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Report of an Audit of
Moore Theological College

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Level 10, 123 Lonsdale Street
Melbourne, VIC 3000
Ph 03 9664 1000
Fax 03 9639 7377

admin@auqa.edu.au

<http://www.auqa.edu.au>

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OVERVIEW OF THE AUDIT

Background

In 2003 the Australian Government introduced the Higher Education Support Act 2003 (HESA) to allow students in non self-accrediting higher education institutions to receive financial assistance for their students' tuition fees through the FEE-HELP program.

Non self-accrediting institutions (NSAIs) approved under the HESA for this purpose have become known as higher education providers, or HEPs. Although other institutions also provide higher education, the term 'HEP' is commonly used to denote only non self-accrediting higher education providers, and it is used in this sense in this Report. The HESA requires that HEPs in receipt of FEE-HELP funds must meet a range of quality and accountability requirements, including regular audit by a quality auditing body named in the Higher Education Provider Guidelines.

This Report of the audit by the Australian Universities Quality Agency (AUQA) of Moore Theological College (MTC, or 'the College') provides an overview, and then briefly summarises the Audit Panel's main findings, and its commendations, affirmations and recommendations. The bulk of the Report comprises four chapters in line with the four Quality Audit Factors that are listed in the Handbook for Quality Audits of Higher Education Providers ("the Handbook"), now the *Audit Handbook for non self-accrediting Higher Education Providers* (DEEWR 2008, also AUQA Audit Manual ver 5.0, Appendix F). These Quality Audit Factors also form the chapter headings of MTC's Performance Portfolio. The College's Mission Statement, Values, Graduate Attributes and Objectives are given in Appendix A; the mission, objectives, vision and values of AUQA in Appendix B; membership of the Audit Panel in Appendix C; and abbreviations and technical terms used in this Report in Appendix D.

The Report uses the nomenclature that is in everyday use at the College and that is also used in the College Portfolio. In contrast to the usual custom in Australia, the College and this Report use the term faculty to refer to full-time academic staff, visiting lecturer to refer to a part-time or sessional academic and staff to refer to general or support staff.

The Audit Process

AUQA bases its audits of non self-accrediting HEPs on each organisation's own objectives, together with the MCEETYA *National Protocols for Higher Education Approval Processes* (National Protocols, available at: <http://www.mceetya.edu.au/mceetya/>), the DEEWR Handbook and other relevant legal requirements or codes to which the organisation is committed. The programs or courses of NSAIs are accredited by state and territory accrediting agencies; therefore, quality audits of HEPs do not include a detailed examination of the academic quality assurance processes for programs of study.

HEP audits under the HESA consider institutional actions and performance in relation to, firstly, the institution's objectives; and, secondly, the Quality Audit Factors (QAFs). The four QAFs are also set out in the AUQA Audit Manual ver5.0). Their primary purpose is to provide the HEPs with a framework for the review of certain aspects of institutional performance. In the report of its self-review (the 'Performance Portfolio' or 'Portfolio'), Moore Theological College reported against each of the QAFs, in addition to carrying out an analysis of Plan-Do-Review-Improve. Within each chapter, the criteria for that QAF are addressed, but usually in a holistic way rather than criterion by criterion.

On 13 June 2008, the College presented its Portfolio submission to AUQA, comprising a 26-page introduction, a 73-page core document addressing the individual QAF criteria, and a 21-page Appendix plus three ring-binders of supplementary documents. While this approach was comprehensive, many parts of the Portfolio were less self-contained than may have been desirable from the reader's point of view and there was inevitably some repetition across the criteria under the QAFs. NSAI HEP audit panels generally meet via teleconference for the first discussion of the Portfolio (the Portfolio Meeting). This teleconference took place on 14 July 2008. A face-to-face Preparatory Meeting of the Panel took place on 28 July 2008 at the College.

During 30-31 July 2008 the Audit Panel visited the College's Sydney campus at 1 King Street, Newtown, and conducted a range of interviews and inspected a number of documents and publications.

In all, the Audit Panel spoke with more than 65 people during the audit visit, including the College Principal, members of the Governing Board, managers, faculty, visiting lecturers, staff and students. Sessions were also available for any member of the College community to meet the Audit Panel but no one took advantage of this opportunity. The Audit Panel acknowledges the cooperation and friendliness of all involved and in particular the excellent facilitation of the audit program and documentation through Alan Hohne, Dean of Quality and Planning, and the assistance during the days of interviews provided by Mrs Elisabeth Arnett.

This Report relates to the situation current at the time of the Audit Visit, which ended on 31 July 2008 and does not take account of any changes that may have occurred subsequently. It records the conclusions reached by the Audit Panel based on the documentation provided by the College as well as information gained through interviews, discussion and observation. While every attempt has been made to reach a comprehensive understanding of the College's activities encompassed by the audit, the Report does not identify every aspect of quality assurance and its effectiveness or shortcomings.

The Report contains a summary of audit findings together with lists of commendations, affirmations and recommendations. A commendation refers to the achievement of a stated goal, or to some plan or activity that has led to, or appears likely to lead to, the achievement of a stated goal, and which in AUQA's view is particularly significant. A recommendation refers to an area in need of attention, whether in respect of planning, implementing or reviewing, which in AUQA's view is particularly significant. Where such matters have already been identified by the College, with evidence, they are termed 'affirmations'. In its reports generally, AUQA indicates that some recommendations and affirmations have a high priority. It is acknowledged that recommendations in this Audit Report may have resource implications.

CONCLUSIONS

This section summarises the main findings and lists the commendations, affirmations and recommendations. Other favourable comments and suggestions are mentioned throughout the text of the Report.

Introduction to Findings

There are many aspects of Moore Theological College (MTC, or the College) that AUQA finds commendable. The governing body of the College, the Governing Board, provides excellent oversight and very useful input of ideas. Management led by the Principal is accessible and in tune with students and faculty, and has been particularly successful in creating a College community that is caring and supportive.

The academic standing of the College is widely complimented by students who were attracted to join the College, by alumni of the College who achieved academic success elsewhere and were happy to rejoin the College as faculty, and by the various employers of College graduates and other stakeholders.

The College has grown steadily during the past decade and intends to grow more rapidly in future years. There are ambitious campus development plans under discussion to shape the infrastructure and the physical environment of the College on the Newtown site. This physical expansion will be accompanied by growth in the numbers of students, faculty, staff and visiting lecturers.

It is in this context of growth and expansion that this Report sees the biggest challenges for the College. Until now the relatively small size of the College and small number of its full-time faculty have permitted the informal management processes, especially in human resource management, that are currently in place. AUQA believes that it will be inevitable for the College that most of these processes will have to be enhanced, formalised and in some cases delegated.

The role of strategic planning in the College is the second substantial challenge identified by AUQA. There is a College Strategic Plan, but what seems to be missing is a general acceptance by all the College community, not just the Senior Management Team, of the benefits of systematic strategic planning and the value of a Strategic Plan in guiding all College activities throughout the coming years. There is also a need for better alignment of all subsidiary plans in the College with the overarching Strategic Plan. A more extensive planning exercise involving the widest possible participation may be needed to achieve the necessary support of faculty and staff.

A closer look at the key performance indicators and how they are being used, how they are assigned to faculty and staff, and reported on to the Governing Board, may also assist the College in its growth phase. Also, notwithstanding the repeated reference to benchmarking in the Portfolio, the College appears to be somewhat ambivalent in proceeding with benchmarking in a purposeful way. Some areas of College activity would benefit from the application of benchmarking and the Senior Management Team should be able to provide prioritisation to the big range of improvement projects.

The College has excellent facilities to support teaching and scholarly activities. The Library and the Learning Support System stand out as two examples worthy of special commendation. However, although IT has been coping valiantly with the demands of a modern-day tertiary institution, there is a need for systematic planning for expansion in people and hardware.

The College has a good reputation for teaching and learning, backed up by some convincing statistical evidence. Academic standards are assured through regular application of external moderation that has been refined throughout several decades of College history. Given the growth that will occur, it may not be possible or advisable to continue with the relatively traditional teaching approach adopted in lecturing to large classes of students. AUQA suggests that consideration be given to more flexible approaches to teaching and to more extensive use of electronic media for submission of students' work.

Overall, the College is performing very well on the academic front of teaching and scholarship and importantly combines this with the equally significant attention to the development of the individual person through non-academic programs and chaplaincy arrangements.

A summary of commendations, affirmations, and recommendations follows. They are listed below in the order in which they appear in the Report.

Commendations

- 1. AUQA commends MTC for its commitment to, and practice of, free inquiry and academic freedom.....9
- 2. AUQA commends the Chair and representative external members of the Governing Board of MTC for their excellent grasp of the issues of strategic importance, clarity of vision and understanding of the essential functions of a governing body.10
- 3. AUQA commends the Senior Management Team for doing a good job in managing MTC, in maintaining MTC as an institution with a high academic reputation and for the high regard in which MTC is held by students, graduates, external stakeholders and visiting scholars.11
- 4. AUQA commends the Principal of MTC for the high regard in which he is held and for his accessibility to faculty, staff, students and external stakeholders.11
- 5. AUQA commends MTC for its commitment and dedication to student learning and for providing its graduates with the confidence and competence to embark on their chosen careers.....11
- 6. AUQA commends MTC for sharing in a joint vision to integrate Mary Andrews College activities with those of Moore College.11
- 7. AUQA commends MTC for its approach to customising support in foreign language learning through streaming of students.13
- 8. AUQA commends MTC for the practice of external moderation in undergraduate programs for assuring academic standards.....13
- 9. AUQA commends MTC for the introduction and consequent improvements of the Learning Support System as an essential tool for communication and teaching and learning.....14
- 10. AUQA commends faculty at MTC for their standing in research and scholarship and MTC for the various provisions to support faculty in research and scholarship, in particular generous study-leave provisions.....17

11. AUQA commends MTC for the effort in building of College communities, especially the inclusive nature of support for students' spouses and children and for the overall pastoral care and especially chaplaincy services available to all students.18
12. AUQA commends MTC for the outstanding Library holdings that support research and scholarship at the highest level; and for the services the Library provides to faculty, students and external scholars.20
13. AUQA commends MTC for the clear recognition that quality improvement is a continuing process based on sound quality principles.21

Affirmations

1. AUQA affirms MTC's consideration of alternative, more flexible modes of teaching and learning with attention to class size and appropriate use of technology.....14
2. AUQA affirms MTC's support of faculty in the use of technology to improve teaching and learning, for example through the electronic submission of student work.15
3. AUQA affirms MTC's continued vigilance in ensuring that overall workloads for students and for faculty remain manageable.....15
4. (urgent) AUQA affirms that MTC pursue the finalisation of arrangements for and implementation of benchmarking for selected relevant College processes and activities.16
5. AUQA affirms MTC's plans to review committees and functions that are part of and support the quality framework.18
6. AUQA affirms that MTC give consideration to formalising some of the currently relatively informal approaches to several aspects of human resource management, such as: performance management of faculty and staff; study leave applications and reports; appointment processes of faculty and staff; professional development provisions; induction and continuing support for visiting lecturers; and the development of an Academic Promotions Policy.19
7. AUQA affirms MTC's commitment to professional development in teaching and learning by supporting as many faculty and visiting lecturers as possible to undertake the Graduate Certificate in Teaching & Learning, or parts thereof.19
8. AUQA affirms MTC's plans and encourages its efforts to actively pursue better gender representation amongst faculty and visiting lecturers.....19
9. AUQA affirms MTC's plans to increase IT support and encourages the College in its efforts to plan for IT governance and management.20
10. AUQA affirms MTC's view that the quality improvement framework is being inculcated across the institution through the activities of the Quality Improvement Steering Committee under the direction of the Board of Studies and Senior Management.22

Recommendations

1. (urgent) AUQA recommends that the College review and strengthen its approach to strategic planning to ensure effective penetration, clearer accountability and better commitment at the operational level and to provide clearer linkages between its Mission, Values and Objectives and the strategies and KPIs for realising the Mission.8
2. AUQA recommends that MTC review the Key Performance Indicators it uses, possibly increase their number and assign them to individuals, and also more explicitly use these indicators to measure and review performance.....9
3. AUQA recommends that MTC pay particular attention to improving turnaround time and the quality of feedback to students on the work they submit, in particular at first year level.15

1 INSTITUTIONAL AND EDUCATIONAL OBJECTIVES AND INSTITUTIONAL GOVERNANCE

During the past decade the College has experienced substantial growth in student numbers and envisages even stronger growth and development during the coming years. This is an important factor in the Audit Panel's considerations of various aspects of College activities and of governance and management overall. What may have been entirely appropriate in a relatively small setting and what may have worked well within the confines of a small College may have to be reconsidered, adapted or improved in order to meet the demands and the implications of the College's growth agenda.

In 2008 the College has 327 full-time and 215 part-time students enrolled in higher education courses. The total full-time equivalent student load in 2008 is 362. There are currently 23 full-time faculty members. Plans for the redevelopment of the College campus allow for a doubling of capacity to cater for the growing demand for MTC courses.

In 2006 the NSW HED reviewed the College and all its higher education courses for the purposes of registration as a provider, accreditation of all seven courses and approval to enrol overseas students. The College received unconditional approval for each course for a period of 5 years from 1 January 2007. The College aims to apply for status as a self-accrediting institution (SAI) sometime before the end of the accreditation/registration period.

1.1 *Institutional and Educational Objectives*

The College defines its role in Clause 4 (the Object of the Council) of the MTC Ordinance as

The object of the Council shall be to manage, govern and control the College as a College or establishment of higher education for-

- (a) the education of persons in the principles of Christian knowledge and such of the branches of moral, useful and general knowledge as the Council shall from time to time direct and appoint and as shall be consistent with the principles of the Anglican Church of Australia, and*
- (b) the education and training of candidates for holy orders in connection with the Anglican Church of Australia and, in particular, but without limiting the generality of the foregoing, the training for such period as may be determined in each case, of candidates for holy orders to serve after ordination in this Diocese and of other persons to serve after completion of such training in this Diocese.*

The MTC Mission and Values shape the College Objectives and inform the Graduate Attributes (see Appendix A). For the dissemination of these elements of its Strategic Plan, the College uses the College website for the public and for prospective students, the Annual Report for the Synod, the Student Handbook for students and the Strategic Plan 2008-2010 through the College Intranet for faculty and staff. There is an annual update of the Strategic Plan, preceded by consultation that takes place during relevant reviews.

The College also has a Teaching and Learning Plan 2008-2010 that contains a wide range of topics and is linked with the Strategic Plan by the teaching and learning strategies embedded in that Plan.

The Annual Plan represents the allocation of the resources in terms of the Strategic Plan that is structured on the basis of the College Objectives. Each objective is supported by strategies, performance indicators and targets (PFp5).

In the Panel's view, based on interviews with faculty, staff and stakeholders, the Strategic Plan of the College and subsidiary plans, such as the Teaching and Learning Plan and Annual Plan, have not yet achieved a high level of awareness and penetration. The Strategic Plan is regarded by some as a high level policy document that does not really affect their areas of operational responsibility. The whole approach to strategic planning is considered by some as an extra burden with doubtful corresponding benefits.

The College also approved many new, revised or updated policies in late 2007 and early 2008. Given that timing, it was not possible for the Panel to establish the level of knowledge, penetration and impact of these policies throughout the College.

The Portfolio notes 'In March of each year the Annual Performance Review provides a collation of results of all performance indicators within the Strategic Plan and top-level recommendations for responses for the consideration of the Board of Studies and the Governing Board.' (PF p xvii). However, this process does not seem to be cascading down to activities on the ground such as IT or the Library.

It is acknowledged that the College could manage without a systematic approach to strategic planning when the College was of relatively small size. Given the ambitious expansion plans in student numbers and consequently in faculty and staff as well as infrastructure, a well articulated and thoroughly understood and widely embraced strategic planning process is needed and will be of benefit to the College. In light of the planned application for SAI status by the College, it is urgent for the College to make good progress on these matters.

Recommendation 1

(urgent) AUQA recommends that the College review and strengthen its approach to strategic planning to ensure effective penetration, clearer accountability and better commitment at the operational level and to provide clearer linkages between its Mission, Values and Objectives and the strategies and KPIs for realising the Mission.

The College has identified a relatively small number of Key Performance Indicators (KPIs). Although the College uses a wide range of sources for determining performance indicators for tracking, there could be merit in setting targets and in using a wider range of indicators incorporating inputs, processes and outcomes, linked to individual accountabilities and aligned with goals and strategies in the Strategic Plan. It is suggested that the nine KPIs may be too limiting for monitoring and guiding activities throughout the College, especially in the light of the planned growth ahead.

The small number of KPIs may, possibly, hamper the Annual Performance Review process. The College may also miss opportunities to reflect on some central aspects of its activities that are not linked to a KPI. Typically, universities make use of more than twenty key indicators that are reported annually to the governing body and are sometimes updated and checked more frequently at lower levels in the institution. Although most universities are relatively complex organizations with several fields of study, and a number of departments, schools and faculties, nevertheless the types of key items of concerns do not vary greatly from institution to institution. They encompass teaching and learning, research and scholarship, community engagement, support services and finances.

Even within its current documentation in the Strategic Plan, the College might like to select some of the Performance Indicators for a more prominent status as KPIs. For example, increasingly the number of visiting lecturers employed as a proportion of all full-time equivalent faculty and lecturing

academics is an important indicator. With increasing use of technology and flexible delivery, the student-to-staff ratio becomes less important, but if it is used then all academics that teach should be factored into the equation to provide a more accurate indication.

Further, numbers of students in particular categories may be of importance to the College, such as commencing versus continuing students, and students in equity groups, as well as identification of students by gender, and indigenous, or international backgrounds. Levels of participation of faculty and visiting lecturers in professional development activities should be of interest as is engagement of faculty and students with the (external) community. These comments are provided as examples only. Collaboration with partner institutions may provide access to relevant material such as Annual Reports, score cards, performance against plan analyses and the like.

Recommendation 2

AUQA recommends that MTC review the Key Performance Indicators it uses, possibly increase their number and assign them to individuals, and also more explicitly use these indicators to measure and review performance.

1.2 *Open Intellectual Inquiry*

One of the values of the College says that it is committed to is “Freedom of Inquiry: the freedom to subject all ideas to honest inquiry.” Evidence supporting this claim was provided through written documentation in policy and from feedback and explanation in interviews. Several years ago the College identified a gap in the documentation related to this value by benchmarking against peer institutions. As a result a formal Academic Freedom Policy was adopted in 2006.

The College also adopted the commonly used approach that faculty and staff members are asked to avoid giving the impression that they are speaking on behalf of the College when not acting in an official capacity.

Faculty were complimentary in their comments on what research they can pursue and what teaching materials and topics they can select. The Library collection includes a wide range of literature including significant works on different religions and a diversity of theological traditions.

The College Assessment Procedures include a requirement for fairness, justice and equity on the part of examiners. Open intellectual inquiry by students is also protected by the Academic Grievance Policy, the External Dispute Resolution Policy and through extensive external moderation of undergraduate essays and examination scripts, and external marking of 40 per cent of coursework masters assessments and external assessment of research masters theses.

Commendation 1

AUQA commends MTC for its commitment to, and practice of, free inquiry and academic freedom.

1.3 *Institutional Governance and Organisational Culture*

The College’s governing body is the Governing Board. There is a Governing Board Handbook that outlines the relationship of the Governing Board with the Principal, Faculty and Senior Management; the role of the Governing Board and its members; induction; evaluation;

Committees and a Governance Development Plan. Full details of the accountabilities involved are, surprisingly, set out in Chapter 12 of the Teaching and Learning Plan 2008-2010 instead of the Governing Board Handbook. The current members of the Governing Board are listed in the Student Handbook.

The Governing Board has an Executive Committee, an Audit & Finance Committee and a Compliance Committee. As a result of suggestions by the 2006 NSW registration panel that assessed the College for registration, plans for changes and improvements of governance were approved by the Governing Board on 13 March 2008 and are contained in the Governance Development Plan.

The Audit Panel spoke with the Chair and external members of the Governing Board and canvassed issues such as policy setting, strategic planning, induction for Board members, benchmarking, budget and finance, risk management, and faculty appointments. The Panel formed the view that the College is very well served by these members of the Governing Board. The responses were to the point, direct and honest. The grasp of the issues and the understanding of the intricacies of the challenges for higher education in general and for MTC in particular were commendable, and would do credit to many higher education institutions.

Commendation 2

AUQA commends the Chair and representative external members of the Governing Board of MTC for their excellent grasp of the issues of strategic importance, clarity of vision and understanding of the essential functions of a governing body.

The College is managed by the Principal who is supported by a Vice-Principal, a Director of Property Planning, a Bursar who heads the Service Division, a Dean of Students who heads the Pastoral Care Division, and a Dean of Quality & Planning. The large Academic Division is headed by the Academic Dean who also chairs the Board of Studies.

The College structures, policies and management are consistent with a student-centred approach and a recognition that learning relates to the whole person. All students are allocated to a pastoral care group of not more than 18 students led by a faculty member. Faculty are recruited on the basis of having demonstrated qualities as pastors, teachers and scholars.

The Principal of MTC identified the service to the contributing Christian Churches as the predominant reason for the College's existence. Much of the teaching and scholarship is for that community and the College is an integral part of it. Some of the documents produced by the College may be improved if they place more emphasis on the College's role and activities in what is widely referred to as Community Engagement. The Panel supports the Principal's view that this is not a peripheral activity but rather, that it is integral to the teaching and scholarship that the College undertakes.

The Principal is closely involved with the recruitment, supervision and performance management of all members of faculty. He also meets regularly with and supports the incumbent holding the newly created position of Dean of Women. The Principal is proud of the faculty and staff of the College and acknowledges their dedication and hard work. Faculty, students and external stakeholders praised the Principal for his willingness to listen, for making himself accessible and for providing guidance and sound advice.

Students, graduates, and external stakeholders such as employers of graduates endorsed the view of the College being of high academic standing and reputation. Supporting examples were provided from Australia and overseas.

The Audit Panel formed the view that the College is well managed and hence operates effectively to its objectives.

Commendation 3

AUQA commends the Senior Management Team for doing a good job in managing MTC, in maintaining MTC as an institution with a high academic reputation and for the high regard in which MTC is held by students, graduates, external stakeholders and visiting scholars.

Commendation 4

AUQA commends the Principal of MTC for the high regard in which he is held and for his accessibility to faculty, staff, students and external stakeholders.

As part of the College self-review leading to accreditation and re-registration in 2006, the College engaged the services of an external consultant to provide advice to the College. The view expressed by that consultant in March 2006 was that: "There is substantial evidence of the use of objective data and external feedback with respect to student learning, assessment and graduate outcomes, and so forth." In the Panel's view this is still true. Support for student learning is guided by College Objectives and College Values, but is apparent also when listening to faculty and staff talk about their work with students and their care for students.

The Panel met a range of senior students and graduates of the College. Those interviewed presented themselves as confident persons who said that they gained considerably as individuals during their years at the College and that the academic program provided them with a solid grounding in the discipline of theology. To complement this, the non-academic aspects of the College and the particular emphasis on essentially full-time and on-campus study was seen to be beneficial to their development and learning. Employers were interviewed as part of the external stakeholders group and they expressed great satisfaction with the College graduates.

Commendation 5

AUQA commends MTC for its commitment and dedication to student learning and for providing its graduates with the confidence and competence to embark on their chosen careers.

Part of the agenda of change for MTC was the decision to integrate the College with Mary Andrews College, a College for female students. The integration of the two Colleges is underway and all indicators are that the combined and enlarged institution will be of benefit to the students and faculty. It will provide some economies of scale and it will also enhance the pursuit of the College objective to enable both men and women to engage in higher education in the field of theology.

Commendation 6

AUQA commends MTC for sharing in a joint vision to integrate Mary Andrews College activities with those of Moore College.

1.4 Business Management

As already noted, the College appears to be well managed. Some management practices currently in place may have to be revised when the planned College expansion takes place. College faculty and staff, together with the students form a close-knit community. The faculty and full-time students have meals together daily. Managers and staff meet regularly and there is easy access to management and opportunity to raise concerns or queries. Therefore, some of the formal aspects of business management have to date not been seen as essential.

It is still too early to see outcomes of the implementation of the Governance Development Plan. Generally there appears to be, at best, a close focus on departmental plans but perhaps a corresponding lack of ownership of the College Strategic Plan at the departmental level. The Panel heard that the Library and IT are developing their own plans, but what may be missing is overall integration of planning and cohesion across plans. This applies more to administrative functions and support services than to the core function of the College, teaching and learning, although even the Teaching and Learning Plan is in the Panel's view an unusual combination of items that somewhat lacks focus and urgency. This Report details some concerns regarding human resource management in a later section.

As far as financial management is concerned, the College appears to be in a sound position that is supported by an annual grant from the Sydney Anglican Synod. The College approach to risk management appears sound, although the method of budget allocation might benefit from a closer linkage with the Strategic Plan and a broader set of KPIs that measure progress and achievements linked to budget measures. Also, it is not clear how the various performance indicators other than KPIs listed in the Strategic Plan, are monitored or reported on.

2 TEACHING AND LEARNING, SCHOLARSHIP AND CREATIVE ACTIVITY

2.1 Admission and Progress

2.1.1 Admission

The College Registrar administers Student Selection Procedures for admission of students to the College. The Governing Board takes a close interest in and monitors student admission statistics and admission recommendations from a selection panel.

The College operates an elaborate admissions process that involves a rolling process of selection including preliminary interviews with each candidate followed by two panel interviews. The College says that it considers a wide range of equity groups for enrolment. Most students come to MTC with a first degree and a variety of professional backgrounds including Medicine, Law, Arts, Science, IT, Education and Engineering.

The Panel suggests that as further student growth occurs, the College may wish to consider mechanisms for streamlining or modifying the relatively involved and resource intensive process of student selection. This is not to deny the cogent argument put forward by the College that outlines the potential benefits of interviews in helping both prospective students and the College make informed selection decisions.

In admitting students into Greek and Hebrew language units, the College recognises the different levels of students' prior background and familiarity in the foreign language. The College is using a supportive method of streaming students into classes according to their entering language proficiency levels with good educational outcomes and high student satisfaction.

Commendation 7

AUQA commends MTC for its approach to customising support in biblical Hebrew and Greek language learning through streaming of students.

2.1.2 Progress and Moderation

Student progress is monitored by the College Board of Studies, and academic results for every student are presented to a meeting at the end of Semester 2. Any concerns regarding progress that arise during the course of a year are conveyed to a student's chaplain by the Registrar. The College has excellent student progress and retention figures that have been consistently high over the past five years.

The College makes extensive use of external moderation in the assessment of students' work at the undergraduate level. This practice is commendable and ensures the maintenance of academic standards through careful selection and briefing of external moderators.

Commendation 8

AUQA commends MTC for the practice of external moderation in undergraduate programs for assuring academic standards.

This practice could serve as an example to other institutions.

There is evidence of good practice in assessment of postgraduate students' work where good use is made of external marking reports.

2.2 Good Practice and Innovation

There exists strong evidence of student satisfaction with the educational experience provided by the College and strong employer satisfaction with graduates from the College. The College appears to be responsive to suggestions for change and improvement, for example as evidenced by the review of student workloads prompted by student feedback and modification of workloads following extensive benchmarking with comparator institutions two years ago.

Examples of good practice in teaching and learning are shared through professional development seminars (at least two per year) and at the faculty conference held at the end of Semester 1. They are also discussed at Departmental meetings and at the Board of Studies.

The introduction of the Learning Support System (LSS) at the start of 2007 and substantial improvements made to it in 2008 is the most significant innovation in teaching and learning and more generally facilitates communication within the College. All students had high praise for the LSS and spoke about its multiple features and varied benefits. The LSS has evolved into an indispensable tool for communication and supporting teaching and learning.

Commendation 9

AUQA commends MTC for the introduction and consequent improvements of the Learning Support System as an essential tool for communication and teaching and learning

Not all faculty are using LSS as effectively as they might and take-up is somewhat patchy amongst some of them. Most undergraduate teaching is traditional with a faculty member lecturing to a class of 100 or so students. There have been recent amendments and innovations in the methods of assessment used, but there seems relatively little variety in approaches to teaching. Given the planned expansion of the College this may be a good time to consider alternative approaches to teaching and more flexible modes of delivery of academic programs with a consequent reduction in class size for some units and more use made of tutorials in first year.

Affirmation 1

AUQA affirms MTC's consideration of alternative, more flexible modes of teaching and learning with attention to class size and appropriate use of technology.

In this context, AUQA supports the wish of an increasing number of students to submit work in electronic form. There is a concomitant need for support and professional development of some faculty and some students to help them become familiar with new uses of technology that supports and enhances teaching and learning.

Affirmation 2

AUQA affirms MTC's support of faculty in the use of technology to improve teaching and learning, for example through the electronic submission of student work.

As is the case in many higher education institutions, there is room for improvement and achievement of good practice in the timing of feedback and the quality of feedback to students on the work they submit. The level of satisfaction of students with teaching and learning at MTC is very high already, but feedback to students on assignments is one area where further significant improvement could be achieved. The use of technology will more and more permeate College life and the most recently admitted students at first year level are particularly keen to make use of and explore relevant technologies in their learning.

Recommendation 3

AUQA recommends that MTC pay particular attention to improving turnaround time and the quality of feedback to students on the work they submit, in particular at first year level.

As mentioned, a few years ago the College went through a phase where students experienced very high workloads throughout their program of study. Following a process of benchmarking student workloads with other institutions, the College revised student workloads to more manageable levels. The Principal also commented that the workload of faculty at MTC is high but saw it as a measure of their motivation and dedication to their work. It is not clear whether appropriate instruments are in place to monitor and if necessary modify faculty workloads. Some comments on human resource issues more generally are provided in the next chapter.

Affirmation 3

AUQA affirms MTC's continued vigilance in ensuring that overall workloads for students and for faculty remain manageable.

2.3 Academic Planning, Courses, Benchmarking

Quality Audit Factor 2 of the Handbook contains several criteria (F2.3 to F2.10) where the Panel sees sufficient positive evidence (without the need for further comment by the Panel) from the accreditation and registration exercise that led to the College being registered and its courses accredited by HED for a period of five years from 2007.

Some of the comments below are intended to assist the College in its quest for SAI status. The College has already taken on board a large number of improvement projects that arose from comments by the HED panel in 2006, from suggestions made by external consultants and through self-review. The Portfolio lists 48 projects of improvement that have been made or are planned.

The College is performing well on some of the standard output measures. The proportion of graduates in vocational ministry within three months of course completion is approximately 90 per cent; attrition rates for the last three years have been less than two per cent; student satisfaction expressed in the Student Course Experience Questionnaire (SCEQ) and the Unit of Study Evaluations (USE) surveys is well above 90 per cent as is the overall satisfaction of year 4 exiting students. In the past four years MTC graduates have been admitted into doctoral degrees at Cambridge and Oxford Universities and at Sydney University.

The College has implemented academic plans that are embodied in the College Strategic Plan, the Teaching and Learning Plan, the Faculty Research and Scholarship Development Plan and in the Annual Plan. As mentioned earlier, there may be advantage in streamlining some of the documentation and most importantly in providing linkages between plans, focusing on a manageable number of major goals, identifying suitable strategies for pursuing them, and defining the targets and performance indicators that allow the College to judge when these have been achieved.

The Panel does not suggest that these ingredients of strategic planning do not exist, but they seem to get lost in the wealth of documentation that has been generated. Further, the College is exposed to the danger that very few people at MTC with identified roles are familiar with the details. In other words, the policies and plans are not easily translated into actions and do not easily cascade down into working documents for faculty and staff at the College. Hence the value and impact of strategic planning is diminished.

In 2006 the then accreditation panel made suggestions such as the alignment of aims, learning outcomes and assessment in subject (unit) outlines. These have been addressed by the College.

The College states that it will be seeking SAI status within the next few years. The relevant criteria and guidelines in the *National Protocols for Higher Education Approval Processes* make reference to benchmarking in a number of places, including as it affects governance (20.10.3), approval and review of courses (20.10.4), teaching and learning outcomes (20.10.7) and level of scholarly activity (20.10.9). Notwithstanding the more than 50 references to benchmarking in the core Portfolio document, the College has to make further progress in setting up and achieving useful outcomes in meaningful benchmarking projects.

Affirmation 4

(urgent) AUQA affirms that MTC pursue the finalisation of arrangements for and implementation of benchmarking for selected relevant College processes and activities.

Although plagiarism is an issue of concern in higher education, there has been less than one case of plagiarism per year reported at MTC during the past five years. The cases have been dealt with according to the Academic Misconduct Policy. Neither faculty nor students interviewed considered plagiarism to be an issue. However, as the College grows, it may be necessary to revisit strategies for detecting plagiarism that at present depend on faculty familiarity with key scholarly sources and relatively small numbers of students.

2.4 Scholarship and Research

The College enjoys a high reputation and standing in research and scholarship. This reputation has been gained through a judicious appointment policy of faculty over many years, and the support that is provided to faculty in terms of study leave policies and facilities, such as a Doctoral level Library.

A number of initiatives that assist in the development and promotion of research and scholarship at MTC are included in the Faculty Research & Scholarship Development Plan 2008-2010, a well written document focused on the topic of immediate concern.

- 8.5 per cent of College annual expenditure to be used for research
- The Library Collection Development Policy highlights the priority of research
- Opportunities for graduates and academics to pursue research higher degree studies

- Generous study leave provisions of six months study leave after three and a half years of full-time teaching
- Positions of Senior Research Fellow, currently three
- Joint publication of Reformed Theological Review
- 50 per cent of faculty listed on RHD Supervision Register
- 30 peer-reviewed publications in 2007

Commendation 10

AUQA commends faculty at MTC for their standing in research and scholarship and MTC for the various provisions to support faculty in research and scholarship, in particular generous study-leave provisions.

3 STRUCTURES, DECISION MAKING AND RESOURCES

3.1 *Organisational Structures*

AUQA finds that the College's structures for decision-making are generally sound although in some places at a minimal level due to the small size and close nature of the College community. Faculty and staff interviewed were clear about their responsibilities and appear to be performing their roles effectively. There are many aspects that work well at MTC as an organisation, most likely due to a large extent to the leadership and management style of the Principal and members of the Senior Management Team, the easy access they provide to faculty and staff, students and stakeholders, and the ethos of the College as a close-knit community.

An important part of the organisational structure of the College is the encompassing provision of pastoral care, the assignment of each student to a chaplain and the various non-academic programs provided. The predominantly on-campus nature of the College is seen by most students as a key defining feature, attraction and strength of the College, as are the care and support for students as spouses and for their partners and children.

Commendation 11

AUQA commends MTC for the effort in building of College communities, especially the inclusive nature of support for students' spouses and children and for the overall pastoral care and especially chaplaincy services available to all students.

The Report commented earlier on the Governing Board and the Board of Studies as important building blocks in the organisational structure. The implementation of Grievance Policies for students and faculty and monitoring of outcomes attest to the high level of satisfaction within the College community. There is, however, a continuing need for renewal and improvement, both at the organisational level through reviews of committees and boards, and through the review and benchmarking of functions (such as admissions, staff recruitment, staff development) and academic and administrative departments. Currently there is a strong emphasis on the review of academic courses. All of these augur well for the development of the quality framework and the College's future. However, the College is encouraged to embrace a systematic review function and to implement those planned such as the review of the Governing Board and the Review of Assessment, just to mention two.

Affirmation 5

AUQA affirms MTC's plans to review committees and functions that are part of and support the quality framework.

3.2 *Faculty, Visiting Lecturers, Staff*

The Portfolio outlines a heavy responsibility on the Principal for the recruitment, appointment (through the Governing Board) and on-going performance management of all faculty members. The Principal is assisted by the Vice-Principal in ensuring the provision of professional development for faculty and visiting lecturers (i.e. part-time or sessional academics). These arrangements are working at present because of the relatively small size of the College. There

are 23 Faculty and the Principal schedules a performance management meeting with each of them throughout the year.

These arrangements and those for staff in the support services departments (like IT, Library) are not sustainable into the future if the College grows as projected. A greater degree of formality will have to be introduced into performance management and review and written reports and records, forms and standard procedural documents will need to be designed and used.

Even at present there are some instances where policy has not been carried out as intended, such as in the case of annual performance review discussions with some staff members albeit in a minority of cases. The current approach to human resource management issues may have been adequate in a small institution but is insufficiently robust in the context of the College's growth plans. Bearing in mind that the College is planning to apply for SAI status within a few years, strengthening some of these processes is advisable. The absence of a policy for faculty promotion is an example of a current omission.

Affirmation 6

AUQA affirms that MTC give consideration to formalising some of the currently relatively informal approaches to several aspects of human resource management, such as: performance management of faculty and staff; study leave applications and reports; appointment processes of faculty and staff; professional development provisions; induction and continuing support for visiting lecturers; and the development of an Academic Promotions Policy.

The College relies on the services and support of almost the same number of visiting lecturers as there are faculty. It is important to provide tailored programs of induction, support and professional development in teaching and learning for visiting lecturers. Continuing professional support and skills development and innovation in teaching for faculty is equally important. It is not feasible for every faculty and visiting lecturer to obtain a formal award qualification in teaching. Nevertheless, the College is encouraged to provide opportunities for faculty and visiting lecturers to keep abreast of new developments in teaching and learning, to gain new insights and to develop relevant skills.

Affirmation 7

AUQA affirms MTC's commitment to professional development in teaching and learning by supporting as many faculty and visiting lecturers as possible to undertake the Graduate Certificate in Teaching & Learning, or parts thereof.

The integration of MTC with Mary Andrews College has been commented on earlier with the expected improvement in better gender representation amongst faculty. Currently there is only one female faculty member at MTC although the College has allocated three positions for female faculty. There is also a need to improve gender representation amongst visiting lecturers.

Affirmation 8

AUQA affirms MTC's plans and encourages its efforts to actively pursue better gender representation amongst faculty and visiting lecturers.

3.3 Support for Student Learning, Library and IT

In line with earlier positive comments regarding the College's commitment to and support for student learning, the support provided by the Library for scholarship and research appears to be exemplary. The Library offers advice on the most appropriate research tools available, provides literature searches on request and assists in assembling reading lists, and offers briefings to faculty members on publications, new tools and developments in their areas of interest. It also has a collection policy that has enhanced the Library holdings to achieve the status of a Doctoral level Library.

The Panel received very positive feedback regarding the Library from students and stakeholders.

Commendation 12

AUQA commends MTC for the outstanding Library holdings that support research and scholarship at the highest level; and for the services the Library provides to faculty, students and external scholars.

In future it may be of benefit to the development and further improvement of the Library for it to undertake more systematic data gathering, including surveys, statistics and planning of various Library activities.

The Panel did not note a particular focus on international students coming to the College although permission has been granted under the ESOS regulations to enroll international students. At this time, English Language support for incoming international students appears not to be as readily available as is desirable and the College may consider strengthening this area particularly if it plans to expand its international student numbers from non-English speaking countries.

Information technology provides indispensable tools for the running of a higher education institution, in supporting teaching and learning, communication, and record keeping of the life cycle of a student from admission to graduation, to mention a few examples. The IT function at MTC is supported by a very small number of staff. Although neither faculty nor students raised any issues regarding IT at the College, the Panel is concerned about the capacity for forward planning in IT, IT governance and day-to-day IT management. Any growth plans for the College have to factor in adequate provision for IT support in terms of people and infrastructure. Most of the current students own personal computers and those students appreciate the wireless Internet access and other support that are available. Further innovation in teaching and learning and flexible delivery will place more demands on IT.

Affirmation 9

AUQA affirms MTC's plans to increase IT support and encourages the College in its efforts to plan for IT governance and management.

4 MAINTAINING A COMMITMENT TO QUALITY IMPROVEMENT

4.1 Review and Evaluation

MTC has been consistently engaged for three decades in comparing its academic standards with those of Australian universities. This is done through a process of external moderation of academic assessment and involves action by the core academic units, the Departments, and its members, the faculty of the College. The College makes use of an External Advisory Committee to inform its teaching and learning activities.

In 2005 the College undertook a major review of its academic programs and in 2006 it was reviewed by the NSW HED for registration as a Higher Education Institution, re-accreditation of existing Bachelor and Masters programs and first-time accreditation of three Diploma courses. Thus there has been continuing self-review and improvement during a period of more than three years leading up to the finalisation of the Performance Portfolio 2008 document for the AUQA audit.

The Portfolio refers to over 80 quality improvement projects. Although they vary in size and complexity, the approach taken by the Quality Improvement Steering Committee (QISC) to implement them seems to be cumbersome and involves design of project control forms, their review and approval and then reporting on them. This approach may be useful for large and complex projects but appears time-consuming for smaller ones.

However, there is good understanding within the College that the goal is to embed relevant quality assurance processes so that they occur without the need for assistance by specially established quality committees and specially identified positions. In this way the core functions of teaching and learning, research and scholarship, and the support functions to assist them, have embedded within them the appropriate quality assurance mechanisms and ongoing means for quality improvement.

Commendation 13

AUQA commends MTC for the clear recognition that quality improvement is a continuing process based on sound quality principles.

4.2 The Quality Management System

As mentioned in the opening sections of this Report, there appears to be a relatively weak level of integration, common understanding or proper cascading of the College's key strategic planning documents within the College. Although the Quality Improvement System outlined in the Portfolio (PFp xi) expresses the connectivity between the formal strategic statements at the top with the actions at the coalface, the reality appears to be somewhat different. Although suites of measures are mentioned and accountabilities are referred to, in practice they do not appear to be being used to create benefits for the institution.

The College is encouraged to embed the Quality Improvement System across the institution through the activities of QISC under the direction of the Board of Studies and Senior Management and reflected in key responsibilities of faculty and staff in order to achieve a quality system that is integrated with teaching and scholarship and is not seen as the

responsibility of a small subgroup. The aim is that within a few years the need for QISC will have been eliminated and quality improvement will be seen as the business of each member of faculty and staff.

Affirmation 10

AUQA affirms MTC's view that the quality improvement framework is being inculcated across the institution through the activities of the Quality Improvement Steering Committee under the direction of the Board of Studies and Senior Management.

This Report refers to the need for formalisation of a range of human resource management tools. Performance management, appraisal and professional development are closely linked and can work well to the benefit of the employee and employer. It is at that level of interaction between supervisor and individual where formal discussions about accountabilities, targets and performance indicators are most productive.

The College has already in place a range of good communication channels such as the College intranet, the LSS, the comprehensive Student Handbook, Faculty Handbook, and Registrar's Department Handbook that together can facilitate better alignment of the College activities with the Strategic Plan.

4.3 Stakeholder Involvement

The College is fortunate to have external stakeholders that are strongly committed to the well-being and advancement of MTC. The stakeholders whom the Panel met are knowledgeable and experienced individuals who are able to contribute significantly to the College. The College has made good use of their input and has derived many benefits from their contributions.

This Report has already referred to the very positive views that have been expressed by internal stakeholders including students in the College's academic and non-academic programs.

From time to time higher education institutions in Australia conduct a climate survey amongst their employees. The Panel is aware of the closeness and relatively small size of the College community of faculty, visiting lecturers and staff. Nevertheless, since there are more than 100 people involved in these roles in supporting MTC, it may be useful for the College to conduct a confidential climate survey, perhaps every three to five years through a questionnaire to all its employees, full-time and part-time, academic and general.

APPENDICES

APPENDIX A: MOORE THEOLOGICAL COLLEGE

MTC was founded in 1856 when the provisions of the will of the late Thomas Moore of Liverpool were first acted upon. The Rev. William Hodgson was the first Principal when the College opened in Liverpool with three students. In 1891 the College moved to its present site in Newtown, in order to be near the University of Sydney (founded in 1850). The College has a long tradition in training the majority of the clergy of the Anglican Diocese of Sydney, and men and women who have served in other parts of Australia and overseas, and in other Protestant denominations.

The Moore Theological College Council is the owner of the College and is constituted by the Moore Theological College Ordinance 1984 of the Synod of the Anglican Diocese of Sydney. The College offers only courses in theology and related fields (including biblical languages, philosophy and ethics). The Bachelor of Divinity is the core course of MTC with the Bachelor of Theology fully nested within it. The College also offers three Diploma programs and two masters courses, a coursework Master of Arts (Theology) and the research Master of Theology. MTC has for many years fostered extension courses to provide a preliminary training in theology. The College offers a PhD program in collaboration with and through both the University of Sydney and the University of Western Sydney.

The College also engages in a significant way in facilitating the spiritual development of ordination candidates and other men and women preparing for Christian ministry. This is done through the so-called non-academic program and is helped by the fact that faculty members are Christian pastors, scholars and teachers.

The College is committed to the principle of learning in community and therefore almost all of the undergraduate courses are full-time, and as far as capacity allows, residential. The exception to this is the one-year Diploma of Bible and Ministry, which may be taken over two years.

Chronology

- 1 March 1856, Moore Theological College opened at Liverpool, NSW
- 1891, move from Liverpool to Newtown (in Sydney, NSW), current site
- 1914, beginning of association with the Australian College of Theology; until 2001 an affiliate of that consortium
- 1974, beginning of right to award Diploma of Arts in Theology (until 1994)
- 1977, beginning of College accreditation by the HED of courses offered by MTC through Australian College of Theology
- 1984, incorporation of the Moore Theological College Council by the Moore Theological College Ordinance (1984) (of the Synod of the Anglican Diocese of Sydney) under the Anglican Church of Australia (Bodies Corporate) Act 1938
- 1992, HED granted right to MTC to award Bachelor of Divinity
- 2001, first-time accreditation of Bachelor of Theology, Master of Arts in Theology, Master of Theology
- 2002, beginning of collaboration with University of Western Sydney on PhD
- 2005, beginning of collaboration with University of Sydney on PhD
- 2005, approval of the College as a HEP under the HESA

2006, first-time accreditation of three one-year Diploma courses
 1 January 2007, accreditation and registration of the College and its higher education courses
 (for five years)

Academic Profile (accredited higher education awards)

- Bachelor of Divinity
- Bachelor of Theology
- Diploma of Bible & Missions
- Diploma of Bible & Ministry
- Diploma of Bible & Youth Ministry
- Master of Arts (Theology) coursework
- Master of Theology, research

Key Statistics

Metrics	2007	2008
Total Faculty, full-time	22	23
Student Enrolments, full-time	326	327
Student Enrolments, part-time	186	215

By comparison, a decade ago the College had approx. 200 full-time students. The College envisages substantial growth during the coming decade to a total student load of approx. 600.

College Statements

(Source: MTC Performance Portfolio 2008)

MISSION STATEMENT

Moore College exists to enable men and women, through higher education in the field of theology, to deepen their knowledge of God so that they might faithfully and effectively live exemplary Christian lives, proclaim and teach the Word of God, and care for others in the name of Jesus Christ in all the world, to the glory of God.

COLLEGE VALUES

The College seeks to achieve its mission in a manner consistent with biblical values. It is therefore committed to:

CHRISTIAN FAITH: Trust in God and his purposes as these are revealed in Jesus Christ and conveyed to us by the Holy Spirit in the canonical scriptures of the Old and New Testament;

INTEGRITY: Honesty, transparency, fairness and accountability in all personal behaviour and community practices;

GRACE: Generosity and compassion in dealings with each other reflecting the undeserved mercy of God in Christ;

SERVICE: Placing the welfare of others above personal interests and convenience, using the gifts and talents that God has graciously given;

COMMUNITY: Loving personal relationships, developed through regular meeting and a common focus, as the proper context for learning about the triune God and his purposes;

SCHOLARSHIP: Rigour of thought characterised by a careful use of primary evidence, breadth of research and appropriate inferences, resulting in fresh and readily accessible approaches to both classic issues and contemporary questions;

GENDER COMPLEMENTARITY: Affirmation of the fundamental equality and mutual dependence of men and women as image bearers of God, while recognising proper differences in roles and responsibilities in life and Christian ministry;

FREEDOM OF INQUIRY: The freedom to subject all ideas to honest inquiry; and

INTEGRATION: Growth in the knowledge of God is best conducted for, and in the context of, life application and active participation in Christian service.

GRADUATE ATTRIBUTES

The various programs of the College aim to produce convinced and thoughtful disciples of Jesus Christ who, in prayerful dependence on God:

1. have a broad and deep grasp of the 'deposit of faith' as it is set forth in the Bible and has been the subject of Christian reflection for the past two thousand years;
2. are convinced of the truth, relevance and authority for living and thinking of all that the Bible teaches;
3. seek to live consistently with the teaching of the Bible demonstrated in the humble service of others (thereby commending the gospel);
4. are committed to the priority of building God's church through the proclamation of the word of God in the context of genuine, loving relationships;
5. demonstrate a capacity for proclaiming the word of God effectively through a faithful, clear and

- compelling exposition of the Bible's teaching;
6. are able to make appropriate connections across the various aspects of the Bible's theology and between that theology and life in both contemporary churches and the world in which we live;
 7. are committed to life-long learning, critical reflection, supportive interaction with peers and nurturing the next generation of Christian leaders; and
 8. are able to exercise, and be subject to, appropriate authority within the community of God's people, recognising their own limitations and the competencies of others.

COLLEGE OBJECTIVES

The objectives of the College are shaped by its mission and values. They are:

1. Students – to attract a growing number of suitably qualified applicants and provide them with theological education of the highest quality equipping them for Christian ministry;
2. Faculty Recruitment and Development – while maintaining an appropriate student to faculty ratio, to foster a well qualified community of faithful scholars, who are able to teach, capable of undertaking research and exemplify the knowledge of God;
3. Library – to maintain and develop a world class resource for learning, scholarship and research in each of the disciplines of theology;
4. Teaching, Learning, Research and Scholarship – to provide the full spectrum of quality learning and research experiences applicable to a lifetime of preaching and pastoring by teaching the knowledge of God: in the Diocese of Sydney, in other settings in Australia and around the world;
5. Community – to foster Christian fellowship among students and faculty as both an outcome and an encouragement of their learning and teaching;
6. Work environment – to maintain a work environment for faculty, staff and students that both embodies the principles of Christian faith and life and complies with applicable laws and protocols;
7. Facilities, resources and student services – to provide facilities, resources and services for a continuously improving quality of teaching and learning by a growing body of students and faculty;
8. Governance and administration – to adhere to practices in governance and administration at least at a level consistent with National Governance Protocols for Higher Education Providers as applicable to non-profit providers, aspiring to the status of a 'self-accrediting institution' at an appropriate time; and
9. Funding – to ensure the College's objectives are achieved through the maintenance of prudentially sound funding to meet current and long-term development and operational requirements, providing teaching and services in a cost effective manner cognisant of the College's financial resources.

BENCHMARKING

Ongoing development of the College's Quality Improvement Cycle includes work on formal benchmarking (<http://intranet.moore.edu.au/750/>). The College is participating in a number of initiatives on this front including:

1. Research into literature on and practice in benchmarking with a view to identifying best practice;
2. Selective adoption of targets based on benchmarks derived from *Benchmarking: A Manual for Australian Universities* ([SM46](#)).
3. Ongoing collaboration with relevant peer institutions including the following with which formal memoranda of understanding are being pursued:
 - 3.1 Avondale College, Department of Theology;
 - 3.2 Morling College, Sydney;
 - 3.3 The Australian Lutheran College, Adelaide; and
 - 3.4 The Sydney College of Divinity.
4. Plans for the foregoing collaboration include:
 - 4.1 To exchange measures of:
 - 4.1.1. Research Active faculty
 - 4.1.2. Faculty Loads;
 - 4.1.3. Student Loads;
 - 4.1.4. Retention Rates;
 - 4.1.5. Courses Completion Times (proportion completing in recommended minimum time);
 - 4.1.6. Student Satisfaction; and
 - 4.1.7. Library Statistics.
 - 4.2. To enter into agreements with Avondale, SCD, Morling and ALC to provide up to a total of 5 person days per year for 'moderation of units' and/or membership of 'external advisory panels' on a quid-pro-quo basis;
 - 4.3. To express interest to ALC and Avondale in undertaking joint work on 'risk management' and 'course development processes'.
5. Correspondence with Trinity Evangelical Divinity School (<http://www.tiu.edu/divinity/about/>), Deerfield II with a view to broadening collaboration on exchange of outcome information (as above) to include a relevant international provider.
6. Participation in a research project (funded by the Carrick Institute) being undertaken by the Committee of Deans of Theological Consortia or University Departments. The aims of the project include: 'To establish consensus on what would be a set of clear national standards for the (theological) sector in terms of the quality of awards and a process for achieving and *benchmarking* quality outcomes.'

Principles of Teaching and Learning

1. We accept the Christian Scriptures (constituted by the Old and New Testaments) as the written word of God, authoritative, clear, sufficient, without error in all that they teach, and containing all that is necessary for salvation and the informed practice of the Christian life of discipleship. We confess that God can only be known in Jesus Christ as he is presented to us in the Scriptures and therefore the study of Scripture and its ancillary disciplines is indispensable in training for Christian ministry, since the central function of such ministry is to make God known. We are therefore committed to:
 - 1.1. The Christian Scriptures as the basis and discerning norm of all that we teach.
 - 1.2. Our students gaining a coherent, integrated and extensive knowledge of the Christian Scriptures including principles of sound exegesis of the biblical text in the original languages, and an understanding of the basic unity of the Bible being found in the person of Jesus Christ and his proclamation and inauguration of the Kingdom of God.
 - 1.3. The study of Christian systematic theology as the discipline in which the knowledge of God given in Christ through the Scriptures is reflected upon rationally and articulated

systematically. We therefore aim to equip our students with a coherent, integrated, and extensive knowledge of Christian theology including principles of theological method.

- 1.4. A core of units of study throughout the curriculum that cohere and build on one another to reflect the sense of unity and coherence that we acknowledge to exist in our foundational text, the Christian Scriptures.
2. We believe the teaching of the Christian Scriptures is faithfully reflected in the historic creeds and in the Protestant Reformed Tradition as expressed in the Thirty-Nine Articles of Religion. We are therefore committed to:
 - 2.1. Our students gaining a coherent knowledge of the history of reflection upon the Scriptures from both a biblical and theological perspective. This will include the history of biblical interpretation and of key doctrines, particularly from a Protestant, Reformed and Evangelical point of view.
 - 2.2. Our students gaining an understanding of the major periods of Christian history, especially the Patristic period, the Reformation and the Modern Evangelical Movement, all with particular reference to Anglicanism.
3. We are committed to the integration of theoretical and applied aspects of knowledge. We understand that the knowledge of God cannot be isolated from the application of this knowledge to all aspects of life, thought, and conduct, and that the proper expression of the knowledge of God is found in a life lived in accordance with his will, seeking to extend the reach of his kingdom through teaching and proclamation. We acknowledge that the life of Christian discipleship is lived in the midst of, and engaging with, a diverse and complex world. We are therefore committed to:
 - 3.1. Exploring and demonstrating the relevance and application of the material learnt to contemporary society and the practice of Christian ministry.
 - 3.2. Encouraging and equipping our graduates for effective teaching and proclaiming ministries in a diverse and complex world. We acknowledge that this needs to be done at both a theoretical and practical level. This means giving proper attention to Christian Mission and its history.
 - 3.3. Teaching Ethics as an integral component of the knowledge of God, and an essential contribution to a life lived in service of others, and engaged with the contemporary culture.
 - 3.4. Exploring and providing learning opportunities that demonstrate and encourage an integrated and holistic personal response.
4. Our conviction is that, in keeping with the personal nature of Christian truth and the relational nature of our God expressed in his being and his plans to bring to himself a people described in family terms, theology is best learned in a community that is both a Christian family and an academic fellowship. We are therefore committed to:
 - 4.1. The understanding that teaching and learning in the College must be accompanied by appropriate application and modelling of the practice of the Christian life in all its facets. This includes respect and care for one another as brothers and sisters in Christ in all matters of teaching, learning and administration.
 - 4.2. Exploring and creating opportunities in the context of the learning programme to facilitate and express our conviction that theology is best learned as stated above.
5. We are grateful for the rich diversity of God's gifts to his people and acknowledge that this diversity is expressed in a variety of abilities, interests and learning styles. We are therefore committed to responding to the range of student abilities, interests and learning styles in the planning and implementation of the Units of Study that comprise the curriculum.

APPENDIX B: AUQA'S MISSION, OBJECTIVES, VISION AND VALUES

Mission

AUQA is the principal national quality assurance agency in higher education with the responsibility of providing public assurance of the quality of Australia's universities and other institutions of higher education, and assisting in enhancing the academic quality of these institutions.

Objectives

AUQA is established to be the principal national quality assurance agency in higher education, with responsibility for quality audits of higher education institutions and accreditation authorities, reporting on performance and outcomes, assisting in quality enhancement, advising on quality assurance; and liaising internationally with quality agencies in other jurisdictions, for the benefit of Australian higher education.

Specifically, the objectives of AUQA are as follows:

1. Arrange and manage a system of periodic audits of:
 - the quality of the academic activities, including attainment of standards of performance and outcomes of Australian universities and other higher education institutions;
 - the quality assurance arrangements intended to maintain and elevate that quality;
 - compliance with criteria set out in the National Protocols for Higher Education Approval Processes;and monitor, review, analyse and provide public reports on the quality of outcomes in Australian universities and higher education institutions.
2. Arrange and manage a system of periodic audits of the quality assurance processes, procedures, and outcomes of State, Territory and Commonwealth higher education accreditation authorities including their impact on the quality of higher education programs; and monitor, review, analyse and report on the outcomes of those audits.
3. Publicly report periodically on matters relating to quality assurance, including the relative standards and outcomes of the Australian higher education system and its institutions, its processes and its international standing, and the impact of the National Protocols for Higher Education Approval Processes on Australian Higher Education, using information available to AUQA from its audits and other activities carried out under these Objectives, and from other sources.
4. Develop partnerships with other quality agencies in relation to matters directly relating to quality assurance and audit, to facilitate efficient cross-border quality assurance processes and the international transfer of knowledge about those processes.

Vision

To consolidate AUQA's position as the leading reference point for quality assurance in higher education in and for Australia. Specifically:

- AUQA's judgements will be widely recognised as objective, accurate and useful, based on its effective procedures, including auditor training and thorough investigation.
- AUQA's work will be recognised by institutions and accrediting agencies as adding value to their activities, through the emphasis on autonomy, diversity and self-review.
- Through AUQA's work, there will be an improvement in public knowledge of the relative academic standards of Australian higher education and an increase in public confidence in Australian higher education.
- Through AUQA's work with other quality assurance agencies, the international quality assurance requirements for Australian higher education institutions will be coherent and rigorous, avoiding duplication and inconsistency.
- AUQA's advice will be sought on quality assurance in higher education, through mechanisms including consulting, training and publications.
- AUQA will be recognised among its international peers as a leading quality assurance agency, collaborating with other agencies and providing leadership by example.

Values

In its external relations, AUQA will be:

- *Rigorous*: AUQA carries out all its audits as rigorously and thoroughly as possible.
- *Supportive*: AUQA recognises institutional autonomy in setting objectives and implementing processes to achieve them, and acts to facilitate and support this.
- *Flexible*: AUQA operates flexibly, in order to acknowledge and reinforce institutional diversity, and is responsive to institution and agency characteristics and needs.
- *Cooperative*: AUQA recognises that the achievement of quality in any organisation depends on a commitment to quality within the organisation itself, and so operates as unobtrusively as is consistent with effectiveness and rigour.
- *Collaborative*: as a quality assurance agency, AUQA works collaboratively with the accrediting agencies (in addition to its audit role with respect to these agencies).
- *Transparent*: AUQA's audit procedures, and its own quality assurance system, are open to public scrutiny.
- *Economical*: AUQA operates cost-effectively and keeps as low as possible the demands it places on institutions and agencies.
- *Open*: AUQA reports publicly and clearly on its findings in relation to institutions, agencies and the sector.

APPENDIX C: THE AUDIT PANEL

Professor Alex Radloff, Pro Vice-Chancellor (Academic Services), Central Queensland University, Rockhampton (Chair)

Dr Sophia Matiasz, Higher Education Directorate, Department of Further Education, Employment, Science and Technology, Adelaide

Dr Rudi Lidl, Audit Director, Australian Universities Quality Agency

Observer

Ms Karen Treloar, Audit Director, Australian Universities Quality Agency

APPENDIX D: ABBREVIATIONS AND DEFINITIONS

The following abbreviations and definitions are used in this Report. As necessary, they are explained in context.

ALC.....	Australian Lutheran College
AUQA.....	Australian Universities Quality Agency
BoS.....	Board of Studies
CEQ.....	Course Experience Questionnaire
DEEWR.....	Australian Government Department of Education, Employment and Workplace Relations, formerly DEST
EFTSL.....	equivalent full-time student load
FEE-HELP.....	FEE-HELP is a loan given to eligible fee-paying students to help pay part or all of their tuition fees.
HED.....	Higher Education Division (of NSW Department of Education and Training)
HEP(s).....	higher education provider(s)
HESA.....	<i>Higher Education Support Act 2003</i>
IELTS.....	International English Language Testing System
IT.....	information technology
KPI.....	Key Performance Indicator
LSS.....	Learning Support System
MTC.....	Moore Theological College
NSAI(s).....	non self-accrediting institution(s)
PF p.....	Performance Portfolio page reference
Portfolio.....	Performance Portfolio: Self-Review Report, prepared by MTC
QAFs.....	Quality Audit Factors
QISC.....	Quality Improvement Steering Committee
RHD.....	Research Higher Degree
SAI(s).....	self-accrediting institution(s)
SCD.....	Sydney College of Divinity
SCEQ.....	Student Course Experience Questionnaire
USE.....	Unit of Study Evaluations
UWS.....	University of Western Sydney

