

This is the final progress report prepared by Australian Catholic University in relation to the nineteen recommendations made by AUQA in its Cycle 1 audit report. The report describes the University's response to each recommendation and includes reference to evidence of implementation where relevant. A brief description of the effect of any changes made by the University on institutional outcomes has also been prepared for each recommendation. Please note that evidence of implementation is associated with hyperlinked words that have been both *underlined and italicised*.

A brief commentary is provided in relation to those recommendations that are yet to be implemented.

1. REVIEW THE UNIVERSITY'S PLANNING FRAMEWORK

What the AUQA audit report said . . .

Following the agreement on an institutional Strategic Plan, the three faculties and other areas (including libraries, personnel, student administration etc.) have created their own plans, based on the Strategic Plan ... Each relevant area is expected to embed its interpretation of the ACU Strategic Plan and the University's approach to quality assurance and improvement in its own Strategic Implementation Plan ... These faculty and unit plans confirm that there is a strong planning culture in ACU and progress to date is satisfactory, but it is not clear that the various plans have clearly articulated roles nor that they fit together in a coherent system of planning ...

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.

How the University has responded . . .

The University's *Strategic Plan* was revised and adopted in its updated form in September 2003. The University's *Teaching and Learning Plan* and the underlying *Faculty plans* have been updated in line with the revised Strategic Plan. A set of *core academic performance indicators* has been identified and one cycle of reporting on these indicators ("Culture of Evidence" *report*) has been completed.

The University is progressively implementing a revised *quality management policy* that includes a University-wide planning and review framework that is consistent with the PIRI (plan-implement-review-improve) model. The framework establishes the Strategic Plan as the University's peak planning document and all subordinate plans, including those plans prepared by the faculties and other organisational units, are required to adopt strategies and propose arrangements that are directed toward the achievement of the University's high level goals as articulated in the Strategic Plan.

The University has developed *planning guidelines* for the preparation of Strategic Implementation Plans by each faculty and nominated organisational unit which assist with the implementation of these arrangements.

What has been the effect on outcomes . . .

The measures taken by the University have provided greater clarity for staff about the relationship between the Strategic Plan and the various plans that are prepared at lower levels across the University. The explicit inclusion of individual performance development plans within the University's planning and review framework has also helped to establish and clarify the important links that exist between the goals of individual staff members, the goals of their organisational unit and the high-level goals in the Strategic Plan.

2. ENHANCE STUDENT APPRECIATION OF THE UNIVERSITY'S NATIONAL CHARACTER**What the AUQA audit report said . . .**

Students are not generally conscious of ACU as a single multi-campus institution, but experience it and regard it in relation to their own campus. They are generally very positive about their own local context and its arrangements but unclear about its 'national' status and what that means for them. Their attitude to the national university is usually neutral, but sometimes becomes somewhat negative if services they need are located elsewhere and are therefore more difficult to access; or requirements are introduced at one campus because of institution-wide considerations ... Students expressed a high degree of support and commitment to ACU, but the more formal mechanisms of representation reveal some weaknesses. They appreciate the strong collegiate identity on each campus, and report that academic staff are both available for consultation and responsive to student feedback. Despite the effectiveness of these informal channels of communication and influence, students find it difficult to engage with decision-making processes of the university, except through their communication with individual staff...

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.

How the University has responded . . .

The University has instituted regular meetings of the Dean of Students with Student Association representatives which consider, among a range of matters, the development of strategies and activities to enhance student engagement with the University.

Consequently, various national events and activities aimed at building student appreciation and experience of the University's national character have been initiated. These include:

- ❖ *The Big Event* – a biennial social justice conference where students from across the University's campuses participate in workshops and seminars that focus on how students can make a difference in the world. The '*Big Event*' was first held in 2004 on the Melbourne campus and again in 2006 on the Brisbane campus. The next '*Big Event*' is planned to coincide with World Youth Day activities in Sydney in July 2008.
- ❖ *ACU Alive* – a national showcase of talent in which students perform and participate in live bands, theatre, choir, comedy, art and fashion. '*ACU Alive*' was first held in 2005 on the Melbourne campus and again in 2007 on the Strathfield campus.
- ❖ *ACU National Games* – a national sporting event with mixed teams from each of the University's campuses competing in a variety of sports. The inaugural ACU National Games were held in 2007 on the Canberra campus.
- ❖ *ACU National Radio* – an in-house, on-campus radio station that commenced broadcasting in 2007. ACU National Radio was established as joint staff-student initiative aimed specifically at strengthening the University's national identity.

The University has also taken steps to promote its national character to students through adopting a strong national emphasis in all its marketing and promotional initiatives (including the development of the ACU National brand) as well as through the establishment of Student Centres on each campus which operate under consistent national policies and procedures and which aim to communicate a consistent and national perspective to students.

Lastly, the University has formally moved to increase student representation on University-wide decision-making bodies. Students are now represented on the following University-wide committees:

Academic Board
Academic Regulations Committee
Ceremonial and Protocols Committee
Community Engagement Advisory Committee*
Faculty Boards*
Goals Committee*
Library Committee
Quality Management Committee*
Teaching and Learning Committee*
Teaching Development Grants and Awards Committee
Teaching and Learning Evaluation Committee*
University Research and Research Training Management Committee*
University Senate

* A student representative has been added to the membership of these committees subsequent to the University's Cycle 1 quality audit.

What has been the effect on outcomes . . .

Collectively, these initiatives have significantly increased the level of interaction and engagement among students from across each of the University's campuses and created an enhanced sense among students of the University's national character.

3. ENHANCE CHANNELS OF COMMUNICATION ACROSS THE UNIVERSITY

What the AUQA audit report said . . .

Most of the [communication] mechanisms mentioned and contemplated are downwards. (The Vice-Chancellor's Listening Exercise ... is a notable exception.) While this communication from the top has had very significant benefits so far, it is essential that the routine 'bottom-up' channels of communication be developed ...

Recommendation 3: That ACU, as stated in its Performance Portfolio, further develop the channels of communication throughout the University.

How the University has responded . . .

The University has invested substantial resources in enhancing its online communication through the development of its corporate website (<http://www.acu.edu.au>) and is increasingly using both WebCT and the student e-mail, in targeted ways, to communicate more effectively with students.

The University has also developed a range of print and online initiatives also aimed at improving communication with the University community and its stakeholders. These communication initiatives are now in place and include:

1. *ACU National Update* – an electronic, internal communication tool for staff, students and other stakeholders that is circulated fortnightly;
2. *ACU Events Calendar* – an online calendar of upcoming events on campus that is updated continually;
3. *ACUnique* – a new thematically based publication for stakeholders that is published three or four times a year and is available in print and online formats;
4. *ACU National Annual Report* – a formal report to stakeholders that is published annually and is available in print and online formats; and
5. *Media summaries/clippings* – an electronic news clipping service that is distributed daily to subscribers.

In terms of 'bottom-up' channels of communication, the University has implemented new, cyclical surveys to obtain feedback from students. These include:

1. a University-wide *student course completion survey* which seeks feedback from graduates on a range of ACU-specific aspects; and
2. a survey of *continuing students' perceptions* in relation to the provision of administrative and academic support.

In the period since 2002, the University has also undertaken a number of strategic activities (for example, the *Discipline Review of the Faculties* and the Vice-Chancellor's *Scenario Planning Exercise*) that actively sought 'bottom-up' communication as part of the information gathering and feedback phases. A survey of staff perceptions of support for quality teaching and learning was also undertaken.

As foreshadowed in the University's Cycle 1 Performance Portfolio, a further development has been the establishment of a *project management policy* which explicitly requires the development and implementation of a project plan when undertaking significant University-wide initiatives. All such project plans are required to include a communication strategy that affords the opportunity for affected staff and/or students to provide feedback. [Refer also to Recommendation 6.]

The University regularly collects (and responds as appropriate to) student feedback provided through the Student Centres on each campus. Student Administration and Student Services also work closely with the Student Association on each campus to obtain representative student feedback, including hearing student perceptions on the drafts of various communications to students.

What has been the effect on outcomes . . .

The “bottom up” process of communication is an essential element of the University’s management and operational strategies. There is no less importance attached to communication from the Senate, Vice-Chancellor and senior management, but that is supplemented by activities to ensure that input from the University community is sought, reviewed and utilised.

The University has also formalised the requirement that “communication with stakeholders” be an essential part of project plans to enhance the effectiveness of project implementation.

4. REVIEW THE UNIVERSITY’S BUDGET MECHANISMS**What the AUQA audit report said . . .**

It appeared to the Audit Panel that a relatively high proportion of the budget is being distributed in a rather formulaic way, reducing the capacity to allocate resources to support strategic priorities in teaching, research etc. ... The Audit Panel noted some instances where the structure contains an element of incentives (eg. in the distribution of income from on-shore international students), but also that the income from ACUcom is used for strategic initiatives. However, benefit may be gained by reviewing the distribution of the budget to provide further incentives to support the achievement of the priorities in the Strategic Plan.

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.

How the University has responded . . .

The University established the *Budget Advisory Committee* in 2003 which developed and in 2004 implemented an improved budget model. The model demonstrates greater clarity in the distribution of income and provides funding incentives to support activities that are aligned with strategic objectives. It is reviewed annually by the Budget Advisory Committee.

As flagged in section 14.4.2 of the University’s Cycle 1 Performance Portfolio, the University has also implemented a revised *Business Plan Template* for use by faculties in course planning and review.

What has been the effect on outcomes . . .

The revised budget model has significantly improved transparency and accountability in the budget process. While all managers are aware of their responsibility to fund operations through a defined share of discretionary income, the budget process now also provides the opportunity to seek funding for specific initiatives. Assessment and allocation is a public process which has enhanced the level of trust, understanding and confidence in the budget process. The revised budget model has also been instrumental in facilitating the smooth introduction of new strategic priorities such as the Institute of Legal Studies and the Institute for Advancing Community Engagement.

5. INTEGRATE RISK MANAGEMENT INTO PLANNING AND REVIEW**What the AUQA audit report said . . .**

ACU has paid explicit attention to risk management for some years. The Strategic Plan identifies clear opportunities for ACU to innovate and develop its profile and also identifies potential problems that may arise ... the Audit Panel was concerned that there is not a well-developed culture of risk management throughout all areas of activity in ACU. The issue here is that universities are operating in rapidly changing circumstances, and there needs to be a continuous process of identifying opportunities and risks, and managing the risks ... The Audit Panel was not able to get a clear picture of how risk management is a continuous process within ACU. Some operational structure (eg. a designated staff position such as an internal auditor) is needed to support the task of risk management and report to the Audit Committee ...

Recommendation 5: That ACU, its faculties and operating units reflect annually or biannually on the major opportunities for and risk to their activities and plans, and on possible actions to realise the opportunities while minimising the risks and limiting adverse consequences.

How the University has responded . . .

Under the auspices of the *Standing and Finance Committee* (a sub-committee of Senate), the University has established an annual *risk assessment process*, within which all senior officers are required to undertake a risk assessment exercise for their portfolio area. Where a risk is deemed to be unacceptably high, strategies to manage and mitigate the risk are required to be developed and implemented. Also, in accordance with the requirements of Protocol 9 of the National Governance Protocols for Higher Education Providers, each year the University now includes a report on risk management within its *annual report*.

The University has also developed *planning guidelines* for the preparation of Strategic Implementation Plans by each faculty and nominated organisational unit. The guidelines explicitly require the consideration and management of risk to be an integral part of the planning and review process. Strategies to manage and control unacceptably high risks are also required to be identified within plans, and subsequently implemented.

As per the relevant priority for improvement identified within the University's Cycle 1 Performance Portfolio, the University has also amended the *Policy for Course Approval, Amendment and Review - Higher Education Courses* and the *Policy for Course, Approval, Amendment and Review - Non Award Courses* to require all course proposals to explicitly consider and address risk in line with the requirements of the Audit Committee and Senate. The University also periodically conducts workshops on risk for Heads of School and other senior University officers.

What has been the effect on outcomes . . .

The management of risk is now a well established part of the University's strategic management activities. Senior managers understand and are able to apply the principles of risk management when undertaking cyclical planning and review activities.

6. ADOPT PROJECT MANAGEMENT METHODOLOGIES**What the AUQA audit report said . . .**

In general, ACU has a good strategic vision, but has not developed a methodology for the efficient roll-out of the resulting strategies through a regular and systematic process of project definition, planning, management, evaluation and modification ... the Audit Panel found members of the University very clear on what is to be done, and eloquent on why this was valuable, including frequent references back to the Mission, but much less clear on how change is being brought about and what stage the process has now reached ... A more explicit system for project management would support senior staff responsible for implementing new policies and procedures through documentation of intended outcomes, specification of milestones and the overall timeframe for change, what is open for local interpretation and what should be standard across ACU, the responsibilities of staff including the various levels of management in relation to the project, and a communication strategy to ensure all who are affected by the change are well informed of what is proposed.

Recommendation 6: That ACU develop formal mechanisms, such as the adoption of project management tools, to assist in the implementation of all major strategies.

How the University has responded . . .

The University has established and implemented a *project management policy* which explicitly requires the development and implementation of a project plan (and the use of project management tools) when undertaking significant University-wide and other major initiatives.

The objectives of the project management policy are to ensure that:

- ❖ projects are effectively managed;
- ❖ appropriate governance is established;
- ❖ change, communication and risk management are effective;
- ❖ stakeholder communication is effective; and
- ❖ post-implementation reviews are undertaken.

Accordingly, and as set out in Section 6.3.3 of the University's Cycle 1 Performance Portfolio, specific communication strategies, including feedback mechanisms, are now incorporated into the project plans of all significant University-wide initiatives.

The *ITCS Project Management Handbook* is an example that illustrates the implementation of the University's policy objectives with respect to project management.

What has been the effect on outcomes . . .

The management and implementation of major University projects are now guided by formal project management policy and procedures which offer standardised processes and improved outcomes. For example, the University was able to develop and implement a new online student system which was aided by a comprehensive approach to project management.

7. CLARIFY THE UNIVERSITY'S INTEGRATED APPROACH TO PLANNING AND QUALITY MANAGEMENT**What the AUQA audit report said . . .**

... the Audit panel examined the three faculty strategic implementation plans, which contain the faculties' quality management plans, together with the corresponding plans of other operational units ... the plans vary a great deal in both the material that they cover, and the way this material is treated. While this variation is to be expected when the responsibility for planning is devolved to the faculty and unit level, it does raise the issue whether ACU's Strategic Plan and Quality Assurance Policy are giving sufficient form and direction to planning and quality at the faculty and unit level to ensure that the strategic implementation plans, and the review activity which is associated with their development, constitutes an effective planning and quality assurance system for ACU ... ACU also needs a systematic approach to discussing the relative success of different faculty and unit approaches to planning and review. This would enable it to reflect on whether the diverse forms and content of the various faculty and unit strategic implementation plans are each best adapted to the needs of the particular area, and to identify instances of good practice in review and planning and spread this information across the ACU.

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 identify areas for improvement and good practices to achieve improvement, and that a process be established for communicating these between faculties and units.

How the University has responded . . .

The University has developed and is progressively implementing a revised *Quality Management Policy* that adopts the quality management cycle (plan-implement-review-improve) as the model for integrating quality management (and a continuous improvement philosophy) within the University's planning and review processes.

Planning Guidelines have been established to assist with the formulation of plans, the conduct of reviews and the preparation of reports against plans. These guidelines provide templates for the preparation of plans and reports and explicitly require the identification of improvement opportunities (as part of the review and reporting process) and the subsequent development and implementation of improvement strategies and actions (as part of the planning and implementation process going forward).

The University has also enhanced its website in relation to *planning and quality* activities to provide improved staff access to relevant information, e.g. organisational planning and review policy and guidelines, current planning documents, etc.

What has been the effect on outcomes . . .

Staff in faculty and organisational unit areas with responsibility for the conduct of planning and review activities are better placed to understand and respond in a timely, appropriate and consistent manner to the University's planning and review requirements.

8. INVESTIGATE SUPPORT FOR PLANNING AND REVIEW**What the AUQA audit report said . . .**

To get most value from increased attention to the gathering and use of data, it will be important to enhance the quality of data-gathering from students and staff, concentrating on what is most useful rather than what is easiest to measure ... The Audit Panel noted that the 'Culture of Evidence' project is being jointly managed by the Pro-Vice-Chancellor (Academic Affairs) and the Pro-Vice-Chancellor (Quality & Outreach), and undertaken by members of their staff. The work would be greatly assisted by improving the capacity for institutional research. Such an enhanced capacity for data and information handling and analysis would also provide support to ACU in its planning and review activities ... A desirable infrastructure would include such an institutional research function or office, together with the necessary resources to ensure consistent and integrated planning, policy development, implementation and review, risk assessment and management.

Recommendation 8: That ACU investigate how it can best provide the technical and analytical support for an evidential approach to planning and review.

How the University has responded . . .

The University reviewed the resources that were available to support its planning and review activities and decided, in view of the institution's size and resources, to maintain the *status quo* with respect to the deployment of resources and the assignment of responsibilities.

It was agreed however that the roles played by various organisational units in supporting planning and review activities would be *documented and promulgated* within the University. In addition, responsibility for the co-ordination of the University's planning and review processes would be formally attached to the portfolio of the *Pro-Vice-Chancellor (Quality and Engagement)* and specifically within the Office of Quality and Outreach, which would subsequently be renamed the *Office of Planning and Quality*.

The Office of Planning and Quality has also worked with the Executive Director, University Services and the Manager, Statistics Unit to enhance the data available through the University's *Statistics website* to support planning and review. New data tables developed by the Statistics Unit, with detailed historical information about the University's *core academic performance measures*, have replaced the single year standalone "Culture of Evidence" report.

What has been the effect on outcomes . . .

Given the multi-campus nature of the University, the formal assignment and promulgation of roles and responsibilities in relation to planning and review have helped to clarify arrangements in this area, assisted in the identification and closure of gaps in the coverage of relevant aspects, created the opportunity to develop improved synergy through working more closely together, and guided the assignment of responsibility when new tasks arise.

9. MANAGE THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE 'LEARNING PARADIGM'

What the AUQA audit report said . . .

The Policy on Teaching and Learning refers to a 'Learning Paradigm', which is 'embedded in the University's Strategic Plan'. The term 'Learning Paradigm' is not in fact mentioned in the Strategic Plan, but the Audit Panel was informed that the term is intended to denote 'outcomes-based learning' in contrast to 'input-based teaching' ... While the Audit Panel is confident that the adoption of the new 'Learning Paradigm' betokens a commitment to student-centred learning, the Audit Panel was not convinced that there is a sufficiently robust plan for implementing the paradigm ... It will be necessary for ACU to treat the achievement of the new 'Learning Paradigm' as a project to be specifically managed, and not rely on individual staff to move in this direction without clear and explicit guidance and training ...

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.

How the University has responded . . .

The University assigned responsibility for the systematic implementation of the 'Learning Paradigm' to the Teaching and Learning Committee, a standing committee of Academic Board.

The Committee initially finalised the *Teaching and Learning Plan (2003-05)* which provided the blueprint for embedding the 'Learning Paradigm' across the University and which also sought to move the University from a teaching-centred to a learning-centred focus. A *detailed report* on the outcomes achieved under this plan was endorsed by Academic Board in May 2006. A new *Teaching and Learning Plan (2006-08)* was developed and a *report on progress* in relation to its first-year targets (2006) has been prepared.

The University also introduced relevant staff induction and development activities to assist staff in building their understanding of the Teaching and Learning Plan and the 'Learning Paradigm'. For example, an *online module* that presents the University's approach to teaching and learning was developed and is offered as part of the induction process for new academic staff. This module is also part of the first unit within the University's *Graduate Certificate in Higher Education*, which has been available to staff since Semester 2, 2006.

Following the *2002 Review of the Academic Staff Development Unit*, the University established the Institute for the Advancement of Teaching and Learning (IATL) in 2003. The Institute conducts academic staff development activities aimed at, amongst other goals, inculcating in academic staff a student-centred focus consistent with the Learning Paradigm. Further, the University has developed a *teaching and learning website* that provides staff with access to a wide range of resources that relate to the implementation of the 'Learning Paradigm'.

What has been the effect on outcomes . . .

The 'Learning Paradigm' is now well embedded in the University's strategic focus, policy framework and institutional practice and there is a strong commitment by staff to student-centred learning. Key to these developments has been:

- ❖ the University's inaugural Teaching and Learning Plan (2003-05) and the subsequent Teaching and Learning Plan (2006-08), which implemented the "milestones, reporting requirements, resources needed, and appropriate teaching and learning indicators" as recommended in AUQA's Cycle 1 audit report, and
- ❖ the establishment of the Institute for the Advancement of Teaching and Learning and its associated staff development, evaluation and project activities.

10. REVIEW THE UNIVERSITY'S APPROACH TO THE EVALUATION OF TEACHING AND LEARNING

What the AUQA audit report said . . .

The Audit Panel found that academic staff are professionally committed to evaluating their subjects and their teaching, and employ a diversity of strategies to do so ... there is considerable variation in the way formal unit evaluation data is gathered and used within and across faculties. This level of variability is not entirely desirable, as it makes it difficult for ACU to know how much data is collected and how it is used. Furthermore, the large item bank from which lecturers may choose for their formal unit evaluations has some problematic implications. Firstly, it means that it is impossible to get consistency or comparability between the various evaluations. Secondly, it means that each evaluation may cover both the unit and the teaching, making it difficult to address the source of any issues that may need to be addressed ... The Audit Panel supports the identified priority for improvement to expand the existing procedure for obtaining systematic student feedback on teaching and learning from individual lecturers.

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 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.

How the University has responded . . .

The University had previously reviewed and reconstituted the committee that has responsibility for the evaluation of teaching and learning. The resulting *Teaching and Learning Evaluation Committee*, which was established by Academic Board in 2002, initiated the development of new instruments and procedures to obtain student feedback on both course units and teaching. During 2004, the committee developed the *Policy on Evaluation of Teaching and Learning* (approved by Academic Board on 13 October 2004) and oversaw the review and amendment of the Unit Evaluation Item Bank. A Student Evaluation of Teaching instrument was developed and trialled during 2005 – 2006, for implementation from the beginning of 2007. The Teaching and Learning Evaluation Committee has also developed resources and workshops focusing on the preparation and use of teaching portfolios, incorporating a range of data sources relating to teaching quality and ongoing improvement.

Following the review of the Unit Evaluation Item Bank, a common core of unit evaluation items was adopted across the Faculties and has enabled aggregated data analysis and reporting at School, Faculty and University levels. *Aggregated data by discipline* have also been collated for publication on the University's website since December 2004.

The systematic use of both unit evaluation and CEQ data has been incorporated within the University's *Teaching and Learning Plan* to inform the regular review of courses and course units. A Course Completion Survey (CCS) instrument that provides supplementary student feedback has also been developed and is administered annually. This complements the new biennial Quality and Administrative Support Services (QASS) survey introduced in 2004, which seeks feedback on University services from returning students. The University has also established, in policy, the requirement for unit evaluation data to be used to inform judgements in respect of academic staff probation and promotion.

What has been the effect on outcomes . . .

Through the collaborative contributions of the Teaching and Learning Evaluation Committee and the Faculties, evaluation is now undertaken more extensively and systematically across the University. The generic instrument for course unit evaluation has been supplemented by one specifically for fieldwork units and another for student evaluation of teaching.

Importantly, analysis of 12 core evaluation items across most of the University's coursework programs allows School, Faculty and University-wide comparisons, including for incorporation into curriculum review. The comprehensive development of the University's evaluation program has been accompanied by significant growth in its usage by academic staff. These evaluation processes have also been complemented by the QASS survey of students' assessment of services and course completion surveys of graduating students.

11. DEVELOP A PLAN AND POLICIES FOR ON-LINE ACCESS TO UNDERGRADUATE LEARNING RESOURCES**What the AUQA audit report said . . .**

ACU provides a range of flexible modes including electronic delivery, weekend teaching and concentrated teaching blocks. Students appreciate these options and ACU's willingness to put in place special arrangements for individual students at times of personal hardship or difficulty ... ACU is about to introduce a learning shell for on-line use at the undergraduate level, drawing on its experience at the postgraduate level. However, the undergraduate programs will use the WebCT learning management system [which differs from the postgraduate system]. The Audit Panel enquired about the wisdom of using two platforms, and was told that faculties and schools can make their own choice.

... the Audit Panel suggests to ACU the use of a structured project management approach to the implementation of flexible learning at undergraduate level especially given the capacity of decisions made by individual campuses or faculties to create costs for the support divisions of the University, such as the need to support two on-line learning platforms if different parts of ACU are free to opt for different systems.

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.

How the University has responded . . .

The University has adopted a coordinated planning and policy framework in relation to online teaching and learning, encompassing both undergraduate and postgraduate programs. The framework is anchored in the University's *Revised Strategic Plan 1999 – 2008* which specifies a commitment to the development of flexible, multi-mode delivery and calls for the innovative use of learning technologies.

The strategic implementation of ICT within teaching and learning in undergraduate and postgraduate courses is underpinned by the University's *Policy on Quality Online Teaching and Learning* and the *Framework for Online Pedagogical Development: Principles and Guidelines*. This policy and related framework were introduced in 2006 to promote the use of ICT to enhance learning and teaching when it is both pedagogically and economically appropriate to do so.

Within this policy framework, the University's *Teaching and Learning Plan (2006–08)* has targeted strategies whereby the Faculties and relevant directorates will develop further the University's online teaching and learning resources and relevant staff expertise. The plan aims to increase the number of units with flexible and online components in order to respond to student needs and the realisation of graduate attributes. It also establishes broad objectives as a basis for derivative *Faculty Teaching and Learning Plans*.

Further, the University has recently developed a specific *Strategic Plan for Online Teaching and Learning 2007 – 2009*, which seeks to embed relevant policies and establishes a strategic context for new and existing initiatives. The objectives, strategies and projects for online teaching and learning set out in the Plan encompass undergraduate, postgraduate and research degrees.

In terms of implementation, the University established ACUonline in 2005 as a single supported platform (WebCT) for the delivery of fully online and web-enhanced undergraduate and postgraduate course units. Together with a dedicated helpdesk outsourced to a commercial provider (Net Spot), this development has allowed the streamlining of staffing and resources for online teaching and learning.

The *Online Teaching and Learning Committee*, with wide representation in its membership, has responsibility for developing policy directions for ACUonline and provides an effective link between ACUonline and its stakeholders. Workshops on the WebCT platform and online pedagogy are offered to staff each semester on all campuses with more than 400 staff having undertaken training since 2003. Ongoing support is provided to staff through the *Online Teaching and Learning Co-ordinator* within the *Institute for the Advancement of Teaching and Learning* while ACUonline Project Officers from across the campuses provide staff with technical support and one-to-one technical training.

A third component of support for the development of online learning resources has been the allocation of Teaching and Learning Performance Funding in 2006 – 2007 to enable the recruitment of a Director of Flexible Teaching and Learning and two Educational Designers. These latter positions provide additional design and pedagogical support for staff developing online learning resources.

At the same time a Carrick Institute-funded *Online Leadership Project* is developing organisational leadership capacity in relation to online teaching and learning. As part of the project, six half-time academic positions, *Online Advisers*, have been dedicated to the provision of leadership of and support for online learning resource development across the three Faculties and six campuses of the University. These positions initially extend over an 18 month period, which commenced in July 2006, following which the incumbents will assume ongoing roles in support of online education.

What has been the effect on outcomes . . .

The strategic framework instituted for online teaching and learning together with the infrastructure established to support its development, delivery and evaluation have led to a more systematic approach to staff development and training that encompasses technology, pedagogy and information literacy aspects.

The University has also realised significant growth in the number of web-enhanced units and users of web-based learning as well as enhanced cross-campus (and off-campus) delivery by means of fully online units and courses.

Greater utilisation of staff expertise nationally has also been observed and some resulting rationalisation of offerings achieved. More generally, the University has seen continuous improvement in the efficacy of fully online and web-enhanced teaching and learning and better support for, and communication with, off-campus students.

12. DEVELOP A COMPREHENSIVE APPROACH TO THE MANAGEMENT OF OFF-SHORE ACTIVITIES**What the AUQA audit report said . . .**

The Audit Panel inspected the documentation in relation to a BBus(Accounting) about to be introduced in collaboration with Caritas Francis Hsu College in Hong Kong. A surprising gap in the overall documentation of agreement was the omission of reference to assessment procedures. However, they are well-covered in the associated documentation, which must therefore form part of the contract ... Despite the adequacy of the proposed procedures for the BBus (Accounting) in Hong Kong, the Audit Panel believes that the current system leaves too much responsibility to individual schools and faculties, with no clear specification of ACU's expectations.

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.

How the University has responded . . .

The University's review of *International Education* led to the establishment of an *International Policy Committee*. This committee, chaired by the Pro-Vice-Chancellor (Research and International), holds responsibility for developing a comprehensive system to guide decision-making with respect to the University's involvement in offshore activities. The Committee is also responsible for planning and monitoring the implementation and control of offshore activities, including the incorporation of effective quality assurance systems.

The International Policy Committee meets biannually and is working through the development of policies and establishing priorities for International Education. This work will be expedited through the establishment of a sub-committee which can meet more frequently as needed.

A *Strategic Plan for Internationalisation 2008-2012* has been developed. This Plan specifically addresses the establishment of University-wide decision-making processes to determine which current and potential offshore activities should be continued and initiated, respectively. It also specifies the development of consistent quality assurance systems and the centralised review of offshore programs. To this end, the University has developed a *Policy on Transnational Education and Quality Assurance* and associated *Guidelines for the Establishment of Offshore Programs*.

The Faculties have been audited to provide baseline data on current offshore academic activities. A comprehensive manual has been developed by the Institute of Business and Informatics for the Bachelor of Business (Accounting) offered in Hong Kong. This manual has provided a template for the documentation, including quality assurance systems, for all Faculty offshore programs. In addition, an extensive annual survey instrument to gather comprehensive data on all facets of offshore programs has been developed and implemented with results to be reported to Academic Board in the first half of each year. The first reporting cycle is due on 28 February 2008.

What has been the effect on outcomes . . .

As a result of the above initiatives, the University now has in place a comprehensive system for deciding in which offshore activities to engage, for planning, implementing and controlling them, and for incorporating an effective quality assurance system. The University's expectations regarding the strategic directions for and quality assurance of transnational education are now clearly specified.

13. REVIEW ACUCOM REGULARLY**What the AUQA audit report said . . .**

ACUcom is the commercial arm of ACU's educational activity and provides ELICOS and other non-award courses, including a large number of English language courses, principally for Japanese and Korean students ... Quality considerations relate more to the markets served than to the ACU Mission and, without a very strong input from staff who have responsibility for inculcating the Mission, it is not clear how ACUcom relates to or achieves the values embedded in ACU's Mission ... While there is a strong quality control exercised by market forces, and its ISO quality system, on the activities of ACUcom, which are all in the commercial sphere, that is not an adequate insurance against the potential risk to the reputation of ACU from the activities of ACUcom operating outside ACU's system for quality assurance.

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.

How the University has responded . . .

The University's review of *International Education* included a review of ACUcom's international activities. In particular, there was a focus on the relationship between Diploma programs and related Degree programs - their content, staffing, student recruitment, application processing, course administration and monitoring progression. ACUcom Diplomas were also reviewed to ensure that they contain at least one 'Mission-focussed' unit which is consistent with the requirement for University award courses.

A *Non-Award Courses Committee* has been established as a standing committee of Academic Board and the *Policy on Course Approval, Amendment and Review - Non-Award Courses* has been developed. As a result, procedures for the approval of ACUcom courses have been strengthened such that Diploma programs are now monitored through Academic Board and Certificate courses through the relevant State based Training Authority.

The criteria for eligibility for credit or articulation of ACUcom Diploma programs with University award courses is in the process of review, in relation to courses offered by the Institute of Business and Informatics.

Research evaluating the academic outcomes of Diploma/other pathway programs and subsequent student entry and progression in Degree programs has been conducted in 2007. The results of this research will inform future Diploma course development, in particular the Diploma of Exercise Science, which is to be introduced in 2008.

As part of a long-term strategy towards consistency with the University's Mission and academic standards, a regular annual review of ACUcom has been specified in the University's *Strategic Plan for Internationalisation 2008-2012*. A full external review of ACUcom, including its domestic operations, is scheduled for April 2008.

What has been the effect on outcomes . . .

The recruitment, selection and induction processes for ACUcom staff now ensures that appointees understand and are committed to the University's Mission. In addition, Mission Induction staff development is now required for ACUcom staff, as it is for all University staff. Course approval procedures also ensure that ACUcom courses are of an appropriate academic standard.

14. REVIEW RESEARCH STRUCTURES AND THEIR RELATIONSHIPS**What the AUQA audit report said . . .**

There is a lack of clarity in the distinction between the different kinds of research centres and the flagship concept. ACU Guidelines refer to three levels of research centre (Faculty, University, and Senate) as well as flagships ... However, there is considerable overlap in the criteria defining research centres and flagships and no clear mechanism for the recognition of one kind of research centre rather than another. Although it is suggested that a centre may move up this 'hierarchy' there are no criteria for the progression, nor stated consequences in terms of status or resourcing. Directors of Research Centres and Flagships interviewed by the Audit Panel were also unable to describe the significance of these differences.

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.

How the University has responded . . .

At the time of the last quality review, the Flagships were a relatively new feature of the University's research structural arrangements. A *Review of Research* was undertaken in 2004 and recommendations considered by the *University Research and Research Training Management Committee* and Core Planning Group. Reviews of individual Flagships and Research Centres have been completed and clearer differentiation between Flagships, Senate Research Centres and Faculty Centres has been established.

Applications were invited for Flagship designation (including the then existing Flagships) and, as a result, only three areas received Flagship designation. Criteria for designation were established in this selection process. Each Flagship area has been granted funding from the Vice-Chancellor to support infrastructure and staffing needs on an annual basis for three years, and a full-time Director has been appointed for each one, increasing the operational distinction between Flagships and other entities. Flagships are scheduled for review in 2008.

New *Principles Governing the Relationship between Faculties/Schools and University Senate Centres/Flagships* have been promulgated. The University is now considering how the proposed RQF, if implemented, may impact on its decisions about research priorities, structures and funding arrangements. A new *Research Strategic Plan* has been developed and is expected to be endorsed within the next few months.

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. Flagship Directors are full-time appointments.

What has been the effect on outcomes . . .

There is now a greater degree of clarity of the differences between Flagships and other research entities. The University is focused on ensuring that its research structures reflect strategic priorities and its context in the educational system, taking account of changes in the external funding environment.

15. ADDRESS THE TEACHING / RESEARCH NEXUS

What the AUQA audit report said . . .

The Audit Panel discussed the teaching / research nexus with a range of staff. Quite a number of staff appeared to have little understanding of its significance or meaning beyond the usual interpretation of 'active researchers teaching in their area'. Other staff, however, were able to provide evidence of a range of ways in which the connection can fruitfully be made ... The Audit Panel formed the view that the implementation of the teaching / research nexus is relying on individuals and that it is not being rolled out in a systematic manner. Although the concept of the teaching / research nexus is being effectively addressed at ACU, it appears to depend heavily on the professional knowledge of staff, rather than being made explicit through specific ACU definitions and examples.

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.

How the University has responded . . .

The University has updated its policies and procedures related to the recruitment, appointment, probation and promotion of academic staff to include a specific requirement for applicants to address and respond effectively to the teaching / research nexus. An *online induction module* on Teaching and Learning at Australian Catholic University, which includes an introduction for new staff to the nexus between teaching and learning and research and scholarship, has been developed and is used as part of the formal induction process. This module has also been incorporated into the first unit within the University's *Graduate Certificate in Higher Education*, which has been available for academic staff since 2006. Importantly, the fourth unit of the Graduate Certificate, *Research-based Teaching and Learning*, provides staff with the opportunity to explore means of integrating their teaching and research to the benefit of themselves and their students.

The University's *Teaching and Learning Plan (2006-08)* includes a specific objective to "develop the teaching and learning and research nexus" and annual *Faculty Teaching and Learning Plans* are formulated with reference to this objective and its underlying strategies.

The University has adopted a strategic approach to identifying potential staff and staff teams for the various Carrick Institute projects, fellowships and awards, in order to foster research and scholarship related to teaching and learning. Further, academic staff who have effectively demonstrated the nexus between teaching and learning and their research and scholarship are showcased in an online publication (*Illustrative Approaches to the Teaching and Research Nexus*) and used as exemplars to inspire other academic staff in relation to enhancing the teaching / research nexus.

What has been the effect on outcomes . . .

The University's focus on the teaching / research nexus is now explicit. It is a specific objective of the University's Teaching and Learning Plan (2006-08), a focus of University publications and communication (e.g. *acunique*, the University intranet) and a key criterion for the employment, probation and promotion of academic staff.

Such initiatives have led to a growing understanding among academic staff of the mutuality of teaching and research so that staff are increasingly seen to be fostering the nexus in various ways, including through:

- ❖ demonstrating an enthusiasm for, and integrating research into their teaching;
- ❖ introducing students to their research interests;
- ❖ using staff publications in teaching;
- ❖ updating curriculum in line with research trends; and
- ❖ including items of assessment with a research component/activity.

16. REVIEW RESEARCH STUDENT TRAINING ARRANGEMENTS**What the AUQA audit report said . . .**

The University Research and Research Training Management Committee has started to develop systematically the research training offered and to draw up a map. However, when asked about this, the directors of research centres appeared to be unaware of it. One gap is that research centres have been given a special role for the development of research cultures, including that for research students, yet the formal management of postgraduates is outside research centres (through heads of school, for example) and there seems to be rather poor communication between the relevant committee charged with oversight of research training and the directors of research centres who should be instrumental in delivering it.

Recommendation 16: That ACU consider the role of research centres and flagships in research student training and, in particular, in the provision of resources to support research education.

How the University has responded . . .

Following a *Review of Research* in 2004 and the designation of three Flagships in 2005, the University's research environment has changed considerably. All research higher degree students are located in Schools within Faculties in order that there can be appropriate oversight of admissions, candidature progression, supervision arrangements and overall quality management.

In consultation with the Deans and the Pro-Vice-Chancellor (Academic Affairs) an agreed protocol entitled *Principles Governing the Relationship between Faculties/Schools and University and Senate Centres/Flagships* 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.

Almost all the processes and procedures related to higher degree candidature, supervision and examination have been completed within the past 18 months. An Associate Dean (Research and Research Training) has been appointed in each of the Faculties and this group, together with the Manager of Research Services, meets as the *University Research and Research Training Management Committee* under the chair of the Pro-Vice-Chancellor (Research and International). One of the matters on which considerable progress has been made is the provision of services and support to research higher degree students.

What has been the effect on outcomes . . .

The role of Flagships and other research entities in research student training has been considered, but the University has chosen to place its support for research training firmly within Faculties and Schools in the belief that this arrangement will promote the highest quality outcomes. The University continues to monitor quality through a review process, and, following completion of a number of changes to candidature processes, the PhD degree will be reviewed in 2008 to examine outcomes on key indicators.

17. ADOPT A STRATEGIC APPROACH TO WORKFORCE PLANNING

What the AUQA audit report said . . .

The changing nature of the workforce means that some strategic workforce planning is necessary and potential problems need to be recognised in the risk management practices. Matters requiring attention are not only the planning of the right permanent / casual mix, but also addressing the ageing workforce and adopting appropriate succession planning. The right type and balance of professional development should also be included in such planning. It was not apparent where the responsibility for such workforce planning lies within the organisational structure.

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.

How the University has responded . . .

The University is progressively developing and implementing a workforce planning framework that is in harmony with its Mission and in line with the University's identified strategic initiatives and priorities. The University is also developing a *People and Culture Plan* that will articulate the University's goals and strategies with respect to staffing matters and include strategic workforce planning as one of its key strategies.

In constructing the workforce planning framework, the University has implemented a new Human Resources Management Information system (HRMIS) that enables the effective collection and management of workforce data. Processes that facilitate the extraction of workforce data for analysis in other systems have also been developed which has enhanced the University's capacity for workforce projection modelling and reporting, and for the monitoring of workforce-related performance measures. A new position of Workforce Planning Co-ordinator has also been established to assist with the implementation of the workforce planning framework.

The University now participates in two benchmarking programs, a national higher education HR benchmarking program and an international benchmarking program. These initiatives enable the University to monitor and report on comparative benchmark measures.

At the Scenario Planning Workshop in February 2007, it was noted that the current age profile of staff in the University provides a number of key challenges, including the need for succession planning and the retention of corporate memory. These challenges are exacerbated by the highly competitive market for academic staff across all universities and the small pool of current younger staff within the University who are able to mature into leadership roles.

Despite this, the ageing workforce provides significant opportunities for renewal, for realignment of staff capabilities with future requirements, and for re-energising of the organisation. The University will focus on its workforce planning processes to address these issues in key areas including:

- retention - by exercising focussed performance management with associated rewards and recognition, by providing effective support and development for existing staff (particularly Heads of School and other Managers), by identifying and actively supporting talent;
- retraining / development of staff for leadership roles;
- attraction of new staff – by targeting recruitment to early career academics and/or by invitation, and, flexibility in employment and employment paths; and
- enhancing research and scholarly activity by existing academic staff.

Attraction and retention strategies need to target staff who can add value to the University, and to do so the University has put in place a broad array of flexible employment arrangements which have been widely recognised across the industry in Australia. It was agreed that there is a need also to manage the perception inside and outside the University that the age and life stage of staff could impact on course quality and University reputation. The University's *Pathways to Retirement Program*, which provides academic staff with a phased approach into retirement, has twice been a finalist during 2007 in national awards. Equally challenging will be the utilisation of change management for aligning emerging staffing capabilities with current staffing capabilities, particularly in relation to long tenured staff.

In February 2007, the University considered an initial report (*Workforce Profile 2006*) that analysed statistical data relevant for workforce planning and resolved that strategic workforce management was to be given a high priority at ACU National. The University subsequently endorsed a *Workforce Planning Policy* statement that provides a broad context within which a range of future workforce management strategies and planning processes will be able to emerge. More recently, a discussion paper which proposes arrangements for the introduction of workforce planning has been developed and is being considered for pilot implementation in 2008.

What has been the effect on outcomes . . .

Workforce planning, which has been in the forefront of strategic University issues for some time, is now supported by comprehensive data collection and a formal policy statement. Work to further develop the University's approach to workforce planning is progressing.

18. DEVELOP A STRONG AND EFFECTIVE ROLE FOR THE STUDENT BODY

What the AUQA audit report said . . .

It is evident that students have a high regard for the communication with, support from, and interaction with individual staff members ... however, formal communication channels are in need of strengthening as the students' perception is that they do not have an effective voice. There appears not to be a common understanding between ACU and the students of the role and place of the Student Representative Council (SRC). Just as with ACU itself, this is complicated by the dispersed structure. The student view is more attuned to their local SRC branch and they do not consider issues from a 'SRC National' perspective. Thus it is not clear whether the ACU National Students Association (ACUNSA) is in fact 'the University students association' or 'a federation of student associations'. ACU is aware of and is working towards addressing the issue, with a specific project on this proposed for 2003.

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.

How the University has responded . . .

The University held discussions with each campus Student Association, the ACU National Student Association (ACUNSA), and the elected student Senate member to develop proposals for revising the structural and procedural arrangements for student representation and involvement in University life.

Consequently, a common Student Association *constitution* was developed and implemented on each of the University's campuses. The new constitution clarifies student representation at the campus level, and nationally, and has been endorsed by the University Senate. The University Statutes (Statute 9) empowers the Student Association to nominate the student member of the University Senate. Any student who is interested in becoming the student member of Senate must firstly be selected by their local student association as the nomination from that campus. The Student Senator is subsequently selected by ACUNSA following an interview process.

The Dean of Students attends regular meetings of the reconstituted ACU National Student Association (ACUNSA) Executive and uses this forum as a formal mechanism for consultation and communication between the University and the national student body.

What has been the effect on outcomes . . .

The national student association (ACUNSA) has a central role in selecting the student who sits on the University Senate and Academic Board, which are the two key decision-making bodies within the University. ACUNSA Executive members are also able to influence University decision-making through the regular meetings with the Dean of Students.

19. ASSESS THE ADEQUACY OF LIBRARY FUNDING

What the AUQA audit report said . . .

The creation of ACU as a single institution and the expansion of the research area has provided a challenge for the library. There is continuing pressure to provide increased financial resources to enhance the Library service ... It is relevant that national comparative surveys show that while the Library's service level is good (in the top quartile) its resources and facilities are below average ... Several initiatives have been implemented to address the resource issue. These include a shift to electronic resources offered online, inter-campus loans and subsidising students to purchase a reciprocal borrower's card for use at other libraries.

Recommendation 19: That ACU ensure that library funding is appropriate 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.

How the University has responded . . .

The University has reviewed the allocation and distribution of library funds with regard to the adequacy of both campus-based and e-learning resources. As a result, *funding* for Library acquisitions has increased significantly, from \$1.4m in 2004 to more than \$2.0m in 2007.

A range of other strategies and initiatives have also advanced this recommendation:

- ❖ The *review* of the Library in 2003 addressed library funding and support for developing the e-learning strategy through its terms of reference.
- ❖ All serials, both print and electronic, are now funded centrally by the Library to provide better overall co-ordination of the serials budget and the broader acquisitions model will be assessed by the Library Committee to ensure its effectiveness. Bibliographies in unit outlines are regularly checked to ensure the ready availability of key texts.
- ❖ The digital library now allows access 24x7 to library resources from any location, e.g. office or home, through the internet browser. In addition, new software (Ezproxy) that provides improved access to the digital library has been made available to students and staff.
- ❖ The functionality of Library IT infrastructure has been optimised through an increase in the number of student use computers; the establishment of a service level agreement with Information Technology and Communication Services (ITCS); the rostering of ITCS staff in the library to assist students; and a move to simpler wireless access for students that will also support Windows Vista by December 2007.
- ❖ The Library offers Information Literacy programs to students (including postgraduates) and staff to assist users to make optimal use of library resources. From 2007, the Library has also been involved in the First Year Experience program each semester.

A range of special projects, which are of benefit to both the University and wider community (e.g. the cataloguing of the Nolan Collection of Early Childhood Literature and the Stanis McGuire Art Collection, the purchase of microfiche of Wallace Stevens' works of poetry), has been undertaken. The Library has also joined the Australian Digital Theses Project and, as a consequence, all Australian Catholic University's theses from 2000 are now available online with the remaining print theses to be digitised as part of an ongoing project.

In order to ascertain the effectiveness of such strategies, the Library continues to seek ongoing feedback from students and staff through the *Rodski survey* of client attitudes. The latest data (2006) showed many positive changes in client attitudes towards the collections, services and facilities when compared to earlier surveys (2002, 2004) and a significantly improved ranking when benchmarked against other Australian and New Zealand university libraries.

What has been the effect on outcomes . . .

Under the new budget model (see Recommendation 4), the budget for the Library is now linked to expansion of the University's activities and related income growth. Since 2002, under a substantially increased budget, Library collections have significantly strengthened and usage across a wide range of categories has demonstrably increased.

Over the same period, strategic investment in electronic resources (journals, databases and books) has greatly enhanced access to the improved collections available University-wide and off-campus.