

ANNUAL
REPORT

2015

Report of the **Fiji Higher Education Commission** for the year ended 31st December 2015 to the Hon. Minister for Education, Dr Mahendra Reddy, in accordance with section 49 of the Higher Education Promulgation 2008.

Presented by
Salote Rabuka
Director
Fiji Higher Education Commission

FIJI HIGHER EDUCATION COMMISSION

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The Commission's 11 Mandated Functions



1. To register and regulate higher education institutions according to provisions of the Promulgation;



2. To foster and safeguard the national interest, the interest of students and parents and also of local higher education providers;



3. To establish national standards for different qualifications;



4. To oversee the review process of higher education institutions;



5. To provide assurances that programmes developed by institutions meet national standards;



6. To promote the development of Fiji as a knowledge society;



7. To allocate government funds marked for higher education annually for higher education institutions according to a transparent and well publicized criteria for allocation;



8. To foster cooperation among higher education institutions and linkages between higher education institutions and industry;



9. To maintain a database of higher education information;



10. To develop or cause to be developed an academic broadband facility for use by higher education institutions; and



11. To make recommendations to the Minister with respect to issues consistent with its functions including special projects.

The Commission's Vision, Mission, Philosophy & Values

Vision

To build together an educated and globally competitive Fiji

Mission

To quality assure the delivery of higher education that meets the needs of our stakeholders

Philosophy

The Commission's pursuit of the above mission is guided by the belief that higher education is essential for social, economic, political and cultural progress. Higher education also provides expanded opportunities for learners to realise their potentials so they can become productive and competitive in the workplace, constructive in the community, creative in their endeavours and peaceable.

Values

In fulfilling its mission, the Commission is committed to act in ways that are consistent with the value it places on:

- Aligning with national and international imperatives in higher education;
- Quality education and training to develop quality graduates;
- Equity, access and relevance in higher education;
- Critical thinking, creativity and free intellectual inquiry;
- Lifelong learning;
- Cooperation and partnerships with industry and professional bodies; and
- Transparency, accountability and responsiveness.

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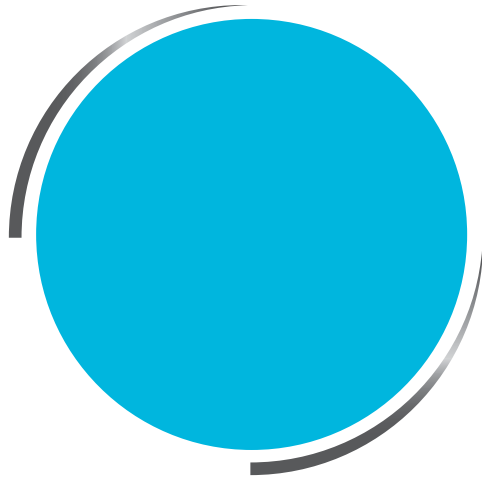
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Acronyms

ABP	-	Annual Business Plan	MoYS	-	Ministry of Youth and Sports
ACBSF	-	Accreditation Council for Business Schools and Programs	MQA	-	Malaysian Qualification Agency
AGM	-	Annual General Meeting	NARIC	-	National Academic Recognition Information Centers
APQN	-	Asia-Pacific Quality Network	NEC	-	National Employment Centre
ANZ	-	Australia & New Zealand Banking Group Limited	NQ	-	National Qualification
AUT	-	Auckland University of Technology	NQD	-	National Qualification Development
CATD	-	Centre for Appropriate Technology & Development	NQI	-	National Qualification Implementation
CAUQ	-	Committee for the Accreditation of University Qualifications	NUCES	-	National University of Computer and Emerging Sciences
CBA	-	Competency-Based Assessment	NZQA	-	New Zealand Qualifications Authority
CBT	-	Competency-Based Training	ONAWA	-	Online Assessment With Evidence
CCTC	-	Corpus Christi Teachers' College	OER	-	Open Education Resources
CEO	-	Chief Executive Officer	PACER Plus	-	Pacific Agreement on Closer Economic Relations
CIL	-	Competency International Limited	PINZ	-	Polytechnics International New Zealand
COL	-	Commonwealth Of Learning	PITS	-	Pacifika Institute of Tourism Studies
CTC	-	Chevalier Training Centre	PQF	-	Pacific Qualifications Framework
DMT	-	Dynamic Marketing Team	PRQS	-	Pacific Register for Qualifications and Standards
EER	-	External Evaluation & Review	PS	-	Professional Services
ENIC	-	European Network of Information Centers	PSC	-	Public Service Commission
EQA	-	External Quality Assurance	PSET	-	Post-Secondary Education and Training
EU	-	European Union	PSM	-	Professional Staff Meeting
FBEA	-	Fiji Business Excellence Awards	Q & R	-	Qualifications & Research
FCEF	-	Fiji Commerce and Employers Federation	QA	-	Quality Assurance
FHEC	-	Fiji Higher Education Commission	QMS	-	Quality Management System
FNPF	-	Fiji National Provident Fund	RoL	-	Record of Learning
FNU	-	Fiji National University	RPL	-	Record of Prior Learning
FQC	-	Fiji Qualifications Council	SEA	-	Service Excellence Award
FQF	-	Fiji Qualifications Framework	SFCCO	-	Strategic Framework for Change Coordinating Office
GCT	-	Governance Corporate & Technological	SG	-	Solicitor-General
GGP	-	Guidelines of Good Practices	SOP	-	Standard Operating Procedure
HEIs	-	Higher Education Institutions	SPBEA	-	Secretariat of the Pacific Board for Educational Assessment
HES	-	Higher Education Strategy	SPBEQ	-	Secretariat for the Pacific Board for Education and Qualifications
HR	-	Human Resources	TEC	-	Tertiary Education Commission
INQAHE	-	International Network for Quality Assurance Agencies in Higher Education	TEST	-	Technical Employment Skills Training
IPENZ	-	Institution of Professional Engineers New Zealand	ToR	-	Terms of Reference
IQA	-	Internal Quality Assurance	TPAF	-	Training Productivity Authority of Fiji
ISAC	-	Industry Standard Advisory Committee	TSLB	-	Tertiary Scholarship and Loans Board
IT	-	Information Technology	TVET	-	Technical Vocational Education and Training
ITO	-	Industry Training Organisation	UN-APCICT	-	The United Nations Asian and Pacific Training Centre for Information and Communication Technology for Development
MBT	-	Montfort Boys' Town	UNESCO	-	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization
MCI	-	Marist Champagnat Institute	VTC	-	Vivekananda Technical Centre
MFAT	-	Ministry of Foreign Affairs & Trade, New Zealand			
MoA	-	Memorandum of Agreement			
MoE	-	Ministry of Education			
MoL	-	Ministry of Labour			
MoU	-	Memorandum of Understanding			



Message from the **EXECUTIVE CHAIRPERSON**



Overview by the **DIRECTOR**

The year 2015 marked the end of the first strategic development plan (SDP) and the development of a new strategic plan for the following 5 years. The implied transition meant much planning and consultation with relevant stakeholders to ensure effective collaboration that would result in intended outcomes. The new SDP reflected the Fiji National Development Plan and the Tertiary Education Strategy 2016 – 2020 which was also developed during the year to provide an overarching framework of development in the higher education sector.

The major achievements during the year were consistent with the major outcomes in the 2012 – 2015 SDP. These were in the pursuit of quality and relevance through the accreditation of institutions and their programmes and the promotion of quality assurance in general within institutions and at the level of the Commission's secretariat.

This resulted in the recognition and registration of institutions and the accreditation of programmes across all the levels (1-10) of the Fiji Qualifications Framework. Notable in the latter was the adoption, for the first time, of the CAUQ's (Committee for the Accreditation of University Qualifications) programme approval approach for programmes in levels 7 – 10. While the process was considered a

success, the CAUQ found it appropriate to explore other approaches that may achieve its purposes faster than that which had been adopted.

Also a significant achievement in this regard was the review of the Commission by the Asia-Pacific Quality Register Review Team. This resulted in a "Substantial Compliance" rating which granted the Commission registration in the Asia-Pacific Quality Network (APQN) Register. This achievement was a boost to the demanding preparatory work undertaken during the year for the May 2016 back-to-back conferences of 2 international quality assurance networks to be hosted by Fiji through the Commission. The networks are the INQAAHE (International Network of Quality Assurance Agencies in Higher Education) and the APQN.

Meanwhile, the Commission recognised the efforts of a number of institutions during the year to quality assure their own programmes and processes by recognised external quality agencies. In this regard, the newly established Technical College of Fiji worked closely with the Commission in the quality assurance of its programmes and their delivery and assessments.

In the pursuit of international recognition of education and training and in support of the government's goal of an informed and progressive

Fijian society, several activities were undertaken to acquaint the staff with relevant experiences and processes in advanced systems. These were mainly in the form of study tours and conference attendances outside of Fiji. Of particular significance here was the work undertaken on Open Educational Resources (OER) which resulted in a National Policy on OER. The policy, which is now effective, was the outcome of a national consultation in March and it was later endorsed by the Hon. Minister for Education, Dr Mahendra Reddy.

The Commission's commitment to work closely with higher education stakeholders and industry in particular was demonstrated in a number of joint meetings to address issues relating to higher education and training and their role in economic growth and sustainability.

While the achievements of the year were not without their challenges, they were significant enough to mark continuous improvement and progress in the achievement of the Commission's mandated functions.

S. Rabuka

Director

The Commission 2015

Since the Education Act in Fiji did not cover Higher Education Institutions (HEIs), the government established the Higher Education Advisory Board (HEAB) to make significant recommendations to the Minister for Education on aspects pertaining to higher education in an effort to determine a suitable legislative framework for the sector. The HEAB comprised of a Chairperson and six members from various professional and educational background who were responsible for preparing and finalising the proposed Higher Education Promulgation, including the establishment of the Fiji Higher Education Commission. The Higher Education Promulgation 2008 was gazetted on 14th October 2008.

The Fiji Higher Education Commission began operations on 1st January 2010 following the commencement of the Higher Education Promulgation 2008. The Commission is a statutory body that reports directly to the Minister for Education and is responsible for regulating the establishment, recognition, operation and standard of higher education institutions. These responsibilities are contained in each of the Commission's eleven mandated functions.



Richard Wah (PhD)

Executive Chairman



Savenaca Madanavosa

FQC Chairperson



John Fatiaki

Consultant Physician



Arun Narsey

Chartered Accountant



Emi Rabukawaqa

Former Permanent Secretary
for Education

The Fiji Qualifications Council 2015

The Fiji Qualifications Council is a committee of the FHEC, whose primary role is to administer the functions relating to the Fiji Qualifications Framework (FQF) such that the FQF stands as a beacon and reference for socio-economic planning. The Council is governed by the Qualifications Regulations 2010. It has six members including a Chairperson. The Council is responsible for accrediting qualifications at levels 1–6 on the FQF and reviews such qualifications every 5 years to ensure their currency and adherence to acceptable and relevant standards of teaching and assessment.

1. **Savenaca Madanavosa** - *Chairperson*
2. **Salote Rabuka** - *Director FHEC*
3. **Humphrey Chan** - *Managing Director, Wing Lee Motors*
4. **Raymond Nicholls** - *Company Manager/Director Integrated Welding Industries*
5. **Meli Nacuva** - *Pilot Project Manger Connexional Plan Methodist Church*
6. **Neeraj Kumar** - *Senior Mechanical Engineer, Ministry of Labour*

Recognition and Registration Committees

Applications by institutions for recognition by and registration with the Commission are thoroughly assessed and scrutinised by the members of the Recognition and Registration Committees, respectively. The Committees then make recommendations accordingly to the Commission.

Recognition Committee

1. **Etuate Koroï** - *Chairperson*
2. **Rigietā Nadakuitavuki**
3. **Vikram Deo**

Registration Committee

1. **Dr Robin Taylor** - *Chairperson*
2. **Salote Dugu**
3. **Josefa Matau**

Committee for the Accreditation of University Qualifications (CAUQ)

The Committee for the Accreditation of University Qualifications (CAUQ) is a committee of the Fiji Higher Education Commission. It comprises of the Vice-Chancellors of the University of the South Pacific, Fiji National University and the University of Fiji and an independent chairman, Dr. John Harré of New Zealand. The universities are established by individual statutes, which to varying degree empowers them to approve their own qualifications. However, this authority in the universities was not consistent with the statutory responsibilities of the Fiji Higher Education Commission in respect of approving qualifications.

For this reason, the Vice-Chancellors negotiated a procedure with the Commission whereby they took joint responsibility for the approval of new programmes at Level 7 and above. This involved the formation of the CAUQ.

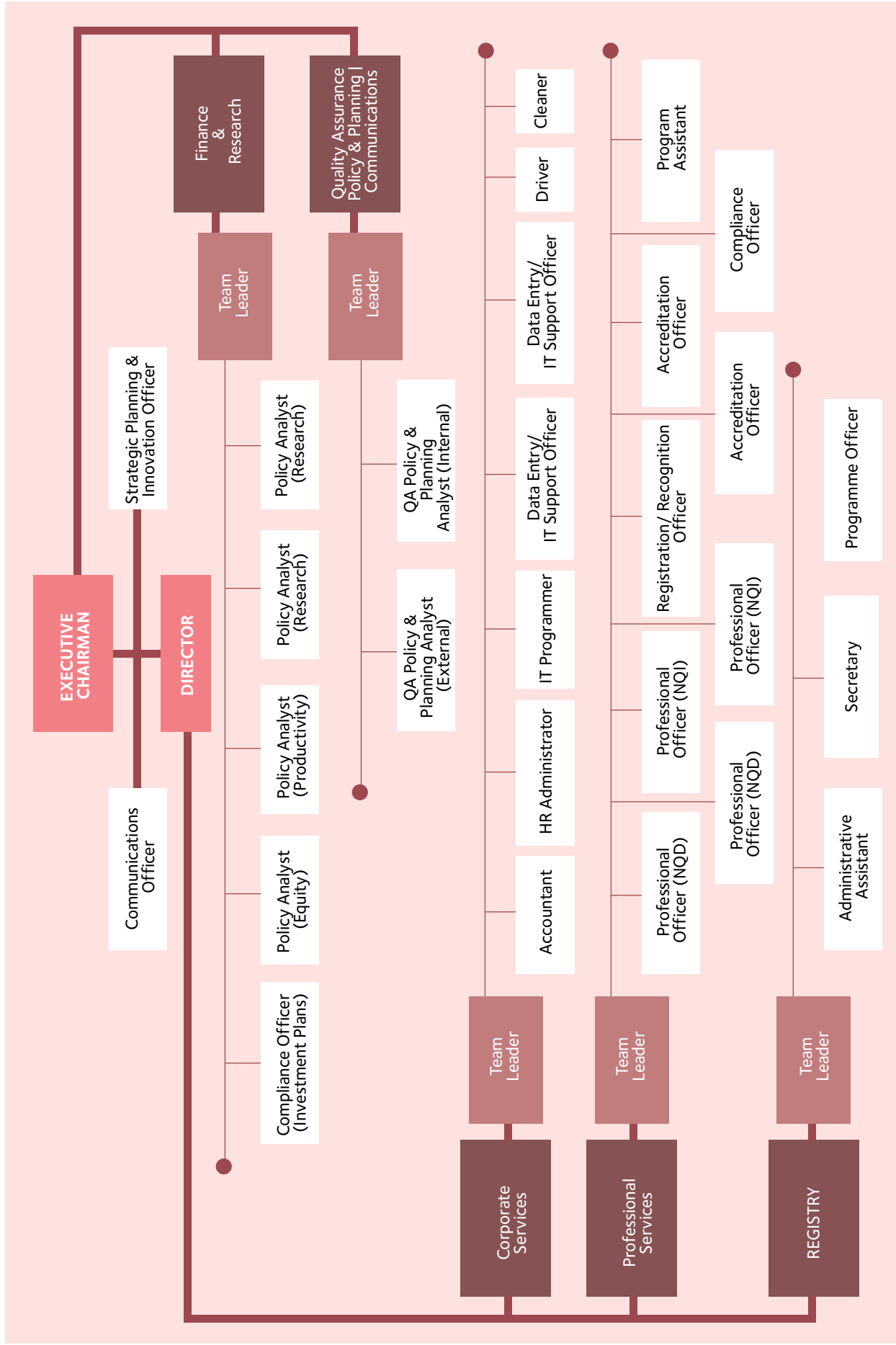
1. **Dr John Harré** - *Independent Chairperson*
 2. **Prof Chandra Dulare** - *Acting Vice-Chancellor (The University of Fiji)*
 3. **Prof Ian Rouse** - *Acting Vice-Chancellor (Fiji National University)*
 4. **Prof Rajesh Chandra** - *Vice-Chancellor (The University of the South Pacific)*
-

Industry Standards Advisory Committees (ISACs)

Background

The ISACs (Industry Standards Advisory Committees) support the FHEC's commitment by engaging with the industry stakeholders and relevant institutions for the development of unit standards, workplace manuals, assessor guides and qualifications documents in Fiji. The ISACs ensure that national qualifications developed and delivered by education providers in Fiji are aligned to the needs of the industries and benchmarked to other recognised national and international qualifications frameworks.

The Fiji Higher Education Commission Organisational Structure 2015



The **FHEC** Teams

Executive Office

The Executive Office (EO) provides strategic and operational leadership which ensures the proper administration and management of the functions and affairs of the Commission in accordance with the Commission's governing legislations and policies.

The EO was formed in mid-2015 which saw the combination of the registry, communications and strategic planning activities.

The current EO oversees strategic planning & conferences, finance, human resources, registry, communications; all of which are responsible to the Director of the FHEC.

Quality Assurance

Primarily responsible for quality assurance matters in FHEC as an agency (internal) and Higher Education Institutes (HEI) (external) in Fiji. The quality assurance processes is evidence based approach that ensures goals are being achieved and that policies and practices are under on-going review as part of an overall continuous improvement and quality enhancement. The FHEC is a member of APQN and internal practices are benchmarked to the INQAAHE GGP and APQN criteria. As part of quality development and ensure continuous improvement in service delivery, this section is also responsible for SEA and FBEA initiative using Malcolm Baldrige Framework.

Professional Services

Responsible for providing assistance to the Director Fiji Higher Education Commission to facilitate and manage the efficient operation of the FHEC in the areas of the accreditation of higher education institutions programmes, the development and implementation of national qualifications, conduct of Audit/CBT assessment/moderation of national standards and qualifications, the recognition of foreign qualifications and monitoring of higher education institutions and compliance at all levels.

Finance and Research

The Finance and Research section was setup for the purpose of establishing and administering the funding model for the financing of institutions in Fiji's higher education sector. Underlying this broad function, was the need to establish the section to be the hub and facilitator of all higher educational data collection and analysis including any other research deemed important to Fiji's HE sector.

Corporate Services

The Corporate Services section ensures that the Secretariat is adequately resourced at all times. They facilitate the administrative operations (HR and Financial) that support other sections with budget planning and an IT team that helps develop its own capabilities to be able to manage the Higher Education Sector.

Statement of Service Performance

The FHEC gives effect to its overarching responsibilities for post-secondary education and training through a comprehensive framework of regulations that cover the establishment, recognition, registration, and development of HEIs and the programmes that they offer. At the same time, it promotes the development of the sector as a whole through processes that foster collaboration, quality assurance and international recognition.

The FHEC is committed to quality higher education, training

and sustainable development through:

- Quality academic and cooperate governance;
- National Standards and Qualifications;
- Quality Assurance of courses and programmes;
- Encouraging lifelong learning through pathways and progression opportunities;
- Administration of the National Qualifications Framework; and
- Fostering collaboration between institutions and industry.

Better Economic Outcomes

In addition to the monitoring of the Strategic Plan 2012 - 2015, the FHEC utilised policies and processes that have been developed in the Strategic Planning to consider significant issues for the Commission, HEIs and industries.

Industries drive the Fijian economy whereby the FHEC provides significant support for and the enhancement of these primary industries through its HEIs and leading edge research.



FHEC Strategic Plan: 2016 – 2020

For socio-economic progress, Fiji needs to be supported by a dynamic and focused higher education and training environment. This is to ensure a capable workforce and a way forward for its multi-cultural community of people. The strategic planning document outlines the strategies to be pursued every four years and their expected outcomes in key areas of Fiji's higher education sector.

The Strategic Plan is consistent with the vision, mission and values of the FHEC. These statements espouse the notion of a dynamic education and training culture that respond to the needs of industry and society, while fostering lifelong learning and the desire to enhance international credibility.

The five outcomes identified in the 2012 – 2015 Plan are aligned with the Peoples' Charter for Change, Peace and Progress and the Roadmap for Democracy and Sustainable Socio-Economic Development.

The Pillars 5 and 9 from the People's Charter for Change, Peace and Progress, promote sustainable economic development and the growth of a knowledge society.

The Strategic Plan also recognises the efforts made to strategically link important areas for economic growth as done through the application of the National Strategic

Human Resource Development Plan 2011 – 2015. It takes into account the policies developed earlier at the then TPAF [now under the FNU] in collaboration with Polytechnics International New Zealand (PINZ), on the development of the FQF.

The regulatory and facilitative work of the FHEC with institutions and industry stakeholders are strategically linked to impact Fiji's education and training capacity; based on national and outward looking needs.

The FQF, in particular, is expected to establish a platform for planning and development at all levels of education and training.

The FHEC Strategic Plan 2016 – 2020 has five strategic outcomes for the next five years. These are:

1. Quality, relevance and consistency of education and training provision across the nation is assured;
2. Education and training that is internationally recognised;
3. An informed and progressive Fijian society;
4. Sustained economic growth supported by key capability development; and
5. An education and training culture based on continuous improvement.

Strategic Outcome 1

Quality, relevance and consistency of education and training provision across the nation is assured.

Strategy

Implement the FQF and quality assurance system and ensure their continuing development.



Asia – Pacific Quality Register Review

The FHEC became the first external quality assurance agency for tertiary education to be reviewed and then registered on the Asia Pacific Quality Register (APQR) for a period of 5 years (2015 – 2020).

This process and result gives FHEC and its QA process the international recognition and benchmarking; signalling prospects for Fiji's HEIs and sector in the international scene. The Pacific Quality Assurance Framework (PQAF), in the regional Quality Assurance Framework (QAF) to which Pacific Island Countries (PIC) frameworks are linked, and in the bargaining platform for PIC to other international frameworks.

The members of the review team were:

- Professor Colin N. Peiris, BSc (Sri Lanka), MSc and PhD (Penn. University, U.S.A.), Director of the Quality Assurance & Accreditation Council of the University Grants Commission (UGC), Sri Lanka, and Chair of the Review team;
- Professor Jianxin Zhang, PhD (Peking University, China), Chief Expert of Yunnan Higher Education Evaluation Centre, PRC, Director of Research Institute of Higher Education, Yunnan University, Peoples Republic of China; and
- Dr Jeanette Baird, BA (Hons) Literature and Philosophy (University of Melbourne), B.Lit. Japanese Studies (University of Melbourne), MBA (RMIT University), PhD Sociology and Higher Education Governance (University of New England), Adviser at the Department of Higher Education, Research, Science and Technology, Office of Higher Education in Papua New Guinea.

A site visit was conducted by the review team from 24–26 June, 2015. Based on FHEC's documentation, interviews, and authenticating statements from the Self-Evaluation Report, the review team concluded that the FHEC was in 'substantial compliance' with the APQR criteria.

The FHEC, as well as the country, benefitted greatly from the review, namely:

- Strengthening Fiji's relations with other EQA (External Quality Assurance) agencies in the Asia-Pacific region;
- Gaining mutual trust and respect at a regional and international level in delivering quality education and training;

- Moving Fiji toward becoming a renowned destination for higher education; and
- Improving the internal quality assurance systems of the FHEC.

The FHEC would however continually enhance the need impr to improve its systems and processes, to be competitive. The FHEC was officially accepted onto the APQR for a period of five years from 10th August 2015 to 10th August 2020.

Comparing FHEC's Quality Assurance Standards against the Pacific Quality Assurance Framework

The rationale for comparing the PQAF and the FHEC's Quality Assurance (QA) standards was to identify any commonalities in terms of standards used for HEIs and their respective programmes.

The comparison was done via a review of the following:

- The IQA of FHEC's operation in comparison to the PQAF standards for national agencies;
- The comparison of standards for programme accreditation of the FHEC against the PQAF; and
- The FHEC's QA standards for provider recognition and standards for provider registration against PQAF requirements.

It was concluded that the FHEC's QA strategy was comparable with that of the PQAF, and that there was a robust and comprehensive QA system in use at the FHEC.

2015 Recognition of HEIs

In 2015, a total of three HEIs were granted recognition and these were:

1. Black Meridian Watchers Academy (BMWA), Suva;
2. Cannan Institute of Technology (CIT), Nadi; and
3. Pacific Eye Institute (PEI), Suva.

BMWA is the first company to register its training department with the FHEC. CIT offers hospitality training in Nadi while the PEI is the Pacific region's first training facility for eye health professionals.

2015 Registration of Higher Education Institutions (HEIs)

In 2015, two (2) HEIs were granted full registration, whilst six (6) were granted provisional registration:

Full Registration

1. Department of Youth and Sports (DYS), Suva; and
2. Marist Champagnat Institute (MCI), Suva

Provisional Registration

1. Chevalier Training Centre (CTC);
2. Corpus Christi Teachers College (CCTC);
3. Fiji Corrections Service Academy;
4. Methodist Deaconess Training Centre;
5. St. John the Baptist Theological College; and
6. Workbridge Fiji.

Compliance

The Quality Assurance (QA) section ensures and monitors the delivery of processes and systems within the FHEC and the HEIs through external review process. The compliance sub-unit is an integral part of the QA department.

The sub-unit conducts QA checks across institutions to ensure that the relevant and mandated legislations, regulations and policies are followed; and in the process that quality education is assured and delivered.

Mandated Review

With the first round of Registrations drawing to a close, the Fiji Higher Education Commission had to establish an Assessment and Evaluation procedure to determine how well HEIs had performed against the criteria assessed during the initial Registration process.

Thus, the Mandated Review was formulated to meet this operational need. In addition, this process tied the operational need to the legislative requirement for a review process of HEIs as mandated in the Higher Education Promulgation 2008 and the Higher Education (Regulations) 2009.

Work on this process was spearheaded, at the Secretariat, by the then Acting Team Leader Quality Assurance, Mr. Eci Naisele, and the Recognition / Registration Officer, Mrs. Vilimaina Waqanokonoko Dreli. They worked on output measures that would be performance indicators or measures of the Registration Criteria, ensuring that these would tie in with the required Outcome of the Review process as mandated in the Higher Education Promulgation 2008 and the Higher Education (Regulations) 2009.

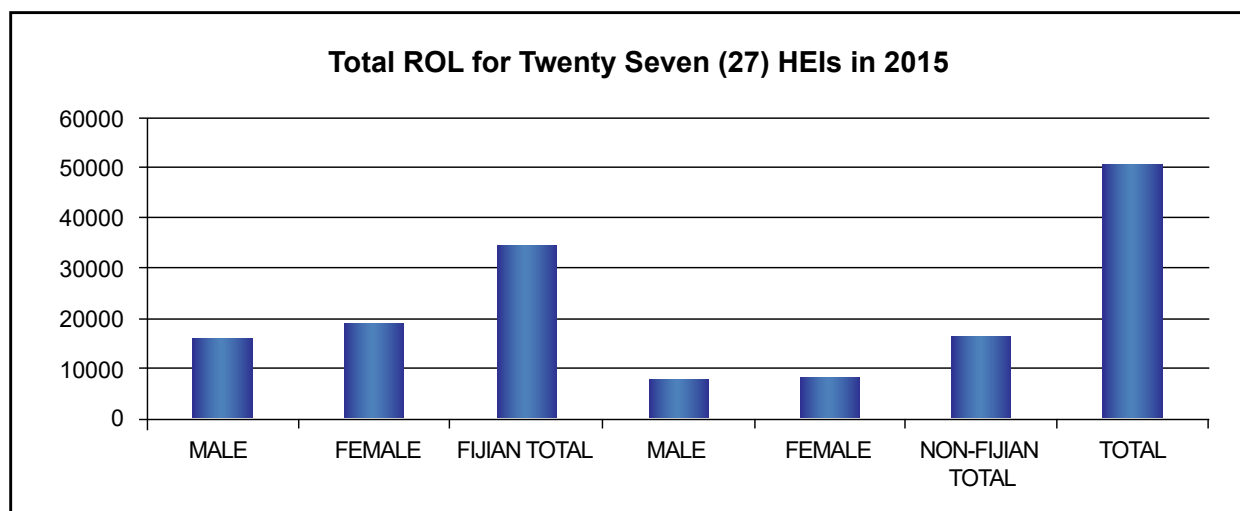
They also worked on establishing the Review Committee, who would conduct the Mandated Review process, through the publication of an Expression of Interest for the same and shortlisting the individuals who had applied for the Commissions endorsed and approval.



Record of Learning (ROL) 2015

Source: FHEC ROL Data Collection 2015

FIJIAN STUDENTS					NON-FIJIAN STUDENTS			
No. of HEIs	YEAR	MALE	FEMALE	TOTAL	MALE	FEMALE	TOTAL	GRAND TOTAL
27	2015	15,719	19,046	34,765	7,878	8,204	16,082	50,599



Function nine (9) of the Commission's eleven (11) mandated functions states that the FHEC has 'to maintain a database of Higher Education information'.

The ROL database stores the details of all learners who are pursuing qualifications (Provider or National Qualifications) along with the unit standards that each learner is enrolled in per semester/trimester. This data collection is currently only confined to registered and provisionally registered higher education providers in Fiji. The ROL data will provide a 'life long learning' higher education record for each learner and as the learner moves from one organisation to another, the learners record would be updated.

The key purposes of the ROL data are to enhance the ability of institutions and industry to authenticate the record of learning of students and to trace the progression of students at an institution and/or across various institutions. The ROL can help trace students or persons having the best fit qualifications, something that is desired by government and employers, and to be a reference point for the FHEC and institutions when learners wish to transfer credits from one institution to another.

An interesting finding from the data was that Fiji had a greater female population base (54%) in both domestic and foreign students. This is a unique scenario in comparison to the primary and secondary sector.



Technical College of Fiji (TCF)

The government initiatives of the TCF warranted the support work of the FHEC in 2015, focusing on the recognition of the institutions as well as oversee the national qualification programmes to be delivered.

Preliminary workshops for staff on CBA and CBT for the first three TCF centres were conducted by the FHEC.

Centres	Workshop Dates
Nadi	04 February 2015
Labasa	06 February 2015
Nabua	16 February 2015

A working committee consisting of the FHEC officers, external Assessors and TCF staff was an important collaboration for TCF's establishment years.

National Qualifications Rollout by the TCF

The NQs were issued to the TCF in three phases.

Phase 1 – Readily Available

Three NQs (Level 2) were readily available were given to the TCF to deliver

- National Certificate in Heavy Commercial Vehicle;
- National Certificate in Mobile Mechanic; and
- National Certificate in Electronics.

Phase 2 – Developed out of Existing Level 4

The FHEC developed Level 2 NQs from existing Level 4 NQs and these included:

- National Certificate in Tour Guiding;
- National Certificate in Agriculture; and
- National Certificate in Beauty Therapy.

Phase 3 – Developed for Construction

FHEC developed NQs for wet trades for construction and these included level 2 national certificates in the following areas:

- Tiling;
- Block Laying;
- Concrete Finishing;
- Plastering; and
- Painting and Decorations.

Committee for the Accreditation of University Qualifications (CAUQ)

Accreditation of Level 7-10 provider developed programmes on the FQF

Shown below is a list of programmes that were accredited.

No	Programmes	Level	University
1	Postgraduate Diploma in Oral Surgery	8	Fiji National University (FNU)
2	Postgraduate Diploma in Education	8	Fulton University College (FUC)
3	Postgraduate Diploma in Theology	8	Fulton University College (FUC)
4	Bachelor of Theology (Honours)	8	Fulton University College (FUC)
5	Bachelor of Education (Honours) Primary	8	Fulton University College (FUC)
6	Bachelor of Nursing Science	7	Sangam Institute of Technology (SIT)
7	Master of Science in Renewable Energy Management	9	University of Fiji (UOF)
8	Master of Pathology	9	Fiji National University (FNU)
9	Bachelor in Geospatial Science	7	University of the South Pacific (USP)

Fiji Qualifications Framework (FQF)

The FQF is a Framework on which Standards and Qualifications are registered. The FQF has 10 levels:-

- Level 1: Certificate 1;
- Level 2: Certificate 2;
- Level 3: Certificate 3;
- Level 4: Certificate 4;
- Level 5: Diploma;
- Level 6: Advanced Diploma;
- Level 7: Bachelor's Degree;
- Level 8: Post Graduate;
- Level 9: Masters Degree; and
- Level 10: Doctorate Degree.

It has three (3) Key education sectors:

- School Sector;
- TVET Sector; and
- Higher Education Sector.

What Will The FQF Do?

- Provide flexible & multiple pathways for acquiring education;
- Make qualifications accessible to those already in industry;
- Allow Recognition of Prior Learning-(RPL) and current competencies (RCC);
- Provide for recognition of other qualifications especially overseas institutions;
- Meet industry need with alignment to the training institutions;
- Ensure the transferability of credits across various institutions;
- Ensure recognition of local qualifications by overseas institutions;
- Allow the award of National Certificates set against National Standards; and
- Provide for the offering of different levels of programmes at different institutions but which can lead to a national qualification.

Overall Benefits

- For Learners: Provision of quality education with national recognition and international comparability.
- For Workers: Clear Learning pathway in the qualification structure that facilitates and supports lifelong learning.
- For Workforce: knowledge + skill + attitude and supports lifelong learning.
- For Society: knowledge based society and a learning nation.

Other Benefits

- National Consistency of Recognition of Outcomes.
- National Consistency of Certification.
- National Quality Assurance System and Mechanism.

- Flexibility of Movement and Credit Transfer.
- Vocational School: access levels 1 & 2.
- Secondary school: access Pre-Trade Entry Qualification.

The FHEC was pleased to announce that in 2015, the first round of accreditation of higher education programmes had been completed.

The outcome for the approved programmes is summarised below:

Level on FQF	Qualifications	Numbers Approved
2	Certificate	2
3	Certificate	3
4	Certificate	3
6	Diploma	6
7	Bachelor Degree	2
8	Post Graduate Diploma	3

A total of fourteen (14) applications for Levels 1-6 were evaluated while a total of 10 applications were evaluated for programmes in Levels 7-10. While the accreditation of those at Levels 1-6 was facilitated by the Fiji Qualifications Council in collaboration with local experts in the various subject areas concerned, the accreditation of programmes at levels 7-10 was facilitated by the CAUQ.

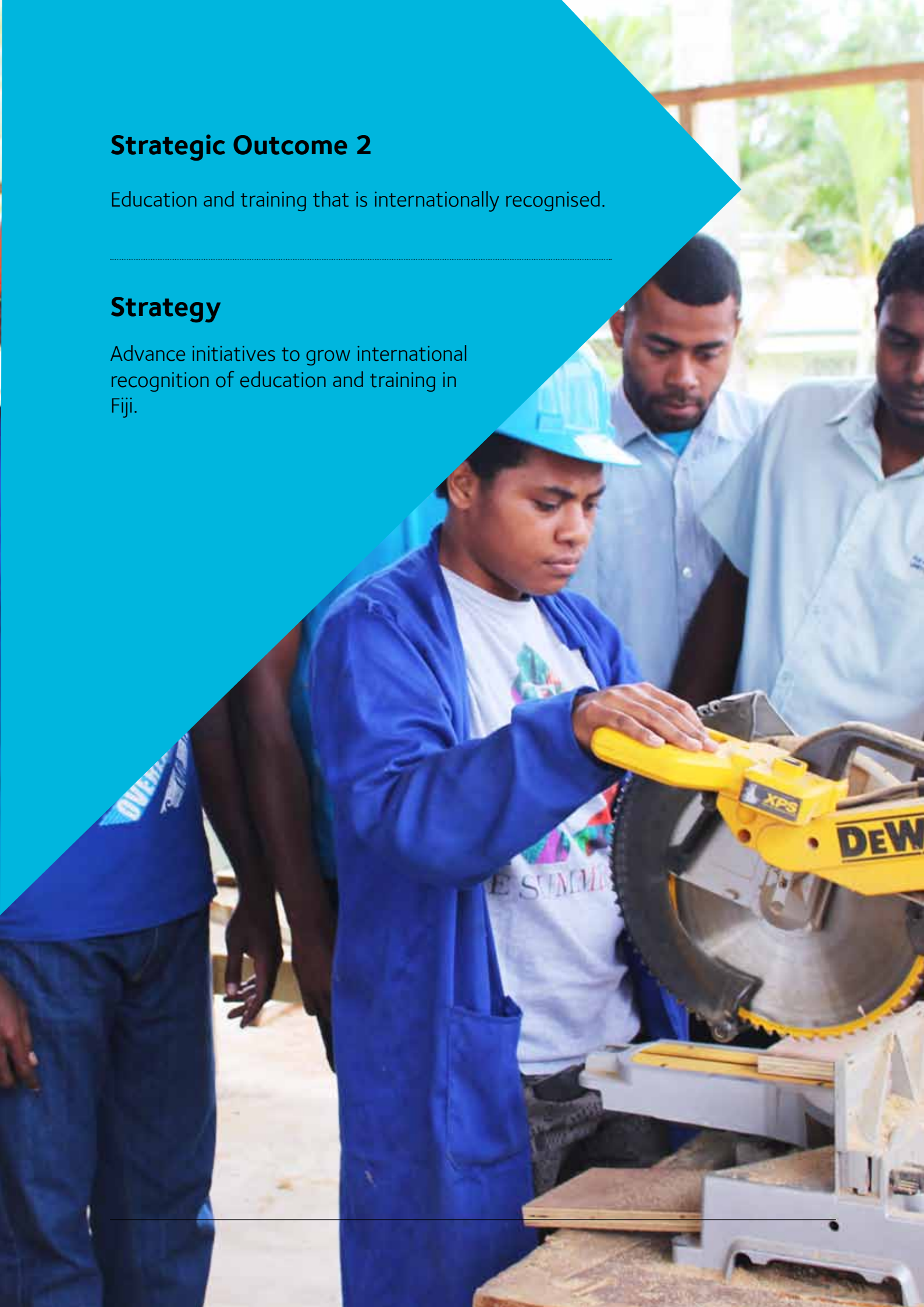
It is the intention of the Commission that all programmes currently delivered by institutions are registered by FHEC and will need the programme evaluated to determine whether they have met the minimum requirements for relevancy and quality and thereafter be recorded on the FQF

Strategic Outcome 2

Education and training that is internationally recognised.

Strategy

Advance initiatives to grow international recognition of education and training in Fiji.



Asia-Pacific Quality Network (APQN) Conference 2015

The Asia-Pacific Quality Network (APQN) Conference and AGM are the main annual events for discussing and advancing quality assurance in higher education throughout the Asia-Pacific region.

The 2015 Conference and AGM were held in Kunming, PRC. The FHEC presented a research paper titled "Internal Quality Assurance Using Integrated Approach of the Malcolm Baldrige Framework".

The mission of the APQN is to enhance the quality of higher education in Asia and the Pacific region through strengthening the work of QA agencies and extending the cooperation amongst its members.

The main theme of the 2015 APQN Conference was "Globalization and Diversification of Quality Assurance of Higher Education".

The sub-themes were:

- The quality assurance mechanism of Cross-border Higher Education (CBHE), international accreditation and international cooperation;
- Internal quality assurance, programme accreditation, project accreditation, course accreditation, etc.
- Professional accreditation, quality labels, and rankings;
- Quality assurance of Open Educational Resources (OERs), Massive Open Online Courses (MOOCs) in post-traditional provisions;
- Teacher assessment and student learning outcomes assessment;
- Qualification frameworks, quality assurance and quality information systems.

International Network for Quality Assurance Agencies in Higher Education (INQAAHE) Conference 2015

The INQAAHE Conference was held in Chicago, U.S.A from the 30th March – 3rd April, 2015.

The conference was guided by the theme 'Changing Land-

scape of Higher Education: New Demands on Quality Assurance'. The FHEC Executive Chairman and the Strategic Planning & Innovation Officer attended the conference and also submitted the FHEC's bid to host the INQAAHE Biennial Forum scheduled for 22nd – 24th May 2016.

The Accreditation Council for Business Schools and Programs (ACBSP) organised and hosted the four-day event which featured a wide range of activities that involved four (4) keynote speakers and three pre-conference workshops.

New Zealand Study Tour

The Commission embarked on a plan to develop its staff professionalism and capabilities to international standards by:

- Collaborating with HE providers, professional bodies, industry, donors and government;
- Providing staff with experiences at international conferences, overseas attachments and university attachments; as well as; and
- Comprehensive in-house training opportunities.

The Commission liaised with the New Zealand High Commission resulting in a study trip for a team of six (6) staff in New Zealand from the FHEC for a week. The trip was facilitated and funded by the New Zealand Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade (MFAT).

The aims of the visits were to:

- i. Introduce identified agencies in New Zealand to FHEC's mandated tasks; and
- ii. Develop a clear understanding of these prestigious agencies and where appropriate, create partnerships for long-term collaboration.

Study Tour Venues	
1	Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade
2	Universities New Zealand – Te Pokai Tara
3	New Zealand Qualifications Authority (NZQA)
4	Ministry of Education (Tertiary Strategy Group)
5	Tertiary Education Commission (TEC)
6	PINZ (WINTEC)
7	Primary ITO
8	Institution of Professional Engineers New Zealand (IPENZ)
9	Volunteer Service Abroad (VSA)
10	Ministry of Business, Innovation and Employment
11	Service IQ
12	Manukau Institute of Technology (MIT)
13	Auckland University of Technology
14	SKILLS ITO

Pacific Tertiary Education Forum 2015

The inaugural New Zealand Pacific Tertiary Education Forum: Enhancing Learner Success was held on the 4th – 5th November in New Zealand. The objective was to engage the entire higher education sector in practically-oriented discussions about strategic, organisational and practitioner changes required to improve outcomes for Pacific learners.

Co-hosted by the Association of Pasifika Staff in Tertiary Education (APSTE) and Ako Aotearoa, with the support of the Tertiary Education Commission, this forum was designed to engage the entire sector in a practically-oriented discussion about the strategic, organisational, and practitioner changes required to improve outcomes for Pacific learners.

The discussion topics covered:

- NZ Government investment approaches and expectations;
- Successful approaches to supporting Pacific learners;
- Tertiary Education Commission's goals, expectations and upcoming investments;
- Developing high quality pathways and transitions;
- Addressing knowledge gaps; and
- Family and community in tertiary education.

The experience at the on-going forum reinforced the FHEC activities to:

- Contribute to the development of a clear career pathway for students and the transition from levels of learning to the sector of employment;
- Conduct surveys and research on the 'transitions/ shifts

of secondary school students in Fiji to tertiary or higher education';

- Encourage continuous pastoral care in Fiji's education system and explore ways to improve such support system; and
- Establish and promote the need of quality data collection from higher education institutions.

Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade Funding (MFAT) Funding (June – December 2015)

The FHEC received funding support of \$100,000.00 from MFAT from July to December, 2015 to facilitate strategic development. The funding focused on attaining and strengthening FHEC's capacity by linking with institutional partners and accessing technical assistance. This involved the following phases:

Phase 1(a)

Obtaining technical assistance to support the strategic and operational planning.

The tertiary sector needed a clear statement from the Government on what is expected. The FHEC needed to align its strategic planning and business processes onto it to ensure that its funding decisions are reflected the expectations of the Government. In response to the identified need, the FHEC took lead on the development of a Tertiary Education Strategy for Fiji to ensure that its strategic planning and key business processes are aligned to a new investment approach for higher education.

Phase 1(b)

An urgent need for the training of workplace assessors.

The identified need reflected Fiji's expansion opportunities for learners to undertake vocational education and training, which included the establishment of additional technical colleges to increase the relevance of tertiary education. These were conducted by requiring graduates to demonstrate their new competencies in workplace settings. In response to the identified need, the FHEC established a target of having 200 workplace assessors to be certified by the end of the 2015.

The funding allowed the FHEC to;

1. Deliver a 'train the trainer' programme in Fiji to ensure that suitable contractors and FHEC staff are qualified to train and certify the competency of workplace assessors;
2. Provide an opportunity for experienced contractors and FHEC staff to travel to New Zealand for a refresher training;
3. Deliver training for workplace assessors; and
4. Align the accrediting processes for workplace assess-

sors and ensure an on-going professional development to the quality standards that apply in New Zealand, taking into account the Fiji context.

The FHEC also identified the need to develop and register national qualifications for the higher education sector that reflected the needs of employers and learners and are aligned to the economic and workforce development goals of Fiji. In response to the identified need, the FHEC developed the capacity of its national qualifications development unit to have the national qualifications developed in a timely way to ensure rationalisation of the existing provider programmes.

The funding allowed the FHEC to:

1. Develop a policy on reducing the proliferation of provider programmes in Fiji;
2. Establish a communications and engagement strategy focused on supporting the uptake of national qualifications by providers in Fiji; and
3. Refine the existing business processes and systems that underpin the development of national qualifications to ensure that they are fit for purpose.

Phase 2

The second phase of the funding supported the FHEC in responding to its strategic priorities during the remainder for the year. The priorities for this phase was planned to organise activities; articulating its prioritization and sequencing. This phase addressed the needs to ensure that programmes offered by providers in Fiji meet appropriate standards. Later, the FHEC identified the need to explore alternative mechanisms for accrediting programmes taking account the different regimes that apply to programmes at levels 1 to 6, and 7 to 10 respectively, and the need to ensure the quality and relevance of provider programmes.

The funding enabled the FHEC to:

1. Review existing policies and processes that identified options for accelerating the accreditation of provider programmes and;
2. Develop policies and processes to guide the work of staff involved in the accreditation of programmes.

The Office of the Chief Trade Adviser (OCTA) - Workshop on Mutual Recognition of Qualifications

The OCTA seminar on mutual recognition of qualifications was held in Auckland, New Zealand from the 17th – 19th February. The seminar was attended by twenty-eight (28) representatives from National and Regional Qualifications Authorities, Ministries of Education and foreign qualifications' recognition agencies in Pacific Island Countries (PICs), including Australia and New Zealand. It was hosted by the OCTA in collaboration with the South Pacific Board for Education Quality (SPBEQ).

The FHEC's attendance was important as the seminar provided information on the latest developments in (PACER Plus) negotiations between Pacific Island Countries and Australia and New Zealand. More importantly, the FHEC needed to be aware of issues relating to the mutual recognition of qualifications and how these are addressed by other qualifications agencies in the Pacific and in other regional agencies. The seminar also provided an opportunity to learn from other agencies in the Pacific and in particular, NZQA and Australia's National Office for Overseas Skills Recognition; and learn what provisions are available on the recognition of qualifications to facilitate labour mobility.

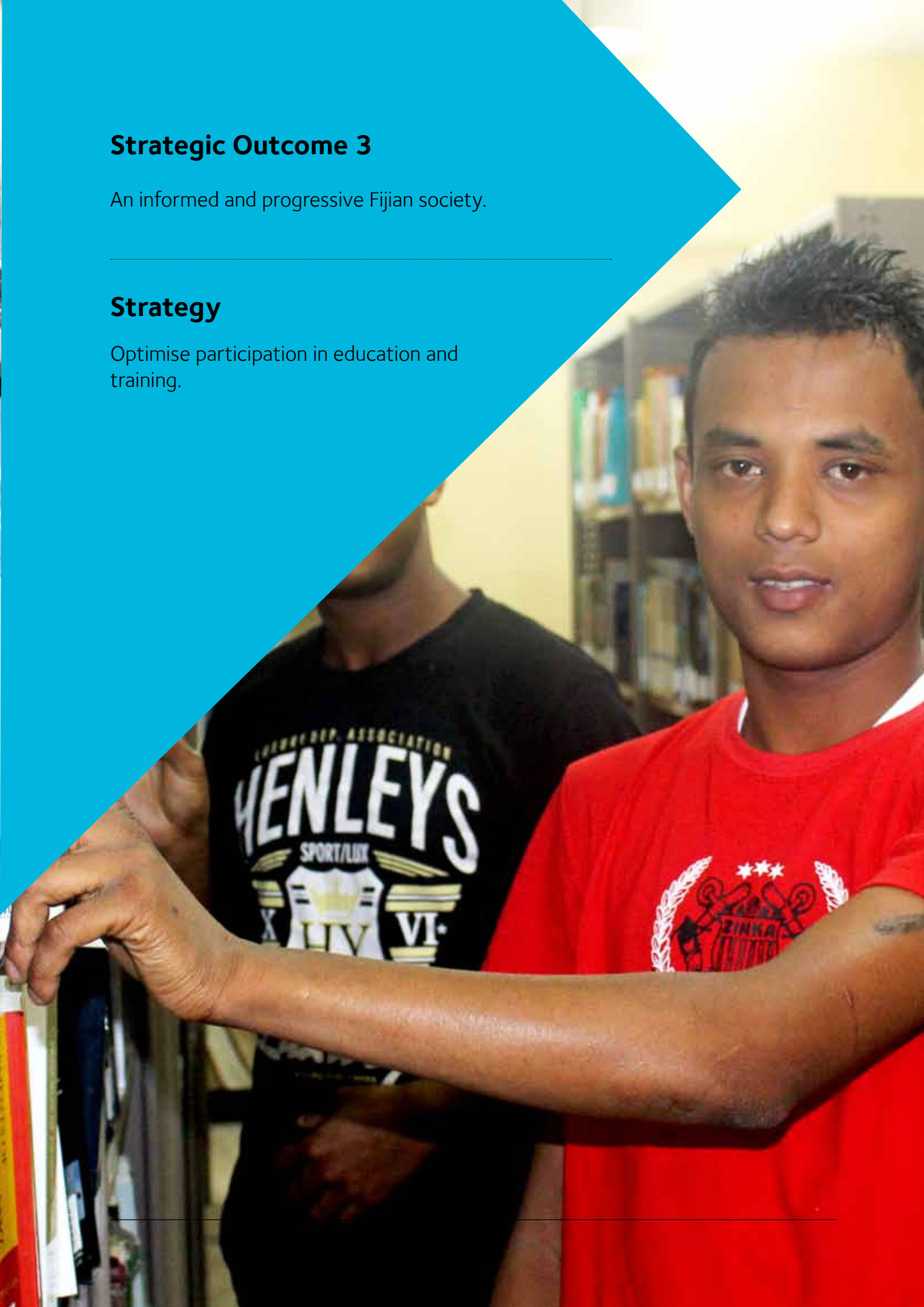
The seminar also provided FHEC the opportunity to verify the alignment of the Fiji Qualifications Framework to the Pacific Register of Qualifications and Standards (PRQS) as well as to other Pacific Island Countries' qualifications framework in the Pacific.

Strategic Outcome 3

An informed and progressive Fijian society.

Strategy

Optimise participation in education and training.

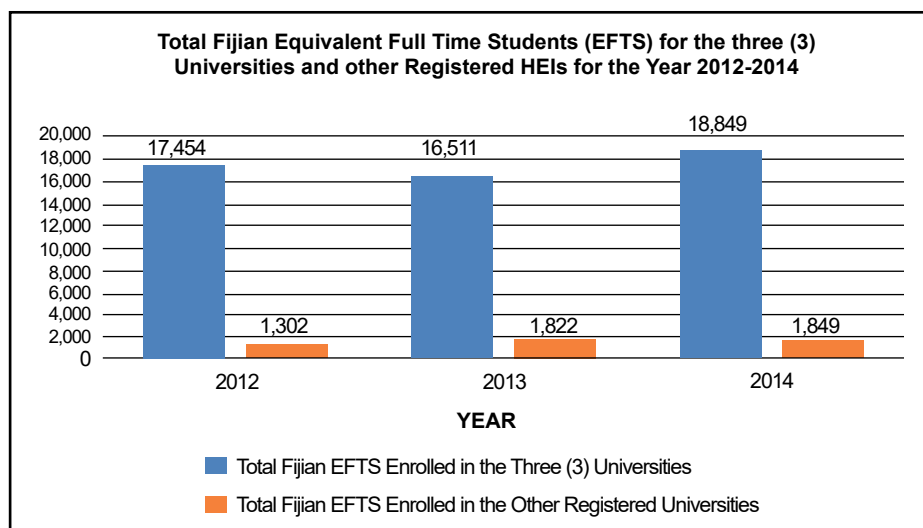


Data Trends

Trend analysis in the higher education context, helps to better understand the higher educational terrain in Fiji. The Equivalent Full Time Students (EFTS) trends have been sourced from the funding model data, following the establishment of the funding model system in 2012. The growth in the Fijian EFTS enrolments reflects the increase in commitment to higher

education by local learners implying a more knowledgeable society and skilled workforce. The Fijian Government's desire to have a more knowledgeable society is progressively being achieved through this trend, although the number of EFTS retained and completing programmes is still to be fully determined.

Figure 1.1

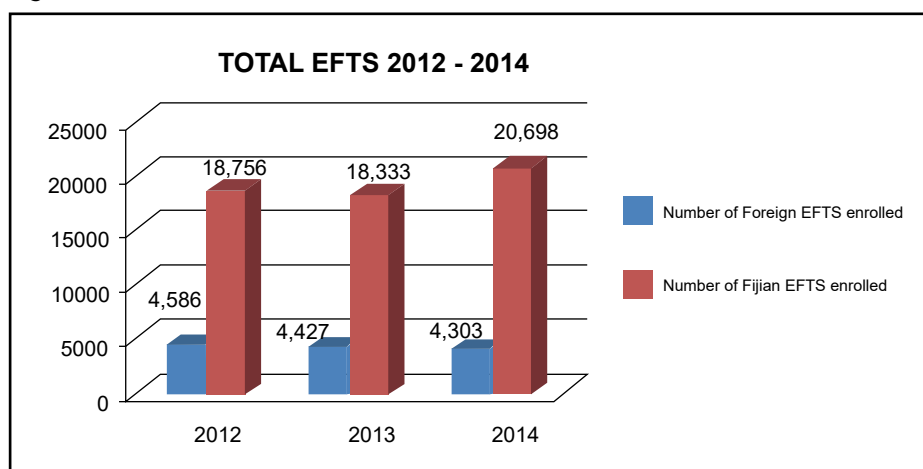


Source: Funding Model Data 2012 – 2014

The graph illustrates the trend for Fijian Equivalent Full Time Students (EFTS) in the three (3) universities as well as the Fijian EFTS for other registered HEIs from 2012 to 2014.

On average from 2012 to 2014, 91% of Fijian EFTS were enrolled in the universities while the remaining 9% in other HEIs. (The FNU has had the highest EFTS enrolment averaging 57%).

Figure 1.2

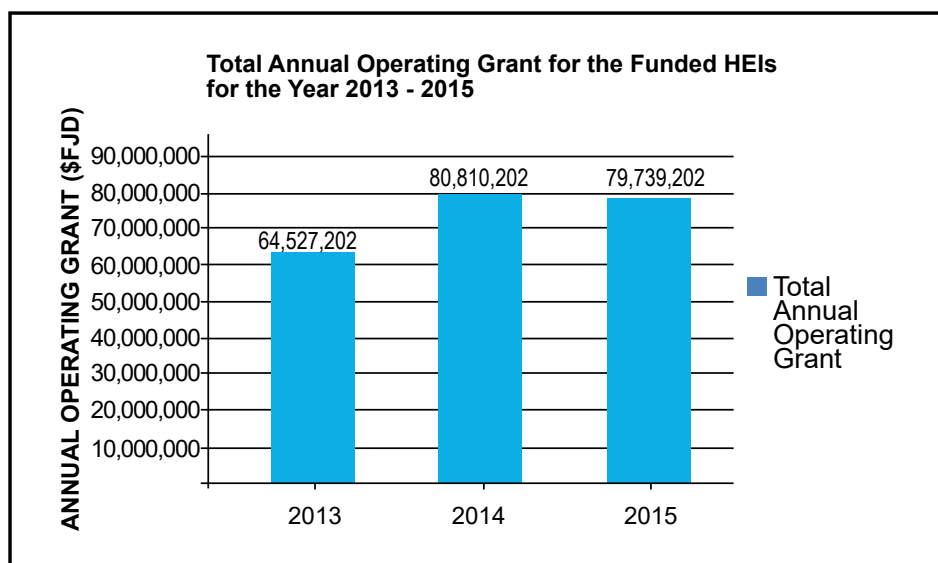


Source: Funding Model Data 2012 – 2014

The graph illustrates the trend for the EFTS and the Foreign EFTS studying in registered HEIs in Fiji from 2012 to 2014.

On average for the given period 19% were foreign students while 81% were local students. The FNU has had the largest local student base averaging 51% for the same period. The USP has had the largest student base for foreign students at an average of 76% the same period.

Figure 1.3



Source:
Annual Government
Budget 2012 – 2014

The graph illustrates the trend for the total annual operating grant for funded HEIs from 2013 to 2015.

The average funding for 2013 to 2015 was \$75m FJD while the largest recipient of the grant has been the USP. On average the USP has received \$36.6m FJD, 49% of the total grant over the course of the three years.

Operating Grants 2015 for HEIs

Ten (10) institutions received operational grants from Government in 2015 after fulfilling the funding criteria.

Institution	Percentage of Fijians Students studying at the HEI	Percentage of NON Fijian Students studying at the HEI	Approved Funding Amount (\$FJD)
1. Fiji National University	95.0	5.0	38,587,000
2. The University of the South Pacific	52.2	47.8	36,597,202
3. The University of Fiji	97.8	2.2	2,500,000
4. Centre for Appropriate Technology & Development	100.0	0.0	755,000
5. Montfort Boys' Town (Veisari)	98.0	2.0	700,000
6. Montfort Technical Institute (Savusavu)			
6. Sangam Institute of Technology	100.0	0.0	250,000
7. Corpus Christi Teachers College	95.0	5.0	150,000
8. Vivekananda Technical Centre	100.0	0.0	150,000
9. Fulton University College	64.1	35.9	50,000
TOTAL			79,739,202

Capital Grant – Fiji National University (FNU) Labasa Campus

The FNU's development initiative in the North is meant to help decentralise the provision of higher education to Fiji; creating easier and better access for school students, employers and the general public.

Open Educational Resources (OER) for a smarter Fiji

Fiji recognises the potential in Open Educational Resources [OER] to play a major role in expanding equal opportunities to access quality education and contribute in a significant way towards the development of a smarter Fiji. This is due to the ability for OER to provide free and adaptable learning and teaching material at relatively low cost.

The scope of OER; "describes any educational resources (including curriculum maps, course materials, textbooks, streaming videos, multimedia applications, podcasts, and any other materials that have been designed for use in learning and teaching) that are openly available for use by educators and students, without an accompanying need to pay royalties or license fees".

Higher Education Strategy (HES): 2016-2020

The development of the Higher Education Strategy (HES) 2016-2020 has been one of the major highlights of 2015 for the FHEC.

This HES is to be the first comprehensive document to provide direction on the development of the post-secondary (tertiary) education sector in Fiji. This document is in consultation following extensive discussions with selected focused groups from various sections of the Fijian community. These included the providers, faith-based groups, civil society, industry, professional associations, licensing bodies, students, parents, chiefs and government officials.

The HES sets out three (3) priority areas that the FHEC will present. It is expected that each stakeholder will find themselves reflected in these broad priorities and that they can develop and implement, within their niche area, to enable Fiji to progress towards accomplishing these strategies. It is important that these strategies are made known to the community at large so that all Fijians are fully aware of what stakeholders in the sector are expected to contribute to and what is expected from the sector.

HES Advocacy

The FHEC conducted two consultation sessions with relevant stakeholders are the following periods:

- Wednesday 27th May – Commission Board, FQC and other committees;

- Wednesday 28th May (morning) – Government and Industry Representatives; and
- Thursday 28th May (afternoon) – Education providers, Civil Society, Youth & Religious groups.

The second round of consultations was conducted in August with the focus on the community-level and faith-based organisations to gather a wider response from the public:

- Monday 3rd August – Macuata Provincial Council (North);
- Wednesday 5th August – Rakiraki Provincial Council (Western);
- Thursday 6th August – Faith Based Organisations (Central).

The Fiji HES would identify the indicators for assessing progress and success to provide a complete representation of change across the higher education sector, as well as guide the Government's investment decisions in order to maximise higher education's contribution to Fiji's development.

Graduate Skills Research Report Findings

Identifying and developing competencies required of graduates is a challenging task. The views of employers regarding the skills, qualities and qualifications required of graduates, are important.

Various organisations representing large, medium and small scale employers were approached during the University of the South Pacific Student Expo in 2015 to answer a graduate skills and competency survey.

The findings highlighted that soft skills such as interpersonal and communication skills were required of graduates from the employer's perspective. Soft skills refer to the personal attributes that enable an individual to interact effectively and harmoniously with others. Also noted by employers was that graduates needed to be passionate, customer service oriented, to effectively manage time and have strong work ethics.

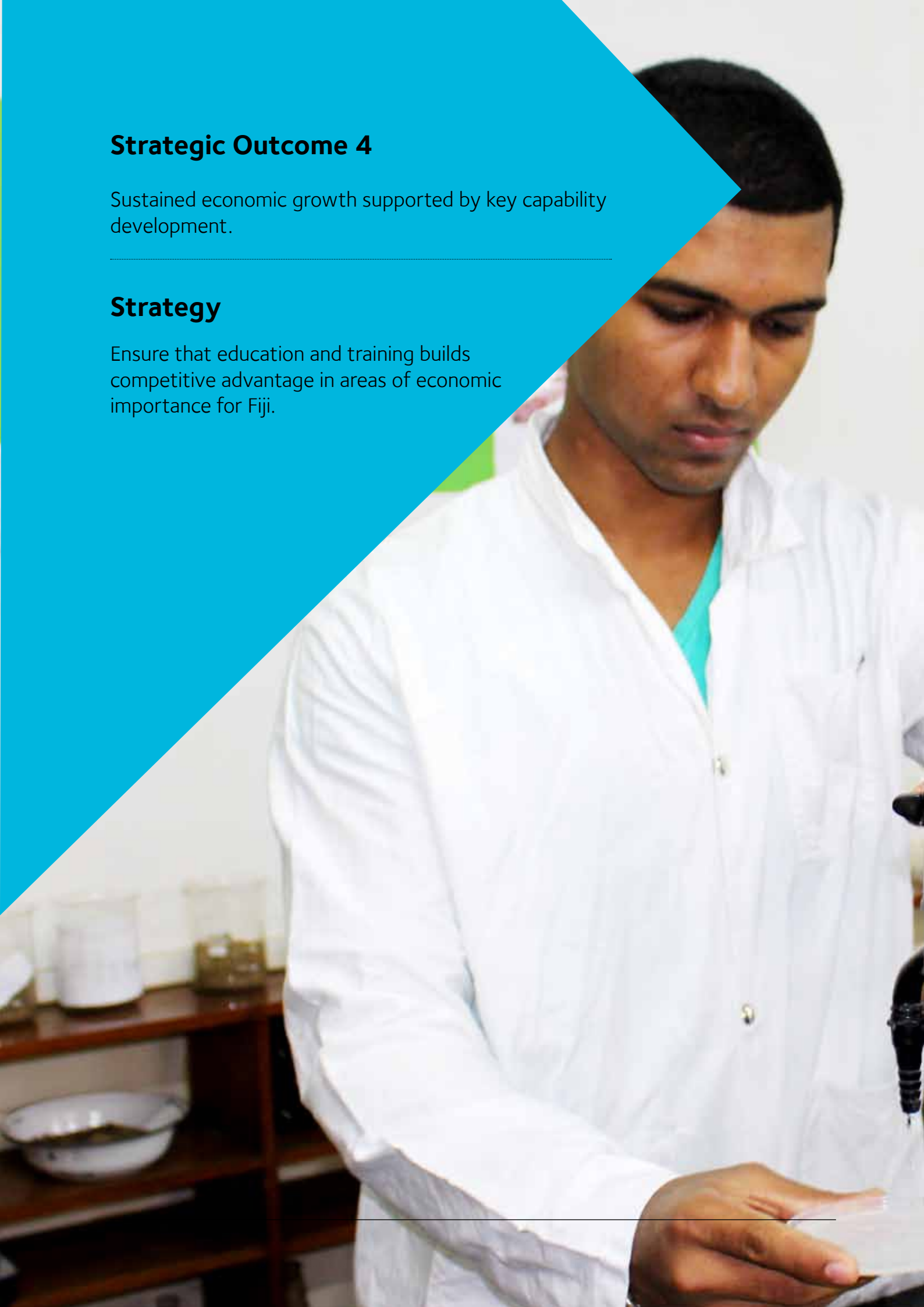
Based on the aforementioned outcomes, it was recommended that the learning content at HEIs should include a practical component, so that graduates could attain the necessary work experience that employer's desire. Graduate skills attributable to universities and their comparison and contrast with the requirements of employees, can be further explored.

Strategic Outcome 4

Sustained economic growth supported by key capability development.

Strategy

Ensure that education and training builds competitive advantage in areas of economic importance for Fiji.



Industry Academia Collaboration Meeting

From the 7th – 8th of September 2015, the FHEC hosted the Industry Academia (Providers) Collaboration Meeting at the USP: Japan-Pacific ICT Centre.

The FHEC initiated a collaboration meeting which sought to create synergies between the Industries and Academic providers to help ensure that high quality and relevant graduates are produced in Fiji.

The meeting was organised in joint collaboration with the USP - Pacific Technical and Further Education, FNU – National Training & Productivity Centre and the Suva Chamber of Commerce and Industry.

The main objectives of the collaboration were to seek Industry input to:

- Specifically define competencies needed for each vocation at various levels (Industry to clearly and specifically articulate the types of job required, and what are the specific competencies required);
- Engage industries to accommodate for student work experience attachment;
- Provide persons from industry to be independent assessors;
- Create industry workplace exposure for provider's teaching staff;

- Provide physical equipment where possible;
- Embed competency and cognitive licensing requirements in National Qualifications;
- Establish professional bodies for Vocational groups; and
- Create a mechanism for Industries to voice their concerns about the quality of programmes.

The meeting was attended by more than 200 representatives from the HEIs, faith-based organisations, civil society, professional organisations, non – governmental organisations and several industry sectors.

Mini-Industry Academia Collaboration Meeting (Tourism Sector)

Following the achievement of the Industry Academia Collaboration Meeting, a proposal was finalised on 15th October with the FNU to host a Mini-Industry Academia Collaboration Meeting.

On the 19th of November 2015, the Mini-Industry Academia Collaboration Meeting was conducted which focused on the tourism and hospitality sector. The meeting was attended by various tourism sector stakeholders which focused on the skills and competencies of employees; and ways they could assist HEIs in supplying quality graduates to boost their sector.

Strategic Outcome 5

An education and training culture based on continuous improvement.

Strategy

Innovation, research and continuing development to improve performance and create new opportunities for education and training is encouraged.



Funding Model 2015

The funding model contains the proposal for the funding of operational grants for HEIs.

The four types of funding from government to HEIs include:

- Operating Grants allocated and administered by the Commission;
- Capital Grants – allocated by the Strategic Planning office (MOE), but monitored for impact by the Commission and the Strategic Planning Office;
- Special Grants jointly allocated by different Government departments, e.g. MoH and MPI contributions to FNU; and
- Student scholarships and loans funding by the TSLB.

Many of the anomalies in the operations of HEIs continued to be addressed in 2015, through improved data collection methodologies, monitoring of allocated funds, initiation of

impact assessment and quality assurance systems being put into place.

The progressive implementation of the funding system is expected to rely on the linkages between HEIs and industries, professional associations, licensing bodies and relevant government ministries; to ensure that funding is properly directed to strategic areas for the higher education sector.

Ministerial visitation from the Solomon Islands

A Ministerial team from the Solomon Islands visited the FHEC on Tuesday, 21st April 2015. The team included the Minister for Education (Solomon Is) Dr Derek Sikua, High Commissioner, Patteson Oti and Deputy Secretary-James Bosamata. The Solomon Islands is currently reviewing its Education Act and is seeking the assistance of the FHEC. They want to have a separate Higher Education Act.

Financial Statement - 2015

- Commissioners' Report
- Statement by Commissioners
- Independent Auditor's Report
- Statement of Comprehensive Income
- Statement of Changes in Equity
- Statement of Financial Position
- Statement of Cash Flows
- Notes on the Financial Statements



**FII HIGHER EDUCATION COMMISSION
COMMISSIONERS' REPORT
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2015**

In accordance with a resolution of the commissioners', the Commission herewith submit the statement of financial position of the Commission as at 31 December 2015, the statement of comprehensive income, statement of changes in equity and statement of cash flows for the year ended on that date and report as follows:

Commissioners

The names of commissioners' in office at the date of this report are :

Dr. Milika Sobey - Chairperson
Pratarp Singh
Vimlesh Chand
Arun Narsey (co-opted member)
Dr. Sandhya Coll
Dr. Joseph Veramu

Principal Activities

The principal activities during the year remained unchanged and are in accordance with the mandated functions of the Commission as per Higher Education Act 2008.

Results

The net loss for the year was \$275,110 (2014 : loss \$165,834).

Bad and Doubtful Debts

Prior to the completion of the Commission's financial statements, the commissioners' took reasonable steps to ascertain that action had been taken in relation to writing off of bad debts. In the opinion of commissioners', no further provision for doubtful debts is required.

As at the date of this report, the commissioners' are not aware of any circumstances, which would render the amount written off for bad debts inadequate to any substantial extent.

Non Current Assets

Prior to the completion of the Commission's financial statements, the commissioners' took reasonable steps to ascertain whether any non current assets were unlikely to be realised in the ordinary course of its operation compared to their values as shown in the accounting records of the Commission. Where necessary these assets have been written down or adequate provision has been made to bring the values of such assets to an amount that they might be expected to realise.

As at the date of this report, the commissioners' are not aware of any circumstances, which would render the values attributed to non current assets in the Commission's financial statements misleading.

Unusual Transactions

Apart from these matters and other matters specifically referred to in the financial statements, in the opinion of the commissioners', the results of the operations of the Commission during the financial year were not substantially affected by any item, transaction or event of a material unusual nature, nor has there arisen between the end of the financial year and the date of this report any item, transaction or event of a material unusual nature likely, in the opinion of the commissioners', to affect substantially the results of the operations of the Commission in the current financial year, other than those reflected in the financial statements.

**FIJI HIGHER EDUCATION COMMISSION
COMMISSIONERS' REPORT (Continued)
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2015**

Events Subsequent To Balance Date

No matters or circumstances have arisen since the end of the financial year which significantly affected or may significantly affect the operations of the Commission, the results of those operations, or the state of affairs of the Commission in future financial years.

Other Circumstances

As at the date of this report:

- (i) no charge on the assets of the Commission has been given since the end of the financial year to secure the liabilities of any other person;
- (ii) no contingent liabilities have arisen since the end of the financial year for which the Commission could become liable; and
- (iii) no contingent liabilities or other liabilities of the Commission has become or is likely to become enforceable within the period of twelve months after the end of the financial year which, in the opinion of the commissioners, will or may substantially affect the ability of the Commission to meet its obligations as and when they fall due.

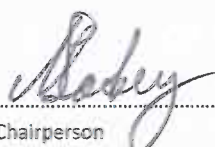
As at the date of this report, the commissioners' are not aware of any circumstances that have arisen, not otherwise dealt with in this report or the Commission's financial statements, which would make adherence to the existing method of valuation of assets or liabilities of the Commission misleading or inappropriate.

Commissioners' Benefits

Since the end of the previous financial year, no commissioner has received or become entitled to receive a benefit (other than those included in the aggregate amount of emoluments received or due and receivable by the commissioners' shown in the financial statements or received as the fixed salary of a full-time employee of the Commission or of a related entity) by reason of a contract made by the Commission or by a related entity with a commissioner or with a firm of which he or she is a member, or with an entity in which he or she has a substantial financial interest.

For and on behalf of the Commission and in accordance with a resolution of the commissioners'.

Dated this 29th day of June 2017.


.....
Chairperson


.....
Commissioner


**FJI HIGHER EDUCATION COMMISSION
STATEMENT BY COMMISSIONERS'
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2015**

In accordance with a resolution of the Commission, we state that in the opinion of the commissioners' :

- (i) the accompanying statement of comprehensive income of the Commission is drawn up so as to give a true and fair view of the results of the activities of the Commission for the year ended 31 December 2015;
- (ii) the accompanying statement of changes in equity of the Commission is drawn up so as to give a true and fair view of the changes in equity of the Commission for the year ended 31 December 2015;
- (iii) the accompanying statement of financial position of the Commission is drawn up so as to give a true and fair view of the state of affairs of the Commission as at 31 December 2015;
- (iv) the accompanying statement of cash flows of the Commission is drawn up so as to give a true and fair view of the cash flows of the Commission for the year ended 31 December 2015;
- (v) the financial statements have been prepared in accordance with International Financial Reporting Standards for Small and Medium-sized Entities;
- (vi) at the date of this statement, there are reasonable grounds to believe that the Commission will be able to pay its debts as and when they fall due ; and
- (vii) all related party transactions have been adequately recorded in the books of the Commission.

For and on behalf of the Commission and in accordance with a resolution of the commissioners'.

Dated this 29th day of June 2017.


.....
Chairperson


.....
Commissioner

OFFICE OF THE AUDITOR GENERAL

Excellence in Public Sector Auditing



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INDEPENDENT AUDITOR'S REPORT

Report on the Audit of the Financial Statements

I have audited the accompanying financial statements of Fiji Higher Education Commission, which comprise the statement of financial position as at 31 December 2015, the statement of comprehensive income, statement of changes in equity, statement of cash flows for the year then ended and a summary of significant accounting policies and other explanatory information as set out in notes 1 to 24.

Management's Responsibility for the Financial Statements

The Commissioners and management are responsible for the preparation and fair presentation of these financial statements in accordance with International Financial Reporting Standards for Small and Medium- sized Entities. These responsibilities include: designing, implementing and maintaining internal controls relevant to the preparation and fair presentation of financial statements that are free from material mis-statements, whether due to fraud or error, selecting and applying appropriate accounting policies, and making accounting estimates that are reasonable in the circumstances.

Auditor's Responsibility

My responsibility is to express an opinion on these financial statements based on my audit. I have conducted my audit in accordance with International Standards on Auditing. Those standards require that I comply with ethical requirements and plan and perform the audit to obtain reasonable assurance about whether the financial statements are free from material misstatement.

An audit involves performing procedures to obtain audit evidence about the amounts and disclosures in the financial statements. The procedures selected depend on the auditor's judgment, including the assessment of the risks of material misstatement of the financial statements, whether due to fraud or error. In making those risk assessments, the auditor considers internal control relevant to the Commission's preparation and fair presentation of the financial statements in order to design audit procedures that are appropriate in the circumstances, but not for the purpose of expressing an opinion on the effectiveness of the Commission's internal control. An audit also includes evaluating the appropriateness of accounting policies used and the reasonableness of accounting estimates made by management, as well as evaluating the overall presentation of the financial statements.

I believe that the audit evidence I have obtained is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for my audit opinion.

Audit Opinion

In my opinion, the financial statements presents fairly in all material respects, the financial position of Fiji Higher Education Commission as at 31 December 2015 and of the statement of comprehensive income and changes in equity and its statement of cash flows for the year ended in accordance with International Financial Reporting Standards for Small and Medium-sized Entities.

Emphasis of Matter

Without qualifying the audit opinion attention is drawn to the following matter:

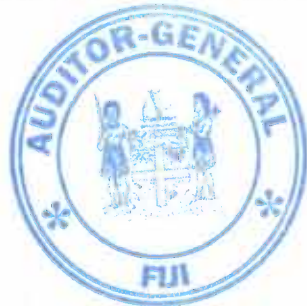
As stated in note 22 of the Notes to the Financial Statements, the Commission collected and disclosed revenue from registration fees, annual fees and renewal of registration fees totaling \$48,850 which was deposited in the Consolidated fund account of the Government. The Commission has not carried out a detailed survey of the institutes registered with the Commission in 2015. Therefore, the Commission is not in a position to determine if all institutes operating in Fiji and operation in 2015 were registered and paid their registration fees.

Other Matters

Deficiencies in internal controls were noted in the area of budgeting, bank reconciliation, procurement and payroll and as such there is a reasonable possibility that material misstatements or fraudulent activities would not be prevented or would not be detected in a timely manner.



Ajay Nand
AUDITOR GENERAL



Suva, Fiji
5 July 2017

**FUJI HIGHER EDUCATION COMMISSION
STATEMENT OF COMPREHENSIVE INCOME
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2015**

	Notes	2015 \$	2014 \$
REVENUE			
Government grant	3(h)	1,359,599	1,247,579
FNU grant		-	472
MFAT grant		134,678	-
EU PAC TVET		105,000	-
Release of deferrred income	14	50,206	44,195
Other refunds		704	-
Total operating revenue		1,650,187	1,292,246
EXPENSES			
Depreciation and amortisation expense	5.2	(50,206)	(44,195)
Salaries and employee costs	5.1	(1,096,364)	(993,026)
Operating expenses	5.2	(778,727)	(420,859)
Total operating expenses		(1,925,297)	(1,458,080)
Operating loss for the year		(275,110)	(165,834)
Other comprehensive income		-	-
Total comprehensive loss for the year		(275,110)	(165,834)

The statement of comprehensive income is to be read in conjunction with the accompanying notes.

**FJI HIGHER EDUCATION COMMISSION
STATEMENT OF CHANGES IN EQUITY
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2015**


	2015	2014
	\$	\$
ACCUMULATED FUND		
Balance at the beginning of the year	815,044	980,878
Loss for the year	(275,110)	(165,834)
Accumulated Fund at end of the year	539,934	815,044

The statement of changes in equity is to be read in conjunction with the accompanying notes.

**FJI HIGHER EDUCATION COMMISSION
STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL POSITION
AS AT 31 DECEMBER 2015**

	Notes	2015 \$	2014 Restated \$
CURRENT ASSETS			
Cash and cash equivalents	10	669,410	920,455
Receivable from staff	6	213	213
Other debtors, deposits and prepayments	7	80,338	16,629
Total current assets		749,961	937,297
NON CURRENT ASSETS			
Property, plant and equipment	11	218,196	164,856
Intangible assets	12	133,292	68,738
Total non current assets		351,488	233,594
TOTAL ASSETS		1,101,449	1,170,891
CURRENT LIABILITIES			
Trade payables and accruals	8	72,334	27,009
Deposits	16	7,341	-
Provisional tax		982	-
Provision for annual leave	15	50,468	2,327
Deferred income	13	430,390	326,511
Total current liabilities		561,515	355,847
TOTAL LIABILITIES		561,515	355,847
NET ASSETS		539,934	815,044
ACCUMULATED FUNDS		539,934	815,044

Signed on behalf of the Commission


.....
Chairperson


.....
Commissioner

The statement of financial position are to to be read in conjunction with the accompanying notes.

**FIJI HIGHER EDUCATION COMMISSION
STATEMENT OF CASH FLOWS
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2015**

	Notes	2015 \$	2014 \$
Cash flow from Operating Activities			
Receipt of grants		1,657,526	1,516,703
Payments to suppliers and employees		(1,768,170)	(1,336,463)
Net cash (used in) / provided by Operating Activities		<u>(110,644)</u>	<u>180,240</u>
Cash flow from Investing Activities			
Acquisition of plant and equipment		(140,401)	(240,965)
Net cash (used in) Investing Activities		<u>(140,401)</u>	<u>(240,965)</u>
Net decrease in cash and cash equivalents		(251,045)	(60,725)
Cash and cash equivalents at the beginning of the year		920,455	981,180
Cash and cash equivalents at the end of the year	10	<u><u>669,410</u></u>	<u><u>920,455</u></u>

The statement of cash flows are to be read in conjunction with the accompanying notes.

**FIJI HIGHER EDUCATION COMMISSION
NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2015**

1. GENERAL INFORMATION

1.1 Reporting entity

Fiji Higher Education Commission is a government statutory body incorporated under the Higher Education Act 2008. The address of its registered office and principal place of operation is at 22 Gorrie Street, Suva.

2. BASIS OF PREPARATION

2.1 Basis of preparation of the financial statements

The financial statements of the Commission have been prepared under the historical cost convention. The financial statements are presented in Fijian dollars and all values are rounded to the nearest dollar.

2.2 Statement of compliance

The financial statements of the Commission have been prepared in accordance with International Financial Reporting Standards ("IFRS for SME's").

3. SUMMARY OF SIGNIFICANT ACCOUNTING POLICIES

The preparation of the Commission's financial statements requires management to make judgments, estimates and assumptions that affect the reported amounts of revenue, expenses, assets and liabilities, and the disclosure of contingent liabilities at the reporting date. However, uncertainty about these assumptions and estimates could result in outcomes that could require a material adjustment to the carrying amount of the asset or liability affected in the future.

a) Property, plant and equipment

Property, plant and equipment is stated at cost less accumulated depreciation and accumulated impairment losses. Such costs include the cost of replacing part of the plant and equipment when that cost is incurred, if the recognition criteria is met. Likewise, when a major inspection is performed, its cost is recognized in the carrying amount of the plant and equipment as a replacement if the recognition criteria are satisfied. All other repair and maintenance costs are recognized in income statement as incurred.

Depreciation is calculated on a straight line basis over the useful life of the asset as follows:

Office equipment	12% -25%
Furniture and fittings	12% -25%
Computer equipment	20% - 30%
Softwares	12% - 40%

An item of property, plant and equipment is derecognised upon disposal or when no future economic benefits are expected from its use or disposal. Any gain or loss arising on derecognition of the asset (calculated as the difference between the net disposal proceeds and the carrying amount of the asset) is included in statement of comprehensive income in the year the asset is derecognised.

The asset's residual values, useful lives and methods of depreciation are reviewed, and adjusted if appropriate, at each financial year end.

Software costs which does not form an integral part of the hardware is recognised as intangible assets in the year of acquisition.

3 SUMMARY OF SIGNIFICANT ACCOUNTING POLICIES (continued)

b) Receivables

Trade receivables are non-derivative financial assets with fixed or determinable payments that are not quoted in an active market. Trade receivables are initially recognised at original invoice (inclusive of VAT where applicable).

c) Cash and cash equivalents

For the purpose of statements of cash flows, cash equivalents include cash at bank.

d) Provisions

Provisions are recognised when the Commission has a present obligation (legal or constructive) as a result of a past event, it is probable that an outflow of resources embodying economic benefits will be required to settle the obligation and reliable estimate can be made of the amount of the obligation.

The amount recognised as a provision is the best estimate of the consideration required to settle the present obligation at reporting date taking into account the risk and uncertainties surrounding the obligations. Where a provision is measured using the cash flows estimated to settle the present obligations, its carrying amount is the present value of those cash flows.

When some or all of the economic benefits required to settle a provision are expected to be recovered from a third party, the receivables is recognised as an asset if it is virtually certain that recovery will be received and the amount of the receivables can be measured reliably.

e) Employee entitlements

Provisions are made for wages and salaries, annual leave estimated to be payable to employees at balance date on the basis of statutory and contractual requirements.

f) Taxes

Value Added Tax

Revenue, expenses and assets are recognised gross of the amount of Value Added Tax (VAT) except:

- where the VAT incurred on a purchase of assets or services is not recoverable from the taxation authority, in which case the VAT is recognised as part of the acquisition of the asset or as part of the expense item as applicable; and
- receivables and payables are stated with the amount of VAT included.

The net amount of VAT recoverable from, or payable to, the taxation authority is included as part of receivables or payables in the statement of financial position.

Further to above, this policy will come into effect from September 2016 as FRCA has waved VAT from 2010 to July 2016.

g) Trade and other payables

Liabilities for trade creditors and other amounts are carried at cost (inclusive of VAT where applicable) which is the fair value of the consideration to be paid in the future for goods and services received whether or not billed to the entity. Amounts payable that have been denominated in foreign currencies have been translated to local currency using the rates of exchange ruling at the end of the financial year.

**FIJI HIGHER EDUCATION COMMISSION
NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS (Continued)
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2015**

3 SUMMARY OF SIGNIFICANT ACCOUNTING POLICIES (continued)

h) Government grant

Government grants are recognised in the statements of the financial position initially as deferred income where there is reasonable assurance that they will be received and that the group will comply with the conditions attached to them.

Government grants related to assets including non-monetary grants at fair value, shall be presented in the statement of financial position either by setting up the grant as deferred income or deducting the grant in arriving at the carrying amount of the asset and in the case of the entity it is treated as deferred income.

i) Segment information

A business segment is a group of assets and operations engaged in providing products or services that are subject to risks and returns that are different from those of other business segments. A geographical segment is engaged in providing products and services within a particular economic environment that are subject to risks and returns that are different from those of segments operating in other economic environment.

(i) Industry segment

The Commission operates predominantly in the education sector.

(ii) Geographical segment

The Commission operates predominantly in Fiji and is therefore one geographical area for reporting purposes.

4 CRITICAL ACCOUNTING ESTIMATES AND JUDGEMENTS

a.) Depreciation

In relation to acquired property, plant and equipment, the commissioners and the management apply judgement to determine the depreciation period based on the expected useful lives of the respective assets. Where estimated useful lives or recoverable values have diminished due to technological change and market conditions, depreciation is accelerated. The commissioners' assessment of useful lives or recoverable amount involves making a judgement, at the particular point in time, about inherent uncertain future outcomes of events and conditions. Accordingly, subsequent events may result in outcomes that are significantly different from assessment.

b) Amortisation/impairment of intangible assets

In relation to acquired intangible assets, the commissioners' and management apply judgement to determine the amortisation period based on the expected useful live of the respective assets. Where estimated useful lives or recoverable values have diminished due to technological change or market conditions, amortization is accelerated or allowance for impairment is provided. The Commissions assessment of useful lives or recoverable amount involves making a judgement, at a particular point in time, about inherent uncertain future outcomes of events or conditions. Accordingly subsequent events may result in outcomes that are significantly different from assessment.

The commissioners' reasonably believe that no indicators for impairment exist as at balance date and therefore no impairment or provision was made during the year.

5. OPERATING EXPENSES	2015	2014
	\$	\$
5.1 EMPLOYEE BENEFIT EXPENSE		
Wages and salaries	945,878	863,028
Superannuation contributions	150,486	129,998
	<u>1,096,364</u>	<u>993,026</u>

FIJI HIGHER EDUCATION COMMISSION
NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS (Continued)
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2015

	Notes	2015 \$	2014 Re-stated \$
5.2 OPERATING EXPENSE			
Allowances	9	77,800	86,040
Depreciation and amortization		50,206	44,195
Travel and subsistence		252,478	107,927
Training Facilities and materials		440	1,470
Contingencies		-	767
Bank charges		2,233	2,995
Office equipment		-	684
Utility bills		44,538	34,440
Vehicle expense		19,305	54,416
Publication/subscription		108,790	17,576
Conference workshop seminars		71,393	-
Web based database		-	1,454
Other expenses		28,367	102,371
Audit fees		2,000	2,000
Consultancy fees		171,383	8,719
		<u>828,933</u>	<u>465,054</u>
6. RECEIVABLES			
Receivable from staff		213	213
		<u>213</u>	<u>213</u>
7. OTHER DEBTORS, DEPOSITS AND PREPAYMENTS			
Prepayments and other receivables		78,540	5,099
Provisional tax		-	8,732
Bond receivable		1,798	2,798
		<u>80,338</u>	<u>16,629</u>
8. TRADE PAYABLES AND ACCRUALS			
Trade creditors		36,787	2,863
Accruals and other liabilities		35,547	24,146
		<u>72,334</u>	<u>27,009</u>
9. ALLOWANCES			
Higher education commission		33,520	20,447
Fiji Qualification Council		3,923	4,005
Registration committee		9,868	9,678
Recognition committee		4,450	1,350
Assessors fees		23,350	39,930
Standard setting committee		2,689	2,580
Programme evaluators		-	8,050
		<u>77,800</u>	<u>86,040</u>

**FJI HIGHER EDUCATION COMMISSION
NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS (Continued)
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2015**

	2015 \$	2014 \$
10. CASH AND CASH EQUIVALENTS		
Cash and cash equivalents consist of cash at bank accounts all maintained with ANZ Bank.		
Government grant - a/c # 11447457	543,926	701,910
FNU grant - a/c # 10780690	118,301	218,545
INQAAHE - a/c # 12463126	49	-
APQN - a/c # 12463115	7,134	-
	<u>669,410</u>	<u>920,455</u>

11. PROPERTY, PLANT AND EQUIPMENT

	Office Equipment \$	Computer Equipment \$	Furniture & Fittings \$	Total \$
<u>Cost</u>				
Cost at beginning - at cost	38,824	145,795	43,395	228,014
Additions	10,740	44,781	30,954	86,475
Prior Period Adjustment	430	6,497	-	6,927
Closing balance	<u>49,994</u>	<u>197,074</u>	<u>74,349</u>	<u>321,417</u>
<u>Accumulated depreciation</u>				
Acc. Dep. at beginning	7,935	44,546	10,677	63,158
Depreciation for the year	5,241	33,477	5,667	44,385
Prior Period Adjustment	(1,898)	(1,671)	(754)	(4,323)
Closing balance	<u>11,278</u>	<u>76,352</u>	<u>15,590</u>	<u>103,221</u>
<u>Carrying amount</u>				
Carrying Amount at beginning	30,889	101,249	32,718	164,856
Carrying amount at year end	<u>38,716</u>	<u>120,721</u>	<u>58,759</u>	<u>218,196</u>

12. INTANGIBLE ASSETS

	Software \$	Database \$	Total \$
<u>Cost</u>			
Cost at beginning - at cost	24,918	49,415	74,333
Additions	34,879	33,060	67,939
Closing balance	<u>59,797</u>	<u>82,475</u>	<u>142,272</u>
<u>Accumulated depreciation</u>			
Acc. Dep. at beginning	5,595	-	5,595
Depreciation for the year	5,821	-	5,821
Prior Period Adjustment	(2,435)	-	(2,435)
Closing balance	<u>8,980</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>8,980</u>
<u>Carrying amount</u>			
Carrying amount at beginning	19,323	49,415	68,738
Carrying amount at year end	<u>50,817</u>	<u>82,475</u>	<u>133,292</u>

FIJI HIGHER EDUCATION COMMISSION
NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS (Continued)
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2015

	2015	2014
	\$	\$
13. DEFERRED INCOME		
Opening Balance	326,511	112,602
Additions	154,085	258,104
Release to income statement	<u>(50,206)</u>	<u>(44,195)</u>
	<u>430,390</u>	<u>326,511</u>
14. RELEASE OF DEFERRED INCOME		
Depreciation charge for the year	44,385	39,705
Amortization charge for the year	5,821	4,490
Release of deferred revenue to income statement	<u>50,206</u>	<u>44,195</u>
15. PROVISION FOR ANNUAL LEAVE		
Opening balance	2,327	1,877
adjustment to opening balance	60,100	-
Additions	63,243	4,368
	<u>125,670</u>	<u>6,245</u>
Leave taken	<u>(75,202)</u>	<u>(3,918)</u>
Closing balance at year end	<u>50,468</u>	<u>2,327</u>
16. DEPOSIT FOR CONFERENCE		
Registration fee - International Quality Assurance Agency for Higher Agency 2016 conference	90	-
Registration fee - Asia Pacific Quality Network 2016 conference	7,251	-
	<u>7,341</u>	<u>-</u>

17. COMMITMENTS AND CONTINGENCIES

- a) Capital expenditure commitments at balance date amounted to \$157,207. (2014: \$134,208)
- b) Contingent liabilities at balance date amounted to Nil. (2014 : Nil)
- c) Operating lease commitments at balance date amounted to Nil.(2014: \$7,212)

18. PRINCIPAL ACTIVITY

The Commission's principal activities is to carry out regulatory and facilitative role in the higher education sector, as specified under section (7) of the Higher Education Act 2008.

19. SUBSEQUENT EVENTS

There has not arisen in the interval between the end of the financial year and the date of this report any item, transaction or event of a material and unusual nature likely, in the opinion of the commissioners, to affect significantly the operations of the Commission in the subsequent financial period.

Further to above, the Commission has signed a FJ\$7,328,947 agreement with Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade (MFAT) of New Zealand on 27th June 2016.

20. COMPARATIVE FIGURES

Where necessary, amounts relating to prior years have been reclassified to facilitate comparison and achieve consistency in disclosure with current year amounts.

**FIJI HIGHER EDUCATION COMMISSION
NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS (Continued)
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2015**

21. COMMISSION DETAILS

Registered Office

The registered office of the Commission is located at:
22 Garrie Street
Red Cross Building
Suva
Fij Islands

Number of employees

As at balance date, the Commission employed a total of 37 employees.

22. COMMISSION TRANSACTIONS ADMINISTERED FOR THE FIJI GOVERNMENT

The Commission is responsible for collection of following revenue which are deposited directly by the Commission into the Government Consolidated fund:

	2015	2014
	\$	\$
Fees	48,850	11,800

The above fees represents application for registration fees, annual fees and renewal of registration fees.

23. RELATED PARTY DISCLOSURE

Management

The names of the management in office at any time during the year are:

Mrs. Salote Rabuka	Director
Mrs. Ronika Devi	Team Leader Corporate services
Mr. Robert Misau	Team Leader Funding and research
Mr. Eci Naisele	Team Leader Quality assurance
Mrs. Serasaini Vuki	Team Leader Professional services

The above key management personnel's who have the authority and responsible for planning, directing and controlling the activities of the Commission directly or indirectly during the year.

During the year, remuneration of the key management personnel was as follow:

Salaries and superannuation	261,757	208,479
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**FUJI HIGHER EDUCATION COMMISSION
 NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS (Continued)
 FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2015**

24. RE-STATEMENT OF 2014 BALANCES

The total balance for non current liability of \$75,778, and intangible asset of \$144,516 was retrospectively re-stated. This was due to the amount being verified and adjusted as there were no liability existed with Vtech Solutions for the upgrade of the Commission's database at year end.

Account	2014 audited \$	Effects \$	2014 re-stated \$
Non-current asset			
Intangible asset	144,516	(75,778)	68,738
Non-current liability			
Trade creditor	75,778	(75,778)	-



FIJI HIGHER EDUCATION COMMISSION

FIJI HIGHER EDUCATION COMMISSION

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