



# The University of Sydney

## Academic Board Minutes

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### Minutes of the meeting of the Academic Board held at 2 pm on Wednesday 26 August 2009 in the Professorial Board Room

There were present: the Chair (Professor B Sutton) presiding; the Vice-Chancellor and Principal (Dr M Spence); Chairs of Standing Committees (Professors B Bennett, S Kable and T Aspromourgos; and Associate Professor P McCallum); Professors D Armstrong, A Boyd, A Brewer, D Day, R Ewing, S Garton, G Hancock, R Magnusson, B Paltridge, A Peters, E Schwarz, S Short, G Triggs and J White, Associate Professors E Blignaut, L Chappell, C Collyer, A Dunn, M Fairskye, M Halliwell, A Holland, A Jamalipour, T Masters, S Newberry, I Odeh, G Ryan, A Twomey and M Walton, Drs D Auld, S Cox, M Edmond, M Fisher, N Hajjar, J Hanrahan, B Jones, D Moses, C Nelson (for Professor K Trigwell), K Nelson, R Phillips, S Ronaldson, L Scanlon, T Schofield and J Slapeta, Mr P Ball, Mr W Chan, Mr J Conomos, Mr G Dain (for Ms R Santos), Ms J Henderson, Mr N Irving, Ms R Kumar, Mr D Liu, Mr A McLeod, Ms J Mooney, Mr J Quilty, Mr J Shipp, Ms L-M Syron, Mr G Weary and Mr N White.

Present as observers: Associate Professor R Drynan (Faculty of Agriculture, Food and Natural Resources), Mr M Charet (Secretariat), Mr T Payne (Director, Policy Analysis and Communication), Mr A Potter (Media Manager), Ms L Rose (Provost's Office) and Ms L Young (Secretariat).

In attendance: Ms Megan Kemmis (Secretary to the Academic Board)

#### ★ 1. Apologies

The Board noted that apologies had been received from: Professors M Adams, J-A Brien, J Hearn, G Llewellyn, C Murphy, I Ramzan, K Trigwell (Dr C Nelson attending instead), K Walker and P Wolnizer, Associate Professors M Boughton, A Fekete, L Harris, D Hibbs, L Hossain, N O'Dwyer and H Zoellner, Drs T Anthony and L Cutcher, Mr M Kalonikos, Ms R Santos (Mr G Dain attending instead) and Ms J Truman.

#### ★ 2. Arrangement of agenda

##### ★ 2.1 Starring of items

Members of the Board were invited to star for discussion any unstarred items. The following items were starred: 9.1.1, 9.4.1, 12.2.1, 13.2.1 and 13.2.2.

##### 2.2 Adoption of unstarred items

###### Resolution 170/09

That the Academic Board resolve as recommended with respect to all unstarred items.

**3. Minutes of previous meeting**

**Resolution 171/09**

That the Academic Board adopt the minutes of the previous meeting held on 1 July 2009, as a true record.

**4. Business arising from Minutes (not dealt with elsewhere in the Agenda)**

There was no business arising from the minutes.

★ **5. Discussion Topic**

**5.1 Academic Board Review: Discussion Paper**

The Chair invited the Vice-Chancellor to speak to his discussion paper, which had been circulated with the agenda. The Vice-Chancellor suggested the discussion should start with some thoughts about the purpose of the review, the functions of the Academic Board, the potential committee structure, and issues around the composition of the Board's membership. He thanked those members who had submitted responses to the discussion paper, noting that his own concept of the review process obviously differed from those expressed in some of the submissions. He noted that, when he arrived at the University, both the Academic Board and Senate had clearly defined functions, but there was a vast space outside of these functions in which decisions were being made (under delegated authority). He proposed that such decisions might better be made by the responsible officers after discussion across the University. The academic life represented by the faculties had not always been in line with the University's strategic planning, and the level of consultation on some decisions was debatable, with some decisions being made without consulting all faculties.

The revised Senior Executive Group (SEG) was an attempt to formalise the exercise of these delegations and to ensure that decisions are made as a consequence of university-wide discussions involving himself, the Deputy Vice-Chancellors and the deans. He noted that one submission pointed out that SEG is not a formal organ of the University. He agreed, pointing out it was intended to be an advisory body to those people who wield delegated authority. The new SEG and its committees have had an impact on the work of the Academic Board. He suggested that, in the absence of a committee holding university-wide discussions on strategic planning, the Academic Board had expanded to fill this vacuum, leading to an extension of the work of the Board and a dilution of its core function, which he believes is to keep the University academically honest.

He contrasted the role of those with day to day administrative responsibility, particularly in balancing competing needs (such as fiscal responsibility, staffing, academic and research), with the role of an independent Academic Board committed to defending the University's core values of academic freedom and integrity and arguing for the University to maintain its principles in the face of business demands. He questioned the will of the Board to oppose questionable proposals, pointing out that the Board rarely, if ever, rejected proposals for new courses.

To be a strong and independent academic voice, the Vice-Chancellor suggested the membership would include a greater proportion of rank-and-file academics committed to upholding the University's academic standards. He also suggested the work of the Board focus on course approvals, faculty reviews (in conjunction with the SEG), regular investigations of the statistical performance of the University, and policy

approval. With regard to this last function he queried the role of the Board in policy formulation and suggested it would be preferable for central portfolios to develop policy, in consultation with the Board, to be submitted to the Board for consideration and approval.

The Vice-Chancellor also questioned the current membership of the Board's committees tasked with advising the Board on course approvals, with the focus on associate deans who were essentially assessing each other's course proposals. He suggested the current membership of these committees should be replaced with one which could support a more robust course approvals process. In addition to course approvals he also suggested a quality assurance committee to look at faculty reviews, and to accept annual reports from the Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Education) and Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Research) regarding the quality of teaching and research at the University. Policy proposals should be considered either by a committee or directly by the Academic Board.

He suggested the Academic Board should operate in dialogue with SEG and the senior officers of the University, but should focus its work in three or more committees. Such a structure would provide a better forum for students to raise concerns, for researchers and teachers to protect the integrity of their core work and a clear voice for academic quality assurance within the University, which would help the University with the Federal government's new requirements for quality assurance. He invited comments from members.

Members raised the following points:

- Can an independent Academic Board with the right expertise be formed via the current election process? The Vice-Chancellor argued that this should be a reasonable process for obtaining members for the Board; it was also suggested faculties should take some responsibility for encouraging the right people to nominate for election;
- Should the University offer courses that are not economically viable but are important in reflecting the University's place nationally and internationally? The Vice-Chancellor responded that whether a course makes money should not be the major driver, but the University should be certain that courses are offered on good academic grounds;
- If there are disagreements between the Academic Board and SEG would they be resolved on a case-by-case basis, or would the Board have a right of veto? It was pointed out that Senate would be the obvious circuit breaker in such a situation, with the Vice-Chancellor and the Chair of the Academic Board both fellows of Senate; the Vice-Chancellor advised that he had framed his discussion paper in terms of quality assurance because it makes sense to have a University where individual staff are committed to quality, and with a body that looks at quality issues more broadly. He added that if the Academic Board was not happy about a particular proposal it would go back to SEG or management for reworking;
- Is there a danger that in moving policy-making functions to SEG the connection to working academics who implement the policies would be lost? The Vice-Chancellor argued that it was important to get the various parts of the University to work together, including getting vertical conversations occurring in faculties;
- Will course proposals require dual approval from SEG and the Board, and if so will approval occur in parallel and will the Board be able to consider courses without SEG having previously vetoed them on the

basis of cost? The Vice-Chancellor suggested that this would be a good idea;

- Shouldn't the Academic Board, as a body with a strong auditing culture, be involved in policy initiation and formulation, and in identifying the gaps and weaknesses in existing policy? The Vice-Chancellor said that there would certainly be a role for the Board in identifying areas in which policy should be developed and in making suggestions as to how it might be improved, but that the detailed 'civil service' work of policy proposal formulation should happen in the DVC portfolios. This would allow the Board the independence it would need in considering policy for approval or rejection. When asked how the Board could maintain oversight of work done in other departments (rather than through its own committees and working parties), he responded that the relevant Deputy Vice-Chancellors are members of the Board, and, as a last resort, the Chair could raise issues with Senate;
- Will the Academic Board be properly resourced to undertake its revised charter, and will the proposed changes to policy development mean there will no longer be any resolutions or policies of the Board? The Vice-Chancellor agreed that the resourcing of the Board required consideration, but again put forward the concept of policy development occurring within the portfolios in consultation with the Board and its officers. He added that the Board should be able to identify policy issues that require work, but would instruct the relevant portfolio to look into these matters;
- Would the Board retain its Academic Staffing Committee, given the current membership of the Committee has significant overlap with the membership of SEG? The Vice-Chancellor suggested the Board would still have a role in considering policy in this area, but suggested the question of whether there should be a specific committee should be considered;
- How will the University ensure the effective development of policy if it is effectively being written at "arms length" from the approving body? The Vice-Chancellor reiterated that the Deputy Vice-Chancellors are themselves members of the Academic Board and that the proposed structure would see enhanced administrative capabilities (akin to a civil service) in the portfolios, with the Office of General Counsel playing a role similar to Parliamentary Counsel in ensuring the validity of policies;
- What sort of support will be in place for the members of the proposed independent and robust Academic Board, and will the workload issues of being involved in university governance be properly addressed? The Vice-Chancellor expressed the hope that the revised Board would be somewhere that people wanted to dedicate some of their time, and suggested that faculties should include the work of Academic Board members into the individual's faculty workload;
- The Board's current course approvals process involves thorough, and often critical, consideration of proposals by its committees prior to the final approval by the Board, with the Board only seeing those proposals that have been thoroughly vetted by the committees. Would the proposed revised membership of the committees and Board have an expert grasp on the University's full range of course offerings? The Vice-Chancellor contended that the current process meant that proposals were being considered by managers up to the point of final approval by the Board, and he suggested the revised committee (or committees) should include one or two deans, some associate deans, some students and some academic staff with no management responsibilities to form a group representative of the University; and

- Isn't the current Secretariat the "civil service" to the Academic Board? The Vice-Chancellor responded that the Secretariat should support the Board in its work as a secretariat but not as an academic policy development unit which would be better placed in the relevant DVC portfolios.

In responding to these questions the Vice-Chancellor reiterated his belief that a strong, vigorous, independent Academic Board was essential for the health and well-being of the academic life of the University. He stressed the key role of the Board in quality assurance and stressed that he saw it as the place where policies and procedures were debated. While SEG had an important role in developing strategy and policy the Board was the arena for deliberation upon these strategies and policies. If the Board found them wanting the Board was empowered to send them back for further development.

At the end of this discussion the Chair asked members whether or not they supported the Vice-Chancellor's general proposals about the role and function of the Board. A majority of members expressed support for the principles of the Vice-Chancellor's proposal as outlined in the paper and developed in the discussion. As a consequence of this endorsement the Chair of the Board and the Vice Chancellor undertook to develop jointly some specific proposals concerning the committee structure and composition of the Board for consideration at a future Board meeting. The majority of members agreed to this, with one vote against.

#### **Resolution 172/09**

That the Academic Board note the report of the Vice-Chancellor on the review of the Academic Board.

*Action:* The Vice-Chancellor and the Chair of the Academic Board to report to the next meeting of the Academic Board on the revised structure of the Board's standing committees.

## ★ 6. Report of the Chair

### 6.1 Report on Senate matters

#### 6.1.1 Report of the Senate meeting held on 3 August 2009

The Chair noted that the report had been circulated with the agenda.

#### **Resolution 173/09**

That the Academic Board note the report of the Chair of the Academic Board on academic matters considered by Senate at its meeting of 3 August 2009.

### 6.2 Honours and Distinctions

The Board noted and congratulated by acclamation the recipients of honours and distinctions, as set out in the agenda.

#### **Resolution 174/09**

That the Academic Board note the report of the Chair of the Academic Board on the honours and distinctions and congratulate the recipients, as set out in the report presented.

*Action:* Chair of the Academic Board to write to recipients congratulating them on their honours and distinctions.

### 6.3 General Report

#### 6.3.1 Application for Early Submission of PhD Thesis

The Chair advised members that he had approved an application for early submission of a PhD thesis from the Faculty of Science. He noted the candidate in question shown exceptional progress within the last two years, having four papers accepted for publication and a further five under consideration.

##### **Resolution 175/09**

That the Academic Board note the report of the Chair of the Academic Board regarding his approval of an application for early submission of a PhD thesis, as set out in the report presented.

#### 6.3.2 Academic Board Membership

The Chair noted that Dr Steve Cumming, an academic staff member from the Faculty of Health Sciences, has advised that he will be on study leave for the remainder of the year. Members approved the appointment of Professor Stephanie Short as an academic staff representative of the Faculty of Health Sciences.

##### **Resolution 176/09**

That the Academic Board note and approve the nomination of Professor Stephanie Short as an academic staff representative of the Faculty of Health Sciences, as set out in the report presented.

*Action:* Executive Officer to update the Academic Board's membership list.

### ★ 7. Report of the Vice-Chancellor and Principal

#### 7.1 Report on Senate Matters

##### 7.1.1 Report of the Senate meeting held on 3 August 2009

The Vice-Chancellor noted that the report of this meeting had been circulated with the agenda.

##### **Resolution 177/09**

That the Academic Board note the report of the Provost and Deputy Vice-Chancellor on behalf of the Vice-Chancellor and Principal on matters considered by Senate at its meeting held on 3 August 2009.

#### 7.2 General Report

Dr Spence advised members that consultation on the strategic planning process was currently underway. He highlighted the importance of members being consulted, both as individual staff and student members of the University, and as the membership of the Academic Board. He proposed holding a dinner and consultative session with the Academic Board in the next few weeks, focussing on the strategic plan – this would be in preference to monopolising the agenda of the Board's next meeting (it was also noted that the Board's next meeting would fall outside of the proposed timeframe for consultation).

Members' opinion was sought on the two options of holding an evening dinner and forum or scheduling a second day-time meeting, with a split vote between the two options. It was agreed that an email would be sent out the next week outlining a number of options, and that the final date would be based on the availability of a majority of members.

##### **Resolution 178/09**

That the Academic Board note the report of the Vice-Chancellor.

★ 8. **Question time**

Professor Masters noted that he had raised the question of reviewing processes for improving the academic progress of elite athlete scholarship holders at a previous meeting. He asked if this matter could be discussed at the Board's next meeting. The Chair suggested that the Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Education) be asked to prepare a report on this matter.

**Resolution 179/09**

That the Academic Board note the questions and responses provided.

*Action:* The Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Education) and Registrar to report to the Academic Board on reviewing processes for improving the academic progress of elite athlete scholarship holders.

9. **Reports of the Faculties**

9.1 **Report of the Faculty of Medicine and Faculty of Nursing and Midwifery**

★ 9.1.1 **Amendment to the Governance of Faculties, Colleges, College Boards, Departments, Schools and Committees**

Mr Irving noted the proposal to include postgraduate research student administration in the Combined Postgraduate Board of the Faculties of Dentistry, Medicine and Pharmacy and asked for assurances that staff levels would be sufficient to meet the increased student needs.

The Dean of the Faculty of Nursing and Midwifery responded, advising that the Faculty of Nursing and Midwifery would continue their current level of support for these students, and that the involvement of the Combined Postgraduate Board would effectively provide an enhanced service for these students, with improved quality assurance.

Members approved the proposal.

**Resolution 180/09**

That the Academic Board recommend that Senate approve the amendments to the Senate Resolutions relating to the Governance of Faculties, Colleges, College Boards, Departments, Schools and Committees, as set out in the report presented.

*Action:* The Chair to recommend that Senate approve the amendments to the Resolutions of Senate relating to the Governance of Faculties, Colleges, College Boards, Departments, Schools and Committees.

The Deans and Faculty Managers of the Faculty of Medicine and the Faculty of Nursing and Midwifery to note the Academic Board's approval of the amendments to the Resolutions of Senate relating to the Governance of Faculties, Colleges, College Boards, Departments, Schools and Committees.

File No. (036/0006/00170)

## 9.2 Report of the Faculty of Medicine

### 9.2.1 Semester and Vacation Dates 2010

#### Resolution 181/09

That the Academic Board approve the semester and vacation dates for the Faculty of Medicine for the year 2010, as set out in the report presented.

*Action:* The Dean and Faculty Manager of the Faculty of Medicine to note the Academic Board's approval of the semester and vacation dates for the year 2010.

File No. (2001/29)

## 9.3 Report of the Faculty of Nursing and Midwifery

### 9.3.1 Amendment to the Governance of Faculties, Colleges, College Boards, Departments, Schools and Committees

#### Resolution 182/09

That the Academic Board recommend that Senate approve the amendments to the Senate Resolutions relating to the Governance of Faculties, Colleges, College Boards, Departments, Schools and Committees, as set out in the report presented.

*Action:* The Chair to recommend that Senate approve the amendments to the Resolutions of Senate relating to the Governance of Faculties, Colleges, College Boards, Departments, Schools and Committees.

The Dean and Faculty Manager of the Faculty of Nursing and Midwifery to note the Academic Board's approval of the amendments to the Resolutions of Senate relating to the Governance of Faculties, Colleges, College Boards, Departments, Schools and Committees.

File No. (036/0006/00170)

## 9.4 Report of the University of Sydney Summer and Winter School

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### 9.4.1 2009 Winter School

Mr Irving noted the report from the University of Sydney Summer and Winter School but advised that there were some items of information SUPRA would like to see included, such as breakdown on income from penalty fees, and data on the number of fail grades awarded. The Chair asked him to submit his questions in writing for referral to the Deputy Vice-Chancellor (International).

Members noted the report.

#### Resolution 183/09

That the Academic Board note the report of the 2009 Winter School, as set out in the report presented.

*Action:* The Deputy Vice-Chancellor (International) to respond to questions from SUPRA regarding the report of the 2009 Winter School.

**10. Report of the Undergraduate Studies Committee**  
(Professor Scott Kable)

★ **10.1 Oral report of the Chair**

Professor Kable advised that he had no items to report on other than item 10.2.2.

**10.2 Report of the meeting held on 5 August 2009**

**10.2.1 Report of the Admissions Sub-Committee**

**10.2.1.1 Table of Comparative English Test Scores**

**Resolution 184/09**

That the Academic Board approve the amended table of comparative English test scores, as set out in the report presented.

**10.2.1.2 Flexible Entry Scheme**

**Resolution 185/09**

That the Academic Board amend the policy Admission to Undergraduate Courses, with effect from 1 January 2010, as set out in the report presented.

*Action:* The Executive Officer to amend the policy Admission to Undergraduate Courses on Policy OnLine.

File No. (2001/2126, P23)

**10.2.1.3 Faculty of Health Sciences: Multicultural Entry Scheme and Vocational Entry Scheme**

**Resolution 186/09**

That the Academic Board amend the policy Admission to Undergraduate Courses, with effect from 1 January 2010, as set out in the report presented.

*Action:* The Executive Officer to amend the policy Admission to Undergraduate Courses on Policy OnLine.

File No. (2003/2414, P23)

★ **10.2.2 University of Sydney (Amendment Act) Rule 1999 (as amended)**

Professor Kable advised members that this proposal recommended amending the current provisions for deferral of admission. The Rule currently allows prospective students to defer for up to 12 months, but it was proposed that this be amended to allow deans discretion to extend the deferral period for up to 24 months. The main reason for this amendment was the recent alteration by the Federal Government to the independence criteria for the youth allowance. He pointed out that some of the University's competitors had already amended their deferral rules in response to these changes.

Dr Edmond advised the meeting that the Minister for Education, Employment and Workplace Relations had announced that the amended criteria would not be applied to 2008 school leavers, and she expressed concern that the alteration to the University's

deferral policy could counteract the intention of the Federal Government to ensure that the youth allowance was available to more students of lower socio-economic background. She also queried the usefulness of the amendment, pointing out that it was not a clear-cut change but a move to considering applications on a case-by-case basis. Mr White countered that the proposed amendment was not simply for the current cohort of students but for future cohorts as well. Professor Kable commented that similar arguments (both for and against) had been raised at both the Admissions Sub-Committee and the Undergraduate Studies Committee.

Members debated the necessity for the amendment, with students arguing in favour of the proposal and pointing out that the opportunity to defer was one welcomed by students, who appreciated the security of knowing they had a guaranteed admissions place. Mr White pointed out that a student had no way of knowing if their UAI or ATAR would still be competitive in two years time. He also stressed the importance of students being given the opportunity to support themselves at university, adding this was a preferable situation to the prospect of students attempting to juggle part-time work and study commitments.

A majority of members voted in favour of endorsing the amendment, with one vote against.

#### **Resolution 187/09**

That the Academic Board recommend that Senate approve amendments to the *University of Sydney (Amendment Act) Rule 1999* (as amended), with effect from 1 January 2010, as set out in the report presented.

*Action:* The Chair to recommend that Senate approve amendments to the *University of Sydney (Amendment Act) Rule 1999* (as amended).

File No. (022/0003/00003)

### **10.2.3 Reports from Faculties**

#### **10.2.3.1 Faculty of Arts: Bachelor of Arts, Bachelor of Arts (Honours) and Diploma of Arts**

##### **Resolution 188/09**

That the Academic Board:

- (1) the proposal from the Faculty of Arts to amend a subject area in the Bachelor of Arts and Bachelor of Arts (Honours) and introduce a new subject area in the Diploma of Arts; and
- (2) approve the amendments to the Faculty Resolutions for the courses relating to subject areas

with effect from 1 January 2010, as set out in the report presented.

*Action:* The Dean and Faculty Manager of the Faculty of Arts to note the Academic Board's approval of the amendments to the Bachelor of Arts and Bachelor of Arts (Honours) and submit resolutions via CMS.

File No. (003/0015/00009, 2000/3982, 2000/3983)

**10.2.3.2 Faculty of Engineering and Information Technologies  
(1) Bachelor of Engineering**

**Resolution 189/09**

That the Academic Board note the report of the Faculty of Engineering and Information Technologies regarding amendments to units of study in the Bachelor of Engineering degree.

**(2) Bachelor of Engineering: Civil Engineering stream**

**Resolution 190/09**

That the Academic Board note the report of the Faculty of Engineering and Information Technologies regarding amendments to units of study in the Bachelor of Engineering degree, as set out in the report presented.

**10.2.3.3 Faculty of Pharmacy: Bachelor of Pharmacy**

**Resolution 191/09**

That the Undergraduate Studies Committee recommend that the Academic Board note the report of the Faculty of Pharmacy regarding new units of study in the Bachelor of Pharmacy with effect from 1 January 2010, as set out in the report presented.

**10.2.4 Proceedings of the Committee**

**Resolution 192/09**

That the Academic Board note the proceedings of the Undergraduate Studies Committee meeting held on 5 August 2009, as set out in the report presented.

**11. Report of the Graduate Studies Committee  
(Associate Professor Peter McCallum)**

- ★ **11.1 Oral report of the Chair**  
Associate Professor McCallum advised he had no matters to report.

**11.2 Report of the meeting held on 12 August 2009**

**11.2.1 Reports from Faculties**

**11.2.1.1 Faculty of Agriculture, Food and Natural Resources:  
Master of Agriculture, Graduate Diploma in  
Agriculture and Graduate Certificate in Agriculture**

**Resolution 193/09**

That the Academic Board:

- (1) approve the proposal from the Faculty of Agriculture, Food and Natural Resources to amend the Master of Agriculture, Graduate Diploma in Agriculture and Graduate Certificate in Agriculture, and
- (2) approve the amendments to the Faculty Resolutions related to the courses

with effect from 1 January 2010, as set out in the report presented.

*Action:* The Dean and Faculty Manager of the Faculty of Agriculture, Food and Natural Resources to note the Academic Board's approval of the proposal to amend the Master of Agriculture, Graduate Diploma in Agriculture and Graduate Certificate in Agriculture and submit resolutions via CMS.

File No. (TBA)

#### **11.2.1.2 Faculty of Architecture, Design and Planning (1) Master of Architecture**

##### **Resolution 194/09**

That the Academic Board

- (1) approve the proposal from the Faculty of Architecture, Design and Planning to amend the Master of Architecture, and
  - (2) approve the amendments to the Faculty Resolutions related to the courses
- with effect from 1 January 2010, as set out in the reports presented.

*Action:* The Dean and Faculty Manager of the Faculty of Architecture, Design and Planning to note the Academic Board's approval of the proposal to amend the Master of Architecture and submit resolutions via CMS.

File No. (2001/5035)

#### **(2) Master of Heritage Conservation, Master of Interaction Design and Electronic Arts, Master of Urban and Regional Planning**

##### **Resolution 195/09**

That the Academic Board

- (1) approve the proposal from the Faculty of Architecture, Design and Planning to amend the Master of Heritage Conservation, Master of Interaction Design and Electronic Arts and Master of Urban and Regional Planning, and
  - (2) approve the amendments to the Faculty Resolutions related to the courses
- with effect from 1 January 2010, as set out in the reports presented.

*Action:* The Dean and Faculty Manager of the Faculty of Architecture, Design and Planning to note the Academic Board's approval of the proposal to amend the Master of Heritage Conservation, Master of Interaction Design and Electronic Arts and Master of Urban and Regional Planning and submit resolutions via CMS.

File No. (2000/3080, 2000/3082)

**(3) Master of Heritage Conservation**

**Resolution 196/09**

That the Academic Board note the report from the Faculty of Architecture, Design and Planning regarding amendments to the units of study in the Master of Heritage Conservation, as set out in the report presented.

**(4) Graduate Diploma of Urban Design and Graduate Certificate of Urban Design**

**Resolution 197/09**

That the Academic Board

- (1) approve the proposal from the Faculty of Architecture, Design and Planning to amend the Graduate Diploma of Urban Design and Graduate Certificate of Urban Design, and
- (2) approve the amendments to the Faculty Resolutions related to the courses with effect from 1 January 2010, as set out in the reports presented.

*Action:* The Dean and Faculty Manager of the Faculty of Architecture, Design and Planning to note the Academic Board's approval of the proposal to amend the Graduate Diploma of Urban Design and Graduate Certificate of Urban Design and submit resolutions via CMS.

File No. (2000/3087, 2000/3091)

**(5) Postgraduate courses – credit transfer**

**Resolution 198/09**

That the Academic Board

- (1) approve the proposal from the Faculty of Architecture, Design and Planning to amend the credit transfer requirements for its postgraduate courses, and
- (2) approve the amendments to the Faculty Resolutions related to the courses with effect from 1 January 2010, as set out in the reports presented.

*Action:* The Dean and Faculty Manager of the Faculty of Architecture, Design and Planning to note the Academic Board's approval of the proposal to amend the credit transfer requirements for its postgraduate courses and submit resolutions via CMS.

File No. (TBA)

### 11.2.1.3 Faculty of Arts

#### (1) Master of Professional Communication, Graduate Diploma in Professional Communication and Graduate Certificate in Professional Communication

##### **Resolution 199/09**

That the Academic Board

- (1) approve the proposal from the Faculty of Arts to amend the English language requirements for the Master of Professional Communication, Graduate Diploma in Professional Communication and Graduate Certificate in Professional Communication; and
- (2) approve the amendments to the policy “Postgraduate English Language Requirements”

with effect from 1 January 2010, as set out in the reports presented.

*Action:* The Dean and Faculty Manager of the Faculty of Arts to note the Academic Board's approval of the proposal to amend the English language requirements for the Master of Professional Communication, Graduate Diploma in Professional Communication and Graduate Certificate in Professional Communication.

The Executive Officer to amend the policy “Postgraduate English Language Requirements” on Policy OnLine.

File No. (2001/5032, 2001/5033, 2001/5034, P24)

#### (2) Master of Arts, Graduate Diploma in Arts and Graduate Certificate in Arts

##### **Resolution 200/09**

That the Academic Board

- (1) approve the proposal from the Faculty of Arts to amend the Master of Arts, Graduate Diploma in Arts and Graduate Certificate in Arts, and
- (2) approve the amendments to the Faculty Resolutions related to the course

with effect from 1 January 2010, as set out in the reports presented.

*Action:* The Dean and Faculty Manager of the Faculty of Arts to note the Academic Board's approval of the proposal to amend the Master of Arts, Graduate Diploma in Arts and Graduate Certificate in Arts and submit resolutions via CMS.

File No. (003/0015/00026, 003/0015/00031, 003/0015/00032)

#### **11.2.1.4 Faculty of Dentistry: Doctor of Clinical Dentistry – English Language Requirements**

##### **Resolution 201/09**

That the Academic Board

- (1) approve the proposal from the Faculty of Dentistry to amend the English language requirements for the Doctor of Clinical Dentistry, Graduate Certificate in Clinical Dentistry and Graduate Diploma in Clinical Dentistry, and
- (2) approve the amendments to the policy “Postgraduate English Language Requirements” with effect from 1 January 2010, as set out in the reports presented.

*Action:* The Dean and Faculty Manager of the Faculty of Dentistry to note the Academic Board’s approval of the proposal to amend the English language requirements for the Doctor of Clinical Dentistry, Graduate Certificate in Clinical Dentistry and Graduate Diploma in Clinical Dentistry.

The Executive Officer to amend the policy “Postgraduate English Language Requirements” on Policy OnLine.

File No. (2008/1000, P24)

#### **11.2.1.5 Faculty of Economics and Business**

##### **(1) Graduate Certificate in Innovation and Enterprise**

##### **Resolution 202/09**

That the Academic Board

- (1) approve the proposal from the Faculty of Economics and Business to amend the Graduate Certificate in Innovation and Enterprise, and
- (2) approve the amendments to the Faculty Resolutions related to the course with effect from 1 January 2010, as set out in the reports presented.

*Action:* The Dean and Faculty Manager of the Faculty of Economics and Business to note the Academic Board’s approval of the proposal to amend the Graduate Certificate in Innovation and Enterprise and submit resolutions via CMS.

File No. (2006/9023)

##### **(2) Master of Transport Management, Graduate Diploma in Transport Management, Graduate Certificate in Transport Management and associated combined degrees**

##### **Resolution 203/09**

That the Academic Board

- (1) approve the proposal from the Faculty of Economics and Business to amend the

- Master of Transport Management, Graduate Diploma in Transport Management, Graduate Certificate in Transport Management and associated combined degrees, and
- (2) approve the amendments to the Faculty Resolutions related to the courses with effect from 1 January 2010, as set out in the reports presented.

*Action:* The Dean and Faculty Manager of the Faculty of Economics and Business to note the Academic Board's approval of the proposal to amend the Master of Transport Management, Graduate Diploma in Transport Management, Graduate Certificate in Transport Management and associated combined degrees and submit resolutions via CMS.

File No. (2005/4764, 2008/2697, 2008/2700)

**11.2.1.6 Faculty of Engineering and Information Technologies: Master of Information Technology**

**Resolution 204/09**

That the Academic Board note the reports from the Faculty of Engineering and Information Technologies regarding amendments to the units of study in various streams of the Master of Information Technology, as set out in the report presented.

**11.2.1.7 Faculty of Nursing and Midwifery: Master of Nursing and associated combined degrees**

**Resolution 205/09**

That the Academic Board note the report from the Faculty of Nursing and Midwifery regarding the unit of study "Human Bioscience in Health" in the Master of Nursing and associated combined degrees, as set out in the report presented.

**11.2.1.8 Sydney College of the Arts: Master of Film and Digital Image and Master of Interactive and Digital Media**

**Resolution 206/09**

That the Academic Board note the reports from the Sydney College of the Arts related to units of study in the Master of Film and Digital Image and Master of Interactive and Digital Media, as set out in the report presented.

**11.2.2 Proceedings of the Committee**

**Resolution 207/09**

That the Academic Board note the proceedings of the Graduate Studies Committee meeting held on 12 August 2009, as set out in the report presented.

**12. Report of the Learning and Teaching Committee**  
(Professor Tony Aspromourgos)

- ★ **12.1 Oral report on behalf of the Chair**  
Professor Aspromourgos advised members that he had no additional matters to report.

★ **12.2 Report of the meeting held on 12 August 2009**  
**12.2.1 University of Sydney (Student Appeals against Academic Decisions) Rule 2006 (as amended)**

Dr Auld supported the move to simplify the University's policies in this area, but raised some queries regarding the draft document as follows:

- the wording of clause 2.6 appeared to conflict with part 5 of the revised policy, and it was agreed that this should be reviewed;
- the use of the phrase "where possible" was queried, and again it was agreed that this be reviewed; and
- he suggested that the user's guide be submitted with the policy for approval by the Board.

On this last point, the Chair advised that the guide would focus on the issue of "reasonableness", and was still being developed. Professor Aspromourgos added that the issue of "reasonableness" applied to a range of other policies, not just the appeals policy.

The Chair recommended that the policy be returned to the Committee for further consideration, and members agreed.

**12.2.2 Proceedings of the Committee**

**Resolution 208/09**

That the Academic Board note the proceedings of the Learning and Teaching Committee meeting held on 12 August 2009, as set out in the report presented.

**13. Report of the Research and Research Training Committee**  
(Professor Bruce Sutton)

- ★ **13.1 Oral report on behalf of the Chair**  
Professor Masters advised he had some queries regarding the degree of Doctor of Philosophy. The Chair asked him to forward these questions following the meeting.

★ **13.2 Report of the meeting held on 5 August 2009**  
**13.2.1 PhD Review Working Party report**

The Chair advised members that the report would be forwarded to the Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Education) for his consideration, and noted that a number of the Academic Board's policies would need review and re-drafting. Professor Masters commended the report, but suggested some amendments as follows:

- Recommendation 5 be amended to read "...prior to enrolment or at an appropriate stage early in the development of the project, the supervisors, together with the candidate, prepare an indicative budget...";
- Recommendation 17: he suggested that aggregated data be used by the faculty, rather than the data from individual students' progress reports, to avoid privacy issues; and

- Recommendation 20: he queried whether the outcome of the proposed completion review would be advisory, or would the panel have some form of veto over the student's progression.

Other members also queried the recommendation for a completion review, commenting on the difficulties of forming such a panel in discipline areas with small numbers of knowledgeable academic staff, the potential for conflicting views between the panel and the examiners, the rationale for not including the supervisor in the review, the suggestion of a grading system for theses and whether conducting such a review of the thesis 3 to 6 months before submission could have any meaningful impact on the development of the thesis. The Chair stressed that the review was intended to be supportive, and should not replace or emulate the examination process, but provide useful feedback to the student which would hopefully ensure the thesis passed the examination. He noted that some faculties already use similar processes and others are thinking of introducing such a system, and pointed out the need to address concerns regarding the current length of the examination process. Professor McCallum added that there would be consultation with the faculties before any implementation of this recommendation. It was suggested that the recommendation be rephrased to emphasise the student support focus of the process.

The Chair asked members to note the report and asked that further comments be sent to him.

#### **Resolution 209/09**

That the Academic Board receive and note the report of the PhD Review Working Party, as set out in the report presented.

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#### **13.2.2 Best Practice Manual for Postgraduate Research Supervision**

Professor Masters noted the length of this document and suggested the development of an executive summary. The Chair advised that he was seeking the Board's feedback on how useful this document might be, and agreed that it should be converted into an online document. He pointed out that many of the policies would be reviewed in the next few months, and the document would need to be updated following this review. He asked the Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Education) if his portfolio could take charge of the document. Professor Armstrong agreed, and suggested that Internal Communications look into how best to distribute the document.

Members endorsed the manual.

#### **Resolution 210/09**

That Academic Board endorse the adoption of the Best Practice Manual for postgraduate research supervision, as set out in the report presented.

### 13.2.3 Reports from Faculties

#### 13.2.3.1 Faculty of Economics and Business: English Language Requirements

##### Resolution 211/09

That the Academic Board approve the amendment to Schedule 1 of the policy “Postgraduate English Language Requirements”, with effect from 1 January 2010, as set out in the report presented.

*Action:* The Dean and Faculty Manager of the Faculty of Economics and Business to note the Academic Board’s approval of the proposal to amend the English language requirements for the Master of Philosophy and Doctor of Philosophy.

The Executive Officer to amend the policy “Postgraduate English Language Requirements” on Policy OnLine.

File No. (P24)

### 13.2.4 Proceedings of the Committee

##### Resolution 212/09

That the Academic Board note the proceedings of the Research and Research Training Committee meeting held on 5 August 2009, as set out in the report presented.

## 14. Report of the Academic Staffing Committee (Professor Belinda Bennett)

### ★ 14.1 Oral report of the Chair

Professor Bennett advised that she had nothing further to report.

### 14.2 Report of the meeting held on 29 July 2009

#### 14.2.1 Proceedings of the Committee

##### Resolution 213/09

That the Academic Board note the proceedings of the Academic Staffing Committee meeting held on 29 July 2009, as set out in the report presented.

## 15. General Business

There were no items of general business.

The meeting closed at 4:34 p.m.

Signed as a correct record

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*Chair*

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Date