EDCN843

Quality, Performance and Regulation in Higher Education

S2 Online 2015

Dept of Education

Contents

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General Information

Unit convenor and teaching staff
Norman McCulla
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Credit points
4

Prerequisites
Admission to MA in Education Studies or MEChild or PGDipEChild or PGCertEChild or MEd
or MEdLead or PGDipEdLead or PGCertEdLead or PGDipEdS or PGCertEdS or MHEd or
PGDipHEd or PGCertHEd or MSpecEd or PGDipSpecEd or PGCertSpEd or MTeach(Birth to
Five Years) or GradCertEdS or GradCertHEd or GradDipIndigenousEd or MIndigenousEd

Corequisites

Co-badged status

Unit description
Diverse conceptions of quality place internal and external pressures on the planning, delivery
and evaluation of many aspects of practice in contemporary higher education institutions,
especially in relation to teaching and curriculum. This unit examines this diversity in relation to
the organisation, governance and regulation of higher education at sectoral and institutional
levels. We consider the tensions arising from regulatory and reporting requirements in this
context and how institutions can satisfy both internal and external requirements through
organisational learning and development of integrated quality assurance and enhancement
systems.

Important Academic Dates

Information about important academic dates including deadlines for withdrawing from units are
available at https://www.mq.edu.au/study/calendar-of-dates

Learning Outcomes

On successful completion of this unit, you will be able to:

Describe and critique the regulatory and reporting context for HE and its impact on
quality assessment, assurance and enhancement processes at sectoral and institutional
level.

Describe and analyse the outcomes of various approaches to quality management at
institutional level.

Critically relate quality assessment and enhancement practices to underpinning conceptions of quality.

Devise and evaluate quality assessment and enhancement processes in a selected area of HE operations.

General Assessment Information

Assessment tasks are submitted via iLearn in a manner appropriate to the task. More detailed specifications for individual assessment tasks are included in the iLearn unit, including the procedure for consulting with the Unit Convenor about your major assessment task topic and approach.

Assignment 1 consists of a blog post that will be posted through a blog-style discussion forum, with comments enabled so that students can respond and share ideas as part of Learning Activity 1 (you won't be able to see others' posts until you have posted your own Assignment 1).

Assignment 2 consists of independent research resulting in database entries on regulation and quality assessment mechanisms in higher education. The database tool in iLearn will be used for this purpose, with comments enabled so that you can add responses as part of Learning Activity 2.

Assignment 3 is to be submitted as a Word or rtf file via the Assignment tool in iLearn.

Learning Activities use various online collaborative tools such as forums (discussion or blog format) and workshops for peer feedback and discussion.

Assignments will be marked on the criteria of knowledge, application and presentation, using rubrics based on the unit's grading standards, which are in turn aligned with the Macquarie University Grade Descriptors. The rubrics will be available via the iLearn unit.

Learning Activities will be marked on the criteria of active contribution that furthers your own and others' learning through discussion, questioning and reflecting on unit content and curriculum. They will be peer-assessed with moderation by the Unit Convenor.

Assessment Tasks

Name	Weighting	Hurdle	Due
A1 Legislation and regulation	20%	No	Week 4 (Sunday 23 August)
A2 Contemporary challenge	25%	No	Week 7 (Sunday 13 September)
A3 Major Assignment	40%	No	Week 13 (Sunday 8th November)
Learning activities	15%	No	Throughout

A1 Legislation and regulation

Due: **Week 4 (Sunday 23 August)**

Weighting: **20%**

Class exercise on regulatory instruments and legislation applying to HE institutions. Class member contributions integrating reading, workplace experience, reflection and discussion. The 20% weighting is made up of: 10% group mark for the collaborative process of examining, asking and answering critical questions on, and building critical and shared understanding of, the regulatory and legislative environment for higher education; and 10% for individual response to a selected question from the collaborative exercise.

On successful completion you will be able to:
- Describe and critique the regulatory and reporting context for HE and its impact on quality assessment, assurance and enhancement processes at sectoral and institutional level.
- Describe and analyse the outcomes of various approaches to quality management at institutional level.
- Critically relate quality assessment and enhancement practices to underpinning conceptions of quality.

A2 Contemporary challenge

Due: **Week 7 (Sunday 13 September)**
Weighting: **25%**

Blog post on contemporary challenges with respect to performance assessment, quality assurance, quality enhancement and/or regulatory requirements (theory, practice and impact).

Length: 1500 words.

On successful completion you will be able to:
- Describe and critique the regulatory and reporting context for HE and its impact on quality assessment, assurance and enhancement processes at sectoral and institutional level.
- Describe and analyse the outcomes of various approaches to quality management at institutional level.

A3 Major Assignment

Due: **Week 13 (Sunday 8th November)**
Weighting: **40%**

This assignment involves the integration of theory and practical application in producing an artefact that can be used in the workplace as part of a quality enhancement strategy. The form and content is negotiable to some extent, but should be focused on one of the following:

- planning and implementation of a QA/QE process in a selected institutional unit or area

of activity or

- analysis and evaluation of an existing QE/QA plan/process in a selected institutional unit or area of activity or
- analysis and evaluation of existing performance assessment processes, instruments, tools and/or standards, as applied to a selected institutional area of activity.

Length: 2000-2500 words

On successful completion you will be able to:

- Describe and critique the regulatory and reporting context for HE and its impact on quality assessment, assurance and enhancement processes at sectoral and institutional level.
- Describe and analyse the outcomes of various approaches to quality management at institutional level.
- Critically relate quality assessment and enhancement practices to underpinning conceptions of quality.
- Devise and evaluate quality assessment and enhancement processes in a selected area of HE operations.

Learning activities

Due: **Throughout**
Weighting: **15%**

Participation in learning activities, including online discussions, peer feedback and major assignment planning.

On successful completion you will be able to:

- Describe and critique the regulatory and reporting context for HE and its impact on quality assessment, assurance and enhancement processes at sectoral and institutional level.
- Describe and analyse the outcomes of various approaches to quality management at institutional level.
- Critically relate quality assessment and enhancement practices to underpinning conceptions of quality.
- Devise and evaluate quality assessment and enhancement processes in a selected area of HE operations.

Delivery and Resources

Overview of Unit Delivery

The **overall objective** of the unit is to enhance your capacity for, and practice of, leadership and management in higher education and other organisational contexts.

The unit is organised in such a way as to enable you to learn through a combination of independent reading, collaborative discussion and written assignments.

To complete the Unit requirements satisfactorily you must have regular and reliable access to the internet.

On-campus sessions may be held if we have enough students (at least 6) who can attend. Alternatively, we can arrange meeting times on campus and/or via Skype, iLearn Chat or other communication tools for external students. We will discuss this further online during Weeks 1 and 2.

Work requirements

The Unit has been designed as a 4 postgraduate credit point unit. Activities (including reading) and assessment tasks have been designed to ensure that an *average* student can meet the Unit learning outcomes within 150 hours of independent and online collaborative work over a 15 week teaching session (13 teaching and 2 non-teaching weeks) . This means you should expect to spend at least 10 hours per week on your study in order to meet the requirements of the Unit.

As postgraduate scholars, students bring to the Unit a vast and diverse range of previous knowledge and experience. We regard this as a major resource in the development of your individual and collective understanding of the concepts addressed in the Unit.

To satisfactorily complete each of the modules for this unit you are expected to:

- read a number of specified articles/chapters/documents, plus additional reading that you seek out independently;

- complete the specified Learning Activities for each Module, including participation in online discussions and collaboration - Learning Activities are an integral part of your learning in this unit because it is through these that you engage with the content; and

- submit each of the assignments on or before the due date.

Independent study is an important aspect of the unit, as this develops scholarship and depth of understanding. Other learning activities in the unit are designed to model the collaborative and collegial processes by which many of the objectives of higher education institutions are met. It is important, therefore, that you confidently and courageously:

- share your current knowledge and experience with others in the group;

- allow your current thinking to be subject to constructive critical analysis and debate;

- contribute to discussion of the key concepts and ideas found in the literature and in the taken-for-granted notions held by you and others in the group; and

- use these discussions as a way of further developing your individual and collective understanding of the key concepts and ideas in the Unit.

To reflect the importance of this aspect of your learning, the extent and quality of your involvement in, and contributions to, the Learning Activities associated with each module will be assessed as part of the overall assessment strategy in this unit (see Assessment Tasks link at left).

Readings and Resources

Regulation, quality and performance in higher education are highly politicised. Historically, Higher Education (and universities in particualr) have been, and continue to be, sites of contestation between many stakeholder groups. Such struggles over territory are often based on a combination of ideology, economics and culture.

In Australia, with legislative and funding responsibilities divided between Commonwealth and State jurisdictions (although with the balance now very much shifted towards the Commonwealth, as we shall see), the higher education sector is regularly reviewed, investigated and reported upon by both State and Federal Governments (and by Oppositions). Therefore, unlike many other areas of study in higher education, when we consider the study of its regulation, performance and quality, we find much source material in Parliamentary or departmental reviews, reports, discussion papers, policy statements and/or legislation, as well as in scholarly books and articles. The pace of change in the sector means that there is no single textbook that covers all the content of the unit - we therefore draw on a number of texts and journal articles for the scholarly and theoretical perspectives we need.

Core and recommended readings for each module are listed within the iLearn modules themselves, as well as in the overall Reading List. Core readings and many of the recommended readings will be made available either via direct link (if publicly available), via the Library's eReserve or in some cases in hard copy in the Library's physical Reserve section.

Unit Schedule

The unit consists of five modules as follows:

Module 1: Introduction, unit overview and some useful frameworks.

Module 2: Current legislative, regulatory and reporting mechanisms in Australian Higher Education; quality and performance metrics.

Module 3: Contemporary challenges for higher education sectors and institutions.

Module 4: Leading and managing quality - quality enhancement and organisational learning.

Module 5: Future focus - application of learning to institutional settings.

The Unit Schedule over the 15 weeks of Session 2 (13 teaching weeks and a two-week mid-

session break) is set out below.

1	27 July	1, 2	Learning Activity 1 (LA1): complete by 31 July
2	3 August	2	Learning Activity 2 (LA2) opens 3 August Assignment 1 (A1) opens 3 August
3	10 August	2	LA2 continues A1 continues
4	17 August	2, 3	LA2 closes 23 August A1 due Sunday 23 August
5	24 August	3	LA3 opens 24 August
6	31 August	3	LA3 continues
7	7 September	3	LA3 continues Assignment 2 (A2) due Sunday 13 September
Mid-session break/study period (2 weeks)	14 September & 21 September	(3, 4)	LA3 closes 23 September
8	28 September	4	LA4 opens 28 September
9	5 October	4	LA4 continues
10	12 October	4	LA4 continues
11	19 October	5	LA4 continues LA5 opens 21 October
12	26 October	5	LA4 concludes 1 November LA5 continues
13	2 November	5	LA5 concludes 6 November Assignment 3 (A3) due 8 November

Learning and Teaching Activities

Learning Activity 1

Introductions, sharing personal conceptions of quality, discussion of readings.

Learning Activity 2

Response to issues raised in Assignment 1 - regulatory mechanisms, quality audit and reporting.

Learning Activity 3

Online discussion of selected Module 3 topics and associated readings.

Learning Activity 4

Circulation and discussion of proposed major assignment topic and outline, and provision of feedback. Being a "critical friend" to a class colleague in development of Assignment 3.

Learning Activity 5

Approaches to quality enhancement; organisational learning, organisational development and leadership.

Policies and Procedures

Macquarie University policies and procedures are accessible from Policy Central. Students should be aware of the following policies in particular with regard to Learning and Teaching:

Academic Honesty Policy http://mq.edu.au/policy/docs/academic_honesty/policy.html

Assessment Policy http://mq.edu.au/policy/docs/assessment/policy.html

Grading Policy http://mq.edu.au/policy/docs/grading/policy.html

Grade Appeal Policy http://mq.edu.au/policy/docs/gradeappeal/policy.html

Grievance Management Policy http://mq.edu.au/policy/docs/grievance_management/policy.html

Disruption to Studies Policy http://www.mq.edu.au/policy/docs/disruption_studies/policy.html *The Disruption to Studies Policy is effective from March 3 2014 and replaces the Special Consideration Policy.*

In addition, a number of other policies can be found in the Learning and Teaching Category of Policy Central.

Student Code of Conduct

Macquarie University students have a responsibility to be familiar with the Student Code of Conduct: https://students.mq.edu.au/support/student_conduct/

Results

Results shown in *iLearn*, or released directly by your Unit Convenor, are not confirmed as they are subject to final approval by the University. Once approved, final results will be sent to your student email address and will be made available in eStudent. For more information visit ask.mq.edu.au.

Student Support

Macquarie University provides a range of support services for students. For details, visit http://students.mq.edu.au/support/

Learning Skills

Learning Skills (mq.edu.au/learningskills) provides academic writing resources and study strategies to improve your marks and take control of your study.

- Workshops
- StudyWise
- Academic Integrity Module for Students
- Ask a Learning Adviser

Student Services and Support

Students with a disability are encouraged to contact the Disability Service who can provide appropriate help with any issues that arise during their studies.

Student Enquiries

For all student enquiries, visit Student Connect at ask.mq.edu.au

IT Help

For help with University computer systems and technology, visit http://informatics.mq.edu.au/help/.

When using the University's IT, you must adhere to the Acceptable Use Policy. The policy applies to all who connect to the MQ network including students.

Graduate Capabilities

PG - Capable of Professional and Personal Judgment and Initiative

Our postgraduates will demonstrate a high standard of discernment and common sense in their professional and personal judgment. They will have the ability to make informed choices and decisions that reflect both the nature of their professional work and their personal perspectives.

This graduate capability is supported by:

Learning outcomes

- Describe and analyse the outcomes of various approaches to quality management at institutional level.
- Critically relate quality assessment and enhancement practices to underpinning conceptions of quality.
- Devise and evaluate quality assessment and enhancement processes in a selected area of HE operations.

Assessment tasks

- A1 Legislation and regulation
- A2 Contemporary challenge
- A3 Major Assignment
- Learning activities

Learning and teaching activities

- Response to issues raised in Assignment 1 - regulatory mechanisms, quality audit and reporting.
- Online discussion of selected Module 3 topics and associated readings.
- Circulation and discussion of proposed major assignment topic and outline, and provision of feedback. Being a "critical friend" to a class colleague in development of Assignment 3.
- Approaches to quality enhancement; organisational learning, organisational development and leadership.

PG - Discipline Knowledge and Skills

Our postgraduates will be able to demonstrate a significantly enhanced depth and breadth of knowledge, scholarly understanding, and specific subject content knowledge in their chosen fields.

This graduate capability is supported by:

Learning outcomes

- Describe and critique the regulatory and reporting context for HE and its impact on quality assessment, assurance and enhancement processes at sectoral and institutional level.
- Describe and analyse the outcomes of various approaches to quality management at institutional level.
- Critically relate quality assessment and enhancement practices to underpinning conceptions of quality.
- Devise and evaluate quality assessment and enhancement processes in a selected area of HE operations.

Assessment tasks

- A1 Legislation and regulation
- A2 Contemporary challenge
- A3 Major Assignment
- Learning activities

Learning and teaching activities

- Introductions, sharing personal conceptions of quality, discussion of readings.
- Response to issues raised in Assignment 1 - regulatory mechanisms, quality audit and reporting.

- Online discussion of selected Module 3 topics and associated readings.
- Circulation and discussion of proposed major assignment topic and outline, and provision of feedback. Being a "critical friend" to a class colleague in development of Assignment 3.
- Approaches to quality enhancement; organisational learning, organisational development and leadership.

PG - Critical, Analytical and Integrative Thinking

Our postgraduates will be capable of utilising and reflecting on prior knowledge and experience, of applying higher level critical thinking skills, and of integrating and synthesising learning and knowledge from a range of sources and environments. A characteristic of this form of thinking is the generation of new, professionally oriented knowledge through personal or group-based critique of practice and theory.

This graduate capability is supported by:

Learning outcomes

- Describe and critique the regulatory and reporting context for HE and its impact on quality assessment, assurance and enhancement processes at sectoral and institutional level.
- Critically relate quality assessment and enhancement practices to underpinning conceptions of quality.
- Devise and evaluate quality assessment and enhancement processes in a selected area of HE operations.

Assessment tasks

- A3 Major Assignment
- Learning activities

Learning and teaching activities

- Response to issues raised in Assignment 1 - regulatory mechanisms, quality audit and reporting.
- Online discussion of selected Module 3 topics and associated readings.
- Circulation and discussion of proposed major assignment topic and outline, and provision of feedback. Being a "critical friend" to a class colleague in development of Assignment 3.
- Approaches to quality enhancement; organisational learning, organisational development and leadership.

PG - Research and Problem Solving Capability

Our postgraduates will be capable of systematic enquiry; able to use research skills to create new knowledge that can be applied to real world issues, or contribute to a field of study or practice to enhance society. They will be capable of creative questioning, problem finding and problem solving.

This graduate capability is supported by:

Learning outcomes

- Critically relate quality assessment and enhancement practices to underpinning conceptions of quality.
- Devise and evaluate quality assessment and enhancement processes in a selected area of HE operations.

Assessment tasks

- A1 Legislation and regulation
- A3 Major Assignment
- Learning activities

Learning and teaching activities

- Circulation and discussion of proposed major assignment topic and outline, and provision of feedback. Being a "critical friend" to a class colleague in development of Assignment 3.

PG - Effective Communication

Our postgraduates will be able to communicate effectively and convey their views to different social, cultural, and professional audiences. They will be able to use a variety of technologically supported media to communicate with empathy using a range of written, spoken or visual formats.

This graduate capability is supported by:

Learning outcomes

- Describe and critique the regulatory and reporting context for HE and its impact on quality assessment, assurance and enhancement processes at sectoral and institutional level.
- Describe and analyse the outcomes of various approaches to quality management at institutional level.
- Critically relate quality assessment and enhancement practices to underpinning conceptions of quality.

- Devise and evaluate quality assessment and enhancement processes in a selected area of HE operations.

Assessment tasks

- A1 Legislation and regulation
- A2 Contemporary challenge
- A3 Major Assignment
- Learning activities

Learning and teaching activities

- Introductions, sharing personal conceptions of quality, discussion of readings.
- Response to issues raised in Assignment 1 - regulatory mechanisms, quality audit and reporting.
- Online discussion of selected Module 3 topics and associated readings.
- Circulation and discussion of proposed major assignment topic and outline, and provision of feedback. Being a "critical friend" to a class colleague in development of Assignment 3.
- Approaches to quality enhancement; organisational learning, organisational development and leadership.

PG - Engaged and Responsible, Active and Ethical Citizens

Our postgraduates will be ethically aware and capable of confident transformative action in relation to their professional responsibilities and the wider community. They will have a sense of connectedness with others and country and have a sense of mutual obligation. They will be able to appreciate the impact of their professional roles for social justice and inclusion related to national and global issues

This graduate capability is supported by:

Learning outcome

- Devise and evaluate quality assessment and enhancement processes in a selected area of HE operations.

Assessment tasks

- A3 Major Assignment
- Learning activities

Learning and teaching activities

- Introductions, sharing personal conceptions of quality, discussion of readings.
- Response to issues raised in Assignment 1 - regulatory mechanisms, quality audit and

reporting.

- Online discussion of selected Module 3 topics and associated readings.

- Circulation and discussion of proposed major assignment topic and outline, and provision of feedback. Being a "critical friend" to a class colleague in development of Assignment 3.

- Approaches to quality enhancement; organisational learning, organisational development and leadership.

Changes from Previous Offering

This unit has been revamped and refocused, with a change of name from Governance, Organisation and Structure of Higher Education to Quality, Performance and Regulation in Higher Education. This reflects a changing approach to viewing organisation and structure as deriving from historical norms to now being responsive to legislative and regulatory frameworks. Governance has similarly shifted, being more explicitly referenced to the regulatory environment and increasingly working to externally-imposed standards and quality assessment processes. Much of the material used in the former incarnation of the unit remains relevant and is included in the unit notes, but this has been expanded to include discussion of quality and performance issues in relation to specific areas of activity.

The revamped unit is more focused on operations at the sectoral and institutional levels than the previous version, which included a substantial section on the historical international antecedents of contemporary universities. This topic is now covered in a new unit (EDUC869), which you will complete as a required unit in the Graduate Certificate in Higher Education, and which you are strongly encouraged to complete as an elective if you are enrolled in the HE Specialisation of the MEd.

Quality and performance processes and metrics are examined in more detail in the new version of the unit, but a similar process of exploring the contemporary issues is followed to that in the previous version: the building of knowledge through a combination of independent reading and scholarship with collaboration and sharing of ideas and experience, and the demonstration of learning through assessment tasks that encourage integration of theory and application in "real-life" scenarios and situations. There is considerable room for negotiation with regard to major assignment topic, so that students, in consultation with the Unit Convenor, can tailor their work on this assignment for immediate application in their workplace if they desire to do so.

Reading lists have been updated to reflect the inclusion of the new focus on quality and performance assessment, and students are expected to add to the core readings with their own literature searches and exploration of the regulatory and reporting requirements for higher education in Australia and elsewhere.

Changes since First Published

Date	Description
14/08/2015	LA2 closing date amended in Unit Schedule to coincide with A1 due date. Typo fixed in Unit Schedule (A1 not A2).
02/07/2015	Changed the weighting of individual and collaborative proportions of assessment in Assignment 1, as I'm trialling a new iLearn tool that emphasises the collaborative aspect of the assessment task.