

## AGENDA ITEM 13

## Report of the Research and Research Training Committee

## 13.2 Report of the Research and Research Training Committee meeting held on 11 June 2008

The Committee met on 11 June 2008 when there were present: The Chair (Professor J Trehwella) presiding, Professors J Christodoulou, M Crossley, T Hambley, A Masri, K Refshauge, J Stubbs, B Sutton and N Weber, Associate Professors J Bobis, J Kril, P McCallum and A Mitchell, Drs A Black, D Cabrera, K Marsh and P Young, and Ms K Barnsley, Ms C Blomley, Mr J Shipp and Mr D Trembath. Ms M Kemmis was in attendance.

## 13.2.1 Proposals for New and Amended Courses

13.2.1.1 Faculty of Engineering and Information Technologies: Master of Philosophy page G3

The Faculty of Engineering and Information Technologies is proposing to amend the admission requirements for the Master of Philosophy to allow entry to the course from various coursework masters degrees offered by the Faculty. This amendment will allow the Faculty to market the coursework degrees packaged with the Master of Philosophy, particularly to international students. It is stressed that these packages will not be combined degrees and that admission to the Master of Philosophy will be dependent on completion of the coursework masters.

**Recommendation**

*That the Academic Board:*

- (1) *approve the proposal from the Faculty of Engineering and Information Technologies to amend the Master of Philosophy, and*
  - (2) *approve the amendment of the Resolutions of Faculty relating to the course,*
- with effect from 1 January 2009, as set out in the report.*

## 13.2.2 Appointment of Examiners

An analysis of the examination times reported by various faculties indicates that one factor in unnecessarily prolonging the examination period is the time taken in appointing examiners, particularly in those cases where the examiners are appointed after the thesis is submitted.

To ensure that examiners are appointed in a timely manner, the PhD Award Sub-Committee recommends that amendments be made to the Academic Board Resolutions relating to the Degree of Doctor of Philosophy (*Calendar 2008*, p 147) (additions indicated by underline, deletions indicated by strikethrough):

**Delays in appointment to be avoided**

1.3.1 The head of department and the faculty or college board shall take all possible steps to ensure that examiners are appointed ~~within~~ at least four weeks ~~of~~ before the submission of the thesis and, where this does not occur, shall report the circumstances to the PhD Award Sub-Committee.

**Recommendation**

*That the Academic Board amend the Academic Board Resolutions relating to the Degree of Doctor of Philosophy, as set out in the report presented.*

### 13.2.3 Reports to Examiners on the Outcome of the Examination Process page G4

At the Research & Research Committee meeting of 6 February 2008, Associate Professor Kril raised the issue of advising the outcome of the examination process to the relevant examiners. The Committee asked that the PhD Award Sub-Committee discuss this issue further.

The Sub-Committee has developed the attached template for use by faculties in providing advice to examiners. It recommends that the template be referred to the Academic Board for approval.

#### **Recommendation**

*That the Academic Board approve the implementation of the outcome of the examination template, as outlined in the report presented.*

### 13.2.4 Proceedings of the Committee

#### **(1) Open Access to Research Publications**

The University Librarian, Mr John Shipp, presented a proposal for the lodgement of research papers with the University's digital repository. He advised that there was a world-wide trend for government-funded research to be publicly accessible, and advised that the Library was currently developing materials to assist academics to negotiate such access with specific journals and publishers.

The Committee has agreed to establish a Working Party (chaired by Mr Shipp) to develop a policy on this matter for submission to the Academic Board.

#### **(2) Report of the Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Research)**

The Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Research) advised the Committee regarding the new Future Fellowships scheme being introduced by ARC and the recent publication of a discussion paper by the higher education review commission (headed by Professor Denise Bradley).

#### **(3) Other Reports**

The Committee also noted:

- an update from the Research Office on the Research Management Project;
- the report of the PhD Award Sub-Committee meeting held on 20 May 2008;
- the membership of the PhD Review and Master of Philosophy working parties established at the Committee's May meeting; and
- the report of the Academic Board meeting of 28 May 2008.

## Resolutions of the Faculty

### Faculty of Engineering and Information Technologies

Clauses 1 and 9 in the Faculty Resolutions relating to the Master of Philosophy in the Faculty of Engineering and Information Technologies is amended, with effect from 1 January 2009, as follows (additions indicated by underlined, deletions indicated by strikethrough):

#### Master of Philosophy

##### 1. Admission Requirements

1.1 Except as provided in Part 9, University of Sydney (Amendment Act) 1999, an applicant for admission to candidature for the degree of Master of Philosophy shall:

1.1.1 be a graduate in Engineering or Information Technologies of the University of Sydney and have achieved first or second class honours or a standard deemed acceptable by the Faculty; or

1.1.2 be a graduate of any other Faculty of the University of Sydney and have achieved first or second class honours or a standard deemed acceptable by the Faculty; or

1.1.3 be a graduate of another institution holding equivalent qualifications to a graduate of the University of Sydney; and

1.1.4 have completed courses acceptable to the Faculty of Engineering and Information Technologies; and

1.1.5 have in the opinion of the Faculty reached first or second class honours standard.

1.2 Any applicant who furnishes evidence that satisfies the Faculty that a suitable standard of knowledge has been acquired, may be admitted by the Dean on the recommendation of the Head of School.

1.3 Candidates who have completed a Masters by Coursework in the Faculty of Engineering and Information Technology will be admitted to the MPhil provided that they:

1.3.1 achieve a minimum weighted average mark of 75% in the Masters by Coursework, and

1.3.2 complete a research thesis with a weighting of at least 12 credit points and a minimum grade of Distinction.

1.4 Candidates who have completed a Masters by Coursework and have not achieved the requirements detailed in Section 1.3, may still be admitted to the MPhil subject to special approval by the Faculty.

##### ~~9. Alternate path in Information Technologies~~

~~9.1 The MPhil may be combined with the MIT (Master of Information Technology) and MITM (Master of IT Management) in a two-year program subject to the Faculty approval and provided that the candidates meet the following requirements:~~

~~9.1.1 A minimum WAM of 75 in an undergraduate degree in Science, Computing, Engineering or IT from the University of Sydney or another institution of equivalent standing.~~

~~9.1.2 Achieve a minimum WAM of 75 in the first 24 credit points completed during their candidature, and~~

~~9.1.3 Achieve a minimum WAM of 75 in the subsequent enrolment which consist of an 18cr thesis and 6cr unit of study on research methods.~~



# The University of Sydney

NSW 2006 AUSTRALIA

[Faculty's Representative Name]

**[FACULTY]**

Telephone: [INSERT NUMBER]

Facsimile: [INSERT NUMBER]

Email: [INSERT EMAIL]

[NAME]  
[ADDRESS]  
[EMAIL]

[DATE]

Dear [TITLE] [Examiner's SURNAME]

## Re: Examination of [Students Name]

Please accept our thanks for your assistance in this examination. I am writing to advise you of the outcome of the recent examination of [Student's FIRST NAME] [Student's SURNAME] thesis. Following the receipt of all examiner reports a decision was made to award/not award the degree of Doctor of Philosophy to the candidate. **INSERT ONE:** [The degree has been awarded without any further conditions] [The degree has been awarded subject to minor correction(s)] [The degree has been awarded subject to the making of emendations /the fulfilment of other conditions] [The degree has not been awarded, but instead the student has been permitted to resubmit a revised and resubmit thesis for examination following a further period of study].

Sincere thanks

[INSERT NAME]

*on behalf*  
**Dr William Adams**  
Registrar

cc Student File