



The Campus This Week

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UNRE prepares for external quality assurance audit

OUR VISION

Advancing Knowledge for Sustainable Development

OUR MISSION

To develop into a sustainable University through delivery of innovative research, quality teaching and learning, developing staff and students as alumni agents for positive change.

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PAPUA NEW GUINEA University of Natural Resources and Environment (PNG UNRE) is preparing for its third external academic audit, which will take place in June this year.

This process, facilitated by the Department of Higher Education, Research, Science and Technology (DHERST), is a requirement under the PNG National Standards for Higher Education and will be conducted by an independent panel of national and international academic experts.

This will be the university's third such audit - the first was held in 2013, followed by the second in 2019.

Two representatives from DHERST, Mr David Malongalong and Mr Terence Pogo Jima, visited both the Vudal and Popondetta campuses last month to provide guidance on finalizing the university's Self-Assessment Report (SAR), which is central to the audit.

Mr Jima emphasized that although the audit was originally scheduled for 2024, it had been deferred to this year and now calls for urgent, unified action by all sections of the university.

He said the report must contain factual and verifiable information.

Leading the internal preparation for this important exercise is Dr Caleb Breria, Acting Dean of the Centre for Postgraduate Studies and Research. The team has been working closely with academic departments and administrative sections to finalise the SAR.

"This audit is not just about ticking boxes - it's an opportunity to reflect on our strengths, identify areas for improvement, hence demonstrate our institutional readiness for the future," said Dr Breria.

"It reaffirms our commitment to deliver



▲ UNRE Senior Management Team and QA Working Team meet with the DHERST officers. Photo by Gloria Tenga.

quality education and remain accountable to our stakeholders."

The audit's outcome should provide a depth of introspection for PNG UNRE's reputation, operations, and future growth. A successful audit will reaffirm the university's registration status, open doors for the expansion of academic programs - particularly at the postgraduate level - and increase its attractiveness to both domestic and international partners. It will also position the university for enhanced government support and help raise its profile as a leader in natural resources, and sustainability-focused education.

PNG UNRE's Institutional audit follows the University of Goroka and University of Papua New Guinea audits which were conducted last year. The outcome of this year's audit will determine UNRE's continued registration and future growth.

"The reputational benefits of a successful audit are far-reaching," noted University Vice Chancellor Professor Aisak Pue.

"It validates our institutional integrity and assures our stakeholders - students, staff, alumni, partners, and sponsors - that PNG UNRE is delivering quality and relevant academic programs."

All University sections are encouraged to support the QA team's efforts.

Popondetta campus ICT launches #CleanICTAwareness campaign

THE ICT section of UNRE's Popondetta Campus has launched a proactive internal campaign at the campus to prepare for the upcoming External Institutional Quality Audit.

According to ICT officer, John Bosco Uralele, the initiative titled #CleanICTAwareness aims to promote professionalism, cleanliness, and responsible behavior among staff and students.

It will be implemented in collaboration with Human Resources and line managers at Popondetta Campus.

"There are several areas where we, as staff at PNGUNRE, need to improve," he said.

"As our country approaches the celebration of its 50th golden jubilee, it



▲ One of the signs put up as part of the campaign.

is a good time to reflect on our practices."

The campaign targets several key areas for improvement across campus such as:

- Maintaining cleanliness;
- Prohibiting the chewing of betelnut;
- Upholding professional dress standards;
- Promoting punctuality;
- Communication and coordination between

line managers and subordinates; and other related issues.

Mr Uralele said the ICT section will provide laminated signs that remind staff, students and visitors of the prohibition of chewing betelnut and spitting around campus.

The campaign also encourages the use of English in daily interactions, as well as appropriate dress

codes during work, classes, and practicals.

Mr Uralele emphasized that these habits will not only prepare the campus for visits by the DHERST External Institutional Quality Audit Team but will also instill a culture of discipline and pride at the campus.

Echoing the spirit of national pride, he said, "It starts with each and every one of us believing in ourselves. Together, we can lift our standards and help PNG grow by nurturing the leaders of the next 50 years."

With initiatives like #CleanICTAwareness, PNG UNRE's Popondetta Campus is demonstrating that quality assurance goes beyond documentation - it is about culture, attitude, and a shared commitment to excellence.

28th Graduation Ceremony
Friday April 25, 2025 | 08:30am - 12:30pm | Ruthley Hall, PNG UNRE Vudal

Banana fly identified as major threat to banana crops in ENB

A STUDY has confirmed that the banana fly, *Bactrocera musae* Tryon, is the primary pest affecting banana crops on the Gazelle Peninsula, causing significant losses for banana growers in East New Britain Province.

The research, conducted by researchers from PNG University of Natural Resources and Environment and the National Agriculture Quarantine and Inspection Authority - Kari Iamba, Loretta Abraham, Anastasia P. Kawi, Thecla Guaf, Alex Nugi, and David Tenakanai - was published in the *Journal of Entomological and Acarological Research* in 2024.

It found that *B. musae*, a fruit fly species belonging to the family Tephritidae and subfamily Dacinae, has become well-established in the region and is infesting bananas at various stages of maturity.

To assess infestation levels, the researchers collected banana fruit

samples from four locations on the Gazelle Peninsula - Burit, Kereba, Vudal, and Vunapalading.

At each site, twelve banana bunches were randomly selected and 100 individual fruits were removed from each bunch.

The fruits were weighed, thoroughly cleaned with rainwater three times, and then incubated in containers to monitor larval development.

The study found that the Kalapua bananas samples from Burit had the highest number of adult flies compared to the other three sites.

The banana fruits were categorized into three stages: "mature green," "mature ripe," and "immature green."

Mature green bananas had a higher abundance of adult flies than mature ripe bananas. In contrast, immature green bananas had the fewest adult flies.

By fruit weight, Burit had the highest infestation rate at 20.9%, while Vunapalading had the lowest at

11.9%. Vudal and Kereba recorded infestation rates of 16.8% and 14.7%, respectively.

Mature ripe bananas showed the highest infestation rate by weight at 37.1%, while immature green bananas had the lowest at just 2.04%. Mature green bananas had a moderate infestation rate of 17.1%.

In terms of fruit count, the least affected were immature green bananas, with only 1.8% infestation, followed by mature green bananas with 17.0%, and mature ripe bananas with the highest at 26.9%.

Geographically, the infestation levels of Kalapua bananas on the Gazelle Peninsula ranged from 11.9% to 20.9%, and the infestation levels across the different maturity stages varied from 2.04% to 26.9%.

Overall, the study confirms that the infestation of *Bactrocera musae* has increased, and the pest has firmly established itself on the Gazelle Peninsula.