AUQA audit follow-up
The Australian Universities Quality Agency (AUQA) reviewed the University in 2008, and its suggestions were considered in the formation of the Transitional Plan 2009–2010 and Strategic Plan 2009–2011.

The Vice-Chancellor reported that the review had given:
- eight commendations (areas where we are doing well)
- nine affirmations (areas that need improvement, but which we are already working on)
- seven recommendations (areas in which we need to make improvements).

Suggestions for improvement
The AUQA review made suggestions for improvement that included the following:
- give urgent attention to the “appropriate balance between permanent and sessional staff, replacing ageing staff and succession planning”
- implement regular staff satisfaction surveys
- consider the issue of risk management when establishing community engagement partnerships.

Actions taken
- Workforce profile
  AUQA identified ACU’s workforce profile as an impediment to long-term sustainability, with a significant proportion of academic staff particularly in the Faculty of Education eligible for retirement in the near future. During 2009 a renewal strategy was put in place. Expressions of interest for voluntary early retirement were invited from staff, and a campaign begun with the SladeGroup to recruit a combination of early-career and mid-career academics, with focuses on both research and teaching.
- Staff survey
  As outlined on page 7, the initial myVoice staff survey was successful, providing Human Resources with data for potential action in areas needing development.
- Risk management
  The University in 2009 confirmed it had put in place risk management processes consistent with the Australian/New Zealand Risk Management Standard.

During 2009 a renewal strategy was put in place … to recruit a combination of early-career and mid-career academics, with focuses on both research and teaching.
Government review visits

During the year the University had a visit from both the Department of Education, Employment and Workplace Relations (DEEWR) and the Department of Innovation, Industry, Science and Research (DIISR) to discuss major areas of strategic direction.

As noted on page 9, the first draft compact with the Commonwealth Government was lodged with DEEWR by the end of the year.

Government waiver for gender equity

During the year the Equal Opportunity for Women in the Workplace Agency (EOWA) granted the University a waiver from reporting to the agency for three years, on the grounds that it has “done everything that is reasonably practicable to advance women and remove barriers for advancement”.

The ACU workforce consists of 67 per cent women, with this high proportion also reflected in the senior levels of the University.

Alternative entry programs

The University has developed flexible entry programs to offer the benefits of tertiary education more widely.

The objectives of the Bradley Review underpin our enrolment aims, seen in our draft Pathways Strategy 2009–2012. This is more fully discussed on pages 8 and 9.

ACU pathways

- The Early Achievers’ Program is a scheme for both recent school leavers and non-recent school leavers, which recognises wider achievements, including community involvement and, for non-recent school leavers, employment experience. Successful applicants receive an early provisional offer of a place. In 2009, the program’s second year, 647 offers were made from 993 applicants.

- Another important program is accessACU which grants bonus points on consideration of a number of factors, including:
  - subjects relevant to the course to be studied
  - geographical proximity to one of our campuses
  - educational, socioeconomic or rural disadvantage experienced in Year 11 or 12.

- The Elite Athletes Program gives consideration to applicants whose high-level competition in sport has had an impact on their academic results, but who are regarded as having the ability to combine their sporting ambitions with successful academic study.

- Mid-year entry is a popular option for undergraduate and postgraduate students, both local and international, and is being made available in an increasing number of courses.

- Relationships with the VET sector and TAFE is an area in which the University is investing in mutually beneficial pathway partnerships. It is also working to strengthen its relationships with schools and workforce groups.
new courses

A male student at the new Media lab, part of new courses approved in 2009.
New Memoranda of Understanding and partnerships

- New Memoranda of Understanding (MOUs) were established with TAFE NSW (Northern Sydney Institute), Metropolitan South Institute of TAFE (in Brisbane) and Box Hill Institute of TAFE (in Melbourne) to establish academic links including the development of mutually agreed pathways between academic programs, collaborative curriculum development and admissions processes for international students.
- An MOU was developed with the Catholic University of America (CUA) for undergraduate and postgraduate student exchanges.
- ACU signed MOUs with Caritas Francis Hsu College in Hong Kong to develop a degree conversion program leading to an ACU Bachelor of Nursing degree, and to offer the Bachelor of Business (Accounting) degree conversion program in Hong Kong.
- An agreement was signed with Hong Kong Universal Education (HKUE) to offer the ACU Bachelor of Commerce in Hong Kong.
- Mercy Foundation and legal firm Carroll O’Dea signed an MOU to support the Clemente Australia program (see pages 17 and 33).
- ACU and the Uniting Church’s Trinity Theological College signed an ecumenical agreement to share teaching, resources and research.
- A new agreement with Capital Medical University (CMU) Beijing will foster joint research, develop students’ knowledge of traditional Chinese medicine and establish a collaborative Master of Rehabilitation program.
- Melbourne Health and ACU signed a Deed of Affiliation agreement.
- Mater Misericordiae Health Services Brisbane signed new MOUs with the University to support the Chair of Midwifery and a physiotherapist.
- Southern Health Victoria signed a new MOU to support an ACU Professor of Nursing.
- Healthcare Australia NSW pledged support for national nursing scholarships at ACU.
- A new cardiovascular research centre in Melbourne was established through a partnership between ACU, the University of Melbourne and St Vincent’s Hospital.

New courses

During the year, the following courses were approved by Senate and their curriculum plans by Academic Board:
- Bachelor of Midwifery (Honours)
- Master of Social Work
- Bachelor of Media Communication
- Graduate Certificates in Logistics Management, Not-for-Profit Organisations and Financial Counselling
- Postgraduate Diploma in Counselling
- Fee-paying Graduate Diploma in Ministry
- Diploma in Youth Ministry
- Graduate Certificate in Teaching English as a Second Language (TESOL)
- Master of Educational System Leadership and Postgraduate Certificate in Educational System Leadership
- Bachelor of Physiotherapy
- Bachelor of High Performance (Sport and Business)
- Graduate Certificate in Health Science (Rehabilitation) and Master of Health Science (Rehabilitation)
- Bachelor of Arts major sequence in East Timor Language and Cultural Studies for inclusion in the Diploma of Liberal Studies (offered in East Timor only).

The non-award Certificate in Educational Studies was approved by Academic Board.

Course reviews

Reviews of courses and curriculum plans were conducted in 2009 for:
- Bachelor of Exercise Science (Honours)
- Bachelor of Nursing (Honours)
- postgraduate courses in Business and Information Systems
- Bachelor of Music
- Postgraduate Diploma in Information Systems
- Certificate/Diploma in Teaching and Learning (South Africa)
- Graduate Certificate and Graduate Diploma in Orff Music Education
- Associate Degree in Social Science (Disability Care).

New faculty

With the establishment of the new Faculty of Theology and Philosophy in 2009, the national School of Theology and the national School of Philosophy moved from the Faculty of Arts and Sciences to the new faculty; and the separate Institute of Theology, Philosophy and Religious Education was discontinued.

The administration of all relevant courses was also transferred to the new faculty, including those in applied ethics, Catholic identity and leadership, inter-faith relationships, liturgy, practical ministry and theology.