Quality Management Policy

Responsible Officer: Provost

Approved by: Vice-Chancellor

Approved and commenced: September, 2013

Review by: July, 2014

Relevant Legislation, Ordinance, Rule and/or Governance Level Principle:
- University of Tasmania Act 1992
- Council Charter
- Ordinance 13 - Academic Senate
- Ordinance 83 - Research College Board
- Ordinance 99 - Academic Structure
- Governance Level Principle 2: Risk Management
- Governance Level Principle 12: Academic Standards
- Governance Level Principle 13: Quality Management Framework

Responsible Organisational Unit: Office of the Provost

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1 Objective

The Quality Management Framework Governance Level Principle outlines the UTAS approach to quality management and articulates the principles that underpin the UTAS quality management framework.

The objectives of this Quality Management Policy are to:

- explain the structure of the UTAS Quality Management Framework
- specify how this framework operates
- outline the arrangements to embed across UTAS a practice of continuous improvement that focuses on enhancing outcomes for students, staff, partners and other stakeholders.

2 Scope

This policy applies to all organisational units, all staff and all functions of the University.

3 Policy Provisions

3.1 Quality Management Framework

The quality management framework is a whole-of-institution framework that links strategic direction setting, planning and quality. It is aligned with the budgeting and risk management systems.

3.1.2 The UTAS quality management framework has been developed to assist our endeavours to:

- ensure that we satisfy the needs and expectations of students and other stakeholders
- guarantee that we meet or exceed threshold or minimum requirements in all areas (regulatory, academic and administrative)
- achieve our aspiration to excellence in all that we do
- embody our commitment to reflective practice and continuous improvement.

3.1.3 The UTAS quality management framework:

- is driven by the Mission, Vision, Values and Priorities laid down in the Strategic Plan, *Open to Talent*
- reflects the nested hierarchy of organisational levels from the Council, through the Vice-Chancellor, Senior Management Team and Academic Senate, to Colleges Academic Units and Divisions and other subsidiary units and on to individual academic and professional staff
- further reflects the two-way nature of effective quality management influence from Council to individual staff member and from individual staff member to Council (that is, both top-down and bottom up)
- involves the alignment of all functional, organisational unit and individual staff member plans with the Strategic Plan
- is underpinned by a University-wide governance and policy framework of ordinances, rules, governance level principles, policies and procedures, supported by local level procedures, guidelines and work instructions
• is further supported by performance management and professional development programs
• emphasises the two essential and fundamentally intertwined dimensions of planning for quality and improving quality.

These features are represented graphically in Appendix 1.

3.2 Planning for and Improving Quality

3.2.1 UTAS’s approach to quality management embodies continuous improvement, in a cycle of planning, implementation, review and improvement. Continuous improvement is therefore integral to UTAS plans and planning. The University actively plans for quality as well as seeking opportunities to improve quality.

3.2.2 The underlying approach is the OADRI Cycle, an adaptation of the ADRI Learning Cycle developed by the Australian Business Excellence Framework. The OADRI approach can be used to review any aspect of UTAS, at any level from the Strategic Plan to operational plans for any organisational units or functions. It is deployed using a variety of specific tools.

The OADRI Cycle is depicted in Appendix 2. The specific elements are outlined below.

O: Objectives
Objectives are established and aligned at the UTAS-wide, organisational unit and individual staff levels.

A: Approach
Approaches are developed and/or established to achieve the objectives, including action plans, strategies and processes; performance measures are selected to facilitate later assessment of whether the objectives have been met.

D: Deployment
The approaches to achieve the objectives are put into effect, supported by the required infrastructure, facilities and resources, as well as professional development programs to ensure staff understand the approaches and are properly prepared to carry them out.

R: Results
The outcomes are monitored and evaluated using the performance measures selected earlier and an assessment is made as to whether the objectives have been met appropriately.

I: Improvement
The loop is closed with the identification of any amendments in approach or deployment necessary to achieve the defined objectives or whether new objectives can be set to generate a new round of improvements.

3.2.3 UTAS deploys a range of mechanisms and specific tools to implement the OADRI approach and hence to achieve continuous improvement. These include but are not limited to:

• strategic, functional or organisational unit plan review procedures
• course and unit review procedures
organisational unit review procedures
- cyclical reviews of policies and procedures
- annual staff performance appraisals
- benchmarking.

These mechanisms and tools are described in specific policy and guideline documentation.

In addition, the Internal Audit Strategy is a key mechanism for continuous quality improvement.

3.2.4 Quality management at UTAS is predicated on evidence-based decision making. The University established the Business Intelligence Unit and the Student Evaluation Review and Reporting Unit to provide data to assist decision making. The University is currently developing a more comprehensive Strategy unit that will drive improvements in business intelligence capacity.

While in the first instance, individual organisational units should seek to access centrally-held data, in many cases they will also need to establish and maintain evidence and data collection mechanisms to support continuous improvement processes.

4 Responsibilities

The Council has statutory responsibility for the University's:

- strategic direction
- academic and general reputation
- financial viability
- maintenance of high standards of conduct and probity.

It therefore has ultimate responsibility for quality management.

The Audit and Risk Committee is responsible for:

- overseeing the Internal Audit Strategy which has a significant role in quality management.

The three key 'governing entities' operating in partnership:

- Council
- the Vice-Chancellor supported by the Senior Management Team
- Academic Senate

are advised and assisted by the Quality and Standards Committee and responsible for:

- implementing the UTAS quality management framework
- providing clear and consistent leadership in quality management.

All committees of management and sub-committees of Academic Senate play important roles in quality management.
Quality management, however, remains the responsibility of all organisational units and all staff.

The Provost is responsible for:

- day-to-day oversight of quality management.

## 5 Definitions and Acronyms

### Term/Acronym | Definition
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**Academic Unit** | Means the secondary organisational unit in the academic structure of the University, reporting directly to the College Executive Deans, as per Ordinance 14 – Academic Structure.

**Benchmarking** | The systematic comparison of an organisation’s inputs, systems, processes and outputs both against those of external bodies and internally against previously collated in-house data.

**College** | Means

- (a) the primary organisational unit in the academic structure of the University, as per Ordinance 14 – Academic Structure
- (b) the University College

**Organisational Unit** | College, Faculty, School, Centre, University Institute, other University Entity, Division, Section or University Business Enterprise.

## 6 Supporting Documentation

- UTAS Quality Management Framework (Descriptive/ explanatory document)
- Review Framework
- Benchmarking Framework
- Quality Management Toolbox
- Quality Management Webpage

## 7 Versioning

| | Version 2 – Quality Management Policy; Minor amendment Approved by Director, Governance and Legal May, 2011.
| | Version 3 - Quality Management Policy; approved May, 2011; , amended in December 2016 to incorporate Colleges
| Current Version | Version 4 - Quality Management Policy (current document); approved May, 2011; amended in December 2017 to reflect College structure and nomenclature.

## Appendix 1

UTAS Quality Management Framework
Appendix 2

The OADRI Cycle