

Academic Audit Background

Academic audits are conducted by the [Academic Quality Agency \(AQA\) for New Zealand Universities](#).

Theme for Cycle 6

Each audit cycle includes an 'enhancement theme' in which all universities address an issue of national significance.

For Cycle 6, from September 2017 to March 2020 universities engaged in the theme "Access, outcomes and opportunities for Māori students and for Pasifika students".

Each university developed its own objectives and plan at the start of 2018 and then reported on both progress and challenges. Further progress on the theme will be included in the University's academic audit self-review.

You can find more information about enhancement themes on [Universities New Zealand's theme website](#) and can read about the [final reports of the Cycle 6 theme](#).

Cycle 6 audit process

The audit process involved two broad stages, with the first stage focused on a university-wide self-review. The second stage involved an audit panel visit to the university which was guided by evidence in the self-review report and information gathered from interviews. During the site visit the Panel talked to 78 members of staff and 35 students. Most interviewees were able to attend face-to-face meetings with a very small number attending via Zoom. All interviewees engaged constructively and candidly with the Panel and provided helpful insights into the audit areas.

Scope of work

The Cycle 6 Academic Audit focused on teaching, learning, support, and outcomes for students. The audit phase of Cycle 6 utilised a framework of 30 guideline statements setting out expectations of outcomes and standards a university of good international standing would be expected to demonstrate. In assessing University responses to the guideline statements, the Panel considered all students, all delivery and all staff who teach or supervise or support teaching or supervision.

The Cycle 6 Academic Audit Framework was underpinned by relevant Aotearoa New Zealand legislation and the constitutional framework. In addressing the Cycle 6 guideline statements, universities and audit panels were expected to reflect university obligations or responsiveness with respect to Te Tiriti o Waitangi, the close interdependence of university research and teaching and the role universities play as critic and conscience of society.

Self-review report

The drafting of the self-review report was undertaken by a Working Group at the University, with oversight from a Steering Group.

The Working Group engaged with a diverse range of stakeholders, including student groups, faculties, schools, and central service units to gather responses and evidence for the development of the self-review report. Evidence was gathered and synthesized to address 30 various guideline statements. The Academic Office provided administrative support to the working group circulating sections to various university committees to ensure validity and editing and crafting the final self-review report.

The Steering Group for the audit, chaired by Vice-Provost (Academic) Professor Stuart Brock, provided advice to the Working Group and ensured that the information was robust and institutionally embedded.

Outcome

The self-review process is a time for the University to reflect on its work in the spheres of leadership and management of learning, teaching and academic quality; student support and wellbeing; curriculum, assessment and delivery; teaching quality; and postgraduate supervision. Through honest self-assessment the University has developed a list of ten enhancements designed to make meaningful improvements in these areas.

Through their review of the University the Audit Panel have affirmed our enhancements, and in some cases, expanded on them. They have also made recommendations for further work. The University has also been commended in various areas for good practice. AQA will publish a full list of affirmations, recommendations, and commendations on their website along with a full copy of their 2022 Cycle 6 audit report of Te Herenga Waka – Victoria University of Wellington.