproxy,</li> <li>iii. The Strategic Implementation Plan has been updated to reflect progress in this area.</li> <li>iv. The Library Review has been completed and its recommendations are being assessed and implemented by Library staff and various relevant committees.</li> <li>v. A Service Level Agreement is in place for Library servers.</li> <li>vi. Information Literacy programs continue to be offered.</li> <li>vii. Another Rodski Survey of client attitudes has been conducted – it includes benchmarking against other university libraries.</li> </ul>

<p>vi. The Library will continue to conduct Information Literacy programs for students and staff; this will assist users to make optimal use of existing library resources.</p> <p>vii. The Library will seek ongoing feedback from students and staff on its services as indicated in the Performance Portfolio (Section 12.2).</p>	
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