



Academic Board

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MEMORANDUM TO: Members of the Academic Board

A meeting of the Academic Board will be held at **2 pm on Wednesday, 11 February 1998** in the Professorial Board Room.

The agenda for the meeting is set out below, and the Chair's recommendation for the action to be taken by the Board in respect of each agenda item is set out below each item, preceded by the symbol #. The Chair has also starred those items which she believes need discussion. At the beginning of the meeting members will be invited to star any other items that they wish to have discussed.

Erica Ring
for
Dr W Adams
Registrar
4 February 1998

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A G E N D A

P A1. Starring

Members of the Board are invited to star any unstarred item which they wish to have discussed.

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

A2. Minutes

1. Minutes of the meeting held on 10 December 1997

The minutes of the meeting of the Academic Board held on Wednesday, 10 December 1997 are enclosed.

Any proposed amendments to the minutes should be submitted in writing to the Registrar (Attention: Miss E R Ring) before the meeting and preferably by Tuesday, 10 February 1998 so that they can be included in the supplementary agenda for the meeting.

that the Board confirm the minutes of the meeting held on 10 December 1997 as a correct record.

2. Business arising out of the minutes

A4. Report of the Chair

Part I

1. Report on Senate Matters

To be tabled at the meeting.

that the Board note the report.

2. Membership of the Board

In the absence of nominations for the one elected member of the Faculty of Law for membership of the Board, the Acting Dean has nominated Associate Professor Mark Findlay for membership. The Board is asked to appoint Associate Professor Findlay under Section 42.4 of the Academic Governance Rules, to hold office until 31 December 1999.

that the Board appoint Associate Professor Findlay to membership of the Board as requested.

3. West Review of Higher Education

Attached for information is a copy of the University's response to the West Discussion Paper. (Pages 11-19)

that the Board note the report.

4. Action under delegated authority and reports from the Academic Groups

Under delegated authority, the Chair and Acting Chair have considered the recommendations of the Academic Groups in respect of academic appointments and the appointment of selection committees that have been processed under the "old" appointments procedures and have approved/noted them as appropriate. A report on the appointment of Visiting Professors is attached. (Page 20)

that the Board note the report.

5. Questions on notice

that the Board note that no questions have been received this month.

P Part II

To be presented at the meeting.

A5. Statement by the Vice-Chancellor and Principal

Part I

1. Report on Senate Matters

To be tabled at the meeting.

that the Board note the report.

P Part II

To be presented at the meeting by the Acting Vice-Chancellor, Professor D Anderson.

A8. Report by the Vice-Chancellor and Principal on proctorial matters

The Acting Vice-Chancellor will table a report at the meeting.

that the Board note that a report was tabled.

A12. Report of the Academic Forum

The Academic Forum met on Monday 26 November 1997. This special meeting of the Forum, held specifically to discuss the recently released discussion paper of the West Review, was open to all staff of the University.

1. Forum focus:

The West Review: 'Learning for Life: Review of Higher Education Financing and Policy: A Policy Discussion Paper'

The discussion was introduced by Professor Ann Sefton (Chair, Teaching and Learning Committee), Professor David Cockayne (Chair, Research Committee), Mr Tom Clark (President, SUPRA) and Ms Katrina Curry (President, SRC).

Professor Sefton noted that while the paper encouraged good university teaching, nowhere did it recognise that good teaching costs money. She saw a strong need for teaching grants to encourage and reward good teaching. The dichotomy between teaching and research was maintained by the paper, whereas active learning encompassed research. The omission of 'the creation of new knowledge or ideas' from the paper's list of generic skills was a cause for concern. The paper placed strong emphasis on deregulation, yet it was inappropriate to argue for deregulation in the case of some professional degrees. While the paper emphasised competition, it said nothing about collaborative endeavours, which made the best use of resources. The paper did support appropriate accreditation, but did so without apparent awareness that accreditation currently exists for most professional courses.

Professor Cockayne was also critical of the dichotomy between teaching and research presented by the paper and believed that the emphasis on teaching was unnecessarily at the expense of research. While the West committee would be aware of the shortages of research funds and acknowledged that the success rate of ARC grants had fallen, it made no comment on the need for increased funding for research. Rather, it simply proposed a shift in funding, suggesting fewer but larger grants. Professor Cockayne believed that the setting of national priorities for research, which the paper proposed, had already been happening to some extent, but expressed concern about who should have the role in this; failure to involve active researchers would lead to a priority shift based on poor information.

Ms Curry was critical of the paper's failure to suggest both an increase in higher education and a reversal of budget cuts. She was opposed to the voucher system and to the expectation on students to pay increasingly more. The suggestion of increased deregulation was a concern, as deregulation would lead to rapid decline in accountability of institutions and to inequity of access: high status institutions could charge higher fees, thus effectively

excluding poor students. Education should be creative and challenging, an agent of change, rather than conservative, yet the paper did not actively support this view. With its emphasis on business, the paper had lost sight of the social importance of the higher education sector. The dichotomy presented between teaching and research was false.

Mr Clark expressed concern with the paper's failure to deal with the position and purpose of postgraduate research. Equity issues needed to be addressed if industry were to sponsor such research. It was worrying too that, while the paper suggested that university governance may need to be overhauled, it acknowledged lack of thought on the matter. It was unacceptable that students were often marginalised; the university needed more consensual administration, rather than more managerialism.

In the ensuing discussion, concern was reiterated about the artificial dichotomy of teaching and research, as well as with the suggestion that not all university teachers need to be researchers. The imposition of national research priorities was challenged, as well as the paper's assumption that basic research should be funded over applied. It was thought important that the University emphasise the significance of collaboration (not only competition) across universities internationally, both in research and teaching. The University should insist that infrastructure funding be increased. Views were split on what students, the government and community should pay for education. Concern was expressed about what proportion of time or the totality of a degree would be deemed publicly subsidisable, as this had implications for combined and honours degrees. It was seen that the paper's views on funding could allow for some universities to generate money at the expense of others. The issue of equity was discussed further in relation to the TER and to the consumption of resource units.

that the Board note the report.

B1. Report of the Faculty of Agriculture

The Faculty met on 23 September 1997.

Amendment of the Resolutions of the Senate: Constitution of the Faculty of Agriculture

Membership of Faculty by Research staff

The Faculty agreed to **recommend** to the Academic Board and Senate that the Faculty's Constitution (p 137, *Calendar 1996*, Vol 1) be amended:

- by deleting section 1 (g) which reads as follows:
 1. The Faculty of Agriculture shall comprise the following persons:
 - (g) such other persons, if any, being full-time members of the senior research staff in the Faculty as may be appointed from time to time by the Senate on the nomination of the Faculty.

and

- by replacing it with the following new section 1.(g)
 1. The Faculty of Agriculture shall comprise the following persons:
 - (g) such other persons, if any, being full-time members of the research staff assigned to the departments or units in the Faculty and holding a position at the level of Research Fellow and above, after they have been employed in the Faculty for more than three years.

The purpose of the amendment is to provide for membership of research staff who are consistently involved over a long period in Faculty business, particularly through teaching activities or supervision of postgraduate candidates.

that the Board recommend that Senate amend its Resolutions relating to the constitution of the Faculty of Agriculture, as recommended.

B3. Report of the Faculty of Arts

Rescission of the Resolutions of the Senate: Board of Museum Studies

The Faculty met on 3 November 1997.

The Faculty **recommends**, on the recommendation of the Board of Museum Studies, that the Resolutions of the Senate relating to the Board of Museum Studies (p 229, *Calendar 1996* Vol. 1) be abolished with immediate effect.

The purpose of this recommendation is:

1. to allow for the replacement of the Board of Museum Studies with a *Museum Studies Professional Advisory Committee* of the Faculty of Arts; and
2. to give the Faculty of Arts direct responsibility for supervision of the award of the Graduate Certificate, Graduate Diploma, Master of Arts and Master of Letters in Museum Studies, all student matters relating to Museum Studies programs to be administered through existing, standard Faculty procedures.

The Faculty wishes to note that this recommendation arose as an initiative of the Board of Museum Studies and comes forward with the full support of the Board and the Faculty. It will allow those current professional members of the Board to continue their valuable, industry-focused input into such areas as curriculum design while locating overall supervision of the Museum Studies programs more properly within the Faculty.

Contingent upon the approval by Academic Board and Senate of the above recommendation, the Faculty of Arts will, on the recommendation of the Board of Museum Studies, adopt the following recommendations, with immediate effect:

1. That a *Museum Studies Professional Advisory Committee* be established by resolution of the Faculty of Arts with membership consisting of:
 - (a) the Dean, Faculty of Arts, or a nominee of the Dean (Chair);
 - (b) the Chair, Faculty of Arts Postgraduate Matters committee, or a nominee of the committee;
 - (c) all members of the teaching staff of the Museum Studies Unit;
 - (d) the Head, Department of History, or a nominee of the Head;
 - (e) the Curator, Nicholson Museum, or a nominee of the Curator;
 - (f) the Director, Macleay Museum, or a nominee of the Director;
 - (g) the Director, Museum of Contemporary Art, or a nominee of the Director;
 - (h) the Curator, University Collection;
 - (i) the Director, Art Gallery of NSW, or a nominee of the Director;
 - (j) the Director, Australian Museum, or a nominee of the Director;
 - (k) the Director, Historic Houses Trust, or a nominee of the Director;
 - (l) the Director, Museums Australia Inc NSW, or a nominee of the Director;
 - (m) the Director, National Maritime Museum, or a nominee of the Director;
 - (n) the Director, National Trust of Australia, or a nominee of the Director;
 - (o) the Head of the New South Wales Ministry for the Arts, or a nominee of the Head;
 - (p) the Director, Powerhouse Museum, or a nominee of the Director; and
 - (q) the Director, Regional Galleries Association of NSW, or a nominee of the Director.
2. That the functions and responsibilities of the *Museum Studies Professional Advisory Committee* be:
 - (1) To receive a comprehensive written report from the Director and staff of the Museum Studies Unit on the programs taught by the Unit in the preceding year, the internship program and the employment of diplomates/graduates.
 - (2) To review the curriculum of all Museum Studies programs with a particular emphasis on the ability of the programs to meet the needs of the museum industry.
 - (3) To review co-operative links between the Museum Studies Unit, University museums and the industry, and to suggest ways in which liaison could be maintained and enhanced to the benefit of all parties.
 - (4) To provide advice to the Faculty of Arts on matters which the Advisory Committee considers to be of relevance to the teaching of Museum Studies.
3. That the *Museum Studies Professional Advisory Committee* meet annually on a set day before April, the secretary of the Advisory Committee to be the Student Administration Manager of the Faculty of Arts.

4. That the papers for the annual meeting include sufficient teaching materials from the preceding year and course evaluations to enable members to fully review the curriculum, and proposals for course development: and that the papers be circulated at least three weeks prior to the meeting.
 5. That provision exist for the establishment of sub-committees and working parties of the Advisory Committee by the Advisory Committee or as requested by the Faculty of Arts. People with expertise, who are not members of the Advisory Committee, may be co-opted as necessary.
- # ***that the Board recommend that Senate rescind its Resolutions relating to the Board of Museum Studies, as recommended.***

B11. Report of the Faculty of Medicine

Amendment of the Resolutions of the Senate: Constitution of the Faculty of Medicine

The Faculty met on 11 December 1997 and **recommends** that the constitution of the Faculty of Medicine (pp 383-4, *Calendar 1996* Vol. 1, and as amended by Senate in May 1997) be further amended by changing section 1. (o) to read as follows:

1. (o) The President of the Medical Graduates' Association and the President of the Medical Foundation;

The purpose of the amendment is to allow for membership of the Faculty by the President of the Medical Foundation.

- # ***that the Board recommend that Senate amend its Resolutions relating to the constitution of the Faculty of Medicine, as recommended.***

C1. Report of the Undergraduate Studies Committee

Part I

The Committee met on 16 December 1997. There were present: Professor Jocalyn Lawler (Chair), Mr Hal Davey, Mr Adair Durie, Professor Brian Farrow, Dr Ross Gilbert, Associate Professor Christopher Gillies, Dr Jim Kitay, Ms Aileen McAuliffe and Mr Ross Wilson. Ms E Bergmann was in attendance.

1. Amendment of Resolutions of the Senate

(1) Faculty of Health Sciences Bachelor of Health Science (Hearing and Speech)

The Committee **recommends** that the Academic Board approve in principle the proposal for the introduction in 1999 of the new award program, Bachelor of Health Science (Hearing and Speech).

The purpose of the proposal to award the Bachelor of Health Science in Hearing and Speech from 1999 is to prepare students to undertake further study for a career in audiology, a rapidly growing health profession; enter the health care workforce in a capacity such as health promotion consultants, health education officers, women's health workers and residential care workers; enter the private commercial workforce with businesses such as Cochlea or Optus; and undertake further study for a career in related fields such as health administration, medicine and rehabilitation counselling.

- # ***that the Board recommend that Senate approve in principle the proposal for the introduction of the new course, Bachelor of Health Science (Hearing and Speech).***

2. Proceedings of the Committee

(1) Membership

The Committee welcomed Mr Adair Durie, SRC President, to the meeting.

(2) The Committee's achievements in 1997

The Committee noted the following achievements for 1997:

- A policy relating on credit points was approved by the Board in September 1997.
- New approval mechanisms for new or amended courses of study were approved by the Board in December 1997.
- The Committee's recommended policy on uniform reporting of honours grades was approved by the Board in December 1997.
- A number of new courses/new specialisations within existing degrees/major changes to existing course were approved by the Board/Senate on the recommendation of the Committee.
- Special admissions preparation courses were approved by the Committee.
- An Overseas Qualifications Working Party was established.

(3) Minor Changes to Resolutions of the Senate relating to Faculties

The Committee noted the following minor changes to Senate Resolutions approved by Faculties:

(i) Faculty of Engineering

The Faculty of Engineering has approved amendments to the Resolutions of the Senate (tables) relating to the Bachelor of Engineering to attract high achieving students allow them to take advanced courses.

(ii) Faculty of Nursing

The Faculty of Nursing has approved a new Table of Courses relating to the Bachelor of Nursing in order to reflect changes in nomenclature as recommended by the University, correct a few misprints in the units of study, and reflect changes in the Honours course.

(4) Report of the Overseas Qualifications Working Party

The Committee noted a report.

that the Board note the report.

P Part II

To be presented at the meeting by the Committee's Chair.

C2. Report of the Graduate Studies Committee**Part I**

There is no report this month.

P Part II

To be presented at the meeting by the Committee's Chair.

C3. Report of the Teaching and Learning Committee**Part I**

The Committee met on 4 December 1997 when there were present: Professor Ann Sefton (Chair), Mr Tom Clark, Professor Richard Johnstone, Associate Professor Tony Koppi, Professor James Lawrence, Mr Les McCrimmon. Apologies: Dr Angela Brew, Associate Professor Lloyd Dawe, Dr Mary Peat. In attendance: Ms Louise Maral.

Proceedings of the Committee**1. Composition of the Committee**

The Committee welcomed Mr Les McCrimmon and, *in absentia*, Dr Mary Peat, as newly co-opted members representing the Colleges of Humanities and Social Sciences and Sciences and Technology respectively.

2. Assessment Policy

The Committee noted the document tabled by the Chair, which comprised the draft of the revised 'Principles of assessment' and 'Rights and responsibilities of staff and students' in relation to assessment, and agreed to forward any comments to her by mid-January 1998. At that stage, the drafts would be sent to Faculty Teaching and Learning Committees for comment before forwarding to the Board.

It was reported that the appeals procedures working party aimed to have a substantive document completed by the end of the year and it was agreed that the two documents should cross reference each other.

3. Draft Guidelines for Excellence in Teaching Awards

The Committee noted the Guidelines tabled by the Chair, and agreed to forward any comments to her by mid-January 1998, with the aim of having it ready to go to the April Academic Board.

4. Travel grant entitlements for teaching purposes

The Committee noted a letter from Professor Cockayne (Chair, Research Committee) and a reply from Professor Sefton concerning the current lack of provision of travel grants for teaching purposes.

Professor Sefton further reported that some staff felt that applications for teaching equipment under the Major Equipment Grants scheme did not receive due attention, hence there was a major problem regarding how the grants are allocated. There was a need to provide funds, for instance, to ensure that departments that don't have a technological base have access to modern technologies.

Professor Johnstone raised two possibilities towards rectifying this situation: (1) proposing to the Vice-Chancellor that there be a separate fund for teaching purposes, or (2) proposing to the Vice-Chancellor that a certain proportion of the money currently allocated be set aside for teaching purposes. The former seemed more viable and Professor Johnstone undertook to raise the idea with the Vice-Chancellor. It was suggested that it could be pointed out that, if the University is to be seen as a good teaching institution, it was not helpful to see that the only money available was labelled as allocated for research.

5. Report of NeTTL

The Committee noted the report on projects NeTTL has been involved in since the beginning of 1997 which provided a good overview of the range of projects being undertaken in the University, and that the information is being continuously updated at <http://nettl.usyd.edu.au>.

6. Flexible learning: guidelines for development of flexible delivery

The Committee noted a discussion paper, 'Flexible Delivery or Distributed Learning', tabled by Associate Professor Koppi towards preparation of guidelines and a set of standards for University-wide use. Feedback would be sent directly to him by mid-January 1998. The Committee aimed for the draft of the guidelines to be sent to faculty teaching committees then the Academic Forum for feedback, and ultimately to the Academic Board for endorsement.

In discussion it was acknowledged that there are different types of material on the Web for different purposes and that this should be reflected in the criteria provided in the guidelines. The question was raised as to whether the University should be involved in courses, the sole method of delivery of which was the Web. An identified problem with the Web was the amount of obsolete material on it resulting from there not being a system in place for checking and updating.

A distinction also needed to be made between what was put on the Intranet (i.e. made available internally only) and what was made available externally. Professor Johnstone was considering appointing someone who would have responsibility for authorising the latter. While there would still be academic autonomy, there would be a caveat on it.

It was thought guidelines would be most effective if substantiated by group learning projects to familiarise people with the techniques and ground rules.

7. National Council for Open and Distance Education (NCODE)

The Committee noted the previously circulated: NCODE agenda for September and minutes for July meetings; report, tabled at NCODE 's September meeting, from the Working Party on Flexible Study Time; and discussion paper on Implications of National Competition Policy for Open and Distance Education. It was agreed that copies of the NCODE material would also be circulated to Dr Russell Ross, Chair, Coursework Sub-Committee of the Graduate Studies Committee, via the Secretary to the Graduate Studies Committee in future.

8. Research project on admission and performance data

The Committee noted that it was agreed not to proceed with the research project at this time because other requests had come in and any work for the Committee would not be completed in the immediate future. Ideas for future work would be brought to the Committee.

9. Meetings for 1998

The Committee noted the previously circulated dates proposed for meeting in 1998 (2-4 pm, first Thursday of each month, Vice-Chancellor's meeting room, commencing 5 February) and agreed to adhere to these until April/May when the dates will be reviewed to accommodate all members.

that the Board note the report.

P Part II

To be presented at the meeting by the Committee's Chair.

C4. Report of the Research Committee

Part I

There is no report this month.

P Part II

To be presented at the meeting by the Committee's Chair.

C5. Report of the Library and Information Technology Committee

Part I

The Committee met on Monday 15 December 1997. There were present: Professor R McPhedran (presiding), Professors R Johnstone and M Harris, Dr M Peat, Dr S Carlile, Associate Professors R Kummerfeld and E Cornell, and Mr J Shipp. Associate Professor T Koppi and Dr A Davison were present by invitation. Ms B Olde and Mr T Robinson were in attendance.

1. Distance Education

Associate Professor T Koppi and Dr A Davison addressed the Committee on some current matters related to the use of information technology in distance education. Dr Davison described a trial project at the Faculty of Health Sciences involving the use of Internet and satellite technologies. Professor Koppi discussed the need for the University to develop guidelines for the use of Internet based flexible learning systems.

In discussion, the Committee recognised the central position of the Academic Board and its Committees in the development of standards and guidelines for emerging teaching modalities within the University. The desirability of a forum meeting to discuss the implications of the technologies was recognised.

2. Report of the Chair of the IT Reference Group

A letter from Dr S Carlile, Chair of the IT Reference Group, was tabled expressing the Reference Group's deeply felt concerns about the charging for Internet access to be introduced in 1998. The Reference Group was of the view that the devolution of charges for 1998 should be limited to the College level, and not passed on to individual departments or schools. It was argued that there are many technical difficulties associated with mapping IP addresses to Departments resulting from shared networks and the dynamic allocation of IP addresses within Faculties. The technical difficulties will have implications for the equitable and appropriate distribution of costs.

Professors McPhedran and Johnstone agreed to write jointly to the Pro-Vice-Chancellors of the Colleges requesting that, for 1998 only, charging for Internet access be paid at the College level and not passed on to Faculties and Departments. The letter will outline the concerns expressed at the meeting.

3. Membership of the Committee

It was announced that Professor A Martin will replace Associate Professor N Newbiggin while she is on SSP leave, as a member of both the Committee and the Library Reference Group.

that the Board note the report.

P Part II

To be presented at the meeting by the Committee's Chair.

C6. Report of the Academic Staffing Committee

P Part I

The draft 'Policy Document - Promotion of Academic Staff to Level E (Professor)' will be circulated prior to the Board meeting.

The complementary draft 'Policy Document - "University/"Distinguished" Chair' will be circulated with the agenda for the March Board meeting.

P Part II

To be presented at the meeting by the Committee's Chair.

D1. Membership of Central Promotions Committees

The Chair, under delegated authority, has approved the appointment of Professor Richard Johnstone as Chair of the Senior Lecturer and Lecturer Central Promotions Committees, in place of Professor Derek Anderson.

that the Board note the report.

The University of Sydney

Response to the Review of Higher Education Financing and Policy Discussion Paper “ Learning for Life”

1. Introduction

The University of Sydney welcomes the opportunity to contribute further to the debate about the future of higher education in this country. The University’s April 1997 submission to the Review was developed after detailed discussions within the University and it is therefore appropriate for the University, in considering what the Discussion Paper has to say about the four themes initially raised by the Review Committee, to make reference back to what was said in its April submission. The present submission also addresses each of the particular points on which the Discussion Paper seeks comment.

The University applauds the Committee’s stated vision for Australian higher education as part of a more seamless postsecondary environment; in the more detailed comments which follow it seeks to focus on what that vision might mean in concrete terms and to suggest means of enabling its implementation. However, there needs to be more thinking about the future of post-secondary education and the most desirable forum for cross-sectoral planning to enable us to avoid repeating the negative features associated with the former NBEET. It welcomes, too, the emphasis on student focused resourcing of teaching to the extent that this opens up the debate about how universities should best respond to the needs of their different stakeholders - students, staff, employers and the community - both nationally and internationally. A distinction, however, needs to be drawn in this debate between student focused resourcing on the one hand and user pays on the other. The University supports the principle of universal opportunity of access to post-secondary education with realistic schemes for ensuring that equity, as well as academic merit, is an integral part of those opportunities, especially where financial contributions are required of students. Nevertheless, it must be recognised that universities themselves cannot necessarily remedy inequalities that have been brought about within society, including the pre-tertiary education system. Equality of opportunity of access cannot mean that everyone should be able to (or would want to) undertake every course offering available in the post-secondary sector. Particular courses will require particular educational backgrounds, and as discussed below, there will have to be restrictions on numbers of available places in particular disciplines because of external constraints.

The University notes the current debate in the United Kingdom about whether students attending Oxford and Cambridge Colleges should continue to receive additional non-means tested funding. It finds the argument put in the Times Higher Education Supplement of 14 November that subsidies should be directed to students from poorer families rather than applied generally quite compelling, because it encourages those universities to enrol such students and allows market forces to impact on College fees for those able to pay them. Such arguments can be applied to Australian universities where, if fees have to be charged, equity issues are properly the concern of the individual university.

The University believes that *learning for life* as a Discussion Paper for debate about the future of higher education for the next two decades is diminished by a lack of detailed analysis and discussion of significant areas it acknowledges but to which it refers only in passing. The status of the various appendices is unclear and the University would have hoped for explicit discussion of some of the key issues facing the sector and where it might be in twenty years time. Without such explicit information and discussion on some of the issues raised below, the Committee is not providing the Government with the advice that can allow it to take policy decisions which will address the needs of the next century and provide the assurance to the community that such decisions are well founded. For example:

- What is the expected student demand across the highly differentiated yet seamless post-secondary sector for the next two decades and what will it cost to meet it, however it is to be funded?
- What has been the impact of the UNS “level playing field approach” on both the sector as a whole and on individual institutions. Does Australia wish to have some institutions competing at a truly international level and, if so, how should these be identified and allowed to flourish? Or, is the Committee happy to allow Australia to drift into educational and cultural re-colonisation, on this occasion by the United States?

- What are the major funding problems faced by universities in Australia and how does funding overall compare with that provided within the OECD? How does support to Australian universities compare with the best funded universities within the Asia/Pacific region?
- What is the current and likely future nature of the student experience? How are financial pressures changing that experience? What does being a full-time student mean in the late 1990s and how well are higher education institutions reacting to the need for students, for example, to spend their week-ends working as nursing home auxiliaries?
- How is the sector to meet its future staffing needs? On page 21 reference is made to the universities' (now partially deregulated) ability to engage on an institutional level in salary bargaining. In fact the universities' apparent increased flexibility is highly constrained by the Government's unwillingness to supplement salaries and by the resource intensive nature of the enterprise bargaining process.
- What is the extent of the contributions that universities as public institutions with a huge intellectual resource make to the nation through, for example, the vast amount of pro bono (as well as paid) advice and support provided by University staff around the country to a vast range of enterprises, including government and the community? Will, in future these contributions be limited to university-industry interaction? Or can they be expanded, with appropriate funding, to enable universities to continue to make a valuable contribution to the cultural wealth of the nation?
- What has been the impact of the internationalisation of Australian universities, both inside and outside Australia, noting that internationalisation extends far beyond the provision of fee-paying courses to international students within Australia?

2. Teaching

The emphasis on encouraging good university teaching is a strength of the Discussion Paper. Nowhere, however, is it explicitly recognised that good teaching is costly. The Discussion Paper notes the enormous potential for new teaching and learning strategies made possible by advances in information technology. It does not, however, acknowledge the substantial infrastructural and ongoing costs of developing and maintaining the complex networks and hardware required for delivery of courses on-line. Good teaching requires the establishment of a positive relationship between teacher and student and the provision of appropriate individual feedback; "lowest possible cost" options cannot meet these needs (p13). Experience from the Faculty of Medicine at the University of Sydney, which has a new program strongly supported by internationally recognised state-of-the-art information technology, confirms the interdependence of personal and on-line teaching.

The use of the new technologies offers the promise of providing a rich array of resources as well as flexibility in space and time for learning. Undergraduate degrees are still likely to be largely campus-based, most importantly for recent school leavers and for disciplines requiring practical skills (eg in laboratory or clinical work). For adult learners and for postgraduate coursework, however, the use is particularly appropriate and likely to increase sharply. To produce and maintain high quality materials on the Web is, nonetheless, very costly, requiring the use of skilled instructional design and technical assistance as well as content-specific input.

The expanding information technologies, including the Internet, must be used in all degree courses in order to prepare graduates for the workplace into the next century. It should be noted, however, that the recent history of tertiary education is littered with examples of teaching technologies which were embraced with enthusiasm but which proved lacking in practice (for example, television lectures; tape-slide presentations; video-disks; early computer-aided learning packages). While the unprecedented access to information offered by the Web offers new educational opportunities, the sheer volume of information is overwhelming and, for the most part, not evaluated. The ease with which unattributed material can be incorporated into assignments and papers poses new challenges for teachers and researchers. Many issues of intellectual property and the copyright of on-line educational materials are still largely unresolved.

The development of additional opportunities to enhance the professionalism of university teachers is applauded (p36). At the University of Sydney, in moving towards better measurement of teaching, new policies emphasise the expectations for good practice in teaching. Recognition of teaching quality through the promotional system is preferred to the loading of salaries for good teaching.

The suggestion of enhancing funding for competitive teaching grants (through CUTSD) is strongly supported (p13). Higher levels of specific funding through the Higher Education Innovation Programme must also be maintained for major degree restructuring, particularly for collaborative projects across universities. Special initiatives (p38) should also be separately funded, as suggested.

The teaching-research nexus

In some statements, however, an apparent dichotomy is made between teaching and research. To fulfil their roles, universities must provide opportunities for both staff and students to learn. For most staff, active learning represents their research. When this activity is undertaken collaboratively with students, particularly during Honours and postgraduate supervision, there is no such ready division between research and teaching (pp 3,6,37).

There are significant overlaps between the skills and qualities that derive from good teaching and good research. The outcomes that result from good teaching at the tertiary level include

- critical thinking
- problem solving skills
- creativity
- knowledge
- responsibility
- motivation
- lifelong learning attitudes
- collaborative attitudes
- self assessment
- peer assessment

A person skilled in the performance of research would have acquired these skills as well. The list of skills for lifelong learning are thus not essentially different from the skills required for research, although the balance may be different. The outcomes, too, will be strongly differentiated within the post-secondary sector, and even within the university sector. The outcomes expected of a graduate in visual arts will be different from those of an accountant.

Students at the University of Sydney progressively acquire these learning outcomes as they proceed through their undergraduate programs and thus are well prepared to undertake, where appropriate, research programs in their Honours and postgraduate years. It is in these research education years that students are exposed, often for the first time, to the ways by which the boundaries of knowledge are expanded.

Student Learning and Choices

The list of skills on p3, while in itself unexceptionable, omits the creation of new knowledge or the generation of new ideas. Other generic skills could be added.

The continuing provision of programs of study that are appropriate to students' needs and interests is obviously a major concern (p18). Accountability to students, however, extends beyond financial concerns: the quality of the programs, their academic rigour, the appropriateness for professional preparation are all important.

The deregulation of entry to popular programs (p18) - particularly for professional degrees - will have profound implications for the workforce and for the capacity of the community to support increased numbers of graduates. This problem is most sharply demonstrated by medicine, still one of the most popular choices of school leavers. When the number of job opportunities is restricted, it is surely better to regulate numbers at entry, rather than at the end of training. Some national guidelines based on professional workforce predictions would be preferable to an unregulated system. These arguments do not apply to generalist degrees which are intrinsically valuable and may increasingly form the basis for graduate entry to professional qualifications.

The Committee is somewhat naive if it thinks that there is any simple way of providing valid and meaningful performance information to allow choice and comparison. This should be a matter for institutions, rather than any regulator, with resource to the courts if misleading information was supplied.

Institutional Issues

Throughout the Discussion Paper, there is a flavour of deregulation and competition between institutions (eg pp 11,43). Whilst supporting this approach we believe that it is important to achieve an appropriate balance between competition and collaboration and accordingly we

welcome the strong arguments put on pp 4,9 for collaborative arrangements between universities in the provision of units of study. Cooperation is becoming increasingly important not only to increase students' choices and to enhance the flexibility of degrees, but also to reduce unnecessary duplication of courses so that institutions can maximise their resources in areas of strength. New collaborative initiatives are also important in developing courses, particularly for electronic delivery. There is scope for cooperation between universities, enabling those with the more extensive infrastructure to assist those with less and this cooperation could be enhanced with appropriate incentives.

The presence of additional providers does emphasise the need for appropriate accreditation processes (pp 32,33). There are, already, existing accreditation mechanisms for most professional programs which would need review before any imposed national system can be developed. The substantial costs of the increasing number of reviews and benchmarking exercises are, however, often unrecognised.

The University expects to see itself increasingly cooperating with the vocational education sector and with appropriate private providers. It would expect to satisfy itself about the quality of offerings from such providers, no matter what accreditation processes were in place, before it entered into formal arrangements but it sees benefits in enabling its students to gain a mix of educational experiences.

There are important reasons for encouraging the enrolment of international students, only one of which relates to financial concerns (p12). The foundations can be laid for future international cooperation, cultural diversity within the institutions and the provision of aid to neighbours less well resourced than we are. If the higher education sector is an industry, its international competitiveness can only be built on strong, well-funded institutions that meet local needs.

3. Research

There are aspects of the Discussion Paper with which some in the academic community will agree; but the paper is seriously deficient in its coverage of its terms of reference in the research area. This has been acknowledged by the Chair of the Committee in various statements since the release of the paper; but this deficiency is itself a reflection of the failure of those responsible for setting research policy to tackle the difficult issues.

The University believes that in using the term "research training" the Committee may conceptually be turning towards the VET technical skill based element of the post-secondary spectrum. To gain a truer picture of what postgraduate research students at universities are doing, their learning experience would be far better described as "postgraduate research education".

Research in our universities informs governments and policy setting, national priority settings, and public discussion on matters as diverse as greenhouse emissions, native title, the performing arts and industrial reform. The questions considered in the Discussion Paper, such as setting national priorities for research programs and having research teaching being market driven, are less important than the over-riding fact that research funding and infrastructure are in such a parlous state that only a major increase in funding will overcome the problem. It is simply not sufficient to modify allocation formulae and procedures.

The balance between teaching and research

Strong universities are strong in both teaching and research. The University of Sydney, unquestionably one of the leading research universities in the country, aims to be internationally competitive and it sees its strength in teaching as an integral part of this endeavour. It sees the link between good teaching and good research as being absolutely clear at the postgraduate and honours levels. It also sees an active research environment as promoting the scholarship that is essential to effective undergraduate teaching.

Inadequacy of research funding

There is no doubt that the Committee was made aware of the chronic shortage of funds for university research. For example the Discussion Paper refers to the fact that the success rate for ARC Large Grants has fallen by 43% since 1966 and that, had the average grant size been maintained, the fall would have been 66%. Submissions were almost unanimous in arguing the need for increased funding, especially for infrastructure, even to the point of stating that "The state of disrepair of university equipment, libraries and fundamental infrastructure combined with reduced intramural funds to invest in infrastructure threatens the fabric of universities." (submission of Prof Ian Chubb). Given the Committee's term of reference to consider "the contribution that graduates

and research conducted within higher education institutions make to the competitiveness of Australian industry" it is distressing that the Discussion Paper was not bold enough to either agree, and recommend, or to disagree and state why. This is a major shortcoming of the Discussion Paper. It is essential that, if the final report is to be credible in arguing that universities have a major role to play in contributing to the national well-being, it put increased funding, and not simply the shifting of budgetary headings, as a priority.

There is also concern that, while arguing the need to strengthen the means for transferring knowledge to industry, the Discussion Paper makes no comment on the level of funding needed to achieve this, nor on the paucity of R&D support from, and research activity in, industry. Increased research funding to industry-linked programs and to the transfer of research and technology to industry is desirable but should not be at the expense of already diminished funding for basic and strategic research. At a minimum, one might have expected to see a set of arguments about the desirability of a well-articulated R&D policy.

Our major universities are deeply embedded in the international sphere, and this promises well for our continuing globalisation and our international competitiveness in technology. But we cannot remain competitive internationally unless we have the funding needed for the infrastructure to enable our excellent staff to remain at the cutting edge of their fields. How to provide such targeted funding should be an urgent priority.

Research funding models

The Discussion Paper calls for discussion on its three possible research funding models. The implications of each of these models cannot be assessed without notional budgets, since, without increased funding, some of the measures suggested would have extremely serious repercussions. The models can be discussed sensibly only in a budgetary context.

What is clear is that a move to diminish peer-reviewed grants in favour of block grants would be a sure recipe for mediocrity. Rather, we should strengthen the capability of the Research Councils to ensure that those researchers and programs which it does fund are selected by a rigorous review system, and that they are funded adequately. Any moves towards diminishing the reviewing process because of administrative or other reasons will weaken the research strengths of universities, and will lead outstanding researchers to leave the system.

Attaching some infrastructure funding to grants has merit; however this should not be at the expense of overall funding and it is essential that universities continue to have access to infrastructure funding for strategic research purposes, and for providing centralised infrastructure.

The setting of national priorities for university research and the role of the ARC

The Discussion Paper argues that priorities in university research activity need to be set, with the ARC taking a leading role, and that these priorities should focus upon economic, social and cultural goals at the national level. Strong, internationally competitive research programs and appropriate infrastructure take many years (often decades) to establish; attempting to set narrow discipline or even sub-discipline level priorities has the danger of leading to major and rapid shifts of research activity based on whim, and with an insufficient number of researchers properly qualified to carry out the research specified as priorities. Researchers themselves are keenly attuned to shifts in the pattern of knowledge and economic and social development, and their advice should be at the heart of decision making. International evidence suggests that priorities at the very broadest level are the ones most likely to lead to research coherence. It is also arguable that the priorities which should be set are strategic priorities - not based on specific areas of research but upon principles such as supporting strong researchers, keeping up with infrastructure developments, and fostering appropriate sharing of resources.

The ARC should be established as a stand alone properly funded and staffed public authority. There are pressures already towards reducing peer assessment of research programs because DEETYA, whose staffing numbers have been cut, is under stress in handling the current volume of applications. Staffing reductions have resulted in the loss of corporate skills relating to the allocation of peer assessed grant funding.

This University is, of course, outstanding within Australia in terms of its research and teaching performance. However it is far from content with that comparison given its mission to be a leading international research (and teaching) institution.

4. Funding issues

Student focused funding

As was stated above, there needs to be a distinction drawn between student focused resourcing on the one hand and user pays on the other.

As the University made clear in its earlier submission, the 1998 system where some students will be paying HECS with the option of deferring to the tax system and others will be paying a substantially higher fee without access to universal income contingent loans is not at all satisfactory. A less complicated and more transparent scheme would arise if individual universities were free to set fees for all courses and students were provided with scholarships (taking account of living expenses and a contribution towards fees) by governments and by the universities themselves. Both these providers would be able to encourage industry and other private participation in the establishment of scholarships appropriate to programs being followed, enabling students to pursue studies to the maximum extent of their ability and would have the opportunity to influence student choice of programs on the basis of incentives.

To gain widespread public acceptance of the funding arrangements described above an unequivocal government commitment to the maintenance of adequate levels of public subsidy and to the provision of deferred income-contingent loans would be required. Unlike a funding scheme based totally on vouchers, these mechanisms could be introduced with minimal disturbance to the system as Government could continue to provide suitably adjusted operating grants. Universities would be in a position to negotiate “anchor funding” to cover a minimum student load in an agreed discipline mix through a process not dissimilar to the current profiles process. This process would provide universities with a framework upon which to achieve their niche while encouraging all to strive towards better performance and providing students with some certainty about the ongoing stability of the institution to which they are committing a key time of their lives.

The Committee itself recognises that its more revolutionary proposals would require complex implementation arrangements over a number of years. Noting the added difficulty of implementing long-term policy shifts in a short-term parliamentary cycle these evolutionary proposals would seem to offer more likelihood of success without unduly disturbing the sector. The Committee would do well to look beyond its current options.

A combination of “anchor funding” and student focused contributions, would, in the competitive environment, result in a more realistic funding regime. Stability would be balanced by new initiatives and the ability for new providers to enter the sector.

The Committee states that there is no nationally agreed method of ranking the academic performance of school leavers. It would be unfortunate if such a statement were to lead to renewed attempts to introduce a national examination system. The universities currently cope with the diversity that exists between States and rank students for admissions purposes. However, it is important to note that increasingly universities are using a variety of methods of selection and are placing much less emphasis on TERs. This is a trend which the Committee might wish to encourage. It should note, too, that a high proportion of university entrants are not progressing directly from secondary school studies.

The Discussion Paper attempts to utilise the principles articulated for the funding of undergraduate education for the development of a student focused scheme at the postgraduate research level. While the University believes firmly that research students should have the opportunity to study where the appropriate research infrastructure is in place, there are at least two problems with the suggestions. First, the Australian university sector is becoming increasingly differentiated and it is likely that this increased differentiation will promote a greater mobility in research students. Second, most universities spend a good deal of time and energy in evaluating and ranking potential research students and the possibility that this could be done at a sector-wide level with any greater validity or reliability is difficult to accept. It is not likely that parameters of moderation could be agreed, much less implemented. If it proved to be feasible it could just be a complicated and expensive way of achieving the desirable outcome of ensuring that only those universities with a significant research and research education infrastructure are allocated government funding for postgraduate research education - a task the Research Councils could achieve just as well.

Rather than extend the principles of a student focused approach to the postgraduate research level, we believe that it will be more effective to ensure that students who wish to move to another university for academic reasons (e.g. supervision, expertise, infrastructure support) are encouraged and supported to do so.

HECS Issues

HECS was developed primarily to ensure a contribution from graduates towards the cost of their education in order to provide funding for the major expansion of the tertiary system (creating new opportunities for others), as well as recognising an element of private benefit from the public subsidy. It was never intended as a de facto, second tier taxation system - much less a mechanism for confiscation. Persons earning high incomes - whether as a direct result of their higher education or otherwise - should be paying higher levels of tax through the progressive taxation system. Levying tax liability on the basis of **predicted** future income, however, is social engineering at its worst.

Many of the humanities and social sciences (especially Law) have suffered from low levels of public funding and regulations which severely limit their ability to gain private contributions. The recent move to differential HECS by the Howard Government has a top tier comprised of the "expensive" disciplines (Medicine, Dentistry and Veterinary Science) which receive a high level of Government funding - and Law. Senator Vanstone said this was justified on "equity" grounds, on the basis of "the likely future benefits" to Law graduates.

The original Wran Report recommended a differential HECS system based on educational costs; the current system based partly on predicted income is an unwelcome innovation. While many of our law graduates do go on to lucrative careers in law - and in other occupations - many of our graduates work in low paid areas (eg legal aid, community legal centres, youth refuges, general practice in outer suburban and rural areas, and university lecturing). Recent studies commissioned by DEETYA itself indicate clearly that a growing portion of Law graduates do not intend to go into private legal practice. The new policy also fails to take any notice of marked gender differences in career paths, with women tending to work in the lower-remunerated parts of the profession, to work part-time, and to have more career interruptions.

The University condemns the lowering of the repayment threshold and the setting of HECS levels on the basis of predicted incomes.

Fees

The Government has brought in (some) US-type fee levels, without any of the infrastructure (or culture) which backs up the American system - particularly widespread soft Government loans, semi-soft private bank loans, massive scholarship endowments from alumni and a culture of parents saving for their children's higher education over many years. Nevertheless, US graduates are now entering the workforce with considerable levels of debt. One consequence is (as raised in our April submission) that evidence from USA indicates that the high level of debt carried by medical graduates (about \$US100 000) contributes substantially to the skewing of the medical workforce towards the most financially rewarding specialties and contributes to the large costs of health care.

It would introduce considerable inequities not to fund students for both first degrees and recognised double-degree combinations. That is, the entitlement to tuition fees of say five years is appropriate for many, but for a number of very able students, a longer duration of entitlement would be appropriate and merit based extensions of entitlement should be provided for. In this University new double-degree combinations have been developed to meet employers' perceptions of desirable skills. Graduate-entry second degrees are increasingly providing a means to select more reliably and open access to a wider range of motivated and mature applicants, many of whom may have studied in a regional university. The nation needs a range of the best and most broadly qualified professionals prepared for ever-changing workplace environments.

Most of the community would not accept the assertion included in the Discussion Paper that the study of science is implicitly valued more highly than the study of arts because a greater 'absolute amount' of public funding is directed towards a student studying the former. The community would accept that some things are more expensive than others but may be just as valuable to the community.

The proposal to differentiate funding by academic year is unnecessarily intrusive and fails to recognise that within universities the structure of some programs results in higher costs at earlier levels of the course while in others the later years are more expensive. The Committee shows a lack of understanding of the huge diversity of programs within universities and may have outdated ideas of immense first year classes. Public anchor funding needs to reflect the costs of provision if the full range of professions are to be supported without totally unreasonable repayment burdens on students.

Postgraduate Coursework Programs

We are disappointed with the lack of emphasis in the Discussion Paper on postgraduate coursework programs. The Discussion Paper could usefully have explored in some depth the area of postgraduate coursework provision and the contribution it makes to the nation. The case that all such education should be on a fee basis is not well made but the University would support the principle of access to income-contingent loans. The effects of cuts in Operating Grant supported postgraduate coursework programs have not been explored. Postgraduate coursework programs in a variety of fields have traditionally provided the basis for further professional development. In some fields employers have been ready to support staff, while in others which involve larger numbers of employees, this has been found more difficult. There is evidence that employer sponsorship supports an uneven equity profile. There is inequality in access to some professions because of the differing prerequisite educational qualifications required. It should be noted too that Australian first degrees are much shorter than European equivalents and that access to further postgraduate study is becoming a necessity for employment.

5. Other financing issues

Taxation

The University would welcome any moves to reform taxation legislation and to treat donations to universities more favourably. Comparisons of public and private funding of lead US institutions often overlook the inherent public subsidy through the generous taxation arrangement for donors to universities in that country. It is not only the taxation of donations that is treated unfavourably compared with the US, but the taxation regimes (ie, the absence or rate of deductions) regarding investment in R&D, and by individuals/families for tuition fees. One of the centrepieces of President Clinton's re-election platform was generous tax deductibility for university tuition fees.

Infrastructure charge

The Discussion Paper states that universities are the recipients of 'hidden' subsidies in the form of the publicly funded assets held by institutions and proposes some form of infrastructure charge to provide incentives for institutions to manage their assets 'more efficiently'. The University totally rejects this argument. The converse argument can be and was supplied by the University in its April submission. The University has the responsibility for maintaining significant parts of the heritage of the nation for which it receives no special support but which entails significant expenditure on its part. The cost of converting 19th century buildings for 21st century use is immense as is the expense of maintaining museum collections and rare books. Not only are these costs very high, they are absorbing funds that could be used for other capital development. The only way for the University to survive under such a regime would be to become involved in selling off and leaseback arrangements to overseas concerns where tax minimisation provides their interest.

The Committee has acknowledged the complexities in this area and this University with its extended funding of assets from private, state and commonwealth sources over 150 years would be a prime example. The University has obligations under its act to the development and provision of cultural, professional, technical and vocational services to the community as well as the provision of educational and research facilities at university standard and the promotion, advancement and transmission of knowledge and research.

Governance

The Discussion Paper calls for comments on the Governance of universities. Governance of universities goes beyond questions of financial management to a range of academic issues. The University does not accept that the current governance arrangements are unsuitable for a supposedly more competitive environment. However, it would argue that it could benefit from there being more opportunity for the University community to appoint members to its governing body. Such appointments could bring particular expertise and provide balance rather than leaving the University solely reliant on the wisdom of electorates and the State Government to bring forward suitable persons.

6. Conclusion

The University believes that it is worth repeating its concluding remarks from its April submission. It said then that " the importance to Australia of a productive, accessible higher education system, capable of rapid and effective response to changing demands, requires a firm government commitment to public investment in it. A high level of public funding is necessary to provide student support and essential infrastructure, allow the support of specialist disciplines, pure scholarship and research and to ensure that this country has some universities of truly international standing.

“Public funding alone cannot support and maintain high quality service in a time of continual change. There must be a public expectation that the private benefits derived from ongoing access to the services of higher education are recognised by increasing private support for it. This is best encouraged by provision of taxation incentives appropriate to its significance.

“The University of Sydney accepts that the challenge is to ‘do more’ and emphasises that this presupposes significant public support and a regulatory framework which fosters institutional self-help. We have already committed significant resources to enhancement of our research and teaching activities over the period leading to the next century, with the intention of increasing the quality of performance and improving working conditions for staff and students. In the light of announced Government cuts, however, this strategy is crucially dependent on income generation and that, in turn, relies on a suitably deregulated environment.”

The University at the time indicated that it was aware of the magnitude of the task being undertaken by the Committee and that it was willing to provide further development of particular issues canvassed in its submission. The Committee, in its Discussion Paper has, however, failed to properly analyse many of the key issues facing the higher education sector. It has avoided the responsibility of such a major review committee to gather hard data, most notably with respect to international comparisons, and should undertake more work before putting forward any recommendations to Government. We are very concerned that a valuable opportunity may be lost to make significant adjustments in the sector designed to enhance its effectiveness and the quality of its performance.

Action by the Chair under delegated authority

College of Health Sciences

Appointment of Visiting Professor

The Academic Board **is asked to note** the following appointments:

Name	Department/School	Period
Professor N Rutter	Obstetrics and Gynaecology	1 April 1998 to 30 June 1998
Professor S Yusuf	Postgraduate Committee in Medicine	27 July 1998 to 31 July 1998
Professor S MacMahon	Department of Public Health and Community Medicine/Northern Clinical School	17 September 1997 to 1 August 1998

College of Sciences and Technology

Appointment of Visiting Professor

The Academic Board **is asked to note** the following appointments which have been approved by the Acting Chair on behalf of the Academic Board, on the recommendation of the Pro-Vice-Chancellor, on the advice of the relevant Deans and Heads of Departments/School:

Name	Department/School	Period
Dr Christopher J Howard	Chemistry	09/02/98 to 08/02/99
Dr Juhl R S Hales	Veterinary Clinical Sciences	01/01/98 to 11/03/98
Professor John C Burnham	Psychology	13/07/98 to 10/08/98
Professor Anthony D J Haymet	Chemistry	28/02/98 to 31/12/98