



Academic Board

Meeting held on Wednesday 15 April 1998

Minutes of the meeting of the Academic Board held at 2 pm on Wednesday 15 April 1998 in the Professorial Board Room.

There were present: the Chair (Professor R Pesman) presiding, the Deputy Chairs (Professors D J H Cockayne, J R Lawrence and R McPhedran), the Acting Deputy Chair (Associate Professor M Painter), the Vice-Chancellor and Principal (Professor G Brown), Professors C Adam and D Anderson, Associate Professor R Arnold, Ms S Baker, Ms L Buchanan, Professor B Cass, Mr T Clark, Associate Professors L Copeland, D Davey and D Dragovich, Professor R Dunn, Associate Professors C J Durrant and D Farnill, Professors L D Field and D R Fraser, Associate Professor C B Gillies, Dr D P Godden, Professor R Hewitt, Dr D Hutchinson, Ms C Hyde, Associate Professor P Jones, Professors H Kendig and I J Klineberg, Associate Professor A F Masters, Drs P McCallum and M Peat, Professor J Raper, Dr A Reynolds, Professors B D Roufogalis, W Schworm, V Spate and G P Steven, Associate Professor G M Stone, Professors T Walter and J Webber, Mr T J Wilkinson and Dr G Wright.

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

Present by invitation were: Ms O Cornelius, Ms N Downey, Ms B Olde and Mrs L Rose.

In attendance: Miss E R Ring.

P 29/98 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.

30/98 Minutes

1. Minutes of the meeting held on 11 March 1998

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

P 2. Business arising out of the minutes

Dr Godden referred to the Board's adoption of the recommendations of the Graduate Studies Committee to make provision for electronic submission and examination of theses (Minute Item 23/98) and expressed several additional concerns about it:

- If theses were examined in the USA and examiners' comments were returned on the basis of US pagination (which is different from that used in Australia), supervisors and candidates could have difficulties in connecting the comments to the thesis.
- Computer viruses could be distributed, including the possibility of identifying examiners to the candidate.

Dr Godden said that a lot of issues associated with electronic submission and examination were yet to be addressed and asked what steps the Graduate Studies Committee was taking to do so.

Professor Lawrence emphasised the evolutionary nature of the proposal and asked that all comments and suggestions for improvements be forwarded to him in writing; these would be referred to the Working Party for its consideration.

31/98 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.

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2. Principles and Procedures for Student Appeals

In response to comments by Ms Buchanan that changes had been made to the document since it had last been seen by the Working Party, the Chair reported that, following re-drafting, the final version had been circulated to all members of the Working Party, including the student members. Mr Clark reported on the reasons for the final changes and explained that while the procedures for dealing with appeals up to the level of a formal appeal to Senate had to be laid down, the procedures followed by Senate were in the province of that body. Senate could, however, be asked to review its procedures, and the document had been re-drafted in such a way that it could be amended if Senate changed its procedures. The Chair reported that she would ask Senate to do so.

During the ensuing discussion, members suggested the following amendments to the document:

- that, just as provision was made in the document for a dean to nominate another faculty officer to deal with the matter, provision be made for the Chair of the Academic Board to nominate the Alternative Chair or a Deputy Chair to act on the Chair's behalf; this would facilitate the process if the Chair were not available to act;
- that the cross-reference in section 9.9 of the document be corrected; and
- that the reference in section 5.4 to "rules of procedural fairness" be amended to "principles of procedural fairness".

*** The Board adopted the Principles and Procedures for Student Appeals document, subject to the suggested amendments set out above.

3. Semester and vacation dates for the year 2000

*** The Board adopted the revised Semester and Vacation dates for the Year 2000 as recommended.

4. Flexible learning

*** The Board noted the report.

5. Committee of Chairs of Academic Boards

*** The Board noted the report.

6. Membership of the Board: President of the SRC

*** The Board noted the report and welcomed Ms Buchanan to Board membership.

7. 1998 APAs and UPAs

*** The Board noted the report.

8. Action under delegated authority and reports from the Academic Colleges

*** The Board noted the report.

9. Questions on notice

*** The Board noted the response.

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Part II

At the meeting the Chair said that she had no further matters to report.

32/98 Statement by the Vice-Chancellor and Principal

The following report was tabled:

(see 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 Vice-Chancellor reported on the following matters:

1. Assistant Pro-Vice-Chancellor (Information Technology)

The Vice-Chancellor reported that that Dr Simon Carlile had agreed to take up the position of Assistant Pro-Vice-Chancellor (Information Technology), overseeing the general management of information technology with partial responsibility for the introduction of the new Student Information System and Year 2000 problems. Dr Carlile's appointment was until March 2000.

2. Water damage

The Vice-Chancellor reported that a considerable amount of water damage had occurred over the weekend. The University's security and after-hours data base had proved to be not entirely adequate, but this would be addressed. A large amount of the damage had occurred, however, because of open windows, and it was the University's staff who could ensure that this did not recur.

33/98 Report by the Vice-Chancellor and Principal on proctorial matters

*** The Board noted that the Vice-Chancellor tabled a report.

34/98 Report of the Academic Forum

The following report had been circulated:

(see agenda item A12.)

1. Forum focus: Flexible learning

2. Student Proctorial Panel

3. The late Professor John R. Booker

4. The late Professor Stephen Salsbury

5. Reports for noting

*** The Board noted the report.

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35/98 Report of the Faculty of Agriculture

The following report had been circulated:

(see agenda item B1.)

Dr Godden drew the Board's attention to the motions passed by the Faculty of Agriculture which made recommendations to, and requests of, the Board and asked that the Board consider these when considering the item on Admissions in the report of the Undergraduate Studies Committee.

The Chair reported that Motion 1 was answered in item 5 of her report on the Committee of Chairs; Motions 2 and 3 were complicated and therefore she had suggested that the Board refer them to the Undergraduate Studies Committee for advice prior to considering them.

*** The Board referred the matter to the Undergraduate Studies Committee for consideration and advice to the Board.

36/98 Report of the Faculty of Nursing

The following report had been circulated:

(see agenda item B13.)

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

*** The Board recommended the amendment of the Resolutions of the Senate relating to the constitution of the Faculty of Nursing as recommended.

37/98 Report of the Undergraduate Studies Committee

The following report had been circulated:

(see agenda item C1.)

Part I

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1. Admissions

Dr Godden referred to section 5. of the draft Board Resolutions relating to Requirements for Admission, and asked how and by whom the admission of local fee-paying students would be determined. Professor Hewitt explained that applicants were ranked on the basis of merit, as in the case of HECS-liable students, and that deans drew the cut-off at the point where the quota was filled. The Chair reported that any significant changes to this procedure would be referred to the Board.

Ms Buchanan referred to the next section of the draft Resolutions on English Language Requirements and said that the SRC was concerned about what the assessment criteria were. The Chair reported that the nature of some courses, teacher-training courses for example, was such that faculties needed to be able to set higher English Language requirements to reflect the verbal communication skills needed for success in the course. Ms Buchanan asked whether or not there was a current document that set out the specific English language requirements for each faculty, and, if not, whether the Undergraduate Studies Committee could produce same. The Chair said that consideration could be given to this.

Professor Klineberg asked that a correction be made to the entry relating to Dentistry in the Degree Table with the Special Tertiary Admissions Test (STAT) being replaced by the Undergraduate Medicine and Health Sciences Test (UMAT).

*** the Board:

- recommended the adoption of the revised Rules and Resolutions of the Senate relating to admission and enrolment; and
- subject to Senate's approval of the above, adopted the draft resolutions of the Academic Board, subject to the entry relating to Dentistry in the Degree Table being amended, with the Special Tertiary Admissions Test (STAT) being replaced by the Undergraduate Medicine and Health Sciences Test (UMAT).

The Chair said that there had been an enormous amount of work in compiling the new Rules and Resolutions. The Chair placed on record her appreciation of the work and contribution of Ms Natalie Downey.

2. Proceedings of the Committee Membership

*** The Board noted the report.

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Part II

No further report was presented at the meeting.

38/98 Report of the Graduate Studies Committee

The following report had been circulated:

(see agenda item C2.)

Part I

1. **Amendment of the Resolutions of the Senate: Degree of Doctor of Philosophy Faculty in which postgraduate students should proceed**
 *** The Board, acting on behalf of Senate, amended the Resolutions of the Senate relating to the PhD degree as recommended.
 2. **Membership of the PhD Award Sub-Committee**
 *** The Board noted the report.
 3. **Proceedings of the Committee**
 - (1) **Membership of the Committee**
 - (2) **Report of the PhD Award Sub-Committee**
 - (3) **Report of the Coursework Sub-Committee**
 - (a) **Annual faculty reports on postgraduate teaching and reviews of postgraduate coursework**
 - (b) **Position papers referred to faculties for comment**
 - (c) **Course structures**
 - (d) **Approval process for amended postgraduate courses**
 - (e) **Credit for units of study at postgraduate level**
 - (f) **Conjoint ventures in postgraduate coursework**
 - (g) **Future agenda items**
 - (4) **Postgraduate Studies Handbook**
 - (5) **Higher doctorates: award of degree of Doctor of Science**
 - (6) **Communication with students and their administrative needs**
 - (7) **Embargoes on higher degree theses**
- *** The Board noted the report.

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Part II

No further report was presented at the meeting.

39/98 Report of the Teaching and Learning Committee

The following report had been circulated:

(see agenda item C3.)

Part I

Proceedings of the Committee

1. **Correction of Committee's report to March Board**
 2. **Composition of the Committee**
 3. **Flexible learning: draft guidelines for development of flexible delivery**
 4. **Report of NeTTL**
 5. **CUTSD Grants**
 6. **Proposed workshop on teaching**
 7. **Courses for postgraduate students**
 8. **Travel grant entitlements for teaching purposes**
 9. **CEQ data**
 10. **Committee representation on Teaching Sub-committee of LITC**
- *** The Board noted the report.

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Part II

No further report was presented at the meeting.

40/98 Report of the Research Committee

The following report had been circulated:

(see agenda item C4.)

Part I

- 1. Amendment to report of February 1998 meeting**
- 2. General Business**
- 3. Library journal cancellations**
- 4. Proposed combined URG/ARC Small Grant Process - Guidelines**
- 5. Guidelines on research practice/policy review**
- 6. Report of the Pro-Vice-Chancellor (Research)**
- 7. Report of the Director, Research and Scholarships Office**
- 8. Next Meeting**

*** The Board noted the report.

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Part II

No further report was presented at the meeting.

41/98 Report of the Library and Information Technology Committee

The following report had been circulated:

(see agenda item C5.)

Part I

- 1. Alumni access to the University Intranet**

*** The Board noted the report.

- 2. The Intranet System Project Proposal - policy implications for the Academic Board**

*** The Board endorsed the recommendation.

- 3. Report of the Chair of the Library Reference Group**

*** The Board noted the report.

- 4. A Report to the Vice-Chancellor on Developments in 1997 and Major Issues for 1998 and Beyond**

*** The Board endorsed the recommendation.

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Part II

At the meeting Professor McPhedran said that he wished to draw the Board's attention to item 2 in Part I of the Committee's report; access to the Intranet would expedite communication in the University, with such facilities becoming a *de facto* standard in Australian universities.

42/98 Report of the Academic Staffing Committee

The following report had been circulated:

(see agenda item C6.)

Part I

- 1. Welcome to Professor M Koder**

*** The Board noted the report.

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- 2. Draft Policy Document - University Chairs**

The Chair reported that various drafts of the policy had been circulated widely in the University. Sydney was not the only university to be considering the introduction of such Chairs: UNSW had approved their introduction last month and Flinders had previously done so. The proposed policy was minimalist and there was no provision for appeal. Only a few such chairs would be offered: either to reward and retain the brightest and best academic staff at Sydney; or to attract internationally-acknowledged scholars of

exceptional distinction from elsewhere. The document provided the procedures for the determination of salary loadings but did not specify details as this was a management matter. It was hoped to attract external sponsorship for the Chairs.

The Chair had received two further suggestions for changes to the policy from Professor Napper:

- The first suggestion was that the Chairs be named “Sesquicentenary” Chairs rather than “University” Chairs. This would be a dynamic name, embodying a sense of the history of this University and it would not reflect adversely on other Chairs.
- The second was that the section on procedures relating to appointments from outside the University be reworded as follows:
 1. Members of the academic staff of the University may forward to the Vice-Chancellor the names of appropriate persons for nomination. If the Vice-Chancellor considers that such persons may satisfy the criterion of being internationally acknowledged scholars of exceptional distinction, the nominations will be considered by a committee comprising
 - Vice-Chancellor (Chair)
 - Chair of the Academic Board
 - a relevant Pro-Vice-Chancellor (College).

(Note: the suggested amendments to the original wording are underlined.)

Following some discussion, it was moved and seconded that the policy document be amended by changing the name of the Chairs from “University Chairs” to “Sesquicentenary Chairs”; the motion was put and lost on a show of hands.

It was moved and seconded that the section of the policy document on the procedures relating to appointments from outside the University be amended as had been suggested by Professor Napper to the Chair; the motion was put and carried on a show of hands.

In response to a question from Professor McPhedran about how the linkage between the sponsor and the Chair would be acknowledged, the Chair said that that issue could be determined when the need arose.

Dr Godden suggested that there be explicit provision for membership of the University Chair Committee by experts from outside the University. After some discussion it was agreed that the membership of the UCC be amended to provide that in the event that neither of the professors nominated by the Vice-Chancellor or Chair of the Board were external to the University, an additional external member be appointed by the Vice-Chancellor in consultation with the Chair of the Board.

In reply to questions from Ms Buchanan about the salary loading and review, the Chair reported that the policy had deliberately been left open — it was up to the Remuneration Sub-Committee to set the salary bands which would be public; individuals’ salaries would be determined by the Vice-Chancellor within the bands and would be confidential.

During the ensuing discussion, several members commented on other aspects of the document, and motions to make two further amendments to the document were put, seconded, and carried:

- the term of office of the UCC members would normally be for three years; and
- “Nominations of University staff will be called for annually” would be amended to read “periodically”.

*** The Board endorsed the Policy Document on University Chairs, subject to the following amendments, and commended it to Senate for approval.

- The section on procedures relating to internal appointments would be amended as follows:
 - the membership of the UCC would be amended to provide that in the event that neither of the professors nominated by the Vice-Chancellor or Chair of the Board were external to the University, an additional external member would be appointed;
 - the term of office of the UCC members would be specified as normally for three years; and
 - “Nominations of University staff will be called for annually” would be amended to read “periodically”.

- The section on procedures relating to appointments from outside the University would be reworded to read as follows:
 1. Members of the academic staff of the University may forward to the Vice-Chancellor the names of appropriate persons for nomination. If the Vice-Chancellor considers that such persons may satisfy the criterion of being internationally acknowledged scholars of exceptional distinction, the nominations will be considered by a committee comprising
 - Vice-Chancellor (Chair)
 - Chair of the Academic Board
 - a relevant Pro-Vice-Chancellor (College).

3. Draft Policy Document - Academic and Research Titles

*** The Board noted the report.

4. Report of the Sub-committee - Promotion of Academic Research Only Staff to Levels B, C and D

*** The Board noted the report.

5. Probationary Procedures for Fixed-Term Academic Staff

*** The Board noted the report.

P 6. Interim Arrangements for Academic Promotion for 1998 only

(1) Research only and Teaching only Staff

The Chair reported that the Academic Staffing Committee was working on new policy documents relating to promotion of research-only and teaching-only staff, but that these had not yet been finalised for presentation to the Board. An interim policy had been required for 1998, and she had therefore, on the recommendation of the Academic Staffing Committee, approved the policy on behalf of the Board.

*** The Board noted the report and confirmed the Chair's action.

(2) Central Promotions Committee for Promotion to Clinical Level D & Clinical Level E

*** The Board endorsed the report and commended it to Senate for approval.

P Part II

No further report was presented at the meeting.

43/98 Report of the University of Sydney Cancer Research Fund

The following report had been circulated: (see agenda item C7.)

*** The Board noted the report.

44/98 Nomination of members of the Advisory Committee for the Centre for Continuing Education

The following report had been circulated: (see agenda item C8.)

*** The Board nominated Dr MacAlister and Associate Professor Masters for appointment to membership of the Advisory Committee.

45/98 Report of the Tenure Committee

The following report had been circulated: (see agenda item D1.)

*** The Board noted the report.