

The report that follows was discussed in the November meeting of the Quality Alignment Board. It was written in the wake of the submission of 92 Interim Programme Evaluation and Planning documents. Notes from the Quality Alignment Board discussion are recorded below.

Te Korowai Kahurangi is committed to partnering to improve our evaluative capability. We welcome interaction and ideas toward refining this process so that it becomes integral to our life and a truly useful means for helping to continue to improve the educational experience of our students and staff. Please contact Rosemary Dewerse, Academic Quality and Capability Partner ([rdewerse@unitec.ac.nz](mailto:rdewerse@unitec.ac.nz)) and she will visit you.

- Templates for the PEPs have changed several times in the past three years, as have priorities. This makes it difficult for staff to gauge expectations. Simon Tries noted that change will continue for now as we seek best process. It was agreed the form will look similar for the final 2018 PEPs. A new template will be co-created with QAB in 2019.
- Some programmes have been struggling to get appropriate data. There is also the question of whether the expectation is that every prompt be responded to (*the answer to this is 'no'*).
- It was noted that the questions to the PAQC on the PEP did not align with the KEQ focus and that expectations of the HOPPs should be much clearer, eg how much are they expected to write?
- We need to be clear as to who the audience for the PEPs is. *While it should be a tool for keeping programme improvement a live conversation within teams, written, a PEP empowers a PAQC and HOPP to evaluate the strength and ongoing relevance of its programmes, enables TKK to monitor quality of evaluative capability (mindful of NZQA expectations), and should alert support services and Unitec governance to areas needing response.* The question of where the PEP goes and who is listening and responding to it becomes very important.
- The idea was mooted that the QAB could note particular areas for a year that the PEPs be asked to focus on – for example, student experience, resourcing, staff morale or, for 2019, those identified in the EER – noting things to celebrate as well as areas needing improvement. Data can then be gathered specifically to speak to those. This grew into a discussion around the question of whether we could align our self-evaluation with key frames such as the Unitec Diamond for the purpose of setting priorities/SMART goals looking forward. Is there a way to integrate evaluation in this way, even as it gathers material NZQA needs?
- Encouragement of TKK proactivity was offered. The PAQCs were affirmed, as well as the work of the AQAs. Attendance at such things as monitor's reports was suggested.
- Clearer communication of timelines was requested – a Quality calendar with key dates, sent out in the year prior.
- Two different approaches to evaluating in terms of KEQs were spoken about: in Architecture ALs and their programme teams discussed KEQs 1-3 while the ALs and HOPP worked on KEQs 4-6; Bridgepoint gather teams together, put KEQs up on whiteboards and invite a whole-group brainstorm.
- TPA's 'Course Reporting' was noted as one piece of useful resourcing in terms of improving evaluative capability.
- A question the EER panel asked of Pathway representatives was whether they had read the PEP and monitor's report for the programmes they taught in. Collegial awareness and ownership is expected.
- *TKK aim: PEPs happening at the end of the relevant semester, predicated a simpler, yet rigorous, process. Programme teams meet to review and evaluate, and this discussion – linked to evidence – becomes the PEP. Frequency will be once-a-semester for now but become once-a-year once TKK is confident evaluative capability is growing and becoming consistent across programmes.*

## Te Korowai Kahurangi: Analysis of Interim PEPs (2018)

### Summary

The 2018 Interim PEPs utilised a new template. Workshops were held with Academic Leaders and Heads of Practice Pathway to familiarise them with expectations around evidence-based evaluation. What has been presented across 92 PEPs suggests that the process and our capability in enquiry require further intentional and systemic development if we are to improve in self-evaluation.

### Commendations

PEPs for the Health Sciences pathway are well done with SMART goals carefully diagnosed, documented and updated. Architecture programmes are showing very good evidence of evaluative ability. Both pathways evidence effective feedback loops with students, staff and their wider industry and stakeholder communities, as do Certificates in Business Studies. Creative Industries set and review very good SMART goals, as do Bridgepoint. Postgraduate Programmes and BAHSB/MOST also evidence very good interactive loops and self-evaluation. Meanwhile, a range of programmes are operating initiatives for enhancing communication between students, staff and stakeholders, and academic and pastoral support, which are worth seeding across the system. (See examples on p4).

A number of programmes are engaging in Poutama training and/or investing in different possibilities for raising cultural intelligence for pedagogy and academic and pastoral care with priority groups. Continuing proactivity in this is vital for retention and completion.

### Concerns as TKK evaluates the process<sup>1</sup>

- Many PEPs are overwritten (averaging 27 pages), including pages of data, and/or are descriptive rather than evaluative. Suggested areas for discussion under key headings should be understood as indicative only. How well is the purpose and potential of the PEP being communicated and understood across Unitec?
- That 51% of Semester 1 PEPs arrived after the QAB due date of 12 October (in the August 2018 QAB meeting it was noted that 5 PEPs remained outstanding from 2017) suggests PEPs are more a reporting chore than integral to our life as educators.
- The number of programmes speaking from generic data, more than programme-specific, suggests an intentional culture of owned and well-informed self-evaluation needs further developing.
- A number of programmes seem unaware of how to set SMART goals and thus of their potential for aiding crisp critical assessment of progress and intentions for future improvement.
- PAQC responses suggest that, for many, there is still work to be done in solidifying their purpose and authority.
- Feedback received is raising the question of how best to enable programmes and pathways to evaluate their evaluative capability in ways that promote open and robust conversation in the context of relationship.
- A question has emerged: when programmes note external factors impacting upon them, how and where can their concerns be heard to effect change?

### Considerations for improving the evaluative process

- Move the activity of programme evaluation from an individual (the AL) to the programme staff team, gathering them in facilitated collegial inquiry that, drawing from data and while memories are fresh, seeks to constructively review the semester and set SMART goals to build upon success and address areas needing improvement.

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<sup>1</sup> These are not peculiar to 2018. They have been noted in previous years also.

- Seek advice on how matauranga Māori might inform our evaluative process.
- Train facilitators to guide programme conversation so it provides on-point material for the report, which the AL will finalise.
- Collate and locate quantitative and qualitative data separately from the PEP so they focus only on recording evaluation, with brief opening description provided when a programme is new or has been updated. Data becomes an informative resource for collegial evaluation, sitting alongside.
- Review the PEP template. One thought is to move instructions for its completion into an accompanying guide, including examples of evaluative responses.
- When evaluating evaluative capability, invite the programme team (with their HOPP?) to do so together so that this is owned by all.
- TKK collaborate with TPA in designing professional development growing evaluative capability, including running an effective PAQC.
- Determine best process for alerting governance and management to those factors impacting upon programmes needing higher-level decision-making.

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### TKK observations on self-ratings for 2018's Interim PEPs

**Health Care** PEPs have evaluated themselves from Good to (mostly) Excellent. This is accurate according to the evaluative work presented.

**Social Practice** have evaluated themselves Excellent/Good. Reduction of description would highlight initiatives.

**Community Development** self-evaluate across Marginal-Excellent. Half the PEPs need less description and more evaluative support for this. Attention to SMART goals varies.

**Architecture Pathway** has evaluated their Programmes across a range. Evidence offered in Architecture/Design supports these self-ratings. Landscape PEPs need more programme-specific evidence for their ratings to be accurate.

**Building, Construction and Service.** Self-rating is Good-Excellent. PD needs to be done to ensure the PEPs are effectively diagnosing evidence, to inform the creation of SMART goals. Lack of experience in self-evaluation is in evidence across the Pathway.

**Business Practice Pathway** with some programmes at Good-Excellent has rated others Good-Marginal. Their HOPP is noting the urgent need to progress development for their viability.

**Creative Industries** are self-rating across their PEPs as Good-Excellent. Data supports this; PEPs tend toward descriptive; goals generally are SMART.

**Environmental and Animal Science** self-evaluated at Good. PEPs tend toward Unitec and Pathway level comment and being descriptive at programme level.

**Computer Studies Pathway** has rated themselves Good. *Evaluative* evidence is needed to support this rating.

**Bridgepoint** self-assess at Excellent. Evidence generally supports this, including their noting achievement in KEQs from Marginal-Good. Some description could be removed.

PEPs for **Te Miro** are significantly impacted by disestablishments/non-enrolments and the movement of degrees back into Pathways in 2019.

In the **Engineering Network, Vehicle Systems and Materials** are rating themselves Good-Marginal. Evidence of responsive critical self-reflection as educators needs documenting. **Engineering** (rating Good) provides good evidence but little analysis. SMART goals for both need attention.

*Note: As I, Rosemary, have begun to meet with HOPPs, ALs and AQAs I have been discovering stories that, if told in the PEPs, would have shown more evidence of evaluative capability.*

## Amber lights raised by Pathways

- **Programme viability.** The Bachelor of Business Studies has been judged by external monitoring to be out of date and needing to find a point of difference if it is to remain viable. Several Business programmes have rated themselves 'marginal' expressing concern about their viability if development is not supported urgently.
- **Student administration.** Healthcare notes problems with academic administration – particularly in terms of enrolments, enrolment changes, grades, etc – impacting on students accessing Moodle etc and Postgraduate students also note challenges with campus services. Language Teaching students report satisfaction. Consistency in the system and in communication is needed for smoothing experience across programmes.
- **Resourcing.** Availability of fit-for-purpose building, teaching rooms and technologies are an issue for Architecture, Creative Enterprises and NZCSP. The change of lease on computers from 3-5 years, impacting software capacity, and PowerPoint projectors with insufficient resolution for presenting material are particularly noted by Architecture. Creative Enterprises is also registering the impact of uncertainty as to location and resourcing beyond 2021 on industry relations.
- **Research.** How to ensure, mindful of current restrictions across Unitec, that academic publishing and presenting standards, as well as numbers of appropriately qualified staff, are maintained so that supervisors remain current and capacity is not lost for research supervision in remaining postgraduate programmes? Adequate space for research (and for personal workspace) is noted as an issue in the Engineering Network.
- **Trend? Preparedness.** Some comments across PEPs suggest a trend in students arriving/being accepted in Diploma and Bachelor studies without enough basic skills to support them. Testing in the Bachelor of Architecture Studies cohort, for example, indicated an average reading age of 13.<sup>2</sup> It will be important to monitor this over time for the sake of academic and pastoral load, completion and retention, and the work of support services.<sup>3</sup> A question working in the other direction, mindful of the under 25s, is whether pedagogies in common use at tertiary level correlate with and build upon those that students are experiencing in primary and secondary schools.
- **Trend? Wellbeing.** Certificate in University Preparation, with a large group of under 25s, notes their increasing need for counselling for depression and anxiety.
- **Marketing.** Further help with programme-specific marketing is being requested by several Pathways, particularly by those with good-excellent results yet currently small or dropping in student enrolment. Emphasis on Unitec-generic brand marketing focuses expertise away from the promotion of programme distinctives, necessary in a student-competitive market. Engineering spoke of errors in PeopleSoft data impacting messaging.
- Programmes continue to note the stress and impact on morale of restructuring/realignment.

**Note:** A number of programmes were relying on the Graduate Survey for evidence toward KEQ2 (value of outcomes for stakeholders) but that survey only offered Pathway-level data. While they need to be more proactive in gathering information themselves, in the future is it feasible to ask students to identify their programme when completing the survey?

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<sup>2</sup> Some programmes at L3 and L4 report no recent use of the NATool or, in one, student resistance to it. The NZCEL PEP notes: 'The ESOL field does not accept that the Tool appropriately assess gains made by students learning English as an Additional Language.' What, therefore, is a best approach?

<sup>3</sup> Could Bridging Education's Skills Review approach be adopted by Pathways for higher qualifications?

## Examples of Good Practice in Programmes

- Environmental and Animal Science has an 'Away Day' every year at which issues informing programme development are discussed, as well as 'broader strategies that enhance student outcomes.'
- Creative Industries has a weekly newsletter noting and celebrating what is happening in their wider community, with students, faculty and graduates.
- Bridging Education requires students to book in a Skills Review session, which identifies literacy and numeracy issues before they begin any study, and enables them to advise for pre-course upskilling or during-course support. They are very proactive in support of priority students.
- NZ Certificate in Retail designed a Home Study Log for guidance and accountability around home study hours. The design is attached to their Sem1 2018 PEP.
- BHS(MI) has a very active feedback loop with students via 6 student reps who meet every 5-6 weeks during the semester with teaching staff, enabling prompt response to suggestions for improvement. They also keep exploring a range of pedagogical methods to meet different learning styles.
- Community Development programmes employ a pre-course peer-moderation process to check that what is planned is to standard and to flag any things to be watching out for.
- A couple of programmes have, or intend to have, a course or pastoral diary for capturing informal feedback. Teachers note comments – critical and good feedback – as it happens in a class and issues as they emerge; this information informs prompt response and is available for recording on CEPs. Trends emerging across a programme can then be noted for PEPs.
- A lecturer in Plumbing, Gasfitting and Draining noted younger students (particularly Pacifica) were struggling with attendance and learning. They were spoken with one-on-one in order to put accountability in place, but were also buddied up with more mature students in the class. Having the support of elder peers is raising the ako standard of the whole group.
- PASS initiative in Electrical Engineering (Peer Assisted Study Sessions) is very much appreciated by students.
- Social Practice appointed two Māori teaching staff and have supported them through Masters level study. This and other initiatives are providing immediate matauranga Māori and whanaungatanga into their programmes, which reflect better the demography of their students (of whom 50-55% are Māori and Pacifica). Meanwhile Architecture have lecturers and students of differing ethnicities and experience offering intentional pastoral, experiential and academic support, including in language other than English to current and prospective students.
- Bachelor of Construction: "our strategy for Pacifica success is Denoted with the acronym IMPACT, Identify, Monitor, Progress, Attendance, Connect and Together." This initiative from the Pacific Success Team is appreciated where it is being applied.
- Interior Design has a high number of industry people inputting to their diploma (30 in semester 1, 2018). This is helping them keep current in content and delivery.
- Certificate in University Prep have many women students (and mostly Pacifica/Maori/Asian), with families, which has put pressure on classes beginning or ending beyond the 9-3pm window, so they came up with the idea of a 'designated drop in time' from 8:30-9am as a creative response. A challenge to this, noted by another Bridgepoint programme (NZCSP), is when lectures are timetabled for 1:30-4:30pm.