This Report is published by the Tertiary Education Quality and Standards Agency (TEQSA) under the Tertiary Education Quality and Standards Agency Act 2011, in order to complete the quality audits initiated by the former Australian Universities Quality Agency (AUQA). This Report is not to be taken as an assessment under the Higher Education Standards Framework as defined in the TEQSA legislation.

REPORT OF AN AUDIT OF UNIVERSITY OF CANBERRA
MARCH 2012
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Tertiary Education Quality and Standards Agency
Level 6, 595 Collins Street
Melbourne, Victoria 3000

T: 1300 739 585
F: 1300 739 586
E: enquiries@teqsa.gov.au
W: http://www.teqsa.gov.au
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OVERVIEW OF THE AUDIT

BACKGROUND

The Tertiary Education Quality and Standards Agency (TEQSA) is Australia’s higher education regulatory and quality assurance agency. This Report is published by TEQSA under the Tertiary Education Quality and Standards Agency Act 2011, in order to complete the quality audits initiated by the former Australian Universities Quality Agency (AUQA). This Report is not to be taken as an assessment under the Higher Education Standards Framework as defined in the TEQSA legislation.

These audits adopt the audit process as previously advised by AUQA. They are concerned with the existence and effectiveness of the quality processes that the organisation has in place to achieve its stated objectives, produce the desired outcomes and meet the needs of the institution’s identified constituencies. ‘Effectiveness’ is judged by the results and standards achieved. The audit also addresses actions taken by the organisation to improve its effectiveness.

Quotations taken from the Performance Portfolio are identified in the Report as (PF p).

The membership of the Audit Panel is provided in Appendix A, and Appendix B defines abbreviations and technical terms used in this Report. Appendix C provides a report of the two offshore programs of the University visited by a delegation of the Audit Panel.

THE AUDIT PROCESS

The University of Canberra (UC) underwent stage 1 of its Cycle 2 AUQA Audit in 2008 and this is a follow-up audit for the University. At the time of the 2008 Audit, UC had initiated a wide-ranging review and restructure and it wished to use the AUQA audit as an opportunity to reflect on the approach it had taken to restructure. Considering the timing and scope of the restructure, the University suggested that the 2008 audit focus on ‘approach’ and that AUQA conduct a follow-up audit three years later in relation to ‘deployment, results and improvement’. AUQA agreed to this proposal and considered the approaches of the University to a large extent in the 2008 Audit. The scope for the 2008 Audit of UC was the two themes of ‘Renewal of the University’ and ‘Internationalisation’, together with the follow-up of recommendations from the 2003 Cycle 1 Audit. Three years later, this follow-up audit in 2011 examines how the University has implemented the plans and achieved demonstrable improvements within the scope of those same two themes.

In 2011 AUQA appointed an Audit Panel to undertake a quality audit of the University of Canberra. Within the scope of the particular audit, Cycle 2 audits emphasise institutional standards and performance outcomes, with attention to benchmarking activities and their effect on standards and outcomes.

Full details of the Cycle 2 audit process are available in the AUQA Audit Manual.

On 25 May, UC presented its submission (Performance Portfolio), including 72 supporting materials. The Audit Panel met on 28 June 2011 to consider these materials.

The Audit Panel Chairperson and Audit Director undertook a Preparatory Visit to UC on 19 July 2011. During that visit, the answers to questions and additional information requested by the Panel were discussed, as well as the Audit Visit program.

A visit to two educational partners of UC in the delivery of offshore programs was conducted on 21 and 28 July 2011. A written report of these activities was circulated to the full Audit Panel prior to the
main Audit Visit. The main Audit Visit to the University’s Bruce Campus in Canberra took place between 8 and 11 August 2011.

In all, the Audit Panel spoke with around 170 people in the course of the audit, including the Vice-Chancellor, the Chancellor, senior management, academic and general staff, external stakeholders, undergraduate and postgraduate students (including external, Indigenous and international students), and offshore partners. Open sessions were available for any member of the University community to meet the Audit Panel and two people took advantage of this opportunity.

TEQSA expresses its appreciation to Mr Bruce Lines and others at UC for their professional and friendly assistance and organisation throughout the audit process. TEQSA also thanks UC for its ready production of additional information and for granting the Panel secure access to its intranet for the period of the audit.

This Report relates to the situation current at the time of the Audit Visit, which ended on 11 August 2011, and does not take account of any changes that may have occurred subsequently. The Report records the conclusions reached by the Audit Panel based on the documentation provided by UC as well as information gained through interviews, discussions and observations.

While every attempt has been made to reach a comprehensive understanding of UC’s activities within the scope of the audit, the Report does not identify every aspect of quality assurance and its effectiveness or shortcomings.
1 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

1.1 AUDIT CONTEXT

The University of Canberra (UC or the University) underwent stage 1 of its Cycle 2 AUQA Audit in 2008 and this is a follow-up audit for the University. At the time of the 2008 Audit, UC had initiated a wide-ranging review and restructure and it wished to use the AUQA audit as an opportunity to reflect on the approach it had taken to restructure. Considering the timing and scope of the restructure, the University suggested that the 2008 audit focus on ‘approach’ and that AUQA conduct a follow-up audit three years later in relation to ‘deployment, results and improvement’. AUQA agreed to this proposal and considered the approaches of the University to a large extent in the 2008 Audit.

The scope for the 2008 Audit of UC was the two themes of ‘Renewal of the University’ and ‘Internationalisation’, together with the follow-up of recommendations from the 2003 Cycle 1 Audit. Three years later, this follow-up audit in 2011 examines how the University has implemented the plans and achieved demonstrable improvements within the scope of those same two themes. There have however been changes to the external environment that have impacted on the University’s plans and have resulted in the University responding by putting in place new plans and initiatives. Therefore, wherever appropriate this Audit considers the new plans and developments since the 2008 Audit within the two themes.

The audit findings are contained in sections 2 and 3. A selection of data that supports the findings is provided in section 4.

1.1.1 Main Points

Since the 2008 Audit, the University of Canberra has continued its change and renewal process with good leadership and staff engagement. While it is too early to comment on the deployment or results of some of the approaches, in general, the renewal process has made a positive impact on major aspects of the University. Implementation of the Performance Development Review process, strategic use of the ‘signature themes’, reinvigoration of the research culture, improvements to the profile of academic staff are areas where the University demonstrates positive results. Other plans and actions in progress include campus development, full implementation of the student feedback framework, monitoring the relative academic performance of different student cohorts, and strengthening the winter term courses. The area where this Report cautions the University to take immediate action relates to its financial plan. The University should further develop its financial management capability, including through the development of financial contingency plans and use of independent external validation of its long term financial plan.

The University is aware that its international programs need improvements. Its international strategy is under review and it has the potential to address several areas where improvements are required. The University has been successful in its strategy to increase international student enrolments. Its offshore student enrolment through transnational articulation agreements and pathway arrangements has been consistent. However, the University should ensure consistency in English language entry requirements for its bilingual transnational teaching programs and address the issues around the certification of language of delivery and equivalence of standards.
1.1.2 Theme 1: Renewal of the University

The University of Canberra is on an ambitious trajectory of change and renewal. The Vice-Chancellor, with the Council and the senior executives, provides consistent leadership in taking the University through this change process. The University is promoting the re-vision of UC as an ‘omniversity’ under the ‘UC for Life’ banner. The re-vision has made a positive impact on staff engagement with the various strategies of UC. The approach appears to be sound and is proactively addressing the changes in the external environment of tertiary education. It is too early to comment on the deployment or results.

The University has implemented the Performance Development Review process with significant endorsement from academic staff. It has used ‘signature themes’, including ‘research-led education’ strategically, to bring an institution-wide focus and impetus to important areas of development. The academic renewal project has been successful in attracting significant new talent to the University and it has reinvigorated the research culture. It is evident that the University has enhanced its support for research activity and the impact might become evident in a few years. This Report commends the University for its success in these areas.

The University has taken a proactive approach to campus development opportunities but it is too early to comment on the outcomes. Full implementation of an integrated framework for student feedback, monitoring the relative academic performance of student cohorts entering through different pathways, and strengthening flexible teaching and learning arrangements in the winter term courses are work in progress. This Report affirms the actions of the University in these areas. Sustained and timely implementation and follow-through of plans and priority actions remain a challenge for the University in the context of a range of ambitious new projects.

The substantive area that needs immediate attention is ensuring sufficient financial and human resources to sustain the institution’s programs into the future. Since the 2008 Audit the University has shown demonstrable results in strengthening its human resources. However, its position regarding financial resources requires continuous monitoring. The University should develop financial contingency plans for the worst-case scenarios for the sensitivity analysis that was undertaken for the 2011 University Annual Budget and extend them to the budget projections incorporated in the long term financial plan. The University should also undertake an independent external validation of its long term financial plan and the associated sensitivity analyses and contingency plans.

1.1.3 Theme 2: Internationalisation

The international strategy of the University is under review and it has the potential to assist the University to develop a global engagement strategy and to refine policies and procedures for international activities. The University is taking steps to develop a shared understanding of internationalisation of the curriculum in the University community. This Report affirms these actions of the University.

The University of Canberra has been successful in increasing international student enrolments in accordance with its strategic plan, in particular through strategic articulation agreements and pathway arrangements. It provides effective support services to enhance the international student experience and the international reputation of the University. The Panel commends the University of Canberra for these achievements. The supply and management of student accommodation, appropriate to the needs of all student cohorts, continues to be a challenge. The University has undertaken a review of the outsourcing arrangements for campus accommodation.
In transnational education, the substantive area that requires improvement relates to the bilingual delivery of programs in China where the consistent adoption of English language entry requirements, equivalence of standards and certification of language of delivery need to be ensured. A new International Strategy was still under consideration and the Panel did not find a shared understanding across the University of UC’s goals and intent in transnational education. Alignment with the AusLIST Code of Good Practice also needs to be addressed.

1.1.4 National Protocols for Higher Education Approval Processes

The National Protocols for Higher Education Approval Processes (National Protocols) require all higher education providers to meet a range of criteria, in particular the nationally prescribed criteria A1 to A10. Universities must also meet criteria D1 to D5. The University of Canberra provided a self-assessment against the National Protocols prior to the audit.

The 2008 Audit noted that UC satisfies the criteria of the National Protocols but with some potential for problems with UC’s adherence to the criteria that relate to having sufficient financial and human resources to sustain the institution’s programs into the future. The 2008 Audit commented that the follow-up audit should check that these compliance issues have been fully addressed. This follow-up audit reveals that while the University has shown demonstrable results in strengthening its human resources, concerns regarding its financial resources still remain. In particular, underlying operating deficits over the past few years; relatively low level of cash reserves; significant reliance on cash advances from the Commonwealth and banking overdraft facility; long term projections that show that deficits will continue under the worst-case scenarios; and the costs associated with deferred maintenance, salaries and new infrastructure indicate that the University’s financial position needs careful and continuous monitoring. This Report makes several observations and a recommendation appropriate under the relevant themes that will assist the University to monitor its alignment with the National Protocols.

1.2 COMMENDATIONS, AFFIRMATIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

This Report contains commendations, affirmations and recommendations. A commendation refers to the achievement of a stated goal, or to some plan or activity that has led to, or appears likely to lead to, the achievement of a stated goal, and which is particularly significant. A recommendation refers to an area in need of attention, whether in respect of approach, deployment or results, which is particularly significant. Where such matters have already been identified by the University, with evidence, they are termed affirmations. It is acknowledged that recommendations in this Report may have resource implications.

The themes for Cycle 2 audits are chosen for their risk potential and are likely also to reflect the institution’s own assessment of its developmental and strategic needs. As for Cycle 1 audits, Cycle 2 audits aim to assist the University to enhance the quality and standards of its operations and this follow-up audit has the same emphasis.

COMMENDATIONS

1. The senior management of the University of Canberra is commended for its consistent leadership in developing and communicating the new vision for the University, and for engaging external stakeholders and staff in planning and implementing the vision. ................................. 8

2. The University of Canberra is commended for achieving its goal to be in the top third on standard educational measures two years ahead of schedule. ...................................................................... 10
3. The University of Canberra is commended for its enhanced support for research activity provided by the restructured Research Services Office, as exemplified by research ethics approval processes.

4. The University of Canberra is commended for its use of ‘signature themes’ which has brought an institution-wide focus and impetus to strategic curriculum issues.

5. The University of Canberra is commended for its academic renewal project that has attracted significant new talent to the University and reinvigorated the research culture.

6. The University of Canberra is commended for the implementation of its Performance Development Review process and achieving significant endorsement from academic staff.

7. The University of Canberra is commended for the effective deployment of articulation agreements and pathway arrangements that are in accordance with its Strategic Plan.

8. The University of Canberra is commended for the effectiveness of its International Student Support Service provision and its contribution to enhancing the international student experience and the international reputation of the University.

9. The University of Canberra is commended for its constructive relationship with the University of Canberra College in the provision of pathway programs.

AFFIRMATIONS

1. The University of Canberra’s establishment of the Capacity Assessment Advisory Group is affirmed, as a useful way for the University to plan for campus infrastructure and other support services to match growth in student and staff load.

2. The University of Canberra’s plan to fully implement an integrated framework for student feedback is affirmed, for its potential to play a significant part in the enhancement of quality of teaching and learning.

3. The University of Canberra’s intentions to monitor the relative academic performance of student cohorts entering through different pathways and the success of learning support provided to these cohorts are affirmed.

4. The University of Canberra’s plans to strengthen flexible teaching and learning arrangements in the winter term courses to embed a quality and sustainable winter term provision are affirmed.

5. The University of Canberra’s review of its international strategy is affirmed, for its potential to assist the University to develop a global engagement strategy and to refine policies and procedures for international activities.

6. The University of Canberra’s actions to develop a shared understanding of internationalisation of the curriculum in the University community are affirmed.

7. The University of Canberra’s review of the outsourcing arrangements for campus accommodation is affirmed.
RECOMMENDATIONS

1. It is recommended that the University of Canberra strengthen its ability to achieve sustained and timely implementation and follow-through of its plans and priority actions.

2. It is recommended that the University of Canberra take action to develop financial contingency plans and independently validate its long term financial plans.

3. It is recommended that the University of Canberra clarify its transnational education strategy and rationale to inform planned reviews of current operations and prospective opportunities.

4. It is recommended that the University of Canberra take effective action immediately to address the substantive academic issues of English language entry requirements, equivalence of standards and certification in relation to language of delivery in its bilingual programs in China.

5. It is recommended that the University of Canberra immediately reconsider the issues related to issuing non-standard testamurs.

6. It is recommended that the University of Canberra ensure full alignment with the AusLIST Code of Good Practice.
2 THEME: RENEWAL OF THE UNIVERSITY

‘Academic Governance with emphasis on the Quality Management System’ was one of the themes of the 2008 AUQA audit. In the Portfolio that was submitted in July 2008, the University had taken a broad interpretation of the theme and portrayed it as the ‘Renewal of the University’ for which its Strategic Plan and the reviews that had been initiated became the foci. To ensure consistency in the scoping and follow-up, the 2011 Audit also had ‘Renewal of the University’ as a theme.

This chapter is organised around three aspects – the revised Strategic Plan and its targets, the reviews that were in place at the time of the 2008 audit, and new developments.

2.1 LEADING THE RENEWAL AGENDA

UC is on an ambitious trajectory, which not only requires the commitment of staff in support of the delivery of the renewal agenda, but also a cultural shift within the University, from a largely teaching-oriented institution to one which has an orientation to research. Alongside this, the University has acted consistently to raise its profile internationally, nationally and within the Australian Capital Territory. These aspirations of the University are understood by all staff and there is a high level of staff engagement with the renewal agenda. Internal communications, such as messages from the Vice-Chancellor setting out the future direction of the University, have been well received by the staff. There is demonstrable understanding of the University’s vision among members of Council. External stakeholders praise the growing reputation of the University and its standing within the Australian Capital Territory.

To provide leadership to the change agenda, UC has made changes in senior management classifications and appointments, including the appointment of a Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Research), the creation of a Registrar’s portfolio, the creation of a new position of University Architect, the restructure of the Chief Operating Officer’s responsibilities, the creation of a new portfolio of Pro Vice-Chancellor (PVC) (International & Major Projects), and the appointment of four new deans. Throughout the audit visit it was evident that staff recognised and respected the impact of senior leaders on the University’s development and future direction. Members of the University Council are clear about and supportive of the University’s strategic direction. They also recognise the contribution made by the Vice-Chancellor, and senior executives, in leading the University through a period of sustained and rapid change and development. The University Council is fully engaged in the strategic development and planning of the University.

Commendation 1

The senior management of the University of Canberra is commended for its consistent leadership in developing and communicating the new vision for the University, and for engaging external stakeholders and staff in planning and implementing the vision.

2.2 RE-VISION OF THE STRATEGIC PLAN

The University’s priorities and aims were initially set out in the ten-year Strategic Plan adopted by the Council in 2007. Although it is a ten-year plan, it listed 39 steps or actions to achieve the strategic priorities for the first five years only and came to be known as the Strategic Plan 2008–2012. It presents the 39 steps under the following five strategic goals:
Strategy 1: Strengthen the foundations

Strategy 2: Increase our student load to 9000 EFTSL by 2013

Strategy 3: Perform in the top third of universities on standard educational measures by focusing particularly on selected scales where we currently perform below that level

Strategy 4: Perform in the top half of universities on per capita research measures

Strategy 5: Engage effectively with the world around us (Strategic Plan 2008–2012, pp12–13)

The Strategic Plan 2008–2012 has four key targets and UC monitors performance towards these targets through a set of KPIs. Of the four key targets, three relate to achieving the improvements specified in strategies 2, 3 and 4. The fourth target relates to investing $100 million, in addition to normal operating revenue, to implement the five strategies and associated steps. While UC meets its targets on increasing student load and improving performance on standard educational measures, more time will be needed to achieve some measures, such as research performance. The funding strategy to revitalise the University needs careful monitoring, as many steps within the five strategies have been funded out of normal operating funds rather than the $100 million capital funding raised, thus putting pressure on University’s operating budget (section 2.2.4).

Three years into the plan, UC has revised the Strategic Plan to spell out its goals and targets for the next five years. By 2018, the University wants to be ‘recognised as a unique educational eco-system providing or supporting learning at all stages of life’ (PF p13). It plans to achieve this by bringing the various UC entities such as the UC schools, UC College, and UC University together as the UC Group under the banner ‘UC for Life’. The University proposes to establish a polytechnic as a part of this group. While the University wishes to become an internationally recognised research university by 2018, it intends that the UC Polytechnic will establish itself as a practice-led higher education institution within the UC Group.

The Vice-Chancellor and the Council have been successful in the re-vision to promote the concept of UC as an ‘omniversity’ under the ‘UC for Life’ banner. The re-vision has made a positive impact on staff engagement with the various strategies of UC. The approach appears to be sound and is proactively addressing the changes in the external environment of tertiary education. The external environment presents other opportunities that may result in further new developments within the revised strategic plan. It is too early to comment on the deployment or results.

2.2.1 Increasing Student Load

The Strategic Plan 2008–2012 has a target to increase student load to 9000 EFTSL by 2013. In 2011, with a student load of 9288 EFTSL, UC has already reached its target. Both domestic and international student numbers have increased over the years (data item 4.1). The University attributes much of its growth in domestic enrolment to the Undergraduate Admission Strategy, predicated on three admission streams differentiated by Australian tertiary admission rank (ATAR) or derive equivalent rank cut-off. These pathway streams enable school-leavers and mature age applicants to participate in higher education. As a result, UC has become a high-access institution with the median ATAR reducing over the same period (data item 4.2). However, the University has strengthened its support programs for the students who enter UC with a lower ATAR.
The ‘smart study passport program’, which includes generic skills support, in-discipline support, peer assisted learning, library support, and faculty learning resource centres is a good initiative. Students in a pathway program are supported by the UC College and can move into the University if they successfully complete their pathway program (section 3.9).

Growth in student numbers requires a corresponding increase in staff numbers and campus infrastructure. Until recently, the alignment was weak between capital work priorities and the University’s strategic plans for projected growth in student and staff numbers relating to teaching and research. To address this gap UC established a Capacity Assessment Advisory Group in 2009. The Group advises the Registrar on long-range capacity and the implications of rising student and staff numbers on support services and campus infrastructure. In addition to ensuring that the plans for infrastructure and other support services are linked to the forward projections of student and staff growth, the Group now needs to give attention to the ways in which the impact of technology on teaching delivery will affect future infrastructure requirements.

**Affirmation 1**

The University of Canberra’s establishment of the Capacity Assessment Advisory Group is affirmed, as a useful way for the University to plan for campus infrastructure and other support services to match growth in student and staff load.

### 2.2.2 Performance on Standard Educational Measures

UC has a goal of performing in the top third of universities on standard educational measures and has been measuring its progress towards this target through a composite index where a score of 100 equals the beginning of the top third in the sector. The composite index is made up of the five measures of the Course Experience Questionnaire (CEQ) and the Graduate Destination Survey (GDS): Good Teaching, Generic Skills and Overall Satisfaction of CEQ; and Employment, and Further Study of GDS. UC has achieved a score of 100.2 under this index, based on the 2010 data. The University has achieved this goal two years ahead of its target.

**Commendation 2**

The University of Canberra is commended for achieving its goal to be in the top third on standard educational measures two years ahead of schedule.

The University’s mean score on the Good Teaching scale of the CEQ has showed an upward trend since 2006. From a position below the mean for the sector and UC’s comparative cohort in 2006, the mean scores have increased steadily over time. In 2010, the mean moved above that of the sector mean and was close the mean of the comparative cohort. A similar upward movement has occurred for the Generic Skills and Overall Satisfaction measures (data item 4.3). The GDS results for the period 2005–2009 show that the percentage of UC graduates in full-time work has remained above the percentages of the sector and comparative cohort. The percentage of graduates in full-time study has remained below the percentages of all the comparators throughout 2005–2009 (data item 4.4). UC has achieved its target against the composite five measures of CEQ and GDS.

### 2.2.3 Performance on Research Measures

The University has developed a new research strategy to promote and enable a stronger focus on research. The performance review process for academic staff now incorporates a discussion of research performance expectations. Various developments to provide a supportive
environment for researchers and research students have taken place recently or are in progress. These developments include restructuring of the Research Services Office, more support for researchers and supervisors, and strengthening of the policies for higher degree by research (HDR) students.

The percentage of academic staff with a PhD has increased and over 50 per cent of the University's academic staff now have a PhD, compared with 35 per cent in 2007. Although there is no change for HDR load per academic staff member, the number of HDR students has increased. There was an overall increase in total research income in 2008 and 2009 compared with previous years (data item 4.5).

It is evident that early-career researchers are key to the University's ambition to develop as a research-intensive organisation. In this respect, the University has taken a systematic and deliberate approach to staff development and support for early and mid-career academics, either making their first forays into the world of research or re-invigorating an established, but perhaps dormant, portfolio. This support manifests itself through staff training and development, peer support and mentoring, workload allocation and dedicated financial support for research projects.

The re-structured Research Services Office makes effective use of more limited resources to support staff engaged in research and HDR students. Academics express support for the work of the Research Services Office and agree that it is effective. This is particularly evident in the University's approach to managing ethical considerations for research projects, for both staff and HDR student proposals, which demonstrates increased efficiency in an area which has seen considerable growth in recent years. The Research Support Office provides effective support to the University Research Centres as well.

Commendation 3

The University of Canberra is commended for its enhanced support for research activity provided by the restructured Research Services Office, as exemplified by research ethics approval processes.

The 2010 Excellence in Research for Australia assessment identified Engineering and Environmental Science as areas of excellence at UC. UC achieved a rating of world standard in Environmental Sciences; Earth Sciences; Biomedical and Clinical Health Sciences; and Creative Arts and Writing. However, these results are based on research outputs for 2003 to 2008 and therefore reflect the performance of the University prior to the introduction of academic renewal in 2009. During the period 2003–2008, UC's weighted publications showed a strong increasing trend but remained below the weighted publications of all members of the benchmark cohort. The next assessment will provide more insights into the impact of the academic renewal on research performance.

2.2.4 University Revitalisation

In 2008, UC initiated a 39-step University Revitalisation project that it estimated would cost, in addition to normal operating revenue, $100 million to implement fully. It indicated that the development of sections of the campus would be the primary source of these funds. The 39 steps involved a wide range of actions to support the five key strategies. In addition, UC anticipated that the campus would be developed to create a more vibrant atmosphere.

In 2011, while UC had not achieved its objective of raising $100 million primarily through the development of the campus it had however been successful in raising mainly capital funding through attracting private investment in student accommodation and through successful bids
for capital funds from both the Federal and ACT governments. This funding has allowed the University to contribute significantly to Strategy 1 – Strengthening the Foundations – of the University revitalisation project through undertaking a major capital works program to enhance its teaching, learning, research and student support facilities. The student learning commons in the library, the teaching and learning commons, study spaces for collaborative learning and more space for the Teaching and Learning Centre have been achieved. A Campus Masterplan, a Sustainability Strategy, a Space Management Policy, and a Student Accommodation Strategy 2011–2015 are among the notable developments of the past three years. The objective of creating a more vibrant atmosphere has been achieved.

Non-capital activities relating to the other four strategies of the 39 steps appear to have been funded from normal operating revenue, which have added to the pressures on the University budget. The potential remains for additional funding to be derived from campus developments. UC has taken a proactive approach to campus development opportunities and challenges through the establishment of the Campus Development Board. The Board has been established as a committee of the Council, to provide oversight of commercial and third-party campus development, and met for the first time in May 2011.

2.3 RESTRUCTURE PROCESSES

In 2007, UC initiated several separate but interrelated restructure processes. At the time of the 2008 Audit, the outcomes of many of these processes were unknown. This situation led to UC's two-stage audit process, at the University's request, and the status of restructure in 2011 is outlined below.

A review of administrative services resulted in UC shedding 25% of its professional staff workforce in 2008. Further consolidation has taken place and UC claims that the savings on professional workforce have directly resulted in an increase in investment in teaching, learning and research, one of the objectives of the restructure (PF p52). Data provided by UC indicate that the resource allocation for academic costs has improved from less than 50 per cent of the budget in 2008 to 55 per cent in 2010, which in context is a significant improvement.

A review of the structure of academic organisational units has not resulted in any change. The University's faculty structure has remained the same since 2007. The smaller faculties that were given until 2010 to grow to a sufficient size to become viable will continue to exist until the end of 2012, to allow some of the external environmental factors to become clear. A viability analysis, being discussed, is expected to provide a further perspective on the financial and academic performance of academic units within the faculties.

A review of academic governance has enhanced consistency in the implementation of policies and practices. In its 2009 audit report, AUQA recommended ‘that the University of Canberra clarify academic governance operating procedures including the new Council subcommittees, Academic Board priorities, and faculty boards’ roles and responsibilities to ensure strong and consistent implementation’ (Recommendation 3). Since 2008, the University has strengthened the position descriptions, terms of reference of committees and the reporting lines. Oversight of these developments by the Academic Board is evident from the minutes of meetings. The University’s Policy Framework Manual, which was only just approved at the time of the 2008 Audit, has been in use for the last few years and has resulted in consolidation of practices and procedures (section 2.5).

In 2007, UC undertook a review of its courses and disciplines. Addressing the recommendations of the review, the University has introduced new courses in its areas of strength, reviewed its curricula, established signature themes, introduced a winter term,
refurbished the learning spaces and improved the online facilities, among others. Introduction of five signature themes, namely, work-integrated learning, research-led education, internationalisation, interdisciplinarity, and greater student access, choice and flexibility has been an important factor in establishing the University’s strategic priorities and development. Use of these themes has ensured that staff are fully aware of priorities and ambitions across the University. In some areas, it may take a little longer for the impact of the signature themes to permeate all levels of the institution. In the areas where the alignment is most evident, such as in research-led education, there is good understanding and engagement from staff at all levels. UC plans to promote the theme of research-led education through rewards and incentives for the integration of research and teaching, and through the introduction of an inquiry-based curriculum. UC has taken this theme as its focus for 2011.

Commendation 4
The University of Canberra is commended for its use of ‘signature themes’ which has brought an institution-wide focus and impetus to strategic curriculum issues.

The review of the budget model was instrumental in developing the cost allocation model that was introduced in 2010 and refined further for 2011. In the 2011 budget the University’s support costs have been allocated to the faculties using two cost drivers namely student and staff numbers. The cost allocation model appears to provide useful information on the relative costs of the faculties’ activities, including contribution margins, and has the potential to assist the University to meet its targets for future operating results.

The Business Process Simplification Review has resulted in the outsourcing of facilities maintenance, routine IT and finance, HR and student administration business processes and other administrative processes. The University has been monitoring the outsourcing arrangements through regular reports against expected outcomes. Some aspects of this process need more time to demonstrate their impact but the University considers that these changes will lead to cost savings. The 2008 Audit recommended that the ‘University of Canberra ensure that business continuity plans are developed for the University’s critical activities, in particular those areas that rely heavily on enterprise system applications’ (Recommendation 5). In addressing this recommendation, UC has developed a Business Continuity Management Framework and within this framework individual business continuity plans are being developed for areas such as student management systems. Short-term disaster recovery plans for IT systems that support UC’s core business are well in place. Other aspects of the plans are still evolving and the University has not yet fully addressed this recommendation.

Overall, the restructure processes have proven to be successful and have had a significant impact on several core areas of the University. However, implementation of some of the most important processes commenced only in 2011. Although the University has undergone a period of rapid change and positive development in recent years, at times, there has not been adequate follow-through, resulting in uneven implementation of change. A lack of effective follow-through was noted as an issue in the 2008 Audit and the University was asked to ‘address the intent of the 2003 audit report recommendations and ensure that the earlier lack of follow-through is not repeated with the recommendations in 2008 AUQA Audit Report’ (Recommendation 1). The situation in 2011 is much better, as greater attention is being given to implement the 2008 audit recommendations and affirmations. While it is acknowledged that there have been significant changes to the higher education policy environment over recent years, a range of initiatives that could have been progressed were not implemented in a timely manner. Once again, the Audit Panel was presented with initiatives that can only be assessed in regard to their planning, not their success. There is a sense that there is so much
new activity and review that detailed, thorough implementation may be at risk. Senior management supporting the VC and the governance committees of the Academic Board and the Council need to ensure that UC can demonstrate a sustained culture of effective implementation, not only one of continual planning and review.

**Recommendation 1**

It is recommended that the University of Canberra strengthen its ability to achieve sustained and timely implementation and follow-through of its plans and priority actions.

2.4 LONG-TERM FINANCIAL PLAN

The 2008 Audit listed two major areas for improvement on the business and financial aspects of the University. The report recommended that ‘the University of Canberra develop a contingency plan to address the impact on strategic planning targets that could occur as a result of any shortfall in income from planned campus development’ (Recommendation 4). The Report also affirmed that ‘the University of Canberra continue to follow through with actions arising from the recommendations of the PhilipsKPA report, in particular, and as a matter of priority the actions relating to business planning, asset strategic planning and cash flow modelling’ (Affirmation 4). While the University has acted on the PhilipsKPA report to a large extent and made considerable improvements in its financial reporting and budgeting, it strongly considers that a contingency plan recommended in the 2008 Audit is not necessary. The progress report submitted to AUQA in 2010 and the update provided for the 2011 audit argue that the University has been successful in funding its strategic plan targets and therefore a contingency plan is not necessary.

The University has continued with its ambitious plans and is proceeding with a borrowing program to fund the University’s strategic plan, address backlog maintenance and invest in campus development. An external diagnostics report and the University’s financial performance reflected in the audited financial statements of the last two financial years indicate that the Council and University management will need to monitor closely the University’s progress to ensure that the University maintains the capacity to continue to balance its budget and support the borrowing program.

In the light of this the University has developed a long term financial model to allow management to build scenarios for different combinations of operating results and capital programs over a 10 year period. Recent financial reports and results have indicated that this model will need to not only address the additional material costs associated with increased salaries and deferred maintenance but also return the operating budget to surplus as soon as possible after four years of underlying deficits to maintain liquidity without the need for cash advances or borrowings. Other major considerations will be the impact of the lifting of caps in 2012 on domestic student enrolments and a high level of uncertainty around international enrolments. A sensitivity analysis for 2011 carried out by the University indicates deficit budgets for 2011 in the worst-case scenarios. Contingency plans need to be developed for these scenarios and should extend to the long term financial plan. Considering the risks involved in these plans it would be prudent to undertake an external validation of the long term financial plan and the associated sensitivity analyses and contingency plans.

**Recommendation 2**

It is recommended that the University of Canberra take action to develop financial contingency plans and independently validate its long term financial plans.
2.5 ACADEMIC GOVERNANCE AND QUALITY MANAGEMENT

The 2008 Audit recommended that ‘the University of Canberra strengthen the oversight mechanisms for quality management to enable attention to quality at this critical time of systems and governance and strategy change’ (Recommendation 2). It also recommended that ‘the University of Canberra clarify academic governance operating procedures, including the new Council subcommittees, Academic Board priorities, and faculty boards’ roles and responsibilities to ensure strong and consistent implementation’ (Recommendation 3). It further affirmed ‘the steps being taken by the University of Canberra to enhance institutional performance reporting to the University Council and to the senior management to support informed decision-making in the discharge of their responsibilities’ (Affirmation 1). During the past three years UC has strengthened its academic governance and quality management to a large extent through the review of academic governance as part of the restructuring process (section 2.3).

At the time of the 2008 audit, the Pro Vice-Chancellor (Quality) was about to retire and following his retirement, the University Registrar has been made responsible for quality assurance. The University has developed a Quality and Standards Framework for which the Academic Board provides governance and oversight and the Planning and Quality Unit is responsible for coordinating the activities. The Framework is still in its infancy and communication to the broader University community requires much attention. Implementation of the Quality and Standards Framework has been both lengthy and partial.

A key component of the Framework is the Course & Teaching Evaluation and Improvement (CATEI) system that integrates five student surveys:
- UC Course Experience Questionnaire (UC–CEQ)
- Australian Graduate Survey Course Experience Questionnaire
- UC Unit Satisfaction Survey
- Australasian Survey of Student Engagement
- Formative Evaluation Options.

Use of this system provides an excellent opportunity for UC to develop a fully-integrated approach to student feedback, which will enhance the University’s ability to understand student opinion and also to identify areas of strength and weakness. The survey results are reviewed by associate deans (Education) and these results, plus action plans, are reported to the relevant faculty boards and the University Education Committee. However, to be fully effective, the survey process must be supported by effective tools for analysis and follow-up of actions taken. This is occurring in some faculties and UC is now addressing the institution-wide implementation.

**Affirmation 2**

The University of Canberra’s plan to fully implement an integrated framework for student feedback is affirmed, for its potential to play a significant part in the enhancement of quality of teaching and learning.

UC has strengthened its processes for reporting to the Council on KPIs, engaging the various University committees in quality management and defining the terms of reference for these committees. While the terms of reference of individual committees are adequate, there are occasional instances where both University processes and staff understanding of these processes are unclear in respect of the interrelationship and hierarchy of the committees. For example, the approval process for articulation agreements and transnational programs contains different interpretations of the roles of different committees. This lack of clarity could lead to burdensome, or complex, processes, requiring multiple approvals and retaining a high
risk of rejection of a proposal at quite a late stage at senior committee level. It could lead to one matter being pursued through variant, and parallel, pathways, while failing to fully exploit the potential for expert analysis of some issues.

There is also a potential risk that senior committees become less engaged with key issues. One example is the monitoring of relative performance of student cohorts entering UC degree programs through different pathways and the effectiveness of the support provided to them. It is not clear to the senior committees which committee is responsible for triggering actions and monitoring results. UC acknowledges that reporting to the Academic Board needs strengthening in this regard.

**Affirmation 3**

The University of Canberra’s intentions to monitor the relative academic performance of student cohorts entering through different pathways and the success of learning support provided to these cohorts are affirmed.

### 2.6 OTHER DEVELOPMENTS

#### 2.6.1 Academic Renewal

The 2008 Audit affirmed ‘the University of Canberra’s intention to develop its capability plan, in particular the development of workload and workforce planning, policies and principles’ (Affirmation 2). UC has made considerable progress in relation to this affirmation and it has implemented capability plans in key areas such as capital management, workforce and people, technology, library, information management, risk management, and water and energy plan. As part of workforce planning, UC initiated an academic renewal project in 2009, to attract, recruit and retain early career academics.

While it is still too early to evaluate the impact of academic renewal on all aspects of the academic workforce, the University’s academic staff age and seniority profiles have become better balanced since 2009. During the last three years, 69 assistant professors have been appointed. A significant number of these appointments have been strategically located in various units of the University in order to contribute to the University’s ambitions for the signature themes of internationalisation and research-led education, particularly with the appointment of academic staff with demonstrated international standing. The new appointments provide role models for existing staff, as well as engendering a better environment for constructive development and academic engagement.

**Commendation 5**

The University of Canberra is commended for its academic renewal project that has attracted significant new talent to the University and reinvigorated the research culture.

#### 2.6.2 Performance Development and Review Process

The 2008 Audit affirmed UC’s Performance Development and Review process (Affirmation 3). The Performance Development and Review process, revised in 2009, uses a range of measures to evaluate individual academic staff performance including survey results on student satisfaction, research publications, research grants and research student supervision. The process has been embedded at all levels of the University and has undergone consultation and review throughout the pilot phases of implementation. While staff recognise that this has been a challenging process at times, they consider the process provides a clear direction for all
staff and supports the developing research agenda within the University. Staff know what is required of them, as well as what is needed to improve in the future and are clear that the targets set are located within an institutional framework informed by strategy and in keeping with the University’s vision.

Commendation 6

The University of Canberra is commended for the implementation of its Performance Development Review process and achieving significant endorsement from academic staff.

2.6.3 Winter Term

To make the course delivery attractive to students, UC introduced a Winter Term in 2010. The first winter term had 638 EFTSL enrolled in 177 units. The results of the Unit Satisfaction Survey for these units showed improvements in the Overall Satisfaction Scale from 76.2 for the previous semester to 78.1. Similarly the Student Experience Scale recorded improvements in results.

The University carried out an internal evaluation of the winter term that resulted in 14 recommendations. The key recommendations are regarding organisational and planning issues involving workloads, unit offerings, use of flexible delivery, and training of staff. The evaluation report acknowledges that flexible delivery should play a significant role in any future semester at UC, not just winter term. The Teaching and Learning Centre is planning for a series of workshops and staff training opportunities in flexible delivery.

Affirmation 4

The University of Canberra’s plans to strengthen flexible teaching and learning arrangements in the winter term courses to embed a quality and sustainable winter term provision are affirmed.

The University recognises that, while the internal evaluation endorses the merits of the winter term, there is some developmental work required in ensuring student understanding of its purpose and in managing students’ expectations, particularly with respect to accelerated progression. While staff recognise the opportunity afforded to them to practise alternative modes of delivery, students, generally, have a lesser understanding that such changes are pedagogically sound and based on a clear plan which assures equivalence with more traditional modes of delivery.
3 THEME: INTERNATIONALISATION

The scope of this theme in the 2008 Audit was:

- arrangements for the teaching and learning of international students in Australia
- arrangements for teaching and learning of transnational students offshore (including partner arrangements)
- internationalisation of the curriculum
- overall student experience including student mobility and staffing arrangements
- other international activities.

The 2011 Audit agreed to the same scope and examined the results and improvements the University provided for the four recommendations and three affirmations of the 2008 Audit. The 2011 Audit also considered the other developments since 2008 that relate to internationalisation of the University.

3.1 INTERNATIONALISATION

UC defines internationalisation as ‘the process of integrating international, intercultural, and global dimensions into the purpose, functions, and delivery of education at the University of Canberra, where domestic students, international students, and staff participate and benefit equally’ (International Education Policy 2010). The Academic Plan, which supports the implementation of the Strategic Plan, contains an international section that highlights the steps and key initiatives of the University for internationalisation.

The 2008 Audit affirmed the intent of the University to ensure renewed staff commitment and engagement in its international goals (Affirmation 5). The Panel notes the University’s progress, including those initiatives currently underway. The development of internationalisation as one of the signature themes has contributed significantly in taking these initiatives forward (section 2.3).

3.2 STRATEGIC DIRECTIONS

Two strategies guide the international priorities of UC – Strategy 2 on growth in student numbers and Strategy 5 on engagement with the world around. To implement Strategy 2, UC plans to pursue the following steps:

- ‘Step 21: Develop profitable articulation pathways and transnational education programs with high quality overseas universities, with whom we can also collaborate in research or consultancy;
- Step 22: Improve strategies and practices for recruiting domestic and international students’ (Strategic Plan, p12).

The University has been successful in its strategy to increase both onshore and offshore international student enrolments. Its offshore student enrolment through transnational articulation agreements and pathway arrangements has been consistent, although UC has more to do to assure the quality of its transnational teaching provisions (section 3.10).

The University is aware of the improvements needed for international programs. Appointment of the PVC (International & Major Projects) and review of the international strategy are expected to lead to actions required to address the challenges in promoting internationalisation in the University. The terms of reference of the review include reassessing
the University infrastructure and services required for sustainable international programs, and identifying key international partnerships that the University should develop to achieve its international goals. The University expects that the review will facilitate the development of a global engagement strategy and refinement of policies and procedures in line with this strategy. At the time of the 2011 Audit the outcomes of the review were yet to be finalised but discussions with senior management indicate a clear understanding of areas that need improvement and good practices that can contribute to the University’s global engagement strategy.

**Affirmation 5**

The University of Canberra’s review of its international strategy is affirmed, for its potential to assist the University to develop a global engagement strategy and to refine policies and procedures for international activities.

Strategy 5 is in relation to UC’s external engagement. The Strategy includes, amongst other items, internationalisation of curriculum and expanding the University’s relationships in East Asia and South Asia. The University is well on its way in expanding its relationship in the region, with ongoing efforts being placed on internationalisation of curriculum (section 3.4).

### 3.3 MANAGEMENT RESPONSIBILITIES FOR INTERNATIONALISATION

The PVC (International & Major Projects), a new appointment made in early 2011, provides leadership on international matters. The Academic Board has overarching responsibility to monitor the academic quality of all international programs through the University Education Committee. The International Education Committee, a sub-committee of the University Education Committee chaired by the PVC (International & Major Projects), is responsible for the management and review of international activities including transnational programs. The positions of a Deputy Director (Transnational and Training) and an International Articulation Officer are very new. There are two associate deans (International) in the three faculties that offer transnational education programs. A dedicated subunit, the International Student Support Service, manages all aspects of support for the international students. Overall, there is a sound system and structure in place with clarity over responsibilities for various aspects of internationalisation. Many of these developments are new and require time to demonstrate their effectiveness.

### 3.4 INTERNATIONALISATION OF THE CURRICULUM

UC defines internationalisation of the curriculum as ‘the provision of curricula, pedagogies and assessments that foster understanding of national and global perspectives, and of how these intersect and interact with personal perspectives’ (Internationalisation of the Curriculum Procedures 2010).

The 2008 AUQA audit noted the enthusiasm of staff for revitalisation of internationalisation of the curriculum but with inconsistent levels of priority across discipline areas. It also affirmed the plans of the then newly established International Education Committee to implement a consistent approach to internationalisation of the curriculum (Affirmation 6). In three years, the International Education Committee has not fully achieved its purposes and continued work is being undertaken in this area across the University with many initiatives being recent.

The University has developed procedures to guide staff in internationalising the curriculum. The procedures, approved only in 2010, require new course proposals to address internationalisation of the curriculum and a Gateway Group screens the course proposals to
consider alignment with UC’s signature themes including internationalisation. This is a good beginning and has made a positive impact on the awareness of staff on the broader meaning of internationalisation.

While UC has a good system in place to ensure that the new course proposals give attention to internationalisation of the curriculum, embedding those principles and practices in course renewal is uneven. However, UC has evident ‘champions’ in this area, and has supported staff engagement in this signature theme through workshops and seminars. At this stage there is partial and uneven understanding of UC’s expectations in internationalising the curriculum across the faculties, as evidenced by the internal audit of internationalisation of the curriculum in the faculties.

Much of the academic staff’s understanding relates to inclusion of international content or case studies but with the growth in numbers and the cultural diversity of international students, some academic staff are struggling to manage linguistic and cultural diversity in the classroom, particularly in group work. This is an area for more staff development, particularly given the increased success of the University in the AusAid Africa program that provides scholarships to students from Africa to study in Australian universities. The Teaching and Learning Centre has developed a staff professional development program that includes internationalisation. At the time of the audit this program was at an early stage of implementation.

The University believes that a two-year Australian Learning and Teaching Council grant to develop resources and curricula on cross-cultural communication will strengthen internationalisation of the curriculum. The project is being conducted in partnership with Griffith University and will pilot a curriculum internationalisation model in two UC faculties. The Panel was advised that, if successful, the model will be rolled out across the University.

The proposed restructure of the International Education Committee by the PVC (International and Major Projects), as part of the review of the International Strategy, provides for a standing working group on internationalisation of the curriculum. This structure has the potential to provide continued focus and leadership for faculties. The role of the associate deans (International) is relatively new, and predominantly focussed on the business dimensions of international work such as transnational education, rather than leading in curriculum aspects where the associate deans (Education) appear to have a greater role.

**Affirmation 6**

The University of Canberra’s actions to develop a shared understanding of internationalisation of the curriculum in the University community are affirmed.

### 3.5 ENGLISH LANGUAGE PROFICIENCY

The University’s admissions criteria for international students onshore in coursework programs are governed by the Admission Policy for Undergraduate and Postgraduate Coursework Courses, which includes requirements related to proficiency in English language. The English language requirement stipulates an overall band score of 6.5 IELTS (Academic) and permits exemptions by faculty deans. When exemptions are made to accept an IELTS (Academic) score of 6.0 such exemptions are required to be reported to the Academic Board. The admission policy has been adhered to for the onshore international students and during the last two years no such exemptions in English language requirements have been recorded for onshore students. However, that is not the case for offshore students.
In the 2008 AUQA report, it was recommended that the University clarify its English language admission requirements for transnational students (Recommendation 6). In addressing that recommendation, the University determined that the UC English Language Test should not be used where IELTS is available and that the UC admission policy should be followed. Although the admission policy of UC requires that the admission requirements for onshore and offshore students should be the same, at the time of the audit, there were transnational programs in China that were being treated as exceptions to this rule. While the onshore English language requirement is an IELTS score of 6.5, the offshore Master of Business Administration program requires an IELTS score of 6.0. Further, achievement of the IELTS score is required only prior to the commencement of the units taught in English. The issues related to these programs, in particular non-adherence to the policy requiring equivalence in English language entry standards across onshore and transnational programs, are discussed in section 3.10.5.

3.6 INTERNATIONAL STUDENTS ONSHORE

3.6.1 Recruitment and Articulation

The University has around 190 agents in various countries who market UC programs. Recruitment and frontline international student inquiry services have been contracted out to an external company. Procedures to monitor the agents, promotional materials and marketing information are adequate.

The processing of admission applications from students has been outsourced to an external company. The University monitors the performance of this company through weekly reports. The Portfolio states that outsourcing has helped the University to meet its target application processing turn-around time of three business days, despite increases in volume, and that the application conversion rate has improved.

Articulation agreements have contributed significantly to the growth of international students in the University. The number of international articulation partners has increased from eight in 2008 to 21 in 2010. Memoranda of agreements clearly outline the criteria under which students from these partner institutions will be accepted into the University.

3.6.2 Growth in International Student Enrolments

At the time of the 2008 Audit, the University’s international student numbers had been in decline for several years. This trend has changed and since 2008, the University has experienced growth in the international student numbers with onshore load increasing by 24 per cent between 2008 and 2009 and a further 33 per cent between 2009 and 2010. In 2010, the University had a total international student load of 1973 EFTSL, including 1623 onshore international EFTSL and 351 transnational student EFTSL, from 150 countries. The University draws the largest proportions of international students from China, Vietnam, India, Saudi Arabia and Indonesia. Since 2007, the University has increased the number of its students from Vietnam, Indonesia and Saudi Arabia.

The University attributes growth in international student enrolments to several factors and the Panel formed the view that among the various factors, the increasing visibility of the UC brand, the cohort-based transnational articulation agreements, and the pathway articulations provided by onshore partner institutions play a significant role. The growth in student numbers is supported with commensurate development of student support services (section 3.6). An emphasis on articulation agreements, while focusing the University’s areas of activity within a smaller pool of international partners, also helps to mitigate risks in the recruitment of onshore international students on an individual basis.
Commendation 7

The University of Canberra is commended for the effective deployment of articulation agreements and pathway arrangements that are in accordance with its Strategic Plan.

3.6.3 Monitoring Academic Performance

The 2008 Audit affirmed ‘the intentions of the University of Canberra to enhance systematic monitoring of academic performance of international and transnational students at the University level’ (Affirmation 7). The University’s progress in this area is satisfactory as evidenced below.

The University uses four key measures to assess academic performance of international students: student retention; progression; grade point average; and student experience. The University compares the academic performance of the transnational student cohort with onshore international students and domestic students. At the end of every semester, these comparisons are analysed by the faculty assessment boards and the University Education Committee.

The University’s 2008 retention rate for international first-year bachelor students returning in 2009 is 90.3 per cent compared to that of the benchmark group at 87.8 per cent. The University’s first-year bachelor level international student retention rate has improved 4.4 per cent since 2005. For the same cohort of students, success rates have increased from 74.9 per cent in 2007 to 76.3 per cent in 2009. Trend data on retention rates suggests that onshore international students have higher retention rates than domestic students, while the retention rate of transnational students in 2009 and 2010 is lower than both domestic and onshore international students. The progress rate of transnational students is higher than both onshore international and domestic students (data item 4.6).

During 2002–2008, attrition rates of commencing overseas students have remained near the average for UC’s comparator cohort for most of the period. Trend data for the period 2003–2009 indicate that the progress rates of commencing overseas students remained well below the comparative cohort rates for most of the period. The decreasing trend from 2003 to 2008 shows some recovery in 2009 (data item 4.7).

Data collected and analysed by the University indicate that the grade point average of transnational students is slightly higher in 2009 and 2010 than the other cohorts of students.

The 2008 Audit recommended that ‘the University of Canberra develop a holistic evaluation framework and cycle within which domestic, onshore international and transnational student experience is regularly evaluated, analysed, compared and improved upon’ (Recommendation 7). The University has addressed this recommendation satisfactorily through student surveys as given below.

The University participated in the 2010 International Student Barometer survey that measures student satisfaction using importance and satisfaction ratings. Due to low response rate it is difficult to draw reliable conclusions from this survey. However, the surveys conducted by UC provide some useful information. The University uses its own survey UC–CEQ, modelled after the national CEQ, to measure the experience of all undergraduate and postgraduate coursework students. The analysis of UC–CEQ data between 2007 and 2010 suggests trend improvements across all three scales for both international and domestic onshore students. The 2010 result shows that onshore international student satisfaction is slightly lower than the
overall UC results, with a difference of 2.0 per cent in the Good Teaching Scale, 2.0 per cent in the Generic Skills Scale and 6.0 per cent in the Overall Satisfaction Scale (data item 4.8).

UC conducts a survey to measure student satisfaction with individual units of study and teachers. The survey covers all students including transnational students. The survey results indicate that international student satisfaction is higher than that of the domestic students (data item 4.9). Survey results for onshore international students are incorporated into the CATEI framework which allows for comparisons of different cohorts for each teaching period (section 2.5).

3.7 SUPPORT FOR INTERNATIONAL STUDENTS

UC has achieved significant improvements in the quality of provision of services to international students to support the growth in numbers and increase in cultural diversity with committed and culturally diverse staff. Critical incident management, the obvious treatment of all students on campus as UC students inclusive of pathway and English language course students, and the improved and increased number of structured programs for international students were commented on favourably by the international students who were interviewed.

Most support services are centralised for all onshore students with some dedicated services for the international students. The dedicated support structure includes a personal advisor allocated to every commencing undergraduate international student from their home faculty and this system is proving to be effective.

While the Student Equity and Support Unit provides orientation programs for all onshore students, ISSS provides dedicated programs to international students and support their transition and engagement. International student queries are managed by the Student Centre and International Student Advisors. The University handbook outlines the key services and contacts for various support services and the University also has a student guide to University policies and student services. Both of these publications are comprehensive and are available on the University website.

The Academic Skills Centre assists all students including the international students in the first year of study. It offers a series of workshops covering study skills, thesis writing, exam preparation, intensive grammar, and writing and research skills. The centre also offers consultation sessions for students identified to be at risk academically. Total student consultations have increased over the years and the feedback collected by the centre in 2010 indicates 91.5 per cent satisfaction with ‘confidence development’ and 96 per cent satisfaction with ‘developing or learning new skills’. The international students value the services of the Centre.

Other programs for international students include an international student ambassador program, which provides students with an opportunity to network and gain work experience, and the Peer Assisted Learning Sessions program which encourages interaction in an academic environment between international and domestic students.

The dedicated international student support through the ISSS office has clearly focused on the needs of the international students and provides more than a simple triaging of student issues. The support model offers a managed process of problem-solving, which might be strengthened in the future through more systematic record-keeping and tracking generic issues, so that common concerns can be escalated to become matters of development at faculty and University level. The contribution of the ISSS office and the development of an efficient support service were reflected upon favourably within a number of different contexts.
Commendation 8

The University of Canberra is commended for the effectiveness of its International Student Support Service provision and its contribution to enhancing the international student experience and the international reputation of the University.

The management of on-campus accommodation is outsourced and it continues to be an area for improvement. The University provides 1629 beds on-campus for student accommodation through various arrangements but these numbers do not match the demand. There are concerns from students regarding the management of all accommodation on campus, some of these being specifically related to the needs of different national and cultural groups. The University is aware of these issues and anticipates addressing them as it implements the Student Accommodation Strategy 2011–2015. The six steps of the strategy aim to provide accommodation for 50 per cent of the non-local students it predicts will enrol by 2018. At the time of the audit, the University was considering the outcome of the review of its outsourcing arrangements with Campus Living Villages, the principal accommodation operator of UC. During interviews with various groups dealing with international students the Panel noted the expectation that the review outcome will help the University to address the needs of international students.

Affirmation 7

The University of Canberra’s review of the outsourcing arrangements for campus accommodation is affirmed.

3.8 STUDENT MOBILITY

The Marketing and International Office is responsible for study abroad and exchange. It organises induction and orientation sessions for successful applicants. The University has partnerships and agreements with 70 universities in 22 countries for exchange and study abroad opportunities. In 2010, 75 UC students participated in outbound study abroad or exchange programs. The University plans to increase the opportunity for UC students with a target of 116 outbound students in 2011, 186 outbound in 2012 and 325 outbound in 2013. To achieve the stated mobility targets, UC has put in place an effective buddy system where returning students mentor new study abroad participants. The University is encouraged to consider supplementing external funding sources with its own budget provision to support student mobility. The University could consider ways of securing a greater share of national funding provision to support student mobility.

3.9 ONSHORE PARTNERS

The University of Canberra College (UCC), one of the onshore partners to the University, is a part of the University of Canberra Group, but under a separate governance structure from the University. It is an accredited registered training organisation and offers four higher education diploma programs in business, information technology, communication and international studies. The College provides pathways to international students who are not eligible for direct entry into University programs. Successful completion of a diploma enables students to enter the second year of University courses. UCC also offers programs for domestic students in preparation for tertiary studies. UCC has experienced strong demand for its range of courses since 2008.

The University monitors the academic performance of UCC students by comparing their performance on several measures with that of other UC students. The retention rate of UCC
students is higher than for UC students, while the progression rate is lower compared to all cohorts of students including domestic, onshore international and transnational students. Additional support services are provided to the pathway students through the Academic Skills Centre.

The University of Canberra English Language Institute (UCELI) is a part of UCC and the integration has worked well. UCELI provides a range of English language testing services and preparatory courses. Successful completion of UCELI courses allows entry into UC, other universities and to other UCC programs.

Results of a survey of student satisfaction with UCELI programs, conducted by UCELI in 2010, indicate 91 per cent overall satisfaction with the language training courses. The 2009 i-graduate survey indicates that UCELI performed 6.5 per cent above the sector average on overall learning satisfaction, 6.3 per cent above the sector average in overall living satisfaction, and 5.6 per cent above the sector average in overall support (PF p77). As an integrated entity, UCC and UCELI have proved to be successful partners in providing pathways to UC.

Commendation 9
The University of Canberra is commended for its constructive relationship with the University of Canberra College in the provision of pathway programs.

3.10 EDUCATIONAL PARTNERSHIPS OFFSHORE

In 2008, AUQA recommended that ‘the University of Canberra clarify its transnational education strategy and objectives, taking into account more robust budget models; considerations of academic and program sustainability; and quality and compliance requirements both Australian and in country jurisdictions’ (Recommendation 8). UC has made progress in consolidating the transnational partnerships by closing problematic programs. New key appointments including the PVC (International and Major Projects), ongoing review of the International Strategy, a strengthened role of the International Education Committee in monitoring transnational programs, and the implementation of policies on establishment of partnerships have made some impact and will continue to strengthen the transnational activities of the University. However, there are several areas that still remain to be addressed satisfactorily.

3.10.1 Partnerships and Strategy

The ‘International Education Policy and Transnational Programs Procedures’ approved in 2008 sets out clear guidelines in the establishment and quality assurance of transnational programs. Compliance with the policy and procedures is monitored by the International Education Committee. A key component of the procedures is the annual quality assurance review report and the annual course report required to be prepared by the course convener for each transnational program. After considering the recommendation of the 2008 Audit report, quality issues revealed by the quality assurance reports of course conveners, and noting the risks around financial sustainability, the University has closed two transnational programs and another program is being taught-out. At the time of the audit in 2011, the existing partnerships were with reputable partners, many now celebrating decade long relationships. The University has around 600 students enrolled in nine transnational programs with seven partners in China, Hong Kong and Singapore.

UC academic staff and faculties involved in longstanding transnational education partnerships are clearly committed and competent. However, transnational education continues to be the
greatest reputational, academic and business risk area for UC’s international work, despite the closure or non renewal of partner programs identified as risks in the prior audit. The University has not fully addressed the recommendations in this area from the last audit. Issues that need to be urgently addressed are discussed in section 3.10.5.

In its Performance Portfolio the University states that it aims to improve ‘its transnational education strategy and planning processes, so that offshore partnerships, and teaching and research relationships, develop systematically and in alignment with the University’s broader regional, educational and engagement goals’ (PF p98). The University has a clear ambition to become more strategic within the transnational education arena. However, the strategy and rationale for transnational education is not well understood beyond the senior management. There is considerable tension between the aspirations of the senior management and their realisation at faculty and disciplinary level, with a tendency to fail to sufficiently manage, and develop, existing relationships while establishing a more regularised model of engagement with newer partners. This has led to differential processes across the faculties and lack of a shared understanding, and institutional vocabulary, for the development of transnational education. In the absence of clarity on the rationale, there have been instances where the University has returned to ad hoc decision making, which is potentially high risk. To optimise the benefits from the current and planned reviews of partnerships and strategies, and to realise its aspiration to expand in Asia, the University should consider clarifying its transnational education strategy and rationale.

Recommendation 3

It is recommended that the University of Canberra clarify its transnational education strategy and rationale to inform planned reviews of current operations and prospective opportunities.

3.10.2 Quality Assurance

Quality assurance processes for the transnational programs are working satisfactorily for the programs taught in English but there are some gaps in the bilingual programs (section 3.10.5). For every transnational program, the Transnational Programs Procedures require an annual quality assurance review report and an annual course report. The course reports provide information on commencing enrolments, student load, market demand, retention rates, progress rates, CEQ results, and UC–CEQ results, while the quality assurance report is more qualitative in nature. In general, UC uses these reports well to compare data and identify areas for improvement or change.

3.10.3 Staff Induction

The 2008 Audit recommended that the University develop a mandatory standard induction program for staff teaching offshore (Recommendation 9). This recommendation was actioned in 2010. The Teaching and Learning Centre developed an induction program and offered a three-hour workshop in October 2010, attended by 19 staff. UC intends to run these workshops bi-annually. A Transnational Education Induction Program website that provides case studies has been developed. While staff induction remains as an area for improvement, the plans and activities of the Teaching and Learning Centre seem to be addressing this area now.

3.10.4 Programs Taught in English

In transnational programs taught in English, teaching is shared by the UC staff and those appointed by the partner institutions in accordance with parameters given by UC. University
staff travel to partner institutions for brief periods to teach and conduct intensive workshops for offshore students. Following these intensive teaching periods, offshore staff and students rely on the online learning portal Moodle for interaction with the UC staff. In cases where the assessment tasks are marked by the staff of the partner institutions, UC selects a statistically valid number of assessments for moderation. Assessment practices and moderation in the programs taught in English are monitored well.

3.10.5 Bilingual Programs

The bilingual programs, as currently represented, present a particular academic and reputational risk to the University.

The University offers three bilingual programs in four locations in China. The Master of Business Administration program is offered in two locations, at the East China University of Science and Technology and at Ningbo University. The Master of Education offered at the Harbin Normal University and the Master of Educational Leadership offered at Hangzhou Normal University are also bilingual, being taught in English and Mandarin.

The general pattern for bilingual programs is to allow students to complete 50 per cent of the units in Mandarin and the rest in English. The learning materials including the assessment tasks are provided by UC and the materials for the units of study in Mandarin are translated into Mandarin and taught by the staff of the partner institutions. A random sample of assessments from the Mandarin units is translated into English for UC staff to moderate.

The English language admission criteria for students undertaking the Master of Business Administration program is an IELTS score of 6.0. This is a variance from the program’s stated English language proficiency entry requirement for onshore students. Furthermore, students with 5.5 IELTS are given conditional admission with a requirement to achieve a score of 6.0 prior to commencing the units taught in English. Students who meet all the course requirements including the language requirement receive a testamur similar to the one given to any UC student onshore known as a ‘standard testamur’ in the University.

At Ningbo, students who are unable to meet the IELTS test score of 6 also receive a testamur, at the completion of other requirements, and the testamur states that the study was undertaken in English and Mandarin. UC considers this as a ‘non-standard testamur’.

Both the Master of Education offered at Harbin Normal University and the Master of Educational Leadership offered at Hangzhou Normal University require an IELTS score of 6.5 to gain a standard University testamur. The University issues a non-standard testamur to students who do not meet the English language requirements.

What the testamurs attest to regarding learning outcomes and linguistic proficiency is open to misinterpretation by students and the public. While the annotated testamur is given to students who do not meet the admission criteria in respect of English language proficiency, the annotation implies bilingual proficiency. The Academic Board needs to ensure that onshore and offshore standards of admission and completion are following stated UC policies.

**Recommendation 4**

It is recommended that the University of Canberra take effective action immediately to address the substantive academic issues of English language entry requirements, equivalence of standards and certification in relation to language of delivery in its bilingual programs in China.
Recommendation 5

It is recommended that the University of Canberra immediately reconsider the issues related to issuing non-standard testamurs.

Use of the term ‘non-standard testamur’ is very ambiguous and the University may care to consider using the terminology used in the Australian Government’s AusLIST as it has signed up to the AusLIST code. Some of the UC programs listed under the AusLIST require updating. AusLIST requires the programs to be available for enrolment at the time of listing and the Panel found UC programs that were in teach-out mode listed.

Recommendation 6

It is recommended that the University of Canberra ensure full alignment with the AusLIST Code of Good Practice.

Further information on the transnational programs visited by a delegation of the Audit Panel is at Appendix C.
Notes

The University of Canberra (UC) is a non-aligned University as defined in its Institutional Performance Portfolio (IPP). For benchmarking purposes, the University of Canberra is benchmarked against the following universities: Flinders University, James Cook University, Murdoch University, University of Tasmania and the University of Wollongong.

The sector is defined in the University of Canberra 2011 IPP as consisting of the higher education Table A providers as listed in the *Higher Education Support Act 2003* section 16–15.

ITEM 4.1: Student Load

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>EFTSL</th>
<th>2006</th>
<th>2007</th>
<th>2008</th>
<th>2009</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Domestic</td>
<td>5760.89</td>
<td>5716.25</td>
<td>5824.31</td>
<td>6583.83</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Overseas</td>
<td>1587.52</td>
<td>1609.05</td>
<td>1675.49</td>
<td>1927.37</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>7348.41</td>
<td>7325.30</td>
<td>7499.80</td>
<td>8511.20</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


ITEM 4.2: Cohort Median Tertiary Entrance Scores

![Graph showing median Tertiary Entrance scores for students overall and institution levels from 2003 to 2009.](image)

ITEM 4.3: Bachelor Graduate CEQ Core Scales

Source: Course Experience Questionnaire, managed by Graduate Careers Australia.
ITEM 4.4: Graduates in Full-time Employment and Graduates in Full-time Study

Source: University of Canberra Institutional Performance Portfolio (IPP).

ITEM 4.5: Research Performance (Weighted Publications and Research Income)

Source: Research statistics collections of Department of Innovation, Industry, Science and Research.
ITEM 4.6: Performance of Onshore International Students – Undergraduate and Postgraduate Levels

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Retention</th>
<th>2008</th>
<th>2009</th>
<th>2010</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Domestic Students</td>
<td>76.8%</td>
<td>76.8%</td>
<td>73.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Onshore International</td>
<td>78.4%</td>
<td>80.3%</td>
<td>79.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Transnational</td>
<td>79.3%</td>
<td>65.4%</td>
<td>71.9%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Progress Rates</th>
<th>2008</th>
<th>2009</th>
<th>2010</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Domestic Students</td>
<td>88.7%</td>
<td>87.9%</td>
<td>87.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Onshore International</td>
<td>81.5%</td>
<td>82.9%</td>
<td>86.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Offshore International</td>
<td>94.4%</td>
<td>94.4%</td>
<td>95.2%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grade Point Average</th>
<th>2008</th>
<th>2009</th>
<th>2010</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Domestic Students</td>
<td>4.54</td>
<td>4.56</td>
<td>4.59</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Onshore International</td>
<td>3.92</td>
<td>4.04</td>
<td>4.32</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Offshore International</td>
<td>4.46</td>
<td>4.69</td>
<td>4.76</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Performance Portfolio of the University of Canberra, p91.

ITEM 4.7: Cohort Commencing Overseas Students Progress and Attrition Rates


<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>2007</th>
<th>2008</th>
<th>2009</th>
<th>2010</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Good Teaching Scale</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>All Students</td>
<td>62%</td>
<td>68%</td>
<td>77%</td>
<td>78%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Australian Onshore Students</td>
<td>62%</td>
<td>68%</td>
<td>77%</td>
<td>78%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>International Onshore Students</td>
<td>68%</td>
<td>73%</td>
<td>73%</td>
<td>76%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Generic Skills Scale</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>All Students</td>
<td>73%</td>
<td>73%</td>
<td>81%</td>
<td>82%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Australian Onshore Students</td>
<td>73%</td>
<td>72%</td>
<td>81%</td>
<td>82%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>International Onshore Students</td>
<td>73%</td>
<td>80%</td>
<td>82%</td>
<td>80%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Overall Satisfaction Scale</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>All Students</td>
<td>76%</td>
<td>77%</td>
<td>83%</td>
<td>82%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Australian Onshore Students</td>
<td>76%</td>
<td>77%</td>
<td>83%</td>
<td>82%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>International Onshore Students</td>
<td>68%</td>
<td>76%</td>
<td>78%</td>
<td>76%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Performance Portfolio of the University of Canberra, p88.
# ITEM 4.9: Unit Student Satisfaction – International Onshore versus Domestic Students

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Scale</th>
<th>Student Cohort</th>
<th>2009</th>
<th>2010</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Semester 1</td>
<td>Semester 2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Good Teaching Scale</td>
<td>All Students</td>
<td>69.8%</td>
<td>70.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>International Onshore Students</td>
<td>75.1%</td>
<td>74.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Domestic Onshore Students</td>
<td>69.0%</td>
<td>70.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>International Offshore</td>
<td>89.1%</td>
<td>95.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Generic Skills Scale</td>
<td>All Students</td>
<td>71.7%</td>
<td>72.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>International Onshore Students</td>
<td>75.9%</td>
<td>76.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Domestic Onshore Students</td>
<td>71.0%</td>
<td>71.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>International Offshore</td>
<td>89.4%</td>
<td>92.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Overall Satisfaction Scale</td>
<td>All Students</td>
<td>75.6%</td>
<td>75.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>International Onshore Students</td>
<td>75.8%</td>
<td>76.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Domestic Onshore Students</td>
<td>75.5%</td>
<td>75.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>International Offshore</td>
<td>87.0%</td>
<td>94.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student Experience Scale</td>
<td>All Students</td>
<td>74.4%</td>
<td>73.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>International Onshore Students</td>
<td>76.0%</td>
<td>76.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Domestic Onshore Students</td>
<td>74.1%</td>
<td>73.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>International Offshore</td>
<td>89.1%</td>
<td>89.4%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Performance Portfolio of the University of Canberra, p89.
APPENDICES

APPENDIX A: THE AUDIT PANEL

Dr Philip Cardew, Pro Vice-Chancellor (Academic), London South Bank University, England

Dr Anna Ciccarelli, Deputy Vice-Chancellor and Vice-President (International), University of Queensland

Mr Graeme Dennehy, Consultant, Former Chief Operating Officer, Deakin University (Chair)

Dr Antony Stella, Director, Regulation and Quality Assurance, Tertiary Education Quality and Standards Agency

Observer:

Ms BU Huanfang, Deputy Director, Department of Academic and Information Exchange, China Education Association for International Exchange
APPENDIX B: ABBREVIATIONS AND DEFINITIONS

The following abbreviations and definitions are used in this Report. As necessary, they are explained in context.

ATAR...................................................Australian tertiary admission rank
AUQA .................................................Australian Universities Quality Agency
CATEI.................................................Course & Teaching Evaluation and Improvement
CEQ.....................................................Course Experience Questionnaire
DBA.....................................................Doctor of Business Administration
EFTSL..................................................equivalent full-time student load
GDS.....................................................Graduate Destination Survey
HDR....................................................higher degree by research
IPP .....................................................institution performance portfolio, a portfolio of institutional information finalised between a university and the Australian Government Department of Education, Employment and Workplace Relations (qv)
ICM......................................................International College of Management
IELTS ...................................................International English Language Testing System
IT ..........................................................information technology
KPI .......................................................key performance indicator
National Protocols .........................National Protocols for Higher Education Approval Processes
PF p .....................................................Performance Portfolio page reference
Portfolio ............................................Performance Portfolio
PVC ......................................................Pro Vice-Chancellor
TEQSA ................................................Tertiary Education Quality and Standards Agency
UC......................................................University of Canberra
UCC .....................................................University of Canberra College
UCELI ..................................................University of Canberra English Language Institute
UC–CEQ.................................University of Canberra – Course Experience Questionnaire
APPENDIX C: TRANSNATIONAL PROGRAMS VISITED BY THE PANEL DELEGATION

Considering aspects such as materiality and risk, the Panel selected the following two programs for further investigation:

- Master of Business Administration, Ningbo University, People’s Republic of China
- Doctor of Business Administration (DBA) and Doctor of Philosophy (PhD), Asia Global, Singapore

A delegation of the Panel consisting of the Audit Director and the Panel Chair visited the programs in Singapore and the People’s Republic of China.

Master of Business Administration, Ningbo University

The International College of Management (ICM) of Ningbo University is a longstanding partner of UC. Communication between the partners is good although frequent change in personnel at UC was seen by ICM as an aspect that needs addressing.

The program is offered jointly by ICM and UC. Six subjects are offered by UC and they are taught in English by UC staff with tutorial support by co-teachers of ICM. Assessment for these subjects is in English. Six subjects are taught in Mandarin by ICM. Assessment for these subjects is in Mandarin. For moderation purposes, selected assignments from the subjects taught in Mandarin are translated into English and sent to UC staff.

Co-teachers are all from Ningbo University and UC reserves the final say in selecting them. The co-teachers have spent time at UC to work with UC staff and learn the UC style of teaching and learning. They are appreciative of the way the UC staff work with them. While the co-teachers are academically qualified, there is evidence to suggest that not all have an appropriate level of English language proficiency to be able to teach fluently in English. The program has attracted some international students from non-Mandarin backgrounds and they do all the subjects in English including the six ICM subjects taught by the co-teachers without any intensive teaching periods by the UC staff. This adds to the concerns about the integrity of the bilingual teaching.

Students make good use of the online discussion forum and the online library of UC. They consider that the email interaction with UC staff is very good, although feedback on assignments is delayed at times. Contextualisation of knowledge is an issue for both staff and students, who would like to have more Chinese case studies.

Alumni are employed in management positions and they are very positive about the skills they learnt from the UC program and the positive effects of the program on their management style and career enhancement. The program is valued well in the market.

Doctor of Business Administration and Doctor of Philosophy, Asia Global

Asia Global is a private education institution. Although it is a new partnership for the University of Canberra, started in 2010, the senior management of this institution has been involved in offering transnational education programs of Australian universities for many years.

The DBA and PhD programs are spread over six semesters. Every semester has a 20-hour intensive weekend seminar where UC staff teach courses and guide students through the research proposal. All teaching and supervision is provided by UC staff. UC plans to involve local supervisors in the near future. Students are very satisfied with the interaction they had with UC staff and value the advice they receive on their research proposals.
The program structure is such that, students who meet the entry requirements for the PhD program are admitted to PhD and those who do not have adequate research induction at postgraduate level are given conditional admission to DBA. However, the first two semesters are the same for both programs and after completing the first year of DBA, students have the provision to transfer to PhD if deemed by their supervisors to be working at PhD level. It involves an upgrade seminar at the beginning of year 2. When the delegation visited Singapore, students had completed semester 1 and just commenced semester 2. Since the program is in the first year, there have not yet any transfers from DBA to PhD.

The minimum English proficiency required for entry into the programs is the equivalent of IELTS (Academic) 6.5 as per the UC admission policy and compliance with the language requirement is not an issue in these programs.

Although the team that is involved in this program is very confident about the robustness of the procedures to be followed, some aspects of the program such as the supervision model and the transfer from DBA to PhD will need careful monitoring. Most of the students who enter the DBA hope to transfer to PhD after the first year and this might pose a challenge to managing expectations when the current cohort completes the first year. UC may like to consider whether the Academic Board has rigorous assessment procedures in place to ensure that this stage of transition is handled objectively.

Students are very positive about the support they receive from Asia Global. They would like an opportunity to have a period of time on campus in Canberra. Students are also positive about the balance between contextualisation and international examples the program provided for. Asia Global and UC have jointly developed a handbook for the students, which is very informative. Students are required to have membership in one of the local libraries and generally the students find online resources they receive from UC to be valuable.

The programs attract applicants with two major motivations: change of career and professional development. The fact that employers have sponsored students to take these programs indicates the market value of these programs. However, UC’s interaction with employers and industry in Singapore is still evolving and the University should explore possibilities to involve the employers and industry in strengthening these programs.