

# **1200 days to Beijing: lessons learnt from the HEQC pilot audit**

Monica Hammes

*University of Pretoria : Academic Information Service*

*28 October 2004*



Getting Beyond the Starting Blocks:  
Quality Assurance Issues at Academic Libraries



**Out of sync ?**

**Quality practice  
is not enough**



Photo: REUTERS



## The 2003 HEQC pilot audit - not a UP:AIS quality experience

UP was one of three institutions who were pilot audited in 2003. Generally very good for the university but a disappointing experience for the library:

- Q** We were not properly prepared for the audit
- Q** Our lack of a coherent quality assurance strategy and mechanisms was a severe handicap

**It served as a wake-up call  
to get our QA house in order!**





**Counting our medals**

**Building on our  
strengths**



Photo: NOCSA



## What was in place that could be used?

- Q Strong client focus
- Q Strategic vision and long history of planning and innovation
- Q PMT and the new measurement system since 2003
- Q Staff appraisal since 2000





**Are there rules and standards?**

**You cannot even compete  
with yourself without  
knowing the rules**



Photo: AP



## What the HEQC is looking for

- Q HEQC's working definition of quality
  - Fit for Purpose*
  - Value for money*
  - Transformation*
- Q Investigating the quality of our quality programmes and auditing our ability to do self-evaluation
- Q A good report with supporting evidence
- Q They concentrate on the university's main processes and expect to find our contribution there





## Training for more gold

What needed urgent attention?



Photo: IAAF





## Creating a quality agenda

- Q QA knowledge and skills
- Q Reflection
- Q Performance indicators taken seriously
- Q Client and stakeholder perceptions
- Q Benchmarking and self-evaluation





## Reflection : MI Roundtables

- Q So what!
- Q What's measured gets managed
- Q PMT team started a new process of data collection and analysis
- Q Annual MI Roundtables





## Performance indicators taken seriously

- Q Not just “statistics with attitude”
- Q PI Relay Sept 2003: 18 staff members in 3 teams
- Q Performance indicators for some of the 2004 strategic goals
- Q Plotted against the Balanced Scorecard



\*UP success defined as...

The University of Pretoria strives to be

- a leader in higher education that is recognized internationally for academic excellence
- a university that is known for international competitiveness and local relevance
- a university of choice for students, staff, employers
- a university with an enabling, value-driven culture
- the premier university in South Africa

**AIS contribution  
to UP success \***

#### Requirements for PI's

- Relate to goals and objectives
- Easily understandable
- Interpreted uniformly over the institution
- Demonstrate the extent of the institution's effectiveness
- Indicate trends over time: need for consistency
- Developed cooperatively
- Consensus over their acceptability and reliability
- Relevant data must be readily available and accurate
- Should be developed as a set rather than as single units

#### Clients

- *To deliver an indispensable service to doctoral students and their supervisors*
- *To ensure that UP students become information literate and are able to function optimally in the information/knowledge society*

#### PERFORMANCE INDICATORS

##### Doctoral students

- Benchmarking our product/service package for doctoral students against selected local and overseas universities
- Number of D students per information specialist
- Market penetration: % D-students who are registered AIS clients
- Client satisfaction determined by a survey
- Electronic articles downloaded per potential and registered client
- Interlending requests per AIS "research client"
- Survey of usage of information organization packages such as Reference Manager: students and information specialists
- Staff readiness: survey of attendance of research methodology courses.
- Theses on UPeTD: usage as per log files

##### Information literacy

- Training sessions, numbers of students, average
- Market penetration: % undergraduates who are registered AIS clients
- Number of library visits per potential client
- Books loaned per registered client
- Client satisfaction determined by a survey



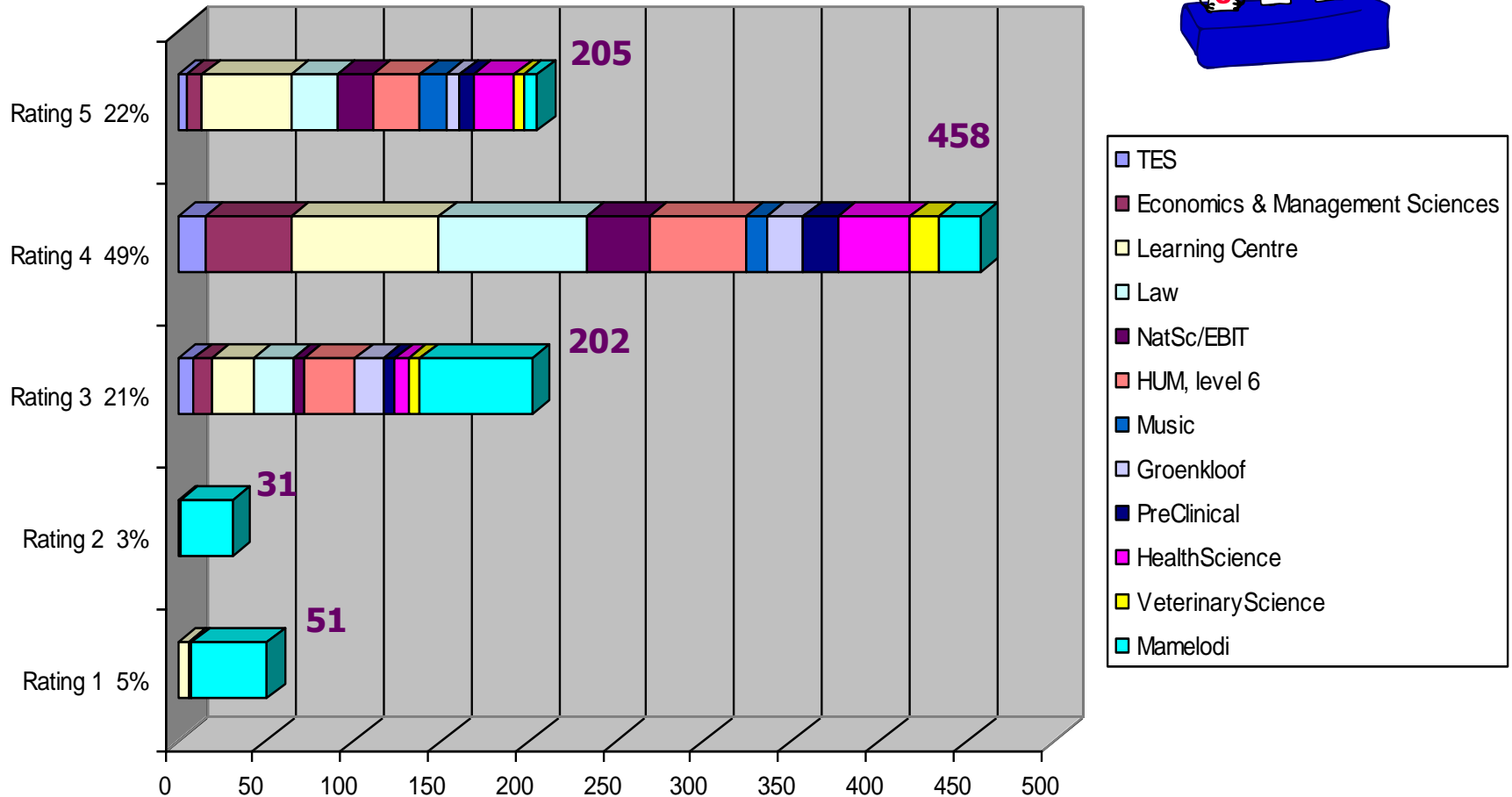
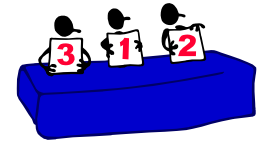
## Client and stakeholder expectations and perceptions

- Q Previous comprehensive survey in 2001
- Q Discussions with our best researchers
- Q "An hour in the life of the AIS"
- Q Postgraduate students survey
- Q Teaching and research staff survey



# How did they rate us [1-5]?

*RATING: 1 = Poor - 5 = Excellent  
( Average: 3,87 )*





## Benchmarking and self-evaluation

- Q Discussions with US (2003)
- Q Planned benchmarking of Inputs with US, UCT and WITS
- Q Australian visit: Monash, NLA
- Q Self evaluation and limited audit: Oct 2004





## The real games: World Cup 2006

**Our real challenge lies  
within our university**







## Five focus areas for quality service

### Q Quality as excellence

- [1] Information for learning
- [2] Information for research

### Q Quality as value

- [3] Lean-and-mean (Meermin)
- [4] Information services to external market

### Q eQuality for Equality

- [5] eInformation Service





# Quality as Value

## Q Sustainability

Budgetary constraints  
Bypassing libraries  
Affordable quality

## Q Return on investment

The British Library value exercise  
Campus initiative with TLEI  
Community of interest with UNISA,  
RAU and WITS





**Will Oscar run in Beijing?**

## Quality as Fit for Future



Photo: AP





## Fit for Future



Open access and digital curation



eResearch



Cultivating a quality culture



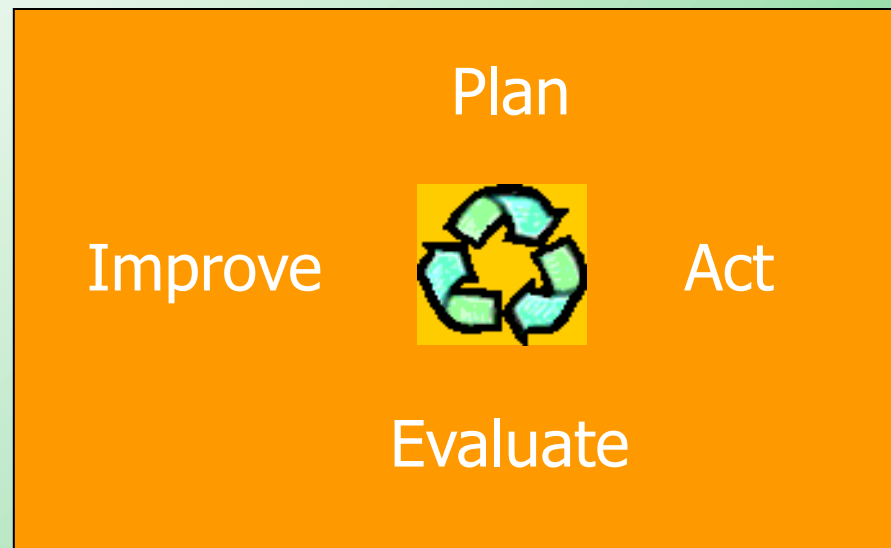
Quality Management and Strategic  
planning in tandem





# Quality Assurance and Planning in tandem

## Q The Quality Cycle



<http://www-library.uow.edu.au/about/planning/qjourney.html>





**How do they do it?**

**Hints for success**



Photo: AFP PHOTO



## Hints for a successful audit (1)

- Q** Read all the HEQC documents carefully and get a grip on their definitions.
- Q** The self-evaluation is the most important part of the exercise: involve all staff and use it as a learning experience.
- Q** Write a good report that will give a clear picture of your services and your quality assurance practices – perhaps this is all the panel will have time for (create paper and electronic versions of the report).





## Hints for a successful audit (2)

- Q The report should include a list of areas for concern and a plan for improvement.
- Q Assemble a convincing portfolio of supporting evidence and create links / hyperlinks from the report to the evidence.
- Q Be very open and frank – if you do not have evidence, say so and add it to your improvement plan.
- Q Work closely with your university's Quality Unit.







## Hints for a successful audit (3)

- Q** Plan the visit carefully to complement the report, to highlight issues and to discuss the panel's concerns.
- Q** Do not waste valuable visiting time to repeat things that are in the report.
- Q** Consider the possibility of a peer audit prior to the HEQC visit.
- Q** Afterwards study the HEQC's report carefully for all recommendations that may have a bearing on the library: it provides a good opportunity for integrating with academic activities.





**Thank you!**

*Please contact me if you would like to discuss these  
issues*

[monica.hammes@up.ac.za](mailto:monica.hammes@up.ac.za)