

## AGENDA ITEM 13

**Report of the Research and Research Training Committee****13.2 Report of the Research and Research Training Committee meeting held on 19 November 2008**

The Committee met on 19 November 2008 when there were present: The Acting Chair (Associate Professor J Kril) presiding; Professors J Christodoulou, E. Cowley, M Crossley, T Hambley, A Masri, K Refshauge, N Weber and K White; Associate Professors A Ammit, A Bashford, K Marsh and P. McCallum; Dr I Shariv; Ms R Kumar, Mr J Shipp and Mr D Trembath. Dr J Nichols and Mr M Charet were in attendance.

**13.2.1 Proposals for New and Amended Courses****13.2.1.1 Faculty of Medicine: Master of Medicine (Reproductive Health Sciences and Human Genetics)/Master of Philosophy and Master of Science in Medicine (Reproductive Health Sciences and Human Genetics)/Master of Philosophy**

The Discipline of Obstetrics and Gynaecology (Faculty of Medicine) is proposing that the existing programs (Master of Medicine (RHHG) and Master of Science in Medicine (RHHG)) be restructured by removing the treatise (currently worth 12 credit points) and offering the masters degree as 48 credit points of coursework, and to combine the coursework degrees with the Master of Philosophy as a double degree. The proposal was circulated, with a note that it had already been considered by the Graduate Studies Committee at its meeting of 29 October 2008, where some concerns had been expressed. An addendum to the proposal was tabled, specifically addressing the concerns of the Graduate Studies Committee. It was noted that the proposed Master of Philosophy component of this joint degree would be governed by the same Resolutions as currently obtain in the Faculty of Medicine, including admission requirements and examination procedures. It was also noted that the changes to the coursework component of the current proposal are under discussion by the Graduate Studies Committee and that only the linking of the two degrees was being assessed by the Research and Research Training Committee. Pending the approval of the coursework component by the Graduate Studies Committee, the proposal was unanimously approved.

Full details of the proposal are available from the Committee's website at: [http://sydney.edu.au/ab/committees/oldcom/rrtc/2008\\_agendas.shtml](http://sydney.edu.au/ab/committees/oldcom/rrtc/2008_agendas.shtml)

***Recommendation***

*That the Academic Board note that the Research and Research Training Committee supports the approval of the proposal from the Faculty of Medicine to introduce the double degrees of Master of Medicine (Reproductive Health Sciences and Human Genetics)/Master of Philosophy and Master of Science in Medicine (Reproductive Health Sciences and Human Genetics)/Master of Philosophy, with effect from 1 January 2009, as set out in the report of the Graduate Studies Committee.*

**13.2.2 Cotutelle Scheme***pages H3-H5*

At the meeting of 17 September 2008, the Committee discussed amendments to the Cotutelle Scheme, as proposed by Associate Professor Bashford (Acting Dean of Graduate Studies), and requested that the proposal be further revised before consideration for approval. A revised document was circulated and Associate Professor Bashford spoke to the changes that had been made, particularly the involvement of the PhD Award Sub-Committee in approving the examination arrangements. Several minor

changes to the amended proposal were suggested, pending the making of which the proposal was approved.

**Recommendation**

*That the Academic Board approve the amendments to the Cotutelle Scheme, as set out in the report presented.*

**13.2.3 Proceedings of the Committee**

The Committee also noted:

- update reports from the PhD Review Working Party, Master of Philosophy Working Party and Open Access Working Party;
- the report of the PhD Award Sub-Committee meeting held by circulation on 14 October 2008;
- the report of the Acting Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Research);
- the report on the Academic Board Phase 3 Review: Faculty of Medicine;
- an Update Report from the Faculty of Science Phase 3 Academic Board Review;
- a report from the Acting Dean of Graduate Studies on the November meeting of the Council of Deans and Directors of Graduate Studies; and
- the report of the Academic Board meeting of 12 November 2008.



# The University of Sydney

## Cotutelle Scheme

Approved by: Academic Board on 13 October 1999  
Date of effect: 14 October 1999

### 1. Background

- 1.1 In February 1998, Senate approved amendments to the PhD resolutions providing for the establishment of cotutelle agreements whereby, if the necessary conditions for joint candidature had been met, a candidate for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy could also receive a doctorate from another University in respect of that candidature, each testamur acknowledging the circumstances under which the award was made.
- 1.2 These arrangements were made in response to an initiative of the French Government designed to establish and develop partnerships between French and other research units which include the facilitation of movement of French and other doctoral candidates under joint supervision arrangements. Cotutelle arrangements exist between French universities and universities in a number of other countries.
- 1.3 The prime intent of such agreements is that they form part of an ongoing or developing cooperative research collaboration between a department or research group in the University and one elsewhere. If the sole collaboration between the two departments or research groups was to be in respect of a particular candidature, then the net benefit to the University would have to be questioned.
- 1.4 Evidence of appropriate financial support both for student's and supervisor's/examiners' travel in each case would have to be provided by the ~~Department~~ School/Faculty concerned. It should be noted that if the agreement is with a French University the student will be required to complete an oral defense of their thesis in order to satisfy French university examination requirements, therefore the cost of airfares and accommodation for external examiners must be taken into consideration by the relevant School at the University of Sydney. The Dean would have to be satisfied that supervision and examination arrangements were satisfactory and fully understood by the potential candidate.
- 1.5 Cotutelle agreements fall under the Guidelines for Inter-Institutional Agreements and require the approval of the Head of ~~School, Department,~~ Dean and ~~Pro-Vice-Chancellor with advice to the~~ Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Academic and International) for each individual candidature. ~~If no previous cotutelle agreement existed with the proposed partner institution, the approval of the Vice-Chancellor is also needed.~~
- 1.6 ~~While generally it would be hoped that a~~ Agreements could should be negotiated ~~prior to from~~ the commencement of candidature. Back-dated agreements may be made in exceptional circumstances at the discretion of the Deputy Vice-Chancellor (International). However students who have completed more than

~~two semesters of their dissertation research are not eligible for the cotutelle scheme. it is recognized that the appropriateness of such an arrangement might only emerge some time into a particular candidature as a result of developing cooperation, and the University should be flexible enough to permit back-dated agreements to be made in these circumstances.~~

1.7 Examination arrangements must be approved by the PhD Award Sub-Committee of the Research and Research Training Committee of the Academic Board.

**2. General principles governing cotutelle arrangements**

~~The following general principles apply to cotutelle agreements. As arrangements are entered into with institutions in countries other than France, detailed country-specific principles will be developed, as necessary, to reflect the particular education practices that apply in that country.~~

2.1 A cotutelle agreement must be drawn up between the two participating institutions in respect of each candidate, detailing the particular arrangements pertaining to that particular candidature. Normally such agreements take effect from the beginning of a candidature.

2.2 The agreement lists the two supervisors who are to undertake the joint supervision.

2.3 The candidature is to be divided between the two countries with alternate stays in each of the two countries and a minimum of 30% in each country.

2.3.1 The agreement sets out the arrangements with regard to fees. At the least a candidate should be exempt from fees at one institution. An Australian student would be HECS exempt and an international student would normally receive at least a fees waiver scholarship for the period within Australia. An overseas student proceeding under a cotutelle arrangement would be otherwise subject to the normal requirements and arrangements for international students.

2.3.2 Unless otherwise agreed by the Parties in writing (noting the potential impact on the Student's insurance coverage), the Student will simultaneously enrol at The University of Sydney and the Partner Institution for each year of the candidature.

2.3.23 The agreement should specify the copyright of the thesis and other intellectual property issues.

2.3.34 The thesis is to be written in either English or the language of instruction at the other participating institution, with an abstract provided in the other language.

2.3.45 There is to be one examination process, and in the initial agreement it is determined whose processes will be followed, with both Universities agreeing to respect the outcome. There would be an exchange of letters with the candidate to ensure he/she was fully aware of all the special arrangements applying.

2.3.6 ~~In the event that the Candidate satisfies all of the conditions set out in the University of Sydney calendar. The Candidate shall be entitled to graduate at a single graduation ceremony at the University of Sydney and~~

shall receive a ~~testamur~~ ~~single certificate~~ which (a) clearly states the conferral of the Jointly Awarded Degree; and (b) carries the names of both The University of Sydney and the Partner Institution.

### 3. Country-specific principles

#### 3.1 France

In respect of a cotutelle arrangement with a French university, the following principles apply:

3.1.1 If the examination is carried out by a French institution at least two examiners would be appointed by each institution. Of the two examiners nominated by the University of Sydney, one must be external. Two of these examiners (one nominated by the French institution and the external examiner nominated by the University of Sydney) prepare written reports on the thesis which are made available to the candidate and the examining jury. The candidate is required to defend the thesis in person by the way of an oral defense (Viva Voce) in French or English and to provide an oral summary in the other language. The candidature does not progress to the oral defense stage if the examiners are not convinced of the candidate's prima facie preparedness.

3.1.2 If the examination is carried out under the University of Sydney's procedures ~~there would have to be some adjustment to cope with the expectation that both institutions appoint two of the examiners and that the supervisors had to be examiners.~~ ~~The relevant Sydney Faculty would coordinate the examining process in the normal way. It could be agreed that any significant disagreement among the examiners would result in referral to a fifth examiner who would act as an assessor.~~ The relevant Sydney Faculty would coordinate the examining process in the normal way.

3.1.3 The successful outcome of either examining process would be the award of the PhD from the University of Sydney and a Doctorat from the relevant French institution. The agreement would state that ~~relevant certification would state that~~ the award was made as a consequence of a cotutelle agreement with the University of ..... . The French Doctorat is normally awarded with the qualification *honorable, très honorable* or *très honorable avec félicitations*. This could be accommodated within the Sydney examination process by specifically asking examiners for their recommendation in respect of the Doctorat.

3.1.4 The signing of such an agreement, particularly if the French institution is to examine, has financial implications for the University. At the very least the University may have to fund expenses associated with two examiners attending a thesis defense. Support for the student concerned, including travel, is another consideration. However, the intent of such agreements is that they should operate in a broader context of cooperative research between the two institutions. ~~Departments~~ Schools/Faculties proposing cotutelle arrangements would have to certify that the necessary financial support would be forthcoming. There is some French Government funding available on a competitive basis.

#### 3.2 Countries other than France

~~In respect of a cotutelle arrangement with other than a French university, the arrangements for the candidature and examination arrangements must be specified and approved by the Graduate Studies Committee.~~