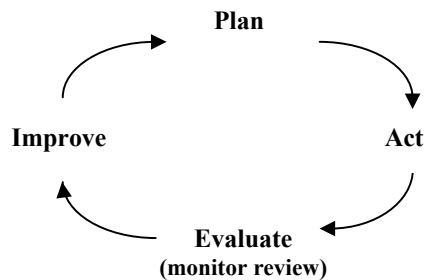


# Quality Activities 2004

## Report to Council

### 1 Introduction

The Monash approach to quality is identified in “Quality at Monash: Values and Principles” ([www.adm.monash.edu.au/cheq](http://www.adm.monash.edu.au/cheq)) and is based on the principles of ‘fitness for purpose’ and the quality cycle. Fitness for purpose suggests that the university as a whole and each of its components identifies and defines what is to be achieved and is then judged on the extent to which these objectives are achieved. The quality cycle outlines a continuous process of improvement to achieve objectives. Values underlie and inform the quality cycle. An appropriate way for reporting on quality is therefore to acknowledge the values that underpin the work of the University and the elements of the quality cycle, as follows.



### 2 Values

2.1 “Still Learning: The Report of Our Self-Review” (2002) recommended that further work be undertaken to articulate and afford more prominence to values. Following a values clarification exercise during 2003, “Excellence and Diversity: Strategic Framework 2004-2008” defined an extended set of values, confirming some values that had previously been acknowledged and adding new ones to inform the university’s operations.

2.2 Addressing another recommendation of “Still Learning”, values, and a definition of “high quality” with respect to teaching and learning, were developed by the Quality Sub Committee of Education Committee for endorsement by Education Committee.

### 3 Planning

3.1 A revised planning framework is being introduced over the next two years. The framework comprises annual plans, such as the faculties’ and divisions’ operational plans and a new university-wide document in the nature of a business plan; the five year strategic framework titled “Excellence and Diversity” approved earlier in the year by Council; five year functional plans such as the Learning and Teaching Plan and the Research/Research Training Management Plan; and, a new 20 year statement of

strategic direction to replace “Leading The Way” and “The Global Development Framework”. The 20 year statement will be discussed by Council at its retreat in February 2005.

- 3.2 In addition to the above documents, campus academic plans are being drafted for all eight campuses. Processes are well-advanced and by the end of 2004 the first draft of each will be available for consultation. They are likely to be assembled as a single document, with chapters for each campus.
- 3.3 Planning for the Australian Universities Quality Agency audit of Monash together with the Higher Education Quality Committee of the Council for Higher Education audit of Monash South Africa, was updated to take account of the likely audit date of 2006. A timeline document outlining actions that have been taken to prepare for audit since 2000 and updating planned actions through to 2008 was approved by the Vice-Chancellor’s Group and presented to Senior Management Committee and Academic Board (Attachment 1).

#### **4 Actions**

- 4.1 The Vice-Chancellor’s Group (Quality), a specially convened group of VCG (and itself a recommendation of “Still Learning: The Report of Our Self Review”) continues to monitor the implementation of recommendations from “Still Learning.” Among items completed in 2004 were: Teaching-Research nexus definition and institutional action plan (Attachment 2); Teaching-Research nexus benchmarking project with the University of Sydney (Attachment 3); further roll-out of the senior leadership and management development programme; development of a protocol for ‘blind marking’ of examination scripts; planning / budget integration, planning framework and campus planning initiatives (see above); and, Monash Experience Questionnaire and Employer Survey Reports (see below).
- 4.2 The Service Level Agreement project saw the agreement of service statements for all central services provided across the university (ITS, CeLTS, Library, Monash International, Student and Staff Services, Facilities and Services, Financial Resources Management, Audit and Risk, Centre for Higher Education Quality, Corporate Finance, Marketing and Public Affairs, University Planning and Research, Monash Research Graduate School, Research Grants and Ethics, Solicitor’s Office and Animal Services (the sign-off of one faculty on a sub-service of one area was postponed until a structural issue is settled). This means that faculties and central services have agreed and have a record of what is included in each service, quality standards and costs for the service, KPIs concerning performance standards (reports on which are updated regularly) and a process for addressing performance issues.

## **5 Monitoring**

- 5.1 Reports of the Monash Experience Questionnaire (MEQ) were delivered providing the first comprehensive view of the Monash student experience for current students and clear evidence to guide actions for improvement. Over seventeen thousand students completed the survey (40% response of the entire population) providing extensive quantitative data together with over 43,000 comments to open ended questions. Scales in the learning and teaching area included: Good Teaching; Generic Skills; Learning Community; Monash Graduate Attributes; Student Support; Monash Approach to Teaching and Learning; and, Other Important Areas of Teaching and Learning. There were also six scales measuring satisfaction with administration and student support and a scale measuring the General University Experience. Summary reports for the whole university, for faculties and for campuses were developed together with individual reports for each faculty and campus. Faculties and campuses were provided with raw data (both quantitative and qualitative) to allow for more detailed sub-analyses, which is presently under way (see Attachment 4 Briefing Paper).
- 5.2 Reports of the Monash Employer Survey were delivered including an overall summary report for the University and reports for each Faculty. The Employer Survey gathered responses from employers of Monash graduates (319 employers completed the survey) with regard to the skills and attitudes that employers regarded as most important and their satisfaction with the skills and attitudes of Monash graduates that they have employed. The survey provides information for the development of Monash graduate attributes and offers the opportunity for relationship building with employers (Attachment 5).
- 5.3 A strategic initiative to redevelop the processes and software to support unit evaluation commenced in 2004 and is scheduled for completion in 2005. When complete, this will allow better support for online unit evaluation, the production of unit management information and compliance with requirements for the DEST fund to support performance based teaching and learning.
- 5.4 In terms of monitoring the national and international quality scene, the SDV-C and PV-C (Quality) both chaired their second AUQA audit and maintained relationships with AUQA and other relevant international quality agencies.

## **6 Review**

- 6.1 The reinvigoration of reviews that began with the development of systematic guidelines in 2000 continued with 37 reviews scheduled for 2004 (22 reviews were completed in 2002 and 19 in 2003). All reviews scheduled and completed, together with information on panel membership, major recommendations etc are available on a searchable Reviews Database at:  
<http://www.adm.monash.edu.au/cheq/reviews/cgi-bin/psearch.cgi>

- 6.2 Following a recommendation of “Still Learning” central monitoring of reviews was strengthened by instituting a process whereby issues of institutional strategic importance arising from external review reports are identified by the SDV-C and PV-C (Quality), comment is elicited from the area being reviewed and further follow-up is undertaken if necessary.
- 6.3 “Still Learning” suggested the need for institutional themes to be reviewed in greater depth. Two such important institutional level thematic reviews commenced in 2004 as the International Self-Review and the Research Review. Led by the SDV-C and the DV-C Research, the review team visited all campuses, held open fora and interviewed staff and students from all interested groupings. The outcomes of these reviews are scheduled for release in early 2005.
- 6.4 During 2004 the Transnational Quality Assurance and Improvement Committee of the University (TQAIC, formerly OQAC), with a mandate to review transnational partnership operations, reviewed operations at the largest Singaporean partner (TMC). The process included all faculties involved undertaking a self review against an improved and more detailed reporting template, followed by a site visit to TMC by the review team and the development of a review report including suggestions for improvement.
- 6.5 The support available for areas of the University undertaking reviews was strengthened during 2004 with further development of: the Reviews Database; the Review secretary service; three workshop sessions on preparing the self review document, conducting the review and implementing recommendations of reviews.

## 7 **Improvement**

- 7.1 An ‘improvement’ website to provide feedback to stakeholders (such as students, staff and employers) concerning the results of surveys and improvements made as a consequence was established at: <http://adm.monash.edu.au/cheq/impovements.html>. By way of example, the first survey to have improvements lodged on the website was the Caulfield Services and Facilities Survey with the following improvements reported:

- bus service doubled in frequency to Clayton and return - now every 15 minutes;
- library hours - increased daily and weekend hours (details on the website);
- computer labs - three extra teaching labs and one designated for postgraduate study only;
- postgraduate lounge including four networked computers;
- postgraduate study space to be opened later in semester 2, 2004;
- food services - coffee cart, high quality coffee vending machine and ‘Anton's Flying Woks’ opened (Juice Bar and Sushi Bar to open in semester 2, 2004);

- new building (September 2005) will include three computer labs, two for postgraduate teaching and one for postgraduate study and include an 'upmarket' eatery and a further postgraduate lounge.

7.2 Many practical improvements to quality were developed at local level and reported through: the Faculty Quality Coordinators' Network meetings; the Support Services Quality Network meetings and the Quality Management Committees and groups of faculties and service areas.

7.3 With improving definition and reporting of KPIs across the organisation, improvements in KPIs will increasingly be capable of being tracked to provide time series data.