

# ACADEMIC BOARD REVIEW

## PHASE 2

### FACULTY OF AGRICULTURE, FOOD AND NATURAL RESOURCES

FRIDAY 23 MAY 2003

## REPORT AND RECOMMENDATIONS

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*Note: This report draws upon the information provided in the documentation considered by the Review Team, as well as the discussions with staff and students. In some places, text from the Self Evaluation Report has been incorporated directly into this report.*

## **1 MEMBERSHIP**

### **1.1 Review Team**

Professor Judyth Sachs, Chair and Chair of the Academic Board

Professor Les Field, Acting PVC (Research)

Associate Professor Tony Masters, Faculty of Science

Associate Professor Michael Prosser, Director, Institute for Teaching and Learning

*with*

Ms Elizabeth Hanna, Executive Officer (Quality Assurance) (*Review Team Secretary*)

Ms Rachel Symons, Quality Assurance Officer (Teaching and Learning) (*Observer*)

### **1.2 Senior Faculty representatives**

1.2.1 The following senior Faculty representatives were met by the Review Team during the first interview:

Professor Les Copeland, Dean;

Associate Professor Fredoun Ahmadi-Esfahani (Discipline Leader: Economics Group);

Dr Stephen Cattle, Associate Dean, Undergraduate (Science degrees);

Professor Ivan Kennedy, Chair, Research Committee;

Associate Professor Mick O'Neill, Acting Discipline Leader (Sciences Group);

Associate Professor Harley Rose, Acting Pro-Dean;

Professor Peter Sharp, Director, Plant Breeding Institute;

Dr Balwant Singh, Associate Dean (Postgraduate);

Mrs Carolyn Tanner, Associate Dean, Undergraduate (Economics degrees).

Please note: some of these titles were interim at the time of the interview and were subsequently changed at a Faculty Meeting on 24 June 2003.

### **1.3 Students**

1.3.1 The Review Team met with two groups of students: twelve undergraduate students who came from the six degrees offered by the Faculty; and eleven research higher degree (RHD) students together with one Postgraduate coursework student (as there were insufficient numbers of Pg coursework students, this student joined the postgraduate research group for the purposes of the meeting). One RHD student took up the opportunity provided by the open meeting to raise issues on an individual basis.

1.3.2 The Review Team acknowledges the need to be careful about generalising views of a small group of students to the whole student body.

## **2 INTRODUCTION**

2.1 The Academic Board reviewed the Faculty's Teaching, Learning and Research Training on Wednesday 8 May 2002. The outcome of that May 2002 (Phase One) Review process was fifteen Recommendations. This current Phase Two Review process complements the Phase One Review, following-up on its recommendations and also considering the Faculty's activities and quality assurance arrangements in relation to the seven Goals of the University.

2.2 The Faculty has recently undergone a major restructure, becoming a single academic organisational unit. This will have two discipline groupings, one to manage the science degrees of the Faculty, and the other for the BAgEc and BResEc degrees. The new structure

was planned to be implemented in January 2003 but this was delayed until 01 May 2003. A name change for the Faculty, from the Faculty of Agriculture to the Faculty of Agriculture, Food and Natural Resources occurred in January 2002, which staff consider to be more reflective of the Faculty's teaching and research activities. (*See Commendation 1*)

- 2.3 The Team acknowledges that the Faculty has only just begun to implement its new organisational structure and appreciates that some of the points raised would be addressed as a matter of course.

### **3. GOAL ONE: QUALITY TEACHING AND LEARNING**

- 3.1 Appendix One provides a summary of the action taken by the Faculty in relation to each recommendation from the Faculty's Phase One review in May 2002, together with the Review Team's comments and conclusions. Further detail follows in relation to some of the recommendations. Information relating to teaching and learning activities not covered during the Phase One review is also provided.

#### **3.2 Communication in the Faculty**

- 3.2.1 Recommendation 1 from Phase 1 Review had recommended that, while informal communication mechanisms in the Faculty had worked well, the Faculty should introduce more effective formal mechanisms. The Review Team welcomed the advice that progress was in the process of being made, in relation to upgrading of the Faculty's website and printed materials, the Faculty's stated objective of having a webpage for each unit of study, planned upgrading of information on policies and degree programs, and the introduction of electronic academic bulletin boards.

- 3.2.2 The Team was pleased to note that staff were aware of the content of the Self-Evaluation Report (SER). (*See Commendation 2*)

- 3.2.3 However, discussions with the group of students revealed that there was still much work to be done in this area. Among the views expressed by undergraduates was that basic information on units of study was often not distributed until well into the semester, that there was frequent confusion and lack of information about assignment deadlines and requirements, and that information flow in general did not work well. Higher degree research students also commented that communication was not effective. (*See Recommendation 4*)

#### **3.3 WebCT**

- 3.3.1 Some students considered that the Faculty did not make good use of WebCT and that this was a shortcoming. The Faculty compared poorly with other Faculties in this regard.

#### **3.4 Graduate attributes**

- 3.4.1 Recommendation 3 from Phase 1 had stated that staff should "communicate the University generic skills to the students more clearly, and that these skills should be more carefully mapped to the curriculum in order to ensure consistent outcomes." In the SER the Faculty had described its response to this as "Staff have been advised to address this recommendation in their teaching." The Dean advised the Team that the issue of generic skills had been discussed in various forums in the Faculty and is still under consideration. It will be a key focus of discussion at the next staff retreat. A unit of study called *Professional Skills* had been run in the fourth year, and material of this nature was incorporated into the Fourth Year agricultural and resource economics unit *Contemporary Issues*, but the Faculty had recognised that a structured approach to skills is needed earlier. Most units incorporate generic skills into assessment tasks.

- 3.4.2 The Dean advised that the Faculty planned to conduct a major curriculum review, commencing with the four Science degrees in second semester 2003, and that this will include generic skills. Members of relevant industry and professions have already been consulted in preparation for the review process. *(See Recommendation 14)*
- 3.4.3 The Team's discussions with students suggested that more work was still needed in the area of graduate attributes. Some had found the fourth year professional skills unit out of place and thought that it would be better if skills were integrated throughout degree programs from the start. They considered that the expectations of students were not clear in terms of skills development. Some students had found group work to be of value. *(See Commendation 2 and Recommendation 1)*

### **3.5 Bachelor of Animal Science (BAnimSc) degree**

- 3.5.1 The Review Team had noted negative comments in the SCEQ results regarding the Bachelor of Animal Science degree, the key concern being that the content of the degree did not meet the expectations of many students. The Dean acknowledged that there was an incorrect perception among students entering the course that it could provide an alternative route to the Veterinary Science degree. The title and content of the degree is currently a significant issue for the Faculty. He also pointed out that the course philosophy centred on teaching animal science in the context of food production systems and natural resource management and so the degree contains substantial components of animal and plant science. This Faculty view of the inter-relationship between crop and animal science is not well understood by students and many do not expect the extent of the emphasis on crop science. The Faculty, however, considers that a balanced approach to rural production that encompasses both crop and animal science is important in terms of the employability of graduates.
- 3.5.2 The view was expressed by students that the BAnimSc degree did not accord with student expectations. They had anticipated and wanted a stronger focus on animal production and conservation issues. They had also not expected the first two years of the degree to be the same as the Agricultural Science degree. They expressed the view that the BAnimSc degree was simply the BAgSc degree with a different title (and different UAI entry score). They were under the impression that the drop-out rate for the program is high, particularly at the end of first year.
- 3.5.3 The Faculty indicated its intention to reconsider the promotional materials and marketing strategies for the BAnimSc degree, and its links with employers and career paths. The Review Team considered that this is an important issue which should be addressed in the immediate future. *(See Recommendation 2)*

### **3.6 Quality of Teaching**

- 3.6.1 One of the recommendations from Phase 1 was that the Faculty should make further efforts to improve the quality of teaching across the Faculty. Undergraduate students indicated to the Review Team that, on the whole, it was their perception that the quality of teaching had improved and that staff put a lot of preparation and effort into their teaching. *(See Commendation 4)*
- 3.6.2 The Review Team was advised by the postgraduate coursework student that there was joint teaching of undergraduate and postgraduate students in the Faculty. Noting that this contravenes Academic Board policy, the Review Team recommended that this practice be discontinued. *(See Recommendation 6)*

### **3.7 Excellence in Teaching awards**

- 4.7.1 Although the Faculty has developed a Faculty Excellence in Teaching Award since the Phase 1 Review, no awards have been made. To date, staff have not been forthcoming in applying

for it or University excellence in teaching awards. This is disappointing as there is evidence of outstanding teaching occurring in the Faculty.

### **3.8 Feedback on assessment**

- 3.8.1 Students described mixed experiences on feedback on assessment. There were examples where the level of feedback had been excellent. Students had particularly appreciated tutorials devoted to going through assignment problems. In general, however, it was felt that there was insufficient feedback on assessed work. *(See Recommendation 5)*

### **3.9 Research-led teaching**

- 3.9.1 While noting that some staff did draw on research in their teaching, undergraduate students met by the Review Team, on the whole, did not feel that there was a strong approach in the Faculty to research-led teaching. They considered that there was greater integration of research and teaching in the units of study that they completed in the Faculty of Veterinary Science

### **3.10 Research training**

- 3.10.1 Recommendation 12 of the Phase 1 Review had recommended that “the Faculty consider making improvements in the resources and accommodation for research students.” The Faculty’s response in the SER was that 30 new computers had been purchased and a Mac lab converted to PC. A postgraduate computing lab for economics students was equipped with nine new Mac computers. In addition the Team was advised that the Faculty’s Research Committee had taken a decision to provide a computer for each research higher degree student (RHD) desk. The Faculty acknowledged that accommodation is still an issue in some areas of research, but considered that, on the whole, RHD provision was improving and that further improvements will be in place soon.
- 3.10.2 The Faculty’s strategies to foster students’ sense of being part of a strong research community include the running of weekly research seminars. End of year interviews are held for first year postgraduate research students. Most research students have both a supervisor and an associate supervisor. Students welcomed the improvements that had taken place in their student experience since the current Associate Dean (Postgraduate) had been appointed. However, they considered that there was little communication between different research groups and that communication in general in the Faculty was not good. They recently approached the Dean and were successful in gaining funds to organise social events for RHD students. Some research groups on the main campus have regular morning teas which were also considered to be valuable. Students considered that the new Faculty Postgraduate Handbook was a very positive initiative, but not all students met by the Team had received it, notably those from Cobbitty. *(See Commendation 4 and Recommendation 8)*
- 3.10.3 An issue raised at the Phase 1 Review was that of students based at the Cobbitty site feeling isolated and removed from the Faculty. Since then, the Faculty has tried to encourage students at Cobbitty to participate in seminars at the main campus by providing transport to and from Cobbitty. The Dean of Postgraduate Studies is also liaising with SUPRA to improve support for students based there. Staff were of the view that the student cohesion among students within the Institute at Cobbitty was good.
- 3.10.4 The Review Team of the Phase 1 Review had identified a low level of awareness among students of the University’s Intellectual Property (IP) rule. Since then, the Faculty has paid particular attention to IP issues during Induction processes. It has also been included in the Faculty’s research student handbook. Staff indicated the view that students whose research projects were industry linked now had a good awareness of IP issues. The Review Team suggested that IP awareness could be followed-up in the end of year interviews with first year RHD students. *(See Recommendation 9)*

- 3.10.5 The Review Team formed the view that many of the RHD students, particularly those working on non-industry funded projects, were unclear about the resources available to them for activities such as attending conferences, and about the procedures for applying for such resources.
- 3.10.6 It became clear to the Review Team that a number of RHD students working on non-industry linked projects were concerned about the level of resource support for their candidatures. These concerns were particularly strong among some international students, many of whom considered that the support for routine research supplies was inadequate (for example, no support for journal copying, no basic computer imaging facilities, no accessible CD burning facilities, and outdated and shared computer facilities). (*See Commendation 6*)

### **3.11 Quality assurance processes**

- 3.11.1 The Faculty uses the Institute of Teaching and Learning Unit of Study Evaluation questionnaire. Each unit is evaluated every three years. Results are considered by the Faculty Teaching and Learning Committee as well as by Unit Co-ordinators. The Faculty is aiming to achieve a minimum of 3 ½ out of 5 for all units. Where a unit is identified as under performing, the issue will be taken up by the Teaching and Learning Committee and the Leaders of Discipline Groups.
- 3.11.2 The Team was advised that, while staff have made considerable efforts to raise student awareness of and participation in the Staff Student Liaison Committee, these have been successful to a limited extent and staff felt that there was still more progress to be made. The numbers of students participating in the Committee is still not optimal. Improvements that have been made have included posting agendas, minutes, and outcomes on the web and ensuring that student reps are well briefed and supported. Undergraduate students met by the Review Team all were aware of this Committee and welcomed its role in giving them a voice and facilitating communications between staff and students. They indicated that they would like to be involved in the impending curriculum review.
- 3.11.4 Some RHD students expressed the view that formal communication and feedback systems between them and staff (for example for resolving problems or complaints) were not as effective as they might be. (*See Recommendation 3*)

## **4. GOAL TWO: DIVERSITY, ACCESS AND EQUITY**

- 4.1 The Faculty provides a range of scholarship schemes and flexible admissions schemes for students from a diversity of backgrounds and for disadvantaged students. The scheme enables students with a UAI five points below the cut-off to apply for admission on the basis of meeting criteria of appropriate prior learning and career motives. The Review Team welcomed these initiatives but suggested that the Faculty may wish to build formal mechanisms into its quality assurance processes for evaluating effectiveness through measuring outcomes against goals.
- 4.2 Students indicated that they valued the diversity of staff and students, particularly the international mix among both these groups.

## **5. GOAL THREE: EXCELLENCE IN RESEARCH**

- 5.1 The Faculty has a strong research culture and receives substantial external funding. It has several research centres with pinnacles of excellence across a range of areas. A large proportion of staff are considered to be 'research active'. The Faculty sees its research strength as one of its defining characteristics when compared with other agricultural faculties. However, it recognises the need for greater flow through of research achievement, to both staff and students, and expects that this will follow-on from the restructuring under the

steerage of the Associate Dean (Research). (Comment: As was foreshadowed, the Associate Dean Research was appointed at the next Faculty meeting after the interview)

## **6. GOAL FOUR: INTERNATIONALISATION**

- 6.1 The Faculty has international research links to current or recently-concluded international programs supported by the Australian Centre for International Agriculture Research, AusAid and IDP, in Vietnam, China, Indonesia, Cambodia, Papua New Guinea, Thailand and Fiji. Several Faculty staff are leaders of large ACIAR projects. The Faculty views the fact that several major projects have been renewed and expanded as an indicator that successful outcomes have been delivered.
- 6.2 The Faculty signed a Memorandum of Understanding in March 2003 with the Faculty of Agriculture at Kasetsart University, Bangkok for collaborations in research and teaching intensive courses to degree programs to postgraduate students in Thailand in a range of disciplines. The Review Team strongly suggests that the faculty put in place a systematic set of processes in place and engage in follow-up strategies to ensure they have appropriate QA processes to safeguard the quality and standards of courses offered.
- 6.3 The Faculty has a few international student exchanges and overseas field trips each year. Students met by the Team spoke enthusiastically of these opportunities. The Faculty's international student enrolment constitutes 7.7% of total enrolments. Faculty percentage enrolments compared to University % enrolments in 2002 were as follows: Undergraduate – Faculty 3.52%, University 12.62%; Postgraduate coursework – Faculty 48.72%, University 23.41%; Postgraduate Research – Faculty 17.14%, University 9.8%. (*See Recommendation 10*)
- 6.4 RHD students commented that they found the international mix of the student group very enriching, but that they would welcome more emphasis on developing nations for exchange programs.
- 6.5 The Faculty has a Director of International Programs who has responsibility for international student recruitment, mentoring and pastoral care. Various support activities are run such as afternoon teas for international students and workshops for English language.
- 6.6 In response to a question from the Team, some undergraduate students indicated that they found many of their units of study to be focused on NSW issues and that they thought that it would be beneficial to have a more international focus in the curriculum, which would help their employment prospects. Students from Agricultural Economics noted that their program had a less NSW-centric approach and addressed many national issues. These comments are drawn to the Faculty's attention for its consideration.

## **7. GOAL FIVE: ENGAGEMENT WITH INDUSTRY AND THE PROFESSIONS**

- 7.1 The Faculty has collaborative arrangements with CSIRO, NSW Agriculture and corporate stakeholders in agriculture, which present opportunities for inter-institution and inter-disciplinary research projects. The Faculty works closely with rural R&D corporations, producers and organizations engaged in, among others, natural resource management, agricultural policy, agribusiness and quarantine. The Faculty's professional links provide students with valuable opportunities for excursions, research projects, and professional experience placements. The Faculty is a major research provider to three CRCs associated with the cotton, rice and wheat industries. The Faculty, through the Plant Breeding Institute, is the major research provider to NuFlora and SunPrime Seeds, in which the University is an equity partner
- 7.2 Students indicated that they valued highly the input of guest speakers from industry/professions. This tended to happen more in the latter years of the program and it was

felt that this exposure also would have been beneficial in the earlier years. Students also spoke highly about field trips, excursions and professional experience. (*See Commendations 7-9*)

## **8. GOAL SIX: EFFECTIVE MANAGEMENT**

- 8.1 The Faculty has close links with the Faculty of Veterinary Science, the Faculty of Economics and Business, the Faculty of Science, and the Faculty of Rural Management. This provides many benefits as well as challenges. Clear lines of communication are required as are unambiguous statements about expectations of students and faculties.
- 8.2 The Faculty relies on service teaching from a number of faculties. It would appear that there is some variation in the quality of the delivery and content of these units of study. The Team encourages the Faculty to liaise with these service providers to ensure consistency and high standards.
- 8.3 The Faculty has been communicating with students via email for some time, but nevertheless the Review Team heard reports of students using different accounts than their University ones, and of some confusion regarding email communication networks.
- 8.4 The Team was aware that the Faculty is working on its IT strategy and that some improvements have been made since last year. Good initiatives included the aim to put all unit of study outlines on the Web. However, it considered that further improvements were necessary, noting the negative feedback from some students on the lack of uniformity of software, lack of good use of WebCT, lack of computers for research students and generally poor communications. (*See Recommendation 1*)
- 8.5 Some students voiced concern about health and safety in laboratories. This comment is drawn to the Faculty's attention for action.
- 8.6 The physical environment in which some staff worked was commented on. The Ross Street building was in need of major refurbishment. Staff commented that these sub-standard working and teaching conditions affected their productivity.

## **9. GOAL SEVEN: SERVICE TO THE COMMUNITY**

- 9.1 The Faculty has a range of community initiatives including: the Student Land Care Society, which has received an external grant for revegetation; annual visits to up to ten high schools, including presentation of lectures on HSC syllabus topics in areas of the Faculty's expertise; annual Agriculture Camp weekend for about 70 Year 11 students; hosting teachers and careers advisors (approximately 30 attended the Faculty's 2003 presentation); participation in agricultural shows; and staff participation in various boards and professional bodies, in Australia and overseas. The Land Care Society is primarily run by students but supported by the Faculty. Students found it very valuable and gained insight and hands-on experience in topics such as gully erosion, water conservation, salinity, water sampling, and reforestation.

## **10. CONCLUSIONS**

### **10.1 Commendations**

#### General

- 1 The Faculty is strongly commended for its change of name. This is considered to better represent the central aims and philosophy of the Faculty and makes a claim for its future strategic directions. (see Section 2)

### Goal One: Quality Teaching and Learning

- 2 The Team commended the sense of ownership by staff of the Self-Evaluation Report and the process of consultation in its preparation. (see Section 3.2.2)
- 3 The Team welcomed the fact that progress had been made in raising the profile of graduate attributes. (see Section 3.4)
- 4 The quality of teaching has improved since the last Review according to feedback received from students during the meeting. Nevertheless, there is still room for improvement as it is below the university average. Overall satisfaction also was below average – 67 compared with University of Sydney average of 70. (see Section 3.6.1)
- 5 The Faculty's Postgraduate Student Handbook is a positive initiative (although distribution should be extended to all postgraduate students). (see Section 3.10.2)
- 6 While the improvements that have taken place in the resource support for research higher degree students was welcomed, it is recommended that further work be done to ensure a quality student experience across the range of subject areas. Particular attention needs to be paid to providing an appropriate level of resource support for non-CRC and international students. It is also suggested that efforts be made to improve dialogue with students regarding resource issues. (see Section 3.10.6)

### Goal Five: Engagement with Industry and the Professions (see Section 7.2)

- 7 The Faculty's close ties with the profession/industry (such as Sydney Water) are an example of good practice and clearly bring benefits to students.
- 8 The professional experience components of programs are very valuable, although students would benefit more if a more co-ordinated approach is taken to providing full and timely feedback.
- 9 Staff participation in industry and professional bodies and boards is commendable.

## **10.2 Recommendations**

### Goal One: Quality Teaching and Learning

- 1 The Faculty should consider developing a more proactive and co-ordinated strategy to integrating graduate attributes throughout degree programs. (see Section 3.4)
- 2 Major work needs to be done so address the current mismatch between student expectations and the content of the Bachelor of Animal Science degree. The Faculty should establish a group to consider the program philosophy, promotional materials, marketing strategy, and target career options for the degree. Students should be consulted as part of this process, with a view to creating a higher level of student satisfaction and a more clearly articulated program identity. Deliberations should also involve the Faculties of Veterinary Science and Rural Management.
- 3 Consideration should be given to ways to improving the student experience in general. The Review Team perceived unevenness in levels of student satisfaction. (see Section 3.11)
- 4 Priority should be given to improving communication in the Faculty in relation to a range of activities. This should include, for example, transmission of information to students (and a co-ordinated approach to email communication), ensuring that all students receive accurate unit of study outlines in a timely fashion, and ensuring that program promotional materials accurately describe programs of study. (see Section 3.2.3)

- 5 While there have clearly been improvements in the provision of feedback on work to students, the Review Team found that this was patchy, and recommended a more co-ordinated Faculty strategy supported by quality assurance mechanisms to ensure implementation. For example, the Faculty might wish to set maximum deadlines for feedback. (see Section 3.8.1)
- 6 Academic Board policy must be complied with in relation to parallel teaching of Masters and undergraduate students. The Review Team suggests that high achieving undergraduate students take masters courses so that they too are extended. By so doing the standards and expectations of high achieving undergraduate students are being met and postgraduate students are being provided with units of study at an appropriate level. (see Section 3.6.2)
- 7 Consideration needs to be given to finding ways to better support the language needs international and NESB students.
- 8 The Faculty should consider providing handbooks, in a similar vein to the excellent Postgraduate Student Handbook, to all students. (see Section 3.10.2)
- 9 The profile of the University's Intellectual Property rule should be raised among the student body. (see Section 3.10.4)

#### Goal Four: Internationalisation

- 10 It is recommended that the Faculty consider whether it might be appropriate to extend student professional experience opportunities to encompass more developing countries, perhaps working with NGOs and organisations such as AusAid. (see Section 6.3)

#### Goal Six: Effective Management

- 11 The Faculty should give priority to improving its IT strategy, including in particular improving systems of communication (such as email and the Web) and implementing a proper and fully supported WebCT strategy (which would need to be supported by appropriate staff development). (see Section 8.4)
- 12 The Faculty should implement a succession planning strategy. The Review Team perceived a need for support and development for staff taking up management positions. The Faculty may also wish to provide greater encouragement to staff to undertake staff development, such as teaching programs offered by the University's Institute of Teaching and Learning.
- 13 It is recommended that the Faculty keep a watching brief on the effectiveness and sustainability of the new structure as it beds down.

#### Quality assurance issues

- 14 While the impending review of the undergraduate programs was welcome, the Review Team considered that this was somewhat overdue and recommends that the Faculty implement a more systematic approach to faculty and program review procedures. (See Section 3.4.2)

Prof Judyth Sachs  
Chair, Academic Board  
Chair, Review Team

1 September 2003

## APPENDIX ONE: REPORT ON RECOMMENDATIONS FROM PHASE ONE REVIEW

### Implementation of recommendations of the Academic Board Review of the Faculty's Teaching and Learning programs in 2002

Recommendation	Action
<p>1. That although informal mechanisms are working well, due mainly to the small size of the Faculty, more effective formal mechanisms should be introduced. This would aid in the dissemination of information to all staff.</p>	<p>To better disseminate information to students and staff, Faculty will by the end of 2003 significantly upgrade its website and printed material. The project is being undertaken with the assistance from a grant from the Teaching Improvement Fund for 2003. Separate password-protected intranet sites are being developed for students and staff.</p> <p>The goal is to have a separate webpage for each unit of study, that will include information on the expectations of students and assessment standards, how the teaching relates to generic skills, teaching material appropriate for electronic distribution, and if relevant, any related research being carried out in the Faculty. Information on policies and generic aspects of the undergraduate and postgraduate degree programs (eg, special consideration, the Professional Experience Program, field trips, generic skills, OH &amp; S issues, IP, etc.) will also be upgraded and collated for electronic dissemination and preparation of booklets. Electronic academic bulletin boards will be developed for undergraduate and postgraduate students, and staff.</p>
<p>2. That the Faculty consider ways of informing research higher degree students of their rights and responsibilities under the University Intellectual Property rule.</p>	<p>Faculty produced a Manual and held an Induction Day for postgraduate students in 2003 (Manual included in Appendix 3)</p>
<p>3. That the staff communicate the University generic skills to the students more clearly, and that these skills should be more carefully mapped to the curriculum in order to ensure consistent outcomes.</p>	<p>Staff have been advised to address this recommendation in their teaching</p>

<p>4. That further efforts are needed to improve the quality of teaching across the Faculty.</p>	<p>The Faculty's intranet sites will provide standardised unit outlines, details of assessment, goals and expectations, appropriate content material.</p> <p>From 2003, Discipline Leaders and Unit Coordinators will implement processes to review teaching programs in the discipline groupings for quality and relevance of teaching and relevance of assessment to learning objectives as specified in unit outlines. This issue will be addressed at the Faculty's planning forum in June</p> <p>All new staff appointed to the Faculty will be encouraged to participate in programs from teaching development</p> <p>The Faculty's 2003 Budget has an allocation of funds for teaching improvements and initiatives, to be developed by Discipline Leaders and T &amp; L Committee under new structure</p>
<p>5. That the Faculty consider introducing a more consistent induction process for new and casual staff.</p>	<p>To be considered by AGMAC under new structure</p>
<p>6. That the Faculty consider the development of a Faculty level teaching excellence award.</p>	<p>Faculty has established a Teaching Excellence Award, which will be available from 2003</p>
<p>7. That the Faculty nominate lecturers from Soil Science 2 for a University excellence in teaching award.</p>	<p>The key staff member will be on SSP in 2003/04</p>
<p>8. That the Faculty investigate ways of providing more input into the curricula of teaching provided by other faculties.</p>	<p>To be considered by Faculty T &amp; L Committee</p>
<p>9. That the Faculty considers ways of stressing the link between research and teaching to students.</p>	<p>Staff have been advised to address this recommendation in their teaching</p>
<p>10. That the introduction of a formal induction program for research students and opportunities for peer review and support be considered.</p>	<p>Induction Day for postgraduate students held in 2003, and Postgraduate Manual produced</p>
<p>11. That the Faculty consider ways in which the annual progress reports could be made more informative for students.</p>	<p>Will be implemented with 2003 cycle of Annual Reports</p>
<p>12. That the Faculty consider making improvements in the resources and accommodation for research students.</p>	<p>Student computing facilities greatly expanded by purchase of 30 new computers and conversion of Mac computer lab to PC</p>
<p>13. That staff consider providing feedback in class, as it would save time taken in individual feedback through their open door policy, and relieve pressure on staff.</p>	<p>Staff wish to maintain accessibility to students, which is considered to be a strength of Faculty's teaching</p>
<p>14. That the Faculty undertake more work in the articulation and communication of assessment standards to students.</p>	<p>Establishment of Faculty intranet site for each unit of study now makes this possible</p>
<p>15. That the Faculty instigate a process which acknowledges the problems raised and addresses the answers to them. The current process discourages students from coming forward with issues.</p>	<p>Faculty/Student Liaison Committee processes under review; input to be sought from next meeting</p>