



Academic Board Minutes

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Minutes of the meeting of the Academic Board held at 2 pm on Wednesday 4 February 2004 in the Professorial Board Room

There were present: the Chair (Professor J Sachs) presiding, the Chairs of the Standing Committees (Professors J P Carter and B Reid), Professors B Armstrong, M Behnia, S I Benrimoj, E Blakely, L Copeland, M Field, M Fry, S Garton, B Hesketh, H Kendig, I Klineberg, R McCallum, G T Moore, C Murphy, R Newman, S Nicholas, D Nutbeam, P Ramsden, B Roufogalis, J Uther and P Wolnizer, Associate Professors F Ahmadi-Esfahani, B Buckley, M Crossley, D Dragovich, R Drynan, P Gay, C B Gillies, D Grant, P McCallum, M Prosser, I Ramzan, G Sullivan, L Unsworth and S West, Drs A Bashford, K Bosward, R J Dixon, A Elias, P Gibbens, E Innes, C Lennings, A Poulos, M Torode, B Winter and K C Wong, Mr S Burshtein, Mr J Conomos, Mr J Shipp, Ms K McGraw and Ms J Mooney.

Also present: Secretary to the Academic Board (Dr W Adams).

Present as observers: Ms J Russell and Ms M Kemmis.

In attendance: Miss K Neveltsen.

In opening the meeting the Chair welcomed members to the first meet of the Academic Board, under the new terms of reference and constitution, following the Review of the Academic Board and the Academic Forum.

★ **1. Apologies**

The Board noted that apologies had been received from: the Vice-Chancellor and Principal (Professor G Brown), Professors C Armour, E Blakely, A Coats and J Lawler, R Newman, Associate Professors A F Masters, P Phibbs, A Rubbo and R Ross, Drs S Forsyth, N Gallery, M Halliwell, J Hughes, L Piggott, M McKerchar and E Peden, Mr D Bradshaw, Mr F Eldridge, Ms L Brown, Ms L Napier, Ms J Toner and Ms G Wong.

★ **2. Arrangement of agenda**

2.1 Starring of items

Members of the Board were invited to star for discussion any unstarred items.

The following additional items were starred: item 4, item 10.1 and item 10.2.

2.2 Adoption of unstarred items

Resolution 01/04

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

3. Minutes of previous meeting

Resolution 02/04

That the Academic Board adopt the minutes of the previous meeting held on 10 December 2003 as a true record.

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

A new member of the Academic Board indicated that item 5.3.6 of the minutes of the meeting held on 10 December 2003, relating to participation in the University by Professor Eltis, appeared to contain factually incorrect information as the Professorial Board had been disestablished in the 1970s.

The Academic Board agreed and noted the point raised.

★ **5. Report of the Chair**

5.1 General report

5.1.1 Review of the Academic Board and the Academic Forum

The Chair reported that the implementation of the outcomes of the Review of the Academic Board and the Academic Forum was almost complete with the structurally revised Academic Board coming into effect on 1 January 2004.

The Chair advised members that the significant changes to the composition of the Board, the structure and composition of the standing committees, and the clarification of responsibilities should assist in the improved operations of the Academic Board.

The Pro Vice-Chancellors were welcomed to their first meeting of the Academic Board as members, they had been observers with speaking but not voting rights under the previous constitution.

Members were reminded that a number of changes had been implemented and these would be monitored, particularly over the first year, and any proposal for change brought back to the Board.

It was noted that the Board had increased in membership size and it was hoped that attendance would continue to improve. Lack of attendance could indicate that true discussion and debate wasn't happening therefore members were encouraged to take the responsibility and opportunity to raise issues for discussion.

The Chair noted that the Chairs of the standing committees were aware of the need to highlight issues for discussion at the Board to ensure that there was full participation in the decision-making processes and that the Board did not act as a "rubber stamp" for the activities of the committees.

Members were reminded that all members had a responsibility to help create an active Board and were encouraged to use the opportunities to question the Chair of the Academic Board and the Vice-Chancellor about academic matters, but also about issues of higher education policy.

Questions were raised about the status of the Library Sub-Committee as a sub-committee of the Teaching and Learning Committee. The Chair reminded members that under the review it had originally been proposed that the Library Committee become an advisory committee to the Librarian with no links to the Academic Board. The proposal for the Library Sub-Committee was approved to ensure ongoing links with the Academic Board and it was strategically associated with the Teaching and Learning Committee rather than any other standing committee to ensure that mechanisms for feeding information into academic activities were enhanced.

Resolution 03/04

That the Academic Board note the report of the Chair of the Academic Board relating to the Review of the Academic Board and the Academic Forum, as set out in the report presented.

Action: No further action required.

(File 2001/3342)

5.1.2 Chairs of Academic Board Standing Committees

The *University of Sydney (Academic Governance) Rule 2003* provided for the Chairs of Standing Committees to be appointed by and from the members of the Academic Board, on the nomination of the Chair at the first meeting of the Academic Board following an election of Academic Board members.

Accordingly, the Chair nominated Chairs of the Committees: Academic Staffing Committee (Professor Judyth Sachs); Graduate Studies Committee (Associate Professor Russell Ross); Teaching and Learning Committee (Professor Beth Reid); Undergraduate Studies Committee (Associate Professor Tony Masters); and Research Committee (Professor John Carter).

Resolution 04/04

That, in accordance with the University of Sydney (Academic Governance) Rule 2003 and on the nomination of the Chair of the Academic Board, the Academic Board appoint Professors J Carter and B Reid, and Associate Professors A F Masters and R Ross as the Chairs of Academic Board Standing Committees, as set out in the report presented.

Action: No further action required.

(File 2004/1728)

5.1.3 Deputy Chair of the Academic Board

The *University of Sydney (Academic Governance) Rule 2003* provided for the Deputy Chair to be appointed by the Academic Board from among the Chairs of Standing Committees, on the nomination of the Chair, at the first meeting of the Academic Board following an election of Academic Board members.

Accordingly, The Chair nominated Associate Professor Tony Masters as the Deputy Chair and thanked Associate Professor Russell Ross for his work as the alternate chair.

Resolution 05/04

That, in accordance with the University of Sydney (Academic Governance) Rule 2003 and on the nomination of the Chair of the Academic Board, the Academic Board appoint Associate Professor A F Masters as Deputy Chair of the Academic Board, as set out in the report presented.

Action: No further action required.

(File 2004/1728)

5.1.4 Co-opted members of the Academic Board

The *University of Sydney (Academic Governance) Rule 2003* provided for the Academic Board to co-opt members on the recommendation of the Chair. Accordingly, the Chair recommended that the Academic Board co-opt Dr Margaret Edmond as a member of the Academic Board for a term of office until 31 December 2005.

Members noted that the purpose of co-option was to contribute to the work of the Academic Board where membership did not already include expertise in a particular area.

During discussion the Chair advised members that there were no other positions that had been identified for recommendation for co-option to the Academic Board at this stage.

It was agreed that the contributions of co-opted members would be monitored and there would be the possibility of proposing an amended to the constitution to provide for permanent membership for co-opted members if it was necessary to include participation by the office that the member represented.

Resolution 06/04

That, in accordance with the University of Sydney (Academic Governance) Rule 2003 and on the nomination of the Chair of the Academic Board, the Academic Board co-opt Dr Margaret Edmond to membership of the Academic Board, as set out in the report presented.

Action: No further action required.

(File 2004/1728)

5.1.5 University of Sydney (Academic Governance) Rule 2003

The *University of Sydney (Academic Governance) Rule 2003* established the rules under which the Academic Board was conducted. Current provisions did not take account of the establishment of the Graduate School of Government.

It was therefore proposed to amend Part 2, section 5 the Rule to include the Graduate School of Government and its Director in membership of the Academic Board.

Resolution 07/04

That the Academic Board recommend that Senate amend the University of Sydney (Academic Governance) Rule 2003, as set out in the report presented.

Action: Chair of the Academic Board to recommend that Senate amend the University of Sydney (Academic Governance) Rule 2003.

(File 2002/3125)

5.1.6 Academic Board Faculty Review Visits: Phase Two

The Academic Board Faculty Review Visits: Phase Two would continue during 2004 with the remaining faculties undergoing their second review. The final reports, recommendations and commendations of the last reviews to be conducted in 2003 were expected to be referred to the next meeting of the Academic Board.

Resolution 08/04

That the Academic Board note the report of the Chair of the Academic Board relating to the Academic Board Faculty Review Visits: Phase Two, as set out in the report presented.

Action: No further action required.

(File 2003/2730)

5.1.7 AUQA institutional visit

The Chair advised members that the Australian Universities Quality Agency (AUQA) visit had been scheduled for June of this year but would now take place in late July.

Resolution 09/04

That the Academic Board note the report of the Chair of the Academic Board relating to the AUQA institutional visit, as set out in the report presented.

Action: No further action required.

5.1.8 Update on policy development and review

(1) Appeals

At the December 2003 meeting, the Chair advised members that a draft report had been received and that further discussions had been held with the consultant. It was expected that the final report would be received in February and revisions, if approved, would be implemented from 2005.

(2) Student Code of Conduct

The Chair informed the Board that development of a Student Code of Conduct continued with preparations moving forward for the first phase of consultation. Members noted that the University was one of the few institutions that did not have a formal student Code of Conduct.

Resolution 10/04

That the Academic Board note the report of the Chair of the Academic Board relating to the update on policy development and review, as set out in the report presented.

Action: No further action required.

(File 2001/2169, 2003/6047)

5.1.9 Issues for consideration in 2004

Members were reminded of the issues identified to be addressed by the Academic Board and its committees in 2004 and were invited to forward any additional suggestions to the Academic Board Officer.

In relation to the work to be undertaken regarding the communication, implementation and monitoring of policies, members expressed the need to focus on the monitoring of policies and not just through the Academic Board Faculty Review Visits process.

Resolution 11/04

That the Academic Board note the report of the Chair of the Academic Board relating to issues for consideration in 2004, as set out in the report presented.

Action: Members of the Academic Board to forward any suggestions for issues for consideration in 2004 to the Academic Board Officer.

5.1.10 Academic Board Nominees

At its December 2003 meeting, the Academic Board noted that the Academic Staffing Committee had produced an information brochure for Academic Board nominees on selection committees. A briefing session for nominees would be held on 18 February 2004.

Resolution 12/04

That the Academic Board note the report of the Chair of the Academic Board relating to the Academic Board Nominees, as set out in the report presented.

Action: Members of the Academic Board to note the briefing session to be held on 18 February 2004.

(File 2003/6514)

5.1.11 Academic Promotions

At its December 2003 meeting, the Academic Board endorsed the revised academic promotions documents. These were subsequently approved by the Senior Deputy Vice-Chancellor.

As part of the process for informing members of the University community about the changes, the Academic Board would be hosting an information session on 12 February 2004 for those looking to apply for promotion.

Resolution 13/04

That the Academic Board note the report of the Chair of the Academic Board relating to Academic Promotions, as set out in the report presented.

Action: Members of the Academic Board to note the information session to be held on 12 February 2004.

(File 2003/6513)

5.1.12 Actions taken under delegated authority

The Chair reported that no actions had been taken on behalf of the Academic Board since the meeting of 10 December 2003.

Resolution 14/04

That the Academic Board note the report of the Chair of the Academic Board on actions taken under delegated authority since the Academic Board meeting of 10 December 2003, as set out in the report presented

Action: No further action required.

(File 033/0001/00019)

★ 6. **Report of the Acting Vice-Chancellor and Principal**

6.1 General report

The Acting Vice-Chancellor and Principal, Professor John Hearn (Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Academic)) expressed pleasure at attending his first meeting of the Academic Board and outlined his personal vision for working at the University of Sydney.

Members were informed that close links between the office of the Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Academic) and the Academic Board were vital. The Acting Vice-Chancellor noted that this was a time of opportunities, particularly with strong interest in international investment in Higher Education, and that while the University's international profile was strong there was scope for it to be enhanced. On a national level, it was noted that the outcomes of the Nelson Review of Higher Education would become more apparent over the next few months and that the University was well positioned to respond.

The work of the Academic Board was acknowledged, in particular its depth and reach in academic matters, highlighted by the Academic Board Faculty Review Visits. The reports of the Review Visits would be funnelled into the overall quality assurance processes and the preparations for the AUQA audit visit. It was noted that such a processes had not been undertaken elsewhere or on such a scale.

The Academic Board was advised that the AUQA audit visit had been postponed until July but that the preparation of the University's portfolio would be completed within the week with the final submission due at the start of March. Consideration needed to be given to the ongoing process of quality assurance once the visit was completed. The audit visit should be viewed as a positive experience which would help the University in achieving its goals and objectives.

The University needed to uphold its values of excellence and academic standards and needed to work towards growing the next generation of scholarship with special consideration being given to improving the academic environment

The Acting Vice-Chancellor expressed the desire to utilise the strengths of the Academic Board within the audit process and the development of the University's 2005-2010 Strategic Plan.

Appreciation was expressed to Deans, Faculties, the Student Centre and all those involved in the enrolment processes, noting the excellence management, team effort and data receipt and processing.

Congratulations were extended to Professor Paul Ramsden, Pro Vice-Chancellor (Teaching and Learning) on his new appointment in the United Kingdom.

Resolution 15/04

That the Academic Board note the general report of the Acting Vice-Chancellor and Principal.

Action: No further action required.

(File 2003/2730)

★ 7. **Question time**
There were no questions directed to the Acting Vice-Chancellor or the Chair of the Academic Board.

8. **Report of the ANZSOG Joint Committee of the Academic Boards of the University of Sydney and the University of New South Wales**

★ 8.1 **Oral report of the Chair**
The Chair of the ANZSOG Joint Committee, Professor Judyth Sachs, advised the Academic Board that a number of management issues had been resolved. The ANZSOG EMPA was being taught and students had been admitted for the 2004 intake.

Resolution 16/04

That the Academic Board note the report of the Chair of the ANZSOG Joint Committee of the Academic Boards of the University of Sydney and the University of New South Wales.

Action: No further action required.

8.2 **Report of the meeting held on 8 December 2003**

8.2.1 **Receipt of report**

Resolution 17/04

That the Academic Board receive and note the report of the ANZSOG Joint Committee meeting held on 8 December 2003.

Action: No further action required.

8.2.2 Proceedings of the Committee

Resolution 18/04

That the Academic Board note the proceedings of the ANZSOG Joint Committee meeting held on 8 December 2003, as set out in the report presented.

Action: No further action required.

9. Report of the Library Committee

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9.1 Oral report of the Chair

The Chair of the Library Committee, Associate Professor Deirdre Dragovich, presented the last report of the Library Committee to the Academic Board following its move as a sub-committee of the Teaching and Learning Committee.

The Chair of the Committee informed members that general discussion centred around the maintenance of the library and its collections. It was noted that each meeting discussed issues relating to electronic journals and publications with a key aspect of how electronic to become yet to be resolved.

Resolution 19/04

That the Academic Board note the report of the Chair of the Library Committee.

Action: No further action required.

9.2 Report of the meeting held on 13 October 2003

9.2.1 Receipt of report

Resolution 20/04

That the Academic Board receive and note the report of the Academic Staffing Committee meeting held on 13 October 2003.

Action: No further action required.

9.2.2 Proceedings of the Committee

Resolution 21/04

That the Academic Board note the proceedings of the Academic Staffing Committee meeting held on 13 October 2003, as set out in the report presented.

Action: No further action required.

10. General Business

10.1 Membership of the Academic Board

The Academic Board noted the membership of the Academic Board and that the Academic Board office would be liaising with the relevant faculties and Colleges to fill the remaining casual vacancies.

Resolution 22/04

That the Academic Board note the report of the Chair of the Academic Board relating to Membership of the Academic Board, as set out in the report presented.

Action: Academic Board office to liaise with relevant faculties and Colleges to fill casual vacancies.

(File 2004/1728)

10.2 Conferring of All Academic Titles

Questions were raised about the apparent disparity in the number of conferrals made. The Pro Vice-Chancellor (Sciences and Technology) advised the Academic Board that she believed not all had been listed in the report and would follow-up the matter.

The Pro Vice-Chancellor (Health Sciences) noted that many of the conferrals from the College were to staff within hospitals who assisted with teaching. Members noted that the medical profession relied on unpaid clinicians who participated with both teaching and research within the University.

The Chair of the Academic Board noted that the issue of academic titles was being reviewed and would be brought back to the Board through the Academic Staffing Committee. Work included clarification of the titles and what they meant and the process for conferring and revoking titles.

Resolution 23/04

That the Academic Board note the report relating to the Conferring of All Academic Titles by Colleges and Faculties, as set out in the report presented.

Action: No further action required.

(File 2001/5164)

10.3 Report of the Vice-Chancellor and Principal on proctorial matters

Resolution 24/04

That the Academic Board note the tabled report on proctorial matters.

Action: No further action required.

(File 2003/5568)

The meeting closed at 2.50pm.

Signed as a correct record

Chair

Date