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Keynote address

Quality: Making a difference



David Woodhouse
Executive Director, Australian Universities Quality Agency

The history of quality

When I was a child, and went shopping with my Mother, it was clear to me that she had a view of quality that related to desirable characteristics of the artefact she intended to buy, and that related also to cost. It would be nice to have a good quality coat or table, but we could rarely afford it, and so settled for utilitarian coats and sturdy tables at a lower cost. However, she would not have accepted a coat that wore too quickly or a table that was badly made. Hence, she had a sense of ‘fitness for purpose’ and that was what she was seeking. Over the years, the meaning of the word ‘quality’ has drifted, so it less frequently denotes something excellent or exceptional, and more often denotes something that meets our needs or fulfils the task intended - ie that exhibits fitness for its purpose.

It may be that the right definition of ‘quality’ is very subjective, namely: ‘quality’ is what I consider important!

We may note in passing that we still need and use words like ‘excellent’ and ‘exceptional’, and furthermore that this could have continued to be the meaning of the word ‘quality’. However, people became dissatisfied with finding that products only exceptionally met their needs, and looked for a greater assurance of satisfaction. The word ‘quality’ came to be associated with products and services that consistently met their specifications (whether the specifications were set by the manufacturer or producer, or by the customer or client, or by a third party). That is, quality denotes ‘fitness for purpose’ for some clearly identified purpose(s). The word ‘consistency’ could well have been pressed into service for what has come to be known as ‘quality’, leaving ‘quality’ to mean ‘excellent’.

Interestingly, there has now grown a tendency to talk about quality not merely in terms of satisfying the customer but ‘delighting the customer’; not meeting the customer’s needs but exceeding the customer’s needs. In other words, the concept of ‘exceptional’ is creeping back in. The difference, however, is that the ‘exceptional’ product or service is now expected to be exceptional from a high base: the base is meeting the customer’s needs, and the exceptional instances are exceeding them. This development is relevant to one of the criticisms sometimes levelled at discussion of ‘quality’ in the HE environment. Why should we be interested in quality in HE if quality really means consistency and what we want in HE is INconsistency - ie such things as initiative, brilliance, variety, etc? The point is that we want these outstanding characteristics from a base level at which all students and other stakeholders can be assured of a satisfactory service, outcome or experience. HE institutions have always been full of brilliant people, but there have also been too many instances of inadequate teaching and trivial research. If bodies like AUQA speak of ‘inappropriate variability’, it is because we are concerned that no student should have an unsatisfactory learning experience. We are of course delighted when we find that, **in addition to this**, some students are enjoying an exceptional

learning experience, and we would never act in such a way as somehow to ‘level down’ an institution’s activities.

External Quality Agencies (EQAs)

An external quality agency (EQA) is a body that has some responsibility for quality in institutions of HE, other than itself. For a number of reasons familiar to us all (size of the HE student body, cost of HE, the national need for HE, etc.), most developed and many developing countries have introduced EQAs over the last 20 years. (There were few EQAs before then. The main ones were in the USA, UK and Ireland.)

Although they are often lumped together as if they were a homogeneous group, they have many different purposes. Some are owned by the government and some by the institutions; some are private; some are essentially a single institution (a common model in small countries). It is, however, possible to make some generalisations about them. Generally, they are responsible for checking whether institutions do certain things, and how ‘well’ (according to certain criteria) they do them. In order to generalise about them, it is useful to have a collective term for them. Many terms (such as accreditation or audit) that have a specific meaning are also used as general terms to refer to these bodies collectively. The word ‘quality’ is also often associated with them. When a global network of such bodies was set up in 1991, they were called ‘quality assurance agencies’. ‘Quality’ itself is a word with many meanings, so it can embrace the range of purposes of the quality agencies. Here, we use the term ‘external quality agency’ (EQA), with ‘external’ indicating that they are external to the institutions (or other organisations) for which they have responsibility. The purpose of an EQA may be any one or more of the following.

1. Assist the higher education institution (HEI) to set up and develop its internal QMS (institutional development or capacity building).
2. Assist the HEI to improve its quality (quality improvement).
3. Evaluate the HEI’s systems for achieving their objectives (ie purposes) or standards, and the effectiveness of these systems (audit).
4. Measure the quality and/or standards of the HEI according to some (internal or external) yardstick (assessment).
5. Provide an explicit comparison between one or more institutions, either within the same country or internationally (benchmarking).
6. Provide a ranking of the HEIs according to some criteria relating to performance (ranking).
7. Determine whether the HEI can be permitted to offer specified programs, or qualify for some other benefit (a gatekeeper role, usually termed accreditation).
8. Define and certify qualifications (qualifications authority)
9. Establish and maintain a framework of qualifications (framework)
10. Assess and record learning, including experiential learning, to enable credit accumulation and transfer (credit accumulation and transfer).
11. Steer the HEI in particular directions, in terms of planning, scope or methods (steering or transformation; relates to fitness of purpose)
12. Provide a report on the HEI as a basis for (government) funding (funding).
13. Provide a report on the HEI to show how it has used the funds and other resources it has enjoyed (ie act as a buffer body or honest broker: accountability).
14. Monitor the financial viability of the HEI (viability).
15. Check the HEI’s compliance with legal and other requirements (compliance).
16. Provide independent information about the HEI for various constituencies (prospective students, employers, etc.) (information provision).

17. Report on the quality and standing of the HE sector as a whole (sector report).
18. Collate the results and outcomes of the activities of other EQAs (co-ordination)

We could group these as follows:

Quality improvement	1, 2
Audit	3
Assessment & standards	4, 5, 6
Accreditation	7
Qualifications	8, 9, 10
Steering, funding	11, 12, 13, 14, 15
Information	16, 17, 18

AUQA does not address all these purposes. The most important in terms of AUQA's constitution and public expectations are 2, 3, 16, 17, 18. There are other purposes that are not incompatible with AUQA's role (eg 1), others that AUQA will not do (eg 4,5,6), and others that it is not authorised to do (eg 7,9,10).

AUQA is also responsible for auditing other EQAs, namely the state and territory accrediting agencies. This is a relatively unusual role, and there are probably only two other bodies with an exactly analogous role. In the USA, some federal funds for institutions and students are dependent on the institution being accredited by an agency that is recognised by the US Education Department as conforming with an extensive list of requirements. In Germany, accreditation is the responsibility of the Lander (states), but state agencies must be approved by a federal body (the Akkreditierungsrat). Some other bodies (in Argentina, the Netherlands, the UK and the USA) have a kindred function.

This meta-role has an analogy in quality systems for organisations outside the educational sphere. Companies exist that provide the service of certifying that organisations are ISO9000-compliant. These certifying bodies themselves need approval, which they achieve by undergoing accreditation by another entity, usually a government agency (such as the Joint Accreditation System for Australia and New Zealand, JAS-ANZ). (The potentially infinite regression stops at this point!) This meta-role may become more common in education, and there is currently (2002) a joint international proposal to establish an accrediting scheme for EQAs themselves.

Improvement and Accountability

No external checking process is entirely neutral, and different purposes and different styles of EQA have different consequences. Some EQAs exercise a good deal of control, and some have the prime purpose and effect of preventing operations that fail to meet specified criteria. The EQA might have a directive responsibility, and explicitly aim to move institutions in particular directions. Even without such a mandate, however, any EQA will affect the institutions and their behaviour through the questions it asks, the things it investigates, and the factors it appears to find important.

It may be seen from the above list that not all agencies have a prime responsibility for the improvement of 'their' institutions. There is a continuing discussion about the difficulty (or some would say impossibility) of combining the functions of accountability and improvement in one EQA. In practice, however, almost all EQAs are expected to fulfil these two roles. Furthermore, with an appropriate institutional response, it is always possible for an EQA's actions to lead to some institutional improvement. AUQA is right along at the improvement end of the EQA spectrum. Our constitution contains four Objectives that say what we are to do, but do not require us to stress 'accountability'. Of course, accountability is built in, as we

check the extent to which the institution is achieving its objectives. However, AUQA's emphasis is on trend data that shows improvement, and on the institution's own plans to rectify any shortcomings identified either by the institution itself, by AUQA, or by any other body.

Some Reported Effects of External Evaluations

['INQAAHE 99' denotes the 5th Biennial Conference of the International Network of Quality Assurance Agencies in HE, Santiago, Chile, 2-5 May, 1999. The theme of the conference was 'Evaluating Evaluation'. Page numbers are from the pre-conference volume of summaries of papers.]

Case Studies

Brennan, J. & Shah, T. (2000), 'Managing quality in HE', Buckingham; OECD, SRHE & Open University Press

The authors present case studies of 29 HE institutions in 14 countries. Quality assessment affects the national system, the institution, the basic unit and the individual. The impact depends on the method (eg internal/external) and context (eg national/institutional), and is effected through rewards, policies, and cultures. The effects occur on different time scales and as a result of the actions of different agents.

There are "many examples of institutional managers using quality assessment as a tool in the wider process of managing organisational change" and "examples of actions by groups of academic staff taken as part of quality assessment processes which have been about ... strengthening quite traditional discipline-based conceptions of academic quality". "At its most effective, quality assessment is ... about accepting change as seen through critical and sometimes sceptical eyes." "Many of the effects [of quality assessment] are likely to be long-term and most are heavily contingent on other factors affecting higher education". (p139-40)

Dubois, P. (1998), 'EVALUE: evaluation and self-evaluation of Universities in Europe', European Community

This project is built on 31 case studies of public universities in eight countries. It concluded that because each university is at the same time a public institution and administration, a set of professional bodies, a business for knowledge production and diffusion, and because each university has a specific history, the best evaluation model for improving university performance is pluralist (participative and contradictory), context-sensitive (taking into account the university environment), dynamic (taking into account the university objectives and history), integral (making links between all the university activities and dimensions), and regularly repeated. Strong university government looks for evaluation and is strengthened by it. Co-operative evaluation with other universities favours dynamics of internal change. The study found that the most innovative evaluation practices leading to improvement in university performance are:

- internal contracting, linking funding to objectives and results
- for administrative services, a customer focus on quality
- effective computer information systems with sets of statistical indicators that allow monitoring of improvements

Brennan, J., Frederiks, M. & Shah, T. (1997), 'Improving the quality of education: the impact of quality assessment on institutions', London: Quality Support Centre, Open University

180 staff members from 53 subject groups in 12 HE institutions were interviewed about the effect of the first rounds of teaching quality assessment by the HE Funding Council for England (HEFCE). The main findings were:

- most recommendations had been acted on (although many actions might have been taken anyway)
- action was more likely at the department level (where the reviews occurred) than at institutional level
- action was more likely when the results were below institutional expectations
- recommendations that appeared insensitive to context were less likely to be acted on
- effects occurred through the self-review, the visit and the report, with the first being seen as most beneficial
- effects depended heavily on the reviewers: their behaviour, professionalism, expertise, and compatibility with the institution
- evaluation of impact is difficult because of the other factors causing change

Dill, D.D. (1999), 'Designing academic audit: lessons learned in the implementation of academic audit in Europe and Asia', INQAAHE 99, 61-65

In the USA, accreditation has been in existence for over 100 years. Over the last decade, it has been subject to increasing criticism as being bureaucratic, unwieldy and ineffective. All the regional agencies have revised or are revising their processes and approaches. The use of academic quality audit is finding increasing favour as a more flexible and targeted approach that can lead to improvement and not merely compliance.

David Dill investigated audit in Europe (the EUA audits), Hong Kong, New Zealand, Sweden and UK. He drew some lessons, including:

1. Academic Audit requires a collegial approach to design and implementation.
2. The objectives and procedures of Academic Audit tend to be clarified through practical experience with the process over time and this learning curve should be anticipated in the "design process."
3. Academic audits represent a new and often unique perspective for an external review, therefore an emphasis on a "reflective" account of quality assurance processes rather than a formal self-study may be more effective use of institutional time in an initial audit cycle.
4. Institutional submissions that lead to reports from each academic unit have the added benefit of stimulating discussion and debate on quality assurance in teaching and learning throughout the entire faculty.
5. Audit visits need to focus on quality assurance processes, particularly the interaction between quality assurance practices and behaviours at the level of the academic unit and quality assurance policies and procedures at the institution level.
6. The publication of academic audit reports appears to be an important element in their influence on academic behaviour.
7. Academic Audit's focus on improvement lends itself to quality enhancement activities that can develop greater understanding about academic quality assurance throughout the higher education system and support the dissemination of "good practice."

Amaral, A.M.S.C. (1998), 'The US accreditation system and the CRE's quality audits: a comparative study', Quality Assurance in Education, 6, 4, 184-196

This draws on Alberto Amaral's participation in several CRE (now EUA) audits and one US accreditation, and the relevant literature. US accreditation's strong points include use of peers, avoidance of ranking, use of specific consensual standards; weak points include poor quality of evidence from the self-study, ad hoc adjustment to standards to accommodate a wide range of institutional differences, fragmentation of the review team. CRE strong points include international panel, independent process, supportive process, accountability to government

and society, use of peers, avoidance of rankings; weak points include lack of support or follow-up, and lack of international comparability.

More effective quality improvement may be achieved in the US system if the institutional self-reviews were more thorough and the external process became an audit of the effectiveness of the institutional quality systems.

Reviews of Quality Assurance Agencies

Meade, P. & Woodhouse, D. (1999), 'Evaluating the effectiveness of the NZ Academic Audit Unit: review and outcomes', INQAAHE 99, 181-186

The review panel concluded that the procedures developed by the AAU requiring universities to undertake a self-review with AAU validating the process have been a major stimulus for introduction of effective quality systems. There are promising signs that universities are highly committed to the audit process, and are going beyond compliance.

Thune, C. & Kristoffersen, D. (1999), 'Guarding the guardian: the evaluation of the Danish Centre for Quality Assurance and Evaluation of HE', INQAAHE 99

An independent review of the Centre found that it had been successful in setting up evaluation procedures which combined the two objectives of control and improvement. The large majority of stakeholder groups found the evaluations to be valuable. Most institutions initiated follow-up activities, but their extent varies between disciplines reviewed. The evaluations have led to changes, but most institutions interpret the reports as good advice and ideas, not as commands that must be obeyed. Institutions stress the amount of human and financial resources taken up by the self-evaluations. (As a result of this positive review, the role of the Centre was extended to include primary and secondary education.)

Massy, W.F. & French, N.J (1999), 'Teaching and Learning Quality Process Review: what has the programme achieved in Hong Kong?', INQAAHE 99

The reviews are carried out every few years by the University Grants Committee (UGC), the buffer funding body. The UGC commissioned the Centre for HE Policy Studies (CHEPS), University of Twente, to evaluate the first round of the TLQPR process. The findings are that

- attention to teaching and learning has increased
- teaching and learning quality has improved
- the general language of the reports detracted from the aim of exercising accountability for quality

The HKUST, which has a research emphasis, was disposed to ignore the recommendations of its TLQPR, until the UGC reduced its grant and the number of funded postgraduate students.

Burrows, J. et al. (2001), 'Report of a review of the NZ Academic Audit Unit', AAU, Wellington NZ

A second review of the New Zealand Academic Audit Unit in 2001 commended the AAU on the success of its work, and reported: "In all universities quality systems have been developed which greatly exceed those which were in existence in the early 1990's. The quality culture which now exists is in large part attributable to the activities of the Unit. The influence of an external auditor has been demonstrably beneficial. The Panel is also impressed by the independence exhibited by the Unit, both in practice and in perception.

"In their submissions to the Review Panel the universities acknowledged the contributions of the Unit. The following statements are typical. One university said: '... there can be little doubt that there has been overall benefit. The major benefit which was undoubtedly an objective of AAU was to improve internal University approaches and to use the power of self

review as a means of seeking ongoing improvement. The fact that such approaches were stimulated and enhanced by the AAU activities is significant and of overall benefit to New Zealand universities amid wider claims for improved performance and accountability.’ Another said: ‘The AAU has acted as a stimulus and catalyst for this university to build its now robust quality systems. For example it motivated our university to codify its existing processes and practices and highlighted areas which would benefit from improvement.’

“We received similar comment from professional organisations which spoke of their high regard for the AAU’s work. One governmental organisation said: ‘The New Zealand Universities Academic Audit Unit (AAU) has led the way in the important shift to a focus on independent external audit in the New Zealand tertiary education quality assurance system. This shift has significantly strengthened the quality of university education to the benefit of all New Zealanders’.”

Reported Effects on Institutions of External Quality Agencies

Bergseth, B. & Karlsson, S. (1999), ‘Quality: an issue of both assurance and development’, INQAAHE 99

Nilsson, K.-A. & Wahlen, S. (1999), ‘Institutional response to the Swedish model of quality assurance’, INQAAHE 99, 259-262

The National Swedish Agency for HE carries out institutional audits and program accreditations. The effects of the accreditation system have been demonstrated more quickly and clearly than expected. Institutions have evinced an ambition to live up to the established quality criteria. Accreditation has also become an important instrument in the competition for teachers and students. For example, teachers have been given greater opportunities for professional development, and more time for research. Results of audits include the establishment of institutional quality systems, changes in management structures, introduction of criteria for judging teaching and processes for rewarding teaching, measurement of student and staff satisfaction

Scheele, J.P. et al. (eds) (1998), ‘To be continued: follow-up of quality assurance in HE’, Maarsse: Elsevier

Programs are reviewed by Association of Co-operating Dutch Universities (VSNU). About two years after the publication of the review report, institutions are questioned by the Inspectorate for HE of the Ministry for Education, Culture & Science about the measures taken concerning the recommendations made in the report, and the improvements made. Measures are considered under four headings: goals & final qualifications; curricula contents; teaching & learning processes; throughput & output. If the inspectorate judges the measures to be inadequate, the Minister is informed. At this stage, MECS has only judged the progress of one program to be inadequate.

Chene, L. & Freedman, B. (1999), ‘Evaluating evaluation: a case-study’, INQAAHE 99, 57-60

The Quebec Commission d’Evaluation de l’Enseignement Collegial (CEEC) carries out programme reviews. Dawson College was pulled up short by the negative review of its first programme, and reports that the consequent soul-searching has had beneficial effects across the institution, including the development of an academic plan, and a process for staff appraisal.

Moon, S. (1999), ‘The impact of internal and external quality monitoring on the student learning experience: a view of academic life at the University of Central England’, INQAAHE 99

This paper concentrates on staff opinions of formal internal quality management procedures and the external HEFCE teaching quality assessments at discipline level. They felt that

formalised QM procedures that are imposed from above or outside, stage-managed, and judgmental rather than encouraging discourse have little effect on the quality of the learning experience. This generates cynicism, confrontation and resistance to change. The external quality events have the value of triggering alternative views and providing an independent comment on problems and deficiencies - especially where the deficiencies arose from outside the discipline area, so the review could be used as a lever within the institution.

Staff felt that other means are more helpful to quality than such formal procedures, internal or external. They cited as examples, student feedback and regular meetings at programme level.

This tends to support a view expressed elsewhere that external review is most effective when it is, and is seen to be, secondary to the internal processes of the institutions themselves. This is the approach AUQA is taking. AUQA recognises and reiterates that quality of Australian HE depends entirely on the Australian HE institutions themselves, and that in the process of achieving and improving quality, AUQA plays a supporting, not a starring, role. 'If something is convincingly valuable [and] appears as worthwhile in its own right, a demand for external evaluation of its value recedes' (Kvale, 1990). Thus, a goal for any EQA is to work itself out of a job by assisting HEIs to be convincingly valuable!

Holdaway, E.A. et al. (1991), 'Program reviews: practices and lessons', Canadian Society for the Study of HE, Professional File 9

This paper reports a high degree of academic staff satisfaction with the centrally mandated University of Alberta programme reviews over the period 1980-88.

Horsburgh, M. (1999), 'Quality monitoring in HE: the impact on student learning', QHE, 5,1, 9-25

A case study at Auckland Institute of Technology, New Zealand, considered the effect of quality monitoring on the improvement and enhancement of student learning within two undergraduate degree programmes. Quality monitoring processes had quite a narrow impact. The influence of the social, economic, political and personal context in which the two programmes are situated was considerable. Overall analysis confirmed that, for quality monitoring to have an impact on student learning, the emphasis must be on curriculum, learning, teaching and assessment.

Barrow, M. (1999), 'Quality management systems and dramaturgical compliance', QHE, 5,1, 27-36

New Zealand polytechnics are subject to review and accreditation by the NZ Qualifications Authority and the NZ Polytechnic Programmes Committee, which have not defined quality but require the introduction of institutional quality systems. In approving and using these systems, attention has been deflected from academic outcomes to an emphasis on understanding and operating the systems. This systems approach to quality has therefore not necessarily led to the institutions' meeting their objectives in terms of their quality definitions. Quality management has become an instrument for monitoring the work of academic staff, resulting in a superficial compliance with the system.

Requirements for Effective External Quality Agencies

Brown, R. (1999), 'Criteria for the external quality assurance of teaching and learning', QA, July

Brown suggests that good quality EQA must pay attention to the following five main sets of criteria:

- coverage and focus;
- the relationship and balance between the elements of assurance: accountability and enhancement;

- the balance, within the accountability element, between reliance on internal and external mechanisms;
- effectiveness; and
- compatibility with other policies for HE.

Smout, M.A. (1999), 'Institutional expectations of quality assurance agencies', INQAAHE 99, 242-244

There is a need for national QA agencies, acting in the national interests. There is also a growing need for HE institutions to be served by quality assurance agencies which are professional, are independent of any national government, and can function across national boundaries.

Smout made the above observation in 1999, and we can now see the emergence of some **international** schemes for auditing institutions against various objectives. Schemes have been set up to check internationalisation, transnational education, self-specified management aspects, business courses, and engineering courses (among other things). Also, US regional accrediting agencies report a great increase in requests from foreign institutions for accreditation using the US models. There is doubtless some amount of jumping on a current bandwagon. However, these quality checks are voluntary and at the institution's own expense, and it is therefore more plausible to assume that institutions observe others receiving positive benefits from these external reviews.

Making it Happen

The previous section was very positive and optimistic about the beneficial effects of EQA. However, these do not happen by chance. Brennan (1995) asks 'is QA helping to drive change or is it a product of change?'. There are at least two more possibilities, namely that it is simply part of the change or an aid to dealing with change. These four interpretations are not mutually exclusive, and examples can be found of all of them. I prefer to emphasise the last-named, as this stresses the supportive role of QA.

Knowledge evaluation may not only define knowledge but also superficialise it (Kvale, 1990). In an analogous consideration, EQAs must take care to avoid trivialising or stereotyping QA and QA procedures through their quality review activities. Just as assessment parameters can penalise the student who writes an unorthodox essay, and promotion evaluation criteria can penalise the innovative teacher, so rigid quality review can penalise institutions that try to be unconventional. It is important to focus on the centrality of an auditee's own activities and intents, so that the internal and external QA processes support innovation and creativity. This can then lead to the sharing of new ideas - both into the institution via the evaluation team, and out from the institution via the review report. However, it is essential that the sharing of new ideas and good practice does not become prescriptive.

Leeuw (1996) refers to 'the performance paradox', namely the simultaneous proliferation and non-correlation of performance measures. He suggests that 'for the coming years it is probably better to focus somewhat less on standardisation of measures and more on creative thinking and discourses between auditors and auditees'.

Senior managers of institutions have a major role to play in achieving the best possible effects from the existence and activities of AUQA. Things they can do include:

- Understand AUQA's intended scope
- Recognise the importance of self-review
- Reflect on how to respond to AUQA most cost-effectively

- Co-ordinate QA activities, whether related to AUQA, other external agencies, or internal purposes, so they are complementary and mutually supportive, not cumulative in load
- Involve academics and students
- Ensure the process is useful to the academic (teaching, research, etc.) activities of the institution, and is widely recognised to be useful
- Liaise with AUQA to tailor the audit to the institution as much as is feasible
- Manage internal and external expectations of the audit, including those of the media
- Get as much benefit out of the self-review report and the audit report as possible

Investigations into the effect of external QA activities suggest that institutional level activities (such as AUQA's audits) are seen to have more relevance to the management of the institution, while the academics are more engaged by (although not necessarily happier with) program- or discipline-level activities (such as the UK's or the Netherlands' teaching assessments). The challenge for us, therefore, is to make AUQA audit relevant to the academic undertaking, but without increasing the load on academic staff. One approach to this is to emphasise the extent to which QA is already a part of academics' activity (as Moliere's *Bourgeois Gentleman* suddenly realised, when told what was meant by the word 'prose': "Gracious me! I've been talking prose for the last forty years and have never known it").

In about 2005, AUQA itself will commission an independent review of AUQA against our already-stated four-point Vision (see footnote). However, in this gathering, I should conclude by pointing out that there would be great value in some longitudinal AUQA-related research on AUQA to see whether we have made a difference.

Footnote: AUQA's Vision:

- AUQA's judgements will be widely recognised as objective, fair, accurate, perceptive, rigorous and useful.
- AUQA will work in partnership with institutions and accrediting agencies to add value to their activities.
- AUQA's advice will be sought on matters related to quality assurance in higher education.
- AUQA will be recognised among its international peers as a leading quality assurance agency.

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