

**Review of the Division of Residential and Campus Communities**  
**Australian National University**  
**23 – 25 September 2013**

## **Background**

The Division of Residential and Campus Communities (DRCC) provides a range of operational, support, enrichment, advisory and business services to help underpin the University's education goals for students living both on and off campus. Recent changes to the University's organisational structure have impacted on DRCC's operations. These include a change in reporting lines with the establishment of a Pro-Vice Chancellor (Student Experience) position and the establishment of Student Services as a stand-alone Division. In light of these changes, the Review Team examined the effectiveness and efficiency of DRCC's delivery of its current suite of services.

## ***Terms of reference***

1. The strategic role and direction of DRCC, including optimal corporate structures and resources for the delivery of its services in the short and longer term.
2. The DRCC pastoral and well-being services, including:
  - team structure and the quality, efficiency and effectiveness of these services
  - on Call services, and broader residential community programming and their contribution to the University achieving strategic objectives
  - the effectiveness of the DRCC pastoral team's relationships and working arrangements with other units within the University's central administration and whether DRCC student support services appropriately support the division's pastoral/well-being/academic function
3. The effectiveness of DRCC's strategies for staff recruitment, retention and development (including workforce planning) to meet the core business needs with particular reference to base level skill expectations regarding skilled support provision and digital technologies

In undertaking the review, the Review team kept in mind:

- [ANU by 2020](#) and the University's strategic objectives in relation to the student experience;
- structural changes to the University since the establishment of DRCC; and
- the likely future development of student residences and the implications of this for student services and existing residences.

The reviewers were not asked to look for cost savings but were aware that DRCC will be required to return a dividend to ANU as part of a university wide efficiency process. A number of submitters made reference to this requirement. Taken overall, the recommendations in this report are likely to result in some cost savings but they have not been made with that intent. Rather they are made with the intent of improving the effectiveness of ANU's student accommodation, with any cost savings a secondary benefit.

The review of DRCC was undertaken by Ms Gail White, Academic Registrar, University of Newcastle, Mr Brendan Mosely, Director, Campus Life, University of Auckland, and Dr Paula Newitt, Associate Dean, ANU College of Medicine, Biology & Environment and ANU College of Physical & Mathematical Sciences, The Australian National University. The review report was submitted to the Pro Vice-Chancellor (Student Experience).

## **Submissions**

The reviewers conducted interviews on 23, 24 and 25 September 2013 with a number of key personnel from the ANU Executive, relevant administrative areas, DRCC staff, and student representatives from a range of campus community organisations. A total of 67 written or verbal submissions were received as part of the review. A list of the submissions is provided in Appendix 2.

## **Thematic summary**

This report offers a number of specific recommendations in response to consideration of submissions against the terms of reference. Before making and explaining specific recommendations (which are summarised in Appendix 1) this report offers some high level themes that lead to the specific recommendations:

1. Existing strengths: There are many features of ANU's accommodation offerings and of DRCC that are high value and should be retained.
2. Strategic clarity: There is a need to provide clarity around what ANU expects of the residential experience and a clearer sense of purpose and direction. There is some confusion and conjecture about the work DRCC should be undertaking which could be removed by a clearer strategy and set of objectives for the student experience at ANU.
3. Structural alignment: There is a need to better align management structures, processes activities with that clearly defined purpose and direction. Doing so will mean undertaking a narrower range of activities. Delivering high-quality accommodation to students is complex and risky. DRCC should focus all its resources on the needs of residents and not be distracted trying to deliver non-residential services. Likewise a focussed management structure should spend as little time as possible delivering generic support services such as finance and property maintenance.
4. Consolidation and leverage: Accommodation at ANU is a great strength and needs to be better used in support of ANU objectives.

ANU is in a very enviable position with regard to its student accommodation: with 34% of its students living on campus, in Halls that have very strong reputations for pastoral care, ANU has an enhanced ability to attract and retain high-calibre students. There are opportunities to better leverage this strength, by presenting the full scale and diversity of the accommodation offering to students, by consolidating all of ANU's accommodation offerings within a single portfolio and by reaching for the highest levels of consistency for all student residents, whether they live in an ANU or affiliated residence.

The specific recommendations that follow reflect, and are grouped under, the themes outlined above. The [] after each recommendation refer to the term(s) of reference that each recommendation directly relates to. This report concludes with a list of other suggestions that the reviewers believe should also be considered but that were not able to be considered in detail sufficient to lead to a conclusion.

### *Theme 1: existing strengths*

Student feedback to the reviewers was overwhelmingly and impressively positive. While some students, or student representatives, made constructive suggestions for improvement there is no doubt that students recognise and value the experience they are receiving and contributing to within the residential communities. This outcome arises from the efforts of staff as well as students in establishing, maintaining and extending a vibrant and supportive culture.

Staff members show great commitment to achieving high standards within residential services. Staff employed across the full range of responsibilities are characterised by dedication in providing a quality experience to all residents. This is especially notable given the upheaval of recent years within the ANU residential service sector and the changes required in establishing the Division of Residential and Campus Communities.

The pastoral care team structure provided within ANU Halls is well considered and effective, particularly with the established support and liaison between Halls and the ANU Counselling Centre, Health Centre and Disability Services. Centralised training of Senior Residents and Community Coordinators provides an excellent introduction to the pastoral care needs of residents. The Review Panel strongly supports the model of the Deputy Head living on site as an aspect of this pastoral care program. This arrangement facilitates ongoing community leadership and enables the Deputy Head to immediately initiate action in demanding situations. The reviewers regard this as critical to maintaining appropriate levels of care and leadership within the residences.

A number of submissions to the reviewers highlighted valued aspects of the residences' academic programs. These programs include Learning Communities, academic mentoring, tutoring schemes, study groups, research presentation evenings and academic dinners amongst others. The range of activities highlights the richness of the residential experience and the leadership offered and developed by student organisers.

Each Hall offers a distinctive style and culture and the Review Panel agrees that this distinctiveness is of great value. While operational processes and training programs benefit from centralised coordination and commonality of expectations, the individualised character of Halls is an asset for the ANU and supports the development of cohesive communities. It was pleasing to see the emphasis given to utilising the very capable students in ANU residences through the senior residents, community coordinators and other student leadership positions, to deliver support to residents. This approach, along with delivering high quality service, also helps ensure that the distinctive style and culture of each Hall is informed by the resident students and their needs.

The development of close alignment between prospective students receiving an offer for admission to an academic program followed almost instantaneously by an offer for accommodation is a significant challenge given the differing and disconnected data management systems between admission and accommodation services. The current arrangements provide timely release of offers but ideally these independent systems can be linked in the future to enable further streamlined processes.

### *Theme 2: strategic clarity*

#### **Recommendation 1:**

Articulate a clear corporate level student experience strategy in which the experience of students in residences is a feature. Determine to what extent and how the residential experience is intended to contribute to the ANU student experience [1].

### Rationale:

A strong and recurrent theme of the submissions was the perceived lack of a clear vision and strategy for DRCC. *ANU by 2020* provides clear, high level and long-term objectives and strategies, including for the student experience. *ANU by 2020* is a strong framework from which more definitive statements can be made about the student experience ANU wishes to offer its students – relating both to classroom and non-classroom activities and outcomes. That in turn would allow a clear vision and objectives to be set for the non-classroom student experience which in turn would help define the long-term strategy for the residential experience.

Currently DRCC has operational plans with quite specific annual objectives and initiatives but they relate directly back to the high-level *ANU by 2020* and not to a clearly articulated vision for the student (residential and non-residential) experience. The panel is of the view that providing such a vision and strategy will make it much easier to determine and communicate residential priorities, and to implement changes and new initiatives. Responsibility for developing the strategy should reside with the PVC (Student Experience), working closely with the Registrar Student Services.

Once a vision and strategy for the ANU student experience is in place a strategy for student accommodation should be developed which clearly sets out:

- a. The focus for ANU student accommodation in the medium-term (e.g., increasing quantity or improving quality) and success measures.
- b. Assuming that growth in bed numbers is a priority (whether or not the highest), target bed numbers over the medium-term, by type (catered or self-catered), preferred locations and indicative financing options.
- c. A clear value proposition for each student segment and priority actions to improve it where required (e.g., establishment of an off-campus accommodation service to assist students who cannot or do not wish to access ANU accommodation).
- d. The relative priorities for allocating currently available beds amongst commencing undergraduates, commencing postgraduates, continuing undergraduates, continuing postgraduates, local students, international etc.
- e. A selection policy that reflects the above priorities and outlines the extent to which each group is concentrated in particular halls (e.g., postgraduate students) and where there might be merit in spreading student cohorts more evenly (e.g., international students).

### **Recommendation 2:**

Centralise the selection and allocation of residents to Halls, align the selection of residents with the admission process of students to the University, and consider as far as possible to merge the two processes [1].

### Rationale:

ANU is in an enviable position with the quantity and quality of its student accommodation. But more could be done to ensure that the allocation of places in residences is done in a way that best uses these assets to achieve ANU goals. Currently there is a great deal of discretion within each Hall over the allocation of places. In some cases potential residents are interviewed by phone and some submitters expressed concerns that the selection of residents follows the interests or preferences of individual Halls rather than ANU priorities. Some expressed concern that students might not be being treated equitably. On the other hand a number of submitters emphasised the importance of each Hall having a unique identity.

That each Hall might wish to develop a unique identity is understood. But that should be done in response to the needs of, not through the selection of, a cohort of students each year. Those responsible for the operation of a Hall should have some say in the type and mix of students selected but that should be by way of input into the selection policy, not the selection of individual students. Of course when selecting residents, consideration needs to be given to their ability to live in a community with fellow students – to contribute and not disrupt. But all students selected by ANU must have a certain level of sociability: they must attend and contribute to classes, and increasingly they must participate in group study environments that extend beyond scheduled classes. The impact of a student without the requisite skills being placed in a residence can be more severe than the impact on a study group. But the problem is the same and ANU needs to have processes to deal with all such students. The need for sociability in Halls is important but not important enough to override ANU's academic objectives.

A selection policy should be developed that aligns priorities as much as possible with those of ANU's academic priorities so that student accommodation is fully leveraged to help attract and retain the highest quality students. The policy should cover the affiliate halls and UniLodge as well as ANU properties. That is not to ignore the independence of affiliates, nor any contractual arrangements that might exist with UniLodge.

The selection process should be conducted by a central accommodation team and in accordance with the policy. The admissions team should be created by establishing a new position, Manager Placements, and by changing the reporting line of all Admissions Officers currently reporting to the Administrative Managers to that new position. A recommended management structure, including the Manager Placements and Admissions Officers, is appended to this report (Appendix 3).

Further consideration should be given to merging the functions of academic and residential admissions so that from a student perspective it is a seamless, single process. The potential exists for students to apply for accommodation when they apply to ANU, and to be notified of the outcome of both applications at the same time. Alignment of the two processes would deliver many benefits to ANU and students alike. However, the reviewers are also aware that the two processes differ in some important ways and did not have time to consider this potential alignment in sufficient detail to recommend merging the functions. It is recommended that the selection and allocation process for residents continues to sit within the new Accommodation Services division, that accommodation and academic admissions work together to investigate how a combined process could be made to work, and that they work closely to align the two processes (short of merging them) in the meantime.

**Recommendation 3:**

Merge DRCC with Student Services, with the most senior manager reporting to the Registrar Student Services [1,2,3].

Rationale:

If residential communities are a contributor to rather than the whole of the non-classroom student experience, which in turn contributes to the overall student experience, then residential communities should sit within the same portfolio as other services that are delivering on non-classroom student experience objectives, such as Health and Counselling services, Student Experience and Transition etc. The review was informed of good examples of collaboration between DRCC and other student services but there would appear to be many opportunities to do more. It is the panel's view that the optimal level of collaboration and alignment can only occur under a single management structure that has responsibility for the broadest range of student services and non-

classroom student experience objectives. In the current structure that means the reporting line for what is currently DRCC should shift to the Registrar Student Services.

**Recommendation 4:**

Transfer responsibility for Campus Communities to Student Engagement and Transition (within Student Services) [1,2,3].

Rationale:

A number of submitters voiced concerns over whether non-residential communities such as Griffin Hall should be developed and operated within DRCC. The success of the residential communities and the absence of similar resources for non-residential student engagement activities, have been of concern for some time and DRCC was given direction to undertake this work. Griffin Hall was spoken of very positively by a number of submitters although the reviewers did not receive any data to enable an objective view to be formed. Concerns from two directions were expressed: there is some resentment that it is funded in part by DRCC while others have expressed concern that DRCC isn't doing enough to support non-residential campus communities. A similar situation exists with regard to learning communities, with some tensions between the desire to see DRCC operate LCs that are open to non-residential students, and some concern that in doing so time and resources are diverted away from tariff-paying residents. Learning Community leaders are also funded through individual Halls and thus the LCs are supported through residential tariffs rather than through a global student funding base.

The reviewers are of the view that Griffin Hall, Fenner Associates, and any future 'virtual halls', should be developed as part of an overarching student engagement strategy (see recommendation 2) and delivered alongside similar engagement activities such as support for student organisations and clubs, student events, transition support and orientation, student leadership development programmes and so on. It should be noted that Griffin Hall and Fenner Associates serve a relatively small number of students and whatever its successes, the model is not believed to be affordable on a wide enough scale to address the needs of all non-residents. Further review of Griffin Hall and Fenner Associates is recommended before any rollout of the models and continuation of the current arrangements to ensure maximum effectiveness for non-residential students.

Likewise the University's approach to LCs should be developed within a framework designed for both non-residential and residential students. Ownership of LCs should sit within Student Engagement and Transition or elsewhere in Student Services. That is not to say that residences could not deliver LCs but that if they did it would be under the guidance of an overarching strategy and in a form consistent with non-residential (or mixed) LCs.

There is obviously a great deal of student engagement expertise within DRCC and this should be drawn upon and contributed to wherever possible but the predominant expertise within DRCC relates to the highly complex and demanding requirements of on-campus student accommodation delivery.

*Theme 3: Structural alignment*

**Recommendation 5:**

Disestablish the role of Director DRCC and establish a new role of General Manager Accommodation [1,2].

### Rationale:

The recommendations above, namely merging DRCC with Student Services, providing an overarching student experience strategy, and removing from DRCC the current responsibilities for campus communities, results in a business unit more closely aligned to ANU strategy and with a narrower focus on the operational and pastoral care requirements of residential communities. The recommendations below, relating to the shift of finance, maintenance and human resources responsibilities to other divisions, have the same effect. The recommended changes are significant and the reviewers believe they would significantly alter the requirements of the unit's most senior manager: there will be a lower level of responsibility for independent strategic planning and non-residential student engagement activities which should be an opportunity to focus more on the operational and pastoral care requirements of the residences.

The reviewers believe the new unit should be led by a General Manager with a more operational focus on student accommodation than is required of the current position of Director. There are opportunities to improve the way in which staff members in halls of residence are supported in their pastoral care of residents. This can occur through a more consistently applied policy framework and training and more direct support for staff members dealing with incidents in halls. A General Manager with a smaller team across fewer responsibilities should be better placed to ensure that best practice approaches to pastoral care are consistently applied across all residences, including as far as possible affiliated residences. A recommended management structure, including the General Manager Accommodation, is appended to this report (Appendix 3).

Undoubtedly a new name for the unit will be required. The panel only suggests "Accommodation Services" for the purposes of the remainder of this document, to refer to a future unit incorporating the recommendations of this report.

### **Recommendation 6:**

Disestablish Head of Residence and Deputy Head of Residence positions and establish new Residential Manager positions [1,2,3].

### Rationale:

In the current structure a Head of Residence ostensibly carries overall responsibility for all aspects of residence life, including resident safety and wellbeing, academic mentoring and support, and operational quality standards, but lacks full control over the administrative structure that is dedicated to their residence. Many submitters referred to the role of Head of Residence in providing residents with a sense of tradition, gravitas and academic connectedness both within the ANU academic community and beyond to alumni.

There is also a live-in Deputy Head of Residence position that is closely involved in the daily operation of the Hall and at times acts as Head of Residence when that position holder is unavailable (including after-hours).

There is an unnecessary degree of overlap in the two full-time positions. There is also a lack of consistency of approach across the residences that would appear to be driven by individual styles and preferences. There doesn't appear to be the workload or other justification for both roles, especially when neither role currently has the level of influence over Hall operations that would allow them to be held fully accountable. The panel is of the view that a live-in, full-time manager with full accountability for that residence is critical to student wellbeing.

The panel recommends that the Head of Residence and Deputy Head of Residence positions be disestablished and a new role of Residential Manager created in their place. The Residential

Manager would differ from the Head of Residence role in that they would not be expected to provide the tradition, gravitas and academic connectedness that the Heads are seen as providing (that would instead be provided by the Academic Reference Group – see below). The new role would differ from both the Head and Deputy Head of Residence in that it would have much more control of and accountability for the administrative support staff that are assigned to each residence (see below).

**Recommendation 7:**

Establish an Academic Reference Group for each residence to support the Residential Manager to develop for residents a sense of connectedness to ANU's academic past, present and future [1,2].

Rationale:

It is clear that many at ANU believe that the residences play, and should play, an important role in providing academic support to residents. Many of the activities such as learning communities, academic dinners and a student journal, were clearly articulated (and are impressive). However, while the importance of academic support was expressed across the range of residences, it doesn't seem that each Hall gives it the same emphasis, nor does there seem to be a consensus view of what sort of academic activity should be undertaken. Some submitters made reference to remedial support, others to enhancing achievement through additional academic support services (without clarity over whether that should entail delivery in residences or by facilitating access to existing ANU services). Others suggested the level of service should go further and that residences should be involved in the direct provision of academic content.

Returning to recommendation 1, ANU should first determine which aspects of the student experience should be delivered in residences, including specific reference to the role they should play in supporting academic achievement, how far that role should and shouldn't go and the types of activities that are likely to make the right contribution. It is not suggested that a sanctioned list of activities be imposed on residences but a best practice approach should be taken in which the most effective support activities are encouraged and evaluated.

Without assuming what kind of role ANU might ask its residences to play, it is clear that students choose to live in halls not only for the convenience but to live in a community of like-minded people. Therefore, it seems inevitable that the residences will play some role in supporting academic achievement and unlikely that ANU would choose not to offer some level of academic support in residences. At a high level the form and structure of activities that take place in individual, or across the portfolio of residences, should be implemented and operated by Residential Managers. Just as they are accountable for other aspects of residential life, such as the quality of living conditions, pastoral care and discipline, Residential Managers should also be accountable for the success of the academic support services provided in their residence.

However capable a Residence Manager might be, they are unlikely to be strongly connected to the teaching and research activities of the University as well as being fully dedicated to the operational needs of their residence. It is suggested that each residence have an Academic Reference Group (ARG) to assist the Residential Manager in their efforts to provide the best academic support to residents. It is suggested that the group should have 2-4 people in total and be drawn from current PVCs and DVCs, professors emeriti, emergent researchers and other ANU leaders. It is suggested that the Residential Manager meets with this group on a regular basis to seek their advice and support in delivering academic support to students. It is also suggested that the ARG is visible and accessible to residents – perhaps by way of attending events and dining with students on a regular or semi-regular basis. Whether through the provision of advice to the Residential Manager or through direct contact with students, the purpose of the ARG should be to:



- Provide assistance to the Residential Manager by helping to connect them with the appropriate academic and professional staff in support of academic support activities.
- Respond to requests from the Residential Manager to help troubleshoot issues with academic support structures, help evaluate activities and suggest improvements.
- Support the Residential Manager to create a culture that appropriately emphasises support for academic achievement.
- Help celebrate the academic and other successes of residents.
- By being visible and accessible to residents, demonstrate that the ANU leadership is directly interested in and concerned with the progress of residents.
- Through interactions with students, demonstrate that the highest standards of academic performance and leadership are both valued and attainable at ANU.
- Provide more opportunities for awareness at senior leadership levels of current students and their needs and expectations.

For clarity, the ARG is an advisory and support function only and is not intended to be part of the management structure. It is recommended that the Residential Manager is accountable solely to the General Manager, Accommodation Services.

**Recommendation 8:**

Change the reporting line of the Administration Managers and disestablish the position of General Manager, DRCC [2,3].

Rationale:

The current structure whereby administrative support staff report to the General Manager, DRCC, is intended to provide the efficiencies of a shared services approach. The review panel supports a shared service approach to administrative support but considers that such an approach works best for standard and generic activities that do not vary significantly across different client needs – or where local customer service and integration with related services outweighs the benefits of centralisation.

There are some support processes that do not, or should not, vary according to the needs of individual residences (for example, processing of applications, routine financial transactions). There are other processes that should be handled in a manner that is sensitive to local/individual needs (for example, room re-allocation requests or bad-debt conversations). The benefit of local support is also in being able to use routine administrative requests as opportunities to identify potential distress in a student and to alert pastoral support staff.

These benefits are recognised by DRCC and are reflected in the ‘responds to’ physical location of administrative support staff in each of the residences. However, the split reporting line does not adequately recognise that there can be considerable overlap between ‘administration’ and ‘pastoral care’. An administrative staff member can, through their overall approach as well as individual decisions, directly influence the level of service to residents. The split reporting line compromises the ability of the Heads of Residences (in the current model; Residential Managers in the proposed Accommodation Services) to have full influence over the interactions between staff and students in their residence.

Many examples were given by submitters of slow approval processes and decision-making that results from administrative staff needing to channel decisions through the line to the General Manager, DRCC. It would appear that the volume of administrative approval requests, much of which could be actioned at residence level under agreed delegations and protocols, is unable to be processed quickly enough at the level of Director and General Manager. The bottleneck

unnecessarily hinders the efficient operation of the residences and ultimately will impact on the service given to students.

It is critical that each Hall has a live-in manager with full accountability for that residence. To meet their accountability they must have responsibility for the student-facing services, whether pastoral or administrative, which operate within that Hall. This is not to say that the current breadth and depth of responsibilities undertaken by the administrative staff is appropriately located in individual Halls. The reviewers were not able to consider those responsibilities in any detail and the recommendation to shift the reporting line to the Residential Managers does not imply that the resulting level of administrative support available to each Residential Manager is optimal. Further analysis could identify opportunities to re-balance the level of support across the portfolio, reducing support in some and increasing it in other residences. There could also be opportunities to take routine, generic or transactional processes currently undertaken by the administrative staff and transfer those processes to other divisions such as Human Resources or Finance. There should also be further work conducted to identify where consistent approaches can be taken, even to localised activities (for example bad-debt conversations need to be handled sensitively and at a local level but can still follow the same principles and best-practice approach as at other Halls).

The recommended shift of reporting line to Residential Managers should not preclude any of the above and only reflects the need for local, student-facing services to be fully integrated into the Residential Manager's team.

**Recommendation 9:**

Transfer Human Resources, Finance, Maintenance, Grounds and Cleaning staff to the relevant central service division of ANU, supported by service level agreements for the delivery of services back into residences [1].

Rationale:

There are a number of services currently undertaken within DRCC that could be better delivered by divisions that are focussed on those activities. Those divisions, supporting the same functions across a wide range of University departments, should be more efficient at delivering routine and regularised services (e.g. payment and issuing of invoices). They should also more likely to have on hand specialist support (e.g., building management system expertise) because the size of their operation warrants it.

There are benefits to having finance, human resources, maintenance, grounds and cleaning staff employed at a local level and some submitters identified those benefits, including local knowledge and responsiveness. The reviewers do not accept that those benefits, where they exist, outweigh the cost or service benefits of a shared service approach. However, the level of concern around the ability of Facilities and Services (F&S) to deliver appropriate levels of service, combined with concerns over the back-log of maintenance (and lack of preventive maintenance) warrant a transitional arrangement for facilities management. It is recommended that a position of Maintenance Coordinator be retained within Accommodation Services. Reporting to the General Manager Accommodation Services the Maintenance Coordinator should work with Accommodation Services and Facilities and Services staff to develop a proactive maintenance programme (both remedial and preventive), to coordinate the provision of work by F&S at a local level and help the transition responsibility for building maintenance to F&S. Once the new arrangements have settled consideration should be given to shifting the Maintenance Coordinator into F&S.

**Recommendation 10:**

Implement a new management model that supports clear and constructive communications and timely decision-making [1,2,3].

**Rationale:**

Submitters offered many examples of poor communications within DRCC. In fact many examples from residences referred to poor communications between DRCC and the residences, implying that the residential teams do not consider themselves part of that entity. Similar comments were made in the reverse direction. There is little point in attributing blame for this internal disconnect but in moving forward with the recommended structure the reviewers believe Accommodation Services will need to deliberately and openly set out to develop the culture it wishes to establish.

The structural and other recommendations in this report are designed to enable a constructive team environment with a strong common purpose but also clearly delineated accountabilities. The recommendations should *enable* those things but they won't *deliver* them. Accommodation Services will need to establish a supportive management model that includes regular team meetings with a clear, purposeful and decision-oriented agenda, mutually supportive one-to-one meetings between managers and direct reports, clear group and individual objective setting and progress updates and regular electronic communications to supplement (not supplant) personal interactions, to name a few of the more standard mechanisms. Accommodation Services could consider enlisting internal or external Human Resources/Organisational Development expertise to assist with this important program of work.

*Theme 4: consolidation and leverage***Recommendation 11:**

Place the management of Graduate House, and possibly University House and ANU Apartments into the new Accommodation Services unit so that all ANU accommodation is consolidated under one management structure [1,2].

**Rationale:**

Just as scale efficiencies and the availability of specialist expertise warrant a shared services approach to finance, facilities and other services as above, they also suggest the inclusion of all ANU accommodation within one management structure. This seems particularly obvious for Graduate House and University House that accommodate students (the latter a mix of students and others). Operating under multiple reporting lines creates unnecessary duplication of effort, hinders efficiency improvements and makes it harder for students to access and engage with accommodation services. For example, a Google search for University House leads to a website that at time of writing stated that the waitlist is closed but no links to other accommodation options were provided, other than to Graduate House (and clicking the link to Graduate House leads to a "404 – Page not Found" error page). Graduate House does appear on the DRCC site but University House does not, despite its role in providing student accommodation.

It also makes sense for non-student accommodation to be located within Accommodation Services because their underpinning business and operational practices are the same as those in halls of residences. Both require marketing, appropriate furnishings, booking and billing systems, replenishment of linen and supplies and people on hand to address enquiries, to name only a few of the fundamentals.

It should be noted however that Graduate House, University House and ANU Apartments sit outside DRCC (and therefore the terms of reference) and the reviewers were not able to fully consider their

role in the university and how they contribute to strategic objectives. For University House especially, being primarily a commercial entity, there could be another set of imperatives that argue more strongly for continued management outside of Accommodation Services. Graduate House on the other hand appears to be a student accommodation facility and should be located alongside the others, while ANU Apartments could continue to be operated as a commercial facility but could also be a very good location for postgraduate students with families.

**Recommendation 12:**

Establish a new role of Manager Short-stay Accommodation, reporting to the General Manager Accommodation, to manage the operations of University House and ANU Apartments [1,2,3].

Rationale:

Notwithstanding the commonalities between student and non-student accommodation noted above, there are important differences between them. A Residential Manager, trained and resourced to focus on pastoral care and other aspects of long-term student residents, is not required for short-stay, non-student accommodation. Conversely the quick turnaround and particular marketing, billing and higher service levels of short-stay accommodation require special attention. Graduate House should be managed by a Residential Manager, in line with other student residences. University House and ANU Apartments should be managed by someone who is able to focus on the more business-oriented needs of short-stay accommodation.

Given the hospitality component of University House and the specialist nature of large-scale catering, consideration should be given to shifting responsibility for residence catering operations (Bruce and Ursula) to the Manager Short-Stay Accommodation. A high quality catering service within a residence will require close interactions between the Head/Executive chef and the Residence Manager and it could be argued that the same rationale for shifting the reporting of the administrative staff to the Residence Manager supports retaining the catering staff in the same line. However, there is minimal overlap between catering and pastoral care. Good and responsive customer service is important but so is the ability to deliver consistently high quality service and to benefit from the ability to lower costs and develop best practice systems and staff that comes from a shared services approach. The two are not mutually exclusive and many of the best residences around the world operate either an internal shared service or externally contracted catering service to very good effect.

**Recommendation 13:**

Develop closer working arrangements with the affiliated Colleges and with Unilodge and transfer full responsibility for any contracts with UniLodge to Accommodation Services [1,2].

Rationale:

Most of the “ANU” accommodation is not operated by DRCC but by affiliated organisations or by UniLodge (under contract). This is common practice and with closer attention being paid to capital allocation, universities all over the world are needing to learn how to work with partners to develop and operate accommodation. The challenge is finding the right balance between independence for partners to operate in a way that allows them to manage their own risk while ensuring a consistent level of service delivery (including pastoral care and critical incident response) a seamless presentation to students and their parents, and that all beds are leveraged to maximum strategic benefit (refer to Recommendation 2).

Affiliated residences appear to be delivering very good quality accommodation to ANU students and the review panel was not made aware of any quality concerns. But there are inconsistencies and a concerning lack of communication between DRCC and the residences that are not part of its

immediate portfolio. Accommodation Services needs to see itself as being responsible for the accommodation experience of all students it places in a residence, whether that residence is an “ANU residence” such as Burton and Garran or a Unilodge facility or an affiliate such as John XXIII. Currently the DRCC website indicates some ambivalence – noting that there are different ownership/management responsibilities but explaining that DRCC processes all applications regardless. Students and their parents need to know that, more than merely ‘approved’ accommodation facilities, Burgmann and John XXXIII will deliver the same high quality experience that is available at other properties and that a different management arrangement for Davey, Kinloch, Warrumbul and Lena Karmel need not indicate a different standard of service.

To be able to deliver against that promise, Accommodation Services will need to implement robust communication systems and decision-making and policy-setting protocols with the managers of affiliate and UniLodge properties. Likewise the affiliated residences need to accept (and there is no evidence that they do not already) that they are part of the ANU accommodation portfolio and need to be as accepting as they can of ANU priorities, processes and standards (without compromising their own responsibilities). The Heads/Management of affiliates should work in close partnership to deliver against ANU’s objectives, as communicated through the General Manager Accommodation Services.

Currently the contractual relationship with Unilodge is managed in two places within ANU – DRCC for operational performance and Finance and Business Services for financial performance. These two aspects are closely interrelated and should be managed through a single point of contact and that point should be Accommodation Services. With such contracts there is often a need to consider a trade-off between financial and non-financial performance and that is more difficult when those accountabilities are split within the university. Accommodation Services should be responsible for the overall performance because whilst the financial performance is critical, the primary purpose of the partnership is the provision of accommodation.

**Recommendation 14:**

Redevelop the website and other promotional material to provide a comprehensive outline of the range of accommodation options open to students, their common and distinctive features and a streamlined guide to the application process [1].

Rationale:

As noted above, currently not all residences are featured on the DRCC website and properties listed elsewhere do not link back to DRCC. There are also incomplete sections (e.g., the policies section). When compared with websites at other highly ranked universities the DRCC site is somewhat impersonal and lacks ‘soft’ information such as YouTube clips of student testimonials. Overall it undersells the availability of the residences (again a strong selling point for ANU) as well as their quality and character. Information relating to pastoral care and academic support is presented differently, and to different levels of detail within the sections relating to individual residence. There are many examples of very good websites that Accommodation Services could look to when making improvements and the University of Bristol’s is one example:  
<http://www.bristol.ac.uk/accommodation/>

**Recommendation 15:**

Develop an accommodation advisory service to meet the residential needs of students who are unable to access ANU accommodation or find it unsuitable [1,2].

### Rationale:

A number of submitters suggested that ANU should offer an advisory service for students who are either not offered ANU accommodation or who do not consider it suitable. There are a range of difficulties faced by postgraduate, international and students with families when they seek accommodation in the private sector, including homestays. The DRCC website includes a section that lists current rental vacancies but more resources should be provided to assist students to understand their rights and obligations, the costs they will face, and how they can deal with landlords and flatmates. The resources should include a flatmate matching service to allow ANU students not only to find the right apartment or house but also the right flatmates. Many resources can be provided online but there should also be a personalised option, allowing students to meet with an advisor to get assistance. It is suggested that student organisations, including ANUSA and PARSA could be useful in designing an advisory service.

University accommodation divisions that operate this kind of advisory service see their mission as being to assist students into good quality accommodation, whether provided directly by them or not. That expanded view allows them to have a much wider impact: their expertise and experience benefits a wider student cohort, one not limited to the numbers of beds they are able to directly finance.

### **Other suggestions**

The written and verbal submissions to the review raised a number of issues or made suggestions that the panel was unable to consider in detail or which were outside the Terms of Reference. In addition, panel members made some observations in the course of the interviews worthy of note. These matters are referred by the panel to the University as issues warranting further investigation, consideration and action. They are listed below:

1. Availability of WiFi in residential buildings and precincts is essential to good student experience. The current lack of access to WiFi was mentioned repeatedly as impacting on students' ability to make most efficient use of online study materials.
2. Need to identify the extent of demand for accommodation to support postgraduate students with families – possible usage of ANU Apartments.
3. Student progress, discipline rules and policies must be in harmony. Different approaches at the University and residence levels place students and the University at risk.
4. Priority should be given to a range of staff development activities, including:
  - \* a clear performance review framework
  - \* comprehensive induction and training for new staff, especially at local level
  - \* policy, guidelines and protocols around the support of students with disabilities in residence
  - \* cultural sensitivity, equity and diversity training for all staff
  - \* staff career planning
5. Along with a move to shared services with central University Units, greater sharing of resources (e.g. vehicles, on call staff)
6. Establish routine, formal student feedback mechanisms and student communication systems to provide timely information on student experience and to provide consistent engagement with students. This should be done in conjunction with broader university strategies which monitor student experience.
7. Possible extension of emergency financial support (bursaries) to international students.
8. Need to identify a role with responsibility for graduate students.
9. Need to be mindful of gender balance on pastoral care teams.

## **Appendix 1: Summary of Recommendations**

### **Recommendation 1:**

Articulate a clear corporate level student experience strategy in which the experience of students in residences is a feature. Determine to what extent and how the residential experience is intended to contribute to the ANU student experience [1].

### **Recommendation 2:**

Centralise the selection and allocation of residents to Halls, align the selection of residents with the admission process of students to the University, and consider as far as possible to merge the two processes [1].

### **Recommendation 3:**

Merge DRCC with Student Services, with the most senior manager reporting to the Registrar Student Services [1,2,3].

### **Recommendation 4:**

Transfer responsibility for Campus Communities to Student Engagement and Transition (within Student Services) [1,2,3].

### **Recommendation 5:**

Disestablish the role of Director DRCC and establish a new role of General Manager Accommodation [1,2].

### **Recommendation 6:**

Disestablish Head of Residence and Deputy Head of Residence positions and establish new Residential Manager positions [1,2,3].

### **Recommendation 7:**

Establish an Academic Reference Group for each residence to support the Residential Manager to develop for residents a sense of connectedness to ANU's academic past, present and future [1,2].

### **Recommendation 8:**

Change the reporting line of the Administration Managers and disestablish the position of General Manager, DRCC [2,3].

### **Recommendation 9:**

Transfer Human Resources, Finance, Maintenance, Grounds and Cleaning staff to the relevant central service division of ANU, supported by service level agreements for the delivery of services back into residences [1].

### **Recommendation 10:**

Implement a new management model that supports clear and constructive communications and timely decision-making [1,2,3].

### **Recommendation 11:**

Place the management of Graduate House, and possibly University House and ANU Apartments into the new Accommodation Services unit so that all ANU accommodation is consolidated under one management structure [1,2].

**Recommendation 12:**

Establish a new role of Manager Short-stay Accommodation, reporting to the General Manager Accommodation, to manage the operations of University House and ANU Apartments [1,2,3].

**Recommendation 13:**

Develop closer working arrangements with the affiliated Colleges and with Unilodge and transfer full responsibility for any contracts with UniLodge to Accommodation Services [1,2].

**Recommendation 14:**

Redevelop the website and other promotional material to provide a comprehensive outline of the range of accommodation options open to students, their common and distinctive features and a streamlined guide to the application process [1].

**Recommendation 15:**

Develop an accommodation advisory service to meet the residential needs of students who are unable to access ANU accommodation or find it unsuitable [1,2].

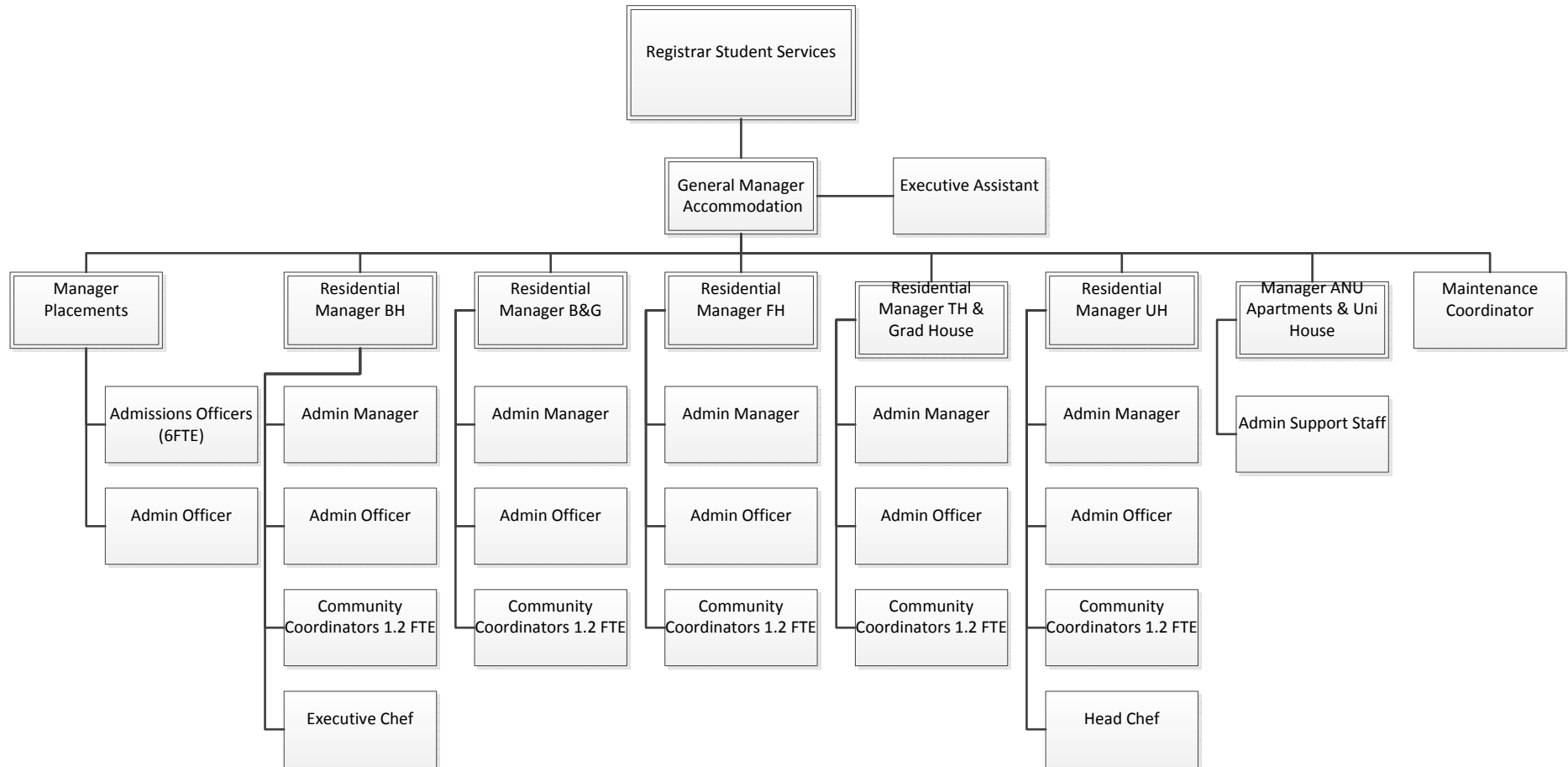


## Appendix 2: List of Submissions to the Review

#	Name	Role	Written Submission	Verbal Submission
1	Dr Luce Andrews	Director, DRCC	✓	✓
2	ANUSA 2013 Executive			✓
3	ANUSA 2014 Executive		✓	
4	Miss Brooke Armour	Admissions Officer & Conference Coordinator, Burton and Garran Hall	✓	
5	Mr Adam Agius	Maintenance Officer, Bruce Hall	✓	✓
6	Mr Cameron Bestwick	Alumnus	✓	
7	Dr Jack Bowers	Previous Head of Residence		✓
8	Mrs Dale Brosnahan	General Manager, University Accommodation	✓	✓
9	Dr Laura-Anne Bull	Registrar, Student Services	✓	✓
10	Community Coordinators			✓
11	Ms Jaclyn Cruz	Project Management Officer, Inbound Study Abroad, International Strategy, Alliances and Partnerships (ISAP), Division of International Operations and Student Recruitment	✓	
12	Prof. Lawrence Cram	Master, University House and former DVC	✓	
13	Ms Rachel Davies	Senior Resident, Burton and Garran Hall	✓	
14	Deputy Heads of Residences			✓
15	DRCC Administrative Managers			✓
16	DRCC professional staff			✓
17	Dr Philip Dutton	Principal, Burgmann College	✓	
18	Mr Mark Erickson	Registrar, Student Administration		✓
19	Ms Catherine Firth	Senior Accommodation Officer, DRCC	✓	
20	Mr Stephen Foley	Head, John XXIII College	✓	
21	Mr Anthony Franzi	Community Coordinator, Ursula Hall	✓	
22	Mr Chris Grange	Executive Director, Administration and Planning	✓	✓
23	Mrs Sarah Hawkins	Associate Director, Admissions		✓
24	Heads of Affiliate Residences			✓
25	Heads of Residences			✓
26	Ms Ida Hope	Finance and HR coordinator, DRCC	✓	
27	Ms Yuzhi Hu	Unilodge resident	✓	
28	Prof. Marnie Hughes-Warrington	DVC(A)		✓

29	Prof. Kerry Jacobs	College of Business and Economics	✓	
30	Mr Wayne Joseph	Student Welfare Advisor, PARSA	✓	
31	Dr Jasmine Jury	Head, Fenner Hall	✓	
32	Ms Kaiting Lin	Unilodge resident	✓	
33	Mr Graeme Lindner	Finance Manager, DRCC	✓	
34	Mr Ian McDermid	College of Business and Economics	✓	
35	Ms Heather McLeod	Head, Counselling	✓	✓
36	Mr Tim Mansfield	Deputy Head, Bruce Hall	✓	
37	Mr Areti Metuamate	Deputy Head, Toad Hall	✓	✓
38	Mr Jacob Meyers	DRCC	✓	
39	Dr Stephen Milnes	Director, Academic Skills and Learning Centre	✓	✓
40	Mr Arjuna Mohottala	President, PARSA	✓	
41	Mr Ashvin Parameswaran	Unilodge	✓	
42	Postgraduate and Research Students Association			✓
43	Presidents of Residences Student Associations			✓
44	Mr Paul Preston	Head, Student Experience and Transition		✓
45	Mr Samitha Ramanayake	Deputy Head, Fenner Hall	✓	
46	Residence academic programs			✓
47	Dr Jeremy Shearmur	College of Arts and Social Sciences	✓	
48	Ms Aleks Sladojevic	President ANUSA	✓	
49	Mrs Susanne Smethills	Administration Manager, Fenner Hall	✓	
50	Ms Kate Snailham	President, Burton and Garran Residents Committee	✓	
51	Ms Marion Stanton	Head, Bruce Hall	✓	✓
52	Mr Jin Tao	Former Unilodge resident	✓	
53	Mr Muhammad Taufiq bin Suraidi	ANUSA International Department	✓	
54	Ms Ros Taylor	Associate Director, Student Mobility, Division of International Operations and Student Recruitment	✓	
55	Ms Nicki Tobin	Administration Manager, Ursula Hall	✓	
56	Dr Ian Walker	Head, Toad and Ursula Halls	✓	
57	Ms Rowena Wedd	Deputy Head, Ursula Hall	✓	✓

## Appendix 3: Proposed Structure



### Notes:

- Residential Managers are live-in positions
- Maintenance staff (with exception of vacant Maintenance Officer position) transferred to Facilities
- Finance staff transferred to Finance
- Coordinator Griffin Hall transferred to SET
- Straight transfer of Admin staff from GM to halls does not presume this is the optimum level of support for each hall
- Straight transfer of Admissions staff from halls to Placements manager does not presume this is the optimum level of staffing for this function.
- Academic Reference Group not included as not part of organisational structure per se.
- Admin support staff for Uni House and ANU Apartments: detail is unknown as not currently covered by DRCC structure.

## **Appendix 4: Possible position description for the Residential Manager position**



## Position Description

<b>College/Division:</b>	Accommodation Services
<b>Faculty/School/Centre:</b>	
<b>Position Title:</b>	Residential Manager
<b>Position No:</b>	TBC
<b>Responsible to:</b>	General Manager, Accommodation Services

### PURPOSE STATEMENT:

The University is committed to a high quality and enriched educational, cultural and social experience for all its students. Accommodation Services helps deliver that experience to students residing on campus.

Every ANU residence provides a safe and comfortable home for student residents that not only delivers high standards of physical amenity but is also a community that supports their academic achievements and other aspirations for their time at university. Students are assisted in their academic efforts, with their social integration and extracurricular pursuits, and in dealing with personal difficulties that might otherwise interfere with their development.

The Residential Manager holds primary responsibility for all aspects of the operation of the residence(s) to which they are assigned. They are responsible for student safety and wellbeing and for ensuring that ANU's objectives for the student experience, and in particular for the residential experience, are appropriately delivered within their residence(s). The Residential Manager is required to live in (one of) the residence(s)

### POSITION DIMENSION & RELATIONSHIPS:

Reporting to the General Manager, the Residential Manager oversees both pastoral care and administrative support teams to deliver on the physical amenity and developmental/pastoral support needs of the resident community. They work with a range of University service providers to deliver academic and personal support, with their Academic Reference Group to ensure the best available academic support, and with other colleagues within Accommodation Services and beyond to deliver the highest possible service standards.

### ROLE STATEMENT:

1. Manage the administrative team as well as the contribution of other divisions such as Facilities to ensure a physically safe and comfortable home is provided to students.
2. Manage the pastoral care team to ensure appropriate support is on hand for students experiencing difficulties and that appropriate critical incident response processes, including after-care, are available.
3. Lead the development of a vibrant, supportive and respectful community that is conducive to achievement.
4. Utilise the Academic Reference Group to enhance academic support to residents and ensure appropriate connections with the ANU academic community are available.
5. Ensure all staff members receive appropriate support and development to meet their responsibilities.
6. Work with the General Manager and other managers within and beyond Accommodation Services to maintain service delivery models for pastoral care and academic support that meet the student experience objectives for residences.
7. Be responsible for residence-wide management functions, including financial management, human resource management, marketing and outreach.
8. Contribute to the establishment and maintenance of networks across the Residence to support the student experience.
9. Provide on-call support and attendance at emergencies as they arise, particularly after hours emergencies
10. Manage the Residence administration budget, as delegated by the PVC (Student Experience)
11. Provide strategic advice to the Pro Vice-Chancellor (Student Experience) and Vice-Chancellor and contribute to University strategic matters as requested within agreed timeframes
12. Undertake other duties as required by the General Manager, Accommodation Services

**SELECTION CRITERIA:****A. Qualifications**

1. A university degree, preferably postgraduate.

**B. Experience**

1. A record of successful management experience including planning and financial management, and policy and procedure development and implementation. Previous experience in a student residence, or in a developmental and/or support capacity within an educational or similar environment will be highly regarded.
2. Demonstrated ability to lead the development of a community.
3. Experience working in a developmental and/or support capacity within an educational or similar environment.
4. Excellent staff management skills and capacity to provide leadership and direction to colleagues and staff.

**C. Attributes**

1. Strong communication skills and ability to build collaborations within the University community and with other stakeholders.
2. Highly refined interpersonal skills and demonstrated ability to work with, and to lead teams, in a changing environment.
3. An ability to negotiate and solve complex problems and exercise judgment and discretion.
4. A demonstrated high level of achievement in relation to the incorporation of EO principles into strategic planning and the capacity to accept devolved responsibility for achievement of equity and diversity strategies.

<b>Delegate Signature:</b>		<b>Date:</b>	
Printed Name:		<b>Uni ID:</b>	