APPENDIX E: FRAMEWORK FOR STANDARDS, EVIDENCE AND OUTCOMES

A. Introduction

AUQA has been carrying out quality audits since 2001, and in 2007 it finished auditing all the existing universities and other SAIs. In 2005, AUQA began a consultation on the desired form of the audits in the second cycle. The respondents to the consultation, AUQA's own external review panel, and the Members of MCEETYA have all expressed views on this, with AUQA's shareholding Members (the nine ministers with responsibility for higher education) having the final say.

For its second cycle audits, AUQA will 1. maintain fitness for purpose as a central structuring principle for its work, but in addition, 2. hold institutions accountable for adherence to certain 'external reference points'. These include the *National Protocols for Higher Education Approval Processes*, the Australian Qualifications Framework, various AVCC codes, etc. Further, AUQA will 3. measure the standards an institution is actually achieving. The attached Framework on Standards, Evidence and Outcomes is intended to assist institutions and auditors in framing and interpreting, respectively, the evidence relative to the various findings and claims in the Performance Portfolio. This Framework will be used in the audits being carried out in 2009. It may then be revised in the light of that use. [A new Advisory Group on standards has been formed in 2008 and is working on such a revision during 2009.]

The Framework is not a checklist, and it should be interpreted flexibly and adapted as necessary to suit the respective institutional contexts

B. Terminology

The word 'standard' is used for many different concepts, including a desirable structure or behaviour, a criterion to measure such behaviour, or an actual measure. For the purpose of Cycle 2 audits, the intended meaning is closest to the third of these concepts: standards are indicators or descriptors of what certain entities should be able to demonstrate. Specifically, AUQA has adopted the following definition:

A **standard** is an agreed specification or other criterion used as a rule, guideline, or definition of a level of performance or achievement.

The specification and use of standards helps to increase the reliability and the effectiveness of an application or service, and also assists in its evaluation or measurement. In a few places in the Framework there is mention of 'clear processes' or 'transparent procedures for...'. In general, however, adjectives such as 'clear' or 'transparent' are omitted but are to be understood. The Framework should be assumed to commend clarity, transparency and comprehensiveness throughout.

Where adjectives such as 'adequate' or 'appropriate' are used, the adequacy is in relation to the institution's aims, and the appropriateness of the standard in relation to external reference points and external comparators (benchmarks).

An auditee will present evidence in the Portfolio to explain how it sets standards, whether it has appropriate policies and processes in place, how it monitors the processes through appropriate (qualitative and quantitative) outcome measures, and what standards it achieves.

C. External Reference Points

Section 2.2 of this Manual sets out AUQA's approach to the use of external reference points, with an indicative list, while Appendix C provides a list of documents and their locations. These documents should be used as relevant to guide many of the processes and methods in the following table. As they are relevant in many places, references to them have not been included to avoid cluttering the table.

D. Data Sources

Data on outcomes and measures is available from many sources. Sources relevant to many of the outcomes and measure in the following table may be drawn from:

- Institution Assessment Framework (IAF) Portfolio
- Australian Research Council (ARC)
- National Health and Medical Research Council (NHMRC)
- The emerging Excellence in Research for Australia (ERA) data (in addition to the data already in the IAF)
- Course Experience Questionnaire (CEQ) reports (in addition to the summary data in the IAF)
- Postgraduate Research Experience Questionnaire (PREQ)
- Graduate Destination Survey (GDS).

As with the external reference points, these data sources are generally not mentioned in the table to reduce the clutter. Some other data sources that are relevant to only a few entries are included in the right-hand column of the table. AUQA has not attempted to make a comprehensive list of such data sources. The table will be gradually revised and augmented in the light of information provided by the institutions and others, in the context of audits and otherwise. Feedback from users in 2008 will be particularly sought on the sources and interpretation of data to provide evidence of achievements.

The right-hand column also includes other comments on the processes or measures.

Institutions and audit panels will interpret the data they provide or receive, respectively, in the light of the institution's strategic directions, the relevant external reference points and selected comparisons. AUQA considered including some example interpretation, but these are not meaningful outside of a specific context. It is expected that, over time, it will be possible to draw on information from the audits to provide concrete examples of interpretation.

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E. The Framework

Major Institutional Activities	Examples of Specific Academic Activities (Themes)	Examples of Key Policies and Processes	Indicative Outcomes & Measures	Additional Comments/Data Sources
1. Teaching & Learning	1.1. Student Assessment & Grading	 Policies and procedures for moderation of assessment Transparent policies and practices on assessment criteria Clear grading system and definitions of grades Validation of assessments against learning outcomes Ensuring attendance requirements for fulfilling objectives of programs Range of assessment methods, including optional student assessments and assessments for students with special needs Use of external examiners/discipline experts and internal/external moderation processes Policies and processes for examination requirements Review of processes for verifying and recording of grades Policies and processes for appeals, unsatisfactory progress, academic integrity 	 Pass/fail/credit/distinction rates Completion rates Student results by cohorts/study locations CEQ Appropriate Assessment Scale, institutional surveys, learning community surveys Distributions of grade point averages External assessor/reviewer reports Moderation reports from assessors, reviews of moderation processes Assessment tasks that provide evidence of attainment of graduate attributes 	IAF data, CEQ, GDS Professional accreditation requirements and reports Institutional/benchmarking trends data
	1.2. Student Profile	Policies and processes for student recruitment and selection Admission policies and processes that take account of equity and access commitments Review and monitoring of student profile related to mission Programs and support provision that reflect student profile and mission	Entrance scores and admissions data Student demographic data (e.g. socioeconomic status, gender, ethnicity, language, cultural and religious affiliations) Progression and retention reviewed for target groups Reviews of admission and selection policy implementation	IAF data

Major Institutional Activities	Examples of Specific Academic Activities (Themes)	Examples of Key Policies and Processes	Indicative Outcomes & Measures	Additional Comments/Data Sources
	1.3. Student Progress	 Policies and procedures on student attrition and retention Transition policies and programs Policies on maximum/minimum time for completion Appropriate academic support programs Policies and programs for students at risk Processes for monitoring of academic progress Criteria for acceptance to honours programs/HDR programs 	Student progress and retention rates (reviewed by demographics, equity group) Student attrition rates, by field of study, by year etc. Student completion rates (HDR, undergraduate, etc.) by field of study Progression to higher degrees Student satisfaction e.g. CEQ, PREQ, institutional surveys Student participation in, and satisfaction with, support programs	IAF data, CEQ, PREQ, institutional surveys
	1.4. Curriculum and Courses	Curriculum underpinned by substantial level of scholarship, coherent body of knowledge, theoretical framework Curriculum review, policies and monitoring of reviews including quality and relevance of courses Ensuring consistent standards for courses across equivalent programs (including offshore) Consultation policies and engagement with employers and professional bodies Explicit learning objectives and their articulation to assessment tasks Mapping of graduate attributes and their embedding into courses, and provision of tools to support development e.g. eportfolio Systematic review of programs and courses against National Protocols and AQF requirements and guidelines	Variety of teaching and learning experiences e.g. work-based, applied, collaborative, Analysis of curriculum review reports Benchmarking results Employer/professional satisfaction and levels of engagement External review of courses, curriculum Reports on national and international accreditation requirements of courses GDS and other employment destination measures Attainment of graduate attributes e.g. CEQ graduate attributes scale, institutional surveys	National protocols, AQF, CEQ

Major Institutional Activities	Examples of Specific Academic Activities (Themes)	Examples of Key Policies and Processes	Indicative Outcomes & Measures	Additional Comments/Data Sources
	1.5. Teaching Staff	 Review and monitoring of policies on staff qualifications, expertise, sessional and full time mix and teaching responsibilities Strategies for enhancing teaching quality for full-time, and sessional staff including provision of appropriate professional development Provision of staff training appropriate to level of responsibility Policies and processes for performance appraisal for teaching and administrative staff Staff position descriptions, workload policies Policies on staff recognition and promotion 	 Staff satisfaction surveys Staff profile analysis (% with various education qualifications, % of staff with professional association membership) Staff professional activities (e.g. teaching projects, fellowships, awards, publications, conference attendance) Staff participation in staff development activities by type Outcomes of performance appraisal Staff recognition and reward Staff workloads Analysis of staff expertise, qualifications and teaching responsibilities relevant to IAF, National Protocols 	National Protocols, IAF
	1.6. Quality of Teaching and Learning	Teaching resources allocation model Policies and processes for monitoring and evaluating teaching Clearly defined mission, values, strategic plans related to teaching and learning Transition programs/student engagement programs Systematic monitoring of trends and evidence of responses	 Teaching and learning plans and implementation reports Staff/student ratios Student participation in transition and support programs Evaluation/review of student survey data, e.g. CEQ, institutional and subject level surveys 	Surveys of staff and students on satisfaction, engagement, experience (CEQ, PREQ, 1st year experience etc.)
	1.7. Learning Resources: Library and Educational Technology, Learning Environment	Institutional plans and policies on provision of resources, facilities to support teaching and learning Policies and processes on access to computers/email/learning management Integration of e-learning into courses Training and support strategies for staff and students Ensuring appropriate provision of facilities, teaching resources, staff offices, administrative areas, computer labs, wireless areas etc. relative to the course offerings	Student satisfaction with provision of e-learning opportunities Staff and student satisfaction with learning resources, facilities, environments Usage figures Benchmarking reports from libraries, IT, facilities management etc. Appropriate provision of library resources Feedback surveys	ACODE protocols for online teaching CAUL data CAUDIT data Rodski / Insync data National Protocols

Major Institutional Activities	Examples of Specific Academic Activities (Themes)	Examples of Key Policies and Processes	Indicative Outcomes & Measures	Additional Comments/Data Sources
	1.8. Learning Support	 Appropriate support and contact with students (remote, off campus, work placements etc.) Appropriate range and quality of student services e.g. counselling, academic advice, career advice, learning assistance, IT support Appropriate and transparent student financial support Provision of scholarships related to targeted equity students Provision of transition programs (to study, to work) Clear processes and support for minority/ equity students Provision of development programs (for administration, support and teaching staff) on cultural inclusivity, sensitivity, equity, diversity 	 Student usage and satisfaction levels Student engagement Student progress/retention Complaints arising from poor course advice Staff participation in development programs Staff and student learning community surveys Number of beneficiaries of each of the support strategies 	National protocols Student support benchmarking data
	1.9. Student Grievances and Appeals	Clearly articulated policies and processes for administration of grievances and appeals Transparency of processes and outcomes	Evidence of implementation of policies Statistics on nature and number of grievances, statistics on outcomes of grievances and appeals	
	1.10. Leadership and Management of Teaching and Learning	Clearly articulated teaching and learning managements plans Designation of responsibilities for teaching and learning Articulation of responsibilities for teaching and learning enhancement and improvement Appropriate training of administration, support and teaching staff for level of responsibility	Evidence of review of policies, review of organisational structures Evidence of monitoring performance against targets in teaching and learning plans Staff participation in training programs Evaluation/feedback on the training programs	

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Major Institutional Activities	Examples of Specific Academic Activities (Themes)	Examples of Key Policies and Processes	Indicative Outcomes & Measures	Additional Comments/Data Sources
2. Research & Research Training	2.1. Externally Funded Research	 Identification and use of external sources of funds to provide additional funding for research Adequate support for staff to identify, apply for, and administer externally funded grants Procedures to ensure appropriate intellectual property ownership agreements Involvement of partner/institution in key decision making 	Ratio of total research income to total revenue National competitive grant success rates and value of income % of income from commercial sponsors Number of research office support staff Examination of institution's intellectual property policies List of organisations for which consultancies have been undertaken in the last five years, and an indication of 'repeat business'	Source: HERDC; IAF National Protocols Source: ARC/NHMRC data Institutional data
	2.2. Ethics	Procedures for identifying/preventing plagiarism and fraud Effective communication strategy on ethics policy Process for assessing risks of contractual arrangements for research projects Policies and procedures to ensure ethical conduct of its research, its researchers and supervision of research students	Examination of institution's ethics policies and their compliance with sector guidelines Minutes of ethics committee meetings	

Major Institutional Activities	Examples of Specific Academic Activities (Themes)	Examples of Key Policies and Processes	Indicative Outcomes & Measures	Additional Comments/Data Sources
	2.3. Quality of Research Approach	Overlaps with 2.4, 2.5, and 2.10. Strategic approach to building research capacity Research culture comparable to similar universities Adequate resources to support high quality research activities Sufficient infrastructure to support its research endeavours Regular and appropriate cycle of program/discipline assessment Ensuring research of acceptable quantity and quality Evidence of well managed risk, and capacity to seize opportunities or support innovation	 Comparisons given in the institution's IAF Budget and strategic plan The timeframe of assessments (to be) undertaken and outcomes from completed exercises Research publications (Analyse the number of research publications (weighted) per FTE academic staff member) Research income and competitive grants awarded Results of research quality assessments Relative citation performance Esteem indicators of staff performance – membership of learned academies; service to journals (editorships, editorial boards) and equivalent service to conferences. 	IAF data National Protocols
	2.4. Human Resources/ People management	Framework for succession planning Identification, support and retention of star performers Appropriate framework for performance management of research active staff Adequate support for the research programs of individual staff members	Staff age, skills, appointment type and diversity profile over time Proportion of staff who are research active Expenditure on staff development and training Staff turnover, absence and vacancies against plans Availability of travel funds for staff; details of internal funding available for researchers Appropriate mix of continuing and contract staff	Sources: Institution's IAF; HERDC data

Major Institutional Activities	Examples of Specific Academic Activities (Themes)	Examples of Key Policies and Processes	Indicative Outcomes & Measures	Additional Comments/Data Sources
	2.5. Institutional	Overlaps with 2.3 Clear understanding of position of research in the institution's mission Teaching-research nexus Infrastructure support at the level required to support high quality research activities Effective strategies to develop areas of research excellence and cross- or multidisciplinary research Monitoring and benchmarking research outcomes against other institutions	 Analysis of institution's strategic plan for research Planned research investment Details of comparator institutions, measures used for benchmarking and outcomes of benchmarking 	
	2.6. Collaboration	Policies and procedures in place to foster collaboration with other research institutions	List of organisations with which the institution has memorandum of understanding, together with the nature and effect of the agreements	
	2.7. Accessibility	Policies and systems in place to facilitate accessibility of research results	Status of institutional repositories and open access archives, and the extent of uptake by researchers	
	2.8. Intellectual Property Management	Effective procedures for managing intellectual property, including for HDR students	Ratio of money spent on building on intellectual property to money earned from the resulting commercial activities Data on spin-offs, licences, partnerships and technology transfer Results of research impact assessments	
	2.9. Supervision of HDR Students	Overlaps with teaching & learning key processes and outcomes Effective supervisor selection, registering, training and appointment processes Professional and other support for supervisors Supervision workloads Grievance procedure in place	Student satisfaction outcomes (e.g. PREQ) Proportion of principal HDR supervisors who are research active Staff/student ratio by discipline, identifying maximum and minimum levels Reports of grievance procedures and resolutions	PREQ Benchmarking

Major Institutional Activities	Examples of Specific Academic Activities (Themes)	Examples of Key Policies and Processes	Indicative Outcomes & Measures	Additional Comments/Data Sources
	2.10. HDR Students	 Overlaps with teaching & learning key processes and outcomes Capacity to attract competent HDR students Provision of adequate resources and training for research students Effective policies on student progress – completion time, changes in enrolment status Active involvement of postgraduate students in the institution community Clear and transparent performance review and monitoring criteria; and selection process for external examiners Active monitoring of outcomes 	 Number of students by academic area Applications per place; undergraduate performance; enrolments against targets Graduate destination surveys Institutional profile of external examiners appointed Progression rates Average completion times for HDR students External examiner reports Degrees awarded Acceptance into academic/postdoctoral positions internationally Number of scholarships by PhD students gained competitively nationally or internationally 	

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Major Institutional Activities	Examples of Specific Academic Activities (Themes)	Examples of Key Policies and Processes	Indicative Outcomes & Measures	Additional Comments/Data Sources
3. Engagement with Communities	3.1 Collaborative Research with Industries	Development of partnerships Establishment of joint research programs Production of joint publications	 Number and duration of MOUs Number and value of joint research grants Number and impact of joint publications and reports Policies covering the development and implementation of collaborative research projects 	Define communities the institution is engaged with e.g. local, national, regional, international etc. Community engagement protocols AUCEA benchmarks
	3.2 Development of Academic Programs in Partnership with other Organisations (Overlaps with teaching & learning)	Collaborative development of courses/programs with organisations Clear policies and processes for staff/student participation in organisations (work study, service) Clear mechanisms for partnership arrangements training etc.	Number and diversity of collaboratively developed courses/programs Number of students participating in collaboratively developed programs Feedback from students on satisfaction with collaboratively developed courses/programs Feedback from partner organisations on success and value of the collaboratively developed courses/programs Feedback from institutional staff on value and success of collaboratively developed course/programs Outcomes for students in collaboratively developed courses/programs e.g. completion rates, employment rates	
	3.3. Service Learning for Students (Overlaps with teaching & learning)	Policies and processes for staff/student participation in service learning activities	Range of service learning opportunities available to students Evidence of integration of service learning activities into student learning outcomes Number of students involved in endorsed community service learning activities Feedback from local organisations of value and success of student participation	

Major Institutional Activities	Examples of Specific Academic Activities (Themes)	Examples of Key Policies and Processes	Indicative Outcomes & Measures	Additional Comments/Data Sources
	3.4 Consultancy Services for Communities	 Policies covering the provision of consultancy services Strategies for institution staff contribution to organisations Processes for organisations' staff contribution to institution Ensuring the socio cultural value of the community engagement activities 	 Range of organisations where institution staff make a contribution Revenue generated by the institution through consultancy services Diversity of activities engaged in by institution staff Feedback from local organisations on value and success of institution staff participation Feedback from the community representatives on the 'common good' served by the institution 	
	3.5 Community Involvement with Institution Affairs	Participation by community representatives in advisory boards and institution activities	Number and diversity of community representatives involved in institution advisory boards and activities Range of institution advisory boards and activities that include community representatives Feedback from institution staff on value and success of community involvement Feedback from community representatives on value and success of their involvement with institution affairs	Evidence for the value and quality of community involvement in institution affairs will be more dependent on a diversity of qualitative measures related to perceptions of engagement and ownership rather than quantitative measures of number of participants or the number of committees including community representatives.

Major Institutional Activities	Examples of Specific Academic Activities (Themes)	Examples of Key Policies and Processes	Indicative Outcomes & Measures	Additional Comments/Data Sources
4. International Activities (Overlaps with some aspects of Teaching & Learning)	4.1. Courses & Curriculum	 Internationalisation of the curriculum Design and development of curriculum materials for Australian and international students National and international accreditation requirements of degree programs Appropriate English language competence of students and staff for delivery of curriculum content Appropriate methods for translation and back-translation of curriculum and assessment materials (if curriculum materials are delivered in a language other than English) Appropriate information systems of institutions for delivery of curriculum content Consistent assessment methods and standards for Australian and international students (onshore and offshore and irrespective of mode) Transparent policies and procedures to educate and to ensure compliance of Australian and international students with standards of academic integrity (onshore and offshore and irrespective of mode) Appropriate academic and intercultural training and support for staff to interact with students from different cultural backgrounds (onshore and offshore) 	 Curriculum materials for selected degrees Statements of accreditation from relevant bodies Data on IELTS (or equivalent) scores for students. English language assessment of staff from non-English speaking background Curriculum materials in English and in other language, with statements from translators as to effectiveness of translation and back-translation Completeness and efficiency of online systems as indicated in the survey of staff and student satisfaction with information systems Comparison of marks of different types of students in different locations and modes of delivery Comparison of plagiarism and other academic misconduct data of different types of students in different locations and modes of delivery training materials; survey of staff and student satisfaction with intercultural awareness 	

Major Institutional Activities	Examples of Specific Academic Activities (Themes)	Examples of Key Policies and Processes	Indicative Outcomes & Measures	Additional Comments/Data Sources
	4.2. Partnerships (includes teaching and research)	Clear and comprehensive contractual agreements between institution and all partner institutions, or "agents" of the institution Clear and transparent statements on responsibilities of institution and partner institutions, in terms of students, staff, curriculum materials, and assessment (including student and staff exchanges) Agreement and specification of institution and partner institution of mechanisms of internal and external review and audit of activities by relevant quality assurance bodies in Australia and home country of partner institution	Survey of institution and partner understanding and perceptions of contractual agreements Statements of responsibility; survey of staff and student understanding and perception of statements of responsibility Outcome of internal review and audit materials; statement from any external quality assurance bodies in Australia and home country of partner institution of adherence to quality assurance and audit requirements	
5. Governance & Management	5.1. Governance	Structures and instruments of governance that ensure all key aspects of a quality institution (including academic autonomy, independent inquiry, integrity of academic programs and self-management) Governing structures to carry out the responsibilities according to the relevant protocols and institution act Governing structures to review delegations, and reporting arrangements	Compliance with National Governance Protocols Council meeting frequency, types of committees Evaluation of Council performance Evaluation of Academic Board performance, including quality assurance Budget alignment to strategic goals Appropriate external reference points of the HEP Compliance with legislative requirements	National Protocols National Governance Protocols
	5.2. Council oversight	Reporting mechanisms to the governing body and its subcommittees Appropriate follow ups on the major delegated functions	Implemented risk management plan Regular reports on key performance indicators Regular reports on reviews Regular reports on audits Plans, including asset management plan aligned to strategic plan	

Major Institutional Activities	Examples of Specific Academic Activities (Themes)	Examples of Key Policies and Processes	Indicative Outcomes & Measures	Additional Comments/Data Sources
	5.3. Leadership	Systematic reviews of leadership structures, preparation for leadership, performance reviews Current strategic plan approved by the governing body and owned by institution Senior management portfolios covering all strategic areas	Results of staff satisfaction and stakeholder surveys Progress in implementation of strategic plan Clarity of delegation	
	5.4. Planning	Planning cycle and processes	Regular cycle of planning, implementation, monitoring and improvements Regular implementation reports	
	5.5. Management	Appropriate structures to facilitate competent management	Achievement of strategic goals in the various portfolios	
	5.6. Academic Governance	Review and implementation of faculty and Academic Board(s) policies	 Monitoring of standards and quality by Faculty Boards and Academic Boards Student admission criteria, benchmarking and monitoring of courses in support of strategic goals 	
	5.7. Human Resources: Workforce Planning and Renewal	Clear recruitment policies linked to strategic plans and mission Clear and transparent appointment, probation and promotion policies Clearly articulated employment conditions Flexibility and incentives to attract and retain quality staff	Alignment of recruitment policies with strategic human resources goals Evidence of attraction and retention rate of qualified staff Redundancy arrangements that allow for regeneration of staff Surveys of staff satisfaction and engagement Exit surveys Climate surveys	

Major Institutional Activities	Examples of Specific Academic Activities (Themes)	Examples of Key Policies and Processes	Indicative Outcomes & Measures	Additional Comments/Data Sources
	5.8. Human Resources: Career Development and Performance Management	 Appropriate professional development programs for staff at all levels, types of positions (admin, professional, academic, sessional etc.) Clearly articulated and transparent performance management processes and policies 	 Promotion data Probation data Staff receiving Carrick grants, national awards Proportion of staff receiving grants and publishing Funds and people available for staff support Aligned with strategic goals and implemented throughout the higher education institution 	