

Appendix A: Auditing the Academic Board

The purpose of this appendix is to raise an initial list of questions that might be helpful in a self-audit of the Academic Board. The section draws upon personal reflections about a possible approach to auditing the activities and impact of the Academic Board.

These reflections are informed by ongoing discussions at meetings of the NSW Chairs of Academic Boards concerning implications of the AUQA audit process for Academic Boards.

The questions listed below might also be a useful starting point for a self-audit of the University Council, and of other committees at the University.

Approach

- how does the Academic Board characterise itself? what is its mission? how does its mission relate to its historical development, context and capabilities? what are its major strengths and areas of emphasis?
- what are its strategic objectives? how well disseminated are these objectives? how widely supported are they?
- how well do the Board's strategic objectives relate to the mission, vision, values and goals of the University? are these objectives adequately informed by benchmarking?

Deployment

- does the Academic Board work well in terms of its mission and strategic objectives? what are the mechanisms for monitoring its performance? are the responsibilities of the Chair effectively discharged? what are the mechanisms for monitoring the performance of the Chair?
- what are the mechanisms for monitoring the implementation of Academic Board policies and procedures? what are the relevant accountabilities at different levels of the organisation? are these well understood by academic staff and students?
- what are the procedures for managing input by members (including student members) and committees to policy development by the Academic Board, and to the review of its policies and procedures?
- how well are members of the Academic Board inducted to their role and responsibilities as members?

Results

- what does the Academic Board know about the quality of the University's academic programs? how does it know?

- against what benchmarks does the Academic Board appraise its performance?
- do key stakeholders play any role in appraising the Academic Board's performance?

Improvement

- what is the process whereby the Academic Board identifies the need for improvements? how well understood by staff and students is this process? how effective is the process?
- what are the follow-up mechanisms whereby the impact of significant policies and procedures approved by the Academic Board is evaluated?

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