

FACULTY OF AGRICULTURE, FOOD AND NATURAL RESOURCES

REPORT ON RECOMMENDATIONS FROM PHASE TWO – Progress Report 2

Recommendation 1	The Faculty should consider developing a more proactive and co-ordinated strategy to integrating graduate attributes throughout degree programs. (see Section 3.4)
Action taken by the Faculty	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Addressed in review and revision of curricula in 2004 and 2005 for implementation in 2005 and 2006 • Policy developed by Faculty Teaching and Learning Committee has been adopted • Substantial progress through TIF project on mapping and integrating generic attributes in curricula
Further action planned but not yet implemented (if appropriate)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continuing emphasis on generic attributes as new curricula are fine tuned in 2006 and reviewed in 2007 • Generic attributes described for each degree • Generic attributes descriptions included in new UOS proposals
Faculty's evaluation of the success of action taken	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The SCEQ scores for GGA for the Faculty have been relatively stable around 60 – 63 for the last 6 years. This is comparable to other Faculties in the former CST ▪ Q3, related to generic graduate attributes in the USE in 2005 had a mean score of 3.51, up from 3.23 in 2004.

Recommendation 2	Major work needs to be done to address the current mismatch between student expectations and the content of the Bachelor of Animal Science degree. The Faculty should establish a group to consider the program philosophy, promotional materials, marketing strategy, and target career options for the degree. Students should be consulted as part of this process, with a view to creating a higher level of student satisfaction and a more clearly articulated program identity. Deliberations should also involve the Faculties of Veterinary Science and Rural Management.
Action taken by the Faculty	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The BAnimSc degree has been discontinued by the Faculty ▪ The BAnimVetBioSci degree has been introduced in the Faculty of Veterinary Science, which includes some units taught by AFNR ▪ A new BScAgr 4th Year specialisation in Livestock Production is being introduced in 2006, catering to students who wish to specialize across the agronomy-animal production nexus ▪ FAFNR has modified several units to address the interests of BAnimVetBioSci students ▪ FAFNR has agreed to offer “environmental” units of study as electives rather than core units in Year 2
Further action planned but not yet implemented (if appropriate)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Curriculum development of the new BAnimVetBioSci degree is now under the control of the Faculty of Veterinary Science, with the involvement of AFNR
Faculty's evaluation of the success of action taken	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Successful outcome for BAnimVetBioSci; remains to be seen for students interested in livestock production and farming systems, and for AFNR ▪ Strength of enrolments for BAnimVetBioSci degree in the coming years, and numbers of BScAgr students specialising in Livestock Production in the coming years ▪ USE and SCEQ results in the BAnimVetBioSci in the coming years ▪ We have found the students who choose “environmental” units to be very interested and engaged

FACULTY OF AGRICULTURE, FOOD AND NATURAL RESOURCES

REPORT ON RECOMMENDATIONS FROM PHASE TWO – Progress Report 2

<p>Recommendation 3</p>	<p>Consideration should be given to ways to improve the student experience in general. The Review Team perceived unevenness in levels of student satisfaction. (see Section 3.11)</p>															
<p>Action taken by the Faculty</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Revised curricula have improving student experience as an objective • Full detail of all units made explicit in new curricula • Increased resources and support from Faculty for PG students • Faculty-Student Liaison C'tee seeking to increase cross-year communication among students • Mentoring program • Function for parents of First Year Students • Major upgrade of student computing facilities 															
<p>Further action planned but not yet implemented (if appropriate)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continue to address concerns of PG students based at Cobbitty • Continue to press for upgrade of the Faculty's inadequate accommodation and teaching venues • Identify areas of dissatisfaction through USE results • Development of "degree level" WebCT sites to create "learning community" for each degree 															
<p>Faculty's evaluation of the success of action taken</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Two successful years of parent nights in 2005 and 2006, with about 70 parents attending in each year • Very positive feedback on mentoring groups with issues from mentoring groups being raised in Faculty-Student Liaison C'tee • Increasing numbers of students attending Faculty-Student Liaison C'tee meetings and overall satisfaction of the process • SCEQ score for ICT have increased from a low of 44 in 2002 to 76 in 2005 • USE results for question 12 (specifically relating to overall satisfaction) above 3.5 in 2005. <p>Results USE "overall satisfaction"</p> <table border="1" data-bbox="560 1323 1465 1496"> <thead> <tr> <th>USE results</th> <th>Q 12 mean</th> <th>Q12 stdev</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>Semester 1 2005</td> <td>3.52</td> <td>0.61</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Semester 2 2005</td> <td>3.65</td> <td>0.90</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Semester 1 2004</td> <td>3.72</td> <td>0.82</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Semester 2 2004</td> <td>3.27</td> <td>0.97</td> </tr> </tbody> </table> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Overall satisfaction with the units is relatively high (See Table) 	USE results	Q 12 mean	Q12 stdev	Semester 1 2005	3.52	0.61	Semester 2 2005	3.65	0.90	Semester 1 2004	3.72	0.82	Semester 2 2004	3.27	0.97
USE results	Q 12 mean	Q12 stdev														
Semester 1 2005	3.52	0.61														
Semester 2 2005	3.65	0.90														
Semester 1 2004	3.72	0.82														
Semester 2 2004	3.27	0.97														

FACULTY OF AGRICULTURE, FOOD AND NATURAL RESOURCES

REPORT ON RECOMMENDATIONS FROM PHASE TWO – Progress Report 2

<p>Recommendation 4</p>	<p>Priority should be given to improving communication in the Faculty in relation to a range of activities. This should include, for example, transmission of information to students (and a co-ordinated approach to email communication), ensuring that all students receive accurate unit of study outlines in a timely fashion, and ensuring that program promotional materials accurately describe programs of study. (see Section 3.2.3)</p>
<p>Action taken by the Faculty</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All students receive information electronically (email, intranet) and in handouts in all UoS; • Detailed PG and 4th Year handbooks given to all students concerned • Student email lists checked and updated; linked to FlexSIS • Implementation of WebCT into all AFNR units with more than 20 enrolled students by Jan 2007 • TIF grant to develop WebCT sites for all units and WebCT sites developed for most first semester units (25)
<p>Further action planned but not yet implemented (if appropriate)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Development of WebCT sites for 2nd semester • Review and redevelopment of the Faculty intranet • Development of “degree based” WebCT sites or websites for all degrees in the Faculty. • Increase in the number of T2 and T3 type WebCT sites
<p>Faculty’s evaluation of the success of action taken</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • WebCT implementation ahead of schedule, with close to 100% of all 1st and 2nd Year units in first semester having WebCT sites • Students give positive feedback on WebCT sites • Fewer student reports of miscommunication • Improved USE scores for the (Faculty-specific) question relating to ICT and learning

FACULTY OF AGRICULTURE, FOOD AND NATURAL RESOURCES

REPORT ON RECOMMENDATIONS FROM PHASE TWO – Progress Report 2

<p>Recommendation 5</p>	<p>While there have clearly been improvements in the provision of feedback on work to students, the Review Team found that this was patchy, and recommended a more co-ordinated Faculty strategy supported by quality assurance mechanisms to ensure implementation. For example, the Faculty might wish to set maximum deadlines for feedback. (see Section 3.8.1)</p>															
<p>Action taken by the Faculty</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Addressed in revision of curricula - better scheduling of assessment tasks, ensuring number and magnitude of assessment tasks are consistent with expectations of student effort, and reducing over-assessment • Responses to USE's are being posted on the student intranet 															
<p>Further action planned but not yet implemented (if appropriate)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Learning & Teaching Committee will develop guidelines (for staff) for the timely provision of feedback on all items of assessment, and advise students of these via the Faculty Intranet • The LTC will also advise staff on the broad level of feedback required for various assessment task types 															
<p>Faculty's evaluation of the success of action taken</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • USE results for question 7 (specifically relating to feedback) were above 3.5 in 2005 <table border="1" data-bbox="555 974 1469 1146"> <thead> <tr> <th><i>USE results</i></th> <th><i>Q 7 mean</i></th> <th><i>Q 7 Stdev</i></th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>Semester 1 2005</td> <td>3.57</td> <td>0.89</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Semester 2 2005</td> <td>3.76</td> <td>0.87</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Semester 1 2004</td> <td>3.62</td> <td>0.96</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Semester 2 2004</td> <td>3.41</td> <td>0.94</td> </tr> </tbody> </table> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The USE results for 2005 indicate that we are generally regarded as giving good feedback, which is encouraging. • The scores cannot be readily compared to 2004 as the units evaluated are different, however the scores have increased. These scores will be monitored over the next few years as we have developed a more comprehensive system of unit evaluations 	<i>USE results</i>	<i>Q 7 mean</i>	<i>Q 7 Stdev</i>	Semester 1 2005	3.57	0.89	Semester 2 2005	3.76	0.87	Semester 1 2004	3.62	0.96	Semester 2 2004	3.41	0.94
<i>USE results</i>	<i>Q 7 mean</i>	<i>Q 7 Stdev</i>														
Semester 1 2005	3.57	0.89														
Semester 2 2005	3.76	0.87														
Semester 1 2004	3.62	0.96														
Semester 2 2004	3.41	0.94														

FACULTY OF AGRICULTURE, FOOD AND NATURAL RESOURCES

REPORT ON RECOMMENDATIONS FROM PHASE TWO – Progress Report 2

<p>Recommendation 6</p>	<p>Academic Board policy must be complied with in relation to parallel teaching of Masters and undergraduate students. The Review Team suggests that high achieving undergraduate students take masters courses so that they too are extended. By doing so the standards and expectations of high achieving undergraduate students are being met and postgraduate students are being provided with units of study at an appropriate level. (see Section 3.6.2)</p>
<p>Action taken by the Faculty</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Advanced streams in BIOL and PLNT units are available to AFNR students from 2005 • High achieving UG students are offered opportunities for extension through co-curricular activities • Revision and development of coursework postgraduate programs, including the offering of a re-organised MAgr program, and new GradCertAgr and GradDipAgr programs for 2006/2007- Academic Policy on parallel teaching has been complied with in the formulating of these programs • All units offered as part of the coursework postgraduate programs carry the following advice; <i>To achieve the objectives of the courses, especially for students seeking training in a new discipline, some material taught in advanced undergraduate Units may form a part of the postgraduate coursework Units. However, the learning level and completion of assessment tasks are at a postgraduate level, and expectations of students will be clearly specified as such in the learning objectives</i>
<p>Further action planned but not yet implemented (if appropriate)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ongoing revision of the postgraduate programs to make sure they are up to date and relevant
<p>Faculty's evaluation of the success of action taken</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ This is too early to judge as the new coursework programs have only just been developed, but increased enrolments in coursework postgraduate programs are expected. ▪ Improved USE "Overall satisfaction" scores for advanced undergraduate units and postgraduate units. For "4000" level units the mean score on question 12 was 3.64, which is above our 3.5 benchmark.

FACULTY OF AGRICULTURE, FOOD AND NATURAL RESOURCES

REPORT ON RECOMMENDATIONS FROM PHASE TWO – Progress Report 2

Recommendation 7	Consideration needs to be given to finding ways to better support the language needs of international and NESB students.
Action taken by the Faculty	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improve ways of identifying students at risk (eg, more progressive assessment tasks) monitoring progressive assessment task results of international and NESB students during Year 1) – mentoring by the degree coordinator if necessary ▪ Recommend that identified students at risk should attend the Centre for English Teaching
Further action planned but not yet implemented (if appropriate)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Development of a new policy for students at risk in conjunction with a new policy in relation to “show cause”. This includes degree coordinator personal interviews with students at risk after the first semester in first year • Development of a first year handbook
Faculty’s evaluation of the success of action taken	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fewer students who are asked to show cause, this is still difficult to assess as the policy takes time to bed down. Degree coordinators have had interviews with around 10 - 15 students each semester and some of these students are progressing well. • Better interaction with students at risk and fewer students with problems

Recommendation 8	The Faculty should consider providing handbooks, in a similar vein to the excellent Postgraduate Student Handbook, to all students. (see Section 3.10.2)
Action taken by the Faculty	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Comprehensive 4th Year Sciences Handbook produced in 2004 and 2005 • 4th year handbook for the Economics discipline in relation to research project
Further action planned but not yet implemented (if appropriate)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Development of a First year handbook in 2006
Faculty’s evaluation of the success of action taken	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Direct feedback sought annually from this cohort of less than 50 students - the 4th Year Sciences Handbook has been well received by students in 2004 and 2005 • Favourable feedback on Economics discipline 4th year handbook

Recommendation 9	The profile of the University’s Intellectual Property rule should be raised among the student body. (see Section 3.10.4)
Action taken by the Faculty	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • PG Handbook provides general information on IP rule for all PG students • Additional specific information provided to students as relevant
Further action planned but not yet implemented (if appropriate)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No further action planned at this stage
Faculty’s evaluation of the success of action taken	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No feedback received from students

FACULTY OF AGRICULTURE, FOOD AND NATURAL RESOURCES

REPORT ON RECOMMENDATIONS FROM PHASE TWO – Progress Report 2

Recommendation 10	It is recommended that the Faculty consider whether it might be appropriate to extend student professional experience opportunities to encompass more developing countries, perhaps working with NGOs and organisations such as AusAid. (see Section 6.3)
Action taken by the Faculty	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All students are made aware of opportunities for PE in developing countries in connection with CARD and ACIAR projects, or through staff links • Students encouraged to self-manage own PE portfolio to assist in developing workplace skills • New guidelines developed for students taking overseas units.
Further action planned but not yet implemented (if appropriate)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Development of PE into a unit of study is being considered
Faculty's evaluation of the success of action taken	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Several students conducted professional experience in Vietnam during 2005/06 summer break

Recommendation 11	The Faculty should give priority to improving its IT strategy, including in particular improving systems of communication (such as email and the Web) and implementing a proper and fully supported WebCT strategy (which would need to be supported by appropriate staff development). (see Section 8.4)
Action taken by the Faculty	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Faculty IT Committee and Computer Sub-Committee established for policy and operational matters, respectively • Extensive adoption of ICT to enhance teaching (25 WebCT sites "live" in 1st semester 2006, which is around 50% of all units and 100% of all first year units administered by the Faculty) • TIF project to enhance adoption of WebCT • Workshops for staff on ICT in teaching (2 to date) • Conversion of a "Mac" lab to PC has brought substantial improvement for UG access • Leasing of additional computers and changes in hardware configuration has led to major and rapid improvement • All students receive information electronically (email, intranet) and in handouts in all UoS; • Student email lists checked and updated
Further action planned but not yet implemented (if appropriate)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review and redevelopment of Faculty website and intranet • Further adoption of WebCT as appropriate and link to existing web-enhanced teaching
Faculty's evaluation of the success of action taken	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • SCEQ score for ICT have increased from a low of 44 in 2002 to 76 in 2005 • Favourable verbal feedback from students on WebCT sites • High use of WebCT sites by students • Increase in the number of staff who self manage WebCT staff

FACULTY OF AGRICULTURE, FOOD AND NATURAL RESOURCES

REPORT ON RECOMMENDATIONS FROM PHASE TWO – Progress Report 2

Recommendation 12	The Faculty should implement a succession planning strategy. The Review Team perceived a need for support and development for staff taking up management positions. The Faculty may also wish to provide greater encouragement to staff to undertake staff development, such as teaching programs offered by the University's Institute of Teaching and Learning.
Action taken by the Faculty	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Several staff have completed ITL programs • Increased involvement of staff in College and University development programs • All new academic appointments have completion of ITL programs as confirmation criteria
Further action planned but not yet implemented (if appropriate)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ongoing encouragement for all teaching staff to undertake development programs • Expressions of interest for Faculty management positions called every two years • Several new staff appointed and other positions in process of being filled
Faculty's evaluation of the success of action taken	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Seven staff members completing or have completed Postgraduate supervision course. Five staff members enrolled in or completed higher degree Education programs, three additional staff members completed 3 day course • Two Faculty seminars on learning and teaching and one presentation at HERDSA conference from Faculty members • Rotation of staff in Faculty executive positions

Recommendation 13	It is recommended that the Faculty keep a watching brief on the effectiveness and sustainability of the new structure as it beds down.
Action taken by the Faculty	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A one-year-on review of the Faculty's new structure has been completed, with recommended changes implemented
Further action planned but not yet implemented (if appropriate)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Further review of faculty structures as part of ongoing strategic planning
Faculty's evaluation of the success of action taken	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No major operational issues identified

FACULTY OF AGRICULTURE, FOOD AND NATURAL RESOURCES

REPORT ON RECOMMENDATIONS FROM PHASE TWO – Progress Report 2

Recommendation 14	While the impending review of the undergraduate programs was welcome, the Review Team considered that this was somewhat overdue and recommends that the Faculty implement a more systematic approach to faculty and program review procedures. (see Section 3.4.2)
Action taken by the Faculty	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Curriculum review of the BScAgr, BHortSc, BLWSc, BAgEc and BResEc programs completed in 2005 • Staffing profile has been reviewed with input from stakeholders, through the many contacts that AFNR has with industry and professional groups
Further action planned but not yet implemented (if appropriate)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ongoing review of agricultural sector needs for graduates, through interaction with industry groups and organisations such as CRCs, rural funding bodies and catchment management authorities • Agricultural sector feedback will inform the curriculum review process, which would normally occur every 3-5 years
Faculty's evaluation of the success of action taken	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continued strong graduate employment rates, as indicated by CEQ results and the Good Universities Guide (listed as "above average" for sector in GUG 2005 and 2006)