

# INTEGRITY AND ACCOUNTABILITY REFORM PROGRAM

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## INTERIM UPDATE

17 September 2012



## WELCOME

It is three months since the University committed to a thorough program of review and reform of our governance systems.

Integrity and accountability reform are now a top priority and I am pleased to report we are making good progress on all fronts.

I have been heartened by the positive response from staff and the wider UQ community. Together we are working toward creating a University that is an Australian leader, and world class, in its approach to ethics and integrity.

Since we announced the program in May, key achievements have included:

- More robust student admission rules and procedures
- Stronger and better-resourced assurance, risk management and investigations functions
- Better policies and processes to prevent conflicts of interest
- A review of processes and policies for addressing complaints and misconduct
- Engagement with the St James Ethics Centre to build the capability of our senior leaders and instigation of a University-wide culture survey.

This Interim Update marks an important milestone in the evolution of our reform agenda, which has three core themes: compliance, capacity and culture.

Compliance refers to our governance policies and systems, along with our interaction with key bodies such as the Crime and Misconduct Commission (CMC) and Tertiary Education Quality and Standards Agency (TEQSA). Capacity deals with ensuring we have appropriate resourcing, communication and training in place. Finally, culture describes our effort to ensure integrity is part of our underlying ethos.

The comprehensive scope of our program is testament to the focus and importance we have placed on review – both internal and external – as well as the cooperation and collaboration of staff, the wider UQ community and stakeholders.

Reviews on such a scale can leave no stone unturned, and time and effort are needed to create and sustain change. This is certainly no quick or simple task, but one we feel is of the highest importance to reinforce confidence in UQ's commitment to accountability and integrity after the irregular student admission occurred last year. The publication of this Interim Update further demonstrates our commitment to transparency, accountability, integrity and participation.

### Professor Deborah Terry

Vice-Chancellor  
The University of Queensland



## STATUS UPDATE ON FOCUS AREAS

Focus area	Item	Status	Comments	Next steps
<b>1 Compliance – Governance and integrity</b>	1.1. Admission rules and procedures review	Completed	We have fully implemented the recommendations of a review of UQ's admissions rules and procedures. As part of this we, have introduced new annual reporting requirements.	Ensure staff are fully aware of all changes.
	1.2. Assurance and risk management review	Review completed, implementation underway	We have established a stronger and better-resourced structure for assurance and risk management. The new structure is in line with the recommendations of a 2011 review of the area, planning for which commenced in April 2011. The review was chaired by Len Gainsford and involved Edward Ho – both experts in audit and assurance.	New Associate Director, Investigations, to commence by early October. Establish Investigations Reference Group once Associate Director has commenced. Continue to embed new structure and finalise implementation of review recommendations.
	1.3. Code of Conduct and policies review	Review completed, implementation underway	We have completed internal reviews of UQ's Code of Conduct and policies. These covered the management and handling of misconduct and complaints and conflicts of interest.	Implement all aspects of the review.
	1.4. Strengthened working relationship with the CMC	Underway and ongoing	We have appointed a second CMC Liaison Officer and established a new oversight group involving the Vice-Chancellor and Executive Director, Operations.	Continued liaison with the CMC.
	1.5. Renewed emphasis on strengthening overall governance of the University and its commercial entities	Underway and ongoing	We have initiated a review to ensure a widespread and appropriate understanding of legislation and compliance requirements, reporting lines and responsibilities, and have engaged a Compliance Officer to assist with this. A wide-ranging review of UQ's commercial entities and licensing arrangements, to ensure appropriate financial management and governance, is also underway.	Compliance Officer to ensure appropriate management of legislative and compliance requirements at all levels. Continue with action in each area as required.
	1.6. Education Services for Overseas Students (ESOS) audit	Audit completed, implementation underway	The January 2012 establishment of TEQSA required universities nationally to comply with a new risk framework and undertake an audit of existing ESOS arrangements. We submitted a report to TEQSA in June 2012 along with recommendations for improvements and compliance.	Continue implementation of audit recommendations.
<b>2 Capacity – Education and communication</b>	2.1. CMC capacity-building presentations	Completed and ongoing	We held CMC capacity-building presentations in April 2012 for our Senior Management Committee and Senior Staff Forum.	Continue to liaise with the CMC as required. Regularly disseminate links on relevant CMC guideline documents to staff.
	2.2. Ethics education and development	Underway	We have delivered sessions on ethics, accountability and integrity to all members of the University's Senior Management Committee and Senate in conjunction with the St James Ethics Centre.	Embed principles of ethical leadership into ongoing staff training to extend understanding throughout the organisation. Follow-up session scheduled for members of senior staff and UQ Senate.
	2.3. Improved communication of policy changes	Underway	We have transferred all current policies to the new UQ Policy and Procedures Library. As part of this exercise, staff can more easily search the library and subscribe to automatic live updates of any new content.	Ensure staff are making full use of the new UQ policy and Procedures Library.
	2.4. Improved internal communication	Underway	Better internal communication has been a key aspect of the Reform Program. We will also initiate a review of internal communication processes to ensure they are as effective as possible.	Conduct review and implement findings.
	2.5. Review of senior staff development programs	Underway	We have initiated a review to ensure senior staff are provided with ongoing training to further develop and maintain a strong culture of ethics, integrity and accountability.	Implement review findings.
<b>3 Culture – Cultural development</b>	3.1. Organisational culture survey	Underway	We have selected an external company to conduct a University-wide (all staff) culture survey to identify challenges and opportunities for further developing and maintaining a strong culture of integrity, ethics and accountability.	Use survey results to inform development of a strategy to strengthen the University's culture and provide a performance benchmark.
	3.2. Values framework development	Underway	Our new values-based framework, developed to underpin robust decision-making, is currently being developed in consultation with staff.	The framework will be finalised in late October.

## NEWS

### Independent reviewers appointed

Given the progress we have made with reform, the time is now right for an independent review.

The University has appointed two independent assessors, to ensure our reform initiatives are best practice in terms of integrity and accountability.

Emeritus Professor Gerard Sutton AO, noted for his contribution to education and one of Australia's longest serving Vice-Chancellors during his time at The University of Wollongong, will lead the review. He will be joined by Dr David Watson whose many credentials include

leading an integrity inquiry into the Queensland racing industry.

The role of this team will include:

- Reviewing each program element to ensure it is sufficiently comprehensive
- Considering gaps in initiatives
- Identifying opportunities for improvement

As a team they will provide independent and authoritative advice on actions to further strengthen our reform initiatives and governance systems across the University.

They will start their work in October and report back by late November.

### New investigations role appointed

The University has appointed an Associate Director, Investigations, who will be responsible for the management and conduct of investigations into public interest disclosures and allegations of policy violation, misconduct and misuse of public money.

The role is key to the implementation of a stronger and better-resourced structure for assurance and risk management, in line with the recommendations of a 2011 review of the area (planning for which commenced in April 2011). Capacity-building and awareness-raising will be a central focus of this role.

### Senior staff development programs

We have initiated a review of staff development programs to ensure senior staff have the appropriate training to further develop and maintain a strong culture of ethics, integrity and accountability (see 2.5 in the table above)

### Other initiatives

As part of our ongoing commitment to reform, we have identified additional areas for improvement beyond the initial focal areas of the review.

In May this year, we undertook an audit of Education Services for Overseas Students, conducted by external consultants Professor Hilary Winchester and Mr Robert Carmichael (see 1.6 in the table above).

We have also reflected on the overall governance of the University and its commercial entities. A range of activities in this area is outlined in the table at 1.5 above.

### Expanded communication channels for reform

We continue to welcome staff input and comments on the Reform Program. As part of this, a new email address has been set up: [reformprogram@uq.edu.au](mailto:reformprogram@uq.edu.au).

Further information and updates continue to appear on our web page at: [uq.edu.au/about/integrity-and-accountability-reform-program](http://uq.edu.au/about/integrity-and-accountability-reform-program).

## NEXT STEPS

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I am heartened by the progress outlined in this update and also by the immense support for the program by UQ staff and the wider community.

Clearly, our efforts are resonating among staff, who are responsible for managing the reputation of the University via their actions and ethical decisions.

After three months, I am confident that, with these significant early steps in our Integrity and Accountability Reform Program, we are well-placed to build on these key focus areas of compliance, capacity and culture.

Our work on the Reform Program is well supported by our existing, and well-established, quality assurance and review processes, and regulatory and reporting procedures.

There is much work yet to be done, but we are committed to seeing it through.

As Vice-Chancellor, I have committed to taking the University forward not only in the core areas of academic achievement and research, but also in the essential area of ethical leadership. I look forward to continuing this work with new Vice-Chancellor Professor Peter Høj, when he arrives in October.

Once this Reform Program has been fully implemented, it will ensure the issues of the past do not occur again, and it will take us to a new, stronger position as a leader in the field of integrity, accountability and transparency.

The University of Queensland is an important Queensland institution and it is crucial that we maintain the trust and confidence of the public.

### **Professor Deborah Terry**

Vice-Chancellor  
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#### **For further information:**

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