

FACULTY OF ARTS

**ACADEMIC BOARD VISIT TO REVIEW
TEACHING, LEARNING AND RESEARCH
TRAINING**

MONDAY 19 AUGUST 2002

**FINAL REPORT AND
RECOMMENDATIONS**

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1 INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 The following Academic Board Review Team visited the Faculty of Arts on Monday 19 August 2002 as part of the review and evaluation of teaching, learning and research training in all faculties within the University.

Chair

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Chair, Academic Board

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Professor Paul Ramsden

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Ms Janet Jones

Head, Learning Centre

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Rachel Symons

Quality Assurance Officer (Teaching and Learning)

- 1.2 During the visit, the Team interviewed the following groups of staff and students:

- *Dean Stephen Garton, Heads of School, Associate Deans of Faculty Committees, Directors of Liberal Arts and Media and Communications¹*
- *Chairs of Departments*
- *Undergraduate students*
- *Postgraduate coursework students*
- *Postgraduate research students*
- *Other academic and general staff²*

- 1.3 This report is based on the findings of the Review Team in relation to the teaching and learning, and research training activities of the Faculty. It is based on the Self-Evaluation Report, the Faculty Teaching and Learning Plan, and interviews conducted with staff and students during the visit.

2 FACULTY CONTEXT

- 2.1 The Faculty of Arts is one of the largest faculties within the University. Its complexity, especially in terms of disciplines underpinning its programs has led to a diverse range of teaching approaches and strategies. Whilst seeing its diversity as a strength, the major challenge facing the Faculty is ensuring a consistency of goals, and parity of student experience.

2.1 Restructuring

- 2.1.1 The Faculty of Arts is currently in a transitional phase following a major restructuring in 2000 (which was implemented before the arrival of the current Dean). The Faculty's previous two-tier structure, where Departments reported directly to the Dean, has been replaced with a new structure of twenty-three departments divided into four schools. Not surprisingly, such a major reorganisation has had mixed responses from various staff. In particular, the changing administrative structures have meant

¹ Referred to as Faculty in the report

² Referred to as staff in the report

that staff positions, which were previously powerful and influential are no longer so, this is particularly the case of Chairs of Departments.

- 2.1.2 Chairs of Departments expressed the view that the restructuring had impacted negatively on the nexus between teaching and research and concern was voiced that, if not remedied, this could adversely affect Departments' ability to provide research supervision. A further area of negative impact was the administrative support provision for Departments. It was suggested that the administrative loads of Chairs of Department, year co-ordinators and other academic staff had increased dramatically under the new structure. Effective communication within the Faculty was also noted as an area that is still developing under the new structure, particularly communication between Chairs of School and Chairs of Department.
- 2.1.3 The Dean and senior staff noted that the Faculty is still in the process of evolving under the new structure and is still progressing towards reaping its full benefits. Staff and students are still in the process of adapting to the changes. The Faculty is committed to resolving outstanding difficulties and to progressing successful consolidation and rejuvenation of the Faculty. Various strategies are being implemented or planned, such as redrafting the Faculty constitution and devising contracts between Chairs of School and Chairs of Department. The Team considered that one of the major challenges for the Dean and his administration would be the harnessing the support and energy of all staff in rebuilding the Faculty and making the new structure work. Strategies to achieve this aim were apparent to the Review Team.

2.2 Challenges

- 2.2.1 The challenges confronting the Faculty were identified by the Dean and his Management Team. These included: the recruitment and retention of new staff; the building up of new programs, for example the Bachelor of Arts Informatics; obtaining more outside funded lectureships; and improving student retention rates. Some of the strategies mentioned during the visit include the provision of a good First Year Experience program, mentorship for undergraduate students, appointing a Faculty First Year coordinator to help the Schools, and the development of an e-learning strategy. These are discussed elsewhere in this report.

3 IMPLEMENTATION OF ACADEMIC BOARD POLICIES AND GUIDELINES

- 3.1 A lack of communication and dissemination of information regarding Academic Board policies between the Faculty office, Schools and Departments was evident. Some Chairs of Departments were unaware of the existence of new policies, such as *Academic Honesty (Plagiarism) in Coursework*, even though the Faculty indicated that information regarding new policies was distributed by email to all Chairs of Departments. The Academic Board policy on Generic Attributes of Graduates is discussed in Section 5.1.

See Recommendation 1

3.2 Academic Honesty (Plagiarism) in Coursework

- 3.2.1 The Academic Honesty Policy was being implemented by some staff through its inclusion in course handouts and mentioning it during the first lecture. Staff contact their Head of School to resolve problems with compliance by students. Staff who were currently unaware of the policy were pleased to hear about its introduction. Students were all aware of the policy and the consequences arising from dishonesty.

3.3 Parallel teaching of postgraduate and undergraduate students in postgraduate courses

- 3.3.1 The Faculty currently teaches a mix of postgraduate coursework and undergraduate honours students in some postgraduate classes, in contravention of the Academic Board policy on the teaching of postgraduate courses. Postgraduate students expressed concern at this situation. They felt that the undergraduate honours students received more attention, due to long standing relationships with the lecturers. Not all students were able to participate in discussions due to the large size of the classes and the lack of active facilitating by the lecturer. While different assessment requirements for postgraduate and undergraduate students are set out in unit of study outlines, the difference in quality and standard of work expected should be made more explicit.
- 3.3.2 It should be acknowledged that the previous Dean had received permission from the Academic Board to include third and fourth year honours students in postgraduate coursework classes. The current Dean considered that current resource constraints would not enable the Faculty to offer a viable MA program if it was unable to offer mixed undergraduate and postgraduate units. While the Review Team acknowledged the resources issues involved, it considered that further consideration needed to be given to this issue with a view to compliance with University policy.

See Recommendation 2

3.4 Assessment and Examination of Coursework

- 3.4.1 The Teaching and Learning Committee is currently working on assessment with a view to introducing more standardised assessment practices across the Faculty. The main priority is consideration of the value of one credit point.

4 GRADUATE ATTRIBUTES, AIMS AND OUTCOMES

4.1 Generic Attributes of graduates

- 4.1.1 A template for the inclusion of generic attributes in all course outlines is being developed for implementation throughout the Faculty, with adaptation for discipline areas. The Undergraduate Matters Committee monitors compliance with the University *Generic Attributes of Graduates* policy, and is aiming to ensure that University and disciplinary attributes are included in unit objectives. Currently half the departments include generic attributes in their course outlines.
- 4.1.2 Student views on the effectiveness of the Faculty's approach to graduate attributes varied. Some undergraduate students indicated that there had been a noticeable development of their writing and communication skills during the time they had been studying; others had no sense of their development across the years and would like a stronger focus on skills development, especially in the senior years of the degree. The view was expressed that there was not enough difference between the skills expected in junior and senior units of a degree. As a consequence they did not feel challenged, especially when they were studying junior units towards the end of their double degree. The development of the BA (advanced) degree may well be a useful strategy to extend high performing students. Postgraduate coursework students met by the Review Team indicated that generic attributes were not included in their course outlines, and that they had gained more skills in their undergraduate degree than in the postgraduate degree.

4.2 Unit of study outlines

- 4.2.1 Through the Teaching and Learning Committee and the Undergraduate Matters Committee, the Faculty is implementing a template for all unit of study outlines (*See Section 3.3.1*). This will ensure alignment of unit of study presentation and that all students will receive the same level of information. Some Chairs of Departments indicated that this would eliminate the burden on

individual departments. Other staff voiced concern that too much standardisation would diminish creativity.

4.2.2 Postgraduate coursework students reported a lack of clear goals in units of study and insufficient links between unit objectives and assessment. Also, they considered linkages between units in the program needed to be more clearly defined.

4.2.3 The Review Team noted that there is currently inconsistency of practice across the Faculty in terms of the quality of unit of study outlines, but welcomed advice from the Faculty that the matter is being addressed.

5 TEACHING AND LEARNING

5.1 Teaching and Learning Committee

5.1.1 The Faculty Teaching and Learning Committee has recently been restructured to include wider representation from all schools. This committee is considered to be an effective mechanism within the Faculty to deal with teaching and learning issues. Staff are involved in the processes and are encouraged to place items for discussion on the agenda. Processes are being developed to ensure that teaching and learning issues are on the agendas of all School committees. Some Schools and Departments having their own Teaching and Learning Committees.

5.1.2 Current priorities of the Teaching and Learning Committee include looking at assessment and curriculum reform, surveying of courses with particular attention to regularity of tutorial offerings, alignment of unit of study design, and rewriting of the Teaching and Learning Plan. (*See Sections 5.2, 6.2*).

See Commendation 1

5.2 Teaching and Learning Plan

5.2.1 The Teaching and Learning Plan is developed by the Teaching and Learning Committee and disseminated through the Faculty via the Schools and Departments, Faculty wide seminars, and electronic communication such as email. The rolling of the Teaching and Learning Plan and the IT plan into one cohesive e-learning document is seen as a priority by the Faculty. Regrettably not all the achievements and milestones in the Teaching and Learning Plan, (see for example the First Year Experience program) were known throughout the Faculty. They concluded that the Faculty should consider ways in which these could be better disseminated.

See Recommendation 3

5.3 Quality of teaching

5.3.1 As anticipated in such a large and diverse Faculty, the Review Team found evidence of a range of practices in the Faculty's teaching provision. The Faculty acknowledges that teaching is an area for ongoing improvement and is currently surveying units of study across its subject areas to identify problems in the quality of teaching. Discussions with staff and students suggested that, while there is clearly good practice in teaching and learning within the Faculty in some areas, there are also instances where teaching practices are working less effectively. In some areas staff reported the use of new teaching methods, information technology, and assessments designed to improve student learning and make more efficient use of teaching time. It was thought that longstanding courses were more likely to be problem areas, especially where lecture styles were didactic rather than interactive, and tutorials were not being held.

- 5.3.2 The Review Team was nevertheless impressed with the high level of commitment of many staff, particularly in what are clearly difficult circumstances as the Faculty settles post-restructuring. Staff workloads (academic and administrative) have increased, staff:student ratios have increased, and resources are declining. Nevertheless, staff are highly committed to maintaining the quality of teaching, endeavouring to provide students with a positive learning experience despite the difficulties of large class sizes and poor physical infrastructure.
- 5.3.3 Discussions with students revealed an awareness of the difficult circumstances of staff and their efforts to minimise the impact of a diminished resource base. Resourcing cuts over the last four years had seen the discontinuation or decrease in the number of tutorials, and an increase in lecture and tutorial class sizes. The culminating effect was a decrease in opportunities for interactive discussion, a reduction in the quality and speed of feedback on assessed work, and limitations on the range of methods of assessment. However, students also noted their appreciation of the ability of staff in the Faculty to manage with less resources than other Faculties (based on their experiences of undertaking units of study in other Faculties).
- 5.3.4 A further area where students voiced concern was in the withdrawal of units of study, often as a result of staff redundancies. Postgraduate coursework students voiced particular dissatisfaction at the restriction in unit of study offering, which meant that they often could not study their chosen subjects.
- 5.3.5 Aside from the resourcing issues, students gave both positive and negative feedback on the quality of teaching in the Faculty. Some praised the wide variety of teaching and learning practices across the Faculty, citing words such as 'diverse', 'enjoyable', 'interesting', 'interactive' and 'flexible' to describe their educational experience. At the same time, the view was expressed that the Faculty provided insufficient opportunity for students to engage in rigorous debate and develop critical and analytical skills. A further concern was the perceived reduction in areas where there is sufficient expertise for Honours thesis supervision.
- 5.3.6 The establishment of a peer support network for students is a positive move by the Faculty. This is currently in place for first year students, with it to be expanded to later years of the student cohort. Student perceptions of peer learning varied, some considering it a good idea and a chance to share ideas, while others thought it was of minimal use.
- 5.3.7 Postgraduate coursework students wanted more face to face teaching, together with more personal contact than the current two hours per week. Postgraduate seminars were considered to be didactic, with students expressing a preference for more critical analysis, participation and interaction between staff and students.

See Commendations 2 and 3

5.4 Tutors and tutorials

- 5.4.1 Although tutorials were seen by staff to be one of the strengths of the Faculty, with students responding well to their content, the Team found that there was variation in the provision of tutorials across the Faculty. Some subjects held regular tutorials with small class sizes, others consisted of groups of 30-40 students, and yet others did not include tutorials.
- 5.4.2 Infrequency or non-existence of tutorials, large class sizes and the quality of the tutors were considered by students to affect the usefulness of this mode of teaching. The lack of tutorials in some subjects and fortnightly occurrence in other subjects limits exposure to critical analysis and rigorous intellectual argument, which was thought by students to be essential in an Arts Faculty. Language

students were particularly concerned about the large class sizes in their tutorials. For them this, together with the limit of two hours per week for tutorials, prevented students at either end of the ability range from benefiting from the experience. Students who were interviewed expressed the view that there was inconsistency in the ability of lecturers and tutors to facilitate discussion and class participation in large group tutorials. They informed the Team that the large tutorial numbers had, in their opinion, caused some students to drop out of the course. The Team suggested to the Faculty that it might promote to its staff programs which the Institute for Teaching and Learning offers on facilitating large group discussions.

- 5.4.3 Chairs of Departments are aware of the need to address the quality of tutoring and are introducing strategies to train and mentor tutors. Postgraduate students who are often used for casual teaching undergo a formal induction program and are required to attend the Institute for Teaching and Learning courses on teaching methods. Students thought that the variation in the quality of tutors might relate to their lack of experience and considered that it was important to use those who knew of research relating to course content, and who could use it successfully.

See Recommendations 4 and 5

5.5 Rewarding good teaching

- 5.5.1 All staff were encouraged to apply for initiative and excellence awards for good teaching available throughout the Faculty. They considered that teaching had become more recognised over the past ten years, but that they were reluctant to ask for nominations from students. Class discussions on the value of teaching take place informally, particularly when evaluations are distributed at the end of semester. Staff also considered that the Faculty should do more to promote teaching excellence awards.
- 5.5.2 Students who were interviewed were unaware of University and Faculty teaching excellence awards. They considered that instances of excellence in teaching were not widespread in the Faculty, and also did not believe that the Faculty knew of these instances. Some postgraduate coursework students chose their subjects by sitting in on lectures beforehand to see who used the best teaching practices.

See Recommendation 6

5.6 Staff development

- 5.6.1 The Review Team was impressed with the high level of staff participation in activities run by the Institute for Teaching and Learning to improve teaching. This has led to positive student outcomes as well as differences in terms of teaching practice. A high proportion of staff are involved in seminars and workshops, for example on the First Year Experience, generic writing skills and fieldwork. Teaching Improvement Fund (TIF) projects within the Faculty are focussing on group learning using enhanced online learning.

See Commendation 4

5.7 Online learning

- 5.7.1 The Teaching and Learning Plan strategies include the provision appropriate information technology infrastructure to support student learning. To this end a three year plan to upgrade IT infrastructure to support teaching and learning is currently being developed, with completion due at the end of 2002. Collaboration with the Faculty of Education in the development of a digital language centre will provide a more coherent structure to language teaching and encourage research in this area.

- 5.7.2 Knowledge of the Arts On-line Teaching and Learning Project within the Faculty appeared to be confined to the developers. The aim of the project is to provide a network within the Faculty which focuses on teaching and learning principles and the use of WebCT. Student and participant evaluations have still to be collated, with results due for publication at the end of 2002
- 5.7.3 Use of online learning within the Faculty is not widespread. Some staff with experience in the use of WebCT acted as mentors for other staff within their Department, providing advice on the effective use of resources. Chairs of Departments considered that student use was dependant on access to computers, both at the University and at home, and that a student survey on the effectiveness of online learning might prove beneficial. Students indicated that they had not been exposed to online learning, except in language units where they considered that it was not used effectively in enhancing their learning experiences.

See Recommendation 7

5.8 Assessment

- 5.8.1 Undergraduate students expressed the view that unit of study assessment requirements were clear in some areas but not others. They voiced some concern regarding the practice of allocating marks for class participation (up to 25% of marks for the unit) when there was minimal class time devoted to interactive discussion (they estimated about 2%). Concern was also expressed by the postgraduate coursework students regarding the equity of such forms of assessment for students whose first language was not English.
- 5.8.2 Some students considered that the range of assessments had been curtailed in recent years due to resources constraints. For example, the assessment requirements for one unit of study had been reduced from two tutorial papers plus a major essay to only the tutorial paper elements, owing, they had been told, to lack of staff resources to mark the essay.
- 5.8.3 Feedback on student work was considered by students to be variable. In general, it was felt that feedback on assessment was inadequate. Some students expressed the view that there was a lack of integration between assessment and the materials taught in class.

5.9 Summary

- 5.9.1 The Review Team acknowledges that the Faculty is currently in a period of transition following its recent restructuring. It welcomes the Faculty's recognition of areas for improvement and planned strategies to foster enthusiasm, innovation and intellectual leadership in teaching and learning (such as invigorating Faculty and School Teaching and Learning Committees, standardising unit of study presentation, aligning objectives to assessment, and the encouragement of staff professional development activities). The strong commitment of staff to maintain the quality of teaching within the Faculty is commended.

6 RESEARCH-LED TEACHING

- 6.1 One priority identified by the Dean and Heads of School for future action is the research teaching nexus, and communicating research strengths both within and outside the Faculty. They considered that despite the increased administrative tasks and academic workload, research output was increasing and becoming better integrated with teaching. There had been good success rates with ARC grants, with staff returning from teaching leave using the results of their research in teaching and learning. Team teaching often resulted in team research which was considered to be beneficial to the Faculty.

- 6.2 Conversely, Chairs of Departments considered that restructuring had a negative affect on the research teaching nexus. They were of the opinion that the dropping of some courses had resulted in holes in research within the Faculty. They maintained that the true impact of the restructuring, staff retirements, and increased staff workload on the Faculty's research activities would not become clear until 2003-2004. One small Department found that it was hard to relate their research to undergraduate classes.
- 6.3 The experience of some undergraduate students was that, in general, lecturers were not using their own research in their teaching. They were of the opinion that this was because lecturers were often teaching outside their own area of expertise. Loss of experts in some areas of the curriculum meant that more generalist classes were being offered. Some students were worried that when the time came for them to undertake their own research in Honours, there would be no one in the Faculty who was researching in their chosen area. Other students had positive experiences regarding the integration of research into teaching. Postgraduate students generally felt that they experienced research-led teaching.

7 RESEARCH SUPERVISION AND TRAINING

7.1 Research training

- 7.1.1 The Team found that some Departments held structured seminars for research students which enhanced their research skills and helped in the building of peer support networks. One discipline includes a year long orientation seminar for new research students which helps in the development of research methodology and includes the use of library and internet resources. Postgraduate research students considered that the research training they received was fairly minimal, and that they were provided with little help in developing research skills or in seeking information relevant to their research. A more structured research training program, with a compulsory one semester long research methodology unit would help to obviate this problem.

See Recommendation 8

7.2 Resources and support

- 7.2.1 The establishment of the Postgraduate Arts Research Centre (PGARC) has been well received by students. It provides research students with a stimulating research environment and access to physical resources such as computers, photocopying, printing and phones. Students appreciated the facilities within the Centre and strongly supported its establishment, the only complaint was the limited amount of desk space. The Faculty is looking to invest more resources in the Centre, and is considering the provision of a similar centre for postgraduate coursework students.

See Commendation 5

7.3 Supervision

- 7.3.1 The Review Team identified problems with student perception of supervision. Whereas some students valued regular meetings with their supervisors, others were of the opinion that meetings should only take place when the student had reached a point in their candidature where advice was needed, or there was something for the supervisor to read. Perhaps the Faculty needs to develop a strategy to resocialise the postgraduate research students to the view that it was in their best interest to have timely contact with their supervisors.
- 7.3.2 Students reported that the reduction in staff expertise within the Faculty had a negative impact on their research. In one case the absence of the primary supervisor overseas had meant that a thesis

was read by other staff with no knowledge of the research topic. In another case a student voiced concern that their supervisor's expertise only partially overlapped with their research topic. Students thought that the value of understanding in their area of research was vital.

- 7.3.3 New staff were required to undertake the Institute for Teaching and Learning postgraduate supervision program, though there was no requirement for more senior staff to complete it. Some senior members of staff expressed the desire to undertake the program. Staff often found that, due to teaching requirements, they were unable to take up places on the course. They thought that the course would be more useful, and fit into their teaching load, if it were compressed into a three day workshop.
- 7.3.4 Students considered that the annual progress report process would be more beneficial if one was able to raise problems, without the supervisor being present. However, the presence of the postgraduate coordinator on the interview panel, if they happened to be your supervisor, made it difficult to identify problems. It was also felt that if problems did not come to light during the interview and in the processing of the report by the office, it would look as though everything was progressing well, with problems only being identified at a later stage in the candidature.

See Recommendation 9

7.4 Research training models

- 7.4.1 Research students in the humanities worked as individuals in their research projects which is in contrast with the preferred University research model of working in teams, as is common in Science research practice. Most students were pleased to work in isolation, and considered that the scientific model was inappropriate for research in areas such as English, Sociology and Anthropology. Alternatively some students considered that the team approach would be an interesting model to follow, especially in the light of workplace requirements for experience in team work.

7.5 Completion rates

- 7.5.1 The improvement in research completion rates was commendable. Completion rates have improved significantly over the past twelve months. The development of a new culture whereby staff and students were being made aware of expectations, where honours students were being incorporated into research programs, and the Faculty was being more selective in its choice of candidates was seen to be the basis for improved completion rates. The Faculty acknowledged that it was in a transition phase between old and new RHD students. There has been some difficulty in communicating the Research Plan to all departments.
- 7.5.2 Postgraduate research students considered that the very nature of research in humanities, particularly in areas that involved fieldwork, hindered completion of projects within the time frame allowed by the University. At the University level consideration need to be given to the fact that humanities research differed from science research and that the same indicators for success could not be applied. Students also indicated that more structured help from the Faculty should be offered to enable them to complete projects on time.
- 7.5.3 The Team commends the Faculty on its strategic use of the MPhil program as a stepping stone to the PhD, particularly for international students. Students who complete their MPhil will have a substantial amount of research completed prior to undertaking a PhD, either at the University of Sydney or one of the Oxbridge universities. It would also aid in improving research completion rates within the Faculty. The Team acknowledges that it may be difficult for international students to obtain funding for completion of a MPhil from their local funding body.

See Commendation 6 and Recommendation 10

8 INTERNATIONAL STUDENTS

- 8.1 The Faculty considers that the increase in the UAI for entry into an Arts degree will address retention and pass rates issues which are currently low within the international student cohort. An Associate Dean for International and Community Relations has recently been appointed, whose job it is to monitor student experiences. Processes are in hand to address identified needs of students, such as English writing skills, and to improve their learning experience. Staff considered that support for the postgraduate coursework international students was easier to organise as they were an identifiable cohort within the Faculty. Some local postgraduate coursework students expressed the view that students from a non-English speaking background did not receive equitable treatment in the classroom.
- 8.2 Departmental staff considered that international students did not receive enough support with their academic and language skills. A special program could be implemented to aid international students in their transition, not only to academic life, but also to life in Sydney. Postgraduate coursework students indicated that advice would be useful on the processes of essay submissions, especially the way in which it differed from practices in overseas universities. Both staff and students were critical of the services provided by the International Office.
- 8.3 Faculty staff considered that the students who attended the University under the Study Abroad Scheme had the advantage of mixing more with the general University population than the international student cohort. They attended specially organised Study Abroad social events, and had courses tailored to the needs of the overseas market. However, staff acknowledged that more support still needed to be provided for this student cohort.

9 STUDENT PROGRESSION

9.1 Student retention rates

- 9.1.1 In order to address the low retention rates of undergraduate students within the Faculty, two major strategies have been undertaken. Firstly, the UAI for students wishing to undertake an Arts degree at the University of Sydney was raised, thereby improving the quality of the student cohort. Secondly a successful transition program was launched in 2000. This was designed to help students understand the keys to success at University, and to provide networking opportunities and build a stronger sense of community. Both strategies have proved successful. Staff considered the raising of the UAI to be a positive move on the part of the Faculty. The Faculty is in the process of appointing a first year coordinator, who will commence in 2003. It is hoped that this position will link the elements in the first year program, and ensure effective strategies to address retention rates are more widely in place.

See Commendation 7

9.2 Academic Advisors

- 9.2.1 The Faculty has appointed academic advisors to provide academic guidance for students on degree planning, and to develop support mechanisms to assist students in completing their degrees. The Review Team found that a lack of communication between the Faculty office and departments had resulted in staff and students being unaware of the existence of academic advisors. Staff considered that more coordination within the Faculty was needed in the area of student advice, particularly where a department is physically spread across the campus.

See Recommendation 11

9.3 Cross-Faculty degrees

- 9.3.1 The Review Team found that better coordination and communication was needed regarding cross-Faculty degrees. Students lacked a sense of identity with either of the faculties, and were unsure of where to go for support and advice. Undergraduate students thought that the home Faculty was the one that was listed first in the degree, but advice on this aspect changed according to the person on the Faculty Office desk at the time the enquiry was being made. Students in the Liberal Arts program did not have a consistent home Faculty, as it was changed on a two yearly basis.

See Recommendation 12

10 QUALITY ASSURANCE PROCESSES

- 10.1 The Review Team found that quality assurance processes across the Faculty were variable. There was a lack of consistency in feedback, unit of study outlines (*See Section 4.2*), clarity of goals in postgraduate coursework (*See Section 4.2.2*), and research supervision (*See Section 7.3*). A number of national benchmarking activities were noted across the Faculty.

10.2 Evaluation and feedback

- 10.2.1 The Faculty is currently improving the feedback process, and has recently designed new student evaluation sheets which directly address aims and outcomes of the units. Chairs of Department indicated that the Academic Board policy on evaluation was being complied with, and monitoring was taking place at both School and Department level. Across the Faculty, evaluation of units of study varied with some units being surveyed every year, and others on an irregular basis. Some staff provided informal feedback to their students during the semester. They considered that this provided the students with a sense of ownership of the program. Some Chairs of Departments were of the opinion that providing students with feedback on their evaluations was resource intensive, though its timely use gave the students realistic expectations.
- 10.2.2 Postgraduate coursework and undergraduate students who attended the interviews, identified problems with the current process of evaluation. All students expressed the view that it would be invaluable to know if changes had been made as a result of their feedback, but were unaware of it happening in any subjects they had studied within the Faculty. They were of the opinion that there were no avenues that they could follow if they encountered problems, and that, even if they existed, they would find it hard to criticise.

See Recommendation 13

10.3 Benchmarking

- 10.3.1 The Dean reported a number of current and planned benchmarking activities which are taking place within some areas of the Faculty. These include benchmarking the Faculty's English provisions with the University of Auckland, History with La Trobe University, and Languages with the University of Melbourne. A priority for the Faculty is the encouragement of benchmarking activities across all the whole Faculty.

11 CONCLUDING COMMENTS

- 11.1 The Review Team considered the results of the interviews, the Self-Evaluation Report and the Teaching and Learning Plan and concluded that staff of the Faculty were strongly committed to

maintaining quality in the face of increased academic and administrative workload. They participated in activities run by the Institute for Teaching and Learning. The restructured Teaching and Learning Committee is more representative and effective. The Postgraduate Research Arts Resource Centre is a positive initiative and is strongly supported by students. The use of the MPhil as a stepping stone to a PhD for students is commended.

11.2 The Review Team recommends that the Faculty give consideration to improving communication mechanisms between the Faculty Office, Schools and Departments, particularly in relation to Academic Board policies, milestones and achievements of the Teaching and Learning Plan, awards for good teaching, the Arts On-line Teaching and learning project, Institute of Teaching and learning on small group teaching, the role of academic advisors, and cross Faculty degrees. In the area of research supervision and training, the Faculty should consider the introduction of a research methodology course, and look at ensuring that research students had timely contact with their supervisors. The student experience of teaching and learning needs to be enhanced with quality assurance processes in relation to feedback, unit of study outline and clarity of goals needing attention.

11.3 These findings were communicated to the Dean of the Faculty of Arts at the end of the visit and through the *Brief report of the findings of the Review Team* which was sent to the Faculty on 4 September 2002.

12 AREAS OF GOOD PRACTICE (COMMENDATIONS)

The following areas of good practice in teaching and learning and research training have been identified within the Faculty of Arts based on the Self-Evaluation Report, the Teaching and Learning Plan and the findings of the Review visit.

Commendation 1

The Review Team found that the restructured Teaching and Learning Committee was more representative and effective, and commends the Faculty for this achievement. *(See Section 5.1)*

Commendation 2

The Review Team commends the Faculty on the strong commitment of its staff to maintaining quality teaching in the face of increased academic and administrative workload, increased student numbers, concomitant with reduced resources. *(See Section 5.3)*

Commendation 3

The Review Team commends the Faculty on the development of a peer support network for students. *(See Section 5.3)*

Commendation 4

The Review Team commends the Faculty on the high level of participation by staff in participation in activities run by the Institute for Teaching and Learning and in Faculty run seminars and workshops aimed at improving the quality of teaching and learning. *(See Section 5.6)*

Commendation 5

The Review Team commends the Faculty on the establishment of the Postgraduate Arts Resource Centre and the resources which it offered to support postgraduate research students. *(See Section 7.2)*

Commendation 6

The Review Team commends the Faculty on the use of the MPhil as a stepping stone to a PhD, especially for international students. The Team observes that the MPhil has no currency in some countries. *(See Section 7.5)*

Commendation 7

The Review Team commends the Faculty on the effectiveness of the first year transition program, as testified by the improvement in retention rates. The increase in the UAI score has led to improvements in the quality of students. *(See Section 9.1)*

14 AREAS OF CONSIDERATION FOR IMPROVEMENT (RECOMMENDATIONS)

A number of areas of consideration for improvement have been identified by the Review Team. In the light of this the following recommendations are made to the Faculty.

Recommendation 1

The Faculty needs to consider improving the dissemination of Academic Board policies between the Faculty office, Schools and Departments. *(See Section 3)*

Recommendation 2

The Faculty needs to develop strategies to ensure that they comply with the Academic Board policy on the use of parallel teaching of postgraduate and undergraduate students. *(See Section 3.3)*

Recommendation 3

Strategies for communicating the milestones and achievements within the Teaching and Learning Plan to staff and students need to be established. *(See Section 5.2)*

Recommendation 4

Variation in the provision of teaching, particularly in tutorials, across departments needs to be considered, in order to enhance the student experience. *(See Section 5.4)*

Recommendation 5

In order to improve large group discussion all staff should be made aware of the programs offered through the Institute for Teaching and Learning. *(See Section 5.4)*

Recommendation 6

Ways of improving communication to students regarding University and Faculty awards for good teaching should be considered. Staff should be encouraged to nominate themselves for these awards. *(See Section 5.4)*

Recommendation 7

Improved ways of communicating information about the Arts On-Line Teaching and learning project throughout the Faculty should be a priority. *(See Section 5.7).*

Recommendation 8

The Faculty may consider the introduction of a compulsory research methodology course to induct new graduate students within the Faculty, and to give them milestones in terms of their candidature. *(See Section 7.1).*

Recommendation 9

Students should be encouraged to have regular and timely contact with their supervisors. *(See Section 7.3)*

Recommendation 10

While significant work has taken place further investigation regarding ways in which its research completion rates can be improved is suggested. *(See Section 7.5)*

Recommendation 11

The role and presence of academic advisors needs to be more effectively communicated to staff and students. *(See Section 9.2)*

Recommendation 12

Better coordination and communication regarding how cross Faculty degrees can be implemented is required. *(See Section 9.3)*

Recommendation 13

The Faculty is encouraged to consider ways of ensuring consistency in its quality assurance processes, particularly in relation to feedback, unit of study outlines, clarity of goals in postgraduate coursework units, and research supervision. *(See Section 10.2)*

Prof Judyth Sachs
Chair, Review Team
Chair, Academic Board

9 December 2002

**FACULTY OF THE ARTS
ACADEMIC BOARD REVIEW VISIT****MONDAY 19 AUGUST 2002****BRIEF REPORT OF THE FINDINGS OF THE REVIEW TEAM****1 Introduction**

- 1.1 The Academic Board Review Team, chaired by Prof. Judyth Sachs, Chair of the Academic Board, visited the Faculty of Arts on Monday 19 August 2002 to review and evaluate academic planning and quality assurance systems within the Faculty.
- 1.2 Meetings were conducted with the following groups:
 - The Dean, Prof. Stephen Garton;
 - The Dean, senior Faculty staff, Heads of Schools;
 - Chairs of Departments;
 - Undergraduate students;
 - Postgraduate coursework students;
 - Postgraduate research students;
 - Faculty academic and general staff.

2. General comments

The Faculty is in a transitional phase with a new Dean and a new Faculty structure. The complex and diverse nature of the Faculty leads to both strengths and weaknesses. A major challenge for the Dean and his administration is to harness the energy and support of all staff in rebuilding the Faculty of Arts. Evidence of strategies and initiatives to achieve this was apparent.

3. Areas of good practice

- 3.1 Strong commitment of staff to quality teaching. This is an added challenge because of an increase in staff (academic and administrative) workload, numbers and reduced resources.
- 3.2 Participation in activities run by the Institute for Teaching and Learning to improve teaching.
- 3.3 Postgraduate peer support network.
- 3.4 Restructured Teaching and Learning Committee to be more representative and effective.
- 3.5 Resources offered through PGARC to support students.
- 3.6 Improved retention rates through transition program. Increase in UAI score .
- 3.7 Use of MPhil as stepping stone to PhD, especially for international students.

4. Areas of consideration for improvement

- 4.1 Communication of milestones and achievements of the Faculty and the Teaching and Learning Plan to staff and students
- 4.2 Communication of Academic Board policies between Faculty Office, Schools and Departments.
- 4.3 The role of Academic advisors needs to be communicated to staff and students.
- 4.4 Awareness of Faculty and University teaching excellence awards and for staff to nominate themselves for these.
- 4.5 Variation in provision of teaching particularly in tutorials across departments. Need to manage perception relating to quality of teaching.
- 4.6 Postgraduate seminars too didactic. Students would prefer more critical analysis forum. Staff could be made aware of programs offered through the ITL on ways of facilitating large group discussions.
- 4.7 Quality assurance processes variable. There is a lack of consistency in feedback, outlines, clarity of goals, supervision, particularly in postgraduate coursework.
- 4.8 Support for international students.
- 4.9 Coordination and communication about cross-faculty degrees to students.
- 4.10 Communication about Arts Online.
- 4.11 Research supervision methods and completion time.
- 4.12 Introduction of compulsory research methodology course to induct new graduate students and give them milestones in terms of their candidature.
- 4.13 Postgraduate research completion rates.
- 4.14 Mix of undergraduate and postgraduate students in coursework classes.

Judyth Sachs
Chair, Review Team
Chair, Academic Board

4 September 2002

**Faculty of Arts
Self-evaluation Report of Quality Assurance Systems 2001**

The Faculty of Arts is the largest humanities Faculty in Australia, with about 7083 students (consisting of almost 6140 undergraduates and 933 postgraduates). The Faculty offers 16 undergraduate degree programs:

- The Bachelor of Arts (three year pass degree, four years Honours Degree);
- 9 combined degrees: Arts/Social Work; Arts/Science; Arts/Engineering; Arts/Law; Arts/Commerce; Arts/Theology; Arts/Music; Arts/Nursing; Arts/ Education
- 5 four year degrees: the Bachelor of Liberal Studies (offered jointly with the Faculty of Science); the Bachelor of Arts (Languages); the Bachelor of Arts (Media and Communications); the Bachelor of Arts Informatics and the Bachelor of Social Sciences.

In addition, the Faculty offers four undergraduate Diplomas, and a number of modularized postgraduate coursework awards, including Graduate Certificate, Graduate Diploma, Master of Arts and Master of Letters. In line with the Strategic Plans of the University and the College of Humanities and Social Sciences, the Faculty's first Major Strategic Goal is to 'maintain and enhance its position as an outstanding provider of high quality undergraduate and postgraduate teaching, both in Australia and internationally'. The Faculty's Teaching and Learning Operational Plan 2000-2001 (Appendix A), sets out a strategies and targets developed from an analysis of our strengths and weaknesses, and informed by data from the GCCA CEQ and from the Student Course Evaluation Questionnaire conducted by the University in 1999.

No. of Schools/Departments etc: 4 schools, 23 departments, 6 programs, 1 centre

No of Students: 6140 UG degree, 115 UG non-degree, 115 UG diploma, 933 PG (research and coursework)

Load (EFTSU): 4972 (2001 figures but S2 estimate only)

No of academic staff: 205 FTE

No of PG Coursework Degree Programs/ Grad Certificates: 11 (in more than 40 subject areas)

No of units: 1551 (UG and PG coursework)

(1) How does the Faculty ensure that each course and unit has an appropriate set of aims and outcomes, clearly communicated to and understood by students, and including generic as well as disciplinary skills?

The Faculty of Arts strongly encourages staff to set clear learning goals and standards for each UoS. In June 2001, the Faculty Teaching and Learning Committee, in collaboration with the ITL, organized a seminar and workshop for academic staff on the topic of 'Setting clear goals and getting students to understand them.'. The Teaching and Learning Committee also works closely with the UG Matters Committee and PG Matters committee. These committees monitor proposals for new units/course; the guidelines for proposals require staff to articulate clearly, and demonstrate alignment between, aims, and learning outcomes.

(1a) Systems for informing students about expectations and ensuring that students understand them:

- The Faculty UG and PG handbooks are available in hard copy and on-line and provide detailed information about all degree programs and units.
- Departmental handbooks are widely available, offering more discipline specific information on aims and learning outcomes, advice on preparation of assignments, assessment criteria and the standard of work expected, some of these handbooks are available on line.
- Departments issue UoS outlines at the beginning of each semester, which include a clear statement of aims, desired learning outcomes, and expectations. The Teaching and Learning Committee is developing a web based template for these outlines for use in 2002.
- Informal discussions in class play a major role in keeping students informed about expectations and

ensuring they are understood. Most staff provide ongoing feedback to students all through the semester and discuss outcomes and criteria explicitly for each assignment. On-line discussions are playing an increasingly important part in this process.

- Departments monitor student perceptions regarding the clarity of aims and learning outcomes through evaluations conducted by UoS coordinators, as well as through formal staff-student liaison committees. At Faculty level, the Teaching and Learning Committee reviews performance on the relevant CEQ and SCEQ scales in consultation with ITL staff.

(lb) Ways in which relations between generic and disciplinary skills in the curriculum are monitored:

Drawing on recent CEQ/SCEQ data, this area has been made a priority in the Faculty's Teaching and Learning Plan (Appendix A, Strategy 3/3). Generic skills particularly relevant to Arts students are clearly spelled out in the UG Handbook (Appendix C; p.49). These skills are also being addressed more explicitly in Departmental Handbooks and UoS outlines (eg. *The English Jool Resource Book*, Appendix F, pp.14-i 5).

- The Undergraduate and Postgraduate Matters Committees monitor relations between generic and disciplinary skills when a new Course or UoS is proposed.
- Heads of Schools are responsible for promoting ways of incorporating into all units appropriate learning activities that will foster the University's Generic Attributes of Graduates (Teaching and Learning Plan, Appendix A, Strategy 3/3).
- Departments monitor relations between generic and disciplinary skills through peer and curriculum review. There is scope for promoting a more systematic approach to these tasks across the Faculty. The peer review process in the department of Art History and Theory, and the curriculum review process of the Bachelor of Social Work degree offer models (see (1 d)).

(ic) Methods for ensuring that courses and units enable students to achieve learning outcomes:

- The effectiveness of the alignment between learning objectives, assessment requirements and learning outcomes is monitored:
 - at Faculty level by analysis of CEQ/SCEQ data.
 - at departmental level by:
 - o formal evaluation of units at the end of semester;
 - o informal discussions in class and both formal and informal feedback before the end of semester, so that timely response can be made;
 - o the common practice of staff teaching units at both junior and senior levels. Observations of students progress in senior units gives us a clear understanding of whether students have achieved intended learning outcomes in junior units.
- The Faculty strongly encourages departments to use assessment strategies coherent with intended learning outcomes, and to give students prompt and effective feedback on their work (Sections (3a) and (3c)).
- Students can consult with staff during clearly advertised, student-friendly times. UoS coordinators report increasing use of email and on-line discussion groups for regular communication about learning strategies and outcomes, assessment, and students' progress. In smaller departments, essays are returned individually, allowing discussion of any problems in achieving intended learning outcomes.

(id) Methods for providing coherence between units and courses:

The Faculty's size and the breadth of offerings, as well as the flexibility of degree structures, make this a challenging issue. We have introduced a number of specific degrees (BA Asian Studies, BA Languages, Informatics, Social Sciences, Media and Communications and Liberal Studies) to provide structured pathways for students and to give their programs greater coherence and connection. The following mechanisms provide a basis for further development

As noted in (lb), the Faculty strongly promotes the development of generic skills, especially the generic

skills identified in the Arts Faculty Handbook as particularly relevant to Arts Graduates.

- For new units, coherence with overall Course aims and outcomes is again subject to monitoring by the UG Matters and PG Matters committees.
- Departments are responsible for monitoring coherence within their discipline.
 - Coherent links between junior and senior-level units are recognized in the setting of pre-requisites, co-requisites etc.
 - Departments have opportunities to evaluate coherence in regular departmental meetings, examiners meetings at the end of semester; and curriculum reviews. (e.g. As part of the curriculum review of the 3rd and 4th year units in the Bachelor of Social Work, coordinators developed a grid representing learning objectives, assessment, theory, and research objectives. This was to ensure parity across optional units and developmental sequencing).

(2) How DOES THE FACULTY ENSURE INTEGRATION OF RESEARCH, INCLUDING BOTH DISCIPLINARY RESEARCH AND EVIDENCE ABOUT EFFECTIVE LEARNING AND TEACHING, INTO ITS UNDERGRADUATE AND POSTGRADUATE COURSES?

In the Faculty of Arts we are committed to our strong tradition of the integration of research and teaching, to the benefit of both. However, we acknowledge that there are significant challenges to be addressed if we are to successfully fulfil this commitment. Student load in the Faculty has increased greatly in recent years (by 26% in the period 1996-2000) whereas academic and general staff numbers have dropped sharply as a result of Voluntary Early Retirements, non-replacement of these staff and non-renewal of contract positions during the last two years. Consequently:

- *staff are often teaching outside their areas of research strength;*
- *departments are showing a skewed research profile;*
- *the teaching commitments and administrative workloads of academic staff have risen;*
- *in order to have time to produce research, staff must use research grants to "buy" their way out of teaching, rather than striving for a greater symbiosis of these activities.*

2(a) How links between disciplinary' research, the expertise of staff and the curriculum are managed:

Because of the diversity of the disciplines in the Faculty, both in research methods and curriculum structures, the Faculty offers guidelines and encouragement while devolving much of the management of these links to school and department levels.

At Faculty level, processes include:

- Consultation between the Dean, Heads of Schools and Chairs of departments to determine staffing policy and priorities in terms of developing the overall teaching/research profile;
- Careful monitoring of processes for recruitment of new staff: both those for articulation of appointment criteria and for selection;
- A Faculty policy of introducing new units to replace units which no longer reflect research interests of staff and current disciplinary research;
- Provision of funding support for staff presenting papers at national and international conferences.

At school and departmental level, processes include sharing of research expertise through:

- Team research projects;
- Regular departmental seminars to share research expertise. In addition, some departments (eg. Japanese and Korean Studies) hold an annual Research Retreat, allowing more in-depth presentation of research and sharing of ideas for its integration into curriculum.
- Team teaching, both within departments and across departments, ensuring that curriculum reflects research expertise of *all* contributing staff, as well encouraging joint papers, workshops etc. (This is particularly relevant to units that introduce students to the discipline as a whole. E.g. foundational units in Asian Studies are taught by staff from the Departments of History, Japanese and Korean Studies, and Southeast Asian Studies.);

- Encouragement of UG, honours and PG students to participate in research fora and present their own research, through:
 - Journals showcasing student work (e.g. *Past Imperfect*, the History Department student journal, *EDUBBA: Studies in Ancient History*, *Sydney Studies in Religion*);
 - PG Colloquia and PG participation in department Research Seminars;
 - Support for PG student conferences, both disciplinary and interdisciplinary;
 - Use of PG students engaged in current research as tutors (although funding for this is very scarce);
 - Encouragement of guest lectures from scholars engaged in current research, including postgraduates (again, funding is extremely tight).

2(b) How links between theory' and practice of university teaching and learning and curriculum are managed:

- Innovative pedagogical practices are supported through the Teaching Initiative Funding Projects and the Faculty's own Teaching Initiative Awards (see Q. 4).
- The Faculty's Teaching and Learning Committee, Chairs of departments and departmental Teaching Coordinators encourage staff to attend ITL programs. (Faculty staff also participate as presenters in some ITL programs).
- Staff can apply for funding to present papers at conferences dealing with the scholarship of teaching and learning.
- Many staff are involved in Higher School Certificate examination and syllabus committees and in-service training for high school teachers. The wide range of links between Arts disciplines and the secondary education system ensures continuing dialogue about secondary and tertiary teaching and learning issues. This is especially relevant to the "First Year Experience" of University students.

(3) HOW DOES THE FACULTY ENSURE THAT STUDENT ASSESSMENT IS EFFECTIVE AND CONTRIBUTES TO LEARNING, AND THAT THE ASSESSMENT PROCESS IS WELL UNDERSTOOD BY STUDENTS?

Many decisions related to assessment are the responsibility of individual departments and UoS Coordinators. Faculty provides a strong framework within which such decisions are taken. This framework includes:

- *The role of the UG Matters and PG Matters committees in monitoring the development of new units/courses.*
- *Liaison with ITL staff with respect to unit Course evaluation and staff development activities in the area of assessment practices.*
- *Faculty Teaching and Learning Committee seminars for academic staff to promote discussion and exchange of ideas on the topic of assessment. (For example, at a seminar on Criterion-based assessment and its interrelationship with the normative model of grade distribution, representatives from six departments contributed discussion papers⁴.)*

(3a) Methods for ensuring that assessments enable students to achieve intended learning outcomes:

New UoS proposals must demonstrate alignment between unit/course aims, assessment methods and intended learning outcomes.

- The Faculty's Teaching and Learning Committee encourages the move towards criterion-based assessment, canvassed in the most recent Academic Board policy on this issue. Samples of 'best practice' handouts clearly explaining departmental policies regarding assessment, and assessment criteria for specific units, are available to all staff through the Faculty Teaching and Learning Committee web site⁵.
- The practice of setting explicit criteria for each assignment encourages students to better understand the learning outcomes of the task and assists them in working towards achieving them.
- A variety of modes of assessment are used within each unit/course (eg. individual essays, group assignments, oral presentations). As well as catering for different learning styles, this variety facilitates the acquisition of a broad range of generic skills.
- UoS evaluations, as well as analysis of CEQ/SCEQ data, assist staff in determining the effectiveness of these formal and informal strategies.

(3b) Methods for ensuring that assessment practices and standards are fair and equitable:

- Using standard grade descriptors and clearly articulating assessment criteria contribute significantly to maintaining fair and equitable assessment practices.
- Procedures for students who are seeking a remark or who have some other grievance are clearly advertised in the Faculty UG Handbook (Appendix C, p.50) and in departmental handbooks.
- Honours theses and PG coursework dissertations are assessed by a team of markers. Many departments double-mark all assignments submitted by fourth year students, and this practice is also widely used for oral performance tests in language units.

(3c) Methods for ensuring that assessments provide students with prompt and effective feedback:

- Early formative assessment and/or continuous forms of assessment are standard practice in the Faculty. These processes not only allow the use of incremental progression in complexity of assessment tasks but also provide all students with early feedback. While the Faculty strongly encourages these strategies for helping students to achieve learning outcomes, it must be added that many departments have great difficulty in maintaining them in the current climate of increasing class sizes and diminishing resources.
- In many units, staff set aside a lecture slot for discussion of essay writing and other major assessment tasks. Most tutorials are structured to allow for discussion of questions/topics before assessment is due and again after it is returned.
- Explicit criterion-referencing enables students to better assess their own strengths and weaknesses.

(3d) How information from assessments is used to improve teaching and learning:

- The widespread practice of formative assessment not only assists students to understand criteria and allows early feedback, but also provides diagnostic assessment and assists staff in identifying areas of the curriculum that need further attention.
- Student perceptions regarding the effectiveness of assessment tasks are studied through UoS evaluations and the relevant CEQISCEQ scales. Teaching and Learning Committee seminars provide a forum for developing a Faculty-wide response to these data. (See also the guidelines for Faculty Teaching Awards, Appendix G, which acknowledge the efforts of staff responding to student feedback on these issues⁶.)

(3e) Methods for ensuring that students understand the assessment processes:

- The requirement that unit/course aims be clearly aligned with assessment and intended learning outcomes helps students understand the purpose of each assessment task.
- General information regarding assessment procedures is available through the Faculty Handbook, Departmental Handbooks and web sites. Many departments also provide style guides to help students understand the requirements of the discipline
More detailed information about specific assessment tasks and the criteria used to mark them is given through the UoS materials which are handed out and discussed in class⁸. Model answers (or examples of inadequate responses) are often provided (Appendix H: *Japanese Communication Introductory*], *Model Exam and Answers*).
- Many schools and departments use assessment cover sheets on which staff note the breakdown of marks against the clearly-defined criteria for the task (Appendix I: *SPGHA WS Cover Sheet*).
- The set of common grade descriptors now used in some departments (eg. History, Italian, English) provides students not only with a general guideline for interpreting their results but also with a clearer sense of the value-system at work in each department *I* discipline⁹.
- Again, student perceptions regarding the effectiveness of these formal and informal strategies are considered in UoS evaluations and via CEQ/SCEQ data.

(4) How DOES THE FACULTY ENSURE THE QUALITY OF ITS TEACHING AND RECOGNISE GOOD TEACHING?

(4a) Methods for monitoring the breadth, depth, pace, variety and challenge in teaching:

The Faculty has more than 40 programs and offers more than fifteen hundred units.

Degree program level:

- The Undergraduate and Postgraduate Matters Committees review the breadth and depth of degree programs through the approval process of new units and through major curriculum revision of existing units.
- The breadth of offerings and challenge in teaching is monitored when departments are reviewed.
- A large number of degree programs are interdisciplinary and draw on the breadth of curricula and teaching strategies across subject areas.
- In collaboration with the ITL, focus groups and individual interviews have been used, to investigate students' learning experience in the new four-year degree programs (Appendix J: *Reports on Focus Group Interviews*).

The Industry Advisory Committee monitors the breadth, depth, variety and challenge in teaching in the Arts Media and Communications Program. There is also an advisory committee for the BA Informatics (the BAI Task force), which seeks to link the degree to industry and provide links for students to employers.

Department / UoS level:

- Departments monitor the scope of the curriculum and range of teaching strategies. Results from the SCEQ and departmental UoS evaluations are used to monitor the scope of the curriculum and range of teaching strategies. Informal feedback through Staff-Student Liaison committees and student representatives.
- Some departments practice team-teaching and peer review, involving discussion and feedback after attending a colleagues' classes or reviewing teaching materials.

(4b) How selection of teaching strategies in relation to student learning outcomes is monitored:

Departments are responsible for selecting appropriate teaching strategies. However, the Teaching and Learning Committee actively encourages debate about teaching strategies through seminars and regular Teaching and Learning Get-Togethers, where specific teaching approaches are show-cased and discussed.

A wide variety of teaching strategies is employed across the more than 40 subject areas taught in the Faculty, in more than 1500 units. Teaching strategies range from issue-based learning (in Sociology) to communicative language teaching (in language departments).

- Some departments review teaching strategies at regular curriculum development days (eg Japanese and Korean Studies annual Teaching Retreat).
- In some more professionally oriented subjects, such as Media and Communications, Social Work, and Arts Informatics, teaching strategies are monitored externally (by the Industry Advisory Committee, the Australian Association of Social Workers, and the Arts Informatics Task Force, respectively).
- All departments monitor the value of teaching strategies in relation to student outcomes through UoS Evaluation and other feedback processes.

(4c) Methods to enhance quality of teaching, including staff development, mentoring and peer review:

- Faculty Teaching Awards (at least one is awarded to an early career teacher):
 - Initiative awards (\$2,000): given to innovative teaching projects. From 2001, one member of the Teaching and Learning committee will be assigned to each Teaching Initiative project to assist in development, implementation and evaluation, and report on progress to the committee. One of the responsibilities of award recipients is to give Faculty presentations about their project and to mentor peers in their School on completion of the project.
 - Excellence awards: new methods of application, based on a peer review process, have been introduced. Applicants can elect to invite the Teaching Excellence Award panel to a lecture, tutorial or other teaching activity, or to give an oral presentation.
- Faculty Teaching and Learning Seminars (once a semester) and Get-Togethers (fortnightly).
- Faculty-wide teaching and learning development projects, such as Arts Online, a TIF-funded project which involves 13 participants (at least three per School) and is based on team development and mentoring principles. Participants have received teaching release for taking part in the project.

Collaboration with the ITL and the Major Projects Group (WebCT).

- Financial support to staff giving papers at conferences.
- Strong encouragement to attend ITL programs.

In the Teaching and Learning Plan, Heads of Schools are given a major role in the enhancement of quality in teaching and staff development (Strategies 3/2, 3/2, 4/1). Going to the restructuring process however, Heads have not been in a position to fully implement these strategies.

(4d) How the faculty supports, recognises and rewards good teaching:

As mentioned above:

Teaching Excellence and Initiative Awards for individual staff members and teaching teams.

- Teaching release (eg. the Arts Online Project).
- Outstanding teaching is a major component of promotion and the Faculty ensures that all academic staff are aware that evidence of good teaching practice is a required component of applications for promotion (strategy 4/2 of the Teaching and Learning an).
- Faculty / School / departmental presentations in seminars and workshops.

(5) What arrangements does the faculty have in place to monitor and support student progression?

- *As proposed in the Teaching and Learning Plan (Appendix A: Strategy 1/5), Directors have been appointed in all four-year programs as well as in the BA. They are responsible for providing academic guidance on degree planning, and for developing support mechanisms to assist students to complete their degrees.*
- *A pilot Transition Workshop was run for incoming BA students in 2001. This Workshop was designed to help participants understand some of the key factors in success at university, and to provide opportunities for them to develop support networks. A Transition Workshop will be run again in 2002, and a pilot mentoring program will be established.*

(5a) Arrangements for identifying students at risk and intervention processes:

- **Course** Directors are responsible for developing support mechanisms to assist students to complete their degree. Students experiencing difficulties are encouraged to consult with the Director.
- The Faculty Manager conducts individual interviews with all students who are required to 'show cause', as well as many others whose academic record suggests they are experiencing problems. These interviews often provide an opportunity to refer students to the appropriate division of Student Services. Some students are required to attend a further interview to review their progress.
- The Faculty enrolls a high proportion of the students in the Elite Sports Program. The Faculty Manager arranges a seminar for these students at the beginning of the year, interviews them individually at least twice a year, and maintains liaison with their coaches.
- The Faculty encourages early assessment and feedback in all units (see (3c) above), particularly in junior units. The importance of this strategy for identifying students at risk of failure and recommending remedial assistance was discussed at the Faculty Teaching and Learning Seminar on Retention Rates, Completion Rates and Good Pedagogy¹⁰. This strategy was dealt with again at the Seminar on the First Year Experience
- Most departments have in place a system of coordinators for various student cohorts (eg. first-year, senior, honours and PG cohorts). These coordinators are in a position to identify students at risk of failure, and to suggest intervention strategies.
- Some units, such as Special Entry units or those involving professional placement or fieldwork, present students with challenges they may not encounter elsewhere in their course. The following are examples of the kind of processes used to support all students in such units and to identify and help students at risk:
 - Students in the Honours stream at 2nd year level in some History have individual 'mentoring' by staff.
 - Students on professional placement in the department of Social Work, Social Policy and Sociology are organised into peer support and accountability groups. There is continuous liaison between

supervisors at their placement location and their departmental placement teacher.

- At department Examiners¹ Meetings, staff have the opportunity of noting and discussing students at risk of failure, as well as with those who have inexplicable or incomplete results. Departments reported the following strategies to assist these students:
 - Staff contact students personally to clarify problems and give advice.
 - Staff recommend that the student enrol in an alternative UoS in the next semester (e.g. language units taught at a less advanced level).
- An increasing range of units offered through the Summer School provides a means for students who fail or withdraw from a unit to rectify the situation without slowing their progress.

(5b) The use of learning resources and academic support to assist student learning outcomes:

- A number of departments in the Faculty have received assistance from the Learning Centre in developing programs to identify students at risk and support learning outcomes. For example, the department of Linguistics offered a new UoS (Structure of English) in Semester 1, 2001. This unit has been designed with help from the Learning Centre to enhance written communication skills, and is particularly suitable for students who are at risk of non-completion or failure because of poor English.
- The Language Centre supports the teaching and research of 34 languages taught through the Faculty as well as providing resources for self-teaching, including a large collection for students learning English as a second language¹². Students may use the computer, video, satellite TV, and audio rooms for self-study. These facilities are available free for all students in the Faculty.
 - The facilities offered by the ARTS IT Unit include three computer laboratories, with one for UG and one for PG self-study access. These provide students with the same facilities as Computer Access Centres elsewhere on the Campus and, in addition, access to specialized software, such as Asian Language Fonts etc.
 - Staff in the Faculty are using on-line resources for teaching and learning more and more. These allow students more flexible access to essential materials (e.g. an image database of more than 6000 images in Art Theory and History). They also allow UoS coordinators organize peer learning groups and on-line discussion of difficulties or learning strategies; increasingly students also use email to raise questions and exchange information.

(6) How does the faculty ensure the quality of research supervision and training?

The Faculty Postgraduate Matters Committee oversees all aspects of postgraduate quality assurance.

(6a) Arrangements for ensuring high standards of supervision:

- All supervisors are encouraged through Chairs of Departments to undertake the Postgraduate Supervision Development Program offered by the ITL.
- All departmental postgraduate coordinators are encouraged to attend University Postgraduate Coordinators Workshops.
- The Postgraduate Matters Committee endorses the University's guidelines on supervision, outlined in the *Postgraduate Studies Handbook*.
- The annual review process for all PG research students (see (b) below) gives students the opportunity to raise any concerns about their supervision.
- **(6b) Mechanisms in place for ensuring effective completion and retention:**
- All PG students must deliver a substantial amount of written work at designated milestones in order to continue through their degree. Unless these are provided, students are requested to 'show cause'.
- All PG research students have an annual review within their department. A report is forwarded to the Associate Dean for PG Matters. Any action required is indicated in the report and enacted through the Associate Dean.
 - In some departments, this annual review is a formal process involving a progress report and an interview. (See Appendix K for an example of the guidelines for this process in Japanese and Korean

Studies.)

- Some departments run structured seminars for research students to enhance their skills and build peer group networks. Philosophy has a course that is assessed; History has a full year orientation seminar for new research students to discuss research methods (library and internet resources etc), broader theories in the discipline and their own research work.

(6c) How the research climate and provision of resources to support research are monitored:

- **The Postgraduate Arts Research Centre (PGARC) provides physical resources and a stimulating research environment for research students in the Faculty.** A Director monitors this facility and is available to postgraduate students for consultation. PGARC has a management committee that includes student representation, and student representative acts as president of the PGARC Activities Group.
 - Physical Resources: computer access points, printing, photocopying, internal telephones, lockers.
 - Research Environment:
 - o PGARC works with the Research Institute for Humanities and Social Sciences (RIHSS) to enhance research opportunities for postgraduates. As well as providing research students with opportunities to meet international scholars, RIHSS co-sponsors research seminars with PGARC. The management committee of PGARC runs occasional one-day thematic workshops. Groups of PGARC researchers are encouraged to propose themes and to participate actively in planning.
- Financial support for Research Students is available through a number of schemes:
 - The PhD Students¹ Research Support Scheme is available for students undertaking primary research that cannot be completed without significant travel outside Sydney.
 - The Postgraduate Research Students' Conference Grant Scheme is available for research students giving a paper or formal presentation at a Conference, to cover expenses including travel, registration, and accommodation.
- A Postgraduate Coordinator is appointed in every department in the Faculty. Some Schools have also appointed Postgraduate Coordinators, responsible for postgraduate matters relevant across the School.
 - In the School of European, Asian, and Middle Eastern Languages and Studies, for instance, strategies for support at the School level have so far included: an email newsletter with information on financial support, conferences, etc.; a Research Student social get-together; a number of Students' Colloquia.

(6d) The use of student / graduate views to improve the experiences of research higher degree students:

- PG students are standing members of the Faculty PG Matters Committee, Research Committee, etc. In this way, they have direct input into policy development and implementation. Many departmental committees also have postgraduate representatives.
- The SUPRA report last year on Postgraduate Coursework produced greater consultation between the Arts Faculty and PG students on their needs.
- CHASS has produced an electronic survey for prospective PG students to find out more about their interests and capacities. A database profiling PG students was also commenced last year.

(7) WHAT ARE THE FACULTY'S ARRANGEMENTS FOR EVALUATION AND QUALITY IMPROVEMENT, INCLUDING THE USE OF STUDENT AND GRADUATE FEEDBACK AND OTHER PERFORMANCE INDICATOR DATA TO MONITOR AND ENHANCE PERFORMANCE? HOW DOES IT RECOGNISE GOOD TEACHING?

The Faculty recognises good teaching through Faculty Excellence and Initiative awards, staff promotion processes and the invitation to showcase good teaching practices in Faculty, School and departmental teaching and learning workshops and seminars, as outlined under question 4.

The Faculty '5 Teaching and Learning Plan (Appendix A, Strategy 3/1) provides for benchmarking exercises in each School to evaluate the quality of teaching and learning, curriculum development and assessment practices against appropriate national and international University programs. The burdens

of restructuring have delayed the implementation of these benchmarking exercises.

(7a) Mechanisms for collecting and acting on the results of feedback on teaching, units and courses:

- Systematic and regular student evaluation surveys of units, with modification of courses and teaching as a result, as mentioned above.
- Many departments have a system by which reports are given to students on actions (or lack of action) resulting from UoS evaluation. These reports are given in class and/or through Staff-Student Liaison Committees and Student Representatives.
- In 1999, the Faculty funded a program to analyse students' comments in the last two open questions of the SCEQ. Comments were code and entered into a database, compiled by major. Areas for improvement were identified and Chairs of departments were asked to define actions to address these areas. This analysis did not take place in 2000 because of the restructuring process but has been resumed in 2001 with the analysis of 2000 SCEQ qualitative data.
- The Faculty Teaching and Learning committee organises staff development programs to address problems identified in SCEQ. For instance, in response to students' perception that UoS goals and expectations were not articulated clearly enough, the committee organised a seminar and workshop on this topic. The development of the on-line UoS outline template is also a Faculty response to this perception.

Student focus groups in the four-year degree programs were established in 2000, in collaboration with the ITL. Reports have been published and issues are being addressed, e.g. group projects and social activities to address the difficulty of student identification with a specific cohort of students.

- Liaison with the ITL to collect and analyse the UoS Evaluation Questionnaires used in individual units.
- Pilot survey instrument developed with students enrolled in English 1001 (a cohort of 850 students) to identify the factors that influence non-continuation within the University. The results of this pilot will be used to inform the expanded First Year Transition program (Teaching and Learning Plan: Appendix A, Strategy 1/3).
- Involvement of PG & UG representatives in many departmental meetings, with a definite and early spot on the agenda so that concerns may be raised.

(7b) Arrangements for applying University performance indicator data to improving quality:

Apart from the actions mentioned above following the analysis of student surveys and focus groups, specific arrangements have been articulated in the Faculty Teaching and Learning Plan (Appendix).

- The Plan requires Heads of School to 'promote ways of incorporating into all units appropriate learning activities that will foster the University's Generic Attributes of Graduates, and to report to the Dean annually on implementation'; the Plan aims to measure the achievement of this objective by improving the Faculty mean on the SCEQ Generic Skills Scale to at least the national average for comparable faculties by the end of 2001 (strategy 3/3).

In the Plan, Heads of Schools are required to "to work with their constituent departments in devising appropriate strategies for enhancing teaching excellence and monitoring progress on an annual basis, and report to the Dean on their processes and progress by the end of Semester 2 2001". The improvement of good teaching practice will be measured by setting a target for increasing the Faculty mean on the SCEQ Good Teaching Scale from +14 to +20 by the end of 2001 (strategy 4/1).

The process of restructuring in the past eighteen months has hampered the implementation of these strategies. Clarification of the respective roles and responsibilities of Schools and Departments is currently under way, and formal policies will be drafted regarding processes for reviewing student survey results.

(7c) Consistency between University requirements and faculty QA and improvement mechanisms:

Faculty QA and improvement mechanisms are implemented by the Teaching and Learning Committee and Heads of Schools, according to the Faculty Teaching and Learning Plan.

For consistency between University requirements and Faculty mechanisms, see table in Appendix L.

(7d) Methods used to monitor progress towards goals specified in the teaching and learning plan:

The Faculty has set itself the following measurable targets in the Teaching and Learning Plan:

- to improve the retention rates of students from first to second year within the University by 2% by the end of 2001 (strategy 1/3)
- to improve the Faculty mean on the SCEQ Generic Skills Scale to at least the national average for comparable faculties by the end of 2001 (strategy 3/3).
- to increase the Faculty mean on the SCEQ Good Teaching Scale from +14 to +20 by the end of 2001 (strategy 3/4).

The Faculty Teaching and Learning committee reviews the Teaching and Learning Plan every six months and advises the Dean on progress. The committee also manages Faculty seminars and workshops (strategy

4/1), the Faculty Teaching Awards (strategy 2/4), focus groups (strategy 4/2), the First Year Transition Program (112), special student survey (English 1001-strategy 4/1), and programs (Competence in Written English-strategy 1/3).

- Heads of Schools are responsible for reporting to the Dean on a number of strategies (Appendix M).

Conclusion

The Faculty of Arts prides itself on the range and diversity of its programs. We believe that diversity within the framework of a coherent degree program is at the heart of a good humanities and social science curriculum. The provision of numerous units, however, makes the coordination of our programs challenging. Sometimes this diversity obscures the coherence of the offerings. Some students find it difficult to see a clear path through the curriculum. Although we have worked hard to identify pathways, and will continue to do so, it is intrinsic to a good humanities and social science curriculum to have a great range and variety of units.

It is clear that we have not yet implemented all of the strategies outlined in our 200-2001 Teaching and Learning Strategic and Operational Plan for Teaching and Learning. In addition some strategies have only been adopted in some parts of the Faculty. Thus implementation has been patchy, and Faculty needs to work more effectively to ensure that all of its parts are working towards these teaching and learning goals.

There are a number of reasons for this partial implementation of our teaching and learning plan. The Faculty of Arts is a very large and complex organisation, with many diverse and localised teaching and learning cultures that have evolved over many years. It takes time to develop consistency of goals and strategies in such an organisation. On the other hand, it would be a mistake to try to impose too much uniformity on departments, as many of these local practices are very effective and intrinsic to the disciplines taught in the Faculty. The other significant problem over the last twelve months has been the difficulties arising from restructuring. Firstly, effective restructuring has consumed an enormous amount of time and energy on the part of many staff, distracting attention from teaching and learning plans. Secondly, we have encountered difficulties in identifying 'responsibility' within the new school structure, and have been struggling to define clear lines of coordination and responsibility for teaching and learning.

In spite of these challenges, we believe that we have implemented a number of very positive initiatives in teaching and learning in the Faculty of Arts over the last few years. We have in place, at the Faculty, School and department level, a range of mechanisms for ensuring that we offer units and programs with clear learning outcomes, which are at the cutting edge of teaching strategies in the humanities and social sciences. Moreover we have effective mechanisms for monitoring student outcomes, progress and experience. We recognise and value good teaching in the Faculty and seek to promote excellence in all spheres of our teaching practice, at both the UG and PG levels.

Faculty of Arts Teaching and Learning Report 2000

Executive Summary

The Faculty of Arts is the largest humanities faculty in Australia, with about 6900 students (consisting of almost 5900 undergraduates and 1000 postgraduates). The Faculty offers 16 undergraduate degree programs:

- the Bachelor of Arts (three-year pass degree, four-year honours Degree);
- 9 combined degrees: Arts/Social Work, Arts/Science, Arts/Engineering, Arts/Law, Arts/Commerce, Arts/Theology, Arts/Music, Arts/Nursing, Arts/Education; and
- 6 four-year degrees: the Bachelor of Liberal Studies (offered jointly with the Faculty of Science); the Bachelor of Arts (Languages); the Bachelor of Arts (Media and Communications); the Bachelor of Arts Informatics; the Bachelor of Social Sciences and the Bachelor of Social Work.

These combined and specialist degrees enable students to link foundational studies in the humanities and social sciences with a more vocationally-oriented education. Almost 600 students are enrolled in four-year degree courses in 2000, and over 1400 students are in the combined degrees. Of all students who graduate with a three-year degree, one third undertake a fourth year to complete a BA Hons degree.

In addition, the Faculty offers four undergraduate Diplomas, and a number of modularised postgraduate coursework awards, including Graduate Certificate, Graduate Diploma, Master of Arts and Master of Letters. The Faculty also offers two postgraduate research degrees: the Master of Philosophy and the Doctor of Philosophy.

In line with the Strategic Plans of the University and the College of Humanities and Social Sciences, the Faculty's first Major Strategic Goal is to "maintain and enhance its position as an outstanding provider of high quality undergraduate and postgraduate teaching, both in Australia and internationally". In order to achieve this goal, the Faculty has developed a Strategic Plan for Teaching and Learning 2000 – 2004, which has the following objectives:

1. To attract high calibre students into the Arts Faculty and foster their development through the range of flexible degree programs the Faculty offers.
2. To provide a rich diversity of formal and informal learning opportunities for all Arts students and to encourage stimulating and challenging teaching to enable students to reach their full learning potential.
3. To provide curricula that are informed by current research, scholarship, creative works and professional practice, and which are responsive to the communities served by the Faculty's teaching.
4. To foster an environment where quality and innovation in teaching and learning are valued and supported by recognition and resources.
5. To provide high quality support for Arts students and to ensure that their access to information technology and their physical learning environment is of a high standard.
6. To strengthen teaching and learning in the Faculty, and ensure efficient use of resources.

Linked to these objectives, the Faculty has formulated an Operational Plan 2002 - 2004, setting out a series of strategies and targets developed from an analysis of the Faculty's strengths and weaknesses, and informed by data from the GCCA CEQ, and from the Student Course Evaluation Questionnaires conducted by the University

Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats

Strengths

- The diversity of humanities and social sciences disciplines offered by the Faculty, providing students with the widest range of subject choices and combinations of majors of any Arts faculty in Australia.
- The flexibility of degree programs through nine combined-degree structures and five four-year degrees. In addition, all the degree programs enable students to enrol in units from other faculties, for example Science, Economics and Education.
- The accessibility of a wide range of humanities and social sciences units to a large proportion of the university's students, particularly students in programs in Law, Science, Economics, Commerce and Education.
- The uniqueness of the provision of some humanities disciplines in NSW, in particular the diversity and number of languages, including European, Asian, Middle Eastern, Medieval and Classical languages.
- The responsiveness of the Faculty to labour market developments through the creation of the new degree programs. The design of each program has been based on industry consultation, and four of the programs have either an internship (Media and Communications, Social Sciences); a major research component (Informatics); or an in-country study component (Languages).
- The widespread enthusiasm among students for further learning, as demonstrated by the substantial number of students (30%) who proceed from the third year of their BA degree to a fourth year honours degree, and the high proportion of Arts graduates who proceed to further study in higher education (52% full-time and 11% part-time).
- The high degree of success in developing students' abilities in written communication and analytic skills (as measured by the SCEQ).
- The benefit to students of contact with active researchers (as attested by SCEQ data).
- The centralised provision of information technology infrastructure for students and staff, through substantial investment and strategic planning in building the Arts Information Technology Unit and the Language Centre

Weaknesses

- The difficulty with current staff resources of providing individual academic guidance on degree planning to the large number of students enrolled in the Faculty.
- The heterogeneity of individual course programs means the identification of a cohort of students in anything but the broadest of terms is difficult.
- The large intake of commencing students into a diversity of degrees makes addressing the First-year student transition experience a challenging exercise.

- The University's upgrading of teaching spaces to enable audio-visual and IT-assisted learning has not kept pace with the expansion of staff and student interest in these areas.
- The spread of discipline areas and pedagogic approaches across the Faculty has meant that engagement by academic staff with emerging university teaching and learning policies and IT-assisted learning developments has not always been uniform.
- The diminished resources available in higher education, combined with increased student load has impacted on staff:student ratios and increased pressure on class sizes, especially in junior units of study

Opportunities

- The formation of four Schools, based on disciplinary affiliations within the Faculty, provides opportunities for new interdisciplinary curriculum developments as well as for the more administratively efficient, centralised management of teaching and learning procedures, including the First-year transition experience.
- The new four-year degrees will also assist in creating identifiable cohorts of Arts students. Most of the five four-year degrees have core units, and the creation of course identity will be focussed in these core units. Each of these degrees has a designated Director, who has the responsibility for overseeing student progress. A First-year transition program in the new degrees will serve as a pilot to assist in developing ways to generate a sense of student identity in the BA degree.
- The introduction of new four-year degrees also provides the opportunity to pilot individual academic guidance on degree planning. An increasing proportion of commencing students (43% in 2000) will be in one of the 5 four-year degrees, or in a combined degree. This will allow for more specialised unit choice and degree pathway advice, which will have beneficial effects for all students in the range of degrees across the Arts Faculty.
- The existing and continuing investment in languages teaching and IT (in particular the Arts On-Line Teaching and Learning Project) enables the stronger development and expansion of flexible learning programs for on-campus students and for teaching consortia with other universities. Further integration of IT developments into course design and delivery to enhance learning flexibility and complement face-to-face teaching is an opportunity the Arts Faculty is well positioned to take up.

Threats

- Diminishing public funding in the higher-education sector poses a particular threat to humanities subjects without direct links to industry groups from whom supplementary funding might be sought. If the costs of teaching in the humanities and social sciences are not fully understood and valued, the public investment in these modes of education will continue to fall and thus jeopardise innovation and the maintenance of very high quality teaching. This requires the identification of and better linkages with relevant industries, government agencies and community organisations. The humanities and to a lesser extent the social sciences have been relatively slow to make strategic linkages with relevant industries.
- There remains a perception in the community which accords low value to intensive study in generic humanities courses even though there is recent research evidence that the communication, analytical, creative and teamwork skills engendered by study in the humanities and social sciences are increasingly valued by employers. In response to the changing environment, new debates are needed in the wider community about the value of study in the humanities and social sciences and work is necessary within the Faculty to plan the future nature, content and objectives of the generic BA degree and the BA honours degree.

Faculty of Arts Strategic And Operational Plan

Objectives	Strategies 2002 – 2004	Strategies and Targets 2002 - 2004
<p><u>Objective 1:</u> To attract high calibre students into the Arts Faculty and foster their development through the range of flexible degree programs the Faculty offers.</p>	<p><u>Strategy 1/1:</u> To maintain and increase the proportion of students with a high UAI score in each degree intake.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To monitor and benchmark the Faculty's UAI profiles against other Sydney metropolitan Arts Faculties where data are available. • To continue work with the University in promoting contacts with selected public and independent schools in the Sydney basin and to continue the program of visits to targeted schools by members of the Arts Faculty to inform students of the range of degrees offered by the Faculty (see Appendix 1)
	<p><u>Strategy 1/2:</u> To enhance the first year Transition to University experience.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Associate Deans for Teaching and Learning to continue to coordinate with the Director of the BA and the Directors of the four-year degree programs , as well as senior students, in the organisation of the Transition to University program in the Orientation period in 2002. The program will introduce students to the physical environment, promote support services and, introduce students to the academic culture of the Faculty. It will focus strongly on promoting involvement with University life, especially engagement with peers. An evaluation of the program by first-year students, senior students and academic staff will be carried out and a report will be presented to the Dean in April 2002 . • To continue to coordinate with the Science Faculty's orientation programs for students in the B. Lib Studies and BA/BSc degrees .
	<p><u>Strategy 1/3:</u> To investigate the retention rates of students from first to second year within the University with the aim of improving retention.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To improve the 2000 figure for the retention rate of students from first to second year within the University by 2% by the end of 2002. • Results of the survey of students enrolled in English 1001 (a cohort of 850 students) to inform the expanded First Year Transition programs and pilot mentoring program in 2002. • The Faculty Teaching and Learning Sub-Committee on Competence in Written English to continue liaising with University support services to devise specific support programs for First Year Arts students at risk of not continuing their studies due to inadequate skills in written English.

Strategies and Targets 2002 - 2004	
Objectives	Strategies 2002 – 2004
	<p>Strategy 1/4: To overcome any possible perception in the community which may accord low value to intensive study in generic humanities courses.</p> <p>Strategy 1/5: To support students through their degree courses within the Faculty.</p>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To continue to develop the database of prominent alumni. • At the end of 2003, to publish on the Faculty web site the career paths of prominent and a diversity of Arts graduates.
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>To continue to develop support mechanisms to enhance students' sense of purpose and direction and to assist students to complete their degrees:</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - <i>To continue working in cooperation with senior students on the First-year Transition Programs.</i> - <i>In 2002, to design a pilot student mentoring program, with senior students, and investigate the feasibility of expanding such program in the Faculty.</i> - <i>To provide advice to students on degree pathways and planning through Undergraduate Advisors in each department.</i> - <i>To develop an on-line resource within the Faculty's web site which will provide students with detailed information about structuring their degree and contain the names and email contact details of all Arts Academic Advisors.</i> • <i>The Directors of the four-year degrees and the Director of the BA to invite the University's Counselling Service and the International Student Services Unit to familiarise Undergraduate Advisors with common difficulties encountered by Arts students, including international students, and recommend strategies to address them.</i>
Objective 2: To provide a rich diversity of formal and informal learning opportunities for all Arts	<p>Strategy 2/1: To encourage peer support for learning and engagement with the University by fostering Faculty- and discipline- based student organisations.</p>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In co-operation with ArtSoc, to continue publicising existing departmental student organisations and to encourage the formation of and student participation in student organisations as well as the Faculty and its committees.

Objectives	Strategies 2002 – 2004	Strategies and Targets 2002 - 2004
students and to encourage stimulating and challenging teaching to enable students to reach their full learning potential.	<p>Strategy 2/2: To encourage eligible students into the Honours program, and sustain their interest into a fourth-year honours program through focussed research projects.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To develop a BA (Advanced) degree for introduction in 2003 for commencing students, creating a designated cohort of first-year students whose entry is based on exceptional merit, and who will proceed into special Advanced entry courses and into fourth-year honours if they meet the normal assessment criteria for honours. All BA students who meet the criteria will be eligible to join the Advanced stream, as under existing policy. In 2002, to develop programs for inducting potential honours students into research culture in all disciplines, such as the Undergraduate Language & IT Research Special Interest Group (ULITRSIG) (see information at http://www.es.usyd.edu.au/~rcdtml/ulitrsig/)
	<p>Strategy 2/3: To encourage the use of peer learning and group work across the Faculty.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Heads of School to work with the Faculty's Teaching and Learning Committee to promote the use of group work and peer learning in seminars and workshops.
	<p>Strategy 2/4: To encourage teaching development by rewarding stimulating and challenging teaching.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To continue to promote the Faculty's Teaching Excellence Awards Scheme, as it has been redefined in 2001 and investigate the impact of the introduction of the new methods of application on the number of applicants (new award guidelines available at http://www.arts.usyd.edu.au/committees/ArtsTLCtee/Awards/TeachAwardsGdInsNEW.html) To promote exemplary teaching and assessment practices by inviting excellent teachers to showcase their work at Faculty and School Teaching and Learning seminars. The Faculty and each School will normally hold one seminar per semester, which all staff will be encouraged to attend.
	<p>Strategy 2/5: To continue to develop and expand IT-supported learning.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To continue to actively support the development of on-line teaching and learning in the Faculty to encourage unit of study coordinators to publish unit of study outlines (including both disciplinary and generic learning objectives, assessment and learning outcomes) on-line, using the Faculty's on-line Unit of Study Outline Template.

Objectives	Strategies 2002 – 2004	Strategies and Targets 2002 - 2004
<p><u>Objective 3:</u> To provide curricula that are informed by current research, scholarship, creative works and professional practice, and which are responsive to the communities served by the Faculty's teaching.</p>	<p><u>Strategy 3/1:</u> To plan benchmarking exercises in each School on the quality of teaching and learning, curriculum development and assessment practices with an appropriate national/international University.</p> <p><u>Strategy 3/2:</u> To encourage curriculum development which engages students with the latest scholarship of leading researchers in the Faculty.</p> <p><u>Strategy 3/3:</u> To equip students with the generic skills necessary to maximise their employment opportunities and life-long learning.</p> <p><u>Strategy 3/4:</u> To continue to seek input into course development from relevant employers and professional organisations where appropriate.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To resource benchmarking exercises in Schools, in at least one department per School, and investigate the feasibility of implementing a benchmarking template for departments. • Heads of School to foster the adoption of the use of external examiners for fourth year honours theses within their School, and to resource this practice adequately. • Heads of School to encourage the incorporation into curriculum development of current research in the discipline and/or research into tertiary teaching through an annual seminar held in each School. • Heads of School to report to the Dean annually on the extent of research and scholarship in teaching in the School, as demonstrated by the publication of textbooks, teaching materials and pedagogical research. • Heads of School to investigate designing a template, coherent with the on-line Unit of Study Outline template, aimed at ensuring that the Faculty's Generic Attributes of Graduates are incorporated into all units of study. Heads of Schools will report to the Dean annually on implementation. • To measure the achievement of this objective by improving the Faculty mean on the SCEQ Generic Skills Scale to at least the GO8 average for comparable faculties by the end of 2003. • To continue to foster close links with industry professionals in relevant degree programs. • <i>By the end of 2002, with the assistance of the ITL, to survey the major employers of Arts graduates to determine the graduate skills which are expected and valued in their workplaces.</i>
<p><u>Objective 4:</u> To foster an environment where quality and innovation in teaching and learning are valued and supported by recognition and resources</p>	<p><u>Strategy 4/1:</u> To demonstrate the high value placed on teaching and learning, by further developing and supporting a strong teaching and learning culture within the Faculty, and to foster academic leadership in teaching within the new Schools.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To measure the improvement of good teaching practice by setting a target for increasing the Faculty mean on the SCEQ Good Teaching Scale from +14 to +20 by the end of 2003. • To continue to enhance teaching excellence within Schools. Heads of Schools to monitor progress through results from unit of study evaluations and the analysis of SCEQ data, and report to the Dean on an annual basis . • Heads of Schools to ensure that departments have a plan for evaluating all units of study over three years, starting with 3rd year units. Reports on evaluation outcomes, including actions taken as a result, have to be presented to Chairs of Departments and Heads of Schools at the end of each year.

Objectives	Strategies 2002 – 2004	Strategies and Targets 2002 - 2004
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To resource the Faculty Teaching and Learning Committee to carry out the analysis of SCEQ results and work with Heads of School in ensuring that workshops on good teaching practice are held on a regular basis (normally one per semester).
	<p>Strategy 4/2: To ensure that all academic staff are aware that teaching excellence is an expected and institutionalised component of Faculty culture.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To encourage Heads of School to foster a culture of teaching excellence, and to ensure, notably through the new Performance Appraisal system, that all academic staff are aware that evidence of good teaching practice is a required component of applications for promotion.
	<p>Strategy 4/3: To reward innovative teachers in the Faculty.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To enhance the Faculty Awards for Teaching Initiatives by creating one targeted award each year to address particular pedagogical objectives.
	<p>Strategy 4/4: To encourage academic staff in the Faculty to further their teaching qualifications in higher education.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Heads of School to develop guidelines for departments to support postgraduate students doing part-time teaching and to encourage all part-time tutors to undertake the teaching workshops jointly run by SUPRA and ITL. To ensure that all staff are aware of the programs run by the ITL and promoting the ITL programs to all teaching staff. To provide support (eg teaching release) to encourage staff to undertake the Graduate Certificate in Educational Studies (Higher Education).
	<p>Strategy 4/5: To organise, as a matter of high priority, School-based as well as Faculty Teaching and Learning seminars.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Heads of School to organise a seminar for staff in their School each semester, focussing on pedagogical issues relevant to teaching in that School, with an open invitation to all other staff in the Faculty. Heads of School to report to the Dean annually on specific teaching issues, raised at the School seminars, that need to be addressed at future Faculty-wide seminars.

Objectives	Strategies 2002 – 2004	Strategies and Targets 2002 - 2004
<p><u>Objective 5:</u> To provide high quality support for Arts students and promote the conditions of access, and successful participation in, all Arts degrees for the five equity target groups identified in the University's Equity Plan</p>	<p>Strategy 5/1: To provide the most effective support for students in their various degrees with designated academic advisers who will provide advice on degree pathways and planning.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Academic staff advisors in each of the four-year degrees to provide advice to students in degree planning and report to the Dean on common problems or difficulties students encounter. • School Undergraduate Advisors to provide advice to students on degree pathways and planning. The Director of the BA will coordinate annual information sessions for the Undergraduate Advisors on degree planning in the BA and combined degrees. • A web page to be developed on the Faculty's site to provide students with information about degree pathways, as well as the names and email contact details of all Academic Advisors.
<p><u>Objective 6:</u> To strengthen teaching and learning in the Faculty, and develop the Faculty's postgraduate coursework program.</p>	<p>Strategy 5/2: To provide Arts students with appropriate information technology infrastructure to support their learning.</p> <p>Strategy 6/1: To broaden the funding base in order to increase the resources for teaching and learning by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - increasing the number of externally funded lectureships; - increasing enrolments in postgraduate coursework programs and fee-paying non-award courses; and - increasing the number of international fee-paying students, especially through the Study Abroad scheme. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • By the end of 2002, Associate Dean for IT and Arts IT Unit Director, in consultation with key academics, to prepare a three-year plan to upgrade the Faculty's IT infrastructure supporting teaching and learning, including the search for sponsors to replace student computer laboratories. • <i>The Faculty aims:</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To increase the number of externally funded lectureships by 1 by Semester 1, 2003. • To increase new enrolments in postgraduate coursework programs by 10% by the beginning of Semester 1, 2003 • To increase the number of international fee-paying students by 10% on the average of the past three years by Semester 2, 2003.

Objectives	Strategies 2002 – 2004	Strategies and Targets 2002 - 2004
	<p>Strategy 6/2: To increase inter-disciplinary post-graduate coursework programs</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To introduce three new postgraduate coursework programs in 2002 (Gender Studies-Media and Cultural Studies, Korean as a Foreign Language and Professional Communication. • To appoint Program Coordinators in each of the new postgraduate programs • The Postgraduate Coursework Associate Dean to work with other Postgraduate Coordinators in the College of Humanities and Social Sciences to investigate areas of student demand and develop cross-Faculty programs in these areas.
	<p>Strategy 6/3: To continue reviewing the units of study offered across the Faculty to ensure there is no overlap or duplication across departments, and that there is greater concentration of teaching effort and increased coherence of the degree structure.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Undergraduate Matters committee to undertake on-going monitoring of the units of study offered in the Faculty in order to reduce overlap and duplication.

Faculty of Arts Teaching and Learning Strategic and Operational Plan State of Implementation, September 2001

Strategies 2000 – 2004

Strategies and Targets 2000 – 2001

State of progress

Objective 1:

To attract high calibre students into the Arts Faculty and foster their development through the range of flexible degree programs the Faculty offers.

Strategy 1/1: To maintain and increase the proportion of students with a high UAI score in each degree intake.

- To monitor and benchmark the Faculty's UAI profiles against other Sydney metropolitan Arts Faculties where data are available.

- To continue work with the University in promoting contacts with selected public and independent schools in the Sydney basin and to establish a program of visits to targeted schools by members of the Arts Faculty **from second semester 2000** to inform students of the range of degrees offered by the Faculty.

- Measured against similar programs offered by other Sydney metropolitan universities, the Faculty of Arts has maintained the UAI standards required for admission to the Faculty's programs (see further details in Appendix 1)

- The Faculty has continued to build its School Liaison program, through attendance at school-based Tertiary Information events (the Faculty is now represented at more of these events than at any time in the past), Arts-specific promotion with individual schools (Monte Sant' Angelo, Fort St, Sydney Girls, Sydney Grammar, PLC) and participation in University-wide events (Teachers Day, Talented Students Day, Year 10 Evening, Koori Centre promotions). In addition, academics in a significant number of departments in the Faculty are members of HSC Examination Committees.

Strategies 2000 – 2004

Strategy 1/2: To enhance the first year Transition to University experience.

Strategies and Targets 2000 – 2001

- The Directors of the four-year degree programs to establish a Transition to University program in the Orientation period in **2000**, report on their progress to the Dean by August 2000, and present a final report in late November 2000. These reports will identify strategies for the Transition Programs in 2001
- To coordinate with the Science Faculty's orientation programs for students in the B. Lib Studies and BA/BSc degrees in **February 2000**.
- In **late October 2000**, the Associate Dean for Teaching and Learning will convene a committee of the degree Directors involved in the orientation programs, in order to begin planning for the Orientation period in 2001, including the development of an Orientation program for generic BA students for 2001.

Strategy 1/3: To investigate the retention rates of students from first to second year within the University with the aim of improving retention.

- To improve the retention rates of students from first to second year within the University by **2% by the end of 2001**.
- In **first semester 2000**, to develop and pilot a survey instrument with students enrolled in English 1001 (a cohort of 850 students) to identify the factors that influence non-continuation within the University. The results of this pilot will be used to inform the expanded First Year Transition programs in 2001.
- The Faculty Teaching and Learning Sub-Committee on Competence in Written English to continue liaising with University support services to devise specific support programs for First Year Arts students at risk of not continuing their studies. Follow-up monitoring of the success of transition and support programs will take place **from 2001**.

State of progress

- Student welcome in 2000 and 2001 in the four-year programs. Participation of two of the four-year program Directors in the "Easing the Transition" program organised in March 2001 for all first-year students.
- Transition Day with the Faculty of Science for Lib Studies students (in 2000 & 2001)
- "Easing the Transition", 3 March 2001, for all first year students.
Analysis of evaluation results in progress, will lead to improvements for next year's transition program
- First-year to second year rate has fallen from 83% (98-99) to 74% (99-00).
- Survey done. Data has been entered into a database and results are currently being analysed.
- "Structure of English" program taught in semester 1 with first year Linguistics students, in collaboration with the Learning Centre. Evaluation of the program in progress. Plan to extend the implementation of the program to another first year UoS.

Strategies 2000 – 2004

Strategy 1/4: To overcome any possible perception in the community which may accord low value to intensive study in generic humanities courses.

Strategies and Targets 2000 – 2001

- In **Semester 2 2000**, the Faculty Community Relations and Development Committee to create a database of prominent alumni.
- In **Semester 2 2000**, to promote the range of career options available from an Arts degree by developing the Alumni section of the Faculty homepage to feature the career paths of prominent and a diversity of Arts graduates.

Strategy 1/5: To support students through their degree courses within the Faculty.

- **From 2000**, the *Directors of the four-year degree programs will develop support mechanisms to assist students to complete their degrees.*
- **In 2000**, to *appoint joint Directors (Arts and Science) for the Bachelor of Liberal Studies, and in 2001 to appoint a Director of the BA degree so as to extend these mechanisms to all undergraduate Arts students.*
 - **In 2001**, in co-operation with Artsoc, to encourage selected senior students to work with staff on the First-year Transition Programs.

State of progress

- The database has been created and will be regularly updated.
- Alumni web pages have been created but do not yet include career paths of prominent Arts graduates (to be included at a later stage).
- Individual interviews of students in Media & Communications done in 2000.
Welcome sessions/transition programs: Lib Studies, Media & Communications, BA Languages, BA Informatics.
- Directors for BA Lib Studies and BA appointed.
- Significant participation of senior students in "Easing the Transition" program.

Objective 2:

To provide a rich diversity of formal and informal learning opportunities for all Arts students and to encourage stimulating and challenging teaching to enable students to reach their full learning potential.

<p>Strategy 2/1: To encourage peer support for learning by fostering Faculty- and discipline-based student organisations.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In co-operation with ArtSoc, to publicise existing departmental student organisations and to encourage the formation of and student participation in student organisations as well as the Faculty and its committees. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Active student representatives on Faculty committees. Departmental student organisations are publicised within departments. The Faculty is considering using these organisations in a mentoring program which is being designed.
<p>Strategy 2/2: To encourage eligible students into the Honours program, and sustain their interest into a fourth-year honours program through focussed research projects.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To develop a BA (Advanced) degree for introduction in 2002 for commencing students, creating a designated cohort of first-year students whose entry is based on exceptional merit, and who will proceed into special entry courses and into fourth-year honours if they meet the normal assessment criteria for honours. All BA students who meet the criteria will be eligible to join the honours stream, as under existing policy. • In 2000, to investigate programs for inducting potential honours students into research culture, and to foster the development of such programs in all disciplines, with a view to establishing targets in 2001 for the number of students entering an honours program in 2002. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Preliminary work on BA (Advanced) program by working party. Implementation funding sought through TIF, and now VC's strategic development funds. <i>(Stephen, anything more specific on the BA Advanced which could be included here?)</i> • Departments send a letter to all C+ students at the end of first year to encourage them to enter Honours programs. Some departments hold open meetings for all interested students at the end of semester 2. A significant number of departments have Special Entry programs designed to introduce students to the research culture of the discipline and include specific instruction in Research Methods. Targets for number of Honours students are being considered.
<p>Strategy 2/3: To develop peer learning projects across the Faculty.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To evaluate the pilot program in peer learning in Social Work, Sociology and Social Policy by December 2000, and on the basis of the evaluation, consider extending it into at least two other disciplines during 2001. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Evaluation has been completed. The program has been presented in Faculty Teaching and Learning seminars by Christine Crowe. Christine has been consulted by other academics interested in adopting her approach. <i>(to be checked with Christine)</i>

Strategies 2000 – 2004

Strategy 2/4: To encourage teaching development by rewarding stimulating and challenging teaching.

Strategies and Targets 2000 – 2001

- To continue to promote the Faculty's Teaching Excellence Awards Scheme based on self-nomination, and to initiate an additional process of nomination **in 2001** of individuals and teams by Heads of School.
- To promote exemplary teaching and assessment practices by inviting excellent teachers to showcase their work at Faculty and School Teaching and Learning seminars. The Faculty and each School will normally hold one seminar per semester, which all staff will be encouraged to attend.

State of progress

- New guidelines for Teaching Excellence Awards have been adopted; they include new methods of nomination, and reporting.
(Add URL)
- 2 Faculty seminars held in 2000, one held at the end of semester 1, 2001 (on *Setting Clear Goals and Getting Students to Understand Them*); another one will be held in November 2001. Fortnightly Teaching and Learning Get Togethers since 3 May 2001.
(Complete T&L web site and provide URL)

Strategy 2/5: To continue to develop and expand IT-supported learning.

- **By October 2000**, based on the data collected by the CHASS 'Use of New Technologies & IT' questionnaire, the Arts IT Unit to identify areas where the use of technology-assisted learning would enhance teaching.
- **During 2000**, to work with Heads of School and their constituent departments to ensure that unit of study handouts (including learning objectives) are posted on departmental web pages. Heads of School to report on implementation at the end of 2000.

- *On-line teaching and learning is the area of priority.*
- *Unit of Study coordinators encourages to use ITL's Unit of Study Outline format. On-line Unit of Study Outline Template currently developed by the Arts IT Unit.*

Objective 3:

To provide curricula that are informed by current research, scholarship, creative works and professional practice, and which are responsive to the communities served by the Faculty's teaching.

<p>Strategy 3/1: To plan benchmarking exercises in each School on the quality of teaching and learning, curriculum development and assessment practices with an appropriate national/international University.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Heads of School to provide the Dean with a report on a benchmarking exercise in one of the departments in their School by the end of 2001. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Because of the restructuring process, the proposed benchmarking exercise has not been systematically implemented in Schools. However the Department of Ancient History (School of Philosophy, Gender, History and Ancient World Studies) has undertaken benchmarking with ... (<i>which university? ask Richard</i>). The Department of English (School of English, Art History, Film & Media) has an exchange benchmarking agreement with the Department of English at the University of Auckland. A large number of departments maintain informal contact with colleagues in other universities.
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Heads of School to survey the use of external examiners for fourth year honours theses within their School, and to foster the adoption of this practice in appropriate departments by 2001. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • English and Art History use external examiners. The School of Philosophy, Gender, History and Ancient World Studies is in the process of introducing this practice: an external examiner will be invited to sample theses across all grades firstly in History in 2001. It will be introduced in the other departments in subsequent years.

Strategies 2000 – 2004

Strategy 3/2: To encourage curriculum development which engages students with the latest scholarship of leading researchers in the Faculty.

Strategies and Targets 2000 – 2001

- Heads of School to encourage the incorporation of current research in the discipline into curriculum development, and **from 2001**, to provide an annual report to the Dean on how this has been achieved.

- Heads of School to report to the Dean by **December 2000** on the extent of research and scholarship in teaching in the School, as demonstrated by the publication of textbooks, teaching materials and pedagogical research with a view to setting targets for 2001.

Strategy 3/3: To equip students with the generic skills necessary to maximise their employment opportunities and life-long learning.

- In preparation for **Semester 1 2001**, Heads of School to promote ways of incorporating into all units of study appropriate learning activities that will foster the University's Generic Attributes of Graduates, and to report to the Dean annually on implementation.

- To measure the achievement of this objective by improving the Faculty mean on the SCEQ Generic Skills Scale to at least the national average for comparable faculties by **the end of 2001**.

State of progress

- Owing to the demands of the restructuring process, Schools have not been in a position to present a report to the Dean on this particular matter. However current and significant research is the basis of curriculum design in all departments and Schools are constantly introducing new units of study/remodelling existing units of study to reflect current research and publications both within the Faculty and nationally and internationally.
- This process took place through the Scholarship Index data gathering process. No formal School reports were presented to the Dean.

- Since teaching is done at departmental level, departments have ensured that Generic Attributes are explicitly referred to in Unit of Study outlines, in conjunction with learning outcomes and assessment. The Faculty Handbook (p. 41) has published its own version of the Generic Attributes to guide departments. The School of English, Art History, Film & Media is currently working on a template for use across the School from semester 1, 2002.
- Improved results on SCEQ Generic Scale for 2000 (from 27.9 to 30.1, +2.2).
(check national average for GO8s)

Strategies 2000 – 2004

Strategy 3/4: To continue to seek input into course development from relevant employers and professional organisations where appropriate.

Strategies and Targets 2000 – 2001

- **By December 2000**, to assess the effectiveness of the industry advisory committee for the BA (Media and Communications) comprising distinguished professionals in the media and communications industry.

State of progress

- *The Media & Communications Industry Advisory Board has promoted exchange of ideas with the media and communications industry, built industry contacts, promoted recognition of the BA (Media & Communications) within the industry, and ensured that the curriculum remains relevant to industry needs. The Board is chaired by Maxine McKew, a prominent print and television journalist, and is comprised of key industry stakeholders and professionals. To date the Board has been extremely useful in reviewing and refining units of study which focus on professional skills and in planning schemes for building closer alliances with industry. The Board is currently working on a funding raising scheme to set up a Journalist in Residence program which would see a senior industry professional take up an academic residence on an annual basis.*
 - *A Task Force is currently being set up for the BA (Arts Informatics), involving industry partners in computing (add details from Jon's report)*
 - *Again owing to the pressures of the restructuring process, the Faculty has not been able to undertake the survey.*
- **By February 2001**, to replicate this format, and establish industry reference groups for up to two additional degree programs.
 - **By June 2001**, with the assistance of the ITL, to survey the major employers of Arts graduates to determine the graduate skills which are expected and valued in their workplaces.

• Objective 4:

To foster an environment where quality and innovation in teaching and learning are valued and supported by recognition and resources.

Strategy 4/1: To demonstrate the high value placed on teaching and learning, by further developing and supporting a strong teaching and learning culture within the Faculty, and to foster academic leadership in teaching within the new Schools.

- To measure the improvement of good teaching practice by setting a target for increasing the Faculty mean on the SCEQ Good Teaching Scale from +14 to +20 **by the end of 2001**.
- Heads of School to work with their constituent departments in devising appropriate strategies for enhancing teaching excellence and monitoring progress on an annual basis, and report to the Dean on their processes and progress **by the end of Semester 2 2001**. The Faculty Teaching and Learning Committee will hold an annual workshop in which each School presents their case study.
- **During 2000**, to resource the Faculty Teaching and Learning Committee to work with Heads of School in ensuring that workshops on good teaching practice are held on a regular basis (normally one per semester).

- 16.6 achieved in 2000 (14.0 in 1999: +2.6)

- Workshop in November 2000 showcased teaching approaches from three of the Schools.
Add URL)
- Workshop in June 2001: *Setting Clear Goals and Getting Students to Understand Them*, in collaboration with Associate Professor Mike Prosser, Director of the ITL.

- Faculty workshops held in semester 1 & 2, 2000. Fortnightly Teaching and Learning Get Togethers, on teaching and learning issues relevant to the Faculty.

Strategy 4/2: To ensure that all academic staff are aware that teaching excellence is an expected and institutionalised component of Faculty culture.

- The Faculty Teaching and Learning Committee to establish student focus groups in several departments where, using qualitative methods, groups of students will be invited to discuss their teaching and learning experiences within their course, and their understanding of the dimensions of good teaching and learning practices. A pilot in one or two departments will be conducted in **Semester 2, 2000**, and an evaluation will be used to decide on a similar expanded program **for 2001**.
- To encourage Heads of School to foster a culture of teaching excellence, and to ensure that all academic staff are aware that evidence of good teaching practice is a required component of applications for promotion.

- Student focus groups in three of the four degree programs (Media & Communications, Arts Informatics and Social Sciences) undertaken in 2000 with the help of the ITL (Christine Asmar). Also and in Linguistics, in collaboration with the Learning Centre (Janet Jones and Peter O'Carroll). Reports are available.

- Academics, especially new appointees, are made aware of this information at departmental level.

Strategies 2000 – 2004

Strategy 4/3: To reward innovative teachers in the Faculty.

Strategy 4/4: To encourage academic staff in the Faculty to further their teaching qualifications in higher education.

Strategies and Targets 2000 – 2001

- To enhance the Faculty Awards for Teaching Initiatives by creating one targeted award each year to address particular pedagogical objectives. In 2000, priority will be given to developing programs to address and support the First-year transition experience.

- *From 2001, to provide one Faculty Teaching Relief Scholarship per annum of three hours teaching relief per week to support a full-time or fractional staff member undertaking the Graduate Certificate Course in Teaching in Higher Education run by the Institute for Teaching and Learning.*
- *Heads of School to develop guidelines for departments to support postgraduate students doing part-time teaching and to encourage all part-time tutors to undertake the teaching workshops jointly run by SUPRA and ITL.*

- To ensure that all staff are aware of the programs run by the ITL by linking the ITL homepage to the Arts Faculty homepage, and promoting the ITL programs to all teaching staff.

State of progress

- Focus of 2001 has been on on-line teaching and the development of effective processes in the design, development, implementation and evaluation of on-line units of study. 12 academics have received teaching release to redesign their curriculum and develop an on-line component.

- Due to budgetary constraints, it has not be possible to offer the Scholarship.

- All departments give priority to the employment of PG students in part-time teaching. The Department of History has drawn up guidelines in consultation with the PG teachers. These guidelines will be modified and promulgated at School level. It is a requirement of the School of Philosophy, Gender, History and Ancient World Studies that all prospective PG teachers undertake an ITL workshop.

The Department of English also has guidelines and organises its own induction for new tutors.

- Faculty web site linked to ITL. ITL programs actively promoted in Faculty through Chairs of Departments, and the Faculty Teaching and Learning Committee.

Strategy 4/5: To organise, as a matter of high priority, School-based as well as Faculty Teaching and Learning seminars.

- *From Semester 2 2000, Heads of School to organise a seminar for staff in their School each semester, focussing on pedagogical issues relevant to teaching in that School, with an open invitation to all other staff in the Faculty.*
- Heads of School to report to the Dean annually on the effectiveness of the seminars in enhancing the culture of good teaching and learning and to recommend specific teaching issues that need to be addressed at future Faculty-wide seminars.

- *Teaching and Learning seminars are still mainly organised at departmental level. However the School of English, Art History, Film & Media has held one seminar and is planning another seminar at the end of semester 2, 2001. The School of Philosophy, Gender, History and Ancient World Studies is organising a seminar on student evaluations in October 2001, and the School of Society, Culture and Performance discuss teaching and learning issues in its weekly School Forum.*

Objective 5:

To provide high quality support for Arts students and to ensure that their access to information technology and their physical learning environment is of a high standard.

Strategy 5/1: To provide the most effective support for students in their various degrees with designated academic advisers who will provide advice on degree pathways and planning.

- **By March 2000**, to designate an academic staff advisor in each of the four-year degrees to provide advice to students in degree planning.
- **Before the pre-enrolment period at the end of 2000**, to appoint one academic staff member in each School to act as an Undergraduate Adviser, providing advice to students on degree pathways and planning.

- An Advisor has been appointed in each of the programs.
- Academic Advisors are still located at department level since this is where detailed knowledge of the degree programs is situated.

Strategy 5/2: To provide Arts students with appropriate information technology infrastructure to support their learning.

- **In July 2000**, to launch the new Faculty of Arts web page as a resource for prospective students, current students and staff.
- **By the end of Semester 2, 2000**, Heads of School to collect information from teaching staff on the adequacy of teaching spaces in providing state of the art audio-visual and on-line technology, to inform priorities for infrastructure upgrading, as appropriate.

- Faculty website launched in August 2000.
- A review of the adequacy of teaching spaces is conducted at the beginning of each semester in one of the Schools only. There is a strong feeling in Schools and Departments that the adequacy of teaching rooms, and equipment within them, is mostly a university matter since infrastructure planning has not been possible at Faculty level due to budgetary constraints. The Faculty has been in regular consultation with the Facilities Management Office concerning the provision of appropriate teaching spaces and facilities.

Objective 6:

To strengthen teaching and learning in the Faculty, and ensure efficient use of resources.

Strategies 2000 – 2004

Strategy 6/1: To broaden the funding base in order to increase the resources for teaching and learning by:

- increasing the number of externally funded lectureships;
- increasing enrolments in postgraduate coursework programs and in fee-paying non-award courses; and
- increasing the number of international fee-paying students, especially through the Study Abroad scheme.

Strategies and Targets 2000 – 2001

- *The Faculty aims:*
- *To increase the number of externally funded lectureships by 2 by Semester 1, 2001.*
- *To introduce two new postgraduate coursework programs in Semester 1, 2001, and an additional two programs in Semester 1, 2002. These new programs will assist the Faculty in teaching its target of increasing new enrolments in postgraduate coursework programs by 20% by the beginning of Semester 1, 2002.*
- *To increase the income from fee-paying non-award courses by 30% by 2002.*
- *To increase the number of international fee-paying students by 10% on the average of the past three years by Semester 2, 2001.*

State of progress

Arts is a strong international player - #3 in the University - with its international load distributed reasonably well across the Faculty, unlike #1 Economics & Business and #2 Science, where Accounting and Computer Science each generate one third of their respective faculties total international load. The Faculty's strengthening International load reflects the increased commitment made to marketing by the Faculty, including a particular emphasis on Study Abroad, which has seen outstanding growth. Between 1998-2000 the overall international load increase in the Faculty has been 75%

- 236
- 339
- 413

For Study Abroad, the growth across the University has been:

- 238
- 316
- 424
- 381 in first semester alone (278 in second semester)

In terms of enrolments in Arts units of study, this has translated to:

- 607
- 759
- 961
- 810 in first semester alone

In 2000, 961 enrolments to Arts represented 45% of the University's total Study Abroad enrolments.

Strategies 2000 – 2004

Strategy 6/2: To review the units of study offered across the Faculty to ensure there is no overlap or duplication across departments, and that there is greater concentration of teaching effort and increased coherence of the degree structure.

Strategies and Targets 2000 – 2001

- **In Semester 1 2000**, to conduct an audit of all undergraduate and honours units of study offered in the Faculty, and to revise offerings so as to concentrate teaching resources. The audit will be presented to Faculty in April 2000 and will lead into the planned reshaping of the BA degree (including its structure of majors and its honours program) in semester 2. The expected outcome of the audit is to concentrate teaching effort and teaching resources, to create opportunities for improving teaching quality, to increase the coherence of the degree structure and to share teaching and IT resources through increased cross-listing of units.

State of progress

- Audit completed.

Appendix 1

Objective 1 Strategy 1/1

The maintenance of standards has been of particular note given the introduction in 2000 of 4 small-intake programs (Media & Communications, Languages, Informatics, Social Sciences) which, with high UAIs in 2001, (respectively, 97.00, 90.40, 81.15, 75.20), had the potential to take the cream off the BA intake. Seven of 14 programs offered by the Faculty maintain a UAI above 80; of the 3 programs (BMus, BA/BMus, BA/BTh) that require criteria additional to UAI, the two Music programs would only rarely admit anyone with a UAI lower than 80.00.

Of the 713 Recent School Leavers offered a BA place in 2001 purely on UAI (ie no special admissions, flexible entry etc), the median UAI was 79.80. In other words, a fraction under half the offers were to those with a UAI of 80.00 or more, with 160 offers going to those with a UAI of 90.00 or more. Note that this is for the BA only, and does not include those with the 90+ UAIs required for Arts/Law, Arts/Commerce, BA (Media & Communications) and BA (Languages).

	Sydney	UNSW	Macquarie	UTS	UWS
BA	70.00	70.00	74.00		66.00 - 67.00
BSocSci	75.20	70.00	75.00		60.20
BA (Media & Comm)	97.00	89.25	91.00 - 85.00	78.55 – 96.95	70.10
Arts/Law	99.15		93.00		90.45
Social Work	70.50	70.00			
Arts/ Social Work	70.80	70.00			