

EXTERNAL QUALITY ASSESSMENT

The University response in addressing the 2013 External Quality Assessment Report

November 2018

Introduction

In 2013, the Department of Higher Education, Research, Science and Technology (DHERST) initiated an External Quality Assessment of the Papua New Guinea University of Natural Resources and Environment (PNG UNRE). The assessment was based on 13 Standards that are used by DHERST for assessing quality in state universities in PNG. The outcomes of the assessment showed that PNG UNRE lacked quality in some essential areas of best practices in determining quality higher education and research at University level.

Although PNG UNRE had complied with some processes of quality assurance, much more remains to be done to improve quality. During the 2013 assessment, twenty-six (26) recommendations from the report were put forward to PNG UNRE for consideration and implementation. These recommendations range from governance, management, academic, administration and other University support systems that should be implemented to improve quality and operations of the University.

In the absence of a unified Quality Assurance System, it continues to be difficult for sections across PNG UNRE to implement the recommendations. Quality Assurance (QA) is a systematic process of determining whether a product or service meets specified requirements. Such system is meant to increase confidence and provide integrity to UNRE graduates especially for potential employers, regulators, and public while also improving work processes and efficiency. In addition, QA will enable this University to better compete with others.

In this update on the PNG UNRE response in addressing the 26 recommendations, the new management within the last three months have either implemented or already laying the framework for implementing all the recommendations. By August 2019, a complete implementation report from PNG UNRE addressing the recommendations of the 2013 External Quality Assessment will be presented to the QA Team from DHERST.

PANEL ASSESSMENT

The assessment made by the Panel on each of the 13 Standards was based on whether the Standard was:

1.	Fully met; or	76%-100%
2.	Substantially met; or	51%-75%
3.	Partially met; or	26%-50%
4.	Not met to any significant extent.	0%-25%

After the assessment, the Panel found whether PNG UNRE met the 13 Standards as shown:

1.	Fully met the Standards	0/13 = 0%
2.	No Standards were substantially or fully met.	0/13 = 0%
3.	Partially met some Standards	9/13 = 69%
4.	Not met some other Standards to any significant extent	4/13 = 31%

The findings indicated that PNG UNRE had complied with six (6) areas that contribute to quality as follows:

- 1. The availability at UNRE of By-laws and other written advice to assist students and staff to understand their responsibilities, noting the need to revise and rationalise this advice.
- 2. The UNRE Council's creation of a Finance Committee of Council, and encourages it to take an active role in approving the annual budget and ensuring high levels of accountability, probity and transparency in the University's financial undertaking.
- 3. The University's creation of an Internal Audit function, which must be organisationally separate from the Bursar's office.
- 4. The development and implementation by UNRE of policies on HIV/AIDS and Occupational Health and Safety.
- 5. The UNRE's commencement of a process to track its alumni, which should be accompanied by the development and use of regular surveys of graduate and employer satisfaction.
- 6. The University's efforts to formalise the creation of an institutional Asset Register and encourages UNRE to develop associated procedures to systematically monitor its assets at all teaching locations.

PNG UNRE RESPONSE

Since 2013, no document is available at PNG UNRE showing a formal response addressing the twenty-six (26) recommendations. The recommendations are being addressed by the new Management as summarised below:

STANDARD	ASSESSMENT 1. PARTIALLY MET 2. NOT MET TO ANY SIGNIFICANT EXTENT 3. NOT SUBSTANTIALLY OR FULLY MET	2018 RESPONSE BY NEW MANAGEMENT ADDRESSING THE 26 RECOMMENDATIONS
1. The University demonstrates honesty and integrity in all its operations, academic and financial, including its relations with students, employers and the public	Partially met (26-50)%	R1. UNRE ensure that comprehensive information on programs, mode of teaching, use of fees, and expectations is made readily available to prospective students in hard copy and online and supplied to all students prior to their being offered a place at UNRE. R2. UNRE develop a Risk Management Policy, identify all significant risks, including academic and reputational risks, and implement strategies to control these risks, including regular consideration by Council and updating of a risk register.
	■ Values statements and self- assessment	 Value statements are stated in PNG UNRE Development Plan 2011–2015, Strategic Plan 2020–2025 will continue to contain statements about values.
	Statues, by-laws and rulesStaff code of conduct and	 Statute is being reviewed for gazettal; there are student by-laws and student rules are reviewed for 2019. Staff rules are reviewed already for 2019.

	prevention of fraud	
	■ Information provided to students	 Handbooks will be distributed to students in 2019 and upload onto the PNG UNRE website; full fee usage structure is being advertised.
	 Handling of complaints and grievances 	 Students and staff complaints and grievances are handled by appropriate committees under the new governance and management structures.
	- Academic integrity	 Quality Assurance Committee established, new TORs being compiled, QA Framework has been completed.
	Risk Management	Risks Management Committee established, new TORs being compiled, Risks Management Framework has been completed.
2. The University is guided by clearly stated purpose and defines its distinctive character and nature.	Partially met (26-50)%	R3. UNRE develop a new strategic plan focusing on the achievement of academic and professional excellence and including clear targets for growth and key performance indicators. 80% MET
	■ University name and enabling legislation	■ PNG UNRE Act replaced Vudal through 2009 amendment to 1998 University of Vudal legislation.
	■ Vision and mission	■ Vision and mission clearly stated in the 2011–2015 PNG UNRE Development Plan.
	Strategic Plan	■ PNG UNRE Development Plan 2011–2015 is being evaluated, Strategic Plan 2020–2025 Framework is being formulated
	■ University activities	 University Planning Resource Management Committee established; new TORs compiled; Resource allocations done

		through this committee; Wastage is being addressed to focus resources on teaching, learning and research; classrooms and lecture halls upgraded; utilities bills sent to government, liabilities being reduced; restrictions on transport usages; staff positions aligned to new management structure; recruitment of tutors, senior administrators and senior academics are afoot.
3. The University appropriately plans	Not met to any significant extent	R4. UNRE develop and implement a transparent budget
and manages its finances to achieve the educational objectives to which it is	(0-25)%	formation and management process, ultimately approved actively by Council, to ensure clarity of budget lines and linkage to clearly-
committed.		articulated and prioritised educational objectives.
		R5. UNRE Council commission an urgent full forensic audit by an independent and well-credentialed firm of all University accounts, including all private accounts, which need to be brought within the main University financial framework. R6. Council implements a formal Financial Delegations Framework and academic managers empowered to manage their own budgets within delegated parameters.
	■ Budget–setting and approval	Budget setting is done by Treasury; Line Managers for the first time were requested to submit budget request for 2019 recurrent
		budget; five cost centres will prioritise and manage the budget;
		Council approved 2019 Budget before submission to Treasury. Budgetary Framework developed and communicated to all line
	■ Financial accountability	managers meeting. The Framework captures the strategic core
		areas of Teaching & Learning, Research, outreach and Extension
		Programs; and the Administrative support of the core functions. It is also performance based in terms of Annual Activity plan for
		section and is transparent, devolved and user friendly. It is flexible

<u>•</u>	<u>in terms of contingency and reprioritise in potential risk hence e</u>		
<u>•</u>	flexible in uncertainties in policies, government and institutional		
<u>•</u>	governance.		
	Operational plans are tied to budgetry frameworks and	4	Formatted: Normal, No bullets or numbering
	devlopemnt plans to justify allocations and hence performances at		
	the end of the year.		
	■ Finance Committee established, new TORs being compiled;		Formatted: Font: (Default) Goudy Old Style, 12 pt
Management of business entities	financial reports for 2015 & 2016 will be ready for Council; 2017		
	financial report will be ready before end of December 2018 and		
	all reports will be submitted to Council and Auditor General.		
 Financial controls, delegations, 	Business Management Committee established; new TORs being		
tender board and internal audit	compiled; all university income generating activities will come		
	under the scrutiny of this committee.		
	, '	•	Formatted: Font: (Default) Goudy Old Style, 12 pt
	 All budget requisition by each sections are activity based justified 		Formatted: Indent: Left: 1.27 cm, No bullets or
	by Annual activity plans		numbering
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	 Payroll monitoring committee is in place including the 		
	membership of the internal Auditor for checks and balance.		Formatted: Indent: Left: 1.27 cm, No bullets or numbering
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	 Itemised cost centres are subjected to 3monthly stock take as a 		Formatted: Font: (Default) Goudy Old Style, 12 pt
	control measure by the Internal Auditor and report to the		Formatted: Indent: Left: 1.27 cm, No bullets or
	Internal Auditor committee and management.		numbering
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	 All university bank accounts have come under the control of 		
	university; Tenders Board established; new TORs being compiled;		
	External Audit Committee established; new TORs being		
	compiled; Internal Auditor has independent office from Bursary;		

Fixed asset register being updated in 2018 and kept by internal auditor; purchasing; Biological asset audit is being undertaken for

		the first time.
4. The University demonstrates sound corporate and academic governance of its educational operations.		R7. UNRE Council to improve its oversight and monitoring of the achievement of the University's objectives, mission and strategy.
		R8. UNRE ensure that the operations of Academic Board meet the norms and standards expected of the main academic governance body of a university.
		R9. UNRE work with current students' representative leaders to re-institute a Student Representative Council that is provided with a budget and that has the power to bring student concerns directly to the University Council.
		90% MET
	■ University Council membership	■ Chancellor (external), Pro Chancellor (external), Members (3 external), 3 x ex-officio, SRC president, staff rep
	■ University Council functioning	■ Council functioning; Held numerous meetings; outstanding and current minutes of meetings are to be presented to Council; Council has 3 x committees, new TORs being written for Council approval; VC report, budget, projects and financial reports have gone to Council.
	■ Academic Board	 Academic Board established, new TORs completed; Examination board established; New TORs being compiled; Appeals Committee established; new TORs being compiled; Statutes being reviewed; Meetings have been held.
	■ Student Governance	•SRC is re-established; Class reps form the SRC; an office for SRC has been identified; SRC president sits on PNG UNRE

		Council; student reps are members to some university committees.		
5. The University operations are well managed and make use of relevant data and evidence to improve educational outcomes for student.	Partially met (26-50)%	R10. UNRE urgently improve the engagement of staff across its Vudal and Popondetta Campuses, including responsiveness of staff to requests, and that UNRE ensure an adequate resource base for the Popondetta campus. R11. A more transparent process of management be adopted by UNRE allowing staff at various levels to provide input into operational management decision-making to improve coordination and resolve outstanding issues.		
	■ Organisational structure	■ New governance (committees system), management (three tier levels), and operational structures (positions & accountabilities) are in place; staffing positions and accountabilities have been realigned; staff participated in formulation of the structures and a informed;		
	■ Policies and procedures	• Some policies are available but may need reviews; Committees will meet to discuss, review and develop specific policies and procedures for operational purposes; quality assurance framework has been developed; specific QA will be developed by each section across the university.		
	■ Cross campus management	 Government decision in 2014 has severed ties with Popondetta and Maprik campuses; Popondetta staff salaries only are being maintained by PNG UNRE. 		
	■ Internal culture and communication at Vudal	■ Communications are mainly through email; PNG UNRE website memoirs, Campus Voice and the newly introduced weekly		

	■ Improvement of educational outcomes	newsletter, The Campus This Week; staff members are being involved in workshops; face-to-face communication; memos and letters on staff and student noticeboards; regular meetings by staff and management; management meetings. Research and Publications Committee established; new TORs being compiled; QA system will be applied across all sections of the university; K4K application for student data base; Two MOUs will be signed to boost staff and student research (biogas) and student industrial training (Oil Palm); Management uses planning resource management committee to focus resources on quality educational outcomes.
6. The University teaching and administrative personnel are appropriate in number, qualifications, experience and skill.	Partially met (26-50)%	R12. UNRE act urgently to make new academic appointments of a scale and level appropriate to a university, and to ensure that all future appointments are based on merit, using transparent and equitable criteria and processes. R13. UNRE develop and implement a robust performance review and development process for all staff, linked to the achievement of University priorities. R14. UNRE professionalise its management of human resources, through the appointment of more senior and experienced personnel and professional development of capable staff.
	■ Staff profile and recruitment	■ Competent and highly qualified staff is being sought by merit; Professors will be sought for the three Schools; senior academics with PhDs and administrators with masters will be sought by merit; equitable and merit appointments will be made; an

		external person is being sought to review terms and conditions of employment after internal re-organisation has been completed.
	■ Staff development and performance management	■ Staff Training and Development Committee has been established; new TORs are being compiled; Staff training and development policy will be reviewed; four staff members are being recommended for postgraduate certificate studies in Australia in 2019.
	■ Human Resources Management	■ Staff Appointment and Appraisal Committee is established; new TORs are being compiled; Policy will be developed; non-academic shall use PS appraisal system; an appraisal system for academics will be developed; an audit of filled and vacant positions is being carried out; promotions and employment contract renewal are being resurrected; acquisition of ALESCO
		system.
7. The University expected student learning outcomes for all programmes	Partially met (26–50)%	R15. In order to achieve the stature of a full university and in accordance with its own Strategy, UNRE expand the breadth and
are at the appropriate level for the PNG		depth of its academic programs.
National Qualifications Framework		80% MET
(NQF), professional body requirements, employer needs and/or international benchmarks.	■ Academic breadth and depth	 New programmes in tourism, forestry and agriculture will be offered in 2019; School of Governance and Management and School of Environment will become operational in 2019; School of Postgraduate Studies and Research must be established.
	■ New programme approval	■ Programme approval will begin with staff to department to Schools to Academic and Accreditation Committee then to the Academic Board and onto Council and to DHERST for NQF and scholarships requirements.

	■Credit transfer	• A policy needs to be developed for credit transfer, both undergraduate and postgraduate courses.
	■ Programme review and updating	■ Programmes have been reviewed and accredited through DHERST.
8. The University teaching and assessment practices are adequate to achieve the expected student learning outcomes.	Not met to any significant extent (0-25)%	R16. UNRE urgently commission a credible external review of block mode teaching and implement the recommendations as soon as possible in 2014 or at the latest 2015. R17. UNRE establish a Teaching and Learning Methods Unit, to improve the quality of teaching practice at UNRE and assist the professional development of academic staff. R18. UNRE develop a new and comprehensive assessment policy
		and ensure the policy is implemented consistently across the University. 60% MET
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	■ Block mode teaching	• Block mode has been reviewed and hence modular programmes; an application to K4K will be sought to fund the review of modular courses to a one semester or year-long course to be used in 2020.
	■ Quality of teaching	■ Teaching and Learning Methods Unit (TLMU) is necessary to improve teaching skills of academics; an ad hoc programme exists but it is not accredited; TLMU must be established.
	■ Assessment policy and practice	• A new comprehensive assessment policy which has not been developed yet be made ready for 2019; clear rules on exclusion and supplementary examinations are included in the assessment policy.

	■Work-based learning	■ Industrial training is being arranged for students to take a letter of introduction to their LLGs and PGs for this purpose; some industrial training is still being arranged by academics.
9. The University demonstrates effective student cohort management to ensure good graduate outcomes.	Not met to any significant extent (0-25)%	R19. UNRE urgently analyse and report to Council trend data on enrolment, retention, progress and completion of annual student cohorts and develop systems that enable reliable and efficient report of these data.
		R20. UNRE establish clear rules on exclusion and supplementary examinations for failure in courses, in consultation with students and staff, and ensure these rules are communicated to and understood by students and applied fairly and equitably by staff. 40% MET
	■ Collection and use of data	 Planning Division will collect data across university (enrolments, retention, progress and completion), analyse and produce reports to Management and Council beginning in 2019.
	■ Management of students cohorts	 Alumni Committee has been established; new TORs are being compiled; formation of Alumni Association; tracer study of cohorts of our graduates will begin in 2019.
10. The University ensures that students have access to appropriate levels of social, welfare and academic support services.	Partially met (26-50)%	R21. UNRE employ a qualified counsellor on the Vudal Campus and consider the need for personal counselling services to be available for students at the Popondetta Campus. 90% MET
	■ Student health and welfare services	■ Health and Safety Committee has been established; new TORs are being compiled; a male student counsellor is available here at Vudal Campus but also need a female counsellor;

	■ Student services	• Sports facilities are already available better than all state universities; orientation programme will be managed by student service but managed by the orientation and graduation committee recently established; new TORs are being compiled; SSS liaise with academics for students with academic difficulties in courses undergo remedial work.
	■ Student security and transport	• Security Committee has been established; new TORs are being compiled; Security services has been assigned a better vehicle; guards are posted regularly to female residences; roles of subwardens will be empowered; restrictions of uses of transport will give priority to students field trips; students and staff private hire of transport has been stopped because of abuse; an insurance cover for students is being sought for study related activities; the discipline committees will be meeting regularly and tough on offenders of university rules; health care is good; housing will be allocated to HEO after renovation of the allocated accommodation.
11. The University has effective processes to provide, maintain and modernise learning resources, including ICT and other physical resources.	Not met to any significant extent (0-25)%	R22. UNRE commits to providing a regular and substantial appropriation for growing library reference materials to a baseline level appropriate for tertiary education. R23. UNRE reprioritise resource allocation to give highest
		priority to the delivery of robust and reliable internet access to students and staff. R24. UNRE reprioritise resource allocation to ensure the availability of essential laboratory facilities appropriate to a tertiary institution running science-based programs.

	R25. UNRE give high priority to investigating the feasibility of implementing an electronic student management system and in the interim give consideration to a back-up system for at least its student records.
	30% MET
■ Library resources	• University library complex project remains a university priority; University is committed to obtaining reference materials for the library; free electronics reference materials is encouraged; interlibrary loans arrangement be established between domestic and international libraries; a library staff is already studying in Fiji and will be returning this year; staff development training and development will library as well as other staff of the university.
■Internet access and ICT	• Internet and email services are available but not all staff can access these due to lack of technical skills and capacity; system needs upgrading so a project proposal is being refined for PIP submission; present system needs broader band width as a short term measure.
■ Physical facilities	■ Tables and benches for classrooms are being constructed; seats for 126 capacity lecture hall 2 is being acquired; air-conditioning system is being acquired for 150 capacity lecture hall 1; air-conditioning is being installed for the computer laboratory; live teaching will occur in the nature reserve park once completed; a proposal for a fisheries research facility is being refined; a proposal for 500-1000 capacity modern auditorium is to be developed.
■ Records management	 An application to K4K for student database system is being

		prepared for 2019; University is looking out for funds to fund a robust system; backup paperless system is being done through Microsoft Access.
12. The University demonstrates a	Partially met (26-50)%	NIL 60% MET
commitment to equity goals and strong engagement with stakeholders.	■ Equity matters	• Equity, equality and merit selection for study places at PNG UNRE must always be maintained for quality outputs; PNG UNRE continues to encourage women and older students reenrolling at the university.
	Relationship with National Fisheries College	■ In 2014, NFA terminated Kavieng Fisheries College as a campus of PNG UNRE.
	■ Integrated Agriculture Training Programme (IATP) & Department of Self-Education (DOSE)	■ IATP is a successful extension venture of the university which had trained over 26,000 farmers; DOSE reaches out to school leavers who are given second opportunity to higher education but has yet to deliver effective services.
	■ Provincial and local stakeholder engagement	•NARI and CCI remain PNG UNRE closest partners; Oil Palm Industries in ENB; a meeting in January 2019 will be led by PNG UNRE Chancellor to meet with ENB MPs and some local leaders; Management has already made some interactions with Governor ENB Hon Nakikus Konga; Guest speaker for the 2018 PNG UNRE Graduation ceremony will Hon Minister for Tourism, Emil Tammur.
13. The University demonstrates that it engages with advanced knowledge, conducts research ethically and objectively and that its research and	Partially met (26-50)%	R26. UNRE develop and implement policies and procedures for research management, including policies on ethics, intellectual property, data management and acquittals. 60% MET

scholarship lead to the discovery and/or application of new knowledge for the benefit of society.		Researchers should seek external journals for publications of research; PNG UNRE must take lead in creating a Papua New Guinea Journal of Natural Resources.
	■ Funding and opportunities for research	■ PNG UNRE Budget for 2019 has made some funding request for research funding; PNG UNRE through collaborations with external researchers usually succeeds in funding opportunities.
	■ Governance and management of research	•A Research and Publications Committee has been established; new TORs are being compiled; policies must be written to cover areas of ethics and intellectual property; control and ownership of information/data.
	■ Postgraduate studies and research higher degrees	• A School of Postgraduate and Research must be established to coordinate all postgraduate studies and research; the MMS will come under this School;

TABLE COMPARISON

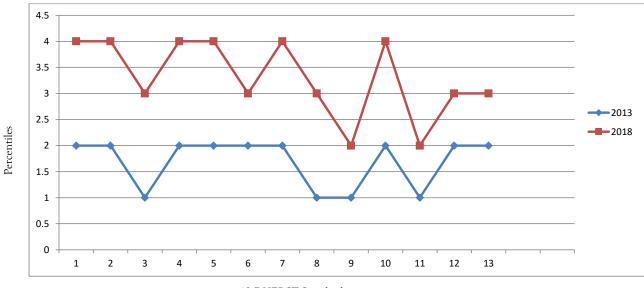
Table showing comparison of 2013 Assessed DHERST 13 Standards and the response of the new PNG UNRE Management in addressing the deficiencies revealed in the assessment of 13 Standards.

DHERST 13 STANDARDS	2013 ASSESSMENT	Percentile (%)	DHERST 13 STANDARDS	2018 RESPONSE	Percentile (%)
1	Partially met	26-50	1	80% met	76-100
2	Partially met	26-50	2	80% met	76-100

3	Not met to any significant extent	0-25	3	70% met	51-75
4	Partially met	26-50	4	90% met	76-100
5	Partially met	26-50	5	95% met	76-100
6	Partially met	26-50	6	70% met	51-75
7	Partially met	26-50	7	80% met	76-100
8	Not met to any significant extent	0-250	8	60% met	51-75
9	Not met to any significant extent	0-25	9	40% met	26-50
10	Partially met	26-50	10	90% met	76-100
11	Not met to any significant extent	0-25	11	30% met	26-50
12	Partially met	26-50	12	60% met	51-75
13	Partially met	26-50	13	60% met	51-75

GRAPHICAL REPRESENTATIONS

The graph below shows the percentiles for the 2013 assessment and 2018 response for each standard.



13 DHERST Standards

KEY

Percentiles

1 = (0-25)% (Not met to any significant extent)

2 = (26–50) % (Partially met)

3 = (51-75) % (Substantially met)

4 = (76–100) % (Almost met)