THE UNIVERSITY OF
MELBOURNE

Ensuring Accountability

A Strategic Framework for Planning, Managing & Assuring Growing Esteem 2009

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Ensuring Accountability draws from the Melbourne University Act 1958, the University Statutes & Regulations and relevant University policy documents. It is intended to function as a practical guide to the operation of the accountability framework for internal stakeholders, and to support external transparency and probity. Readers should refer to the current versions of governing legislation (including the Statutes & Regulations) for the University's legal position. These documents are officially published in the University Calendar (www.unimelb.edu.au/unisec/calendar).

1. Background

This document describes the annual cycle of planning, budgeting, reporting and quality assurance which operates in the University of Melbourne, and sets out the Accountability Structure through which the University of Melbourne achieves its strategic goals and discharges its responsibilities to those to whom it is accountable. Through the Accountability Structure the University of Melbourne adheres to proper processes for the governance and management of its affairs and seeks to ensure it meets its compliance obligations.

The Accountability Structure is a coordinated annual program of corporate strategic planning, divisional business planning, budgeting and operational performance monitoring & reporting, quality assurance, and risk management. These activities are designed to ensure that, at University, faculty and graduate school, and divisional levels, the University's various obligations are properly satisfied in a cost-effective and coordinated manner.

Through effective accountability, a university not only meets important obligations to society, but is better able to achieve its academic mission. Ensuring Accountability describes how the University of Melbourne fulfils its obligations to the people it serves—students and the community at large—and those who support it in various ways—staff, governments and taxpayers, alumni, donors, businesses and non-profit organizations.
Professor Glyn Davis, Vice-Chancellor

2. Purpose

The purpose of the accountability framework is to ensure that the University:

- Achieves the strategic goals outlined in the Growing Esteem strategy which are guided by the principles outlined in The Melbourne Vision

- Manages its various accountabilities to external stakeholders, in an effective and efficient manner: viz-
  – Regulatory
  – Compliance – demonstrating high levels of probity
  – Financial wellbeing
  – Social and community obligations

- Maintains policies and processes which are systematic, cost-effective and well-integrated

- Strives to secure excellent outcomes through adherence to rigorous internal processes

The Melbourne Vision

In pursuit of its vision to be a public-spirited institution highly regarded for its distinctive contributions to society, the University is guided by the following principles:

- as a scholarly community, Melbourne will uphold the values of intellectual freedom, honesty, openness and rigour;

- as a research institution, Melbourne will open new paths to understanding, support critical and creative endeavour and provide an outstanding research training experience for future leaders in academia, government and industry. Melbourne will continue to support a range of disciplines, while also directing additional funding towards disciplines of strategic importance in which the University is currently, or might potentially be, a world-leader;

- as a learning and teaching institution, Melbourne will seek out the brightest students from the widest range of backgrounds. It will offer an outstanding education designed to equip each new cohort to succeed in a globalised environment and define a future that they value;

- as a public-spirited institution, Melbourne will ensure that its research, student learning and knowledge transfer programs serve public ends;

- as an internationally engaged institution, Melbourne will work to meet global challenges with intelligence and ingenuity, while respecting cultural difference and common humanity. It will draw on the rich diversity of its staff and student body, strong relationships with local and international partner institutions, and an alumni network of talented graduates spread across the globe;

- as a university with a strong sense of place, Melbourne will cherish its campus locale, set in a vibrant multi-cultural metropolis. Here face-to-face teaching will be the norm, scholars will gather from across the globe, and learning communities will enrich their work with evolving technologies; and

- as an employer, Melbourne will strive for exemplary employment practices. Melbourne will strive to attract, retain and assist the professional development of talented and diverse staff and will support the educational goals of an inclusive university.

3. Accountability Framework

3.1. Principles and objectives

The following principles and objectives guide the operation of the accountability framework:

- Enabling the University to achieve strategic goals
- Attaining the most effective financial management to achieve these goals
- Ensuring obligations are properly met
- Providing justification for institutional autonomy
- Encouraging continuous improvement at each university level
- Single lines of accountability
- Wherever possible, devolving responsibility to those operational units best able to determine the means of implementation to achieve successful and efficient outcomes

3.2. Level

Accountability is ensured through the following bodies and officers:

- External accountability through University Council;
- University management accountability through the Vice-Chancellor assisted by the Senior Executive;
- Academic accountability through the Vice-Chancellor, Provost & Academic Board;
- Accountability for overall business and administrative performance through the Senior Vice-Principal;
- Faculty and Graduate School academic and management accountability through the Deans; and
- Administrative divisional management accountability through the Senior Vice-Principal.

3.3. Elements

The framework provides the mechanism for integrating the various elements into a credible and consistent set of systematic and transparent internal processes which demonstrates to external agencies accountability and high levels of probity.

- Risk framework
- Risk management & compliance reporting
- Quality assurance and standards
- Key measures

- University strategy
- Portfolio strategic planning

Quality assurance and risk management

Strategic planning

Performance monitoring and reporting

Business planning and budgeting

- External reporting
- Management reporting
- Student profile reporting

- Financial management
- Business planning
- Responsible division management

3.4. University accountabilities

Council and its committees

University Council is the peak governing body of the University responsible for approving the mission and strategic direction of the University and its annual budget and business plan, overseeing and reviewing the management of the University and its performance, approving and monitoring systems of control and accountability and appointing the Vice-Chancellor. Council is assisted in this responsibility through the work of committees appointed under the Melbourne University Act of 1958.

Academic Board and its committees

Academic Board reports directly to the University Council. The Board's function involves (1) the supervision and development of all academic activities including the maintenance of high standards in teaching and research and (2) communication with the academic community through the faculties and schools. The President of the Board, which is a two year elected position, is a member of the Senior Executive.

Nature of management and leadership roles

The Vice-Chancellor and Principal is the chief executive officer of the University. The Provost is the senior academic officer working with the Deans and Academic Board to achieve the academic vision embedded in the Melbourne Model (Statute 2.5.2). Subject to the ultimate accountability of Deans to the Vice-Chancellor, the Provost is the principal line manager for Deans on academic programs, academic staffing and, in conjunction with the Vice-Chancellor, the achievement of overall faculty strategy and targets. The Provost and Deputy Vice-Chancellors are responsible for the major University 'Triple Helix' portfolios of research, learning and teaching and knowledge transfer. This oversight involves leading the strategic direction of the portfolio and engaging faculties and graduate schools in focussing activities towards achieving University strategy in areas for which they are accountable.

The Senior Vice-Principal is responsible for high level strategic planning and resourcing advice to the Vice-Chancellor and the oversight of the university's corporate operations. The Head of University Services is responsible for the day-to-day operation of key University services.

Deans are appointed by Council for each Faculty and Graduate School (where established as a Faculty under Regulation 5.1R1). They are accountable for the educational, research, financial and administrative performance of the faculty (Statute 5.1.4).

This philosophy is based on the principle that decisions should be taken as close as possible to where services are delivered and people affected.

3.5. Management philosophy of subsidiarity

Principle of subsidarity

As a highly devolved institution the University seeks to secure its mission and strategic objectives through its various budget divisions. The University has adopted the concept of subsidiarity to denote its guiding organisational philosophy.

This philosophy is based on the principle that decisions should be taken as close as possible to where services are delivered and people affected. It assumes that core academic and support functions and their supporting budgets should be located in faculties/graduate schools, given their need for innovation, speed, flexibility and personalised support. Some functions need to be grouped centrally for reasons of critical mass, access to scarce professional services, risk management, policy consistency, high transaction costs, cross-subsidies and external representation. This assignment of responsibilities assumes effective financial management to achieve the goals of the University.

Single lines of accountability

The principle of subsidiarity also assumes single lines of accountability through the Vice-Chancellor. Senior officers rather than committees are assigned roles for achieving University targets and undertaking portfolio activities and service tasks. They are given the authority to make decisions and are held accountable for achieving agreed outcomes. The annual process of setting expectations and reviewing performance against key performance indicators for all members of the Senior Executive achieves alignment between individual manager and organisational objectives.

Responsibilities for teaching, research and knowledge transfer (Statute 5.1)

The development, operational control and quality of programs in research, and research training, learning and teaching and knowledge transfer, and the immediate services that support these activities are embedded within faculties and graduate schools, either directly or as assigned to custodial Deans (eg New Generation Degrees, Bio21 Institute).

Responsibilities for administrative activities

Responsible Division Management is a financial management approach with an underlying philosophy premised on (i) achievement of primary academic priorities, (ii) shifting the focus to a 'full cost' view of the operations, (iii) operational decentralisation and (iv) responsibility with overhead services to demonstrate value for money.

In line with the philosophy of Responsible Division Management, administrative functions have been or are being devolved to divisions, except chancellery functions and common or mandated services that support faculties and graduate schools but for efficiency or consistency reasons are best shared. Chancellery functions include corporate governance, broad strategy and policy development, institutional quality control and identity through branding, external representation and compliance and accountability requirements, and areas in the which the University must 'speak with one voice' such as industrial relations.
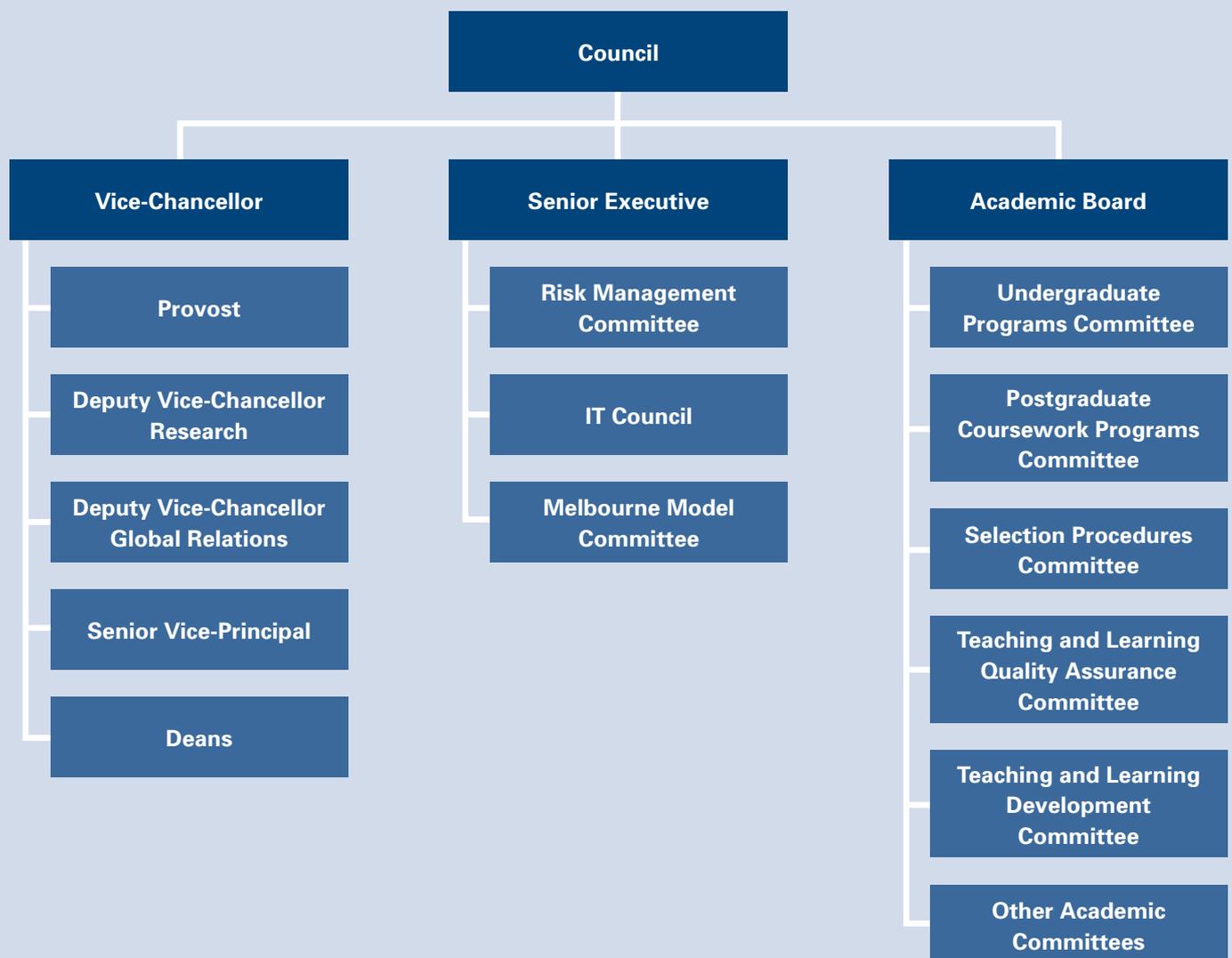
Senior Executive

The Senior Executive is the University's principal management committee. It acts under delegations from the Vice-Chancellor. Its membership comprises the Vice-Chancellor, the Provost, President of the Academic Board, the Senior Vice-Principal, other senior officers with significant portfolio responsibilities and Deans. The Committee is responsible for overseeing the development of University planning and budgeting and for monitoring performance against plans and budgets. In addition to providing advice to the Vice-Chancellor and other senior portfolio holders, the Committee has the VC's delegated authority in a range of areas including approval of the student profile, information technology policy, structural change, and significant changes in human resources policies. Terms of reference and current membership of the Senior Executive are maintained by the University Secretary's Office (http://www.unimelb.edu.au/unisec/).

External stakeholder relations are coordinated by the Vice-Chancellor and the Senior Vice-Principal. The Office of the Vice-Chancellor is responsible for managing political and strategic relationships. The Senior Vice-Principal is responsible for coordinating official University submissions and correspondence to government departments and other external agencies and bodies. In particular, the SVP oversees management of the relationship with the relevant Commonwealth Department responsible for funding universities and administering higher education policy.

4. Accountability Framework Governance

The coordination, implementation and monitoring of the effectiveness of the accountability framework is the responsibility of the Senior Vice-Principal, supported by the University Planning Office. The framework document is an official publication of the University which describes in general terms the annual cycle of major activities. It is intended that the framework be reviewed and published every three years with minor updates as required. The Senior Executive is responsible for revising the framework and individual executives are responsible for the various activities. A timetable for the detailed Annual Cycle is approved in the third quarter of the prior year.

Council

Vice-Chancellor	Senior Executive	Academic Board
Provost	Risk Management Committee	Undergraduate Programs Committee
Deputy Vice-Chancellor Research	IT Council	Postgraduate Coursework Programs Committee
Deputy Vice-Chancellor Global Relations	Melbourne Model Committee	Selection Procedures Committee
Senior Vice-Principal		Teaching and Learning Quality Assurance Committee
Deans		Teaching and Learning Development Committee
		Other Academic Committees

5. Strategic Planning

The Vice-Chancellor leads the development of University strategy and champions the discussion of strategic goals and new initiatives with the University community and stakeholders. The Office of the Vice-Chancellor is responsible for coordinating the strategic planning element of the framework. Major refinements of the strategic direction are undertaken approximately every three years, with annual updates incorporated in University Plans. For 2009 the University Plan will again build on its predecessors – the Strategic Plan from 2006 and the University Plans for 2007 and 2008. Early in 2009 there will be a revision of the strategic plan expected to canvas more substantive changes, including responding to external policy reforms announced in the Commonwealth reviews and the global financial position. Growing Esteem Mark II will be introduced from 2010.

Complementing portfolio plans are developed by the Provost and Deputy Vice-Chancellors to set more specific direction within their respective program areas for periods up to three years.

The University undertakes annual strategic reviews in the first quarter of each year. This corporate level reflection precedes and provides the context for detailed divisional business planning which is undertaken in the second quarter. University-level strategic goals and planning parameters can then inform divisional planning, including strategic, academic and financial planning. In February of each year a Conference of Deans and Heads of Departments is held to consider strategic issues for the current and following year. This is followed by a Council Planning Conference at which Council members confer to ensure that the *University's strategic direction* is reviewed and 'fine-tuned', taking into consideration performance and operational priorities. These conferences allow strategic priorities, goals and directions to evolve with changing circumstances, but at the same time preserving an underlying strategic continuity.

As an important input into the strategic review process, the Provost and Deputy Vice-Chancellors undertake, in areas specific to their portfolios, performance reviews and strategic discussions with faculties and schools during the first quarter. Academic Board may provide advice on academic standards and other academic matters as part of the review process.

The annual planning and budget conference has the responsibility of determining the financial direction and budget issues that set the next year's budget and the three year forecast.

6. Business Planning and Budgeting

The accountability framework assists senior executives in attaining the most effective business management (financial and non-financial) to achieve the University's strategic goals and to ensure high quality outcomes.

6.1. Financial management

The Finance Committee exercises governance responsibilities in the oversight of the University's financial and business affairs and, within delegated authority, acts on behalf of the Council on these matters. It advises Council on financial matters recommends the annual budget for approval to Council and, once approved, exercises governance oversight of performance against Budget. The Senior Executive is responsible to the Vice-Chancellor for the financial management of the University. It oversees the development of university planning and budgeting and once approved, for monitoring performance against plans and budgets. The Senior Vice-Principal has a key responsibility for high level strategic planning and resourcing advice to the Vice-Chancellor, the preparation of the annual Budget, Student Profile and Capital Program and the oversight of the University's corporate operations.

6.2. Business planning

Formal divisional business planning was introduced in 2007, driven by the need to assure that implementation of Growing Esteem could be achieved and managed. Business planning is now part of the annual cycle of planning, budgeting and review. The Business Plan is a division's core planning document by which it generates a shared understanding within the division (and its constituent units) of future directions and priorities, and the means by which they are to be achieved. The Business Plan is also the key vehicle by which the division seeks to secure a shared understanding within the University of the robustness of its strategy, innovative activities, planning process, performance outcomes, financial viability and management of risk. It also provides a direct link between Plans (aspiration) and Budgets (capacity).

The business plan is the basis on which the annual budget of each division is agreed. As a core divisional planning document, these business plans are a medium term document which would have a significant update approximately every three years, with minor annual updates. Divisional Plans are informed by top down directions and parameters set in the University's Strategic Plan and represent a division's more local response to opportunities and challenges. The plan is a key mechanism of accountability within a devolved 'Responsible Division Management" (RDM) setting.

Bottom-up input from divisional plans are also a critical base on which the University's Rolling Five Year Financial Plan is prepared. These plans also provide an important integration point for recurrent and capital planning and budgeting at the divisional and University level. Effective business planning provides longer financial horizons needed to give effect to the significant transition underway. The aim is to achieve greater coordination of teaching programs required under the Melbourne Model reforms. For research, the intention is to concentrate new resources in fewer cross-disciplinary programs. In Knowledge Transfer, the plans provide an important co-ordination point for the wide range of activities that fall under this strand, and for integrating these activities with teaching and research.

6.3. Responsible Division Financial Management and Budgeting

From 2009 a new approach is being taken to University budgeting & financial management so as to give effect to the principle of subsidiarity. It involves the introduction of responsible division budgeting. The underlying philosophy is a focus on operational decentralization and supporting the achievement of academic priorities. Under RDM, the Budget is allocated as transparently as possible, with strategic priorities being cross subsidized where necessary and authority aligned with responsibilities.

The intended outcomes from this approach are:

• Integrated budget management with business planning;

• Provide greater flexibility to achieve strategic goals;

• Single lines of accountability – increased responsibility and accountability for heads of budget divisions;

• Placing the University on a more viable financial footing;

• Simpler budgeting with more rigorous financial reporting and performance measurement; and

• Encouraging broader understanding of University finances through fully-costed support services.

The general characteristics of Responsible Division Management are:

• Academic divisions are allocated and manage the revenues they generate;

• Academic divisions are responsible for funding the service centres that support them;

• Levies are applied to create a subvention pool to fund areas that are unable to generate sufficient resources to finance their operations;

• Academic divisions contribute to direct costs on a user-pays basis and to indirect costs on a basis of expenditure drivers; and

• Administrative/support divisions receive funds on the basis of an agreed service catalogue and service delivery targets and are accountable for demonstrating value for money (efficiency and effectiveness).

The University's budget principles and model are intended to:

• Provide for strategic university investment;

• Be transparent, without undue complexity;

• Support the management philosophies of subsidiarity and single lines of accountability;

• Be plan-driven and incentive-based, providing reward for good performance, both in relation to revenue growth and cost efficiency;

- Where practicable, calculate charges on the basis of services consumed or expenditure drivers capable of being validated as providing value for money;

- Provide for whole of project life cycle funding for major infrastructure projects and programs;

- Provide any cross-subsidisation on the basis of substantiated need and regular review;

- Make apparent the level of and over time reduce the reliance on cross-subsidisation of recurrent programs from investment or other non-recurrent revenue; and

- Be complemented by rigorous financial reporting and oversight

An **annual Planning and Budget Conference** is held early in the 3rd quarter of each year to draft a plan-driven, incentive-based budget for the following year and budget projections for the ensuing triennium. At this conference, budget proposals from each major budget division are evaluated by the Vice-Chancellor, Deans, Academic Board officers, student representatives and academic and administrative executives. Allocations are proposed for the following rolling three year budgets through determination of a one year budget plus forward estimates for a further two years.

Capital and infrastructure planning and budgeting

The ten year rolling infrastructure program provides a clear capital plan against which the operating budget is framed. The budget model being introduced from 2009 has separate but clearly identified allocations for capital infrastructure and facilities services. The Planning and Budget Conference reviews and considers funding proposals for the annual Capital and Infrastructure Plan and other major items of University expenditure. The aim is to achieve full life cycle funding of major projects and to provide greater transparency in the capital planning process.

Divisional budgets

Following the Planning & Budget Conference, Divisions prepare detailed budgets and once finalised by the Senior Vice-Principal, are submitted for approval to the University Council via Finance Committee.

Budget approval

To ensure congruity between planning and resource allocation, Council considers the *University Budget* and the *University Plan* at the same time. Any significant subsequent variations to budget revenue expectations are reported through Finance Committee to Council.

7. Performance Monitoring and Reporting

Good governance and management demand exemplary standards of accountability. Accountability entails not only the external reporting to the State and Federal Governments in satisfaction of the obligations pursuant to which the University has been established or receives funding, but also the internal monitoring of performance against University and divisional plans and budget, and compliance with University policy. Priority is being given to strengthening performance monitoring and management reporting. The aim is to ensure effective decision making that is evidence based and directed to achieving the University's mission and strategic goals.

The performance monitoring and reporting element of the Framework ensures that reporting accountabilities are carried out in a timely and co-ordinated manner that seeks to avoid inefficiency through duplication of effort and promotes effectiveness by ensuring that the monitoring of past performance feeds into current business planning and budgeting.

7.1. External reporting

The main external accountabilities for the University are the *Annual Report,* including the financial accounts, to be submitted to the State Government for tabling in the Victorian Parliament and the annual *Funding Agreement* and *Institution Assessment Framework* documentation required by the Commonwealth Government.

The key activities of external reporting comprise:

• Preparation of the *Annual Report* and its accompanying financial statements. These are submitted to Council for approval in March. In the case of the annual accounts, these are prepared by the Chief Financial Officer, with Finance Committee responsible to Council for recommending their adoption and does so only after receiving certifications of compliance from senior University officers;

• Commonwealth higher education and research reporting including higher education statistical collections and Higher Education Contribution Scheme (HECS) liability reporting;

• Other grant acquittal and reporting, eg competitive ARC and NMHRC grant and program funding, other State and Federal grants;

• Negotiation with Commonwealth over the terms of the University's annual *Funding Agreement.* The *Funding Agreement,* subsequently approved by the Minister and tabled in the Commonwealth Parliament, determines the level of funding to be received for the University's Government-subsidised coursework programs and the conditions on which that funding is provided. Key elements of the University's reporting cycle, in particular the monitoring of the student profile, are undertaken at times that enable University officers to engage in the *Funding Agreement* negotiations in a manner that is as well informed as possible about current performance and future intentions;

- Preparation of the University's annual *Institution Assessment Framework* submission to the Commonwealth. The *Institution Assessment Framework* constitutes the Commonwealth Government's assessment of the University's performance in four key areas: organisational sustainability; achievements in higher education provision; quality of outcomes; and legislative and program compliance; and

- Demonstrating high quality outcomes and process through a cycle of quality audits conducted by the national Australian Universities Quality Agency (AUQA).

7.2. Management reporting

Management reporting is being strengthened with the introduction of a Management Information System (MIS) and a standardised reporting framework for all key aspects of the University's core operational performance. This system will have the following objectives:

- Provision of reporting in a form that meets the requirements of the four key levels of university governance and management: Council, Senior Executive, Faculty Executive and Department/School Executive.

- Timely reports – monthly or the latest available. A detailed reporting calendar will operate from 2009 to help communicate when key information will become available;

- Coverage of both financial and key non-financial (business driver) information. Business drivers include profile information on teaching, research, research training, knowledge transfer, staff, infrastructure, national and international benchmarking;

The key activities of management reporting and performance monitoring comprise:

- Annual Council Planning Conference in February, where Council members formally review a report on University performance against targets in the *University Plan* and consider the implications of that performance for the current cycle of planning. The Council also receives reports on key performance indicators *The Melbourne Scoreboard and Performance Report* which benchmark university performance against national and international outcomes, and show trend data. Following Council consideration, these reports are distributed widely within the University;

- Annual divisional Strategy and Performance Review (SPR) in which the Vice-Chancellor and Senior Vice-Principal, assisted by senior University colleagues including Academic Board officers and Deans, carry out an in-depth appraisal of the performance of academic and administrative divisions. For each budget division a core set of performance indicators embracing research, teaching and learning, student profile and resource management is used to assess performance and set the context for the discussion on strategic

directions. The review also provides an important review point for updated business plans and financial projections. A report and recommendations from the Strategy and Performance Review are used to inform and align the annual budget. The review meeting is an important point in the accountability of the Dean and senior faculty team. SPR outcomes and recommendations are also formally reported to the Academic Board and Council;

- *Taking Stock* is a summary mid-year audit of the University's performance presented by the Vice-Chancellor to Council and members of the Committee of Convocation and Academic Board;

- Regular monitoring by Finance Committee of the financial performance of the University and its auxiliary operations and controlled entities. Finance Committee also oversees external credit rating and lending institutions requirements;

- Regular monitoring by senior managers and the Senior Executive of the performance (financial and non-financial) of divisions;

- Annual monitoring by the Academic Board of University performance in the selection of students into courses, including selection into special entry programs; and

- Structured program of annual appraisals and formal feedback process with regular monitoring of performance against agreed individual performance targets through which Deans and other senior managers are held accountable for their performance.

7.3. Student profile reporting

- Reporting to external agencies, professional bodies, accrediting organisations, and stakeholder groups is regularly undertaken at University and divisional level; and

- Learning and Teaching Performance Fund: The Commonwealth provides funding to institutions on the basis of performance in learning and teaching for undergraduates. From 2009 the LTPF will reward improvement as well as excellence. The seven measures used in the LTPF are based on statistical data collections and student feedback surveys undertaken by universities and submitted to the Commonwealth.

8. Risk Management

8.1. Risk framework

Identifying and managing risk is an inherent management responsibility within any large and complex organisation. At the University of Melbourne faculties and administrative divisions undertake on an annual basis a strategic risk assessment as part of the divisional business planning process. Risk management is a core responsibility of senior managers. The risk profile and management reports that result from such assessments are integrated into a University risk assessment which is reported regularly to Council through its Risk Management and Audit and Risk Committees. A risk management framework has been approved by Council and a risk information webpage is available *http://www.upo.unimelb.edu.au/StratRisk_Management.html*

8.2. Risk management and compliance reporting

At governance level, the Finance Committee has oversight on the University's financial position and risks, assuring that due financial processes and probity are carried out and that the University is fully compliant with legislative and government requirements. The Audit and Risk Committee provides advice to Council and the Finance Committee on all matters pertaining to financial audits, management audits and reviews. The Committee also advises on the appropriate governance and risk management structures and processes, and the effectiveness of risk management controls. The regular reporting to Council on compliance issues by the Compliance Officer is another important monitoring process. Legislation and Trusts Committee has an important oversight of trusts.

At the management level, risks are monitored at various levels as shown, with the Australian Risk Management Standard 4360 being followed:

- **University-Wide Strategic Risks**
  Senior executives are responsible for the effective management of University-wide risks, with the Risk Management Committee having an oversight and monitoring role.

- **Divisional Strategic Risks**
  Deans and division heads are responsible for the effective management of divisional risks, with the business plan being the key vehicle for demonstrating effective mitigation strategies to manage these risks. These risks and their management controls are reviewed twice a year by the Risk Management Committee.

- **Operational Risks**
  The Administrative Policy and Practices Group have the on-going role to ensure that operational risks of University-wide services are well managed, with the accountable Head of Division being responsible for the quarterly review. Quarterly reports are received by the Risk Management Committee.

- **Specialist Risks**
  The University has dedicated risk program managers who are responsible for ensuring effective University-wide programs are in place for controlling specialist risks – Environmental Health and Safety, Biosafety, Insurance, WorkCover, IT and Information Services, Business Continuity Planning, and Crisis Management and Emergency Management Planning. Quarterly reports are received by the Risk Management Committee.

9. Quality Assurance

The University of Melbourne seeks to conduct a comprehensive, integrated program of quality assurance that is tailored to its own particular needs yet satisfies the reasonable expectations of external quality review agencies. Quality assurance embraces the triple helix and the enablers (support services, systems and infrastructure):

• Learning and teaching

• Research and research training

• Knowledge transfer

• Enablers – support services, systems and infrastructure

9.1. Quality assurance and standards

The University is committed to ensuring that its internal quality assurance programs are able to validate the extent of progress towards the fulfilment of its mission at University, faculty/graduate school, academic unit and administrative unit levels. The University also undertakes its quality assurance activities in a manner that obviates, to the greatest level possible, the need for re-work or duplicated effort in order to meet external reporting obligations.

At a time of major change with the implementation of the Growing Esteem strategic agenda and the Melbourne Model it will be crucial to demonstrate that the University continues to achieve excellent outcomes and that its processes are exemplary, fair and transparent. Overall, the aim is to provide University Council, the Vice-Chancellor, Deans, Heads of Department and senior managers with systematic feedback on the performance of the programs for which they are responsible and to promote a culture of rigorous self-analysis and review from which continuous improvement initiatives are identified and implemented.

Quality assurance needs to demonstrate that:

• Outcomes are of a high standard and strategic goals are achieved

• Processes are consistent and fair and enable these excellent outcomes

Quality assurance processes include for:

A. Learning and Teaching, Research and Research Training and Knowledge Transfer

• **National and international benchmarking to demonstrate high standards**

• **Performance monitoring at University, faculty/school, and academic unit level**

• **Self assessment of performance within faculties and graduate schools as part of their business planning process**

• **Academic reviews**
  – Course reviews
  – Curriculum and Discipline reviews

• **Professional accreditation at national and international levels**

• **Academic department/school audits**
  A rolling program of academic department/school audits reviews reporting through to the annual Strategy and Performance Review ensures that heads of academic units have the opportunity to demonstrate to the wider University community the value of their activities and the validity of their processes.

- **Stakeholder feedback – Evaluation program**
  A key feature of the quality assurance cycle is a systematic evaluation program through which key constituencies are surveyed to provide feedback on the quality of the University programs, services or outcomes in which they have a particular interest. Through this matrix of evaluation:
  – students enrolled in coursework programs are surveyed towards the end of each teaching period to provide feedback on their perceptions of the teaching and learning experience provided in each of the subjects in which they have been enrolled in a survey titled Quality of Teaching;
  – various cohorts of students are surveyed each year to provide feedback on their overall experience at the University in a survey titled the Melbourne Experience Survey;
  – International students are surveyed periodically by the University and national agencies;
  – Research higher degree students are surveyed to provide feedback on the quality of research supervision and departmental support of their research candidature. Feedback from this survey is supplemented by the University of Melbourne's participation in the Commonwealth-sponsored Postgraduate Research Experience Questionnaire;
  – Graduates are surveyed, both immediately after graduation through the Graduate Career Council of Australia's Course Experience Questionnaire and periodically some years after graduation by the University, to gauge perceptions of their course and the "Melbourne student experience";
  – Stakeholders including employers are surveyed from time to time to provide feedback on the quality of Melbourne graduates; and
  – Staff surveys are conducted from time to time including pulse surveys, engagement surveys and feedback on management

The conduct of this program of evaluation on a regular and systematic basis provides valuable trend data to monitor progress in continuous improvement activities. A commitment to reporting to the Academic Board and Council on the outcomes of the evaluation surveys and the action proposed in response to survey findings ensures that academic managers are held accountable for initiating actions that will result in improved outcomes in areas identified as requiring improvement. A Surveys Reference Group has also been established to provide policy, co-ordination and quality assurance in respect of surveys conducted within the University.
http://www.upo.unimelb.edu.au/Public/Pol_Ext/Uni_Surveys.html

B. Enablers – Administrative and Support Services

Managing the service improvement process and ensuring that risks are well managed are crucial components of the University's quality assurance and evaluation of administrative and support services. Benefits of responsible division management are clearer lines of responsibility and accountability, removal of duplication, greater responsiveness or client focus and reduced cost.

With the move to portfolio programs and responsible division accountability and budgeting, quality assurance process will also address outcomes and standards from university-wide programs of activities and functions such as:

- Student services and student centres

- Student enrichment and engagement

- Marketing and recruitment

- Infrastructure and facilities services

- Corporate services

Current quality assurance processes include:

Service Program and administrative department audits

Periodic service program reviews and administrative department reviews, both reporting through to the Senior Vice-Principal ensures that senior administrators have the opportunity to demonstrate to faculties and graduate schools that designated services are being delivered at the agreed level.

Stakeholder feedback – Evaluation program

- Senior academic and administrative managers provide feedback on the quality of University management and services. The current instrument is titled Quality of University Management and Administration (QUMA);

- Staff surveys are conducted from time to time including pulse surveys, engagement surveys and feedback on management

Industry Standards and University Benchmark Comparative Performance Data

Services benchmark their cost effectiveness and value for money by comparing Melbourne's performance with industry standards and university sector benchmarking data.

9.2. Key University measures to demonstrate standards and outcomes

Key University performance measures are a means of demonstrating in a quantitative way the achievement of strategic goals, maintenance of high academic standards and quality outcomes. Key University performance measures will need to be finalised but core indicators are listed below:

Quality Standard	Measure
Triple Helix	
(1) Top GO8 university for Course Experience Questionnaire (CEQ) outcomes	CEQ Overall Standing
(2) Graduate Destination Survey (GDS) well above state average	GDS FT Employment
(3) In top national cohort for learning & teaching performance	LTPF top cohort
(4) High proportion of students positive about the Melbourne experience	Melbourne Experience Survey student feedback
(5) Strong international student profile	% and mix of international students
(6) Strong equity student profile, addressing individual and systematic disadvantage	number of low SES equity students by increasing proportion from under represented schools
(7) Top national PG Coursework profile	increase per annum with aim of trebling numbers over three years
(8) 70% of disciplines in the Top 2 of the nation for research performance	Williams benchmark project
(9) Top national competitive grant performer	NCG leader
(10) Citations national leader in a proportion of disciplines	Thomson's citation discipline rankings
(11) Quality staff	Research excellence measure
(12) Research training national leader	Top rank in RHD completions
(13) Top international standing	Increasing performance in international rankings
Enablers	
(14) Top quality resources to support academic outcomes	Unit of Resource increasing % pa
(15) Credit strength	Standard & Poor's credit rating
(16) Diversity of funding sources	Mixed portfolio
(17) Advancement revenue	National leader with % increase per annum
(18) Sustainability	Reduction in electricity and water use

Ensuring Accountability

A Strategic Framework for Planning, Managing & Assuring Growing Esteem

Date	Activity	Key Body	Officer Responsible
January	(1) Preparation of Annual Report, University Performance Report and performance against University Plan targets. (2) Preparation of Annual Accounts. (3) Annual Certification of compliance with University policy and procedures.	Council	Vice-Chancellor & Senior Vice-Principal (SVP) V-P & CFO Heads
February	(1) Review of performance	Senior Executive	Senior Vice-Principal (SVP)
	(2) Deans and Heads Conference – strategic review and planning	Deans and Heads	Director, Office of Vice-Chancellor
	(3) Council Planning Conference – – review University performance – consider strategic direction – consider planning priorities.	Council	Chancellor/ Vice-Chancellor University Secretary
	(4) Report on final outcome against budget for previous year.	Senior Executive Finance Committee	CFO
March	(1) University strategic risk assessment and management controls.	Risk Management Committee	Senior Vice-Principal
	(2) Approval and certification of Annual Accounts.	Finance Committee and Council	CFO
	(3) Approval of *Annual Report*.	Council	Vice-Chancellor
	(4) Preparation of report on compliance with annual staff appraisal policy.	Budget Divisions	V-P, (Human Resources)
	(5) Report on outcomes of annual appraisal of Deans.		Vice-Chancellor
	(6) Report on outcome of Academic Board academic program reviews.	Academic Board	President, Academic Board
	(7) Academic Board approval of new course for following year.		
March–April	(1) Student profile and fee revenue planning.	Deans and Faculty General Managers	SVP/DP University Planning
	(2) Divisional business planning & risk review.	Divisions	Heads
	(3) Quality assurance self-assessments.	All academic & admin units	Heads
	(4) Administration of Graduate Destination Surveys and Course Experience Questionnaire.		DP, Uni Planning

Date	Activity	Key Body	Officer Responsible
April	(1) Review of management response to Auditor-General's audit of University performance.	Audit and Risk Committee	CFO
	(2) Annual Review of University subsidiaries' Annual Accounts and governance capacity.	Finance Committee	CFO
	(3) Review of faculty selection outcomes and processes, including special entry programs.	Melbourne Model Committee and Academic Board	SVP & Provost
	(5) Annual Funding Agreement meeting Commonwealth.		Senior Vice-Principal
April–May	(1) Preparation of University plans.	Vice-Chancellor	Provost, DVCs & SVP
	(3) Audit of University compliance with annual staff appraisal policy.	Human Resources Committee	V-P (Human Resources)
May	(1) Divisional Business plans submitted.	Divisions	Heads
	(2) Review of first quarter Faculty/Divisional performance against budget.	Senior Executive and Finance Committee	CFO
	(3) Review of first quarter performance against budget and plan of University subsidiaries.	Finance Committee	CFO
	(4) Approval of University Student Profile.	Senior Executive	SVP
	(5) Annual review of University subsidiaries.	Finance Committee	CFO
	(6) Administration of student survey on quality of teaching and learning (first semester), to be analysed and reported to Academic Board in September.	Academic Board	DP, Uni Planning
	(7) Review of course selection policies and entry standards for the following year.	Academic Board	President, Academic Board
June	(1) *Institution Assessment Framework* submission to the Commonwealth.	Senior Executive	Provost & SVP
	(2) Audit of University strategic risk assessment and management controls.	Audit & Risk committee	Chair, A & RC

Date	Activity	Key Body	Officer Responsible
Mid July	(1) Budget submissions due.	Divisions	Heads
July	(2) Planning and Budget Conference – University *Plan*. – University *Budget* including budget incentives & cross-subsidies. – 10 Year Infrastructure Plan – review outcomes of SPR visits.	Senior Executive	SVP
	(3) Preparation of annual Taking Stock review of institutional performance.	Council	DP, Uni Planning
	(4) Consideration of report on University strategic risk assessment and management plan.	Risk Management Committee	DP, Uni Planning
August– November	Conduct of Academic Board's academic program reviews.	Teaching and Learning and Quality Assurance Committee	President, Academic Board
July– October	Administration of scheduled student, graduate, staff and employer evaluation surveys.	Academic Board	DP, Planning
August	(1) *Taking Stock* review of University strategy and performance. – progress on University targets – performance reports and report on annual quality program – review of divisional Strategy & Performance Review outcomes.	Council Council	Vice-Chancellor Director, OVC & SVP
	(2) Review second quarter performance against budget of faculties/divisions/auxiliary operations.	Senior Executive Finance Committee	CFO
	(3) Mid-year review of performance of University subsidiaries.	Finance Committee	CFO
August– March	(1) Conduct quality reviews of Administrative units and functions.	Senior Executive	SVP/Vice-Principals
	(2) Conduct Academic unit Audits.	Senior Executive	Provost & DP, University Planning

Date	Activity	Key Body	Officer Responsible
September–October	(1) Consideration of draft annual *University Plan,* University *Budget* and cognate plans.	Senior Executive Academic Board	VC & SVP
	(2) Finalisation of negotiations with Commonwealth on Annual *Funding Agreement* and other program grants.	Vice-Chancellor	Senior Vice-Principal
	(3) *Institution Assessment Framework* meeting (if required).	Vice-Chancellor	SVP
October	(1) Administration of student survey on quality of teaching and learning (second semester), to be analysed and reported to Academic Board in the following February.	Academic Board	DP, Uni Planning
November	(1) Consideration and approval of Growing Esteem strategy update, annual University Plan and University Budget, including Infrastructure Plan.	Council	VC and SVP
	(2) Third quarter review of Faculty, Divisional & Auxiliary Operations performance against budget.	Senior Executive Finance Committee	CFO
	(3) Consideration of auxiliary operations plans & budgets for the following year.	Finance Committee	CFO
	(4) Faculty/Divisional budgets approved & Loaded into Themis.	Divisions	Heads
	(5) Commencement of annual appraisal of Deans & Senior Executives and setting of Performance objectives.		Vice-Chancellor
December	(1) Confirmation of updated University Budget revised to reflect final Commonwealth grant outcomes		SVP
	(2) Publication of University Budget		SVP

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