

FACULTY OF HEALTH SCIENCES

REPORT ON RECOMMENDATIONS FROM PHASE TWO

Recommendation 1	<p>The Review Team commends the discussion around the development of College-wide interdisciplinary Units of Study (such as Indigenous Health Issues) and recommends that the discussion commenced at the 2003 CHS retreat be pursued at the College level. (<i>See Section 3.3.2</i>)</p>
Action taken by the Faculty	<p>The College level Inter-Professional Learning Initiative has been further developed from the pilot program at Royal North Shore Hospital using funds provided by the College. The initiative will progressively involve more health disciplines and greater student numbers.</p> <p>Yooroang Garang staff have submitted an expression of interest under the ICT grant program to develop an interprofessional undergraduate subject in Indigenous Health to be offered as a mixture of face to face instruction and WebCT material.</p> <p>In an effort to promote knowledge of Indigenous health to non Indigenous students in other undergraduate programs, the school has offered electives such as</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Health Promotion in Indigenous Communities • Health Policy, planning and Evaluation • Social Justice and • Teaching Skills for Health <p>as text based self instruction packages. These packages have been popular with students from other schools within the Faculty. In 2005 there are a total of 25 non Indigenous students studying these electives. With Flexsis now implemented for FHS, there will be greater opportunity for students within the College to select these 6 credit point subjects.</p> <p>Staff from Yooroang Garang also teaches Indigenous health within a 2 credit point elective in the 4th year of the Bachelor of Applied Science (Physiotherapy) program and also present guest lectures in Indigenous health in the schools of Occupation and Leisure Science and Physiotherapy.</p>
Further action planned but not yet implemented (if appropriate)	<p>Major Indigenous education initiatives have been deferred pending the appointment of a College Director of Indigenous Programs and a College Director of Indigenous Education, who will also serve as the Head of Yooroang Garang.</p> <p>Currently both the Faculty and College are reviewing all PG coursework offerings with a view to rationalisation and minimisation of duplication. As an incremental result, a high level working group is focussing on units related to research methods and statistics, and is charged with developing an appropriate set of College wide units to be implemented for 2006.</p>
Faculty's evaluation of the success of action taken	<p>The Inter-Professional Learning Initiative has been welcomed by the small number of students able to participate to date. The development should progressively allow the scope and number of students involved to be expanded. Clinical workforce shortages are a limiting factor for some aspects, and where this applies, progress will be as service capacity can accommodate.</p> <p>The success of the Indigenous health electives, particularly amongst non-indigenous students, will be established through the normal unit of study evaluations.</p>

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Recommendation 2	The Review Team recommends that the Faculty identify appropriate international benchmarking partners as well as investigating the benchmarking of common activities and processes within the College of Health Sciences. The Review Team also recommends that the Faculty liaise with ITL over perceived problems in SCEQ data quality. <i>(See Section 3.4.1)</i>
Action taken by the Faculty	<p>Given the large number of professional programs within the Faculty, each School was asked to put effort into developing appropriate benchmark partners. This remains problematic and success is highly varied due to the difficulties in identifying equivalent programs.</p> <p>In regards to the SCEQ, Faculty has discussed with ITL the problem of the aggregating of Faculty data due to the perception that the numbers in individual programs are too small to warrant individual analysis. ITL has now provided some breakdown in data to course level. The quantitative data is limited by the small sample size, however the open-ended comments are considered useful by Schools.</p>
Further action planned but not yet implemented (if appropriate)	<p>At the beginning of 2005 it was recognised that insufficient progress had been made on benchmarking, and given the University's increased emphasis on international ranking, a consultant has been engaged to work with Faculty and the Schools to identify appropriate international comparators. Once identified, formal approaches will be made by the Dean to negotiate access to the necessary information.</p> <p>It is intended that this project will identify an initial set of comparable programs and institutions by the end of 2005 and progressive refinement will take place as data is collected and analysed.</p>
Faculty's evaluation of the success of action taken	<p>It has proven to be essentially impossible to identify appropriate comparators at Faculty level due to the wide range of FHS programs and disciplines. For this reason the emphasis has changed to School and program level. Success to date is highly varied with some Schools finding potential partners, but access to data has been difficult.</p> <p>It is felt that by employing a dedicated consultant to identify potential comparators we will be better able to progress this matter.</p>

Recommendation 3	The Review Team recommends that the Faculty continue to work with the College for a University standard for teaching venue facilities, resources and support. <i>(See Section 4.4.2)</i>
Action taken by the Faculty	<p>At the time of the review, responsibility for facilities and resources resided with the Cumberland Campus unit, a separately funded entity. Faculty was successful in gaining the upgrading of some venues but little progress was made against the backlog of unequipped teaching rooms.</p> <p>During 2004 a College initiated Change Management process was undertaken, which has resulted in responsibility for these matters being assumed by the FMO as occurs for the rest of the University. This means that FHS is now on a scheduled upgrade program and an agreed list of priorities has been drawn up.</p>
Further action planned but not yet implemented (if appropriate)	The results of the actions described above will be monitored and priorities adjusted appropriately.
Faculty's evaluation of the success of action taken	The upgrades achieved to date have been appreciated by staff and students. The proposed upgrades in 2005 will make significant progress against deficiencies.

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Recommendation 4	The Review Team recommends that the Dean and the executive of the Guild take up the issue of the Security Bus with the Director of the Staff and Student Equal Opportunity Unit. <i>(See Section 5.2.1)</i>
Action taken by the Faculty	Central funds were obtained in 2004 to run a trial of an after hours security bus. The trial was judged successful and justified permanent provision of the service.
Further action planned but not yet implemented (if appropriate)	Responsibility for this service has been assigned to the University FMO and we understand they are in the process of purchasing a dedicated mini-bus. In the meantime a hired unit is being used.
Faculty's evaluation of the success of action taken	Feedback from students and staff has been positive. They appreciate that the Cumberland Campus is now receiving the same service as at Camperdown.

Recommendation 5	The Review Team recommends that the Faculty replace the phrase "Aboriginal Health" with "Australian Indigenous Health" in its Bachelor of Health Science. <i>(See Section 5.3.1)</i>
Action taken by the Faculty	No action has been taken in regards to this matter as Indigenous education initiatives have been deferred pending the appointment of a College Director of Indigenous Programs and a College Director of Indigenous Education. It is understood that all indigenous activities will be reviewed once the appointments have been made.
Further action planned but not yet implemented (if appropriate)	
Faculty's evaluation of the success of action taken	

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Recommendation 6	<p>The Review Team recommends that Yooroang Garang introduce a culturally appropriate Student Preparation Program based on the SPP for International Students. <i>(See Section 5.3.2)</i></p>
Action taken by the Faculty	<p>As stated in our initial response to the review report we believe this recommendation is based on unrepresentative student comments as an extensive preparation program is in place.</p> <p>Yooroang Garang offers preparation for Indigenous students at the Faculty in a variety of ways:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. An 8 day Cadigal Orientation Program for Indigenous students who have enrolled in semester based programs at the Faculty. This orientation program provides opportunities for new students to familiarise themselves with Faculty facilities, staff and each other. New students are introduced and spend time with the first year co-ordinator in the relevant school. Classes are conducted in Anatomy and Biology so that students develop skills in learning in these subjects. The curriculum in these classes is modelled on the curriculum as it is presented in undergraduate programs at the faculty so that students get a valuable head start in the skills and content in these areas. Classes are also conducted in Library Skills and the Use of WebCT. Feedback from the orientation programs is always positive. 2. For many years, Yooroang Garang has also conducted a highly successful 2 day Orientation program for Indigenous students who are enrolled in the block mode Bachelor of Health Sciences (Aboriginal Health & Community Development). This Orientation program is held for two days before the first block in each semester. <p>The emphasis of the program for the first year students is on managing newness to many things such as the city, living with others in shared accommodation and study at University. The First year Orientation program includes activities such as</p> <p>Campus tour - which assist student to become familiar with the campus facilities</p> <p>Facilitated group activities such as</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Skills We Bring – which enable students to feel confident about the skills, knowledge and experience they already have to build on • Case studies – which identify challenges to study for students studying in block mode after a long absence from formal study and enables the students to identify strategies for managing these challenges • How to Succeed at University <p>Academic Skills Development Sessions - The orientation program also includes activities to support the development of necessary academic skills such as library tour and training in electronic database and catalogue search skills.</p> <p>Indigenous students who are mature age and have returned to study after long absence and who may have not had extensive formal education experience need time to develop academic literacy over a long period of time and in a sustained way. In any preparation program students have only a limited time to develop necessary academic skills. In 2004 and 2005 Yooroang Garang has developed curricula in which academic skills tasks are embedded in the curriculum at an undergraduate level and this year is conducting a research project which investigates the effectiveness of a particular Scaffolding Literacy method for improving student writing in different fields and genres.</p> <p>To address the travel issues mentioned in the recommendation the School has not been able to provide a pick up service for students arriving in Sydney because the logistics of this exercise is too complex. Our students travel by air and surface transport arriving at multiple terminals around the city and at many different times of the day. However we have attempted to address these issues in the following ways:</p>

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<p>Action taken by the Faculty (cont)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Developed a Travel and Accommodation Preference Form in which students are able to request travel at particular times and in company with particular students. • Attempted within the student fare seats available on any service, to group students together as requested on flights or same arrival times. IESIP guidelines allow us to use only student fares and there are not many ‘student fare’ seats available on each flight. • Provided a taxi cab voucher for student arrival in Sydney for the first time. <p>Cultural Welcoming Ceremonies – in the past the School has arranged for cultural ceremonies to be performed as part of the Yooroang Garang Orientation program. But because our students come from so many different language and cultural groups across the nation no one ceremony was considered (by some students) to be appropriate for all. In fact one ceremony we did arrange offended some students from other areas of the nation.</p> <p>As a minimum we have adopted the Department of Health guidelines for the ‘Welcome to Country’ procedures and use these to acknowledge traditional owners of the land when students are here on block.</p> <p>In 2004 at the Graduation of Indigenous students, the school arranged for a traditional dance group to perform at the graduation lunch.</p> <p>As part of the 2004 Aboriginal Week the school arranged for a local community elder to speak and raise the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander flags at the main gate of the Faculty.</p> <p>Integration of students into the Faculty and Guild.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • As part of orientation this year we arranged our own School Orientation timetable around the Faculty Orientation Program so that Indigenous block mode students attended the activities of the Faculty orientation program such as the Welcome from the Dean, Library tours and Student Guild Lunch. In this way our students could be part of the wider student body. <p>We facilitate connection to Faculty staff by inviting the Faculty staff to present at the Indigenous Orientation. This year we had presentations from the Student Counsellor, Library Liaison staff member and a representative from the Scholarships Office.</p>
<p>Further action planned but not yet implemented (if appropriate)</p>	<p>No further action is planned, however it is anticipated that a College level review of all Indigenous education activities will occur in 2005 following the appointment the College Director of Indigenous Programs and a College Director of Indigenous Education, who will also serve as the Head of Yooroang Garang.</p>
<p>Faculty’s evaluation of the success of action taken</p>	<p>Positive feedback has generally been expressed by Yooroang Garang students participating in the preparation and orientation programs.</p>

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Recommendation 7	The Review Team recommend that Yooroang Garang investigate alternative forms of assessment for exams during block release learning. <i>(See Section 5.3.3)</i>
Action taken by the Faculty	<p>As stated in our initial response to the review report we believe this recommendation is based on unrepresentative and ill-informed student comments.</p> <p>Yooroang Garang utilises a wide variety of assessment tasks that</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Are relevant to the UoS outcomes • Are relevant to professional needs • Respond to individual learning styles and strengths of the students • Pace student learning between blocks of instruction in a block mode programs. <p>The following types of assessment tasks are used :</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Written reports • Essays • Project plans • Evaluations reports • Oral presentations • Poster presentations • In class written tasks with open book • In class exams – these exams form only a minor part of the overall assessment in any one UoS. Across the School only 4 UoS have in class tests. These in class tests are most often open book and untimed. These assessment tools are used in certain subjects as they are considered a valid method of assessing the UoS outcomes and providing students with a measure of their progress.
Further action planned but not yet implemented (if appropriate)	Assessments will continue to be monitored and reviewed as a part of the normal QA process.
Faculty's evaluation of the success of action taken	No significant issues have arisen from the normal QA, evaluation and feedback mechanisms.

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Recommendation 8	The Review Team recommends that the Faculty support and resource the recommendations of the Research Review. <i>(See Section 6.1.3)</i>
Action taken by the Faculty	<p>The Faculty has implemented in large part the recommendations contained in the Research Review. The Faculty governance structures have been changed as proposed and research student management brought into the Faculty Research Committee responsibilities.</p> <p>The new Faculty Research Development S/C has been functional since early 2004 and has proposed a number of initiatives that have been carried forward. For example the Faculty is in the process of offering a number of post-doctoral fellowships funded jointly by the Faculty and home School.</p> <p>The position of a level D/E Faculty Director of Research Development has been advertised and the selection committee should finalise this appointment in April.</p>
Further action planned but not yet implemented (if appropriate)	<p>It has been agreed that once appointed the new Faculty Director of Research Development will reconsider the Research Review report since the context of some recommendations has changed. It is anticipated that a supplementary report will be produced as a basis for further initiatives.</p> <p>The program of Faculty co-funded strategic level D/E appointments continues to build research capacity within Faculty and a further 2 positions are expected to be filled in 2005</p>
Faculty's evaluation of the success of action taken	Progressive implementation of recommendations in the Research Review has continued the deliberate emphasis on research development within the Faculty. The various enabling and support initiatives have been welcomed by staff. The number of applications and success in major competitive grants continues to grow as a result of initiatives taken.

Recommendation 9	The Review Team recommends that the Faculty liaise with the Faculty of Science regarding its work on the development of a non-linear workload formula. <i>(See Section 6.1.6)</i>
Action taken by the Faculty	The suggested consultation was undertaken and information passed to Heads of School and Associate Deans. During 2004 considerable effort was made by Schools to develop or refine workload formulae. The Faculty, through DMAC, has taken a monitoring role allowing each academic unit to evolve workload management methods that best suit their discipline areas and activities. A session at the 2004 DMAC retreat was dedicated to this issue with HOS presenting their School's approach, so allowing discussion and propagation of ideas, and problem solving suggestions.
Further action planned but not yet implemented (if appropriate)	Monitoring of progress will continue.
Faculty's evaluation of the success of action taken	The majority of Schools now have agreed workload formulae in place, with the broad emphasis on equitable distribution and recognition of work. Some Schools have incentives in place to encourage research activities. Issues such as the relativities between teaching and research remain problematic. Some units have followed suggestions from Faculty and moved away from considering research activity; rather recognising research output by way of grants applied for and gained publications and RTS completions. The retrospective nature of this mechanism does present some problems for early researchers which needs further consideration.

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Recommendation 10	The Review Team recommends that the Faculty develop measures to support staff in the necessary preparatory work to identifying and negotiating the participation of appropriate research partners and teams. <i>(See Section 6.3.1)</i>
Action taken by the Faculty	<p>The Faculty has established a support mechanism whereby funds to a maximum of \$5,000 pa per individual are provided to facilitate grant application development. Typically \$2,000 is provided for each new application and \$1,000 for the reworking of a previously unsuccessful proposal. Requests for funding are considered by the Associate Dean (Research) and the Dean.</p> <p>The previous Faculty Director of Research Development provided an advisory and mentoring role for those developing NHMRC proposals and this will be continued.</p>
Further action planned but not yet implemented (if appropriate)	<p>In 2005 the success of the grant preparation support scheme will be evaluated.</p> <p>The Faculty has been providing access to a statistics consultant on a weekly basis. On the basis of the growing number of qualitative research projects, it has been judged that expert advice in this area is required. A mechanism for doing this has been determined and will commence in the first half of 2005.</p>
Faculty's evaluation of the success of action taken	<p>The support funding scheme has been well used by Faculty researchers. The value in terms of improved outcomes, will be established by the proposed evaluation.</p> <p>The number of staff involved in NMHRC proposals has increased and success has improved since the support and mentoring mechanisms have been put in place. In 2004 a second NMHRC research fellowship application was successful.</p>

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Recommendation 11	<p>The Review Team recommend that the Faculty investigate ways of developing a Faculty-wide sense of a community of scholars as a means of reducing the isolation of postgraduate students. (See Section 6.5.2)</p>
Action taken by the Faculty	<p>The Faculty has developed an all postgraduate student' email list and uses the list to inform students of scholarship opportunities, research workshops and colloquia etc.</p> <p>The Faculty has Faculty-based and School based induction programs that complement the programs run by DOGs. The last Faculty induction was held on 21/02/05.</p> <p>Students from across the Faculty are now actively encouraged to attend School and Faculty research seminars.</p> <p>Ongoing research skills workshops are offered by most Schools.</p> <p>The Faculty continues to have a student rep on the Research Training Sub-Committee.</p> <p>The Faculty continues to recognise good supervision through its 'Excellence in HDR Supervision' award. 2004 winner was Prof Mark Onslow.</p> <p>The Faculty used RPIS funding in 2004 to refurbish student accommodation for Physio, OLS and BACHs students. Central funds were matched by equal contributions from Faculty and Schools.</p> <p>Each year Schools review their SREQ results and devise an action plan to address problem areas noted by students. Action plans are reviewed annually. This material is tabled at the Research Training Subcommittee.</p>
Further action planned but not yet implemented (if appropriate)	<p>We are currently analysing the 2004 SREQ results and free text responses and the free text in the 2004 annual progress reports to guide consideration of these issues. We will develop further strategies based upon this information.</p> <p>The Faculty PGR website is being revised so that information is more comprehensive and accessible. The working party has commenced the task and is supported by a casual RA.</p>

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<p>Faculty's evaluation of the success of action taken</p>	<p>The Faculty believe that the actions that have been taken have improved the research training experience of our HDR students. This opinion is justified by improvements in the SREQ results, a reduction in the number of students discontinuing and an increase in the number of students completing.</p> <p>SREQ The scores for each scale of the SREQ have improved over the last two years and now equal or surpass scores for the University as a whole. The broad agreement score for Climate is now 87% which is up 13%. Importantly the items in the SREQ that reflect the issues raised in ABRII have improved greatly in the period 2002-2004. Some examples are listed below.</p> <p>Item 3. The department / school provides opportunities for social contact with other postgraduate students 88% broad agreement (up 16%)</p> <p>Item 8. I feel integrated into the department's / school's community. 78% broad agreement (up 9%)</p> <p>Item 10. I have access to a common room or a similar type of meeting place. 82% broad agreement (up 10%)</p> <p>Item 15. The department / school provides opportunities for me to become involved in the broader research culture. 87% broad agreement (up 14%)</p> <p>Item 23 Interaction with other postgraduate students is actively encouraged in this department / school. 87% broad agreement (up 21%)</p> <p>Item 24. A good seminar program for postgraduate students is provided. 89% broad agreement (up 16%)</p> <p>Item 25. The research ambience in the department / school or faculty stimulates my work. 86% broad agreement (up 15%)</p> <p>Item 29. I feel that this department / school provides a supportive working environment. 94% broad agreement (up 10%)</p> <p>Completion and discontinuations Annual completions have risen from 23 to 45 and discontinuations have fallen from 25 to 7 in the period 2002-2004. During the same period the number of students rose slightly from 306 to 320.</p>
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Recommendation 12	<p>The Review Team recommends that the Marketing Reference Group liaise with the College International and Development Manager to gather data on the determining factors in the selection of Health Sciences tertiary education providers, and to build a marketing campaign on the basis of this data. <i>(See Section 7.2.1)</i></p>
Action taken by the Faculty	<p>Faculty has discussed the marketing issues with the College International and Development Manager. We continue to participate in initiatives led by the College Manager and have agreed on specific areas of opportunity, consistent with College directions.</p> <p>We have agreed at Faculty level that we do not have the resources to do extensive international marketing, but will progressively identify potential markets and investigate them.</p> <p>In 2004 Faculty appointed a new Faculty Marketing Manager and changed the balance of focus on the domestic market vs international. Faculty is planning a mission to India in August 2005, in cooperation with established IDP agents there. As well as carrying out explicit promotional and recruitment activities, a major effort will be made to establish which of our offerings are in demand in the various regions. The results of these consultations will be used to devise an appropriate marketing and promotional campaign.</p> <p>An agreement has been made at College level for 60 students funded by the Saudi government to study in Sydney for 5 years</p>
Further action planned but not yet implemented (if appropriate)	<p>Faculty will be participating in the Beijing graduation ceremony and associated events, which are yet to be finalised.</p> <p>Faculty has a significant presence in Singapore. We believe that we have paid insufficient attention to our alumni there and will be making an effort to involve them more especially by holding an event in association with our graduation ceremony held in Singapore each September.</p> <p>Schools within Faculty continue to promote their programs international through professional bodies and relationships with other institutions. Faculty feels we can better prepare academics travelling overseas to conferences and others activities by providing them with appropriate promotional material and a protocol to allow them to refer contacts. This task has been undertaken by the Faculty Marketing Manager and should be implemented later in 2005.</p>
Faculty's evaluation of the success of action taken	<p>In semester 1 2005, Faculty increased its enrolment of new international students to 211, an increase of 71 (50%) over the figure of 150 in 2004. The increase has mainly been in UG and PG coursework programs.</p>

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Recommendation 13	The Review Team recommends that the Faculty continues to strengthen its senior academic staff, including the appointment of additional professors. <i>(See Section 9.1.2)</i>
Action taken by the Faculty	The strategic appointment of level D & E staff with high research capacity continues as a key item in the Faculty strategic plan. In 2004 two level E and one level D appointments were made. Heads are encouraged to fully exploit the University's Sesqui scheme and Faculty shares the early costs of agreed senior appointments.
Further action planned but not yet implemented (if appropriate)	It is expected that a further level E appointment will be made in 2005 following the advertising of a position in BACHS. Discussions are taking place with Heads to establish other positions and at least one further level E position is expected to be advertised in 2005.
Faculty's evaluation of the success of action taken	Faculty believes that the strategic appointments have greatly enhanced the Faculty's research capacity. The number of major grant successes has increased since the strategic appointments commenced and the full effects are expected to be seen in the next few years as the new researchers establish their projects and collaborations.