

**ACADEMIC BOARD REVIEW
PHASE TWO**

**FACULTY OF ARCHITECTURE
19 MAY 2004**

REPORT AND RECOMMENDATIONS

CONTENTS

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY	3
COMMENDATIONS	4
RECOMMENDATIONS	5
1. MEMBERSHIP	6
1.1 REVIEW TEAM	6
1.2 SENIOR FACULTY REPRESENTATIVES	6
1.3 STAFF	6
1.4 STUDENTS	6
2. INTRODUCTION.....	7
3. QUALITY ASSURANCE.....	7
3.1 THE SELF-EVALUATION REPORT (SER).....	7
3.2 RESPONSE TO PHASE 1 REVIEW	7
3.3 FACULTY-WIDE INTRANET COMMUNICATIONS SYSTEM	8
3.4 CONVERSION TO 6 CREDIT POINTS.....	8
3.5 TUTOR TRAINING PROGRAM.....	9
3.6 WORKLOAD	9
3.7 BENCHMARKING	10
3.8 RESPONSE TO STUDENT FEEDBACK	10
3.9 EVALUATION OF STUDIO UNITS	11
4. GOAL ONE: QUALITY TEACHING AND LEARNING.....	11
4.1 STUDIO TEACHING	11
4.2 ONLINE LEARNING.....	12
4.3 GRADUATE ATTRIBUTES.....	12
4.4 POSTGRADUATE COURSEWORK	12
5. GOAL TWO: DIVERSITY, ACCESS AND EQUITY.....	13
5.1 ENROLMENT AND PROGRESSION OF EQUITY CATEGORIES	13
5.3 STUDENT SUPPORT	14
6. GOAL THREE: EXCELLENCE IN RESEARCH.....	14
6.1 BENCHMARKED RESEARCH DATA	14
6.2 RESEARCH CLIMATE	15
6.3 GRADUATE TEACHING FELLOWS	16
6.4 RESEARCH CENTRES	16
7. GOAL FOUR: INTERNATIONALISATION	16
7.1 INTERNATIONALISATION.....	16

8.	GOAL FIVE: ENGAGEMENT WITH INDUSTRY AND THE PROFESSIONS	17
8.1	BDESCOMP PROGRAM AND ITS PROFESSIONS.....	17
8.2	ENGAGING THE PUBLIC SECTOR AND INDUSTRY.....	17
9.	GOAL 6: EFFECTIVE MANAGEMENT.....	18
9.1	LEARNING COMMUNITY.....	18
9.2	STAFF DEVELOPMENT.....	18
9.3	PLANNING AND BUDGETING	18
10.	GOAL SEVEN: SERVICE TO THE COMMUNITY	19
10.1	YEAR OF THE BUILT ENVIRONMENT	19
ATTACHMENT ONE: IMPLEMENTATION OF 2003 ACADEMIC BOARD REVIEW		
RECOMMENDATIONS		20

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Academic Board Phase 1 Review of the Faculty of Architecture in October 2002 focussed on internal communication and staff workload. In response the Faculty has undertaken three major projects:

- A Faculty-wide Intranet Communications System (the student intranet has been analysed, consulted and designed by 3rd year BDesComp students)
- Commenced a review of all its Units of Study as part of conversion to a uniform 6 Credit Points. As part of this process a common Unit of Study template has been developed. This template captures Graduate Attribute information as well as staff response to USE and SCEQ student feedback. The Dean has also requested that this process be used to reduce the numbers of Units of Study and to regularise to a biennial pattern the offering of Units that are considered valuable but attract small student numbers
- Migration of the BDesArch Tutor Training Program across all undergraduate programs, with discussion about migrating it also across the 13 graduate coursework programs

The Faculty is also about to implement a Graduate Teaching Fellows Program which should assist ameliorating the staff workload issue. However it was found that Academic Staff were increasingly becoming involved in course administration duties. The Faculty needs to ensure that it is appropriately using its staffing resources.

Following its restructure to a one-school faculty, the Faculty has re-commenced looking externally:

- It has undertaken benchmarking studies against other Australian Architecture Faculties and also with the University of Hong Kong
- In addition to its Open Lecture Series with prominent members of its professions, its use of Visiting Overseas Scholars, and its use of prominent members of its professions as guest lecturers, the Faculty has developed Professional Advisory Committees for each of its programs and has established a Dean's Council

Student access to studio and computing resources has been enhanced by the Stage 2 refurbishment of the Wilkinson Building and providing 24 x 7 access via a swipe card.

While Faculty performance is inconsistent in the areas of research performance and quality of postgraduate coursework provision, the consistent story coming from both staff and students is of an individualistic Faculty with an undeveloped sense of a learning community.

Commendations

1. *The Review Team commends the Faculty on the ambitious nature of its response to the Phase One Review. (Section 3.2.2)*
2. *The Review Team commends the Faculty for the best practice project management used to design and develop the student intranet. The inclusive process built student ownership and predisposes the student intranet towards fulfilment of its communication and community development aims. (Section 3.3.4)*
3. *The Review Team commends the Faculty for its development of a template for Unit of Study Outline. (Section 3.4.2)*
4. *The Review Team commends the Faculty on its further development of the Tutor Training Program. (Section 3.5.4)*
5. *The Review Team commends the Faculty on its benchmarking activities, noting especially that the Faculty is using benchmarking to change and improve its undergraduate programs. (Section 3.7.5)*
6. *The Review Team commends the Faculty for both analysing and responding to student feedback. (Section 3.8.5)*
7. *The Review Team commends the Faculty for its solution to increasing student access to computer and design facilities. (Section 5.3.2)*
8. *The Review Team commends the Faculty for its new Graduate Teaching Fellows program. The Review Team feels that this new Program will assist the Faculty to address two problem areas - staff workload and the lack of integration of Research Students into the academic life of the Faculty. (Section 6.3.3)*
9. *The Review Team commends the Faculty for its successful internationalisation of the student cohort. (Section 7.1.3)*
10. *The Review Team commends the Faculty for its leadership role in support of best practice in the Australian built environment. (Section 10.1.2)*

Recommendations

1. *The Review Team recommends that the Faculty ensures that Academic Staff focus on faculty strategic directions and the delivery of teaching and learning and research and that strategic project teams include relevant General Staff to ensure underlying enabling support is available to assist implementation of project outcomes. (Section 3.6.6)*
2. *The Review Team recommends that the Faculty liaise with the Sydney College of the Arts and the Universities of Melbourne and Hong Kong to learn how those institutions evaluate their studio units. (Section 3.9.3)*
3. *The Review Team recommends that in addition to inclusion of Generic Attributes in the Faculty Handbook and on the template for Unit of Study description, that academic staff make explicit to students in the first lecture of the semester the Graduate Attributes developed by successful completion of the Unit of Study. (Section 4.2.4)*
4. *The Review Team recommends that the Assoc Dean (Graduate Studies) use the move to 6 Credit Points to review the Faculty's Postgraduate Coursework offerings. (Section 4.3.8)*
5. *The Review Team recommends that the Faculty collects broader research performance data, beyond the DEST figures, to more accurately identify and reward staff research performance, by measures such as providing relief from teaching. (Section 6.1.3)*
6. *The Review Team recommends that the Faculty work to ensure that all 5 research groups offer active research seminar series and have regular social activities available to both research students and staff. (Section 6.2.6)*
7. *The Review Team recommend that the Faculty clarify its relationship with the Research Centres and the Faculty and ensure that there are appropriate reporting and monitoring mechanisms in place. (Section 6.4.2)*
8. *The Review Team recommends that the Faculty investigate means of providing opportunities for BDesComp students to develop specialisations. (Section 8.1.4)*
9. *The Review Team recommends that a means of building a scholarly and learning community be included in the structural review mooted by the Dean. It is also recommended that Senior Faculty Staff as well as Disciplinary Leaders be involved in this discussion. (Section 9.1.3)*
10. *The Review Team recommends that the Faculty Strategic Plan be widely consulted across the Faculty and its stakeholder groups. (Section 9.3.2)*

Note: This report draws on the information provided in the documentation considered by the Review Team as well as discussion with staff and students. In some places, material from the Self-Evaluation Report has been incorporated directly into the text.

1. MEMBERSHIP

1.1 Review Team

Professor Judyth Sachs (<i>Chair</i>)	Chair of the Academic Board
Professor Paul Ramsden	Pro Vice-Chancellor (Teaching and Learning)
Professor Tim Hirst	Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Research and Innovation)
Dr Ann Elias	Sydney College of the Arts
<u>Review Team Secretary</u>	
Ms Barb McLean	Executive Officer (Quality Assurance)
<u>Observer</u>	
Dr Ian Maxwell	Faculty of Arts

1.2 Senior Faculty representatives

1.2.1 The Review Team met the following Senior Faculty representatives during the first interview:

Professor Gary Moore	Dean
Mr Bruce Forwood	Head of School
Professor Mary Lou Maher	BDesComp Program Coordinator
Assoc Prof Warren Julian	Associate Dean (Graduate Studies)
Dr Simon Hayman	Associate Dean (Undergraduate Studies)
Dr Harry Margalit	Associate Dean (Teaching and Learning)
Ms Kristine Sodersten	BDesArch/BArch Joint Program Coordinator
Dr Peter Armstrong	BDesArch/BArch Joint Program Coordinator
Assoc Professor Peter Phibbs	Urban and Regional Planning Program Coordinator
Mr Barry Shelton	Urban Design Program Coordinator
Mr Martin Hesse	Manager, Student Administration Centre
Dr Kirsty Beilharz	Intranet Coordinator

1.3 Staff

1.3.1 The Review Team met with five members of Academic and General Staff.

1.4 Students

1.4.1 The Review Team met three groups of students: thirteen undergraduate students; five postgraduate research students; and seven postgraduate coursework students. Two of these students had attended the Phase One Review. There were no Open Interviews requested.

2. INTRODUCTION

- 2.1 The Phase Two review complements the Phase One review, following up its recommendations and the continued development of Phase One commendations. It also considers the Faculty's activities and quality assurance arrangements in relation to the seven goals of the University's Strategic Plan.
- 2.2 The Phase One Review of the Faculty of Architecture in 2002 followed closely on the Faculty restructure to a one-school faculty. The Faculty is about to undertake a review of this restructure with a view to removing more unnecessary bureaucracy. Change has been assisted by a radical shift in the Faculty's staffing profile over the last six years, with 50% of academic staff and 33% of general, technical and administrative staff being new to the Faculty.
- 2.3 Since 1999 EFTSU student numbers have increased by almost one third and just over 20% of the student population are International students. 45% of the student population are Undergraduate coursework students, while another 23% of the student population are Masters by Coursework students. There are 13 Postgraduate courses.
- 2.4 The Faculty are about to graduate the first cohort from the BDesComp. This program is being internally reviewed on the basis of student feedback. Indeed, the Faculty is reviewing all Units of Study as part of a move to regularise at 6 credit points.
- 2.4 Engagement with the professions has strengthened since the Phase 1 Review of the Faculty by the creation of Professional Advisory Committees for each undergraduate and graduate program. The Faculty has also established a Dean's Council to assist with external relations including private sector fundraising.
- 2.5 The major impact on the environment of the Faculty has been the commencement of refurbishment of the Wilkinson Building to increase teaching and research space. The BDesComp and the Design Computing and Cognition research students have been provided with a new \$600k mezzanine floor. The Faculty is still investigating funding for Stage 3 of the Wilkinson Building refurbishment to improve facilities for the other research groups.

3. QUALITY ASSURANCE

3.1 *The Self-Evaluation Report (SER)*

- 3.1.1 The Faculty concentrated its consultation efforts in responding to the Recommendations of the Phase 1 Review. Section 1 of the Self-Evaluation Review was broadly consulted. Whereas Section 2, a description and evaluation of Faculty activities aligned to the University goals, was based on the Faculty Strategic Plan and was dependent on this for its consultation.

3.2 *Response to Phase 1 Review*

- 3.2.1 There were 16 Recommendations in the Phase 1 Review of the Faculty basically focussing around two large issues – internal communication and workload. The Faculty has been able to respond to the bulk of these recommendations through the planning of three major projects:

- A Faculty-wide Intranet Communications System, funded by a TIF Grant
- A review and conversion of all Units of Study to 6 Credit Points
- Migration of the Tutor Training Program across the Faculty, again funded by a TIF Grant

3.2.2 *The Review Team commends the Faculty on the ambitious nature of its response to the Phase One Review. (Commendation 1)*

3.3 Faculty-wide Intranet Communications System

3.3.1 The Faculty has responded to the Phase 1 recommendations 1 and 3 dealing with the development of communications systems and processes for disseminating University policy by developing an undergraduate handbook, a graduate handbook and a part-time teacher's handbook. The Faculty had also successfully applied for a TIF Grant to implement a Faculty-wide Intranet Communications System.

3.3.2 At the time of the Academic Board visit to the Faculty, the staff intranet was in place and the student intranet had undergone business analysis with a sample (300) of the student population. 3rd year students in the BDesComp had designed the student intranet, and an evaluation of the prototype will take place in Semester 2 2004. A second phase with secure database elements is planned when further funding is secured.

3.3.3 The Faculty has shared developments in this area with the College Director of Teaching and Learning.

3.3.4 *The Review Team commends the Faculty for the best practice project management used to design and develop the student intranet. The inclusive process built student ownership and predisposes the student intranet towards fulfilment of its communication and community development aims. (Commendation 2)*

3.4 Conversion to 6 Credit Points

3.4.1 In line with the recommendation of the Academic Board, the Faculty is in the early stage of converting all Units of Study (first undergraduate, then graduate) to 6 credit points. The Faculty is utilising this major change to address Recommendations of the Phase 1 Review:

- Recommendation 2: Positively impact on the teaching workload by reducing the number of Units of Study by 30%, by rationalising low-enrolment but valuable Units of Study so they are offered once every two years, and deleting any Units of Study not taught in the past two years
- Recommendation 4: Communicate with students the Graduate Attributes relevant to Units of Study by the development of a template for Unit of Study Outline to be used to describe all new 6 Credit Point Units of Study on the Faculty intranet and in the new Faculty Handbooks
- Recommendation 9: Ensure advertised Units of Study are offered by removing Units not offered or needed, rationalising irregular offerings to a two year cycle and consolidating other Units of Study.

3.4.2 *The Review Team commends the Faculty for its development of a template for Unit of Study Outline. (Commendation 3)*

3.4.3 Recommendation 11 of the Phase 1 Review said “In accordance with Academic Board policy, students need to be advised of the outcomes of student feedback.” The Dean has requested that the Unit of Study template includes a segment where staff are required to insert a summary of relevant SCEQ and Unit of Study Evaluations (USE), followed by a statement of how the Unit has been changed and improved in the light of that feedback. The New and Revised Unit of Study Proposal template (RevA: April 2004) tabled during the Review did not as yet include such a section.

3.5 Tutor Training Program

3.5.1 Recommendation 6 of the Phase 1 Review encouraged the Faculty to develop a more formal approach to the recruitment, orientation and support of Design Tutors and other visiting and sessional staff. In response, the Faculty’s best practice Tutor Training Program for BDesArch degree is being migrated across the BDesComp and BArch undergraduate programs, with discussion about migrating it across the 13 graduate coursework programs.

3.5.2 The Tutor Training Program has several facets including a formal interview, payment to attend a 3 hour introductory teaching workshop, student evaluation and the development of a casual teaching staff manual.

3.5.3 The College of Sciences and Technology is interested in further migrating the Tutor Training Program to other faculties.

3.5.4 *The Review Team commends the Faculty on its further development of the Tutor Training Program. (Commendation 4)*

3.6 Workload

3.6.1 Increases in student numbers created workload issues for academic staff in the Phase 1 Review of the Faculty. The Review Team found that workload remained an issue but instead of being linked to student numbers was related to course numbers and how the Faculty used its staffing resources.

3.6.2 The Faculty has adopted a Workload Model, established a minimum class size for electives (currently 12 students with plans to raise this to 15 students), appointed new academic staff, developed a Graduate Teaching Fellows program (GTFs), and developed a capping program for a maximum number of students in undergraduate and postgraduate coursework programs.

3.6.3 In spite of these measures the SER reports that there is a growing tendency for some staff to coordinate three or four Units of Study and then say that they have no time to teach; which exacerbates the teaching load of other staff. Staff also reported to the Review Team a high assessment load, high usage of team teaching, high coordination time due to the use of practitioners from the professions, and a large number of elective Units of Study. While many of these contributing factors will be rectified by the Unit of Study analysis involved in the move to 6 credit points (see Section 3.4), workload will remain an issue due to the heavy administrative load born by academic members of the Faculty.

- 3.6.4 The Review Team found that the Faculty was not effectively using its staffing resources. Academic staff were failing to focus on teaching and learning and research due to spending their time on administrative duties e.g. keeping class lists up-to-date, instead of developing a program where design tutors supplement face-to-face teaching by short daily Web-based discussions (as used by the University of Hong Kong).
- 3.6.5 This was not the case in Faculty Marketing, where the Faculty employs specialist marketing staff. However again, the Faculty needs to ensure that marketing staff are provided with guidance as to the Faculty's strategic aims to enable them to more finely focus marketing activities (especially International marketing activities).
- 3.6.6 *The Review Team recommends that the Faculty ensures that Academic Staff focus on faculty strategic directions and the delivery of teaching and learning and research and that strategic project teams include relevant General Staff to ensure underlying enabling support is available to assist implementation of project outcomes. (Recommendation 1)*

3.7 Benchmarking

- 3.7.1 Recommendation 13 of the Phase 1 Review recommended that the Faculty establish more formalised [teaching and learning] benchmarking practices with institutions, both nationally and internationally.
- 3.7.2 The Faculty of Architecture aims to be the best provider of quality teaching and learning in architecture and related disciplines of the built and designed environment in Australasia, within the top 5 in the Asia Pacific region and among the best 40 or so in the world. Faculty informal assessment places them at the top in NSW and the ACT, arguably the best in Australia, clearly recognised among the best in the Asia Pacific, with a growing reputation world-wide.
- 3.7.3 In addition to professional accreditation, national benchmarking of the BDesArch/BArch programs against all major architecture programs in Australia has commenced, with a report near completion. This report will form basis for the planned review of the BDesArch/BArch program. In addition, informal benchmarking is occurring through the Association of Architecture Schools of Australasia (AASA) and the Council of Deans of Architecture and the Built Environment (CoDABE).
- 3.7.4 Benchmarking is also taking place with the University of Hong Kong and the Queensland University of Technology.
- 3.7.5 *The Review Team commends the Faculty on its benchmarking activities, noting especially that the Faculty is using benchmarking to change and improve its undergraduate programs. (Commendation 5)*

3.8 Response to Student Feedback

- 3.8.1 Recommendation 11 of the Phase 1 Review of the Faculty noted that staff were unaware of the issues emerging from student evaluations. Since that time the Faculty has allocated a member of staff to review CEQ and SCEQ results and report trends to

the Faculty. The SER also mentions that the Teaching and Learning Committee plans to hold a regular Faculty forum on evaluation.

- 3.8.2 In Open Comments from the SCEQ students are reporting instances of Faculty responsiveness to student feedback. One BDesComp student reported:
“The course has improved a lot over the course of 3 years, as my year will be the first to graduate. The best aspects are that the course coordinators listen to students needs and act on them, such as introducing new courses that have been in high demand.”
- 3.8.3 Postgraduate coursework students reported to the Review Team that requests for Theatre Lighting and software and design studios had been implemented this year with people from industry. In contrast to this other coursework students reported that they had never had feedback on their feedback.
- 3.8.4 In addition to the Faculty’s further analysis of the SCEQ results, it has also undertaken an evaluation of the BDes (Arch) program. Question 22 asked about opportunities for feedback and Question 23 about staff responsiveness to feedback. 93% of respondees felt they were given sufficient opportunity to provide feedback on the program and 98.5% felt that staff were responsive to student concerns.
- 3.8.5 *The Review Team commends the Faculty for both analysing and responding to student feedback. (Commendation 6)*

3.9 Evaluation of Studio Units

- 3.9.1 Recommendation 12 of the Phase 1 Review recommended that the Faculty work with ITL to develop a Unit of Study evaluation for studio based work. ITL has recommended using the existing Unit of Study Evaluation (USE) with the addition of Faculty specific questions. The Faculty is having difficulty in agreeing on four Faculty specific questions.
- 3.9.2 The Review Team felt that this area was perfect for benchmarking – to learn from how other design faculties evaluate their studio units.
- 3.9.3 *The Review Team recommends that the Faculty liaise with the Sydney College of the Arts and the Universities of Melbourne and Hong Kong to learn how those institutions evaluate their studio units. (Recommendation 2)*

4. Goal One: Quality Teaching and Learning

4.1 Studio Teaching

- 4.1.1 Students reported that the quality of studio teaching was high, but there were concerns expressed around their structure. First and Second year Undergraduates especially had no sense of the structure of Studio teaching. They would like to have a Studio Timetable and have greater definition around the studios.
- 4.1.2 The relationship between tutors and the Unit Coordinator was seen to be crucial; students also commented that the range of experience of the tutor also affected the value of the Studio. The Faculty has used both P/G students and 5th Year students as associate tutors to assist with increasing class sizes. The migration of the Tutor-

Training Program across all undergraduate programs should assist in providing greater uniformity in the quality of design studios.

4.2 Online Learning

- 4.2.1 Recommendation 7 of the Phase One Review recommended that the Faculty develop a more coordinated approach to WebCT. The Faculty has not yet responded to this recommendation due to being side-tracked by administrative details; however the Faculty has decided that WebCT will be used to supplement and not replace face-to-face learning.
- 4.2.2 The Faculty is hiring a Teaching Support Officer to commence in Semester 2, 2004. The essential criteria for this position includes experience in the use of WebCT. This position will work with Academic staff to Web-enable teaching materials and assist staff to develop Web-based discussions.
- 4.2.3 Undergraduate students reported positive experiences with WebCT, especially in the area of online discussions, mentioning that while email was good for one-on-one, WebCT allowed one to many access to the reply of the academic. Students requested that the Faculty develop means where students could submit their assignments online.

4.3 Graduate Attributes

- 4.3.1 Recommendation 4 of the Phase 1 Review recommended that the Faculty implement strategies to ensure that Graduate Attributes are made more explicit to students. The new Faculty Handbook incorporates the Generic Attributes of most U/G units, and as mentioned in 3.4.1, the new Faculty template for Unit of Study Outlines will include Graduate Attribute information.
- 4.3.2 While information about Graduate Attributes is becoming increasingly available, undergraduate student feedback does not record a similar increase in the development of these skills. In the Sydney Undergraduate Students' Experience 1999-2003 Undergraduate Architecture students reported increasing satisfaction in all areas except the Generic Skills Scale, which is oscillating in a narrow range between 59 and 62% agreement. This is below both the CST and University average of 64%.
- 4.3.3 Results in the Sydney Postgraduate Coursework Students' Experience 2000-2003 again show the Generic Skills Scale (at 56%) as below both College (59%) and University (62%) averages.
- 4.3.4 *The Review Team recommends that in addition to inclusion of Generic Attributes in the Faculty Handbook and on the template for Unit of Study description, that academic staff make explicit to students in the first lecture of the semester the Graduate Attributes developed by successful completion of the Unit of Study. (Recommendation 3)*

4.4 Postgraduate Coursework

- 4.4.1 The Faculty has 13 postgraduate coursework programs with core units offered in intensive mode. This pattern allows the Faculty to successfully integrate local part-time students and full-time International students.

- 4.4.2 The Review Team gained the impression that these programs varied in organisation, teaching, assessment, workload and evaluation. This variability can be seen in the SCEQ results, where in the Open Comments Postgraduate Coursework Students reported Curriculum as the best Aspect of the Degree Experience (34%) while also mentioning it as an Aspect that Could be Improved.
- 4.4.3 Students commented negatively on course structure and were dissatisfied with the practice of students presenting the underlying theories. They felt that this approach assumed a level of knowledge that was not there. Others reported that while there were no pre-requisites there was a level of assumed knowledge that made it difficult for non-Engineers or Architects to catchup.
- 4.4.4 Variability in teaching may be linked with the heavy usage of visiting lecturers from the profession in postgraduate coursework programs. In order to maintain consistency of quality the Faculty has to balance status of practitioner with their ability to teach. This is monitored through attendance of the Course Coordinator (exacerbating workload problems) or student feedback. Students reported that the role of the Course Coordinator was very important and influenced the quality of the Unit.
- 4.4.5 The SCEQ results also show that the Appropriate Assessment Scale has decreased every year since 2000 (from 74% in 2000 to 64% in 2003). Some students reported to the Review Team that with just 3 weeks of semester left they were still unaware of what assessment will be involved. To students there appeared to be no uniformity in either length or depth of assignment and the credit point value.
- 4.4.6 When questioned about the Faculty's major research themes and research-led teaching, again student response was mixed. For some it was obvious in the way the Units of Study were tailored; others felt that research was happening but not being communicated to students. The same response was gained to questions about internationalised curriculum.
- 4.4.7 Variability can also be seen in the overall value of their course – with responses ranging from the best quality Illumination course in the world to comments about “cash cows”.
- 4.4.8 *The Review Team recommends that the Assoc Dean (Graduate Studies) use the move to 6 Credit Points to review the Faculty's Postgraduate Coursework offerings. (Recommendation 4)*

5. GOAL TWO: DIVERSITY, ACCESS AND EQUITY

5.1 Enrolment and Progression of Equity Categories

- 5.1.1 The Faculty is in gender balance, in comparison with the University; and has students from all equity groups (including 1 ATSI student in 2004). Progress rates for Equity Categories are marginally below that for the Faculty as a whole (but better than the University average). Progress rates for NESB students had been trending upwards until 2002, when it dipped from 0.91 in 2001 to 0.86.

- 5.1.2 Recommendation 16 of the Phase 1 Review dealt with the need to alert NESB students to the language support provisions available in the University. The Faculty responded by raising its IELTS to an average of 7.0 for all coursework and research programs. A diagnostic test is run in the first week of the BDesArch and the BdesComp to identify at risk students. Students are made aware of the University Language Centre and the Assoc Dean (Undergraduate Studies) monitors identified students. The Faculty uses assessment methods (e.g. drawings, computer-based graphic or virtual space tasks) that do not significantly disadvantage NESB students.

5.2 ATSI Students

- 5.2.1 The Faculty has one ATSI student enrolled through the Cadigal Program. This student is supported by student tutors. The Faculty is concerned by its inability to attract numbers of ATSI students and is using its links to an alumnus who heads up Merrima, the NSW Government's Indigenous design group, and links to the Redfern community to attempt to attract ATSI students.
- 5.2.2 The Faculty is using its Marketing Officer to raise the profile of Architecture with potential ATSI students.

5.3 Student Support

- 5.3.1 The Faculty has addressed a student concern about access to computer and design labs and another that its programs are costly, by providing 24 x 7 access to studios and computer labs. The Faculty has also committed to upgrading its computer network to allow off-campus student access to peripherals and teaching materials. A new IT equipment acquisition program will give students access to high quality scanners and printers.
- 5.3.2 *The Review Team commends the Faculty for its solution to increasing student access to computer and design facilities. (Commendation 7)*
- 5.3.3 Students interviewed by the Team appreciated the faculty response to feedback regarding lack of student access; however concerns were still expressed about software support and the fact that the software used by the Faculty was open source and not industry standard. The allocation of computer support staff by floor of the building and the necessity to approach General Staff through a member of the Academic Staff were also sources of frustration to students.

6. GOAL THREE: EXCELLENCE IN RESEARCH

6.1 Benchmarked Research Data

- 6.1.1 DEST figures show that the Faculty has the largest RHD student cohort amongst the G07, however in terms of staff research output the Faculty is lagging in the areas of publications (books and chapters) and research funding (Cat 2 – Public Sector Funding and Cat 3 – Industry and Other Funding).
- 6.1.2 The SER reports uneven research performance across the Faculty. This is attributed by the Faculty to Workload (see Section 3.6) and the professional/creative nature of the Faculty not aligning neatly with DEST categories. The Faculty is working to turn

around performance by the appointment of a new Assoc Dean (Research) and a redefined position description for the Research Support Officer. PMAC (the Dean's Advisory Committee) has suggested as a stop-gap measure that the Faculty recruit research-active middle level staff with an established track record in publishing and that their confirmation be dependent on maintenance of publishing output.

- 6.1.3 *The Review Team recommends that the Faculty collect broader research performance data, beyond the DEST figures, to more accurately identify and reward staff research performance, by measures such as providing relief from teaching. (Recommendation 5)*

6.2 Research Climate

- 6.2.1 The Faculty has responded to the supervision and resource support aspects of Recommendation 10 of the Phase 1 Review. Students reported increasing satisfaction across the board in the Sydney Research Students' Experiences 2002-2003. Quality of Supervision (at 73%) and Overall Satisfaction (at 79%) were both above College and University averages. Research students interviewed by the Review Team reported a high level of satisfaction with both access to office equipment and state of the art machines (this from an Acoustics student). Access to supervisors, encouragement to present at conferences and participation in research groups were also reported favourably.
- 6.2.2 However, the sense of isolation (also part of Recommendation 10 of the Phase 1 Review) remains. Students reported that they did not feel part of a collegiate environment in a role of apprenticeship into academia.
- 6.2.3 In the SREQ Open Comments students reported that Research Climate was the Best Aspect of the Degree Experience; however it was also one of the most frequent responses for the Aspects that Could be Improved. There appears again to be uneven performance in the area of Research Climate.
- 6.2.4 Students reported that they had access to tutoring opportunities but the result had been to isolate rather than integrate them. Faculty were not providing role models and teaching was taking place in a competitive rather than collaborative environment. While social activities do occur they are not well attended, even by staff. International students remarked on the lack of excitement about the communication of ideas; and suggested that the Faculty adopt the idea of having a consultancy arm, financed by industry, that would link the Faculty and its research students into the professions.
- 6.2.5 While the Faculty has an active lecture program featuring key local and international practitioners and also has an active visiting scholars program, research students felt that there was no vehicle to adequately showcase the expertise of Faculty staff, both to celebrate and exploit their scholarly standing.
- 6.2.6 *The Review Team recommends that the Faculty work to ensure that all 5 research groups offer active research seminar series and have regular social activities available to both research students and staff. (Recommendation 6)*

6.3 Graduate Teaching Fellows

- 6.3.1 The Faculty is initiating a Graduate Teaching Fellows program (GTFs) in Semester 2 2004 with joint aims of reducing the teaching load for academic staff in large enrolment courses and providing research students with valuable teaching experience.
- 6.3.2 Research students interviewed by the Review Team reported positively on this development saying that the Faculty was building up a database and setting up a tutor training program. The Dean plans to implement the program by establishing a small working group of Disciplinary Heads and the Assoc Deans of Research and Graduate Studies. He wants to ensure that graduate students are allocated to the appropriate faculty member.
- 6.3.3 *The Review Team commends the Faculty for its new Graduate Teaching Fellows program. The Review Team feels that this new Program will assist the Faculty to address two problem areas - staff workload and the lack of integration of Research Students into the academic life of the Faculty. (Commendation 8)*

6.4 Research Centres

- 6.4.1 The Faculty has 3 research centres, two of which include external membership (Planning Resource Centre and the Key Centre of Design Computing and Cognition). While the Dean reported that the Planning Research Centre reports to the PVC (CST) and I.B. Fell Housing Research Centre has an external Trustee responsible for monitoring the performance of the Centre; University records have all Research Centres as reporting to the Faculty.
- 6.4.2 *The Review Team recommend that the Faculty clarify its relationship with the Research Centres and the Faculty and ensure that there are appropriate reporting and monitoring mechanisms in place. (Recommendation 7)*

7. GOAL FOUR: INTERNATIONALISATION

7.1 Internationalisation

- 7.1.1 The Faculty has a good representation of International students (in 2002 just under 10 per cent of the student body were international students; centred around Graduate Coursework programs where International students formed one quarter of the student population). It has also been successful both in hosting Study Abroad students and in sending out domestic students to participate in Exchange Schemes.
- 7.1.2 In addition, the Faculty has achieved an equivalent progress rate for International students to that of domestic students.
- 7.1.3 *The Review Team commends the Faculty for its successful internationalisation of the student cohort. (Commendation 9)*

- 7.1.4 The SER also reports several new staff appointments from international backgrounds and a number of international research projects involving both staff and students. A particular strength appears to be developing around East Asian Architecture and Urban Affairs. The Faculty signed and renewed several MoUs and Exchange Agreements.
- 7.1.5 Students also reported positively on the access to overseas visiting scholars; mentioning especially the Intensive Studios and Master Classes available over the Summer holiday period.

8. GOAL FIVE: ENGAGEMENT WITH INDUSTRY AND THE PROFESSIONS

8.1 *BDesComp Program and its Professions*

- 8.1.1 As a means to ensure links to the professions, the Faculty uses a large number of visiting lecturers in its programs, especially the Postgraduate Coursework programs. Recommendation 8 of the Phase 1 Review encouraged the Faculty to consider ways of developing such links for the area of Design Computing.
- 8.1.2 BDesComp students reported excellent access to overseas visiting scholars however they still reported confusion as to their profession and where they would find employment. The Faculty is aware of these concerns and have taken multi-pronged steps to overcome student anxieties. Professionals have been invited to participate in studios and potential employers have been invited to end of year student design exhibitions. A prominent Design IT professional has been appointed as Adjunct Assoc Professor and a Professional Advisory Committee (PAC) has been formed to advise on undergraduate and postgraduate design computing and digital media programs. It is possible that student anxiety will not be allayed until the first cohort graduate and find employment.
- 8.1.3 Students reported feeling confident of their broad exposure to technologies but felt that the electives available to them did not allow them to develop majors in an area, such as graphics, 3-D modelling or Web design. They felt that their ability to specialise would add to their employability.
- 8.1.4 *The Review Team recommends that the Faculty investigate means of providing opportunities for BDesComp students to develop specialisations. (Recommendation 8)*

8.2 *Engaging the Public Sector and Industry*

- 8.2.1 The Faculty has repaired its relations with relevant professions and in addition to an active use of professionals as guest lecturers, has formed Professional Advisory Committees for each program and a Dean's Council. The Faculty also supports local and international meetings of its Alumni Association.
- 8.2.2 The Faculty has been successful in gaining individual/professional bequests and endowments and has actively sought donations from individuals, professional groups

and industry for the Wilkinson Society. However, as mentioned in paragraph 6.1.1, the Faculty has not yet been able to gain significant public sector and industry research project funding to be able to commence influencing strategic professional developments.

9. GOAL 6: EFFECTIVE MANAGEMENT

9.1 Learning Community

- 9.1.1 The SER reports that the Faculty has acted on Recommendation 14 of the Phase 1 Review and called for student nominations for places on Faculty boards and committees. Students have not nominated for the available positions demonstrating a lack of interest in contributing to Faculty management.
- 9.1.2 It appears that the Faculty has yet to achieve a strengthened sense of community mentioned in Recommendation 1 of the Phase 1 Review. This was also apparent amongst the disenfranchisement felt by RHD students (see Section 6.2). Staff reported that in spite of it being a one school faculty, there was little conversation across groups and even amongst the disciplinary groups. The older departmental structure had more mechanisms to encourage communication.
- 9.1.3 *The Review Team recommends that a means of building a scholarly and learning community be included in the structural review mooted by the Dean. It is also recommended that Senior Faculty Staff as well as Disciplinary Leaders be involved in this discussion. (Recommendation 9)*

9.2 Staff Development

- 9.2.1 In response to Recommendation 5 of the Phase 1 Review, the Faculty requires all new academic staff, unless they have had significant prior teaching experience, to undertake the 3-day ITL Workshop on Teaching and Learning, and soon thereafter, the full GradDip in University Higher Education, as part of its confirmation criteria. It is assumed that PM&D will provide opportunities for longer standing staff to receive staff development.
- 9.2.2 The University's new academic promotion criteria should suit the Faculty's creative and design profile.

9.3 Planning and Budgeting

- 9.3.1 The Faculty was an early adopter of a 3-year planning cycle and uses CST methodology to undertake quarterly budget reviews. The SER reports that the Faculty maintains a rolling 5-year staffing profile, infrastructure profile and budget, and updates these semi-annually. A Strategic Planning Working Party is currently revamping the Faculty's strategic plan.
- 9.3.2 *The Review Team recommends that the Faculty Strategic Plan be widely consulted across the Faculty and its stakeholder groups. (Recommendation 10)*

- 9.3.3 20% of SCEQ comments from both Undergraduate and Postgraduate coursework students reported problems with customer service and accessing the Faculty Student Administration Office. The Faculty has responded to this feedback by undertaking a review of Student Administration, which has resulted in the appointment of an additional Student Administration Officer.

10. GOAL SEVEN: SERVICE TO THE COMMUNITY

10.1 Year of the Built Environment

- 10.1.1 3rd year architecture students are working with the Government Architect as part of the Year of the Built Environment (YBE 2004). On the Home Page of the Faculty's website a link is provided to the Exemplars Program of YBE 2004.
- 10.1.2 *The Review Team commends the Faculty for its leadership role in support of best practice in the Australian built environment. (Commendation 10)*

Professor Judyth Sachs
Chair, Review Team

August 11, 2004

Attachment One: Implementation of 2003 Academic Board Review Recommendations

<p>Recommendation 1: Internal Communication Systems</p>	<p>“Notwithstanding the clear success of the restructuring, the Review Team supports the Faculty in its commitment to continue working towards improving communication and towards strengthening the sense of community throughout the Faculty. In developing its systems of communication, the Faculty needs to develop a stronger sense of ownership across the Faculty of key documents, such as the Teaching and Learning Plan and Self-evaluation Report. The Team noted the views expressed in some quarters that the dissolution of the old departments had resulted in a reduction in contact with students and encouraged the Faculty to find ways to rebuild this.”</p>
<p>Actions taken by Faculty to date</p>	<p>The Faculty applied for and successfully received a 2003 TIF Grant for three projects, including implementing a Faculty-wide Intranet Communications System – with Dr Kirsty Beilharz, Project Manager. As a result, the Faculty now has a staff Intranet and has been developing a student intranet to address this perceived problem.</p> <p>The Faculty Intranet is designed to give staff and students a one-stop shop. Two of the innovative inclusions are galleries for the displaying by students of their own work and a news section with Faculty activities, student news, staff news and global activities.</p> <p>The staff part of Intranet Project has been up and running since late 2003 – now has the T&L Plan, Self-Evaluation Report, AB Review, etc. all on-line and available to staff. For the student part of the Intranet Project – accrue-ment of sample of student work commenced, areas for inclusion have been identified (technical trouble-shooting and reporting, a gallery of student submissions has been established, interdisciplinary discussion forums, staff-student e-noticeboard, student bulletin board, portal for direction to community groups [e.g. Planning, Design Computing, Architecture], news, policy documents and forms, connections to USYD intranet, SAC forms, student showcase for employers).</p> <p>The first stage of the student intranet has completed construction. The server for its purpose has arrived last week and is ready for uploading files. This phase includes news globally and in the Faculty; an extensive gallery including various representations of media – images, digital, architecture, show reels (linear), 3D modelling – to increase awareness and sharing of our interdisciplinary work; FAQ for students addressing many areas in which students indicated clarification is beneficial. A second phase including secure database elements is planned when further funding is found. The purpose of the intranet is multi-user, community-building, formal and informal</p>

	<p>communication and conveyance of information. This distinguishes its functionality and purpose from WebCT used for teaching.</p>
<p>Further planned actions</p>	<p>Regarding the staff Intranet – no further action other than regular updating is needed.</p> <p>The student segment of Intranet continues under development: AsProf Peter Phibbs (Policy), Dr Kirsty Beilharz (Web Design) and Dr Andy Dong (Intranet Security) are directing construction with input from students. To date: 300 students surveyed, 3rd year 2003 BDesComp project designed the student portion of Intranet. Final building is currently being completed; rollout expected before second semester 2004 to coincide with term start.</p> <p>An evaluation of the prototype by the student community will take place during Semester 2, 2004. Students were asked to fill out questionnaires indicating content that would be helpful. Students will again be asked to evaluate the intranet in progress. Launch date is currently planned to coincide with the building launch (11 June 2004). Delays arose ordering the server.</p> <p>Dr Beilharz will manage the project delivery and discipline heads will be responsible for relevant content.</p>
<p>Faculty evaluation of effectiveness of actions</p>	<p>The staff portion of the Faculty Intranet is up and running, is clear, usable and highly used, and is greatly aiding internal staff-staff communications. These sections of the Intranet have been a boon to intra-Faculty communication. The same is hoped and expected for student sections of the Intranet, eg, the facility for students to post work and correspondence is expected to build communication and community both within the undergraduate students and within the graduate coursework and research students. Students have been involved in the development and have given useful and positive feedback during the process. Staff response to the intranet has been positive especially with respect to intra-Faculty communication.</p>

<p>Recommendation 3:¹</p> <p>Internal Communication Systems</p>	<p>“The processes for disseminating University policy (such as, for example, Academic Board policy on academic honesty and intellectual property) should be reviewed to ensure that they are drawn to the attention of all staff and students, who should have access to the actual policies, rather than only being made familiar with the essence of them.”</p>
<p>Actions taken by Faculty to date</p>	<p>The above recommendation was another reason for the Faculty Intranet Project: As stated in the response to Recommendation 1, the staff part of Intranet Project is fully up and running – now has the T&L Plan, AB Review, etc. on line, with links to relevant University documents. The Head of School and staff of the Academic Support Centre update the Staff Intranet on a regular as needed basis. Two student handbooks have also been prepared for 2004: a graduate student handbook and an undergraduate student handbook. These handbooks contain details of Academic Board Policies and relevant links where appropriate. They have been distributed to all students in the Faculty. A part-time teacher’s handbook has also been prepared. Finally a manual for new staff is also under preparation</p>
<p>Further planned actions</p>	<p>No further action required.</p>
<p>Faculty evaluation of effectiveness of actions</p>	<p>The staff portion of the Faculty Intranet is clear, usable and highly used. The Intranet has provided the delivery vehicle for drawing staff attention to University policy – with a synopsis on the Intranet page and a link to the policy. It seems to be an effective tool in enhancing staff-staff communication and staff communication regarding University as well as Faculty policy. The handbooks have been warmly received and deemed very useful.</p>

¹ This is Academic Board recommendation #3, but inasmuch as it also dealt with the same issue as #1, internal communication, it has been moved to this position for the flow of the presentation.

<p>Recommendation 2:</p> <p>Academic Staff Workload</p>	<p>“The Faculty is commended in its recognition of and commitment to improving the issue of workload for teaching staff. The development of workload models and the recent new staff appointments are welcomed. However, the Faculty needs to continue to consider ways to keep to a minimum the impact of increasing staff-to-student ratios on both the staff and the student experience.”</p>
<p>Actions taken by Faculty to date</p>	<p>The Faculty has a unanimously approved Workload Model. Mr Bruce Forwood, as Head of School, is monitoring this and working with staff to implement the Faculty workload model and reduce teaching loads. The Academic Board recommendation has been discussed at School Board Meetings, and staff have made a number of suggestions that the HoS has considering and implemented. For example, new policies on minimum class sizes are in place for electives (currently 12 students), and electives have been cancelled where numbers are low or where staff are overloaded.</p> <p>New academic hirings in 2004 have further helped the situation (with one more new academic staff member joining in July). Two more positions are under advertisement (one perhaps for July filling), and six more have been initiated by the Dean, discussed at the PMAC and approved in principle for advertising for 2005 take-up. A new Graduate Teaching Fellows program (GTFs) initiated by the Dean for implementation in July 2004 will further reduce the teaching load for academic staff by providing teaching assistance in large-enrolment courses and for overloaded staff (at the same time as providing valuable teaching experience for future academics). In the interim, very busy staff are being provided with funds to employ research students to assist as PT casuals with teaching related administrative tasks.</p> <p>Furthermore, in staff meetings in late 2003, academic staff took the view that if in the short term the ability to reduce workload was limited, an important issue was the need to make improvements to the workplace. The School currently sponsors an exercise program for staff in conjunction with the Sports Union; other initiatives including improved catering for staff giving evening classes and better internet access from staff residences are being implemented.</p> <p>Regarding graduate units under very high demand, the Faculty has implemented a capping program to bring large graduate coursework units to workable numbers, and to cap large enrolment graduate coursework programs (especially in the digital suite).</p> <p>Finally, the Faculty is in the early stages of converting all units (first undergraduate, then graduate) to 6 cp. In so doing, the Dean has challenged each working team to reduce the number of units on our books by 30% per program area, and to rationalise low-enrolment but valuable units so they are offered once every second year in</p>

	a regular time slot. Both actions will further reduce teaching loads and are expected therefore to improve teaching quality.
Further planned actions	<p>While it is expected that the new teaching appointments and advertised positions, along with the Graduate Teaching Fellows Program will ameliorate much of the staff-teaching overload, there remains an additional longer-term issue. At present the Faculty is working on an average academic load of 50% teaching, 30% research and 20% administration. It is often hard to identify the actual teaching workload of a member of staff, as many of the units are team-taught, making it difficult to identify real teaching loads. Related are concerns that there is a growing tendency for some staff to coordinate three or four units of study at the same time and then say they have no time to teach. The Head of School is charged to monitor load, to implement the workload model and to therefore reduce teaching loads. He has also been asked by the Dean to also address these latter concerns, to increase the minimum size of electives to 15 students, to insure the rationalising of low-enrolment but valuable units, and to help insure the reduction in overall numbers of units hopefully by ca 30% during the 6 cp conversion.</p> <p>Staff are being trained in digital graphic presentations, and equipment to support digital presentations by staff is being purchased.</p>
Faculty evaluation of effectiveness of actions	<p>Considerable progress has been made on long-term staff teaching overload, with the above initiatives still to be put to practice and monitored for quality assurance, but increases due to increased mostly graduate coursework load are difficult to manage in the short term.</p>

<p>Recommendation 4:</p> <p>Units of Study Syllabi – Graduate Attributes</p>	<p>“It is recommended that the Faculty implement strategies to ensure that the graduate attributes relevant to units of study are made more explicit to students, particularly in unit of study outlines.”</p>
<p>Actions taken by Faculty to date</p>	<p>The new Faculty <i>Handbook</i> for students has incorporated relevant information, with most of the UG units now carrying this information in the <i>Handbook</i>. The Dean asked the Teaching & Learning Committee to work on five related matters, of which this was one, and to bring firm recommendations for implementation to Faculty this semester. The Teaching and Learning Committee under the leadership of the AD (Teaching & Learning) have developed a list of graduate attributes for both undergraduate and graduate units of study based on Academic Board guidelines, and have also developed a standard Unit of Study Syllabus which includes a section on graduate attributes. The syllabus proforma will be lodged on the Faculty Intranet, and is being used for the current conversion of all units to 6 cp. It will also be offered to the College and through the Academic Board for migration to any other interested Faculties.</p>
<p>Further planned actions</p>	<p>Other than insuring the implementation of this initiative – no further action required.</p>
<p>Faculty evaluation of effectiveness of actions</p>	<p>Staff have embraced the new graduate attributes, and are implementing them with the conversion of units to 6 cp. The move this semester to uniform 6 cp units is greatly assisting the implementation of this recommendation.</p>

<p>Recommendation 11:²</p> <p>Unit of Study Syllabi – Response to CEQs & SCEQs</p>	<p>“Noting that many staff did not appear to be aware of the key issues emerging from (S)CEQ results, the Team recommended that the Faculty’s processes are revised to ensure that the outcome of student evaluations (from CEQs, SCEQs, and staff/student consultative committees) is appropriately analysed, discussed and responded to within the Faculty and disseminated to staff across the Faculty. In accordance with Academic Board policy, students need to be advised of the outcomes of student feedback.”</p>
<p>Actions taken by Faculty to date</p>	<p>The Dean has asked the Teaching & Learning Committee to investigate this, and to bring firm recommendations to Faculty this semester, with an eye to creating a uniform unit of study syllabus proforma, on the Faculty Intranet, that would have a segment requiring all staff to insert a summary of relevant SCEQ and unit of study evaluations, followed by a statement of how the unit has been changed and improved in the light of that feedback.</p> <p>HonAsProf Peter Smith reviews all CEQ ad SCEQ results on an ongoing basis, and reports to Faculty on these results on a regular basis.</p> <p>It is also interesting that while teaching quality has markedly improved over this period according to students, their overall satisfaction has declined equally dramatically. This would suggest that it is in other aspects of their service that they are dissatisfied.</p>
<p>Further planned actions</p>	<p>To hold a Faculty Forum on Evaluation (sponsored by the T&L Committee) once every semester.</p>
<p>Faculty evaluation of effectiveness of actions</p>	<p>Too early to tell; will be monitored by the T&L Committee throughout 2004.</p>

² This is Academic Board recommendation #11, but inasmuch as the Faculty’s response is similar to issue #4 regarding unit of study syllabi, it has been moved to this position for the flow of the presentation.

<p>Recommendation 5: Staff Development</p>	<p>“The Faculty is encouraged in its stated commitment to ongoing improvement in teaching and learning practices and to achieving wider involvement of staff (including those of longer standing) in the latest developments in the theory and practice of teaching (see Self-Evaluation Report (s. 2 (b)). It is suggested that greater use could be made of staff development opportunities offered by the University’s Institute of Teaching and Learning.”</p>
<p>Actions taken by Faculty to date</p>	<p>The Faculty requires that all new, incoming academic staff, unless they have significant prior teaching experience, undertake and complete the three-day ITL Workshop on Teaching and Learning and, soon thereafter, the full GradDip in University Higher Education as a part of its mandatory confirmation criteria. The Faculty is also advertising for and will hire hopefully in time for second semester 2004 a new Teaching Support Officer to assist staff with teaching innovations, including but not limited to the development of more WebCT delivery.</p>
<p>Further planned actions</p>	<p>No further action required.</p>
<p>Faculty evaluation of effectiveness of actions</p>	<p>The quality of teaching has improved year by year, with undergraduate student SCEQs now among the highest in the University (especially from the BDesArch program). Teaching can and will improve more, especially in the graduate coursework area, but is now generally very good across the board, with no known areas of great deficiency.</p>

<p>Recommendation 6:</p> <p>Migrating the Tutor-Training Program</p>	<p>“The Faculty is encouraged to develop a more formalised approach across the Faculty to the recruitment, orientation and support of Design Tutors and other visiting and sessional staff. This could build on good practice already existing in some areas.”</p>
<p>Actions taken by Faculty to date</p>	<p>A second part of the 2003 TIF Grant, under the co-direction of Ms Kristine Sodersten, HonAsProf Terry Purcell and Dr Harry Margalit, is to migrate our already acknowledge Tutor Training Program across the Faculty. The Faculty’s very successful Tutor Training Program for all design tutors in the BDesArch degree is currently being migrated across the BDesComp and BArch undergraduate programs, with discussion about migrating it also across the 13 graduate coursework programs.</p> <p>Organisation of intensive tutor training workshops has occurred for both undergraduate and graduate programs. The relevant part-time teaching staff (both tutors and lecturers) were identified, and workshops were scheduled. We were somewhat hampered in our implementation in 2003 by the absence for part of the year of the ITL’s Dr Christine Asmar, who assisted the Faculty in previous years with tutor training. With Dr Asmar’s return, however, the training workshops funded by the TIF Grant, and these will run into 2004.</p> <p>As a result of the TIF Grants, the faculty has implemented a program and a series of policies to increase the effectiveness in teaching of its part-time casual teaching staff. In 2004 the policies and program are being trailed for undergraduate classes where the part-time casual tutors form more than 50% of the teaching staff. Firstly, the relevant program committee formally interviews all potential tutors to ascertain their suitability before recommending their hiring to the Head of School. Secondly, the tutors are now paid for a three-hour introductory teaching workshop at the beginning of semester and a three-hour feedback workshop at the end of semester, as well as for their actual teaching time. Thirdly, the students in their groups evaluate the tutors’ teaching at mid semester, handing the feedback to the program coordinator who gives copies to the relevant tutor. The evaluation is based on the ‘three helpful things’ and ‘three things that can be improved’ model. The tutors summarise the comments and report in writing and in discussion to the students on their responses to the feedback, including actions they propose to take. This summary sheet is copied to the program coordinator. Fourthly, teaching workshops are being held for all new tutors to the program. Fifthly two new teacher-training programs have been implemented. Assistant tutors and ‘design mentors’ (depending on the program) from Years 4 and 5 BArch work with a senior tutor and a group of students in Years 2 and 3 of the B Des Arch, and undertake</p>

	a workshop training program in introductory design teaching concurrently. A casual teaching staff manual is being trialled in 2004 for all casual staff.
Further planned actions	Specific workshops for tutor training, with support documents for tutor information. CST has requested that one of our leaders in tutor training, Ms Kristine Sodersten, work with others in the College to see how the best practices in tutor training can be further migrated across the College and to other faculties.
Faculty evaluation of effectiveness of actions	Very successful in the BDesArch and BArch Programs (ca 50% of EFTSUs); early days in BDesComp and the 13 graduate coursework programs.

<p>Recommendation 7: Wider Use of WebCT</p>	<p>“While it is acknowledged that there may be courses (such as those based in the studio) where WebCT may be of limited or no use, it is recommended that a more co-ordinated approach is developed to the use of WebCT be implemented across the Faculty.”</p>
<p>Actions taken by Faculty to date</p>	<p>A program of WebCT boards was planned by Professor Tom Heneghan and architecture staff for integration with studio-based teaching in both BDesArch/BArch program during the latter part of 2003. The plan was modelled on the experience of the architecture program at the University of Hong Kong, where design tutors supplement face-to-face teaching by short daily web-based discussions. The system has not yet been implemented at Sydney, partly because of the administrative workload for the co-ordinating academics who would be involved in constantly up-dating the changing student and tutor lists, and because of the extra workload the WebCT system would place on part-time tutors. The imminent hiring of the new Teaching Support Officer, with necessary expertise in WebCT, will greatly assist the implementation of this recommendation. We note, however, that staff familiarity with WebCT and utilisation can still increase to offer flexibility of access to teaching materials. Students do not view it as a substitute for face-to-face learning.</p>
<p>Further planned actions</p>	<p>We will monitor carefully the further implementation of WebCT materials after the new Teaching Support Officer takes up his/her position.</p>
<p>Faculty evaluation of effectiveness of actions</p>	<p>The Teaching and Learning Committee is considering implementation of a monitoring system, with a view to it being set up for second semester 2004.</p>

<p>Recommendation 8: Professional Links for the BDesComp Program</p>	<p>“The Faculty clearly has strong and effective professional links for most areas. However, in light of student feedback (see s. 5.20), it is suggested that the Faculty may wish to consider ways to strengthen such links in the area of Design Computing.”</p>
<p>Actions taken by Faculty to date</p>	<p>The academic staff teaching in the Bachelor of Design Computing program, under the leadership of Professor Mary Lou Maher, are developing professional (job-opportunity) links through the invitation of professionals to participate in studios, the appointment of adjunct academic staff from industry, and invitations to potential employers to end of year student design exhibitions. David Marchant, prominent Design IT professional, has been appointed Adjunct Associate Professor. Design computing professionals now help develop and deliver the content of the 3rd year BDesComp studios, with follow-on opportunities for students to present their design work at appropriate design offices. Many of the lecture-based units of study bring in professionals to deliver lectures on their experiences. A final year Design Computing Student Exhibition is now organised by the Faculty. In 2003 this was coordinated with the Research Conversazione organised by ECE and the School of IT, where key industry leaders and firms were invited to showcase their firms and meet with potential student graduates.</p> <p>Under the encouragement of the Dean, the undergraduate and graduate design computing programs, combined with the graduate digital media program, have formed a Professional Advisory Committee (PAC), comprised of leading professionals in the design computing/digital media industries, to advise on any and all aspects of the undergraduate BDesComp and graduate MDesSc(DesComp) (DigMed) programs. The inaugural meeting of this PAC will occur before second semester 2004.</p>
<p>Further planned actions</p>	<p>No further action required.</p>
<p>Faculty evaluation of effectiveness of actions</p>	<p>The planning seems excellent, with BDesComp students having much closer contact with relevant professionals. The new PAC will further strengthen the professional and industry ties of these three programs.</p>

Recommendation 9: Regular Offering of Units of Study	“Mechanisms should be implemented to ensure that, as far as possible, advertised units of study are offered.”
Actions taken by Faculty to date	This recommendation relates to workload issues. Cancelling units of study with small enrolments increases budget efficiencies and helps reduce workloads. The HoS with the Manager, Student Administration, now routinely checks the active unit list for the following semester, and removes low-enrolment units. As part of the conversion to 6 cp, the Dean has asked all program areas to delete any units not taught in the past two years, and to rationalise low-enrolment though valuable electives so they are offered once every second year in a regular time slot.
Further planned actions	The HoS will continue to monitor low-enrolments units and effect cancellations. The move to 6 cp by 2005 is providing an opportunity to remove units not offered or needed, to rationalise others and to consolidate others. .
Faculty evaluation of effectiveness of actions	The issue seems to be resolved, especially in the light of the conversion to 6 cp and corollaries, but bears watching.

<p>Recommendation 10: Graduate Research Student Management Plan</p>	<p>“It is recommended that the Faculty review its management plan for postgraduate research student support and training with a view to ensuring minimum standards of quality across the Faculty. Matters suggested for particular attention include: “(i) the need to develop a stronger and more active research community across the Faculty, and thereby avoid the sense of isolation currently experienced by some students. “(ii) the need to develop appropriate strategies for safeguarding the quality of postgraduate research supervision. For example, one strategy could be to require supervisors to complete the Postgraduate Supervision Development Program run by the University’s Institute for Teaching and Learning. “(iii) the need for a more co-ordinated and systematic approach to resource support for postgraduate research students. The aim is to ensure that research students across all discipline areas receive appropriate levels of resource support and that they are made better aware of the resources available to them.”</p>
<p>Actions taken by Faculty to date</p>	<p>(i) The Faculty Intranet partially addresses the first of these matters (see Recommendations 1 & 2 for details). Other developments to date include: with active encouragement from the Dean, 3-1/2 out of 5 disciplinary research groups now hold regular research seminar series, and the others are encouraged to do likewise; and with the direct encouragement and support of the Dean, the graduate research students have applied for and received funding from SUPRA to organise Faculty-wide research student social events, both of which initiatives are aimed to increase intra-group and inter-group communications. (ii) The Associate Dean (Graduate Studies) monitored student research progress annually, interviewing new students half way through their first year to identify any problem areas, calling for and reviewing annual research progress reports, following up on any problem areas, and conducting spot checks of progress toward degree. The Associate Dean (Research), Professor John Gero, is now responsible for implementing the CST/Faculty Research Management Plan. In addition to what has been done in the past, the annual interview of each research student will be carried out more formally and all items in the Faculty’s Research Management Plan will be monitored closely for QA and implementation. Student expectations in terms of supervision, resources and output will be monitored and compared with the Faculty’s and CST Research Management Plan, particularly during the first year. Expectations concerning research publications will be made uniform across all research groups. It is expected that the Postgraduate Research Support (PRS) Scheme will have its funds augmented to allow more PhD students to present their research at international</p>

	<p>conferences.</p> <p>Furthermore, new and/or inexperienced research supervisor staff are now required as part of their confirmation to complete the Postgraduate Supervision Development Program run by the University's Institute for Teaching and Learning. There is monitoring of supervisor performance and any who need remedial action can only act as associates.</p> <p>(iii) The Associate Dean (Research) and IT Staff Supervisor, Professor John Gero, has surveyed all PhD students to determine actual levels of infrastructure support, and rectified known discrepancies (mostly in the area of uneven computer support – now corrected). Very importantly, the Faculty also provides – and has for many years – dedicated shared office space for full-time research students, including access to phone, photocopying, inter- and intranet, etc. In the case of Design Computing & Cognition research students, the largest group, a new \$600k mezzanine has been created (funded 50/50 by CDP and the Faculty), with entirely new furniture (funded by the Faculty with some discipline assistance). Considerably more modest shared offices have been created for Architecture & Allied Arts (AAA) and for Environment, Behaviour & Society (EBS) PhD students.</p> <p>The new Graduate Teaching Fellows (GTF) program being initiated by the Dean will address issues of opportunities for tutoring, etc., as well as providing another source of financial support for full-time research students.</p>
Further planned actions	<p>It is hoped that the two remaining research groups (Architecture & Allied Arts and Architectural Science) will also launch a regular research seminar series.</p> <p>The student portion of the Intranet Project will have a sub-section for research students.</p> <p>Under consideration is the post of a new Assistant Dean specifically for research students – to further monitor progress and to provide a more consistent approach to resource allocation (to be further considered for implementation from 2005).</p> <p>IT support for research students has been improved with further improvement in infrastructure, targeted specifically at research students, mooted but awaiting funding. Shared research offices especially for three research groups (Urban & Regional Planning & Policy, Architecture and EBS) still need attention – the Faculty is looking forward to the long-awaited announcement from the DoGS about shared central/college infrastructure support for graduate research students.</p>
Faculty evaluation of effectiveness of actions	<p>There is considerably more intra-group research communication, and the beginnings of more Faculty-wide inter-group communications than in 2003.</p> <p>Research supervision monitoring has pinpointed a couple of problem spots, which have been rectified.</p> <p>Some senior members of staff still have too many supervisees, but this is accounted for in that they are</p>

	<p>supporting some new students while new staff members serve their one-year research associate supervisory period. IT services are now continually addressed; the provision of new computers to all FT research students has occurred. Office space for PhD students is much improved for one disciplinary group, but awaits the infusion of funding as part of Stage 3 of the Wilkinson Building Renovations for three more disciplinary groups.</p>
--	--

<p>Recommendation 12:³ Evaluation of Studio-Based Teaching</p>	<p>“The Faculty is encouraged to develop a student unit of study evaluation questionnaire which is appropriate for studio based work. The University’s Institute of Teaching and Learning may be able to provide assistance.”</p>
<p>Actions taken by Faculty to date</p>	<p>Under continuing encouragement from the Dean, the Teaching and Learning Committee is considering how to do this. The ITL is of the opinion that the current Unit of Study evaluations are relevant to studio teaching, and could be supplemented by the Faculty specific questions. The first step is to develop four Faculty specific questions for the Unit of Study Evaluations. This is underway, but is proving difficult given the diversity of offerings within the Faculty (science and arts based; undergraduate and graduate; didactic and project based). The Dean has renewed his request that this be completed before the end of this semester, and passed by Faculty for implementation for semester two, 2004.</p>
<p>Further planned actions</p>	<p>Possible trial of a studio-based evaluation questionnaire to elicit studio-specific issues.</p>
<p>Faculty evaluation of effectiveness of actions</p>	<p>Too early to tell – the four questions will be trialled, followed by a possible studio-based evaluation questionnaire, and the results compared.</p>

³ For the flow of the presentation, Academic Board Recommendation #11 has been moved up to follow #4.

<p>Recommendation 13: International Teaching & Learning Benchmarking</p>	<p>“The Faculty is encouraged to establish more formalised [teaching and learning] benchmarking practices with institutions, both nationally and internationally.”</p>
<p>Actions taken by Faculty to date</p>	<p>The third portion of the Faculty’s successful TIF Grant Proposal is for national benchmarking, starting with the largest program in the Faculty, the BDesArch/BArch professional architecture program (ca 40% of all EFTSUs). A formalised international architectural education benchmarking project is underway, directed by Professor Tom Heneghan, with a hired PhD RA assisting. In addition, informal benchmarking is occurring through the Association of Architecture Schools of Australasia (AASA) and the Council of Deans of Architecture and the Built Environment (CoDABE).</p>
<p>Further planned actions</p>	<p>Professor Heneghan is currently the External Examiner of the architecture programs at both The University of Hong Kong and Queensland University of Technology, and will benchmark the Faculty’s undergraduate architecture program against these programs as a matter of course. As part of the first stage of the formalised benchmarking process, Professor Heneghan has travelled to all major architecture programs in Australia, accompanied to some universities by Dr Margalit, Associate Dean (Teaching & Learning), to formally benchmark against the programs of those universities. A report on the benchmarking is close to completion, and will suggest improvements in our own teaching and further directions for benchmarking studies. The report will form a basis for the 2004 Reviews of the BDesArch/BArch program.</p>
<p>Faculty evaluation of effectiveness of actions</p>	<p>Early days in the benchmarking project, with results expected by mid-2004. If it is successful, it will be migrated to other teaching programs in the Faculty, first the other undergraduate program, the BDesComp, and then the 13 graduate coursework programs.</p>

<p>Recommendation 14: Student Representatives on Faculty Boards and Committees</p>	<p>“In accordance with Academic Board policy, there should be student representatives on Faculty committees (such as the Teaching & Learning Committee, Undergraduate and Graduate Boards of Study, Faculty) (see Management and Evaluation of Coursework Teaching Part 4, s. 2 (1) (a) and (b)). Faculty is recommended to review its processes to ensure appropriate proactive mechanisms for electing student representatives to sit on Faculty committees. Also, it is suggested that there is a need to raise the profile of student representation on Faculty committees among the student body.”</p>
<p>Actions taken by Faculty to date</p>	<p>The Faculty has been and continues to be very proactive in this regard. The Dean recommended to Faculty (approved unanimously) that the number of students on all boards and committees be increased. The Faculty Manager on behalf of the Dean and Head of School annually calls for student representatives for Faculty and all boards and committees. The Dean personally helps the student organisation (SUAS) conduct its annual elections, serving as stimulant, chair of the meeting and receiving officer. Once officers are elected, however, the students have been very slow to nominate and appoint student representatives to the various Faculty committees. The Dean personally reminds the officers at every opportunity about the importance of having students on the various Faculty committees, they agree and assure him they’ll get names “very soon” but seldom does it happen. It is now well over a year, for instance, since we’ve seen a student at any meeting of Faculty or the two senior Boards of Study.</p>
<p>Further planned actions</p>	<p>The long-term solution to this vexing problem is unknown. Perhaps the students are so happy with all decisions taken by Faculty that they feel no need to be physically represented at meetings? Or maybe it’s a sign of the student workload. We quite honestly don’t know the answer or the solution.</p>
<p>Faculty evaluation of effectiveness of actions</p>	<p>Not effective, in that we still have few student representatives attending committee and even full Faculty Meetings. Not clear how to proceed – despite our continual encouragement – to get students to take up the slots available.</p>

<p>Recommendation 15: Mid-Year Commencements</p>	<p>“The processes for managing mid-year entry are recommended for review by the Faculty to ensure that students commencing course mid-year receive the same level of information, induction and support as students starting in first semester.”</p>
<p>Actions taken by Faculty to date</p>	<p>The Faculty does not admit students to the BDesArch or BDesComp (ca 50% of EFTSUs) in mid-year. The only undergraduate program with mid-year entry is the BArch (total of ca 90 students per year, with only 10-20 mid-year). Graduate coursework students may commence in either semester, and do. Research students may commence at any time, and do, though they are encouraged to commence only in February-March due to the availability only in first semester of Modes of Inquiry (mandatory unit for all new research students). Undergraduate and graduate student orientations – the same in format but smaller in scale – are now conducted at mid-year for both undergraduate (very few) and graduate coursework students. Research students are oriented mainly by the research group to which they most identify.</p>
<p>Further planned actions</p>	<p>No further action required.</p>
<p>Faculty evaluation of effectiveness of actions</p>	<p>Very effective. No known further concerns.</p>

<p>Recommendation 16:</p> <p>Further Assisting ESL Students</p>	<p>“It is recommended that the Faculty consider strategies to ensure that students from non-English speaking backgrounds are appropriately supported and made fully aware of the language support provision available in the University, such as that provided by the University Learning Centre.”</p>
<p>Actions taken by Faculty to date</p>	<p>The Faculty was one of the first in the University to raise its IELTS to an average of 7.0 with no segment below 6.5 for all programs, undergraduate and graduate including research; the results were excellent. Our experience is that the few problems, where they exist, are mainly with international students who have completed study in Australia and therefore qualify without having to take or show IELTS scores.</p> <p>Nevertheless, students with poor English skills are identified in the first year of the BDesArch and BDesComp programs. They are now individually sent information about the University Language Centre.</p>
<p>Further planned actions</p>	<p>The Faculty is considering a new Assistant Dean (International), one of whose duties would be supporting all international students including those for whom English is a second language. The same person could support all students, including domestic, from non-English speaking backgrounds. Specific information about support will be posted on the Faculty Intranet.</p> <p>The Faculty is also seriously considering requiring all graduate coursework students, even if they have matriculated from another “college” in Australia, to take the IELTS and show an average result of 7.0 with no segment below 6.5.</p>
<p>Faculty evaluation of effectiveness of actions</p>	<p>English language skills have increased markedly since the introduction of the IELTS=7.0 policy. It is expected that the new requirement for local international students will show great benefits, especially at the graduate coursework level. It is too early to tell; needs to be monitored through the rest of 2004 and into 2005.</p>