



*Creating Advanced Learning Experiences*

# THE-ICE Panel Session [Anu Mani ]



*'THE-ICE Accreditation Application Process - Applicant Institutions Perspectives- The University of the South Pacific, Fiji'*





## BACKGROUND- THE UNIVERSITY OF THE SOUTH PACIFIC (USP)

- ❁ Established in 1968 through a Royal Charter handed by Queen Elizabeth the Second and the head of the Commonwealth.
- ❁ Jointly owned by the governments of 12 member countries; Cook Islands, Fiji, Kiribati, Marshall Islands, Nauru, Niue, Solomon Islands, Tokelau, Tonga, Tuvalu, Vanuatu and Samoa.





- ❁ Has 3 faculties, which offer academic programmes ( Levels 7-10);
  - ❁ Faculty of Arts, Law and Education,
  - ❁ Faculty of Business and Economics, and
  - ❁ Faculty of Science Technology and Environment and 2 interdisciplinary college/centres;
  - ❁ Pacific Technical and Further Education (TAFE )and
  - ❁ Pacific Centre for Sustainable Development ( PACE SD)





## Background Continued.....

-  Pacific TAFE is a strategically amalgamated and integrated learning and teaching section which offers high quality Skills Based Qualifications (SBQ's – Levels 1-6 ), Foundation and Preliminary studies.
-  School of Tourism Hospitality & Management ( STHM) is a section under the Faculty of Business and Economics which is one of the best providers of tourism and hospitality education ( Levels 7-10) in the South Pacific and an international model for innovative teaching and research.





## THE ICE and The USP

- THE-ICE and the University have come a long way since 2010
- THE USP is proud to have THE ICE as the trusted external quality assurance partner
- Programmes from both Pacific TAFE and STHM have been accredited by THE ICE
- The STHM programmes were pre-accredited in 2010 and, in less than two (2) years' time, the successful completion of their full accreditation in June 2012.
- In 2015, through the introduction of the STHM, THE ICE became a cooperative partner of the Pacific Technical and Further Education (TAFE) as well.
- Currently Pacific TAFE has 4 qualifications fully accredited and 2 submitted for accreditation





## Re- Accreditation Process– Experience

- An email notification was received from the CEO of THE ICE in May 2017
- It was important that programmes of both sections be included in the re-accreditation process, through the completion of a Pacific TAFE-specific and STHM application Proforma.
- Each School had a key person responsible for collecting and compiling all the documentary evidence required to submit a complete application.
- A lengthy process but a learning curve for STHM and Pacific TAFE
- The importance of this process was on how vital it was for staff to keep records stored systematically and in a central location for future reference.
- It took STHM a longer time due to the internal changes in the leadership role.
- An out-going Head of School during this application delayed the process and required some changes to the application.





## Phase 1 – Completion of application Pro Forma

- STHM and Pacific TAFE completed their respective sections of the application proforma
- A Zoom meeting session with staff of The ICE (In this meeting clarifications were provided on how the re accreditation proforma was to be completed the steps involved in the whole process.)
- Continuous communication with THE ICE remained in place during the course of the documentation preparation work.
- THE-ICE Staff played a significant role in guiding us through the re-accreditation process and the subsequent completion of the application.





## Phase 1 continued

- Relevant staff of STHM and Pacific TAFE met a few times to discuss the content of the draft proforma and make additions to the content
- Information synchronization was done in these meetings.
- A lot of email correspondences went back and forth between the two Schools to ensure that relevant information was thorough and complete.
- The appointment of Dr Thomas Bauer as Acting Head of School for STHM was an added bonus due to his experience as an auditor for THE-ICE. He offered valuable guidance and feedback at each stage of the application.





## Phase 2– Submission

- After the Proforma was completed by designated staff, it went through the Heads of School of both sections for final endorsement
- Evidence of supporting information in the Pro forma was collated and added as Appendices
- The final completed proforma was signed off and submitted to THE ICE for assessment and Site Audit preparations.
- Due to the internal changes with STHM, a Site Audit was recommended for April 30<sup>th</sup>, 2018, by Dr Andy Nazarechuk.







## Phase 3– Assessment by THE ICE

- ☀ THE ICE scrutinised the submission and provided comments to the STHM
- ☀ Issues raised by THE-ICE were attended to; clarifications were made where there were doubts.
- ☀ These were nothing major but it also demonstrated how the accreditation process worked and that information must always be well defined and thought through.
- ☀ It was evident that the assessment conducted by THE ICE staff was very thorough and detailed.





## Phase 4 – Site Audit Preparations

- ☀ A date for the Site audit was communicated by THE ICE.
- ☀ The STHM and Pacific TAFE prepared for the Site Audit ensuring that all relevant documents and evidences were in place for the audit.
- ☀ All documentary evidences that were required were collated for the auditor
- ☀ The Site audit day programme was planned, drafted, and agreed to by all the three teams.





## Phase 5 – Site Audit by THE ICE auditor

- The auditor from the ICE visited the USP on 30/04/18 and met with staff from Pacific TAFE and STHM to verify the information submitted in the re accreditation application.
- The site audit was a free consultation and learning experience for staff of both sections
- There was both formal and informal interaction between auditor and staff.
- We view our work with ICE as a collaboration and were able to gain some great insights into from our discussions.
- For example a common part of the tourist experience in Fiji is a Kava Ceremony, this (under various local names), is such a common part of Pacific culture that we have tended to assume any local person can do this, our auditor was able to comment on his experiences in local hotels as a tourist indicating a range in the quality of this experience for guests and as a result we are adding specific skills around show casing local culture into our delivery.





# Cookery and Hospitality Students in Action





## Phase 6 – Audit Report and Re accreditation

- Site audits are great for an School especially if the School is operating smoothly.
- It's also a validation of level of conformity to the standards of THE ICE which needs to be maintained at all times.
- Recommendations from the Re- Accreditation process becomes important milestones for the University to attend to
- Overall THE ICE has continued to provide advice and assist the accredited institutions
- It is one of the only accreditation agency that provides scaffolding to its members in an ongoing basis

THE END

