

THE UNIVERSITY OF MELBOURNE
PLANNING & BUDGET COMMITTEE

11 October 2006

University Response to AUQA Audit – Progress Report

BACKGROUND

During 2005 the Australian Universities Quality Agency (AUQA) conducted an audit of the University of Melbourne as a self-accrediting institution. In January 2006, AUQA released its Audit Report. The report included 21 commendations, 7 affirmations and 15 recommendations.

The University of Melbourne will be asked some time next year to report to AUQA on progress taken. This report is to be published on our own website, with links from the AUQA website.

Accordingly, in April 2006 the University prepared a Response Plan to the Audit Report, setting out a response and, where appropriate, follow-up actions in respect of each affirmation and recommendation. This Response Plan was reported to Planning & Budget Committee and Academic Board in April and Council in May earlier this year.

An internal progress report is now due and is set out at **Attachment 1**. The report has been compiled by the University Planning Office after receiving input from responsible officers.

PROGRESS SUMMARY

A significant amount of progress has been made in response to AUQA's affirmations and recommendations. These range across internal reviews, policy development, recruitment of expertise, systems development and infrastructure planning. Almost all action plans identified earlier this year have been well progressed and have either been completed, or are on track for completion or embedding within ongoing processes. A number of actions, including review of the Accountability Structure, have been slightly delayed but are on track for completion this year. A number of actions are scheduled for 2007. No major issues have been identified that would significantly limit the University's response to the AUQA report.

RECOMMENDATION

For noting.

Michael Beaton-Wells
Director, University Planning

AUQA Audit 2005:

University Response
October 2006

AFFIRMATION 1:

AUQA affirms UoM's recognition of the need to invest more effort and resources to support the commercialisation of its intellectual property through the revision of its Intellectual Property policy, an expanded role for Melbourne Ventures, and the increased availability of seed-funding for early stage technologies.

University Response:

The University has invested increased resources to support its commercialisation activities through the creation of the Innovation and Development (I & D) portfolio, which includes commercialisation as a specific area of responsibility, and the positions of Deputy Vice Chancellor (Innovation and Development) and Vice Principal, Commercialisation. Specifically:

- A new Intellectual Property Statute has been drafted and will be implemented during 2006;
- Melbourne Ventures' role has expanded with the addition of responsibility for IP protection and management (through patent administration), and will expand further as it is core to the commercialisation activities in the I & D portfolio. In addition, its funding was significantly increased in 2006; and
- The University has committed a further \$8m to the pre-seed venture fund, Uniseed (a joint venture with the Universities of Queensland and New South Wales, and Westscheme, Western Australia's largest private sector superannuation fund).

Responsible Officer	Action	Timeline
Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Innovation and Development)	Implement new IP Statute.	Dec-06
Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Innovation and Development)	Monitor outcomes of increased portfolio funding.	Apr-07

Progress to date:

- Vice Principal (Commercialisation) formally appointed 1 March 2006
- Commercialisation strategy discussion paper draft completed
- Local and international benchmarking of commercialisation models and performance completed
- Review of overarching commercialisation management, reporting and governance structures completed
- Coherent process for responsibility for sign off on commercialisation transactions implemented
- Increased involvement of Melbourne Ventures in license agreement negotiations
- Responsibility for Multimedia Licensing & Technology Contracts Unit transferred to VP (Commercialisation) and review of value proposition completed
- Review of Melbourne Ventures model completed and Board issues resolved
- Review of business model for School of Enterprise completed, and policy and process integration of the school into the University predominantly completed
- Areas of improvement in “internal” policies & procedures identified and resolution process commenced

Planned Activity:

Complete external and internal consultation on commercialisation strategy discussion paper – October 06

- Approval of commercialisation strategy – PBC December 06
- Establish Commercialisation Advisory Group – November 06
- Implement recommendations of commercialisation strategy – 2007

Issues Arising:

There are no issues arising.

AFFIRMATION 2:

AUQA affirms UoM's recognition of the need to consistently provide adequate resources and support for postgraduate research students across all discipline areas, and in line with the University's Support Guidelines for Postgraduate Students.

University Response:

- A proposal is being developed by the Property and Buildings Division, with the support of the School of Graduate Studies, for the provision of additional dedicated postgraduate research student accommodation on the Parkville campus. This will be considered as part of the 2007-09 Capital Plan.
- The School of Graduate Studies is also liaising with the Vice Principal (Property and Buildings) to assure that research student accommodation is considered during any faculty development or redevelopment projects.

Responsible Officer	Action	Timeline
Pro Vice-Chancellor (Graduate Studies)	Gain approval of plan for provision of additional dedicated postgraduate research student accommodation on the Parkville campus	Dec-06
Pro Vice-Chancellor (Graduate Studies)	Report on steps taken to ensure research student accommodation is considered during any faculty development or redevelopment projects.	Dec-06

Progress to date:

- Approval has been gained by Property and Campus Services to refurbish the Walter Boas Building as a postgraduate research study facility. In consultation with SGS, concept plans have been developed, some funding approved and costings are now being sought.
- Discussions with the Vice Principal Property and Buildings and key personnel in Planning and Infrastructure.

Planned Activity:

- Expected completion date is 2007. SGS is developing a management plan which will involve allocation of space and management responsibilities to faculties according to demonstrated need for fixed periods. SGS will monitor faculty usage and need and review allocations regularly.

Issues Arising:

- Additional funds may be needed to complete the project in 2008.

AFFIRMATION 3:

AUQA affirms UoM's recognition of the need to develop a coordinated approach to its international positioning through the development of an Internationalisation Plan.

University Response:

- The formulation of an Internationalisation Plan is in progress. The Shared Services Review recommendations, the International Committee members' expertise and the consultations being held by the Deputy Vice Chancellor (International) and the Vice Principal (International Development) are informing the process.

Responsible Officer	Action	Timeline
Deputy Vice-Chancellor (International)	Finalise Internationalisation Plan	Dec-06
Vice-Principal (International Development)	Implement Shared Services Recommendations	Dec-06

Progress to date:

- A draft International Plan has been prepared in consultation with key university stakeholders, including the International Committee and Associate Deans International. The Plan has also been informed by workshops held with relevant faculty and administrative staff.
- Majority of shared service recommendations have been implemented. Several workshops have been conducted with faculty staff and draft partnership agreements developed.

Planned Activity:

- The International Plan will be submitted to the University's approval process following adoption of the University's Strategic Plan for 2007.
- Partnership agreements will be finalised in current areas and additional partnership agreements are being developed for the management of offshore offices.

Issues Arising:

There are no issues arising.

AFFIRMATION 4:

AUQA affirms UoM's recognition of the need to increase access to library and learning resources, and it is currently being addressed through the Melbourne University Libraries: 10 Year Strategic Plan.

University Response:

- In responding to the increasing requirements by students and academics (both teaching and research) for real-time access to library and learning resources, Information Services is putting in place a number of strategic initiatives including: the creation of a Common User Interface to improve access to e-resources both on and off-campus, electronic readings and course-packs available through the Learning Management System and access to e-resources through the Student Portal. A number of e-research initiatives and digital repositories will enhance research based access. A Learning Hub Steering Committee and Working Group has been formed to drive the creation of Learning Hubs to the next stage of development. Substantial progress will be made towards the first Learning/Library Hub by the end of 2006.

Responsible Officer	Action	Timeline
Vice-Principal (Information)	Report on progress of identified actions	Dec-06

Progress to date:

- Readings on-line project currently being conducted to ensure copyright compliant electronic readings and coursepacks. The Common User Interface Project will greatly improve access to electronic resources and is currently in test mode for staff and students. Submissions to the the University of Melbourne Prints Open Access digital repository are providing greater access for staff and students to university publications. The Student Portal project is nearing completion. A Learning Hubs Steering Committee and a number of working groups have been formed to support the development of the first Eastern Learning Hub. The Hub project brief has been completed and an architect is currently being selected.

Planned Activity:

- The Readings on-line service will be operationalised incrementally. The Common User Interface Project will become an operational service providing online access to all electronic resources by January 2007. The Student Portal will be complete by the end of December providing a "one-stop shop" for students to access on-line resources, the learning management system, and the library catalogue. The design and development of the Eastern Learning Hub will proceed over the coming months.

Issues Arising:

- Readings on-line cannot be fully integrated into the curriculum until the full implementation of the Learning Management System, planned for mid 2007. Space required for Learning Hubs will necessitate the removal of low-use library material to remote storage, accessible upon request.

AFFIRMATION 5:

AUQA affirms UoM's decision to strengthen its risk management strategy through the development of a Strategic Risk Assessment and Management Action Plan and an integrated Risk Management Framework, which covers strategic risks in relation to main function areas.

University Response:

- AUQA's affirmation reflects the position within the University when our audit portfolio was submitted (April 2005). Since then the University's Strategic Risk Assessment reporting has been better defined and is being regularly reported to Audit and Risk Committee. The reconstituted Risk Management Committee has a specific term of reference requiring it to monitor the development and maintenance of the Strategic Risk Assessment Framework. Further work needs to be done in aligning the strategic risk assessments at the University and faculty/budget division levels.

Responsible Officer	Action	Timeline
Vice-Principal and Chief Financial Officer	Report on alignment of University and faculty/budget division levels	Oct-06

Progress to date:

- The strengthening of the strategic risk management structure received a set back with the resignation of the key staff member and the University's inability to recruit a replacement within the available salary range. The Strategic Risk Assessment function has been transferred to University Planning Office, where it will be embedded within a broader program of institutional assessment and divisional business planning.

Planned Activity:

Quarterly reporting to Risk Management Committee and Audit and Risk Committee.

Issues Arising:

AFFIRMATION 6:

AUQA affirms UoM's recognition of the need to improve access for students from groups other than school-leavers, such as through articulation arrangements with TAFE.

University Response:

- The Vice-Principal and Academic Registrar has reviewed existing articulation arrangements in the Faculties, particularly following the changes in the LFR and TAFE programs, and will meet with the General Managers to further explore the opportunities for articulation with TAFE providers by Faculties. Other opportunities for access for students from other groups are also being explored such as a mature entry scheme and entry for students with disadvantage, through *Access Melbourne*. A plan to achieve significant increases in articulation and access for non-school leavers will be developed.

Responsible Officer	Action	Timeline
Vice-Principal and Academic Registrar	Plan approved for 2008 implementation	Dec-06

Progress to date:

Planned Activity:

Issues Arising:

AFFIRMATION 7:

AUQA affirms UoM's recognition of the need to increase the awareness of the Indigenous Employment Strategy among faculties and departments, and to actively support and promote the recruitment and retention of Indigenous employees.

University Response:

- The number of Indigenous employees increased from 21 in 2004 to 28 in 2005. The University will continue its indigenous employment strategy by:
 - a) creating an environment where indigenous issues are understood and respected by indigenous awareness training which is compulsory for Heads of Department,
 - b) working with heads of budget divisions to set targets for indigenous employment which will be a Faculty/divisional KPI,
 - c) establishing an indigenous staff network, and;
 - d) providing employment opportunities for indigenous students in the University.

Responsible Officer	Action	Timeline
Vice-Principal (Human Resources)	No specific action	

Progress to date:

In 2006, the University recruited an indigenous employment coordinator and commenced action on items listed (a) to (d). The employment coordinator resigned and currently his replacement is being sought. Despite this setback, five indigenous staff have been recruited, an indigenous awareness program has been planned. The University hopes to appoint a new coordinator by the end of 2006.

Planned Activity:

Issues Arising:

RECOMMENDATION 1:

AUQA recommends that the responsibilities and membership of the University Academic Board be reviewed against the Board's Terms of Reference to ensure that the Board can effectively comply with these.

University Response:

- The Board Officers and the Chairs of the Board Committees will undertake a thorough review of the responsibilities and membership of the Board and its committees, including the terms of reference of the Board and the committees, to ensure that the Board is fulfilling its duties effectively.

Responsible Officer	Action	Timeline
President, Academic Board	Report to Academic Board	Dec 06

Progress to date:

- Prof Pip Pattison, incoming President of the AB, Alan Abbott, member of Convocation, Ian Powell, Secretary of the AB, and Prof Loane Skene have met and discussed the Board's response to this recommendation. Prof Skene is preparing a draft response reflecting this group's thoughts and it is planned to submit this to the October Board meeting.

Planned Activity:

Issues Arising:

RECOMMENDATION 2:

AUQA recommends that UoM develop a strategy for increasing the demand for courses at its regional campuses, and for enhancing the recruitment of students to these campuses.

University Response:

- Since the audit visit the University has withdrawn from three such campuses. The key action now centres on Dookie and what we are proposing there. The Faculty of Land & Food Resources is currently developing a strategy to do this, among other things. Under the Melbourne Model, the first student experience is likely to be in a liberal arts and science program essentially delivered on a central campus; with utilization of regional campuses targetted for specific delivery of essential vocational experiences (practicals, intensive short courses and research projects) built into majors in the LFR disciplines, in later years of the undergraduate experience. This will greatly increase the student profile on regional campuses, since most students enrolled in all the LFR courses would be expected to have a regional campus experience. Additional strategies will be considered.

Responsible Officer	Action	Timeline
Dean, Faculty of Land Food Resources	Develop strategy with firm timelines	Dec 06

Progress to date:

Planned Activity:

Issues Arising:

RECOMMENDATION 3:

AUQA recommends that UoM develop a set of University-wide principles to guide the allocation of workloads within departments as a means of ensuring equity and enhancing transparency, and to address the perceptions of inappropriate variation in the current workload allocations.

University Response:

- Agreement has been reached in the EBA about principles of workload allocation, and Heads of Department are required to sign off annually that these principles have been observed.

Responsible Officer	Action	Timeline
Vice-Principal (Human Resources)	Sign-offs observed	Annually by Dec
Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Academic)		

Progress to date:

- Agreement reached in the EBA early 2006.

Planned Activity:

Issues Arising:

RECOMMENDATION 4:

AUQA recommends that UoM adopt a more exclusive approach to the identification of its research strengths and opportunities resulting in the delineation of a narrower range of particular research strengths.

University Response:

- Internal and external assessments are being made to identify research strengths and cross-disciplinary gaps in the research profile. Funding has been made available to partner strategic developments for current and future areas of research excellence and to ensure cross-disciplinary initiatives flourish.

Responsible Officer	Action	Timeline
Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Research)	Report of Research Quality Taskforce	Sep-06
Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Research)	Strategic Research Initiatives Fund allocates funds and monitors outcomes	At least annually

Progress to date:

- Each Faculty has identified clusters of research excellence. The interaction of researchers within and between clusters will help inform research investment decisions. The self identified “best 4” works for quality and impact are being aligned against the overall publication profile of the University to provide an independent assessment of the relative strengths of each cluster.

Planned Activity:

- Faculties are producing 5 year plans for research and research training with clearly identified annual milestones to check the plans are on track for realization of the ultimate goals.
- Faculties are producing Action Plans, due November, to enable high performing areas to maintain the premier ranking and to improve the performance of all Departments.
Both 5 year Research and Research Training and Action Plans are expected to align with the defined research clusters.

Issues Arising:

RECOMMENDATION 5:

AUQA recommends that UoM formulate an integrated e-learning strategy that defines the University's pedagogical position concerning this educational approach, and ensures the strategic allocation of resources for support and guidance in e-learning teaching methods and delivery options.

University Response:

- An integrated e-learning strategy is being developed within the context of Growing Esteem, the new strategic direction which has been set for the University of Melbourne. The primary carriage for the development of an e-learning strategy rests with the Assistant Vice-Chancellor (Teaching, Learning and Equity) working closely with the Vice-Principal Information to ensure that the e-learning services, developments including major projects and infrastructure are developed in accord with the strategy.
- The strategy will engage a wide range of stakeholders including Academic Board, the TaLMET (Teaching and Learning Multimedia and Educational Technology) Committee and the Centre for the Study of Higher Education (CSHE) as well as Faculty based multimedia development units to provide an overall framework to support innovative and creative e-learning at the University of Melbourne.

Responsible Officer	Action	Timeline
Pro Vice-Chancellor (Teaching, Learning and Equity)	Strategy finalised	Dec 06

Progress to date:

- To underpin Growing Esteem a number of e-learning principles have been developed in conjunction with a wide range of stakeholders, including Academic Board, TaLMET and the Centre for the Study of Higher Education. The Curriculum Commission has endorsed the e-learning principles.

Planned Activity:

- The development of online e-portfolios and communities of practice including the provision of an on-line collaborative environment are two initiatives being planned.

Issues Arising:

RECOMMENDATION 6:

AUQA recommends that UoM rigorously enforce the requirement that proposals for all new fee-paying postgraduate courses must be accompanied by a business case that estimates their full cost, and which must be approved by the Vice-Principal or Academic Registrar before it is presented to the University Academic Board.

University Response:

- The Vice-Principal and Academic Registrar has requested Academic Programs Committee review the existing arrangements for submissions for new Postgraduate courses and the process for ensuring that all submit a business case and that it is appropriately considered and approved before the academic program proceeds to Academic Board. The process of evaluating the business cases rests with Financial Operations and the University Planning Office who are currently auditing all existing courses to identify the full financial costs of all courses and subjects which are not viable. This will enable establishment of a data base against which all new business cases can be referenced. A recommendation is then forwarded to the Vice-Principal and Academic Registrar and advised to APC before the new course proposal goes forward to Academic Board and Council.

Responsible Officer	Action	Timeline
Vice-Principal and Academic Registrar	APC Review	Oct 06
Director, Financial Operations, Director, University Planning	Benchmarks (database) established	Dec 06

Progress to date:

- University Costs Model being developed. A working group of Deans has been established.

Planned Activity:

Issues Arising:

RECOMMENDATION 7:

AUQA recommends that UoM refine the Quality of Teaching questionnaire so that this instrument can provide separate evaluations of different teachers who teach on the same subject.

University Response:

- The Quality of Teaching questionnaire was developed specifically as a systematic quality assurance mechanism to assess subject quality, rather than as an instrument to evaluate individual teachers. The instrument as it is presently constructed allows departments to administer the questionnaire in ways which can provide assessment of separate or sub-components of teaching in a subject. The TALQAC together with the University Planning Office are investigating ways in which the structure and administration of the current instrument can be optimised so that departments can obtain appropriate evaluation information on subject components.

Responsible Officer	Action	Timeline
Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Academic)	Report to Academic Board with recommendations and firm timelines for implementation	Sept 2006

Progress to date:

- The University Planning Office has been asked to investigate the feasibility of differentiating sub-components of teaching with a view to recommending a modification of the Quality of Teaching Survey.

Planned Activity:

- This recommendation will be addressed in 2007.

Issues Arising:

RECOMMENDATION 8:

AUQA recommends that UoM ensure that the meaning of the presence of the UoM crest on Universitas 21 Global degree parchment (and within Universitas 21 Global promotional materials) is unambiguously and clearly communicated to current and prospective Universitas 21 Global students.

University Response:

- The presence of the University's crest on U21 Global's testamurs signifies that Melbourne is a member of U21 LBG which through its subsidiary U21 pedagogica has accredited the programs offered by Global as being at a standard equivalent to that offered by individual U21 universities. Melbourne will write to U21 Global in May drawing attention to AUQA's recommending and seeking assurance that the significance of Melbourne's crest on Global's testamur is unambiguously made known to Global students and prospective students.

Responsible Officer	Action	Timeline
Senior Vice-Principal	Write to U21 Global	May-06

Progress to date:

- Letter sent to CEO, U21 Global seeking advice on the form of advice Global provides to prospective students about the significance of its use of the crests of U21 member universities. Depending upon the nature of response received, further interaction will occur to ensure that use of University of Melbourne Crest by Global complies with Joint Venture agreements

Planned Activity:

Issues Arising:

RECOMMENDATION 9:

AUQA recommends that UoM strengthen its community engagement through the formulation of a Community Engagement Strategy, which embraces the principle of sustaining clear two-way communication between the University and community stakeholders.

University Response:

- The University has developed a key focus on community engagement through the creation of the positions of Deputy Vice Chancellor (Innovation and Development), who's portfolio includes Knowledge Transfer and engagement with the broader community. During 2006, the new Knowledge Transfer Taskforce and the Council's new University Relations Committee will both be addressing strategies for sustaining two-way communication between the University and community stakeholders. In addition, a Cultural and Community Relations Advisory Group has been established and will develop a Cultural and a Community Engagement Policy for the University.

Responsible Officer	Action	Timeline
Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Innovation and Development)	Knowledge Transfer Strategy developed	Mar-07
Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Innovation and Development)	Cultural and a Community Engagement Policy Developed	Dec-06

Progress to date:

- Knowledge Transfer Taskforce met 14 times so far
- A working definition has been developed
- A report by the Taskforce on how knowledge transfer can be incorporated into the curriculum was prepared for the Curriculum Commission
- Draft guidelines for academic promotion written incorporating knowledge transfer as a criterion.
- Scoping study of knowledge transfer activities at the University conducted
- Market research on community perceptions of the University has begun.
- Faculties have included knowledge transfer in their Operational Plans
- Cultural Policy Statement adopted by Council on 11 September 2006

Planned Activity:

- Report to PBC in November
- Develop measurement tools for knowledge transfer activities
- Identify & launch new portfolio of knowledge transfer programs

Issues Arising:

RECOMMENDATION 10:

AUQA recommends that UoM clarify the responsibilities and the division of labour between the Quality Assurance Accountability Committee and the Teaching and Learning Quality Assurance Committee in order to ensure consistency between the understanding of the roles of the committees and their Terms of Reference.

University Response:

- The Quality Assurance Accountability Committee has been terminated and responsibility for monitoring the overall efficacy of the University's evaluation cycles given to the University Planning Office as the primary administrative office with responsibility for collection, assessment and reporting of data. The Teaching and Learning Quality Assurance Committee remains an Academic Board Committee with responsibility for monitoring the quality of academic programs.

Responsible Officer	Action	Timeline
Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Academic)	Monitor	Ongoing
Director, University Planning	Review of Evaluation Cycle	Nov 06
Chairperson, Teaching and Learning Quality Assurance Committee	Monitor quality of academic programs	Ongoing

Progress to date:

- The Teaching and Learning Quality Assurance Committee will continue to have a role in monitoring the quality and coherence of the University's new undergraduate degrees. One of the roles for TALQAC will be to assure the quality of programs being taught out.
- Review of Evaluation Cycle well advanced.

Planned Activity:

- Evaluation Cycle report to PBC in November 2006.
- TALQAC maintains its responsibility for teaching and learning activities. The Melbourne Model is allowing the development of improved processes with respect to quality assurance which will be in place by 2008.

Issues Arising:

RECOMMENDATION 11:

AUQA recommends that UoM review the design (ie questions and rating scales), delivery schedules, response rates and follow-up of its survey instruments, in order to ensure that the results of the surveys more actively contribute to the establishment of a culture of continuous improvement.

University Response:

- The University's Strategic Plan identifies the review of the University's annual Accountability Structure and Evaluation Cycle as actions to be completed in 2006. Revised proposals, taking account of AUQA's comments and recommendations will be taken to the Planning and Budget Committee's annual conference in June.

Responsible Officer	Action	Timeline
Senior Vice-Principal and Director, University Planning	Review presented to Planning and Budget Committee's annual conference	Jun-06

Progress to date:

- Review of the University's cycle of quality assurance evaluations has been consolidated into a broader review of the University's Accountability Structure, taking account of revised expectations flowing from Growing Esteem. Proposals for a revised Accountability Structure will be submitted to PBC by the end of 2006. (NB a simplified interim evaluation cycle, taking account of current major emphasis on business planning was endorsed by PBC in Sept.)

Planned Activity:

Issues Arising:

RECOMMENDATION 12:

AUQA recommends that UoM increase the number of external experts on the course review panels to ensure that the reviews include an assessment against external standards, which is necessary to achieve the University's standards of excellence.

University Response:

- The Board Officers with the Chair of TALQAC will prepare a plan to address this during planning of course reviews for the future (there will be few course reviews this year as the university is planning extensive changes in the curriculum with the implementation of the *Growing Esteem* strategy).

Responsible Officer	Action	Timeline
President, Academic Board	Plan reported to Academic Board	Oct-06

Progress to date:

- The DVC (Academic) has discussed this recommendation with the Chair of TALQAC, Leon Sterling. This matter is not urgent as there will be very few course reviews this year due to Growing Esteem but we will report by the end of the year.

Planned Activity:

Issues Arising:

RECOMMENDATION 13:

AUQA recommends that UoM add to the present rolling cycle of departmental audits routinely scheduled assessments carried out by panels which comprise external discipline academic expertise, to provide an independent appraisal of the quality of each department's teaching and research activities.

University Response:

- A complete cycle of departmental audits will have been completed by mid-2007, at which point the University will consider this recommendation in the context of reviewing the efficacy of departmental and faculty audits/reviews.

Responsible Officer	Action	Timeline
Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Academic)	Review completed	Dec-07

Progress to date:

- Departmental audits were not completed in 2006 due to planning and re-structuring associated with the University's new strategic plan and curriculum review.

Planned Activity:

- Departmental audits have been suspended for 2007-2009. Academic departments will continue to provide written reviews of performance and operational plans. A new approach to academic and administrative department audits will be developed in 2009 for implementation in 2010.

Issues Arising:

- The University Curriculum Commission's report to the Academic Board recommends that course standing committees draw on the advice of external advisory boards when developing new degrees.

RECOMMENDATION 14:

AUQA recommends that UoM take steps to promote a university-wide understanding of the ways in which benchmarking can be used effectively as a quality assurance tool, and encourage the broader use of process benchmarking to identify best practice, rather than a focus on the statistical comparison of numerical outcome measures.

University Response:

- The University has commissioned the Melbourne Institute of Applied Economic & Social Research (MIAESR) to conduct a national and international benchmarking study at discipline level. The University will continue to include international benchmarking as a target within the Strategic Plan and require departments and faculties to report against this in the Faculty Operational Performance Review. The Deputy Vice-Chancellor, International, together with the University Planning Office, will review the merits of instituting a program of deeper institutional-level benchmarking with selected international universities.

Responsible Officer	Action	Timeline
Vice-Chancellor	MIAESR to report in 2006, and then periodically to update	Jun-06
Vice-Chancellor	Report to VCAG on merits of further international benchmarking	Aug-06
Vice-Chancellor	Department and Faculty benchmarking	Ongoing

Progress to date:

- MIAESR data provided to OPR during May and overall report presented to PBC in June.
- As an integral component of developing and implementing the Melbourne Model, survey of international learning and teaching developments and curriculum initiatives undertaken by the Curriculum Commission and educational leaders within faculties.
- High level statistical benchmarking conducted on 17 regional and international institutions in September. A proposal has been agreed at Vice-Chancellor level to exchange student and staff statistics within the Group of Eight in a timely manner.

Planned Activity:

Paper planned to VCAG in November to review results of statistical benchmarking and explore the merits of deeper benchmarking with a few institutions.

Issues Arising:

RECOMMENDATION 15:

AUQA recommends that UoM develop a plan for addressing the deferred maintenance problems that will not only prevent the situation from worsening, but will in the longer term provide sufficient additional funding, to clear this maintenance backlog within a specified timeframe.

University Response:

- An audit of the deferred maintenance problem is currently being undertaken for the Parkville Campus to ascertain, update and prioritise the list of maintenance tasks. Budget costings for each of the maintenance tasks will be determined and options for addressing the problems will be analysed and reviewed against corporate strategic plans, facilities management requirements and risk management criteria.
- The information derived from the assessment will be provided to allow integration of asset management with the University's strategic plans and to allow allocation of budget over an appropriate time frame. Once this process has been accepted as appropriate to address the deferred maintenance problem, it will be extended to cover other University campuses.

Responsible Officer	Action	Timeline
Vice-Principal (Property and Buildings)	Audit report presented and decision made in relation to recommendations, with firm timelines agreed	Oct 2006
Vice-Principal (Property and Buildings)	Extend to other campuses	Dec 07

Progress to date:

Planned Activity:

Issues Arising: