HEQC Institutional Audit Report

DIRECTORATE OF QUALITY PROMOTION

MAY 2007

HEQC Institutional Audit Report

Contents

1. Executive Summary

The institutional audit process began in September 2005 when the HEQC announced that TUT's audit would be scheduled for April 16-20, 2007. During 2006, the university conducted its institutional self-assessment, compiled draft reports, identified tentative findings, and submitted the portfolio to Senate for ratification and the Council for approval. The final portfolio was submitted to the HEQC on January 25, 2007.

The audit culminated with visits in March 2007 to the distance learning sites by an audit sub-panel and to the urban learning sites by a second sub-panel. The full panel, chaired by Prof Gansen Pillay, convened on Sunday, 15 April 2007 at the Pretoria learning site. Whereas the distance and urban learning sites were visited primarily to gain an understanding of the workings of those sites and their relationship with the university as a whole, the institutional visit marked the beginning of the audit proper.

The audit panel had thoroughly interrogated the institutional audit portfolio and was fully conversant with its contents and the TUT context. The HEQC audit officer, Mr Bheki Mbhele, and the audit project coordinator, Ms. Christelle Visser, met with the EMC and the DQP on 6 March 2007 to finalise the audit schedule and logistical arrangements.

The institutional site visit involved a brief tour of the campus, fifty four interview sessions and approximately four hundred staff and students nominated interviewees. The DQP advised faculties on nomination and selection criteria to ensure representivity and diversity in terms of occupation category, race, gender and longevity of employment.

The bulk of the interviews were conducted by the full panel. However, on days three and four, the panel split into three groups and interviewed staff and students in the teaching and learning, research and support categories. The DQP coordinated the interviews sessions, reminded interviewees via email, SMS and telephonically of the date, time and venue of their interviews.

In preparation for the interviews, the DQP conducted fifteen orientation workshops for staff and students at the various learning sites. In addition, briefing and debriefing sessions were held for each interview group prior to and after interview sessions.

Meetings were held between the Vice-Chancellor, the Director of the DQP and the Chair of the audit panel, the Executive Director of the HEQC and the audit officer to monitor the audit process. The audit visit ended with an oral presentation on April 20, 2007 by the Chair of the audit panel on its preliminary observations, finding and recommendation to the TUT Broad Management Forum.

This report is a comprehensive overview of the audit site visit process and its key outcomes. It presents an analysis of the key lines of enquiry pursued by the panel at the distance and urban learning sites as well at the institutional audit. Consequently it provides TUT and its various constituencies with key quality alerts and indicates the central quality matters that need urgent attention.

The audit panel pursued the lines of enquiry into the following areas:

- Transition from Technikon to University of Technology (UoT)
- Policy development, knowledge, implementation, monitoring and evaluation
- Student Demographics and academic Performance
- Staff Equity
- Site-Based Faculty Model
- TUT's position on the future role, form, structure and relationship with the (distant) learning sites
- Match and Place Exercise
- Medium and Long Term Concerns
  - *Equity of resources*
  - *Improvement of academic performance*
  - *Financial sustainability of the institution*
- Resource Allocation
- Deans/Campus Directors (Joint responsibilities)
- Quality Management
- Academic and Strategic Plan
- Co-operative Education Model
- Student Success Rate
- Academic Support
- Short Learning Programmes
- Research Policy and budget
- Community Engagement strategy and quality arrangements

The HEQC final report will be made available within the next seven months. In terms of the external institutional audit policy and procedures, the institution is thereafter expected inform the HEQC of its quality improvement deployment plan. It is therefore recommended that in the interim:

- The institution should address the institutional self-assessment findings in a coherent and structured manner
- The various environments address the most immediate quality deficiencies to mitigate reputational and academic risk
- The DQP begin formulating a policy framework for the development of a new quality management policy and strategy
- The various environments, assisted by the DQP, develop their individual quality management systems on the electronic *Sharepoint* platform
- The managers, committee structures and the DQP monitor the implementation of quality improvements

2. Audit Visit Preparations

The audit visit preparations commenced immediately after the briefing meeting with the HEQC held on March 6, 2007 when the institution was informed of the category of staff and student that the HEQC intended interviewing. Each member of the Executive Management Committee was advised of the interview categories and was requested to, in consultation with their line managers, nominate interviewees.

The audit visit was divided into three phases: the distance learning sites, the urban learning sites and the institutional visit. The primary purpose of the site visit was to get an understanding of workings of the learning site and its relationship to the university as a whole. More importantly, however, the sub-panel's findings were used to inform the full panel's lines of enquiry during institutional site visit.

The DQP structured the institutional preparations into orientation workshops, briefing sessions and debriefings sessions. An orientation workshop was conducted at every site of learning and for all faculties as attendance for nominees was compulsory. Furthermore, a presentation was made to the Council, EMC and the Broad Management Forum so that first, second and third tier management were fully informed of the audit process.

In addition, students and the SRC at these sites, as well as the central SRC, were given an extensive overview of the audit. The notable exception was the local SRC at one site, who failed to honour the scheduled appointments on three different occasions. This was the same group that declared the audit process as management tool to close down their site of learning.

The orientation workshops were designed as interactive sessions, whereby staff and students were provided with an extensive overview of the audit process. The audit was contextualised for TUT, the audit process unpacked by informing them of the HEQC panel, outlining the interview sessions and the session arrangements.

The interviewees were given a broad overview of the self-assessment process and the institutional audit portfolio. The scope of the audit as well as the generic lines of enquiry that the panel may pursue was discussed. Nominees were further informed of the TUT emerging lines of enquiry. Finally, interview etiquette regarding punctuality, honesty, and transparency was discussed and each nominee was given a copy of the institutional audit portfolio.

Each interview session was preceded by a briefing session and concluded with a debriefing sessions conducted by DQP staff member. The briefing sessions involved affirming the earlier DQP orientation and briefing workshops by reiterating the purpose of the audit, the panel's rules of engagement, and to allay interviewee unease and anxieties. The debriefing sessions entailed semi-structured focus group discussions on the panel's lines of enquiry into the university's quality management of its core functions

The DQP communicated the date, time and venue of the interviews via email (twice) and SMS to the nominees to ensure punctual attendance of the sessions.

3. The HEQC Audit Panel

NAME	ROLE	DESIGNATION	INSTITUTION
Prof Gansen Pillay	Chairperson	Director: Research Management and Development	Durban University of Technology
Prof Henk de Jager	Auditor	Executive Dean Faculty of Engineering, the Built Environment and Information Technology	Nelson Mandela Metropolitan University
Dr Sioux McKenna	Auditor	Senior Lecturer	Durban University of Technology
Prof Edmund Zingu	Auditor	Vice-Principal (Academic)	Mangosuthu Technikon
Prof Ana Naidoo	Auditor	Executive Dean: Education	Nelson Mandela Metropolitan University
Dr Stephen Fourie	Auditor	Registrar	Rhodes University
Dr Mvuyo Tom	Auditor	Deputy Vice-Chancellor	University of Fort Hare
Prof Dolina Dowling	Auditor	Independent Consultant	
Mr Ian Hawke	International Auditor	Deputy Director General International, Non-State and Higher Education	Department of Education Training and the Arts, Brisbane, Australia
Dr Liz Lange	Auditor	Chief Executive Officer	HEQC
Dr Mark Hay	Auditor	Director: Audits	HEQC
Ms Thandile Makubalo	Auditor		HEQC

HEQC Secretariat

Mr Bheki Mbhele	Audit Officer	Manager: Institutional Audits	HEQC
Mrs Christelle Visser (Audit Administrator)	Audit Administrator	Project Administrator	HEQC
Mr A B Heyns		Scribe	Independent Consultant

4. Distance and Urban Learning Site Visits

4.1. Site Visit

An HEQC sub-panel of Dr. Steve Fourie (Chair), Prof Dolina Dowling and Mr Bheki Mbhele conducted site visits to the Polokwane (20 March 2007) Nelspruit (22 March 2007) and Emalahleni (23 March 2007) learning sites. A second sub-panel, Dr. Sioux Mckenna (Chair), Prof Dolina Dowling, Mr Bheki Mbhele and Ms Thandile Makubalo visited Ga- Rankuwa (27 March 2007), Soshanguve (28 March 2007) and Arts and Arcadia (29 March 2007).

The primary purpose of the site visit was to get an understanding of workings of each learning site and its relationship to the university as a whole. More importantly, however, the sub-panel's findings would be used to inform the full panel's lines of enquiry during institutional site visit.

In total, three hundred and forty three (343) staff and students from all occupational categories and levels of study, respectively, were interviewed. The nominees were identified by the campus management structures at each learning site. The panel also conducted a brief examination of the library and information services (LIS), information technology resources and the certification environment at each site of learning.

All learning sites demonstrated tremendous goodwill, high levels of cooperation and a willingness to engage with the panel. The campus management, staff and students at these sites of learning are commended for their efforts in ensuring that the site visits were successful by honouring appointments timeously, their warm hospitality and in cooperating with the DQP staff.

It should, however, be reported that at one of the urban learning sites, eleven of the nominated interviewees did not honour their interviews. In addition, despite prior confirmation of logistical arrangements, the audit sub-panel was unable to complete their scheduled activities owing to non-availability of staff or access to facilities.

At a second urban learning site, the nominated student group, led by members of the SRC demanded that the DQP staff member leave the briefing session as they wanted to caucus before their session. The same group did not want to be debriefed and declared that the HEQC were agents of the DOE sent to close that learning site and that the audit process was aimed at achieving this goal. In addition, some of the staff that HEQC audit panel interviewed, were not from that learning, or had recently moved that site.

4.2. Questionnaire Analysis

All interviewees at the learning sites (n = 343) were requested to complete the questionnaire assessing the DQP and the HEQC's sub-panel's professionalism, competency and conduct during the site visit. The questionnaire was based on a template used by the Australian Universities Quality Agency and protected respondent anonymity and confidentiality. Two hundred and eighty nine (289) respondents returned completed questionnaires.

Over ninety (90) percent of respondents strongly agreed that the DQP provided the interviewees with adequate briefings about the purpose of the audit and the site visit, that the DQP provided interviewees with adequate preparation for the sessions in which they were interviewed, that the DQP were professional and knowledgeable in their briefing and orientation sessions and finally, that the DQP staff conduct during the site visit was professional and helpful

Over ninety (90) percent of respondents strongly agreed that the interview sessions started and ended on time, that the questions asked during the interviews were clear and easy to understand, were at an appropriate level for the interviewees in the various sessions, that the conduct of the audit panel was professional, that the panel chairperson's conduct was professional and that the HEQC staff conduct during the site visit was professional and helpful.

4.3. Lines of Enquiry

The panel delved in detail into the relationship between the sites of learning and TUT. They tested the extent to which these sites were able to influence institutional strategic and operational decision-making with regard to their contextual circumstances. In exploring this relationship, the panel also attempted to determine the effect of TUT's vision for these sites on core function performance at the learning site. The panel probed the potential impact of the "mixed signals" from TUT regarding the future of these sites on academic provisioning.

The panel pursued the following lines of enquiry which have been clustered into institutional, site-level and teaching and learning categories to assist in identifying the level of organisational engagement.

➢ *Institutional Level*

> ➢ TUT's position on the future role, form, structure and relationship with the (distant) learning sites.
> ➢ The learning sites fit into the general TUT scheme of things
> ➢ The level of the engagement and degree of influence of the learning sites on strategic decision making (institutional as well as site related).

- Alignment of TUT's strategic priorities with those of the learning sites' contexts
- The level of involvement of the learning sites on policy development, implementation, monitoring and evaluation
- Institutional implementation of a coherent campus management model
- The involvement of the learning sites in budgeting and resource allocation
- The post-merger impact on teaching and learning provisioning
- The level of TUT support for academic, curriculum, student and staff development for the sites of learning
- TUT support for the implementation of the teaching and learning strategy

- *Site Level*

  - The site's role in moving towards the university of technology
  - The site management's degree of autonomy in strategic decision making and in its programme and qualification mix (PQM)
  - Strategic planning at site level
  - Execution of the improvement plans as identified in the Campus Review Report.
  - The site's role in developing new programmes and its engagement with the curriculum development policy
  - Policy knowledge, development, implementation and monitoring
  - Indicators used to determine levels of success in the core functions
  - Management of the part-time lecturers
  - ICT services
    - The IT capacity to support the online movement to technology driven teaching and learning (teaching and learning with technology strategy)
    - The appropriateness of the hardware and software to the student profile, the PQM and related institutional strategies
    - The level of IT access and support for staff and students.
  - LIS services
    - The LIS capacity to service the student enrolment and profile and the PQM
    - The adequacy of the LIS budget

- ➢ Engagement at all institutional levels with LIS statistics

- ➢ Security arrangements for staff, students and equipment with extended LIS hours

- ➢ LIS support for disabled and distance students

- ➢ LIS development of student skills in accessing information.

- ➢ Certification
  - ➢ Procedures and sources used in determining graduation status

  - ➢ Examination logistical arrangements – collection, storage, mark processing, checking and publishing.

  - ➢ Security arrangements for certificate sourcing, printing and storage.

- ➢ *Teaching and Learning*

  - ➢ Implementation of the teaching and learning strategy

  - ➢ Implementation of curriculum development policy

  - ➢ Alternate modes of programme delivery

  - ➢ Integrated communities of practice across all learning sites (common study guides, involvement in assessment and moderation, common tests and examinations, programme planning, implementation and moderation)

  - ➢ Management of experiential learning with emphasis on placement, assessment and moderation

  - ➢ The integrity of the assessment, moderation, promotions processes

  - ➢ The use of short courses for access and the relative worth of the certificate

In visiting the learning sites the panel examined institutional arrangements on policy development, knowledge, deployment, monitoring and evaluation extensively. They tested interviewee knowledge of policy, their participation in policy development, and their role in policy deployment. In particular, the panel assessed interviewee knowledge and implementation of the *Teaching and Learning Strategy*. They also spent a considerable amount of time assessing site-level engagement with the *Curriculum Development Policy.* The panel also wanted to establish the level of institutional support for learning sites with regard to staff, curriculum, academic and student development.

5. Institutional Audit

5.1.   Audit Visit

The institutional audit began on Sunday, April 15, 2007 when the panel convened at TUT, Pretoria Campus. The audit panel was taken on a very brief tour of the Technikonrand campus. Key features such as the library, the central registration facility, the residences, sport facilities and a general orientation to offices and lecture halls were highlighted.

The panel began the first of fifty four (54) interview sessions with the Vice-Chancellor on Monday, April 16, 2007. During the first two days, the whole panel conducted interviews with the nominated staff representing the identified categories. On days three and four, the panel split into three groups: teaching and learning, research and innovation, and infrastructure and support. The three groups, then split into smaller groups conducting up to twelve interviews simultaneously at different venues.

A session on the final day was reserved for staff and students to address the panel. Two staff members and the Pretoria local SRC addressed the panel. One staff member also made a written submission to the panel. The panel recalled the Vice-Chancellor on day four for further discussions.

At the end of days one and four, the panel chairperson, the audit officer, the HEQC executive director and audit director met with the Vice-Chancellor and the Director: DQP to discuss the audit process and related matters. The HEQC panel also requested additional documents which were made available at the end of day one.

In total three and fifty (350) staff and students of the nominated four and twenty six (426) were interviewed. The EMC was requested to task their respective line managers with nominating the interviewees. The DQP then communicated the date, time and venue of the interviews via email, SMS and telephonically to the nominees. While a few interviews had to be rescheduled and or relocated due to last minute requests by the HEQC, staff and students were timeously informed of the changes.

Each interview session was preceded by a briefing session and concluded with a debriefing sessions conducted by DQP staff member. The briefing sessions involved affirming the earlier DQP orientation and briefing workshops by reiterating the purpose of the audit, the panel's rules of engagement, and to allay interviewee unease and anxieties. The debriefing sessions entailed semi-structured focus group discussions on the panel's lines of enquiry into the university's quality management of its core functions.

In general, staff and students are to be commended for their cooperation, goodwill and willingness to engage honestly and openly with the panel. Staff and students also expressed high levels of satisfaction with preparation, logistical arrangements, as well as the briefing and debriefing sessions.

5.2.   Questionnaire Analysis

All the interviewees (N = 350) were requested to complete the questionnaire assessing the DQP and the HEQC's sub-panel's professionalism, competency and conduct during the site visit. This questionnaire was slightly modified to the one used at the distance and urban sites to include questions on the impact of the self-assessment and the external audit on potential quality improvements. Two and hundred and fifty-nine (259) questionnaires were returned.

Over ninety (90) percent of respondents strongly agreed that the DQP provided the interviewees with adequate briefings about the purpose of the audit and the site visit, that the DQP provided interviewees with adequate preparation for the sessions in which they were interviewed, that the DQP were professional and knowledgeable in their briefing and orientation sessions and finally, that the DQP staff conduct during the site visit was professional and helpful

Over ninety (90) percent of respondents strongly agreed that the interview sessions started and ended on time, that the questions asked during the interviews were clear and easy to understand, were at an appropriate level for the interviewees in the various sessions, that the conduct of the audit panel was professional, that the panel chairperson's conduct was professional and that the HEQC staff conduct during the site visit was professional and helpful.

Respondents, however, were less convinced that the self-assessment, the external audit process and the institutional audit led to quality improvements and to changes in the way things are done at TUT. While some chose not the respond to these items, over seventy percent (70%) of the one hundred and ninety five (195) that did, strongly agreed that there had been quality improvements and changes to the way things are done at the university.

5.3. HEQC Lines of Enquiry

The HEQC lines of enquiry have been clustered into to the following categories to assist in identifying and organising the institutional engagement with the key quality matters. Key issues have been coded, summarised and presented as statements. The detailed reports will be forwarded to the relevant environments to assist in effecting quality improvements.

5.3.1. Vision and Mission

- TUT's interpretation and institutional understanding of the University of Technology (UoT) concept
- TUT transition from technikon to UoT and the potential impact on the core functions.
- Vision and mission development

5.3.2. Planning, Resource Allocation and Quality

- The nature, structure and form of the strategic planning processes
- The financial and long term sustainability of the institution
- Financial planning for merger, restructuring, strategic and operation requirements
- The impact of the resource provision and budgeting models effective service delivery
- Impact and sustainability of the site-based faculty model
- Equity of resource provisioning across learning sites
- Efficacy of the turn-around strategy
- Synergies in the reporting arrangements for urban and distance learning sites
- Quality as a key performance area for members of the EMC
- Impact of centralisation of functions on service delivery at all sites of learning
- The impact of the merger on quality arrangements
- The capacity of the DQP to coordinate institutional quality arrangements
- The institutional strategy to underpin quality management arrangements
- Institutional engagement with the self-assessment outcomes

5.3.3. Teaching and Learning

- Teaching and learning strategy
- Curriculum development policy
- Embedding technology and entrepreneurship into the curriculum
- Multimode teaching and learning
- Coordination of quality promotion and academic support and development
- Equity of provisioning across learning sites
- Assessment, moderation and student performance
- Staff training, development , performance and monitoring
- Work integrated learning, Experiential learning; Advisory Committees
- Student academic support and resources
- Foundation and access programmes

5.3.4. Research

- The rationale informing the movement from research and development (R&D) to research and innovation (R&I)
- Comprehensive and coherent policies and procedures to regulate R&I
- The functions and relationships of the various R&I structures
- The role of the R&I professors
- Consistency of practice across faculties
- The capacity of the various structures to execute their respective mandate
- Management and oversight of the different categories of research
- The adequacy, sources and disbursement of research funding
- The number of research focus areas and institutional capacity
- The management of post-graduate students from admission to graduation

5.3.5. Community Engagement (CE)

- CE strategy, structures and quality management arrangements
- Monitoring and evaluation of the CE initiatives

5.4. Chairperson's Oral Feedback

5.4.1. Overview of TUT

The panel observed that, merger complexities, the transition from technikon to university of technology, the management of multiple sites of learning and the movement to single-site faculties pose challenges that may compromise quality management arrangements at TUT. The following is a summary of the chairperson's oral feedback presented to the BMF on April 20, 2007 at the conclusion of the audit visit.

The issues raised here resonate with the quality matters alluded to earlier in this report and with the institutional self-assessment report. The HEQC will make the final report available within the next seven months.

5.4.2. Fitness of Purpose and Transformation

- Student Demographics and Academic Performance

  - The panel observed that the majority of students at TUT are African which was consistent with the national transformation agenda.
  - However, they indicated that performance data analysis revealed that academic success ratios were disproportionate to the demographic spread of students.
  - The university was strongly advised to ensure that there is a reasonable correlation between equity of access and equity of success.

- Staff Equity

  - While the panel acknowledged TUT's efforts to address staff equity, it nevertheless observed that the academic staff were predominantly white and expressed its concern with small number of women appointments to senior positions.
  - The panel suggested that structured staff development initiatives be used to ensure greater gender representivity at senior levels.

- Transition from Technikon to University of Technology (UoT)

  - The transition poses a challenge to TUT in terms of developing a new identity, vision and mission, re-visiting its programme and qualification mix as well as programme design (fitness of purpose)

- While the challenge is exacerbated by the lack of a UoT template, TUT nevertheless has to engage with its internal and external stakeholders to define its vision of a UoT and a differentiated mission as a higher education institution.

- Site-Based Faculty Model

  - The institution was advised to consider resource implications in implementing this model.
  - The institution should consider an integrated development plan in partnership with local authorities to address infrastructural inequalities
  - The panel, however, acknowledged that this was an innovative approach to address the transformation of higher education.

- Distant Campuses

  - The university was advised to ensure that distance campuses are appropriately developed to ensure equitable provisioning of academic offerings.

- Match and Place Exercise

  - The panel recommended that the process of appointing staff be finalised by EMC as a matter of urgency as the delay will have an impact on teaching and learning and staff morale, and potentially risk the academic reputation of the institution.
  - The panel has also observed that there was lack of understanding of the model amongst the key stakeholders which may further delay the process.
  - The panel advised that a model for consultation with unions should be developed to fast track the process.

- Improvement of Staff Qualifications:

  - TUT was commended.

- Medium and Long Term Concerns

  - *Equity of resources*
  - *Improvement of academic performance*
  - *Financial sustainability of the institution*

5.4.3. Institutional Planning, Resource Allocation and Quality

- Resource Allocation

  - The panel acknowledged and commended TUT's intention to ensure equitable allocation of resources to sites of learning and faculties, and its intentions to improve the MIS.

- Deans/Campus Directors (Joint responsibilities)

  - The panel expressed concerns with regard to the sustainability of the dual role of Deans (as Executive Deans and Campus Directors).
  - They noted that this model may undermine the Deans' authority to concentrate on strategic matters, teaching and learning, research and community engagement.
  - The panel recommended that supporting mechanisms are implemented to ease administrative responsibilities of the Deans and to include the deans as strategic managers.

- Quality Management

  - The panel observed that quality management was biased towards teaching and learning to the neglect of the non-academic environment.
  - While quality management is implemented and supported there appeared to be a lack of a strategic approach to quality.
  - The panel was of the opinion that quality does not form an integral part of the key performance areas of the members of the EMC.
  - The panel found that heads of department, staff and students appreciated and acknowledged the support that the DQP provided to TUT as a whole. The panel commended the DQP for its positive contribution to quality management.
  - The panel further recommended revising the definition and location of quality and quality management strategically and structurally.

5.4.4. Teaching and Learning

- Academic and Strategic Plan

  - The panel raised concerns with the lack of a clear academic plan and alignment with the strategic planning processes.
  - It was recommended that an academic plan be developed as part of the strategic planning processes.

- Co-operative Education Model

  - The panel recommended reviewing the current cooperative education model to ensure greater curriculum alignment

- Student Success Rate

  - The panel recommended implementing mechanisms to improve success rate

- Academic Support:

  - The panel indicated that student interviews revealed that there was a lack of academic support to address student needs as well as inconsistencies in the quality of teaching and learning across the faculties and campuses.
  - The panel recommended these should be addressed as a matter of urgency.

- Short Learning Programmes

  - The panel expressed serious concerns with regard to staff involvement in SLP and the potential impact on the formal programmes.
  - In addition they strongly suggested that the Foundation Programmes, rather than SLP be used as access points.
  - They further recommended that the SLP policies and practices and the issue of access be reviewed.

- External Partners

  - The concern regarding the possibility of the decline in the quality of TUT graduates as a result of the merger was expressed to the panel.
  - TUT was advised to develop mechanisms to minimize the impact of the merger process on teaching and learning.

5.4.5. Research

- Research Policy
  - The panel recommended that a comprehensive research policy which addresses research, innovation and partnerships be developed
  - The panel noted the inconsistencies across the institution with regard to the application of research policies and procedures

- Budget
  - The panel advised the institution to invest more in research and to improve the research MIS to support the monitoring function.

- Staff Development
  - TUT was commended for their investment in staff development initiatives

- Higher Degrees Committee
  - The panel recommended the establishment of a Higher Degrees Committee

5.4.6. Community Engagement (CE)

- CE Strategy
  - The panel noted that although there were CE projects undertaken in the various faculties, it was nevertheless concerned about the lack of a well-communicated strategy to coordinate these projects.

- Review of CE Quality Arrangements
  - The panel advised TUT to use the review of its mission to re-visit CE quality arrangements

- TUT Community:
  - The panel suggested that a starting point in reviewing CE quality arrangements would be for TUT to define its community.

6. Recommendations and Conclusions

This report presents three sets of quality alerts: those emanating from the visits to the distance and urban learning sites, the institutional visit and the panel's oral report to the institution. Where possible, these alerts have not been repeated. These alerts and the more detailed reports that will be forwarded to the various environments should be used to inform the quality agenda of those environments in the short term.

The HEQC full report is expected within the next seven months. That report will then be used to formulate the institutional quality management strategy and improvement deployment plan in terms of the HEQC external audit policy requirements. In addition, institutional processes such as the vision and mission building exercise, debates on the UoT, will begin to address the macro and meso-level issues raised in this report.

It is therefore recommended that in the interim:

- The institution should address the institutional self-assessment findings in a coherent and structured manner
- The various environments address the most immediate quality deficiencies to mitigate reputational and academic risk
- The DQP begin formulating a policy framework for the development of a new quality management policy and strategy
- The various environments, assisted by the DQP, develop their individual quality management systems on the electronic *Sharepoint* platform
- The managers, committee structures and the DQP monitor the implementation of quality improvements