Graduate Certificate in Quality Assurance
Program Outline 2011

The LH Martin Institute is Australia’s national tertiary education leadership and management institute, established with the support of the Australian Government and based at the University of Melbourne.

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Graduate Certificate in Quality Assurance

The Graduate Certificate in Quality Assurance (GCQA) is a one year, part-time, on-line, professionally oriented graduate program awarded by the University of Melbourne and endorsed by the International Network for Quality Assurance Agencies in Higher Education (INQAAHE) for professional recognition internationally.

Overview

In recent decades, tertiary education has seen a massive increase in external and internal quality assurance (QA) activity around the world. Dozens of new QA agencies are being formed and reformed as universities and colleges grow in size, number and diversity. A new profession is emerging to meet the demands of QA - one that requires structured academic programs to educate QA practitioners, stimulate research and inform new initiatives. Developed in close collaboration with the International Network for Quality Assurance Agencies in Higher Education (INQAAHE), the Graduate Certificate in Quality Assurance is a University of Melbourne award.

Unlike most education and training for the QA profession, which is in the form of short courses and isolated workshops, the GCQA is a comprehensive academic program for the training and professional development of QA professionals.

Suitable for

Practising quality assurance professionals and individuals who wish to play a role in quality assurance in tertiary education contexts. In particular:

- Staff of existing or emerging external quality agencies (EQAs) needing education in the basic structures and implications of quality assurance, for development, innovation and improvement
- Board/Commission members of EQAs
- Evaluators/reviewers associated with EQAs
- Staff of quality assurance units within educational institutions
- Administrators, academic staff, trustees and governors of educational institutions that are establishing or improving their internal QA systems, or needing to understand systems of external quality assurance and accreditation
- Individuals seeking to enter the field of quality assurance.
Features of the program

Participants undertaking this program can expect:
- A fully on-line program developed according to current state of the art on-line teaching, supported by extensive program resources.
- Integrated learning via theory, case studies, moderated discussion boards, webinars and work-based assignments.
- Scope to choose assignments aligned with personal development and career aspirations.

Learning outcomes

Successful participants will have acquired:
- Well-informed perspectives on the issues and challenges for tertiary education systems and institutions, with a particular emphasis on the role of QA in a dynamic sector.
- An ability to apply the knowledge and skills gained in this program to engage more confidently and effectively in the tasks of leading people, influencing policy, and implementing QA policies and processes at both the system and the institutional level.

INQAAHE endorsement

Developed in close collaboration with the International Network for Quality Assurance Agencies in Higher Education (INQAAHE) the GCQA is a University of Melbourne award, endorsed by INQAAHE for professional recognition internationally.

About the Melbourne Graduate School of Education

The University of Melbourne has a 150-year history of academic excellence. One of the world’s top universities, it is a hub for scholarly inquiry and research innovation.

In 2008 the University adopted a graduate school model of education, aligning with leading institutions in the US and Europe. The Melbourne Graduate School of Education is recognised as one of Australia’s leading schools of education. The School’s 16 research centres and groups are at the cutting edge of current concerns in education, locally and internationally. They continue to be influential in shaping education policy, systems and practice, both within Australia and abroad.

About the LH Martin Institute

Tertiary education is a complex and rapidly changing environment in which to lead and manage. A strong understanding of its unique structure and complex policy environment is crucial to the success of your institution.

The LH Martin Institute for Higher Education Leadership and Management has been established to enhance tertiary education in Australia and New Zealand by providing a suite of programs and activities focused on institutional management and leadership within this sector. We are committed to developing the knowledge and skills of both current and aspiring leaders to ensure they meet their personal and organisational goals.

Our activities include postgraduate award programs, executive education programs, conferences, public seminars, research and consulting projects.
To complete the program, participants need to gain 50 credit points, by undertaking:

- **Two compulsory units:**
  - Tertiary Education Policy and Management (25 points, semester 1)
  - External Quality Assurance (12.5 points, semester 2).
- **Plus one of two elective units:**
  - Operating an External Quality Agency
  - Maintaining Quality within Institutions (12.5 points, semester 2).

**Compulsory Foundation Unit – Tertiary Education Policy and Management**

This unit has three main themes, explored by comparing tertiary systems internationally:

**The Nature of the Tertiary Education Organisation**
How are tertiary sector institutions different from other types of organisations?

**Comparative Tertiary Education Policy Studies**
How have different tertiary education systems and institutions met the pressures and dynamics of contemporary societies?

**Management and Leadership in Tertiary Education**
How do managers balance competing demands, multiple values and distributed authority in tertiary sector settings?

**Compulsory QA Unit – External Quality Assurance**

This unit explores the different approaches to QA internationally through five themes:

**Quality Assurance for Higher Education**
The concept of quality is complex and the variety of frameworks used to define and measure quality through processes referred to as quality assurance are highlighted in this theme. The focus here is on national QA systems and the roles of QA agencies, rather than the internal QA systems that many institutions have established.

**External Quality Assurance – Roles and Responsibilities**
Central to this theme are the generic functions of external quality assurance (EQA) and the different approaches EQA agencies take to discharge their roles and responsibilities. While many of the examples given relate to QA at the institutional level, key observations also apply to program level QA.

**Networks of External Quality Agencies**
Practitioners who operate in the area of quality assurance in higher education have formed associations that provide opportunities for information exchange and mutual support. This theme deals with these networks, with an emphasis on international networks and some consideration of national networks of QA agencies.

**Standards Applied by External Quality Assurance Agencies**
EQA agencies are concerned with 'standards', particularly whether and how they might apply absolute standards to higher education institutions. Many in the community at large would like the certainty that standards in educational institutions appear to offer. But the matter is far from simple, as the discussion of standards in QA will show.

**External Quality Assurance Agencies – Emerging Challenges**
The final theme discusses the many challenges that have emerged in higher education in the past decade and the role of external QA agencies in dealing with these issues. They include: the globalisation of education, the trend to privatisation in education, new technologies and the growth of 'degree mills' that sell bogus or sub-standard qualifications.
Elective Unit – Operating an External Quality Agency

This unit deals with aspects of operating an external QA agency. The focus is on the practical aspects of providing services that ensure quality of programs or institutions through accreditation or quality review and improvement strategies. Five aspects are discussed:

Structures and Management
What are the options in establishing, managing, organising and controlling a quality assurance agency and what are the major functions it has to perform?

Methods of Review and Accreditation
QA agencies differ greatly in the way they define quality and the methods they use to assess it. Some agencies follow the ‘fitness-for-purpose’ definition and focus on how institutions or programs fulfil the objectives they set out to achieve. Others emphasise pre-determined sets of standards for institutions or programs.

Reviewers’ Roles and Training
The range of roles, profiles of effective reviewers and ways of recruiting them are discussed. The training of reviewers is also covered with examples of different approaches to training depending on circumstances.

Site Visits
The primary purpose of a site visit is to collect evidence and explore the information in the self-evaluation document provided by the institution. An overview of approaches and procedures is provided.

Writing the Report and Reporting the Decision
Different approaches to report writing for reviews and audits are highlighted. The purpose of reports, what they generally include, and the use of logic and evidence are discussed.

Elective Unit – Maintaining Quality within Institutions

This unit takes an insider view of quality in institutions and explores how quality can be maintained by a university or college. Four topics are discussed:

Self Study
Focuses on the multiple purposes of the self-study process in a QA program, how to guide an institution/program through this process and how to write a Self-Study Document.

Strategic Planning and Budgeting
Analyses the importance of linking two key components of effective self-management in institutions – planning and budgeting. Their contribution to the institutional culture of quality is discussed.

Assessment for Improvement and Accountability
Explores the differences and relations between assessment for improving teaching and learning, and assessment for accountability.

Analysing and Reporting Data for Assessments
Focuses on the design of assessments with emphasis on the methods of collecting, analysing and using information in institutional assessments. Ways of communicating results to ensure the maximum impact from the data collected are highlighted.
Associate Professor Leo Goedegebuure is Deputy Director of the LH Martin Institute for Higher Education Leadership and Management and active in the field of higher education policy research and management. Prior to his move to Australia (University of New England, Centre for Higher Education Management and Policy), Leo was Executive Director of the Center for Higher Education Policy Studies (CHEPS), at the University of Twente, Netherlands.

His research interests are in the areas of governance and management, both at the systems and institutional level; system dynamics including large scale restructuring policies; university-industry relationships; and institutional mergers. He is auditor for the Hong Kong Quality Assurance Council and has been a member and rapporteur for the OECD tertiary education review of New Zealand.

Dr Geoff Sharrock is Program Director at the LH Martin Institute for Higher Education Leadership and Management. With extensive experience in public administration, private consulting and management education, Geoff’s research interests and publications focus on tertiary sector policy, strategy, culture, leadership and management.

He has worked as an adviser on the ‘Growing Esteem’ strategy development project at the University of Melbourne and project manager on the Baker-IDI medical research institute merger.

Associate Professor Hamish Coates is with the LH Martin Institute for Higher Education Leadership and Management and also leads higher education research at the Australian Council for Educational Research.

His research interests include large-scale educational evaluation, tertiary education policy, learner engagement, leadership, quality assurance, and assessment methodology. He has been a consultant to the World Bank and OECD and has held visiting fellowships at the University of Michigan and UNESCO’s International Institute for Educational Planning.

Dr Chinh Nguyen is Academic Programs Support Officer at the LH Martin Institute for Higher Education Leadership and Management. Chinh’s doctoral research focused on the discursive and electronic construction of Australian universities and international students’ perceptions of university websites. Chinh’s research interests focus on organisational discourse, discursive identity, strategy and change.

Dr Peter Gray is Director of Academic Assessment at the United States Naval Academy. His areas of expertise include the assessment of student learning; research on higher education; higher education course, curriculum and program evaluation; and institutional research.

Maria Jose Lemaitre is Academic Director of CINDA, Chile and Vice-President of the International Network for Quality Assurance Agencies in Higher Education. She is active in the field of quality assurance in higher education and sits on the editorial board of Quality in Higher Education.

Michaela Martin is a programme specialist in higher education policy, planning and management at UNESCO’s International Institute for Educational Planning. She has extensive experience in quality management in higher education.

Tom Philips is director of Soutenir Ltd, a US-based international consultancy firm. He has extensive experience in the area of quality assurance in both Europe and the US and most recently was senior adviser and evaluation leader of the QUESTE project on assessment standards and protocols.

Dr Antony Stella is Audit Director at the Australian Universities Quality Agency (AUQA). In addition to carrying out audits, she has significantly contributed to AUQA’s publication program by her thematic analyses of audit reports.

Dr Don Westerheijden is senior research associate at the Centre for Higher Education Policy Studies (CHEPS), Netherlands, where he co-ordinates the quality portfolio. He has published widely on quality assessment in higher education and has extensive international experience in the field.
Application Details – Eligibility, Fees and Scholarships

Entry requirements
Candidates for the GCQA are expected to have:
– An undergraduate degree or equivalent
– At least two years of relevant work experience
– Current employment in the sector, and employer support to attend the program.

English language requirements
All applicants must meet the English language requirements of the University of Melbourne to be eligible for the program. These can be met in a number of ways, outlined at: http://cms-futurestudents.unimelb.edu.au/int/entry-req/grad/english-req
The IELTS and TOEFL requirements are:
– IELTS (Academic English only): overall 7.0, with written 7.0 and no band less than 6.0.
– TOEFL (paper-based test): 600 + TWE 5.0
– TOEFL (computer-based test): 250 + 5.0 essay rating
– TOEFL (internet-based test): 100 + written score of 24 and no band less than 21.

The test must be taken no more than 24 months prior to application and the score must be achieved from a single test report.

Fees
The 2011 fee for the full 50 points GCQA program is $11,200.
Fee includes access to all on-line resources, excludes text books.

Scholarships
LH Martin Institute will offer a limited number of scholarships in 2011 to support outstanding candidates from lesser developed or low income countries, in accordance with the INQAAHE Development Fund country criteria.
As per the eligibility guidelines, candidates will also need to show evidence of strong relevant experience, potential and commitment to the sector, as well as support from their organisation.
The scholarships will cover 50% of the program fees.

How to apply
Visit the LH Martin Institute website for application details: www.lhmartininstitute.edu.au

Application closing dates:
– Australian and New Zealand applicants: 1 December 2010
– International applicants: 30 October 2010.
Further information
Contact Associate Professor Leo Goedegebuure at leo.g@unimelb.edu.au or call the LH Martin Institute.
Detailed information regarding the full range of LH Martin Institute programs is available on the website: www.lhmartininstitute.edu.au

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