

SUMMARY OF RECOMMENDATIONS

made in *'MORE BANG FOR YOUR BUCK'*.

These are the recommendations USU made to Unitec, at Academic Board on 25th November 2008, based on the findings of USU's research project report: *'More Bang for Your Buck'*.

1. Recommendations to Academic Board:

ASSESSMENT AND ASSIGNMENT ISSUES

1.1: That Unitec design (with USU involvement) and implement a standardised, yet adaptable, Unitec wide 'assessment hand back sheet' for all assessments on all programmes (including essays, practical work such as films and exhibitions, IBL modules, PBL modules, reports, projects, crits and skits). This sheet shall provide space where lecturers and tutors are expected to give written feedback on student work, along with a grade.

1.2: That Unitec implement a standardised Unitec-wide schedule for the return of student work of 3 weeks maximum, with no exceptions.

1.3: That assessment feed-back sheets, including written feed-back and a grade, shall be sent out to all students in electronic form within this 3 week period.

1.4: That the handing back of student work is monitored by the Head of Department.

1.5: That students shall be provided with the following, available to students electronically, according to the timeline stipulated:

- finalised assignment due dates and dates of examinations (at the commencement of a course).
- moderated assignment questions for all summative assessments which are not to be conducted under examination conditions (four weeks before the assessment due date).
- moderated marking criteria sheets for each summative assessment (four weeks before the assessment due date).

1.6: That all summative assessment questions for a course shall be moderated by a senior academic in the discipline, and that this process be monitored the Head of Department.

1.7: That Unitec prepare and circulate written guidelines on assessment best practice, to cover all forms of assessment, for the start of Semester 1, 2009.

Motion 1) That Academic Board adopts, in principle, recommendations 1.1 to 1.7, on Student Assessment and Assignment Issues, and that these recommendations are appropriately incorporated into the new Assessment Policy and/or accompanying regulation in collaboration with the USU, and that the implementation is to be the responsibility of the Dean, Teaching and Learning.

Motion carried

The term 'in principle' here means that, whilst Unitec is not bound to abide by the specific details of these recommendations, they are bound to putting in place measures which match up to the meaning and intent of them and may be held accountable if they fail to uphold such meaning and intent. After a working group, of which USU will be part, has met to discuss the details of these points, they will be brought back to Academic Board in the new year, and we are confident that after consultation these measures will be in place for semester 2, 2009.

STUDENT ENGAGEMENT

1.8: That student representatives shall be elected for all programmes and their names and email addresses forwarded to USU by the last day of the second week of a programme commencing, or the last day of the fourth week for programme representatives in their first year of study, with exceptions to be negotiated with USU, and communication to be the responsibility of the programme director.

1.9: Normally that no nominated student representative, in any class or programme, shall be in an employment relationship with Unitec, with exceptions to be approved by USU.

1.10: That programme directors, in consultation with USU, shall be responsible for ensuring that due process is followed in the selection of student representatives.

1.11: That, in the absence of a student representative from the programme, USU shall be permitted access to all programme committee meetings and programme committee minutes. In such a case a representative of USU would take the position of a student representative from the programme and abide by any rules of confidentiality set up by the committee.

1.12: That, in consultation with a programme director, Head of Department or Faculty Dean, USU shall be permitted access to lectures, classrooms and workshops.

Motion 2) That the Academic Board adopt recommendations 1.8 to 1.12, on Student Engagement, and that their 2009 implementation be the responsibility of each Head of Department.

Motion carried

This means that all the initiatives listed above must be adhered to from the beginning of 2009.

EVALUATION OF TEACHING

1.13: That academic board recognise and encourage USU's future involvement in NZQA and ITPQ processes, and in particular that:

- USU shall be involved in the selection of all students to participate in external evaluations.
- USU shall participate in formal meetings with NZQA/ITPNZ-Q evaluators.

1.14: That a redesign of Unitec's teaching evaluation processes be carried out, in consultation with USU, that is consistent with what students want in the light of research conducted in the QEP.

1.15: That feedback to students in response to course evaluation processes provided by departments shall be made available to USU.

1.16: That the Student Satisfaction Survey, all SEQUAL forms, all SGIDs and any other teaching evaluation mechanism employed by Unitec must measure the specific experience of Māori students.

1.17: That the Student Satisfaction Survey, all SEQUAL evaluations, all SGIDs and any other evaluation mechanism employed by Unitec must measure the Māori student experience of the Māori dimension included in programmes.

Motion 3) That the Academic Board adopt recommendations 1.13 to 1.17, on the Evaluation of Teaching and that their 2009 implementation be the responsibility of the Dean, Teaching and Learning.

Motion carried

This means that all the initiatives listed above must be adhered to from the beginning of 2009.

The following are the recommendations the report '**More Bang for your Buck**' made to USU. These did not need to be approved by Unitec's Academic Board.

Recommendations to USU (for Academic Board to note)

2: That USU nominate one or more programmes (randomly or according to need) during each semester on which to conduct a triangulated USU quality

assurance evaluation, which is to include no less than three of the following, as is consistent with good evaluation practice:

- Focus groups with students OR focus groups with students and lecturers from other parts of the institution.
- Questionnaires.
- Selected one-to-one interviews with students (no less than three, no more than ten).
- Observation (while a course is still running).

3: That all USU evaluations document the learning experience of Māori students.

4: That USU shall provide a dedicated site on usu.co.nz for students to give qualitative feedback on their lecturers and courses, anonymously. This information (amongst other information) may be used to nominate programmes to evaluate. This page shall also contain updated information on improvements made already, and how they were achieved, including reports from past programme evaluations conducted by USU.

5: That USU shall send out an 'all student' email each semester for the sole purpose of reminding students to voice their concerns anonymously on the dedicated web page, and to update them on the USU programme evaluations, when the appropriate systems for this have been put in place.

6: That the USU website shall provide for a 'Question and Answer' space between students and the USU Advocate.

7: That USU shall devote, each semester, a marketing budget to inform students of the mechanism/s USU has set up to evaluate the quality of their education.

8: That USU shall hold, each semester, a focus group with student representatives focussing on how to improve and develop USU quality assurance evaluations, and to work out ways to engage student representatives more fully in the evaluation process.

9: That USU take note of the wishes, needs and views of students along with established criteria on good teaching practice, and use benchmarking with other students' associations, in order to make informed judgements about the quality of Unitec courses and programmes.

10: That USU initiate discussions with TTA, CTLI and the Academic Quality Office (or whatever their new titles shall be) and the Academic Standards Committee regarding making a formal link between those departments and USU, around issues of standards, evaluation and quality assurance.

11: That USU quality assurance evaluations shall be carried out by an education coordinator suitably knowledgeable about tertiary education and, where this is

not the case, or where USU does not have an education coordinator, funding shall be set aside for an independent evaluator to evaluate programmes nominated by USU.

12: That a review of changes implemented, and their effects, including a re-evaluation of the quality of teaching at Unitec, shall be carried out in Semester 1, 2010. Format and method shall be at the discretion of the evaluator/reviewer.