



Academic Board

Meeting held on Wednesday 11 March 1998

Minutes of the meeting of the Academic Board held at 2 pm on Wednesday 11 March 1998 in the Professorial Board Room.

There were present: the Chair (Professor R Pesman) presiding, the Deputy Chairs (Professors J R Lawrence, R McPhedran and A Sefton), the Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Professor D Anderson), Dr R Bohringer, Professor B Cass, Mr T Clark, Associate Professors D Davey and D Dragovich, Professor R Dunn, Associate Professor C J Durrant, Professor K Eltis, Associate Professor D Farnill, Professor L D Field, Associate Professor M Findlay, Professors D R Fraser and G J Gill, Dr D P Godden, Professor R Hewitt, Associate Professor P Jones, Professors H Kendig, J F Kinnear and I J Klineberg, Ms N M MacLaren, Associate Professor A F Masters, Dr P McCallum, Professor G T Moore, Associate Professor M Painter, Drs M Peat and P Phibbs, Professors S E Pretty, J Raper, W Schworm, G Sherington, V Spate, G P Steven and T Walter, Messrs T J Wilkinson and R Wilson and Dr G Wright.

Present as observers were: Dr W Adams (Secretary of the Academic Board), Professors R Johnstone, L M Koder and D Napper, Mr J Shipp and Professors D Weisbrot and J A Young.

Present by invitation were: Ms B Olde and Mrs L Rose.

In attendance: Miss E R Ring.

P 17/98 Starring

Members of the Board were invited to star any unstarred item which they wished to have discussed. All other items were dealt with as recommended in the agenda.

*** The Board resolved as recommended with respect to all unstarred items.

18/98 Minutes

1. Minutes of the meeting held on 11 February 1998

*** The Board confirmed the minutes of the meeting held on Wednesday, 11 February 1998 as a correct record.

2. Business arising out of the minutes

None

19/98 Report of the Chair

The following reports had been circulated and tabled:

(see agenda and supplementary agenda item A4.)

Part I

1. Report on Senate Matters

*** The Board noted the report.

2. April Board meeting

*** The Board agreed to hold the Board meeting scheduled provisionally for 15 April.

3. Terms of reference of Board committees

*** The Board noted the report.

4. Membership of the Board

*** The Board noted the report.

5. Code of Conduct and Corruption Prevention Strategy documents

*** The Board noted the report.

6. Action under delegated authority and reports from the three Colleges

*** The Board noted the report.

7. Questions on notice

*** The Board noted that no questions had been received this month.

P Part II

At the meeting the Chair reported as follows:

1. The late Professor Stephen Salsbury

Full tribute will be paid at the next meeting of the Academic Forum to Professor Stephen Salsbury, Dean of the Faculty of Economics, who died on the 1st of March. But I would wish to place on record my appreciation, and that of my predecessor chairs, of the very valuable contribution that Professor Salsbury made both to the work of the Board and to discussion and debate at Board meetings. He was a very staunch advocate for academic values and standards and for his Faculty. Stephen Salsbury was also a man of much kindness as I discovered in my first days as Chair of the Board. The Academic Board, like the whole University community, is the poorer for his death and will very much miss his presence.

2. Welcome

I welcome Professor Hal Kendig, Dean of the Faculty of Health Sciences, to his first meeting of the Board.

3. Intellectual Property

At its last meeting, Senate noted the Intellectual Property policy which the Board approved at the end of last year so this policy is now in operation. But some members of Senate were worried about aspects of the policy and it was agreed that the Board's committee would consider the concerns of Fellows of Senate with a view to possible amendments to the policy.

4. White paper on the HSC

Members of the Board may have read in the *Sydney Morning Herald* this week of possible changes connected to the recommendations of the McGaw report on the HSC. At its meeting with the Board of Studies in February, the Committee of Chairs of Academic Boards continued to emphasise the need for 'extended' studies. As I understand, the Minister has yet to take his decision on the recommendations in the White Paper, and the number of subjects, and which subjects, will have 'extended' courses in still under discussion.

5. TERs and academic performance

The previous Chair of the Board commissioned Professor Eugene Seneta to conduct a sample study on the correlation of TERs and performance in first year at this University. I have now received that report which at first glance suggests that at least in generalist faculties the TER is still a good predictor of success or failure. The report will be discussed in the first instance at the Undergraduate Studies Committee.

6. Promotions

With the approval by Senate of the new policy on promotion to Level E, the revised policies on promotion from Level B to Level E are now in place for 1998. All promotion

policies now indicate that a year must elapse before unsuccessful applicants may reapply. The Board is not inclined to retrospective legislation so those members of staff who unsuccessfully applied for promotion in 1997 are eligible to reapply in 1998.

7. Academic Forum

I would remind all members of the Board that the first meeting of the Academic Forum for this year takes place next Monday. The Forum focus will be on flexible learning and will be introduced by Professor Johnstone. The attempt is being made this year to secure a wider input into the Board's decision making by bringing to the Forum for discussion issues on which the Board will need to develop policies during 1998.

8. Vacancy in Board membership for a head of department or school

As Professor Reid has indicated that she is not able to serve, a vacancy still exists in the Board membership for a head of department or school, who, in accordance with the Academic Governance Rules, has to be a woman. I seek nominations to fill this vacancy.

During the ensuing discussion, members raised the following matters:

Vacancy in Board membership for a head of department or school

Professor Walter nominated Dr Diane Hutchinson, Head of the Department of Economic History, to fill the vacancy for a female head of department or school, subject to her agreement.

*** The Board appointed Dr Hutchinson to Board membership, subject to her agreement.

Intellectual Property Policy

Professor Walter referred to difficulties in implementing the Intellectual Property Policy in respect of researchers on contract; he had sought advice from the University Solicitor on this matter who had confirmed that there were problems with existing contracts and how they are affected by existing policy in this area. He suggested that there be further input from the Board in amending the Policy. The Chair asked members of the Board to submit any concerns in writing.

20/98 Statement by the Vice-Chancellor and Principal

The following report was tabled:

(see supplementary agenda item A5.)

Part I

1. Report on Senate Matters

*** The Board noted the report.

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Part II

At the meeting, the Deputy Vice-Chancellor, Professor Anderson, reported on the following matters:

1. Resignation of Professor Richard Johnstone as Pro-Vice-Chancellor (Academic Support)

Professor Anderson referred with regret to the resignation of Professor Richard Johnstone as Pro-Vice-Chancellor (Academic Support) as of 3 April 1998; Professor Johnstone would remain at the University as a Professor of the University. The responsibilities of Professor Johnstone's portfolio would have to be re-arranged; he himself would assume responsibility for the teaching and learning aspects of the portfolio, and the information technology aspect would need to be assigned elsewhere.

2. 1998 enrolments

Professor Anderson reported that there were 7,227 new commencing HECS enrolments. This was some 300 enrolments over-target, so DEETYA targets would therefore be well met. There were a little over 29,000 re-enrolments. To date there were 103 enrolments in the first cohort of local fee-paying students, but this figure could drop with withdrawals. As at 6 March there were 784 commencing international student enrolments, exceeding the target of 670. 85% of eligible international students in senior years had re-enrolled.

3. Audit of the University's resources

Professor Anderson referred to item (17) in the written report on Senate matters that had been tabled in the Supplementary agenda and drew attention to the matters upon which the Vice-Chancellor would be reporting to Senate.

4. University teaching hospital

Professor Anderson quoted the Vice-Chancellor's report to Senate on the proposed University teaching hospital, reporting as follows: Judgement had been handed down on the application filed by the University in the Land and Environment Court in connection with South Sydney Council's determination of the Development Application for the proposed teaching hospital. The judgement had found in the University's favour, awarding the University costs.

Last October the Vice-Chancellor had advertised that he welcomed comments on the proposal. The submissions had now been distributed to the Planning Committee and would be made available to all Fellows of Senate.

In response to a question from Mr Clark about the possibility of the submissions and external consultant's report being made available on Internet, the Registrar reported that he had written to the authors of the submissions that morning asking if they could be made available.

5. Vice-Chancellor's Keynote address

Professor Anderson reported that the Vice-Chancellor would present a Keynote address on Tuesday, 17 March at the Education 98 Forum on the current status and future opportunities in higher education.

6. Joint Venture with UNSW - AGSM and the GSB

Professor Anderson reported that Senate had considered a Draft Framework Agreement for the Joint Venture between the University of New South Wales and the University of Sydney for the amalgamation of the Australian Graduate School of Management and the Graduate School of Business and that Senate had endorsed the Vice-Chancellor's proposal to continue negotiations with UNSW. A similar proposal had been endorsed by the Council at UNSW. The draft framework agreements would be used as a basis for future negotiations. The proposal had the support of the business community.

Professor Walter referred to academic aspects of the proposed merger and asked whether these would be referred to the Board. Professor Eltis reported that, following the establishment of the framework, the Vice-Chancellors of both universities would continue deliberations with their universities, including the referral of academic issues to the respective Academic Boards. The Chair reported that the Vice-Chancellor had asked her to refer the academic issues to the Board.

7. ATP - Loco building at Eveleigh

Professor Anderson reported that the Australian Technology Park Board had proposed that the three governing bodies of the partner universities (Sydney, UNSW and UTS) meet at the Park on the occasion of the opening of the Loco Building at Eveleigh on either 13 or 20 June.

8. Emeritus Professor Gordon Stanley

Professor Anderson reported that Emeritus Professor Gordon Stanley had been appointed to the Presidency of the Board of Studies, following four years as Chair of the Higher Education Council.

Over-crowding in class-rooms

Professor Spate referred to a large increase in first-year student numbers and the consequent over-crowding in lecture theatres, and said that it had not been possible to find larger lecture theatres so that classes could be relocated. While student numbers would drop by 30 April, the initial over-crowding was not acceptable and needed to be addressed. In accordance with the Health and Safety Audit staff were being told to close lecture room doors when all seats were occupied. She applauded

the upgrading of lecture rooms, but it appeared to have been at the expense of seating capacity; she asked if similar problems were being experienced in other departments/faculties.

Professor Eltis responded that prior to the commencement of classes he had made two checks on timetable and rooming requirements and had been assured by those organising the time-table that appropriate accommodation allocations had been organised. The one and only over-crowding incident during the first week of classes that had been brought to his attention had been solved in consultation with the Faculty (Arts). Another large lecture theatre complex was to be built on Eastern Avenue, with seating capacity for 500 and 300. This complex would also be available for public lectures; it would not, however, be finished before the end of 1999.

Mr Wilkinson said that students were paying for their education and that it was not acceptable that they be turned away from classes; this needed immediate resolution.

21/98 Report by the Vice-Chancellor and Principal on proctorial matters

*** The Board noted that a report was tabled.

22/98 Report of the Undergraduate Studies Committee

Part I

*** The Board noted that there was no report this month.

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Part II

No further report was presented.

23/98 Report of the Graduate Studies Committee

The following reports had been circulated:

(see agenda item C2.)

Part I

A. First report

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1. Amendment of the Resolutions of the Academic Board: electronic submission of theses

Dr Godden expressed concern over some aspects of the proposal:

- if the thesis were presented in word-processing format, there were opportunities for changes — accidental or otherwise — to be made to it;
- if theses were presented in Word or WordPerfect, the version would need to be specified;
- ASCII would not be an acceptable form for graphics; RTF (Rich Text Format) would be a more suitable form;
- in respect of submission on disk, 100,000 words might not fit onto a floppy, especially in RTF or where graphics were used;
- PDF (Portable Document Format) was already available and could be used; it had the advantage that readers could not change the text;
- submission on CD ROM appeared to be the most appropriate form, with no space or graphics problems and no facility for the work to be changed.

Professor Lawrence said that these issues had already been addressed by the Committee and also by the Board itself last year when it approved the proposal in principle. As the Committee's report stated, there was an awareness that the provisions would need to be amended to reflect technological developments; the new policy was an attempt to make the electronic option available to those who wished to and could use it.

Several members of the Board spoke in favour of the proposal, emphasising its evolutionary nature and the importance of not impeding its implementation.

*** The Board adopted the report and amended its Resolutions as recommended, noting a number of concerns expressed and the evolving nature of the proposal. Professor Lawrence said he would welcome written comment to assist in the refinement and further development of the provisions for electronic submission and examination of theses.

P 2. Guidelines for usage of the terms thesis, treatise, dissertation, essay and long essay as units of study within postgraduate programs

Dr Godden sought confirmation that the guidelines referred only to the usage of the terms in respect of postgraduate study and that the term “thesis” would still be available for use in undergraduate courses. Professor Lawrence pointed out that the Guidelines referred only to postgraduate programs; and the Chair confirmed that the term “thesis” would still be available for use in undergraduate courses in respect of, for example, the Fourth Year Honours thesis.

*** The Board endorsed the report.

3. Appreciation of Professor Geoffrey Berry

*** The Board noted the report.

4. Proceedings of the Committee

- (1) **Membership of the Committee**
- (2) **Report of the PhD Award Sub-Committee**
- (3) **Report of the Coursework Sub-Committee**
- (4) **Postgraduate Studies Handbook**
- (5) **Higher doctorates**
- (6) **A proposal for the reclassification of the MMus (Performance) as a Master’s degree by research**

*** The Board noted the report.

B. Second report

P A proposal for the reclassification of the MMus (Performance) as a Master’s degree by research

Professor Lawrence reported that he wished to make one small amendment to the Resolutions of the Senate relating to the MMus(Perf) degree by the addition of the words “and the thesis” to the end of section 6.(c).

- *** The Board:
- approved the proposal as recommended; and
 - acting on behalf of Senate, amended the Resolutions of the Senate as recommended, subject to the addition of the words “and the thesis” to the end of section 6.(c) of the Resolutions.

P Part II

At the meeting Professor Lawrence said that he wished to draw particular attention to item 3 in the Committee’s First report and to put on record his gratitude to Professor Berry and his achievements, especially in respect of PhD examining times. Professor Lawrence also drew attention to the Committee’s report on the Postgraduate Handbook (item 4(4) of the First report).

24/98 Report of the Teaching and Learning Committee

The following report had been circulated:

(see agenda item C3.)

Part I

P 1. Draft Guidelines for Excellence in Teaching Awards

Mr Wilson suggested that the wording of sub-section 3.(a) in section IB of the Guidelines for Excellence in Teaching Awards (Criteria for Excellence in Teaching) be amended in order to make provision for distance education rather than just “face-to-face teaching”. After a brief discussion it was agreed, with the assent of Professor Sefton (Chair of the Teaching and Learning Committee) that the words “face-to-face teaching” be replaced by the words “teaching, however delivered”.

On Professor Sefton’s suggestion, the Board also agreed to amend the wording in sub-section 3.(b) to read “successful innovation in the development, ...”.

*** The Board adopted the revised Guidelines for Excellence in Teaching Awards, subject to the amendments agreed upon.

2. Proceedings of the Committee

- (1) **Composition of the Committee**
- (2) **Report of Centre for Teaching and Learning**
- (3) **Assessment policy**
- (4) **Flexible learning: guidelines for development of flexible delivery**
- (5) **Travel grant entitlements for teaching purposes**
- (6) **National Council for Open and Distance Education (NCODE)**

*** The Board noted the report.

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Part II

At the meeting Professor Sefton reported that she wished to place on record appreciation for Professor Johnstone's contributions to the work of the Committee and his assistance in shaping the Committee's destiny.

Professor Sefton also reported that she wished to draw attention to University-wide, two-day workshops on excellence in teaching being planned in conjunction with the Pro-Vice-Chancellor (Academic Support) and the Centre for Teaching and Learning. It was hoped to establish the workshops as a biannual event.

25/98 Report of the Research Committee

The following report had been circulated:

(see agenda item C4.)

Part I

1. **General Business**
2. **Proposed combined URG/ARC Small Grant Process - Guidelines**
3. **Policy on dealing with allegations of research misconduct**
4. **Proposed major issues for 1998 - The role of research in the University funding model**
5. **Proposed major issues for 1998 - Report from Ethics Committees and review of outcomes from these committees**
6. **Report of the Pro-Vice-Chancellor (Research)**
Research Quantum and Research Infrastructure Block Grant
Key Centres of Teaching and Research
High Performance Computing and Communications
Issues for the future
7. **Report of the Director, Business Liaison Office**
Proposed Forum
SPIRT seminars
8. **Report of the Director, Research Development**
9. **Report of the Director, Research and Scholarships Office**
ARC Large Grants and Fellowships
NHMRC GrantNet
1998 Publications Data Collection
10. **Next Meeting**

*** The Board noted the report.

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Part II

No further report was presented at the meeting.

26/98 Report of the Library and Information Technology Committee

The following report had been circulated:

(see agenda item C5.)

Part I

1. **Report of the University Librarian - outlook for 1998**

2. **Report of the Chair of the IT Reference Group**
3. **Membership of the Committee**
4. **Distance Education**

*** The Board noted the report; and in respect of the recommendation in item 3, the Board endorsed the recommendation but agreed to delay its transmission to Senate until the other Board Committees have reviewed their terms of reference and forwarded their recommendations for any changes to the Board.

P Part II

At the meeting Professor McPhedran reported that he also wished to place on record appreciation of Professor Johnstone's contributions to the work of the LITC and to IT matters in the University generally.

27/98 Report of the Academic Staffing Committee

The following report had been circulated:

(see agenda item C6.)

Part I

1. **Draft Policy Document - University Chairs**
2. **Draft Policy Document - Academic and Research Titles**
3. **Six monthly reporting on all academic appointments (advertised and appointment on nomination)**

*** The Board noted the report.

P Part II

At the meeting Professor Pesman referred to the statistical information in item 3 in the Committee's report and reported that a full list of the academic appointments made was available from the central Personnel Office.

P 28/98 Nomination of members of the Advisory Committee for the Centre for Continuing Education

The following report had been circulated:

(see agenda item C7.)

*** The item was deferred until the next meeting.