

FACULTY OF EDUCATION

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

THURSDAY APRIL 4 2002

**FINAL REPORT AND
RECOMMENDATIONS**

CONTENTS

1	INTRODUCTION	4
2	MEMBERSHIP OF THE REVIEW TEAM	4
3	FINDINGS OF THE REVIEW TEAM	4
A	Faculty restructuring	5
B	Philosophy of teaching and learning	5
C	Quality of teaching and learning	5
i	Teaching and Learning Plan	6
ii	Faculty teaching excellence awards	6
iii	Mentoring of First Year students	6
iv	Practicum	6
v	On-line learning	7
D	Professional development	7
E	Research-led teaching	8
F	Master of Teaching (MTeach) program	8
G	Graduate attributes, aims and outcomes	8
H	Assessment	9
I	Evaluation	9
J	Research supervision and training	10
K	Messages to the Dean from students and staff	10
i	Staff	10
ii	Undergraduate students	11
iii	Postgraduate research students	11
iv	Postgraduate coursework students	11
L	Concluding comments	11
4	AREAS OF GOOD PRACTICE	11
A	Philosophy of teaching and learning	11
B	Quality of teaching and learning	12
C	Professional development	12
D	Research-led teaching	12
E	Master of Teaching (MTeach) program	12
F	Assessment	12

G	Evaluation _____	12
H	Research training _____	12
I	Benchmarking _____	13
5	<i>AREAS OF CONSIDERATION FOR IMPROVEMENT</i> _____	13
A	Faculty restructuring _____	13
B	Quality of teaching and learning _____	13
	<i>i Teaching and Learning Plan</i> _____	13
	<i>ii Practicum</i> _____	13
	<i>iii On-line learning</i> _____	13
C	Graduate attributes, aims and outcomes _____	13
D	Research supervision _____	14
APPENDIX A:	<i>SUMMARY REPORT OF FINDINGS OF REVIEW TEAM</i> _____	15
APPENDIX B:	<i>LIST OF DOCUMENTS SUPPLIED BY THE FACULTY</i> _____	18
APPENDIX C:	<i>FACULTY SELF-EVALUATION REPORT</i> _____	19
APPENDIX D:	<i>FACULTY TEACHING AND LEARNING PLAN</i> _____	24

1 INTRODUCTION

An Academic Board Review Team visited the Faculty of Education on Thursday 4 April 2002 as part of the review and evaluation of teaching, learning and research training in all faculties within the University.

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

- Professor Geoffrey Sherington, the Dean, and the Faculty Management Team¹
 - Associate Dean, Teaching and Learning
 - Associate Dean, International and External Relations
 - Associate Dean, Undergraduate Studies/ Head of School
 - Associate Dean, Graduate Studies/ Head of School
- Undergraduate students (16 in 2 groups)
- Postgraduate research students (7)
- Other Faculty academic and general staff² (10)
- Postgraduate coursework students (8)

2 MEMBERSHIP OF THE REVIEW TEAM

Professor Ann Brewer (Chair)	<i>Acting Pro-Vice-Chancellor (Employee Relations)</i>
Professor Paul Ramsden	<i>Pro-Vice-Chancellor (Teaching and Learning)</i>
Dr Ross Gilbert	<i>Sydney Conservatorium of Music</i>
Professor Doug Elliott	<i>Faculty of Nursing</i>
Dr Marie-Therese Barbaux-Couper	<i>Faculty of Arts</i>

Secretary

Rachel Symons	<i>Quality Assurance Officer (Teaching and Learning)</i>
---------------	--

Observers

Dr Greg Ryan	<i>Faculty of Medicine</i>
Kristine Sodersten	<i>Faculty of Architecture</i>
Patricia Azarias	<i>Executive Officer (Quality Assurance)</i>

3 FINDINGS OF THE REVIEW TEAM

The Review Team interviews centred on the following main aspects covered in the Faculty Self-Evaluation Report:

- Quality of teaching and learning;
- Research-led teaching;
- Graduate attributes, aims and outcomes;
- Assessment;
- Evaluation; and
- Research supervision and training.

In addition, the Team was interested in finding out more about staff and student perceptions of the Faculty's teaching and learning philosophy, the effects of the recent restructuring of the Faculty, professional development activities, the MTeach program, and the postgraduate experience for both research and coursework students. These areas are covered in separate sections within the report.

One feature of all Academic Board reviews is the final question to staff and student groups in which

¹ Referred to as 'senior staff' within report.

² Referred to as 'staff' within report.

they are asked if they have any message that they would like to give to the Dean. *See Section 3k.*

The final section of the report covers the areas of good practice, and the areas of consideration for improvement that were conveyed to the Dean in the *Summary Report of the findings of the Review Team* on 14 May 2002.

A Faculty restructuring

In February 2001, the Faculty restructuring resulted in the reduction of three schools to two: the School of Policy and Practice and the School of Development and Learning. The Review Team was interested to see how the restructuring had impacted on staff, and found that staff needed more time to gauge this. However, most staff were satisfied with outcomes to date. There appears to be minimal co-ordination inter-school. The Team pointed to the dual appointments of Associate Deans as Heads of Schools. They felt that opportunities for shadowing could be provided to enhance the professional development and leadership of all staff.

The Review Team suggests that greater emphasis on inter-school coordination will facilitate acceptance of the restructure by staff. They commend the Faculty for providing staff with the opportunity to take on senior administrative/ coordinator roles is welcomed, and suggest that other staff be given the opportunity to shadow these positions to enhance their professional development.

B Philosophy of teaching and learning

Faculty members cited the following as evidence that the Faculty is accomplishing its mission of providing *world class teacher education undergraduate and postgraduate programs known to be valued by students, the profession and the community*: there is strong national and international interest in innovative courses such as the MTeach; first destination statistics are highly favourable and there is evidence of employers actively targeting the Faculty's students before they graduate; the Faculty is frequently referred to favourably in publications about Australian teacher education. The Faculty measures its performance through benchmarking activities (for example relating the Faculty's philosophy of teaching with practice at the universities of Melbourne, QUT, Waikato and Singapore). Feedback from students supported the Faculty's view that it is achieving best practice in teacher education.

Undergraduate students expressed the view that the Faculty was trying to be outstanding in teaching. It had a strong focus on creating and developing professionals and giving them the skills to feel part of a professional community. This is borne out by a Faculty analysis of the last three cohorts of graduates which showed that post-graduation they were highly satisfied with the preparation for the profession that they received. The students appreciated that they were not only being shown teaching methods but also the social context of education and the role of the teacher in the community.

The Faculty is to be commended on its innovative and successful approach to teaching and learning and its success in delivering best-practice education, which is recognised both internationally and nationally. The Review Team considered that the progressive approach shown by the Faculty towards collaborative problem solving, the professional development of teachers, the emphasis placed on the social context of teaching, and the preparation of students as lifelong learners were areas in which the Faculty should be particularly commended.

The Review Team commends the Faculty for its approach to benchmarking. It suggests it continues its benchmarking activities with other universities, in particular those in the Group of Eight.

C Quality of teaching and learning

The documentation provided and discussions with staff and students led the team to form the view that the quality of teaching and learning is of a high standard. A high proportion of the lecturers have teaching credentials and pride themselves on being models for their students to follow. Through innovations and changes to the course structure the Faculty has fostered continuing improvement. The

appointment of an Associate Dean for Teaching and Learning is appreciated by staff and has resulted in many improvements.

Overall the Faculty provides a high standard of teaching and learning. The Review Team commends the Faculty on the creation of the position of Associate Dean (Teaching and Learning). This demonstrates the renewed focus on the quality of teaching and learning in the Faculty.

i Teaching and Learning Plan

In response to questions about staff contribution to and implementation of the Faculty Teaching and Learning Plan, the Review Team was advised by senior staff that the Plan was discussed at retreats organised by the Associate Dean (Teaching and Learning), and that groups of staff were allocated tasks from the Plan for response. Staff reported that issues from the Plan were raised in course meetings, and they were told by the Associate Dean (Teaching and Learning) what they needed to focus on. Some staff and students, who were interviewed, were either unaware of the Plan or had only read it briefly prior to attending the interview. Senior Faculty staff felt that although most of the staff were not involved in drafting the Plan, they were involved in its implementation.

The Review Team recommends that more emphasis be placed on the content and rationale of the Teaching and Learning Plan at the level of both staff and students. While staff were involved in the Plan's implementation, they will welcome greater involvement in its development.

ii Faculty teaching excellence awards

The Review Team enquired about the extent of progress in identifying ways of rewarding good teaching within the Faculty. It was advised by senior staff that new procedures for awards had been implemented, resulting in a rise in applications. Staff are advised that the awards make a contribution to the excellence of teaching within the Faculty. The success of the new procedures is measured by the fact that in 2000 there was only one nomination whereas in 2001 there were four successful applicants. Funds from the staff development budget are used for the awards.

iii Mentoring of First Year students

One of the strategies included in the Faculty Strategic Plan for Teaching and Learning 2000-2004 was the establishment of student-mentoring practices across all courses facilitating the transfer of learning from senior to junior students. The Plan also indicated that this was offered to Education One students in 2001 but had not been taken up. The Review Team asked both staff and students what they knew about the current mentoring of first year students. Staff in the Human Movement and Health Education program informed the Team that it was an initiative with current 4th year students mentoring 1st year students. This overcomes the inherent problems in the program arising from the fact that students took core units in 1st year and did not start to concentrate on subjects relating to human movement until the 2nd year of their course. Students from this course said the Faculty had tried to implement mentoring for the current year but without success. Other students who were interviewed confirmed that the mentoring program had not worked last year.

iv Practicum

Both undergraduate and postgraduate coursework students were asked for their views on the preparation and support for practicum blocks during their degree courses.

Primary education students felt that the first practicum in 2nd year, in which students went into schools for one day a week over a period of eight weeks, should be more structured with clearer goals and outcomes. Later practicum blocks were rewarding but tended to be stressful since they were at the end of semester when workload was extremely high (both as students and as prac-teachers). The Review Team was told by the students doing joint degrees that they did not do practicum blocks until their third year and that they would like to do them earlier in their course. Postgraduate coursework students reported that they would like an apprenticeship scheme where they spent one day a week in a

school.

The Team addressed this issue with staff who advised that the single day practicum is being moved to first year, and the fourth year internship is currently being lengthened from three to six weeks. Staff also advised that there was a new joint degree program commencing, which provided students with more practical experience than in previous years. The joint degree students would now be getting two internships.

Students had contrasting experiences of the support given by the Faculty before and during their practicum. Some felt that more support should be given, for example in the form of a workshop at which they could discuss the visits and clarify expectations. Others appreciated the support given prior and during their practicum. Examples included being on call when the practicum occurred before university started, and visiting the student one day a week during a practicum on the South Coast.

The Review Team recommends that the Faculty consider providing more support to students before and during their practicum, although it is acknowledged that some supervisors go out of their way to provide excellent support. Students have expressed the need for a pre-practicum workshop and this is recommended.

v On-line learning

The Faculty Self-Evaluation Report revealed that a teaching improvement grant had been used to help in the development of on-line learning facilities for staff and students. The Review Team sought both staff and students' opinions on on-line learning in the Faculty. Undergraduate students appreciated the value of the Internet and on-line discussion assignments. Postgraduate coursework students appreciated the Internet's information retrieval potential during classes in information technology. Undergraduate students reported that a similar course on using the computer in the classroom was no longer available to them.

Resources for utilising on-line teaching and learning were considered poor by both groups of students, with some computers not working and long queues to use the ones that were available. It was also pointed out that the Faculty's website needed updating.

The Review Team recommends that the Faculty consider the development of a policy on on-line teaching and learning which is disseminated amongst staff and students and implemented effectively. It should also update its website..

D Professional development

The Review Team was impressed by the professional development and outreach activities of the Faculty, as mentioned in the Self-Evaluation Report and Teaching and Learning Plan, and expanded on during meetings with staff. A budget of \$57,000 which includes \$27,000 from the Scholarship Index is being used for a variety of projects, including professional development courses for teachers. The Faculty is developing and tailoring a mentoring program that will meet the needs of teachers in the St George District. Teachers from participating schools are able to take courses at the university while Education students take their classes in the schools. Similar partnerships are being set up with other NSW Department of Education schools in the area, as well as with schools run by the Catholic Education Office. In other areas, MTeach classes are taught at schools so that teachers can be in-service at the same time. Further, the Faculty staff give short courses at school staff development days.

The Team commended the professional development and outreach activities of the Faculty. The engagement of staff with the professional education community through mentoring, input into school staff development days and in-service training with MTeach classes, was invaluable and should be expanded to other schools. The budget set aside for staff development is a positive sign of the Faculty's commitment to the professional development of its staff and the professional community.

E Research-led teaching

New appointments in the Faculty were designed to encompass a range of complementary disciplines and relevant curriculum areas with the aim of providing a stimulating research environment for students. The recently established research clusters, which bring together established and novice researchers, are seen by the Faculty to support and promote research as well as underpin scholarship in teaching. The Review Team was interested to see if teaching and learning within the Faculty was informed by research, what the student experiences of this were, and how the research clusters worked.

They found that the Faculty presented a positive research environment where students were learning from the research activities of staff. Undergraduate and postgraduate coursework students reported that they enjoyed being involved in staff research projects. They also appreciated that, compared to some other universities, courses at the University of Sydney were more embedded in theory and research. Postgraduate coursework students reported that they were provided with theories from Faculty staff and other researchers, encouraged to read them, form their own concepts and challenge them. It appears that, some research clusters were more active than others, not always benefiting postgraduate students equally.

The Review Team considered that there was evidence of connections between research and teaching in the Faculty. Staff research has been integrated into teaching with good outcomes for students. It recommends that there should be more opportunities for staff and student research collaboration as this was appreciated by all students.

F Master of Teaching (MTeach) program

The Master of Teaching (MTeach) program, introduced in 1996, uses an inquiry and problem based approach to teaching and learning. A non-graded criterion-based approach has been carefully developed which allows students to work collaboratively rather than competitively. The Review Team was interested in hearing staff and students' perceptions about the course, together with the value of the assessment process.

All staff reported that they thought that this innovative program was highly esteemed within the professional community. The Team was told by one member of staff, who had been on the Ramsey Review of Teacher Education in NSW, that the MTeach program was considered by the some Review members to be a clear example of best practice. It was also reported that the Faculty is currently collaborating with the University of Toronto who are following much of the Faculty's evidence-based approach. Students who are currently doing the MTeach program felt that there had been a lot of thought put into the program, and that there is a good consultative approach for discussing changes.

The Team ascertained that assessment is by peers and staff and is closely related to criteria. Students told the Team that they thought the pass/fail system of assessment may act as a discouragement for those who wanted recognition for their work. They also thought that feedback as part of peer assessment was integral to the learning process. Assessment goals were clearly explained. Students found the workload enormous especially in second year.

The Review Team congratulates the Faculty on the success and recognition of the Master of Teaching program within the professional community. However, a review of assessment and a balance of the workload between the various years within the program is recommended.

G Graduate attributes, aims and outcomes

The Review Team formed the view, on the basis of evidence provided, that staff were aligning course outlines to the University's statement on graduate attributes, and that aims and outcomes were clearly explained to students at the beginning of their courses. Outcomes, skills and understanding, attributes of graduate in the BEd program and the university all appear in handbooks and on the Faculty website.

Staff explained that since 2000, assessment tasks have had to be clearly aligned with outcomes, and feedback is used to see where goals could be more explicit. The Review Team was advised that if courses were not aligned they were rejected both by the Faculty Teaching and Learning Committee and the Faculty Undergraduate Studies Committee. Senior staff informed the Team that a process of curriculum review had commenced and would continue into 2003.

Students knew that the overall objectives of most programs were clearly written in the handbook and explained by staff at the beginning of semester. The extent to which they were followed up during the remainder of the semester varied from one unit of study to another. Both staff and undergraduate students emphasised that being a reflective practitioner and a professional in the community was a strong focus within the Faculty.

Although there has been considerable work on defining and integrating the graduate attributes into the curriculum, efforts should be made to ensure a clearer understanding among staff and students of the University's attributes. As well as appearing in the handbooks, and being mentioned during the first lectures, the aims and outcomes of units should be at the forefront of students' attention throughout the semester.

The Review Team recommends that the Faculty more clearly integrate the graduate attributes into all units and effectively communicate these to students.

H Assessment

During the visit the Review Team explored issues concerning assessment criteria, workload, credit points and feedback to students. They noted that the number of 2 credit point units posed a challenge for the Faculty as they sought to define credit points in terms of assessment and student effort. The Team heard that the Faculty was preparing to address the problem, and that there would be a new Faculty policy on assessment. Staff acknowledged that the students thought they were assessed too much, particularly in the 2 credit point units. Students felt that assignments tended to be open-ended leading to some of them putting more effort into tasks that the lecturer intended. Students wanted greater integration of similar subjects for assessment purposes.

Students appreciated the fact that in Education 1 they were provided with feedback on two drafts of their essays before having to submit the final version. Staff explained that this strategy allowed them to identify students at risk. Senior staff advised the Team that there was both peer assessment and staff feedback on assignments, but that they did not think it appropriate for peers to play a role in the final feedback. Peer assessment by postgraduate coursework students was seen by them to be part of the learning process. Students showed an appreciation of the heavy workload imposed on staff by the short turn around time for return of assignments.

The Review Team commends the Faculty on the improvements it is making in the area of assessment and encourages the Faculty in its commitment to achieving a better balance with students' workloads and achieving greater consistency in providing adequate and timely feedback on assessment.

I Evaluation

It was clear that staff responded positively to student feedback and that evaluation was an ongoing process within the Faculty. Staff mentioned a number of improvements that had been undertaken in units as a result of student feedback, including the reworking of the BEd Primary course, the restructuring of the Science Foundation course, and the inclusion of a specialised practicum for Special Education students. Of particular note, is the success of the negotiated curriculum used as a vehicle for evaluation and also approaching the students as adult learners. Students often did not see the benefit of their feedback but knew that it was modifying units for subsequent students.

J Research supervision and training

The Review Team noted an ongoing improvement in the area of research training within the Faculty. The senior staff indicated that completion rates have improved, and that more staff were now able to supervise research students. The Faculty benchmarks completion rates with the University of Melbourne, who have a similar profile. The postgraduate research students reported that there is now more encouragement to complete than there had been previously, and that there is a sense that the Faculty are here to support them in their studies. They appreciated the introduction of the completion scholarships⁴ which provide financial incentive to complete their theses. Research training in the Faculty was believed to compare favourably with other universities by the postgraduate research students.

Staff and students commented on the value of the induction program arranged by the Faculty and the Postgraduate Education Students Association (PESA). Students were appreciative of the opportunities to present their research at forums and conferences organised by PESA. They advised that they saw this as preparation for future academic work.

On the subject of research supervision, and despite improvements, there was a need for a more consistent approach across the schools and for staff development in this area. The Faculty is currently working on research supervision documentation, commencing with the handbook for supervisors. Staff and students were aware of the training for postgraduate supervisors provided by the Institute of Teaching and Learning. The postgraduate research students felt that there needed to be stronger involvement of the Faculty with the Institute in obtaining information about supervision, and that it would be beneficial if all supervisors undertook the ITL Postgraduate Supervision Development Program.

Staff and students told the Team that the student progress interview was effective. Senior staff felt that the opportunity for students to comment in the absence of their supervisors was a good practice, and students preferred the interview to written comments. However students would prefer more consistency in the timing of the interview.

The Review Team commends the Faculty for the ongoing improvements that are being made in the area of research training, including the increase in completion rates, the research seminars, and the introduction of completion scholarships. There needs to be more emphasis now on staff development for research supervision purposes. They recommend that supervisors be encouraged to undertake the Institute of Teaching and Learning's Postgraduate Supervision Development Program.

K Messages to the Dean from students and staff

At the end of each interview, staff, undergraduate students, postgraduate research students, and postgraduate coursework students were all asked what messages they would like the Review Team to pass onto the Dean of the Faculty. The following responses were received:

i Staff

- Pleased to be part of the Faculty. After a number of years of cuts and restructuring, this year there is a better collegial atmosphere, things are improving and there is more money.
- Upset about the impending move of the Curriculum Resources Library to the Fisher Library. The resources in the library are valuable, not available elsewhere, and therefore will not be readily accessible in their new location. The move of the library will impinge on the quality of teaching.

³ Offered by both the Faculty and the Research Office.

⁴ Offered by both the Faculty and the Research Office.

ii Undergraduate students

- There should be an emphasis on the practicum being a more successful and enjoyable experience. More practicum and/or observations are needed in the first years of the course.
- The Faculty now makes its expectations of students clear.
- Feedback and communication is important.
- More information about other faculties, particularly for those doing double degrees is required.
- Technology is not covered in the course even though all advertisements about the profession mention its use in the classroom.

iii Postgraduate research students

- Need new leadership in terms of staff and student connections.
- Consistency and coordination need looking at – at the moment all the bits are present but are not together.
- Is it possible to be involved in the research being undertaken by staff? We would pick up research skills better with collaborative research.

iv Postgraduate coursework students

- Satisfaction that the course was of a good standard. Staff are available, approachable and have fantastic communication skills
- Should be made clearer that it is a professional development course and that not everything one learns during it is examinable.
- Keep doing what you are doing and expect more of us.
- Do something about administration – it is very patchy.
- Level of exchange – the delivery far exceeds what we expected to get.

L Concluding comments

After the visit, the Review Team concluded that the Faculty is delivering effectively on its mission of providing world class teacher education, undergraduate and postgraduate courses. This is valued by students, staff, the profession and the community. There are a number of areas of good practice within the Faculty, including the Master of Teaching course, philosophy and quality of teaching and learning, definition and integration of graduate attributes, assessment, research training, professional development and benchmarking. Some areas that might be considered for improvement include dissemination of an on-line learning policy, balancing of student workloads, development of postgraduate supervisors, integration of staff and student research interests, and the establishment of communication channels for practicums.

These findings were communicated to the Dean of the Faculty of Education at the conclusion of the visit and through the *Summary Report of the Findings of the Review Team* which was sent to the Faculty on 14 May 2002.

4 AREAS OF GOOD PRACTICE

The following areas of good practice have been identified⁵:

A Philosophy of teaching and learning

The Faculty is to be commended on its innovative and successful approach to teaching and learning and its success in delivering best-practice education, which is recognised both internationally and

⁵ Based on the Self-Evaluation Report, the Teaching and Learning Plan and the findings of the Review Visit.

nationally. The Review Team considered that the progressive approach shown by the Faculty towards collaborative problem solving, the professional development of teachers, the emphasis placed on the social context of teaching, and the preparation of students as lifelong learners were areas in which the Faculty should be particularly commended. *(See Section 3.B)*

B Quality of teaching and learning

Overall, the Faculty provides a high standard of teaching and learning. The Review Team commends the Faculty on the creation of the position of Associate Dean (Teaching and Learning), which is proving to be very effective and contributing to a renewed focus on the quality of teaching and learning now present within the Faculty. The leadership of the Associate Dean (Teaching and Learning) is appreciated by all staff. *(See Section 3.C)*

C Professional development

The professional development and outreach activities of the Faculty, in particular liaison with the St George District and North Curl Curl schools, are commended. The engagement of staff with the professional community through mentoring, input into school staff development days and in-service training with MTeach classes, was invaluable and should be expanded to other schools. The budget set aside for staff development is a positive sign of the Faculty's commitment to the professional development of its staff, students and the professional community. *(See Section 3.D)*

D Research-led teaching

The Review Team considered that there was evidence of connections between research and teaching in the Faculty. Staff research has been integrated into teaching with good outcomes for students. It recommends that there should be more opportunities for staff and student research collaboration as this was appreciated by all students. *(See Section 3.E)*

E Master of Teaching (MTeach) program

The Review Team congratulates the Faculty on the success and recognition of the Master of Teaching program within the professional community. However, a review of assessment and a balance of the workload between the various years is recommended. *(See Section 3.F)*

F Assessment

The Review Team believed that the Faculty was working hard towards making improvements in the area of assessment and noted that a Faculty assessment policy was being developed. The Team noted that staff were aware of the heavy student workload, in particular in regard to the 2 credit point units, and were looking at ways to redress the issue.

The Review Team commends the Faculty on the improvements it is making in the area of assessment and encourages the Faculty in its commitment to achieving a better balance with students' workloads and achieving greater consistency in providing adequate and timely feedback on assessment. *(See Section 3.H)*

G Evaluation

The Faculty is responding well to feedback from student evaluations and a number of changes have been made to units of study as a result – for example the restructuring of the Science Foundations Unit, the reworking of the BEd course and the introduction of specialised practicum for Special Education students. Of particular note, is the success of the negotiated curriculum used as a vehicle for evaluation and also approaching students as adult learners. *(See Section 3.I)*

H Research training

The Faculty is commended for its attempts to improve aspects of research training. There is now more encouragement and support for research students within the Faculty. Collaboration between the Faculty and the Postgraduate Education Students Association in the induction program, forums and research seminars was important to the students. The introduction of completion scholarships, which enables students to complete their thesis without undue financial hardship, is seen as a positive move. (See Section 3.J)

I Benchmarking

Benchmarking activities by the Faculty include the philosophy of teaching and learning with the University of Waikato and completion rates for postgraduate research students with the University of Melbourne. The Review Team commends the Faculty for its approach to benchmarking. It suggests that it continues its benchmarking activities with other universities, in particular those in the Group of Eight. (See Section 3.B)

5 AREAS OF CONSIDERATION FOR IMPROVEMENT

A Faculty restructuring

Overall, staff are satisfied with the present restructure. The Review Team suggests that greater emphasis on inter-school coordination will facilitate this further. They commend the Faculty for providing staff with the opportunity to take on senior administrative/ coordinator roles is welcomed, and suggest that other staff be given the opportunity to shadow these positions to enhance their professional development. (See Section 3.A)

B Quality of teaching and learning

i Teaching and Learning Plan

More emphasis should be placed on the content and rationale of the Teaching and Learning Plan at the level of both staff and students. While staff were involved in the Plan's implementation, they will welcome greater involvement in its development. (See Section 3.C.i)

ii Practicum

The Review Team recommends that the Faculty consider providing more support to students before and during their practicum, although it is acknowledged that some supervisors go out of their way to provide excellent support. Students have expressed the need for a pre-practicum workshop and this is recommended. (See Section 3.C.iv)

iii On-line learning

On-line learning was perceived differently by staff and students. The Review Team recommends that the Faculty should have a policy on on-line teaching and learning which is disseminated appropriately and implemented effectively. It should also update its website. (See Section 3.C.v)

C Graduate attributes, aims and outcomes

Although there has been considerable work on defining and integrating the graduate attributes into the curriculum, efforts should be made to ensure a clearer understanding among staff and students of the University's attributes. As well as appearing in the handbooks, and being mentioned during the first lectures, the aims and outcomes of units should be at the forefront of students' attention throughout the semester.

The Review Team recommends that the Faculty more clearly integrate the graduate attributes into all units and effectively communicate these to students. (See Section 3.G)

D Research supervision

Although there has been good progress made by the Faculty in the area of research training, and students indicate that the support they get compares favourably with their understanding of what other universities provide, the Team believes that improvements are needed in the area of research supervision. They recommend that supervisors should be encouraged to undertake the Institute of Teaching and Learning's Postgraduate Supervision Development Program. (*See Section 3.J*)

The Team expresses its thanks and appreciation to the Dean, Prof. Geoffrey Sherington and his senior management group for an excellent presentation on the day of the review.

Prof Ann Brewer
Chair, Review Team
Acting Pro-Vice-Chancellor (Employee Relations)

10 July 2002

APPENDIX A: SUMMARY REPORT OF FINDINGS OF REVIEW TEAM

FACULTY OF EDUCATION ACADEMIC BOARD REVIEW VISIT

WEDNESDAY 4 APRIL 2002

SUMMARY REPORT OF THE FINDINGS OF THE REVIEW TEAM

The Academic Board Review Team, chaired by Prof. Ann Brewer, visited the Faculty of Education on Wednesday 20 March 4 April 2002 to review and evaluate academic planning and quality assurance systems within the Faculty their strategic approach to teaching and learning. Meetings were conducted Interviews were held with the following groups:

- The Dean, Prof. Geoff Sherington and senior academic staff
- Undergraduate students
- Postgraduate research students
- Postgraduate coursework students
- Faculty staff

This report is a short summary of the main findings of the Review Team as reported to the Dean of the Faculty, Professor Geoff Sherington, at the end of the visit.

AREAS OF GOOD PRACTICE

The Review Team identified noted a number of areas of good practices in the Faculty of Education:

Philosophy of Teaching and Learning

There was a very positive response from all groups with respect to the Faculty's philosophy of teaching and learning. The Faculty was commended on its :

progressive approach towards: -

- collaborative problem solving
- the professional development of professional teachers, and its reputation for this in on which it was leading the way in Australia
- creative use of the emphasising the social context in which teaching needs to be carried out is conducted
- preparation preparing of students to be lifelong learners
- its especially distinguished integration of teaching and research from elsewhere.

Graduate Attributes, Aims and Outcomes

There is considerable work being done towards defining and achieving the goal of appropriate graduate attributes and outcomes was recognized, as was the fact that the Faculty's programs were aimed well towards graduate attributes. integrating graduate attributes in various programs. In regard to this, a lot of emphasis was placed on reflection, collaboration and teamwork.

Research-led teaching

The Review Team considered that:

- there was a good connection between research and teaching in the Faculty;
- staff research had been well-integrated into teaching; and
- staff and students enjoyed good opportunities to engage in their own projects.

Assessment

The Review Team, and students, felt that the Faculty was working hard on making improvements in this area, especially with regard to student workload reduction, and acknowledged that many improvements had already been implemented. .

Evaluation

The Review Team noted that staff responded well to feedback from student evaluations, and that the majority of staff scored well. Of particular note was the success of the negotiated curriculum, in the MTeach program,, which is used as a vehicle for evaluation and also approaching: students welcomed being acknowledged as adult learners.

Teaching and Learning Quality

It was clear to the Review Team that the lecturing staff of the Faculty were good at what they do. The review team noted that the high quality of teaching and learning in the Faculty overall. Teachers, in the main, modelled good teaching practice and transferred this to their students were themselves a model of what they were teaching, and were very innovative. Appreciation in particular was expressed by many forof the leadership of the Associate Dean (Teaching and Learning).

Research Training

The Review Team noted that

there were ongoing improvement in the Faculty in research training.

Collaboration between the Faculty and the Postgraduate Education Students Association on support activities was an important element for research students. Students greatly appreciatedexpressed appreciation for the introduction of the completion scholarships.

Professional Development

The Review Team noted the outreach activities as well as the engagement of staff with the professional educational community. The introduction of a mentoring program for new staff was a good initiative. The budget set aside for the professional development of staff was also a positive sign of the Faculty's commitment towards professional development.

considered that the staff was working well with the professional community, and that mentoring was working well with staff.

Benchmarking

The Faculty was effective in its approach to benchmarking.

AREAS FOR CONSIDERATION

The Review Team identified the following areas that might be considered for improvement:

- The Faculty may wish toA more direct articulatione more overtly to both staff and to students of the University of Sydney’s graduate attributes. It is important that the graduate attributes be more clearly integrated into all programs and effectively communicated to students;the desired graduate attributes, aims and out comes, and the way they fit into those of the University as a whole
- The Faculty couldA better articulation between aims of assessment more clearly and learning outcomes would aim forlead to more balanced against student workloads and help ensure students receive adequate and timely feedback on assessment;
- There appeared to be a patchy response to the Faculty’s online learning policy, with different responses from staff and students.
- A policy on online teaching and learning which is disseminated appropriately and implemented effectively;
- Improved opportunity for supervisor developmentIn research training, the overall development of supervisors could be improved; thea better integration of Faculty’s research strengths with staff and student research interests; greater opportunity for staff-student research collaboration;
- Enhanced coordination among the various portfolios, line management and staff with particular focus on the ‘restructure’;use and value of research clusters would bear closer examination, because students enjoy collaboration with academic staff on research projects
- A review of assessment and balance of workload between the various years in There appeared to be too little assessment in Year 1 and too much in Year 2 of the M.Teach;.
- Establishment of cCommunication channels e.g. online and structured peer support need to be established during the practicum; and
- There is a need for a systematic evaluation and feedback arrangement across the FacultyMore emphasis needs to be placed on the content and rationale of the Faculty’s Teaching and Learning Plan at the level of both staff and students.

GENERALLY

The message to the Dean was very positive, with some areas of improvement highlighted.

Professor Ann Brewer
Chair, Review Team

APPENDIX B: LIST OF DOCUMENTS SUPPLIED BY THE FACULTY

1. Faculty Self Evaluation Report
2. Courses offered by the Faculty of Education
3. Faculty of Education Strategic Plan for Teaching and Learning
4. Faculty of Education Undergraduate Handbook excerpts
5. Faculty of Education M.Teach Handbook excerpts
6. EDUCH4013 – Adapted PDHPE Assessment tasks 2001
7. Proposals for new units of study
8. Student load by Faculty and Funding
9. Postgraduate Enrolments by Course
10. Enrolments by level
11. Undergraduate Enrolments by Course
12. 2000 SCEQ Data
13. Postgraduate completion rates

APPENDIX C: FACULTY SELF-EVALUATION REPORT

Faculty of Education

Self Evaluation Report 2001

Introduction: The Context

Currently one of the largest and most highly respected Education Faculties in Australia, the Faculty of Education, University of Sydney offers innovative undergraduate and postgraduate education courses focussing on both the professional education of teachers and the study of education as a social science. Because many of the Faculty's students are preservice and postgraduate teachers, teaching and learning processes are constantly scrutinised across university, in school and out of school contexts.

There are a broad range of distinct but interrelated patterns of courses and these are listed as Appendix 1. The Faculty offers a number of joint degrees with other Faculties and this year introduced a B.Ed (Design and Technology) with Sydney Institute of TAFE. In addition in 2001 the Faculty has entered an innovative arrangement with the new Oatley Senior campus with two joint teaching appointments bringing teachers, lecturers and students closer together in their explorations of teaching and learning. Expertise from the Faculty is currently being used to negotiate, plan and design curriculum pathways and teaching issues at the Orange campus of the university.

In February 2001, restructuring saw three existing schools become two: the School of Policy and Practice and the School of Development and Learning. Each school now has a series of collegial research clusters to support research, teaching and professional development. An Associate Dean (Teaching and Learning) was also recreated as part of the restructuring process in order to demonstrate a renewed focus on the quality of teaching and learning within the Faculty.

In the Faculty's Teaching and Learning Strategic Plan for 2000-2004 (Appendix 2), three major goals were developed that articulate strongly with the university's goals. These are:

- To continue to make a significant contribution to the enhancement of the profession;
- To maintain and enhance the Faculty's position as an outstanding provider of high quality undergraduate and postgraduate teaching; and
- To maintain a high level of exemplary service to the community.

In turn these relate to the Faculty's mission which is to provide world class teacher education undergraduate and postgraduate programs known to be valued by students, the profession and the community.

In addressing the Faculty Plan's goals for 2001, it was initially important to ensure understanding and ownership of new quality assurance practices in the University. As a result, the Faculty's Teaching and Learning Committee recently organised a forum to ensure that all staff were aware of these new practices. In July 2001, all staff will also be involved in a Faculty Retreat that aims to allow staff to reflect on current challenges for the future of teacher education in light of the recent Ramsay Review (2000) and other changes in the contexts of teaching and to think strategically about the Faculty's role in continuing to develop innovative programs.

1. Graduate attributes, aims and outcomes: 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 Undergraduate and Postgraduate Division Committees ensure that each course and unit has an appropriate set of published aims and outcomes (see examples in Appendix 3 & 4). Course Co-ordinators also examine unit outlines.

The Desirable Attributes of Beginning Teachers (MACTEQ, 1995) has been used as a framework in developing a set of aims and outcomes for both Bachelor of Education and Master of Teaching programs. Each Master of Education coursework designated degree also has a set of aims and outcomes which is stated in course materials. Learning aims and outcomes are published

for students in course handbooks as well as on the Faculty website. Course coordinators hold information and orientation meetings at the beginning of each year to ensure students are aware of course expectations. Staff are required to link outcomes to specific assessment tasks and include criteria (see Appendix 5 as an example). Individual unit lecturers also ensure expectations are clearly communicated to students early in the semester in lectures and tutorials. Students are invited to seek further clarification where needed and staff are expected to display regular consultation times on their office noticeboard. Student evaluations allow students to comment on the articulation of assessment with intended unit outcomes but this is usually completed at the end of a unit or course. Responses to issues raised in student evaluations are reflected in changes to the structure organisation and curriculum of courses. Internal and external course reviews regularly review outcomes and recommendations from these reviews are continually adopted to ensure improvement.

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?

There are numerous strategies Faculty employs to ensure the integration of research into its courses. First, staff with expertise in a particular discipline or in a particular curriculum area or in pedagogy are employed through careful selection processes. As a result, Faculty has a number of staff who are considered leaders in their field. These fields include:

- Gender Issues in Education
- History of Education
- Comparative and International Education
- Civics Education
- Literacy Education
- Drama in Education
- Management and Leadership
- Health Education
- Program Evaluation
- History Curriculum
- The use of textbooks in schools
- Mathematics Education
- Curriculum Studies in Teacher Education
- Reflective Practice in Education
- Education Policy
- Physical Education, and
- Special Education

Such leadership provides a stimulating context in which students can learn and ultimately generate their own research studies. Second, staff are encouraged to integrate recent developments in research, and Faculty seed grants are regularly provided to enable staff to research their own practice. Regular colloquia and seminars also ensure that visiting scholars share their research with Faculty staff. The effectiveness of Faculty teaching and learning processes are currently being researched. Examples of current projects include:

- (i) the investigation of the perspectives of the last three cohorts of B Ed and M Teach graduates about their preservice education through questionnaire, interview and focus group discussion;
- (ii) a research study which investigates the health of first year education students; and
- (iii) a grant from the CHASS Teaching Improvement Fund in 2001 to investigate the effectiveness of the pedagogy involved in E-line learning.

In addition, the establishment of research clusters in the newly restructured schools will hopefully encourage the further integration of research onto teaching.

In the example of the Master of Teaching (M Teach) course, introduced in 1996, current research across the professions necessitated a completely new degree with the use of an inquiry and case based approach to teaching and learning. In the Bachelor of Education (B Ed) programs, the use of critically reflective approaches in the development of primary and secondary teachers, is a direct result of fourteen years of research in the Faculty. Both the M Teach and the B Ed programs have been

internationally recognised as providing distinctive approaches to teacher education. The M.Teach program has attracted particular interest in Canada. Ontario Studies in Education at the University of Toronto, have begun their own M Teach and plans for a cohort of science students from McMasters University to undertake the M Teach in our own Faculty are currently underway.

Third, Faculty's criteria for recognising staff contributions to excellent teaching includes asking nominees to provide evidence of the integration of research in their teaching at both undergraduate and postgraduate levels. Finally, in 2001, an Incentive Scheme was introduced to recognise staff's research and scholarship in teaching achievements.

3. How does the Faculty ensure that student assessment is effective and contributes to learning and that the assessment processes are well understood by students?

(a) Methods for ensuring that assessments link to intended learning outcomes:

Staff ensure that teaching and learning strategies and activities in course units are designed to allow students to engage with and practice the knowledge, skills, values and attitudes, strategies and understandings intended. Assessment criteria must also be issued to all students. In addition, a range of professional experiences allow students to work towards intended learning outcomes related to their particular area of teaching. Assessment tasks in particular years of various programs are examined through program meetings to ensure that a coherent range of assessment tasks allow for the accommodation of different learning styles and clearly reflect course outcomes. In the M Teach, a non-graded criterion based approach has been carefully developed and allows students to work collaboratively rather than competitively. In Education 1 and some postgraduate courses, students are required to submit drafts of assignments before final submission. Assessment tasks early in the semester in some program units also allow students to receive feedback about their understandings and skills and seek further support if necessary.

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

Many assessment tasks are negotiated with students, especially in final year units. Staff ensure that criteria for assessment tasks are explicitly in writing as are students' right to appeal. Cross marking ensures that assessment standards are equitable. Group double marking was trialled in semester one 2001 for Education I. Students with learning difficulties are also accommodated, for example, staff provide copies of overheads for those who are visually challenged. Assignment cover sheets are in future to have student ID number rather than name in line with University assessment guidelines.

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

With increasing student numbers and the shorter time frame for the processing of student assignments and results, the Faculty acknowledges that this is an area needing improvement in some course units. Staff endeavour to return student assignments with written comments within four weeks of receipt or less.

Peer review and feedback is a feature of many course units and also enables students to receive a range of comments.

In the final year B.Ed secondary unit in teaching and learning this year staff responded to student discussion through a structured on-line discussion room, thus increasing the opportunity for students to work as 'critical' friends.

4. How does the Faculty ensure the quality of its teaching and recognise good teaching?

It is important to note that high proportion of Faculty Staff have teaching credentials and have taught successfully in other contexts.

The Faculty's Teaching and Learning Committee meets regularly. One of its purposes is to find ways to recognise and celebrate good teaching. In previous years this had been through annual Faculty Teaching Excellence Awards. Some staff, however, find this process competitive and the Faculty Teaching and Learning Committee is currently considering other ways to recognise and celebrate excellent teaching. Other forms of recognition are currently being explored. New units of study must meet specified criteria before approval by the Undergraduate Studies Committee (see Appendix 6). Proposed courses must demonstrate responsiveness to recent research in the area of study.

All course units are evaluated at their completion either using the ITL's format or a specifically instrument. Staff then submit summaries of these evaluations to their Heads of School with planned responses to issues raised. Currently the Teaching and Learning Committee is investigating a Faculty designed questionnaire protocol to use in addition to the ITL proforma. Lengthy exit questionnaires are completed in some courses utilising outcomes based criteria as are regular focus group discussions. All feedback is used to revise and improve units. The Faculty needs to find more effective ways to communicate to students the impact of their feedback in course and unit revision.

Faculty courses are regularly reviewed formally. In 2001 the M.Ed postgraduate coursework and the EdD are under review. All external review committees are required to have an external member. The External Advisory Committees for both Primary and Secondary Courses as well as the Practicum Advisory Committee have a majority of external members who provide valuable feedback on Faculty courses as do employers interviewing final year students.

Staff are encouraged to attend professional development activities and to showcase their innovative practices in teaching and learning at relevant forums. The Centre for Practitioner research holds regular twilight seminars which look at important professional issues of practice and regularly attract staff from Education and other faculties.

In 2002 the Faculty has identified a budget line of \$30,000 for Staff Professional Development in the area of teaching and learning.

5. What arrangements does the Faculty have in place to monitor and support student progression?

The large majority of course units in Faculty programs, particularly in the B.Ed and M.Teach are based on cumulative assessment. This provides early and ongoing opportunity to monitor and support student progression. Education I staff identify students considered to be at risk and referrals are made to the Learning Assistance Centre as part of a planned introduction to research and writing skills required for study at university. It is important to note, however, that some of these students choose not to avail themselves of these support services which include the Learning Assistance Centre, Counselling Centre, Mathematics Learning Centre. Many students do, however, benefit from this initiative.

Regular course meetings are used to identify students at risk and staff seek to counsel and advise these students where appropriate. Students are regularly referred to the University's support services. Course co-ordinators play a particularly important role in advising staff of student welfare issues and possible influence on student progression.

In the M.Teach all applicants are interviewed. A recent program meeting recommended that all international students without a first degree in English would be interviewed by TESOL lecturers. It is hoped that this strategy will identify those students whose first language is not English and who, based on previous experience, may well have difficulty with classroom communication in NSW schools. Such a strategy will provide opportunity for early support of these students.

6. How does the Faculty ensure the quality of research supervision and training?

The Faculty Graduate Studies Committee oversees all aspects of postgraduate coursework, research and supervision. All postgraduate co-ordinators are part of the Committee. All research students have a supervisor and associate supervisor with appropriate qualifications and expertise and review meetings are conducted annually. Each student must now present a specific research proposal for assessment. The annual reporting system continues to monitor student progress. The Undergraduate Honours program also helps develop students research skills.

There is an active Postgraduate Education Students' Association which organises seminars and forums regularly to allow students to share their research and invite input from other students and staff. The Faculty acknowledges the need for ongoing staff professional development in this area. Staff are encouraged to attend university training courses in supervision. While postgraduate students are represented on Faculty committees, the Faculty also needs to find ways to continue to improve its communication with its research students. The new research clusters will also address this issue. All fulltime research students are provided with desk space and a computer.

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 Teaching and Learning Committee recently met with Associate Professor Mike Prosser and Simon Carlile to consider the graduate survey data. The 1999 and 2000 SCEQ survey data clearly demonstrate that both undergraduate and postgraduate studies are concerned about clear goals and standards. It is envisaged that the Teaching and Learning Committee will develop mechanisms to act on these concerns following the July retreat. Performance indicators are also being considered. There is concern about the fulltime employment performance indicator because it is so difficult to ascertain how many of the Faculty graduates are in fulltime employment despite casual or temporary status with employers because of the general oversupply of teachers for the past fifteen years. The current research project which with survey graduates from 1999-2001 should also provide relevant data about fulltime employment.

The Associate Dean (Teaching and Learning) has recently joined the Evaluation and Quality Assurance Working Party and the CHASS Teaching and Learning Committee. In addition, the First Year Experience Working Party Representative reports to the Teaching and Learning Committee. In this way the Faculty is attempting to ensure that its policies are consistent with University expectations.

In terms of actioning the Faculty's Teaching and Learning plan in 2001, it is imperative that the Faculty continue to develop its partnerships with schools to ensure optimal professional experiences for students. Recent initiatives include:

- (i) Two Sesqui Centenary Lectureships as part of an innovative partnership with Georges River Senior College, Oatley. One of these appointments was in Teaching and Learning, the other in Science. Both appointments will focus on improving the transition between school and university as well as the partnerships between the Faculty and the school. In addition the Faculty has launched an initiative with the Department of Education and Training's St George District to further develop our relationships with schools and co-operating teachers.
- (ii) Education I, II and III is currently being reviewed with the aim of improving its relevance and quality for preservice teachers following student feedback. In this review the Faculty will seek to address the need for a First Year Co-ordinator.
- (iii) A Teaching Improvement grant enabled the one year appointment of Professor Max Giardina to assist in the development of on-line learning facilities for staff and students.
- (iv) The current development of the secondary combined degrees (B.Ed/B.Sc, B.Ed/Arts, B.Ed/Economics) was a result of student feedback and consultation.

References

- NSW Ministerial Advisory Council on Quality of Teaching (1995). *Desirable Attributes of Beginning Teachers*.
- Ramsey, G. (2000). *Quality matters. Revitalising Teaching: Report of the Review of Teacher Education*, Sydney: New South Wales. Department of Education and Training.

Relevant websites

- Faculty of Education: <http://www.edfac.usyd.edu.au>
Master of Teaching: <http://alex.edfac.usyd.edu.au>

FACULTY OF EDUCATION

Strategic Plan for Teaching and Learning 2000-2004

(Revised September 2001)

Part 1. Faculty Strategic Plan for Teaching and Learning 2000-2004

(Revised 2001)

The Faculty of Education in the University of Sydney focuses on the professional education of teachers, the study of education as a social science, the extension through research of knowledge in the field of education, and the provision of special services related to education, to government and community agencies and policy makers. To achieve these ends, the Faculty commits to teaching its undergraduate and postgraduate students through courses which exemplify best teaching practices. It will maintain and enhance its position as an outstanding provider of high quality undergraduate and postgraduate teaching both in Australia and internationally. In so doing, it supports the University's teaching goals and strategic and operational objectives, in particular the University's goal to maintain and enhance its position as an outstanding provider of undergraduate and postgraduate teaching, both in Australia and internationally. The Faculty has taken a leadership role in responding positively to the Ramsey Review of Teacher Education in NSW. The recommendations of Quality Matters are currently being considered as part of the Faculty's review of its Professional Experiences and External Partnerships. This review will make recommendations to the November 2001 Faculty meeting.

The Faculty of Education's Teaching and Learning Plan relates to the University's goals and to the related goals of the Faculty of Education's Strategic Plan 2000-2004. In that Strategic Plan the Faculty has three major goals relevant to Teaching and Learning:

- to maintain and enhance its position as an outstanding provider of high quality undergraduate and postgraduate teaching, both in Australia and internationally (Major goal 1 in Faculty Strategic Plan: Teaching and Learning)
- to continue to make a significant contribution to the enhancement of the professional practice of education (Major goal 5: Engagement with industry and the professions)
- to maintain a high level of exemplary service to the community (Major goal 7: Service to the community)

The Faculty of Education's Teaching Plan 2000-2004 is based on reflection upon its teaching strengths and weaknesses, together with consideration of the challenges it faces and opportunities available to it as a leading Faculty of Education. One challenge it accepts is to regularly review and document its teaching aims and objectives, together with qualitative and quantitative evidence of the extent to which those aims have been achieved. The Faculty's Teaching Plan commits to an iterative review process which primarily serves the purposes of achieving excellence in pedagogy which is recognised, experienced and validated by its students, its graduates and those associated with the Faculty. As part of this ongoing review process the Faculty was restructured in February 2001. Three schools became two: the School of Policy and Practice and the School of Development and Learning. Each school now has a series of collegial research clusters to support the teaching and research interests of both staff and students. As part of this restructuring the Faculty also re-established the position of Associate Dean (Teaching).

It should also be noted that the Faculty has had a long term commitment to the practice of benchmarking with the Faculties of Education at the University of Melbourne and the Queensland University of Technology. The Faculty continues to maintain above average results on the Student Course Experience Questionnaire including Good Teaching, Clear Goals and Standards, Appropriate Workload, Generic Skills and Overall Satisfaction. The Faculty Teaching and Learning Committee will look more closely at the Appropriate Workload Scale in 2002 as this was the area where students indicated most concerns.

<p>Mission: To provide world class teacher education undergraduate and postgraduate programs known to be valued by students, the profession and the general community</p>
--

Background

The Faculty of Education is located in the College of Humanities and Social Sciences. It is physically situated in a relatively new building and its annex on the central campus of the University which houses all the Faculty's staff and provides most of the Faculty's teaching spaces. It is one of the largest Faculties of Education in the country. In 1999 the student load in the Faculty of Education (excluding local and International fee-paying) was 1172.8 EFTSU. This is projected to grow to 1326.8 in 2002. Of this load, approximately 87% is undergraduate.

The Faculty of Education regards innovative teaching and learning as central to all academic tasks including research, professional development and administration. Our students and the professional community of which we are part expect that the Faculty offers quality pedagogy, responsive to current needs and capable of graduating students well prepared for professional life as educators in schools, tertiary institutions and educational organisations here and overseas. Teaching and learning within the Faculty, and elsewhere, has to be responsive to the increased expectation that educators will be able to prepare students for careers in an ever changing workforce, as well as responsive to dramatic technological changes.

Pedagogy within the Faculty is closely linked with research so that course objectives not only reflect those social and cultural changes which influence educational policies and practices but also so that courses are underpinned by principles of best practice in teaching and learning. The Teaching Plan for the Faculty 2000-2004 reflects the iterative and generative nature of constructing courses which allow

students to develop their individual strengths and interests while also developing the abilities, attitudes and understandings most likely to prepare them for the challenging and dynamic realities of professional life in education.

As a large Faculty committed to meeting the complex, diverse and specialised needs of its undergraduate and postgraduate students, the Faculty of Education offers a number of courses:

Undergraduate Programs

Bachelor of Education (Primary Education)
Bachelor of Education (Secondary Education) (Human Movement and Health Education)
Bachelor of Education (Secondary: Humanities and Social Sciences)/Bachelor of Arts
Bachelor of Education (Secondary Education: Science)/Bachelor of Science
Bachelor of Education (Secondary Education: Mathematics)/Bachelor of Science
Bachelor of Education (Secondary Education: Psychology)/Bachelor of Science
Bachelor of Education (Secondary Education: Psychology)/Bachelor of Arts
Bachelor of Education (Secondary Education: Design and Technology)
Bachelor of Teaching

Graduate Coursework Programs

Master of Teaching
Graduate Certificate in Educational Studies
Graduate Certificate in Teaching English as a Foreign Language
Graduate Diploma in Educational Studies
Graduate Diploma in Teaching English as a Foreign Language
Graduate Diploma in International Education
Master of Education (designated areas):
 Management and Human Resource Development
 Information Technology in Education
 Educational Psychology
 Health Education
 English Literacy and Drama in Education
 Research Methodology
 Special Education
 Teaching and Curriculum Studies
 TESOL/Languages
 Vocational Education and Training
 Research degrees
 Master of Philosophy in Education
 Doctor of Education
 PhD

It should be noted that with the introduction in 2000 of the Combined Bachelor Degree courses with the Faculties of Arts, Economics and Science the students' experience in their discipline areas will be enhanced. This will allow the Faculty to strengthen its links with the Faculties associated with the courses. It is proposed to seek a closer association with their Teaching Committees by sharing expertise through inter-Faculty membership of Teaching Committees.

The following provides a summary of the Faculty's specific strengths and weaknesses as well as potential threats and opportunities.

Strengths

- the positive result evidenced by the Faculty's SCEQ and CEQ data.
- the calibre of the undergraduate and postgraduate students who choose to study in the Faculty as evidenced in UAI cut-off and in the varied and diverse backgrounds of M.Teach students.
- the comprehensive nature of the Faculty's courses and their standing in the education profession, nationally and internationally.

- the targeting of Faculty students for employment in educational institutions as revealed in NSW DET Targeted Recruitment Program.
- the comprehensive expertise of the Faculty's staff across various fields of teaching and learning recognised in part through a number of University Teaching Excellence Awards, as well as published research.
- its leadership in educational innovation, for example, its responsiveness to the Teacher Education Review, chaired by Dr Gregor Ramsey.
- its response to changing demand and market forces, for example, the targeting of market demand in the Masters courses leading to maintenance of numbers, in contrast to other Faculties of Education, and similarly the introduction of double degree undergraduate courses to allow flexible career choices.
- its strong links with the profession through the Industry Advisory Committee, the Associated Schools program in the Practicum, the Centre for Practitioner Research and Sydney Principals' Institute.
- the innovative inquiry/case based approach to teacher education offered in the M.Teach.
- its leadership in literacy education evidenced in staff scholarship and research in the field, the active roles undertaken by staff in advising the NSW Board of Studies, Government bodies, international agencies, HSC examination committees, and the advisory and support role played by the Children's Centre.
- its offering of expertise in curriculum development to other Faculties such as the Faculty of Dentistry, and to Centres such as the National Voice Centre.

Weaknesses

- the need for up-to-date use of information technology in teaching and learning experiences.
- a need to continue streamlining some aspects of the Faculty's degree and course structure to optimise staff resources deployed in teaching.
- the small number of graduates (compared with other university Faculties of Education) who engage in full-time study after graduating.

Threats

- a possibility that the predicted shortage of teachers could lead to pressure to lower accreditation standards.
- the increasing workload and low morale of the teaching profession which could lead to fewer postgraduate coursework enrolments.

Opportunities

- to use the current Teacher Education Review in NSW to revise Professional Experiences offered in the Faculty and to develop our partnerships with schools.
- to provide more ongoing short professional development opportunities for teachers, including
- to further develop summer and international programs and flexible delivery of courses.
- to develop stronger associations with the wider professional community.
- to build on the improving financial position of the Faculty to strengthen its staffing profile.

The overall objectives of the Strategic Plan of the Plan are constructed with direct reference to the University Strategic Plan but with specific strategies relevant to the Faculty. These are summarised below.

Part 2. Faculty Operational Plan for Teaching and Learning 2000-2004

The specific management procedures designated to implement strategies and assess progress towards the strategic objectives of the Faculty of Education will focus in 2000-2004 on six of the University's Objectives, namely:

- 1. Attract an increasing proportion of high calibre students, both local and international.**
- 2. Provide curricula that are informed by current research, scholarship, creative works and professional practice.**
- 3. Provide a rich diversity of formal and informal learning opportunities and professional experiences for all students.**
- 4. Graduate educators who are well equipped to contribute successfully to the education profession and to the global society in which they live and work.**
- 5. Attract, develop and reward well qualified staff with a strong commitment to teaching informed by research.**
- 6. Improve facilities and teaching infrastructure.**

Faculty of Education Strategic and Operational Plan

Objectives	Strategies 2000 – 2004	Progress in 2001	2001-2002 Targets	Responsibility
<p>1. Attract an increasing proportion of high calibre students, both local and international consistent with current equity provisions</p>	<p>1.1 Develop Undergraduate Scholarships Schemes.</p> <p>Enhance the first year experience and communicate the resulting improvements to prospective students, parents and teachers (eg. Careers Days, school visits, and industry links).</p> <p>1.3 To improve the retention rate of students from first to second year.</p>	<p>1.1 A new scholarship in process of development for primary education.</p> <p>1.2 Education I Director – appointed for 2001.</p> <p>Involvement of Learning Centre in improving Education I experience.</p> <p>1.3 Trial an exit questionnaire for those students withdrawing.</p>	<p>a) Develop budget for Undergraduate and Postgraduate scholarships and criteria for their award consistent with equity issues. Implement recommendations of Education I, II & III review which include more in school and non school field experiences. Explore further observation and fieldwork opportunities at Oatley Senior College for Education I students. Explore further opportunities for international exchange opportunities.</p>	<p>a) Dean’s Advisory Committee and Awards Committee</p> <p>b) Education I, II and III Co-ordinators and staff.</p> <p>c) Education I staff, Principal at Oatley.</p> <p>d) Associate Dean (International and External Relations)</p>
<p>2. Provide curricula that are informed by current research, scholarship, creative works and professional practice, and are responsive to the needs of the many communities served by the University, employing bodies, educational institutions, industry.</p>	<p>2.1 Undertake program and course reviews utilising external consultants and benchmarking with University of Melbourne and QUT with particular attention to 3 areas in University of Sydney Student Course Experience Questionnaire and National CEQ data, (namely Clear Goals and Standards Scale, Appropriate Assessment Scale, and Appropriate Workload Scale)</p>	<p>Faculty scores on SCEQ and CEQ above National Average on most criteria.</p> <p>Benchmarking with Uni of Melbourne. Review of Education I, II & III curricula.</p> <p>Postgraduate course work programs reviewed in 2001. Recommendations being implemented.</p> <p>Curriculum development for years 3-5 of joint degrees with B.A., B.Sc and 2-4 of B.Ed (Design & Technology). Revision of curriculum</p> <p>Units of study regularly monitored by Committees (Undergraduate and Postgraduate)</p> <p>Faculty involved in all University recruitment initiatives.</p>	<p>a) Continue program and course reviews. (M.Teach in 2002).</p> <p>b) Incorporate the outcomes of the review of Education I, II & III experience in the provision of curricula.</p> <p>c) Continue to ensure all curriculum units of study require student familiarity with, and demonstrated competence in current syllabus requirements and familiarity with generic attributes of graduates.</p> <p>d) Continue links with University's student recruitment initiatives/school programs/career days</p> <p>e) Development of B.Ed joint degree with Psychology for School Counsellors</p>	<p>External Reviewer or External Consultative Committee/Heads of Depts./Associate Deans (Undergraduate/ Postgraduate)</p> <p>Education I, II and III Co-ordinators Course Co-ordinators</p> <p>Faculty Office, Associate Deans</p> <p>e) Undergraduate Studies Committee and Psychology Department.</p>

Objectives	Strategies 2000 – 2004	Progress in 2001	2001-2002 Targets	Responsibility
	2.2 Involve industry partners and professional organisations in course development and evaluation.	External Review Committees re-activated.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) Continue the External Review Committees involving all stakeholders. b) Pursue further dialogue with professional associations. 	<p>Associate Dean/Program Co-ordinators</p> <p>Associate Deans and Course Co-ordinators</p>
	2.3 Establish triennial review cycles for all programs, starting with B.Ed and postgraduate 2001, taking into account the need for Faculty teaching of combined degrees in 2002 and the need for integrated teaching across degree programs	<p>M.Ed Coursework program reviewed</p> <p>M.Teach Review commenced.</p> <p>T & L Committee considering ITL evaluation forms.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) Continue focus group discussions with students and other evaluation strategies tools to evaluate courses. b) Review of M.Teach. c) Develop evaluation items on ITL unit evaluation form. d) Further exploration of integrated units in some courses (eg B.Ed Primary) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) Associate Deans (Undergraduate and Postgraduate) b) Course Co-ordinators and Associate Deans c) Associate Dean (Teaching) d) Staff involved (eg. B.Ed Primary)
	2.4 Develop a process to assess the quality and impact of community service activities in teaching, curriculum development and policy development	Postponed to 2002 due to Faculty restructuring.	Evaluate effectiveness of new pilot program with St George district and pilot program of school based curriculum units in M.Teach.	Associate Deans
3. Provide a rich diversity of formal and informal learning opportunities for all students, challenging them and thus enabling them to reach their full potential.	<p>3.1 Review literacies education across programs with focus on</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) K-12 and tertiary perspective b) link with concept development c) students' own communicative abilities d) modelling best practices in literacies pedagogy to develop students' teaching and communicative abilities 	Postponed to 2002 due to Faculty restructuring and appointment of new staff in both primary and secondary English.	Develop review brief 2001 for start of review in 2002 and implementation during 2003.	English Language and Literacy Cluster

Objectives	Strategies 2000 – 2004	Progress in 2001	2001-2002 Targets	Responsibility
	3.2 Develop orientation for overseas students for whom student-centred/student managed learning might be new and challenging	Welcome and orientation activities for overseas students organised by Associate Dean (External Relations) and Postgraduate Education Students Association.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Informal survey of overseas students to determine their perceived needs in pedagogy at the end of their first year in the Faculty. • Revision of B.Teach program for overseas students as part of M.Teach Review. 	<p>a) Associate Dean (External and International Relations) Co-ordinator of International Programs, PESA</p> <p>b) M.Teach Course Co-ordinators</p>
	3.3 Thorough review of the First Year Experience to enhance and evaluate support for teaching and learning in Year 1.	<p>O-week activities.</p> <p>Library tour.</p> <p>Orientation meetings with Course Co-ordinators.</p> <p>Individual planning meetings with transfer students.</p> <p>Active social program organised by Education Society.</p> <p>Review of Science Foundation Course to meet student needs more effectively.</p>	<p>a) Continue involvement of Learning Centre in Education Experiences.</p> <p>b) Course Co-ordinators to continue to meet with First Year students in their program groups to monitor experiences in first year</p> <p>c) Trialling of new field experiences for Education I students.</p>	<p>a) Education I Co-ordinator with Learning Centre.</p> <p>b) Course Co-ordinators</p> <p>c) Professional Experiences Unit</p>
	3.4 Develop practicum and related field experiences central to preparation of professionals	<p>Working Party to review Professional Experiences and Partnerships after Faculty Retreat.</p> <p>Report to Faculty due in November.</p> <p>Two sesqui lectureships – joint appointments with Oatley Senior College. Other pilot projects (eg. Curl Curl North and St George District projects) in progress.</p>	<p>a) Establish Professional Experience Unit with a view to improving professional experiences and partnerships.</p> <p>b) Trialling of new patterns of professional experience eg. students placed in pairs in year 2, B.Ed (Primary).</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Appoint 4-5 Teaching Fellows to assist with supervision of professional experience, provide peer mentoring. • Further partnership with systems and schools to be explored and possibility of further joint appointments considered. • Liaise with professional associations to explore and develop other field experiences and school opportunities. • Revision of NSDS agreement 	<p>a) Associate Dean (Teaching)</p> <p>b) Professional Experiences Unit</p> <p>c) Dean and Dean's Selection Committee</p> <p>d) Associate Dean (Teaching) and Professional Experience Unit</p> <p>e) Associate Deans and Professional Experience Unit</p> <p>f) NSDS and Faculty staff</p>

Draft Two
2/08/2002

Objectives	Strategies 2000 – 2004	Progress in 2001	2001-2002 Targets	Responsibility
	3.5 Establish student mentoring practices across all programs with senior students mentoring others	Postponed to 2002 [Education I students offered ‘buddies’ in 2001 but not taken up.]	Consider more careful structuring of mentoring possibilities.	Associate Deans/Program and Course Co-ordinators
	3.6 Explore ways to equip students with generic skills needed for optimal life long learning	Link with 4.3 Postgraduate induction program conducted by Postgraduate students Induction Program (PESA).	Investigate ways to foster the development of the University’s Generic Attributes of Graduates in programs	Course Co-ordinators Associate Dean (Teaching)
4. The provision of graduates who are well equipped to contribute successfully to the education profession and to the global society in which they live and work.	4.1 Review effectiveness of career preparation through survey of recent graduates (1995-2000)	Research project commenced August 2001 to survey 1997-2001 cohorts about effectiveness of preservice preparation.	Questionnaires and focus group discussions with graduates from last 3 cohorts. Analysis of project data. Analysis of focus group and interview data. Discuss findings with Course Co-ordinators	Associate Dean (Teaching)

Objectives	Strategies 2000 – 2004	Progress in 2001	2001-2002 Targets	Responsibility
	4.2 Seek input from major employing authorities and the professions through advisory bodies and employer surveys.	Meetings with DET re improvement of professional experiences. Meetings with External Advisory Committee.	Continue External Advisory meetings in all programs.	Associate Deans and Course co-ordinators
	4.3 To incorporate generic and Faculty specific attributes of graduates into Faculty Handbooks and website and publications.	Revised Education I, II and III incorporated into Handbook and website. Program specific statements included in handbooks.	Link with 3.6	Faculty Office
5. Attract, develop and reward well qualified staff with a strong commitment to teaching informed by research and offer opportunities for teaching development.	5.1 To provide additional staff development and training in a range of teaching methods including IT and flexible learning modes.	Associate Professor Max Giardiana appointed. Several IT seminars held in 2001. Training of selected staff in WebCT opportunities. A new Chair in ICT in Education to be advertised in October 2001.	Make appointment of Associate Professor Information Technology - cross reference 6.1 Those staff trained in WebCT to mentor other staff. c) Mapping of current use of IT in course units for sharing with other Faculty members.	a) Dean and Selection Committee b) Maths, Science and Technology cluster c) Maths, Science and Technology cluster

Objectives	Strategies 2000 – 2004	Progress in 2001	2001-2002 Targets	Responsibility
	5.2 To encourage and recognise teaching which builds on scholarship and research.	Forum on Teaching and Learning held June 2001. Seminars on teaching in innovation and scholarship of teaching underway. Six staff involved in presentations in University Scholarly Inquiry Showcase.	(b) Revise Faculty Excellence in Teaching awards - cross reference 6.2a (c) Continue series of seminars about scholarship of teaching. (d) Proposed series of professional development seminars to support staff in researching teaching and learning experiences. (e) Staff encouraged to share innovative teaching and learning practices. (f) Workshops for staff interested in presenting and writing publishing about teaching in higher education.	Associate Dean (Teaching) T & L Committee
	5.3 To provide additional funding to support innovative teaching developments	Budget for teaching professional development established for 2002. Program of seminars on innovative teaching planned for 2002.	a) Link with 6.1	Dean, Dean's Advisory Committee, Associate Dean (Teaching)
6. Improvement of facilities and teaching infrastructure	6.1 Improve facilities for integration of IT into all course units	Appointment (1 year contract) of Associate Professor Max Giardiana to enable development of more flexible teaching and learning process. Update of Faculty web page. Update of M.Teach website Upgrade of computer facilities for staff & postgraduate students.	Five members of staff now trained with Web CT to mentor other staff in 2002. Flexible delivery of phase I M.Teach using Web CT to be trialled Sem 1 2002 with M.Teach students from McMasters, Canada. Regularly update Web page to showcase teaching innovations in Faculty d) Assess the needs of postgraduate students in terms of IT resources	Associate Professor (IT) and IT staff

Objectives	Strategies 2000 – 2004	Progress in 2001	2001-2002 Targets	Responsibility
	6.2 Creation of specific funds from Faculty Budget to support grants for teaching improvement	<p>Exemplary teaching and learning practices promoted Excellent teachers encouraged to share their work.</p> <p>Criteria for Faculty Teaching Excellence Revised and based on student and peer nomination. Seminars on innovative teaching and learning activities begun and to continue in 2002.</p>	<p>a) Establish a budget for the provision of improvement of the Year 1 Experience</p> <p>b) Appoint a Director of Year 1 Experience</p> <p>c) Series on teaching and learning planned for professional development of staff commencing 2002.</p> <p>d) Continue to encourage and promote sharing of exemplary teaching and learning experiences through regular seminars.</p>	<p>Dean and Faculty Advisory Committee</p> <p>Associate Dean (Teaching) Teaching & Learning Committee</p> <p>Teacher and Professional Development Cluster.</p>