



Australian Universities Quality Agency (AUQA) Audit Action Plan

8 August 2007

The following Action Plan was provided to Ms Lois Sparkes, Director of the Quality Branch in the Department of Education, Science and Training, at the request of the Honourable Julie Bishop, the Minister for Education.

The Minister had requested the response of the Australian College of Theology (ACTh) to three of the eight recommendations contained in the February 2007 AUQA Audit Report of the College.

The Dean responded as follows:

Recommendation 2 – Teaching and Learning Plan

A consortium-wide teaching and learning plan has been devised for the three-year period 2008–2010. The plan is based on seven teaching and learning goals derived from the College's Statement of Mission, Objectives, Values and Vision. The plan is included at Appendix A.

Recommendation 5 – Common Student Evaluation of Teaching Instrument

A common student evaluation of teaching instrument will be implemented by the University of Sydney's Institute for Teaching and Learning (ITL) to commence in first semester 2008. The College proposes to evaluate the six introductory units, which all degree students must take, at the rate of one per semester over a three-year period. This means that in each semester 350 students across the ACTh network of affiliated colleges will have the opportunity to evaluate teaching and learning in the one unit. Data will be processed by the Institute and forwarded to the ACTh office, and from there to the Academic Audit Committee. Each semester the Committee will report its findings and recommendations for action to the Academic Board.

In addition the ITL will make available a student evaluation form that can be downloaded from the ACTh website with space for additional questions that can be devised by each affiliated college to take into account different delivery modes and institutional contexts.

Recommendation 7 – Quality Management Implementation Plan

The Plan, which indicates improvements to the College's quality management system, is included at Appendix B.

Mark Harding
Dean and CEO
8 August 2007

Appendix A

The accompanying Plan is the result of wide-ranging consultation. It was circulated to the Coursework and Diploma Awards Boards and to affiliated colleges in early May and was the subject of discussion at the Consortium Conference of affiliated college principles and chairs of college councils on 23 June 2007.

Suggestions and recommendations were incorporated into a revision that has since been tabled at the meeting of the Board of Delegates on 23 July and the Coursework Awards Board on 3 August 2007.

The ACTh's Teaching and Learning Goals

The seven goals are derived from the Statement of Mission, Objectives, Values and Vision of the ACTh (August 2006) and available at <http://www.act.org.au/>.

The goals are consistent with the College's firm commitment to enhancing teaching and learning. In the tables below each goal is accompanied by a number of initiatives, a statement of the desired outcome and a year in which the outcome is to be reached, an assessment of the priority of the initiative, and the person (or entity) chiefly responsible for the carriage of the initiative.

The goals are:

1. The College aspires to building courses, policies and quality processes that will be widely regarded as comparable with best practice in the self-accrediting tertiary sphere, such processes to include ensuring the quality of delivery of coursework units regardless of mode.
2. The College will maintain, review, monitor and improve stated quality assurance procedures as stipulated in course submissions and the ACTh's quality management system, especially with respect to the work of the Departmental Heads, the unit field moderators, the Academic Audit Committee, and course advisory panels.
3. The College will monitor each affiliated college's attention to quality improvement, provision of resources (especially library and IT) that support scholarly endeavour.
4. The College will ensure that the learning and formational experience of students is of the highest possible quality, and will monitor student, graduate, stakeholder and employer satisfaction.
5. The College will provide support for sustained research by the academic staff of affiliated colleges.
6. The College will be committed to maintain an engagement in teaching and research informed by modern pedagogy and by scholarly developments in academic and pastoral theology.
7. The College aims to be in a position to secure self-accrediting status and then, possibly, after further consultation, modified university title in accordance with the National Protocols for Higher Education Approval Processes (July 2006).

Teaching and Learning Plan (2008–2010)

Goal 1

The College aspires to building courses, policies and quality processes that will be widely regarded as comparable with best practice in the self-accrediting tertiary sphere, such processes to include ensuring the quality of delivery of coursework units regardless of mode.

Initiative	Outcome	Priority	Responsibility	Date
The ACTh will be proactive in informing registrars of the policies and processes of the ACTh.	1. The Academic Administrator continues the work of liaising with registrars. 2. Bi-ennial surveys of registrars continue to show satisfactory levels of satisfaction with the work of the ACTh office.	H	ACTh Academic Administrator.	2007–
The IT Committee will be proactive in seeking improvements in the operation of TAMS through (1) a TAMS users group and (2) decisive action taken by the IT Committee.	Progress is reported on implementing improvements to TAMS through the action of the user's group and the IT Committee.	H	IT Committee.	2007–
The ACTh will enhance the work of the Academic Audit Committee as a standing committee of the coursework boards inter alia to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • monitor the quality of the delivery and assessment of units (including multi-streaming), • oversee the process for reviewing unit outlines, • review CEQ and other student evaluative data and recommend action, • consider moderators' reports, and • register the approval of lecturers who do not formally meet ACTh academic criteria. 	Academic Audit Committee is established; KPIs point to improvements in quality of teaching and learning across the consortium.	H	Diploma Awards Board (DAB), Coursework Awards Board (CAB).	2008–
The ACTh will be involved in benchmarking academic and administrative policies and processes with peer theological institutions in the private and public sphere.	The Dean continues to participate in the benchmarking activity of the Committee of Deans, and establishes benchmarking relationships with other quality providers not represented on the Committee.	H	Dean.	2007–
The ACTh will be proactive in contributing to the scoping study of teaching and learning to be undertaken under the auspices of the discipline-based initiative scheme of the Carrick Institute.	The ACTh fully participates in the discipline-based initiative scheme, and shares data derived from the Carrick study across the ACTh network with a view to addressing deficiencies in ACTh performance.	M	Dean.	2008
The ACTh will continue to implement improvements recommended through the BCNZ audit of the ACTh's moderation processes.	1. Improvements are being initiated by the CAB as noted in progressive reports of the BCNZ auditors. 2. A review of improvements has been carried out by BCNZ.	H	CAB.	1. 2007– 2. 2010
The ACTh will initiate benchmarking of academic and administrative policies and processes with another overseas partner.	A benchmarking partnership with another prestigious overseas institution is established.	H	Dean.	2008

Goal 2

The College will maintain, review, monitor and improve stated quality assurance procedures as stipulated in course submissions and the ACTh's quality management system, especially with respect to the work of the Departmental Heads, the unit field moderators, the Academic Audit Committee, and course advisory panels.

Initiative	Outcome	Priority	Responsibility	Date
ACTh Departmental Meetings will continue to monitor reviews of unit objectives and bibliographies.	The Heads continue to oversee this work.	H	Departmental Heads.	2007–
ACTh Departmental Meetings will continue to enhance the experience of collegiality across the ACTh network.	Surveys show that Departmental meetings are held in a collegial spirit.	H	Departmental Heads.	2007–
An enhanced moderation process addressing the quality of diploma units will be proposed and implemented.	The Diploma Awards Boards approves the moderation process.	M	Dean.	2008–
The unit field moderators will continue to be attentive to issues relating to awarding of grades and deficiencies in teaching and learning in the coursework degrees in their reporting to the Academic Audit Committee.	The work of moderators continues; bi-annual recommendations to colleges from the Academic Audit Committee.	H	Dean.	2007–
The work of the Academic Audit Committee in seeking redress of deficiencies as noted by the unit field moderators will produce an increasing level of (1) compliance with moderation processes and (2) improvements in teaching and learning.	Demonstrable improvements are in place with respect to (1) and (2) across the whole ACTh network.	H	Dean.	2007–
Recommendations of the course advisory panels will be submitted to the relevant boards and committees.	Relevant ACTh boards are considering recommendations of the panels and acting on them as necessary.	M	Dean.	2007–
The ACTh will contract an external advisory panel to review ACTh course structure and advise the boards.	The advisor completes the report with recommendations for action.	H	Dean.	2008

Goal 3

The College will monitor each affiliated college's attention to quality improvement, provision of resources (especially library and IT) that support scholarly endeavour.

Initiative	Outcome	Priority	Responsibility	Date
Colleges will be proactive about ensuring that no academic staff member has regular responsibility for more than a full-time load.	Colleges are ensuring that combined supervision, teaching and administration loads of staff do not exceed 1.0 except in exceptional circumstances.	H	Colleges monitored by the ACTh Quality Manager.	2008–
Colleges will be proactive in providing access to library and technical resources supporting critical engagement with scholarship.	Significant tangible improvements are reported in college annual reports.	H	Colleges monitored by the ACTh Quality Manager.	2008–
Colleges will have adequate general staff to manage administration.	All colleges are adequately staffed.	H	Colleges monitored by the ACTh Quality Manager.	2007–

Goal 4

The College will ensure that the learning and formational experience of students is of the highest possible quality, and will monitor student, graduate, stakeholder and employer satisfaction.

Initiative	Outcome	Priority	Responsibility	Date
The ACTh office will publish attrition and graduation rates each semester with a view to the College addressing the causes of unsatisfactory trends.	Attrition and graduation rates all show positive trends by the end of 2010.	M	ACTh Academic Administrator.	end 2010
The ACTh office will maintain involvement in the GCA surveys, reporting to boards aspects that require improvement.	Action is taken on issues highlighted by graduates; there is an observable trend towards greater candidate satisfaction.	H	ACTh Academic Administrator.	end 2010
The ACTh will adopt a common student evaluation of teaching instrument with a core of common assessment items and a bank of elective questions that can be customised by colleges to take into account different delivery modes, institutional contexts and formational experience provided.	The evaluation is in place. Recommendations for improvement are being acted upon by ACTh affiliates. Positive affirmations in the Agree or Strongly Agree category reach 75% of respondents for all questions.	H	Dean.	2008–
All academic staff will be listed on the ACTh's register of approved lecturers through the recommendations of the Academic Audit Committee.	The register is in place.	H	DAB, CAB.	2008–
The ACTh will develop a common external stakeholder and employer survey with a core of common items and a bank of elective items that can be customised by the colleges to take into account diversity of college ethos, institutional cultures and traditions, and formational experience provided.	Employers (church and mission agencies) report positively on recent ACTh graduates.	H	Dean.	2008–

Goal 5

The College will provide support for sustained research by the academic staff of affiliated colleges.

Initiative	Outcome	Priority	Responsibility	Date
When possible the Board of Delegates will continue expand the funds available to support academic staff in their research.	The Board increases funds available.	H	Board of Delegates.	2007– (\$15K+)
The ACTh will conduct an annual conference on ministry and scholarly topics, and will encourage the sharing of scholarship and research at Departmental meetings.	Conferences are being held. Departmental meetings are increasingly seen as valuable fora for the dissemination of research and recent scholarship.	M	Dean, ACTh.	2008–
The ACTh office will continue to encourage and facilitate opportunities for the publication of research.	Publication of Content and Setting of the Gospel Tradition in 2008 to be followed by at least one other publishable project in 2010.	L	Dean, ACTh.	2008, 2010

Goal 6

The College will be committed to maintain an engagement in teaching and research informed by modern pedagogy and by scholarly developments in academic and pastoral theology.

Initiative	Outcome	Priority	Responsibility	Date
1. The Board of Delegates will continue to make funds available to enhance improvements in pedagogy in affiliated colleges. 2. Colleges are making provision for professional development amounting to 2% of their salary costs.	1. Funds are being used to support such professional development. 2. College annual reports indicate required provision.	H	1. Board of Delegates. 2. Colleges as monitored by the ACTh Quality Manager.	1. 2007– 2. 2008–
Degree-approved colleges will comply with study leave provisions of the ACTh's institutional approval criteria.	Colleges are ensuring that full-time academic staff are able to apply for at least one semester in nine for sustained study leave for research purposes.	H	Colleges as monitored by the ACTh Quality Manager.	end 2008
In addition to maintaining EFTSL in courses that present an equivalent Honours pathway, EFTSL of candidates for Honours will increase from 4 EFT (2007).	A 50% increase in the Honours degrees is achieved.	L	Colleges as monitored by the ACTh Academic Administrator.	end 2010
ACTh HDR load will remain steady at 2% of EFTSL (i.e. 22 EFTSL based on 1,300 EFTSL) in 2007.	HDR load of 2% of EFTSL maintained.	M	Research-approved colleges as monitored by the ACTh Quality Manager.	2010
When possible the Board of Delegates will continue to make available funds to support research training in affiliated colleges.	The Board continues to make funds available at 2007 levels (\$5K) at least.	M	Board of Delegates.	2007–
The College will remain committed to fostering engagement between academic staff and overseas scholars.	The Board of Delegates continues to contribute funds to visiting overseas scholars with input to ACTh colleges.	L	Board of Delegates.	2007–
The ACTh will encourage centres of scholarly excellence in affiliated colleges (e.g., Ridley—Ethics; Morling—Urban Mission).	All research-approved colleges have at least one centre of scholarly excellence.	M	Research-approved colleges.	end 2010

Goal 7

The College aims to be in a position to secure self-accrediting status and then, possibly, after further consultation, modified university title in accordance with the National Protocols for Higher Education Approval Processes (July 2006).

Initiative	Outcome	Priority	Responsibility	Date
The College will seek self-accrediting status in 2008 (or 2009).	Application is successful.	M	Dean.	end 2009
Scholarship profile of research-approved colleges will be enhanced.	College annual reports show enhanced levels of scholarly activity.	H	Research-approved colleges as monitored by the Quality Manager.	2008–
ACTh HDR load will remain steady at 2% of EFTSL (i.e. 22 EFTSL based on 1,300 EFTSL) in 2007.	HDR load of 2% of EFTSL maintained.	M	Research-approved colleges as monitored by the Quality Manager.	2010
Annual ACTh research output among candidates and academic staff will remain steady at about 75 HERDC points.	Annual research output of 75 HERDC points sustained.	M	Research-approved colleges as monitored by the Quality Manager.	2008–
Once self-accreditation status has been achieved further consortium-	Consultation held.	L	Dean.	2010

wide consultation will take place on the wisdom of seeking modified university title.				
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Appendix B

Quality Management System Implementation Plan (August 2007)

The following 12 items represent the key aspects of the ACTh's consortium-wide Quality Management System. Each is accompanied by a brief description of its contribution to assuring quality across the ACTh. This material was submitted to AUQA as part of the Performance Portfolio in September 2006.

Where relevant a table has been appended to each item specifying a schedule and allocation of responsibilities for the roll-out of recommended changes to the QMS identified in the AUQA Audit Report.

In addition, the Dean of the College has begun to implement a response to recommendation 8 which urges the ACTh to develop a comprehensive change-management communication strategy to ensure that planned changes to the QMS are fully known and understood across the consortium. This takes the form of a tri-annual newsletter (February, June, October 2007) distributed to all members of the ACTh Council, principals of affiliated colleges, and academic board members.

Benchmarking opportunities exist among the theological education providers that are represented on the Committee of Deans of Theological Consortia or University Departments. Membership consists of the Deans of the Australian College of Theology, the Melbourne College of Divinity, the Sydney College of Divinity, the Adelaide College of Divinity, the Brisbane College of Theology, St Mark's National Theological Centre (Charles Sturt University), and the Schools or Departments of Theology at the Australian Catholic University, Murdoch University, Auckland University, Otago University and Avondale College. The Committee meets bi-annually.

1. Institutional and Course Approval Criteria

All colleges seeking to be approved to offer ACTh courses are required to make an application to the Board of Delegates and satisfy both the institutional and course criteria specified.

Institutional and course approvals are normally for a period that terminates at the end of the five-yearly cycle of accreditation approvals, i.e., 2001, 2006, 2011. During 2006, the fifth year of accreditation, all colleges were required to re-apply for institutional and course approvals for the next five years (i.e. 2007–2011). Once approved the Memorandum of Understanding is signed between each college and the Board of Delegates. A schedule of courses approved for delivery is attached to each signed MOU.

Approved colleges may seek approval from the Delegates to add further awards to their schedule of course offerings during the five-year cycle.

Improvements planned	Responsibility	Date for implementation
Monitoring of affiliated college compliance with ACTh institutional approval criteria through the annual college report to be enhanced with more formal reporting to the governing body of the ACTh.	Quality Manager	2007–
A thorough review of the criteria should be undertaken, especially to take into account developments in modes of delivery, resourcing of teaching and learning and provision of minimum resources for HDR candidates.	Board of Delegates	2008
Regular review of the terms of the MOU to ensure that the College remains compliant with the terms of the ESOS Act and other relevant state and federal government requirements.	Quality Manager	2007–

2. The Annual Report

The annual affiliated college report is submitted to the Dean by 31 March.

This process monitors the maintenance of human, library and other resources at each college in accordance with the level of course approvals for each college. The Report also tracks changes in governance, progress in meeting strategic goals and action taken on student evaluations and ACTh moderator reports. Matters of concern are communicated by the Dean to the Board of Delegates, and are then followed up.

The Report is submitted with the audited financial statements. These are monitored by the ACTh's treasurer to ensure that colleges are not running into debt. He submits a report summarising the financial position of each to the Finance Committee, underscoring if any further action needs to be taken in accordance with the ACTh's Financial Alert Protocols.

Improvements planned	Responsibility	Date for implementation
Monitoring of affiliated college compliance with ACTh institutional approval criteria through the annual college report to be enhanced with more formal reporting to the governing body of the ACTh.	Quality Manager	2007–
Ongoing advice to affiliated colleges regarding determination of financial cost in replacement terms of delivering theological education to be reviewed.	Board of Delegates	2007–
Benchmarking of ACTh approach to take place with the Melbourne College of Divinity and the Sydney College of Divinity (both consortia).	Dean	2008

3. Five-yearly Self-review

In the final year of the accreditation approvals (2001, 2006, 2011) each affiliated college submits a self-review to the Board of Delegates. The review is based on a demonstration that the college continues to comply with the terms of the Institutional and Course Approval Criteria.

The review also forms the basis of the Dean's official visit to colleges. The visit includes meetings with faculty, students, and college council members, and a tour of the campus. His report, together with the self-review, is considered by the Board concerning affiliated college course approvals for the next five-year period.

Improvements planned	Responsibility	Date for implementation
Five-yearly affiliated college self-review requirements to incorporate fitness for purpose methodology to replace a check of mere compliance with institutional and course approval criteria.	Dean	2010
More regular informal visits to colleges are to be planned in company with senior academic staff of affiliated colleges.	Dean	2008–
Benchmarking of ACTh approach to take place with the Melbourne College of Divinity and the Sydney College of Divinity (both consortia).	Dean	2009

4. Common Regulations and Boards

The ACTh determines the regulations governing the courses it provides and for which it has legal responsibility. These are brought together in the ACTh Handbooks.

The College is served by three academic boards. Each includes representatives from the tertiary sector external to the ACTh and its affiliated colleges who ensure that ACTh practices and regulations are consistent with those operating in the tertiary sphere.

The College has three Departmental Heads. They receive the reports and recommendations of the moderators on student performance at the end of each semester, and to chair meetings of the faculty in their respective department on an annual basis. Within each department each Head assumes the following roles that add value to the work of colleges:

- Mentoring faculty, especially in the case of junior members;
- Fostering scholarly growth in the department;
- Supervising unit reviews, including content and bibliography of units.

Improvements planned	Responsibility	Date for implementation
A policy template for new and existing polices has been recently adopted (2007).	Quality Manager	2007–
New governance arrangements to be implemented in the first half of 2008 to allow the replacement of the current inefficient regime of three academic boards by one with several standing committees.	Board of Delegates (to become a Board of Directors once the ACTh becomes a company limited by guarantee in 2008)	2009
Review of committee structures to take place.	Board of Delegates	2009
Benchmarking of ACTh governance and academic board and committee structure to take place with peer institutions represented on the Committee of Deans.	Dean	2008

5. ACTh Policy on Bibliographies

Students have the right to access the most up-to-date scholarship in each unit of their course of study. To this end the ACTh is committed to drawing up bibliographies which reflect the most current publications in each area of study.

In 2007 and thereafter every two years, all ACTh bibliographies will be reviewed by the unit field moderators reporting to the Departmental Heads with a view to incorporating changes into the ACTh Manuals for the forthcoming year.

The Departmental Heads will ensure that bibliographies—

- are as up-to-date as possible,
- list currently available books,
- maintain a separate list of out of print books considered classics, and
- include relevant journal articles if appropriate.

Improvements planned	Responsibility	Date for implementation
Major review of all bibliographies and units of study to take place.	Departmental Heads	2008
Review of objectives of Master of Divinity units to ensure that there is sufficient discrimination between units offered in the undergraduate degrees and the MDiv units.	Departmental Heads	2008

6. Graduate Careers Australia

Since April 2006 ACTh graduates have taken part in the Course Experience and Graduate Destination Questionnaires developed by the Graduate Careers Council of Australia.

Anne Bates, the ACTh Academic Administrator, will analyse the results of the surveys before sending the data to the GCA. The results of her analysis will be submitted to the Board of Delegates.

Improvements planned	Responsibility	Date for implementation
It would be better to submit data analysis to the Academic Audit Committee reporting to the academic boards.	Academic Administrator	2008
Progress towards target of student satisfaction nominated in the Teaching and Learning Plan to be monitored.	Dean	2008–

7. Survey of Boards

In 2005 and thereafter bi-ennially the Dean's office conducts an anonymous survey of the three Boards and the ACTh Council (from 2008, the College).

The data collected enables the Board of Delegates to assess whether ACTh processes continue to be supported and to alert them (and the Council) to actual or potential misgivings on the part of Board members. As such the surveys will point the way to improvements in the functioning of the College.

Surveys conducted in 2005 resulted in a range of improvements. The process is about to be repeated.

In addition the Academic Administrator visits affiliated college registrars in odd numbered years. In even numbered year the registrars are invited to attend a day conference which the ACTh Academic Administrator convenes. The meeting of registrars for 2008 was held at the ACTh Conference Room on 16 May.

8. Course Advisory Committees

In the second half of 2006, a template for a new course advisory committee was approved.

Three committees were established for existing diploma, undergraduate and MA courses, and research courses. These are designed to ensure that colleges of the ACTh receive mostly external input from stakeholders (mission agencies, denominational bodies), the wider educational context, the professions, industry and the community in the important matter of the evaluation of existing courses and their monitoring. It is also important that each committee has an inbuilt capability enabling the benchmarking of courses against comparable courses in the tertiary sector.

Members of the three committees were appointed by the Board of Delegates for the five year period (renewable) 2007–2011.

Improvements planned	Responsibility	Date for implementation
Recommendations of the three advisory committees that met late in 2006 have been submitted to the academic boards and action taken reported to subsequent annual meetings of the committees.	Dean	2007–

External review of all courses, especially their structure and articulation arrangements, to be conducted by a panel of no more than 3 senior representatives of universities and peer institutions.	Board of Delegates	2008
Major external review of all courses, including units of study, graduate attributes, and academic regulations, to be conducted by a large panel representing senior university expertise and peer institutions ahead of re-accreditation process due in 2011.	Board of Delegates	2010

9. Monitoring and evaluation of units of study and course curriculum

Current (2007) arrangements for monitoring and review of units are as follows:

Agency/Committee/Board	Time Frame	Instrument	Terms of Reference
Departmental Heads	Annual	Meetings with affiliated college faculty	Review of regulations, unit outlines and bibliographies
Academic Board	4 times p.a.	Research thesis examiners' reports, member proposals based on student needs	Review of regulations, Approval of new units, Deletion of old undergraduate and diploma units, In 2010 major review of all courses in advance of 2011 re-accreditation submission
MA Committee	3 times p.a.	New unit proposals, ACTh data on take-up of existing units	Approval of new units, Deletion of old MA units
DMin Committee	3 times p.a.	New unit proposals, ACTh data on take-up of existing units	Approval of new units, Deletion of old Dmin units
Course Advisory Committees (including Permanent Advisory Committee for the Dmin course)	Annual	Affiliated college annual reports on student evaluations, ACTh data on graduation and retention rates, GCA data	Unit and curriculum review, New unit recommendations, Employer satisfaction,
AUQA	2006, 2011	Submission of Performance Portfolio	Whole of institution quality audit
NSW DET	2009, 2011	Submission of application for re-registration (2009)	Re-registration of ACTh (2009), Re-accreditation (2011), review of measures taken to improve the quality of teaching and learning
All STAAs	Bi-ennial	Submission of reports on pass/fail rates, retention, GCA data etc.	Review of Quality Management System, Revisions and improvements initiated to courses

Improvements planned	Responsibility	Date for implementation
Recently approved (2007) new examination process of Doctor of Ministry and HDR candidates to be reviewed.	Research Awards Board	2009
Recommendations of the external auditor of the ACTh's moderation process to be implemented.	Coursework Awards Board	2007–
Retention, attrition rates, grade array data to be submitted regularly to the Academic Audit Committee.	Academic Audit Committee	2008

Benchmarking of above ACTh data with peer institutions.	Dean	2008
The College to undertake unit evaluations through the Sydney Institute for Teaching and Learning.	Dean	2008

10. Ongoing monitoring and evaluation of course delivery and teaching methods

- Each college delivering the diplomas undertakes a student evaluation of each unit and reports the findings and subsequent improvements in teaching and learning to the ACTh office via the Annual Report.
- The major issue for research candidates relates to supervision and access to research materials. These issues, if problematic, are dealt with in the annual report completed by the student, the supervisor and the postgraduate advisor in the student's college.
- The MTh, DMin and ThD annual candidate's report, submitted to the ACTh office, provides feedback from candidates, their supervisors and the postgraduate advisor at each affiliated college. The ACTh office follows up requests for suspension of candidature and, if needed, reminds the candidate and his or her supervisor of the regulations governing the degree.

Agency/Committee/College/Board	Time Frame	Instrument	Terms of Reference
Affiliated Colleges	Bi-annual	Moderators' reports (u/g degrees, masters courses), Student evaluations, Professional development (as required by ACTh policy)	Review of faculty, Improvements in teaching and learning
Departmental Heads	Annual	Meetings with affiliated college faculty	Sharing pedagogy that works
ACTh Office	Annual	Funds available for professional development, e.g., Supervision workshop (held in Melbourne and Sydney in 2006)	Improvements in teaching and learning, e.g., supervision of research candidates, to enhance required by ACTh policy
Academic Board	4 times p.a.	Reception of annual moderator reports on teaching and learning in each unit field, Reports from affiliated college delivering u/g units in intensive mode	New policy initiatives, In 2010 major review of all courses in advance of 2011 re-accreditation submission
Distance Committee	3 times p.a.	Moderators' reports (bi-annual) on the teaching of students studying in distance education	Improvements in delivery of distance education
IT Committee	From 8/2006	Members' knowledge of IT developments in education delivery	Advice to affiliated colleges
MA Committee	3 times p.a.	Members' knowledge of developments in education delivery	New policy initiatives
Course Advisory Committees (including Permanent Advisory Committee for the DMin course)	Annual	Affiliated college annual reports on student evaluations, GCA data (annual)	Appropriateness of course delivery including its mode
AUQA	2006, 2011	Submission of Performance Portfolio	Whole of institution quality audit, including course delivery and teaching methods
NSW DET	2009, 2011	Submission of application for re-registration (2009)	Re-registration of ACTh (2009), Re-accreditation (2011), review of measures taken to improve the quality of teaching and learning

All STAAs	Bi-ennial	Submission of reports on pass/fail rates, retention, GCA data etc.	Review of quality management system, Revisions and improvements initiated to delivery and teaching methods
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Improvements planned	Responsibility	Date for implementation
Affiliated college annual report now requires reporting of the contribution of evaluations of teaching and learning to review of academic staff.	Quality Manager	2008–
2% of annual wage cost in affiliated colleges now to be available for professional development.	ACTh Treasurer	2008–
Sydney Institute for Teaching and Learning student evaluations of teaching and learning in each of the six introductory units of study to be implemented.	Academic Audit Committee	2008
Occasional evaluations of other units of study based on the ITL template to be implemented.	Academic Audit Committee	2008
Confirmation of HDR candidature policy to be approved and implemented, which will include the requirement that colloquia will be instituted in all research-approved colleges.	Research Awards Board	2008
Confirmation of minimum resources policy for HDR candidates to be approved and implemented.	Research Awards Board	2008
All supervisors of HDR and DMin candidates must now be research active (from 2007).	Research Awards Board	2007–
Benchmarking of key policies affecting HDR candidates with peer institutions.	Dean	2008

11. Moderation Committee

In May 2006, the Board of Delegates resolved to establish an Academic Audit Committee to conduct a formal follow up of any deficiencies in teaching and learning identified by unit field moderators. The Committee was established in response to a recommendation of the report submitted by the external auditor of the ACTh moderation process.

The Committee comprises the three Departmental Heads and the Dean.

The Committee would meet face-to-face twice p.a. at the conclusion of the meeting that considers the end of semester reports of the unit moderators, and by email or phone hook-up when required.

Where it saw fit, the Committee could resolve to take action regarding moderator's comments relating to the quality of teaching and learning in any ACTh affiliated college.

Typical scenarios are:

- A lecturer is unacquainted with the ACTh moderation procedures such as not submitting the required assessment proposal for approval through the college registrar.
- A lecturer is unacquainted with ACTh learning outcomes (grade descriptors) or with the suggested array of grades such that there is a wide discrepancy between grades awarded and the moderator's expectations.
- A lecturer has significantly changed the approved assessment procedures or has not followed the ACTh unit outline.
- Students are exhibiting preferences for narrowly conceived viewpoints and are unable to report empathetically points of view with which they disagree.
- The college registrar has not submitted the required number of scripts for moderation.

The Committee would request the Dean to write to the principal of the college concerned (with a copy to the Board of Delegates and to the relevant moderator) detailing the matter raised by the moderator and attaching his or her report.

The Dean would seek a response from the Principal with an account of the action to be taken to address the matter raised in the moderator's report.

Typical action might include any of the following:

- Mentoring of the faculty member or the registrar to ensure a satisfactory knowledge of the moderation processes or of ACTh expectations.
- The lecturer to undergo a course of professional development.
- The lecturer to take on teaching duties at a lower level (e.g. diploma).

This report, together with a recommendation from the Dean, would be sent to each of the Departmental Heads for endorsement. If not considered a satisfactory response, the Heads would seek a revision of the action to be taken. Once a satisfactory course of action is forthcoming, the moderator is informed. The moderator would report on improvement in the next moderation exercise. This report would be tabled at the next meeting of the Board of Delegates.

If no improvement is noted, the process will be repeated, with the expectation that the remedial action proposed will be significantly strengthened.

If there is still no improvement after the second intervention, the Delegates will write to the Principal and invite him or her to show just cause why they should have confidence that the lecturer should continue to lecture at that level in an ACTh award.

12. Academic Audit Committee

In July 2007 the Board of Delegates approved in principle the terms of reference of this new committee. It will now take over from the Distance Committee the monitoring of units approved to be delivered in distance mode. It will also approve all lecturers that do not meet formal ACTh academic requirements, a matter that is noted in the AUQA Audit Report.

The terms of reference of the Committee include the following:

1. Monitor the distribution of grades in all units each semester and report on any anomalies and hence need for action by a College or a moderator.
2. Monitor the practice of multi-streaming across the ACTh network.
3. Consider the reports of moderators at the end of each semester, recommend redress of deficiencies to affiliated colleges, and receive responses from colleges.
4. Recommend the finalisation of all grades to the Academic Board.
5. Develop a means of ensuring all full time or fractional time lecturers at ACTh Colleges have some basic knowledge of adult learning principles and instructional skills.
6. Identify a range of instructional modes for teaching units within ACTh courses and the resources, both human and physical, that are required for a College to be able to use each mode.
7. Approve affiliated Colleges for teaching some or all of these modes of instruction.
8. Approve the list of ACTh units and the lecturers responsible for these units in each College each semester who do not formally satisfy minimum academic requirements.
9. Provide a template for presenting course unit outlines.
10. Ensure there is a process for regularly reviewing course unit outlines.
11. Review results of unit evaluations by students required by the ACTh and recommend any appropriate action.
12. Review the results of CEQ surveys and recommend any appropriate action.

13. Conduct courses or seminars directed towards improving teaching and learning for all staff in affiliated colleges. This may involve the use of guest lecturers.

Improvements planned	Responsibility	Date for implementation
Benchmarking of ACTh policy with respect to multi-streaming with peer institutions.	Dean	2008

