

## SYDNEY CONSERVATORIUM OF MUSIC

### REPORT ON RECOMMENDATIONS FROM PHASE TWO

<b>Recommendation 1</b>	Efforts should be made to make performance assessment criteria more transparent to students and to give them more feedback on how they have performed in relation to the criteria. (Section 4.3)
<b>Action taken by the Faculty</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Unit of Study outlines made a key item in Conservatorium Teaching Days. Performance outlines, for example, were the subject of a special session at the 2005 Teaching Day with staff responses to proposals actively sought.</li> <li>• New Unit of Study template developed in 2005 which includes specific provision for student feedback.</li> <li>• Minor concert practice revised in 2004 with greater transparency and improved student feedback key goals.</li> <li>• Learning and Teaching Committee currently developing generic performance and composition grade descriptors and</li> <li>• Concert Practice performance evaluation form under revision.</li> </ul>
<b>Further action planned but not yet implemented (if appropriate)</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Forum on assessment planned for all performance staff early second semester, 2005. This will be specially targeted at casual and fractional staff.</li> <li>• Future issue of the stall learning and teaching newsletter, Common Concerns, to specifically target assessment issues.</li> <li>• Greater assessment transparency and feedback an ongoing items for the Learning and Teaching Committee</li> </ul>
<b>Faculty's evaluation of the success of action taken</b>	The faculty regards improved assessment mechanisms as an ongoing goal. Unit of Study outlines are improving and there is an increased awareness of student feedback within the faculty. Improved information flows to staff and students remains a major priority.

<b>Recommendation 2</b>	The Conservatorium should explore ways to respond to views expressed by students that there is a need for more live performance opportunities (both formal and informal) and for a more vibrant performance culture generally. It is suggested that discussions should be held with students on this issue, for example in staff:student consultative committees, with a view to exploring ways to achieve a higher level of student satisfaction on this matter. Benchmarking and sharing best practice with national and international institutions on this issue is recommended. (Section 4.4)
<b>Action taken by the Faculty</b>	We have added a major performance program for large ensembles which is the finest in Southeast Asia, as well as heightened the approach and focus to chamber music performance during special projects weeks. This has been benchmarked with the finest international programs and is a strong competitive program, certainly the most comprehensive in Australia.
<b>Further action planned but not yet implemented (if appropriate)</b>	Further refinement for a lab orchestra which rehearses only two hours per week rather than six hours for minors and students from elsewhere in the University.
<b>Faculty's evaluation of the success of action taken</b>	Outstanding response from the faculty, students and the profession.

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<b>Recommendation 3</b>	The Conservatorium should carry out an investigation into the practice and effects of the casualisation of staff, including comparing the Conservatorium's approach with benchmarking data collected from comparable institutions in Australia. (Section 4.5).
<b>Action taken by the Faculty</b>	We have begun a selective process to assure that each unit has a quorum of contractual faculty members to determine academic and artistic matters.
<b>Further action planned but not yet implemented (if appropriate)</b>	This will be ongoing as the resources permit. Further review of assessment will be warranted with a different teaching profile.
<b>Faculty's evaluation of the success of action taken</b>	We have hired 12 of the finest musicians of international reknown who will reverse the brain drain, and add immense value to the faculty profile. Outstanding reception to this structural change.

<b>Recommendation 4</b>	It is recommended that the Conservatorium give high priority to allocating a senior member of staff (e.g. an Associate Dean (Research)) with the role of co-ordinating the Conservatorium's research activities and managing the postgraduate student cohort. It is recommended that this be done soon and that priority be given to ensuring that there is stronger coordination and support of postgraduate research students, including ensuring the quality of the postgraduate research area currently being refurbished. The Conservatorium may find it helpful to develop a Research Plan and is recommended to set itself targets in terms of improved completion rates. More formalised benchmarking of research activities should also be a priority. (Sections 4.11 and 6)
<b>Action taken by the Faculty</b>	Allan Marett has been appointed as Associate Dean for Research. A task Force has just completed a report with regard to the research activities. Additionally, Dr. Peter Dunbar-Hall has been appointed Associate Dean for Postgraduate Studies.
<b>Further action planned but not yet implemented (if appropriate)</b>	Implementation of several recommendations from the task force and integration with the overall vision of post-graduate studies.
<b>Faculty's evaluation of the success of action taken</b>	Outstanding success and much better communication for staff and students.

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<b>Recommendation 5</b>	Consideration should be given to making student exchange opportunities available to students enrolled in Music Education degree programs. (Section 7.4)
<b>Action taken by the Faculty</b>	We have explored some exchange options with US institutions in particular as well as Europe. Several practical teaching opportunities might exist in future in the US. For now, Taiwan and Singapore have been receptive to exchange with music education.
<b>Further action planned but not yet implemented (if appropriate)</b>	For the moment we will be benchmarking programs with some key institutions. During this process we will explore if we can enhance exchange opportunities.
<b>Faculty's evaluation of the success of action taken</b>	Improvement.

<b>Recommendation 6</b>	The Conservatorium should review its quality assurance processes for offshore activities to ensure appropriate monitoring and assurance of standards and accountability. (Section 7.6)
<b>Action taken by the Faculty</b>	The Associated Deans and Chairs are monitoring this closely with colleagues in the offshore locations. To date, all standards are met and student satisfaction has been very high.
<b>Further action planned but not yet implemented (if appropriate)</b>	Stable at present.
<b>Faculty's evaluation of the success of action taken</b>	All parties are satisfied that this is working well.

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<b>Recommendation 7</b>	While the Team considered many of the Conservatorium's strategies to engage with the music industry to be excellent, it is also noted comments from students that engagement could beneficially be strengthened, particularly in discipline areas such as composition and musicology. Accordingly it recommends that ways be explored to identify and satisfy any unmet demand in the student body in this respect. Focus groups with students and staff might be helpful. (Section 8)
<b>Action taken by the Faculty</b>	A series of forums for musicology and for learning business tools in music were highly visible this past 11 months. With regard to composition, we are working closely with the New Music Networks across Australia.
<b>Further action planned but not yet implemented (if appropriate)</b>	Enhanced forums for 2006
<b>Faculty's evaluation of the success of action taken</b>	Overwhelmingly positive. Interestingly, the students attendance was sporadic, whereas public and colleagues from other Conservatoriums has been impressive.

<b>Recommendation 8</b>	Efforts should be made to help improve students' socialisation to the new building. For example, greater clarity is needed in conveying how and where to obtain different types of information; the purpose and location of noticeboards should be more clearly conveyed; and efforts should be made to find ways to stimulate a sense of ownership of the building among students. (Section 4.10)
<b>Action taken by the Faculty</b>	A handbook is being revised for 2006. Additionally, a comprehensive mentoring program has begun for students in all years, and this has proven effective to broaden communication and awareness. Students have been invited to meet the Dean and staff as well as to join receptions after concerts. The ensemble programs bring the students into the venue much more often in larger numbers which has enhanced the sense of community. Signage for all concerts has been taken seriously with flyers and excellent brochures.
<b>Further action planned but not yet implemented (if appropriate)</b>	Tea Parties will begin in 2006, lead by dignitaries. Signage has been improved, with a plasma screen and the student café and atrium have enhanced seating to allow for socialization.
<b>Faculty's evaluation of the success of action taken</b>	There are many more students circulating in the building and a sense that communication is open and available.

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<b>Recommendation 9</b>	Formal induction programs should be run for Postgraduate coursework students, especially those commencing their studies in Semester 2. (Sections 4.10 and 9.5)
<b>Action taken by the Faculty</b>	We have a week planned prior to classes when the Chairs meet the Postgraduate students, as well as the Associate Deans and the Dean. A day of orientation is organized with other meetings for one-on-one contact.
<b>Further action planned but not yet implemented (if appropriate)</b>	International student orientation to be further enhanced.
<b>Faculty's evaluation of the success of action taken</b>	excellent improvement.

<b>Recommendation 10</b>	Consideration should be given to finding ways to further extend library opening hours to facilitate students with work commitments. (Section 9)
<b>Action taken by the Faculty</b>	The library hours have been extended to include more evenings and Saturdays.
<b>Further action planned but not yet implemented (if appropriate)</b>	Stable
<b>Faculty's evaluation of the success of action taken</b>	Outstanding support .

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<b>Recommendation 11</b>	The Conservatorium should continue in its efforts to improve student administration and to ensure a good and responsive client service. Particular areas for attention should be communication and links with University student administration. (Section 9)
<b>Action taken by the Faculty</b>	The staff in student administration have clarified their portfolios so that students and colleagues know with whom they should work with on specific projects, such as international students, auditions, enrolment etc. The links with the University have improved and a quick turnaround is common from this office.
<b>Further action planned but not yet implemented (if appropriate)</b>	tbd as we review ITC and the life-cycle of students at the Sydney Conservatorium of Music.
<b>Faculty's evaluation of the success of action taken</b>	Much improvement over the past year.

<b>Recommendation 12</b>	Consideration should be given whether improvements can be made that would ensure the smooth transition of staff into management positions. The issue of succession planning and preparation for staff undertaking these positions should be investigated. This might range from basic issues such as the transfer of records to running workshops about roles and expectations and other succession planning issues. (Section 9)
<b>Action taken by the Faculty</b>	WE have invited several professional development training session to be hosted here at SCM, rather than have staff go up to main campus. We have supported requests for training and educational opportunities and allowed for higher duties when possible. We held a major retreat focusing on communication skills.
<b>Further action planned but not yet implemented (if appropriate)</b>	As technology changes some of the work roles, we will pay attention to upgrading skills for staff. At PM&D we will mentor staff towards workshops, which can help them prepare their skills.
<b>Faculty's evaluation of the success of action taken</b>	Improved communication already apparent. This has helped retain some key staff and develop others into new areas of expertise.

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<b>Recommendation 13</b>	The Conservatorium is reminded that Academic Board Resolutions (The Management and Evaluation of Coursework Teaching, Part 4, s. 2 (1)) require faculties to ensure that membership of key faculty committees includes student representatives. (Section 6.7.3)
<b>Action taken by the Faculty</b>	A series of operational committees has been instituted, all of which include student representation.
<b>Further action planned but not yet implemented (if appropriate)</b>	NA
<b>Faculty's evaluation of the success of action taken</b>	Welcome and positive results.