Goal 1: Quality Systems

During 2005 priority was given to the need for improved management of corporate information as the University implemented the Higher Education reforms, and renewed its strategic plan. This included further development of computational models for measuring student retention, to help improve CQU’s capacity for achieving its strategic goals.

CQU continued to progress and improve new systems that aim to improve communication with all students, both distance and on-campus including:

- The web kiosk which offers users a short online interview and provides a prospectus that is customised to interests and needs – http://webkiosk.cqu.edu.au.
- The course profile site which makes profiles for all courses available in a common format sourced from a single database to ensure consistency – http://courseprofile.cqu.edu.au.
- The online handbook adds advanced search facilities so that course and program information can be found – http://handbook.cqu.edu.au.

Students continued to respond to requests to attend interviews with Student Services where the student had been identified as not achieving satisfactory academic progress (Monitoring Academic Progress Policy). Students stated ‘difficulty maintaining motivation’ and ‘a lack of connection to the University’ as the main reasons for failure to succeed. Interviewer data also revealed that a significant number of students had very unrealistic expectations regarding a study program and that most students were balancing a maximum study load and high work hours. However, most students are determined to proceed with their degree and believe they have the capacity and skills to do this.

The Faculty of Informatics and Communication launched the Academic Misconduct Database (AMD), a database with a web-based interface to allow the recording, tracking and reporting of alleged plagiarism incidents. The AMD is initially only available in this faculty but will subsequently be available university-wide.

The implementation of the IT Infrastructure Library (ITIL) best practice service management framework within the Information Technology Division is continuing, which will vastly improve service delivery and IT support across the University, and will focus on incident management, change management and problem management processes.

In accordance with recommendations in the Phillips Curran report, CQU Council reviewed its committee structure and the terms of reference of all its committees. At the Council meeting in February 2005, Council adopted a new committee structure, terms of reference for new committees and amended terms of reference for new committees except for Academic Board. Council approved revised terms of reference for Academic Board in October 2005.

CQU’s scheduled AUQA Audit occurred in September and October 2005. The auditors conducted on-campus interviews at Hong Kong, Shanghai and Singapore; the Fiji, Sydney and Melbourne international campuses; and Mackay and Rockhampton regional campuses. AUQA examined the objectives, plans, actions and outcomes of the University, and will report a finding on whether these objectives are being achieved.
Review of Activities

Goal 2: Regional Engagement

• The Bachelor of Information Technology Co-operative program was launched on all regional campuses, with participation from local and national industries. The IT Co-op is modelled on CQU’s flagship Engineering Co-op, widely recognised among industry as one of the most competitive and sought-after engineering degrees in Australia. Established in 1994, the CQU Bachelor of Engineering Co-op has partnered with over 250 organisations across Australia, successfully placing around 100 students per year in industry work placements.

• Nuloo Yumbah was instrumental in forging a collaborative project to design and deliver web based training for Aboriginal Tutorial Assistance Scheme coordinators, tutors and students for regional universities across three states.

• CQU is the first Australian university to receive international accreditation from the United Kingdom-based Chartered Institute of Purchasing and Supply, the premier professional body in this discipline. The accreditation has been obtained through the offering of the program Bachelor of Business (Specialisation in Procurement and Supply). Degree qualification can lead to the award of Member of the Chartered Institute of Purchasing and Supply. Attaining the accreditation builds on the earlier work undertaken by CQU’s corporate training provider, Direct Edge, to develop various external relationships to ensure a steady stream of enrolments in this area.

• The partnership between the Central Queensland Conservatorium of Music (CQCM) and Hamilton Island continued in 2005 with delivery of parts of CQCM jazz courses within the island precinct. The Hamilton Island visits attracted interest from music academics from universities in the United States of America, with two visiting academics contributing to CQCM course delivery during Term 1. The exchange of knowledge and teaching between CQU and these USA universities has the potential to provide important international links for CQU. The Virtual Conservatorium has also attracted a high calibre of professional musicians who deliver the courses around Australia. These include a member of the Australian Brandenburg Orchestra and others who perform regularly at QPAC, Brisbane.

• Australian Broadcasting Commission (ABC) internships for two Faculty of Informatics and Communication Journalism students were completed successfully. This is the first time the ABC has offered an internship like this in an Australian regional centre. Negotiations are also taking place to look at the possibility of the ABC accrediting CQU’s journalism program. The ABC regional manager in Rockhampton expressed his admiration of both students for their dedication and willingness to learn. Consultations are now underway with the aim of continuing the ABC regional internship arrangement in 2006.

• The School of Chemical and Biomedical Sciences within the Faculty of Arts Health and Sciences, was provided with $24 222 by the Australian Government to coordinate a project for a national initiative in professional development that supports secondary school teachers using the Australian Government’s Biotechnology Online School Resource. This project will establish and train a group of presenters including secondary teachers and academic staff who will in turn deliver further professional development to teachers throughout Central Queensland.

• Anglo-Coal has commenced students in the articulated TAFE-CQU engineering program. These students are the start of a program of upskilling Anglo-Coal personnel. At present the students are at TAFE and will join CQU in two years.
The Australian Computer Society (ACS) Queensland held its inaugural ICT Professional and Graduate of the Year awards in November. The gala event saw over 150 ACS members and dignitaries from across Queensland gathered to celebrate ICT professional excellence.

CQU’s Dean of the Faculty of Informatics and Communication, Associate Professor Kevin Tickle was presented with the ICT Professional of the Year (Education) award by Professor Yew-Chaye of Griffith University. Professor Tickle was commended for his contribution to the industry in making the Faculty the largest provider of ICT education in Australia.

Associate Professor Tickle pipped other contenders in the category including Maureen Klinkert, University of the Sunshine Coast, and Professor Bill Caelli, Queensland University of Technology.

Greg Whymark, Associate Professor in Information Systems, was made a Fellow of the Australian Computer Society.
Review of Activities

GPA for a 1st year student at the recent Bundaberg Awards Ceremony and the Virtual Conservatorium continues to give the Central Queensland Conservatorium of Music courses great flexibility with one student completing his studies for 2005 from London.

International Student Mentors were selected for 2006. Mentors make contact with new international students while the students are still in their home country with the aim of assisting the transition to a new country and university. Amidst excitement and well wishes ‘Going Home Programs’ were held at Rockhampton and Mackay campuses. Students attended sessions to assist them to adjust to move back home (some students have not been home during the time of their degree) as well as celebrated the completion of their studies at CQU.

Goal 4: Flexible Learning

The CQU Connections Program has assisted 32 students in addition to STEPS students, to gain entry to CQU across all campuses. The Mentoring and Leadership Program conducted by Student Services have recruited 240 mentors for 2005 across all campuses including 12 at Pomona and 9 at Emerald. 70 distance education students have also been recruited as mentors.

Nulloo Yumbah’s Tertiary Entry Program (TEP) continues to build on its success with increased interest from Etna Creek Correctional Centre in Rockhampton. In addition, students have now enrolled at correctional centres in Goulburn, Sydney, Maryborough and Townsville. Discussions are underway for provision of TEP to some areas of Sydney and more correctional centres in NSW including Sydney, Lithgow, Bathurst and Oberon.

The Faculty of Education and Creative Arts’ e-carer initiative has been extended to include a faculty wide roll out which encompasses every student in the Faculty. Education and Creative Arts staff have worked closely with the Division of Student Services to support students at risk, particularly first term, first year students, to minimise attrition. The e-carer system is in place for the Central Queensland Conservatorium of Music with particular attention being paid to the needs of the Virtual Conservatorium students.

A DVD about support services available to students studying in the flex mode has been created by the Division of Staff and Student Services. A copy will be sent to every commencing student in 2006. With equity funding, ‘Get Optimistic About Study’ has been developed as an e-course and was run as a pilot program during term 3, 2005. This personal and learning support program aims to assist students who are not making satisfactory academic progress or want to improve their grades and is based on Seligman’s theory of Optimism.

The Faculty of Engineering and Physical Systems has introduced a new Diploma of Professional Practice as a dual award, which commenced in 2005 in conjunction with Bachelor of Engineering Co-op program. Reviews of the Associate Degree of Engineering, the Bachelor of Engineering and Bachelor or Engineering Technology led the way to develop a fully articulated suite of programs that will increase student entry and exit options and facilitate industry supported programs.

Writing for academic success, assignment writing and referencing workshops conducted by staff from the Communications Learning Centre as part of the Uniskills week were well attended. The centre is experiencing a notable increase in requests for assistance which appears to be directly related to involvement in the Uniskills week. The Mathematics Learning Centre is experiencing a high level of student activity at the commencement of term providing support and assistance on a face-to-face and over the phone/ internet basis.
Farewell to Foundation Dean

In 2005 CQU farewelled one of its founding staff members with the retirement of Professor Errol Payne, Foundation Dean of the Faculty of Arts, Health and Sciences.

Professor Payne commenced at the Queensland Institute of Technology Capricornia on 3 January 1967 as a member of the first group of staff appointed by the Department of Education.

In 1971 he was among staff given the option of resigning from the Department of Education so they could be transferred to QIT (Capricornia), which was about to become the Capricornia Institute of Advanced Education.

Professor Payne’s seminal role in the institution included helping write the first set of science distance education materials and presenting tutorials at the emerging campuses in Gladstone and Bundaberg.

He quickly progressed through the academic ranks to be appointed Head, Department of Chemistry (1987 – 1992), Dean, Faculty of Applied Science (1990 – 1997); Planning Dean – Faculty of Arts, Health and Sciences (June – December 1997); and Foundation Dean – Faculty of Arts, Health and Sciences (1998 – 2005).

Other leadership roles have included Chair of the Capricornia Institute Board of Studies and its Standing Committee (1989 – 1990); Deputy President of Academic Board (January 1995 - March 1996); Director, Centre for Land and Water Resource Management (1990 – 1998); and member of Queensland Health Education Council (2003 – present).
Review of Activities

• The Australian Research Council (ARC) announced linkage funding over six years for a collaborative project involving Dr Nanjappa Ashwath’s group in the Plant Sciences Research Centre with researchers from the University of Melbourne in partnership with the Waste Management Association of Australia. The funding will not only enable the continuation of the Centre’s phytocapping project in Rockhampton, but will also allow the expansion of the project.

• Associate Professor Stewart Lockie was awarded $206 000 over three years by the ARC for study entitled ‘the production and regulation of agricultural biodiversity’.

The Faculty of Education and Creative Arts were awarded competitive research grants including a $1.25M ARC Large Linkage Grant, a $161 000 DEST, Education Queensland and Catholic Education Commission grant and a $20 000 Reading Development Research Grant.

The Faculty of Engineering and Physical Systems, Rail CRC, was awarded new projects totalling $760 000 over the financial years 2005-2007, including a $282 000 for a National Simulation Centre, $223 000 for a Train/Track Health Card, $64 000 for a performance Based Vehicle Data System, $96 000 for Brake System Design and $92 000 for Brake Modelling. CQU was also awarded $104 000 by the Department of Public Works for the second year of research on solar array applications as range extenders for hybrid vehicles.

Dr Phil Bretherton of the Faculty of Business and Law appeared on Channel 9’s Business Sunday program in April, after being interviewed on his research into the Hunter Valley wineries and wine tourism in the area. The next phase of the research is to convene an expert panel to develop a strategic plan for the Hunter Valley Vineyards Association.

Faculty of Informatics and Communication, Contemporary Communication lecturer, Professor Denis Cryle appeared on the ABC’s Late Night Live with journalist, Ellen Fanning. The topic was a discussion about the history and culture of Australian media, and its relationship with the Australian government, and the public.

CQU staff received nationwide recognition, when the book ‘Consent and Consensus: Politics, Media and Governance in Twentieth Century Australia’ was published by API Network and consequently launched in June 2005. Professor Denis Cryle, of the Faculty of Informatics and Communication, is joint editor with chapter contributions by Errol Vieth, Robert O’Sullivan, Kerrie Hand, Denis Cryle and Geoff Danaher.

Prestigious fellowship awarded

The National Health and Medical Research Council (NHMRC) approved a prestigious fellowship for CQU scholar, Dr Pam McGrath.

The fellowship recognises Dr McGrath’s pioneering work in qualitative research methods. It will extend her innovative research program that explores the human experience of serious illness.

Over the last decade Dr McGrath has provided leadership in the use of qualitative research demonstrating that findings can be used to make a difference for patients and their families.

Recipient Dr Pam McGrath of Central Queensland University’s School of Nursing and Health Studies, said the Research Fellowship of $517 500 over five years will translate into further outcomes that will make a difference ‘at the coalface’ for consumers of health services.