

**Australian Universities Quality Agency Ltd  
ACN 092 938 200**

**AUQA Board Meeting 2009/1  
10.00am Tuesday 17 February 2009**

**AUQA Board Room  
Level 10, 123 Lonsdale Street, Melbourne, VIC 3000**

**MINUTES**

**1. ATTENDANCE & APOLOGIES**

**Present**

Emeritus Professor Deryck Schreuder (Chair of the Board)  
Mr Ian Hawke (Deputy Chair of the Board)  
Mr Patrick Coleman  
Mr Clive Hildebrand  
Emeritus Professor Michael Koder  
Professor Bill Lovegrove (Teleconference)  
Professor James McWha (Teleconference – joined at 12.00 noon)  
Professor Alan Pettigrew  
Mr Terry Werner  
Dr David Woodhouse (Executive Director)

Observer: Carolyn Alport. Audit Directors Rob Carmichael, Rudi Lidl and Karen Treloar were in attendance for the non-confidential items.

Apology: Professor Ian O'Connor

Board Secretary – Dr Antony Stella

The meeting started at 10.00 hrs with the welcome by the Chair of the meeting who placed on record the sympathy of the Board for the bush fire tragedies in Victoria

**2. MINUTES OF MEETING 2008/4 HELD ON 25 NOVEMBER 2008**

The Board **confirmed** the Minutes of meeting AB2008/4 held on 25 November 2008 as an accurate record of the meeting.

**3. THE AGENDA**

**3.1 Approval of the Agenda** and items to be starred; **approval** of all un-starred items

Items that were deemed to require discussion had been starred on the Agenda. Directors were invited to indicate if they wished to change the

status of any items. After considering all updates and the additional papers provided, the Board identified items 7 and 11 as requiring discussion. The Board agreed to consider the draft of the AUQA Annual Report 2008 under item 11.

On a motion from the Chair, the Board **agreed** to the actions recommended in the papers (and which were not starred or taken up for discussion at the meeting), and they were deemed to have the approval of the Board.

The starred items were then taken for discussion.

### **3.2 Matters arising** not listed elsewhere on the agenda

The Board noted that following a reorganisation in DEEWR, Director Colin Walters has moved to the International Division and he resigned from the AUQA Board as from the beginning of 2009.

The terms of office of five other AUQA directors come to an end on 31 March 2009. Directors Professor James McWha and Mr Clive Hildebrand have served on the Board for two terms and are not eligible for reappointment. The terms of Director Ian Hawke, Director Patrick Coleman and Director Ian O'Connor also end in March, and they are eligible for reappointment. The Board noted that the process of nominations is under way and the new appointments will take effect from 1 April 2009.

The Board thanked the outgoing Directors for the leadership they have provided to AUQA and are providing in challenging times in Australian higher education. The Chair noted the expertise and skills which they had brought as Directors and for the support they extended in the good governance of AUQA.

## **4 AUDIT MATTERS**

### **4.1 Audits 2008**

The Board **received** a report on the 2008 audit program.

### **4.1 Audits 2009**

The Board **received** a report on the 2009 audit program.

### **4.3 Audit Schedule 2010 Onwards**

(a) The Board **received** a report on the Audits scheduled for 2010 onwards and **approved** 'internationalisation' as the pre-selected theme for the 2010 audits.

(b) The Board **approved** the audit manual for the GAA audits.

#### 4.4 Progress Reports

The Board **received** a report on the Progress Reports submitted to AUQA by auditees since the previous Board meeting.

### 5. AUQA POLICY AND BOARD ISSUES

#### 5.1. AUQA Policies

The Board **approved** the revisions to the Risk Register and the Travel Policy.

#### 5.2 Standards in Australian Higher Education

The Board **received** a report on the second meeting of the Advisory Group and noted that the higher education review report's recommendation on standards and its implications for this project will be taken up under item 6.

### 6. HIGHER EDUCATION REVIEW

The Board considered the analysis of the implications of the higher education review for AUQA done by an external consultant. The ED spoke to the summary paper he had developed on proposed AUQA actions and sought the advice of the Board.

The Board acknowledged that the Report has many strengths in setting a vision for Australian higher education. But the directors shared the view that the document treated AUQA unevenly. While it recognises the significance of AUQA and indicates major challenges for QA in the future, it appears less positive about the outcomes of existing AUQA audits than might have been expected. Recognition of what AUQA has already achieved in enhancing attention to standards and outcomes in Cycle 2 is also largely absent. Finally, it appears unaware that matters AUQA did not review in Cycle 1 audits were areas not identified in AUQA's original mandate.

The Board determined that an AUQA submission has now to be developed, and submitted to all the stakeholders, setting out how the Review recommendations relevant to quality and standards of higher education can be addressed in detail and by building on what we have already achieved. Significant work on 'standards' is for example being undertaken by the major working party already established by the Board and chaired by the ED.

Draft of the AUQA submission will be circulated to the Board in about a week for early comment by Directors.

The ED sought the advice of the Board on the implications for policy and practice should an audit panel find that an auditee is not fully compliant with the National Protocols. The Board **advised** that AUQA should not hesitate to indicate in the audit report that such concerns related to compliance with National Protocols and provide a 'qualified' report stating that the issues of concern would be followed-up in the following year when the institution submitted its progress report.

**Action: ED**

## 7. FINANCE MATTERS

### 7.1 Finance Report

The Board noted with pleasure the positive result, and that the accounts had been audited without amendment or qualification. The Board complimented the Finance Manager on her excellent work and approved the Financial Report for signature.

### 7.2 Budget

The Budget was approved, noting that AESOC has approved the increased funding requested for 2009. The Board noted the forecasts for 2010 and 2011.

## 8. CHAIR'S REPORT

In his report to the other Directors, the Chair highlighted the following:

1. The Chair and the ED have been having consultations with the governments, ministers and institutions. During the past few months they have had discussions with various people, including Dr John Spierings, Senior Policy Advisor to The Hon Julia Gillard MP; Ms Lisa Paul, Secretary of DEEWR, Mr Jim Davidson and Ms Catherine Vandermark; Dr Glenn Withers, CEO of Universities Australia.

2. The Chair had a discussion with the Australian Academy of Humanities. He has encouraged the Academy to get involved in AUQA's work on academic standards. The policy officers of the Academy will take this matter to NAF (the National Academies Forum). Once the Advisory Group of the standards project produces the consultation paper the Academy should be informed. **Action: ED**

3. The Chair has had telephone follow-ups on audits with the Vice-Chancellors of Curtin and Notre Dame. The conversations indicated that the audits have initiated internal reflections in different ways. The Chair commented that the feedback from the institutional heads is valuable in supporting the quality governance of the AUQA Board and the performance of the Agency.

4. The Chair informed the Board that he would be away for three weeks to China from 21 February 2009 and Director Ian Hawke will be the acting Chair.

5. The funeral of the former chief of AVCC John Mullarvey will be held in Canberra on 18 February 2009 and the Chair will attend that on behalf of AUQA. The Board recorded its deep appreciation of John's contribution to higher education in general and to the universities in particular.

## 9. EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S REPORT

The Board **received** a report from the Executive Director on AUQA activities since the previous Board meeting.

**Action: ED**

## 10. MCEETYA / DEEWR MATTERS

The ED **received** a report on the MCEETYA matters including the nominations to the AUQA Board that need endorsement from the AUQA Members to take effect from 1 April 2009.

**Action: ED**

## 11. OTHER BUSINESS

### (a) Annual Report

Directors **received** the draft 'AUQA Annual Report 2008' a few days before the Board meeting. They commented on making improvements to the report. The ED invited directors to let him have any further input to the Annual Report by the end of the week (20 Feb).

**Action: ED**

(b) The ED briefed the Board about the third meeting of the Advisory Group of the Standards project held on 13 February 2009. The Board **advised** that AUQA write to the government about these developments suggesting that the government put funds into this project in implementation of Recommendation 23 of the review report.

(c) Thanks: In closing the meeting the Chair thanked each of the outgoing directors individually for their committed work in the governance of AUQA and for articulating the perspectives of the various constituencies from which they come. The outgoing Directors expressed their appreciation for their opportunity to contribute to the work of AUQA.

## 12. NEXT BOARD MEETING

The next meeting of the Board will be held on 21 May 2009.  
The other 2009 Board meetings are: 25 August; 24 November.