ACADEMIC QUALITY COMMITTEE

2:00pm – 4:00pm, Tuesday 27 March 2018
Room 557, Wilkinson Building (G08)

Members Present: Associate Professor Wendy Davis (Chair); Associate Professor Javid Atai (Engineering & IT); Donald Tochukwu Azuatalam (PG Student); Professor Matthew Conaglen (Law); Professor Rae Cooper (Business); Jane Currie (Nursing); Ayman Ellawa (Dentistry); Imogen Grant (President, SRC); Dr Christopher Hartney (Academic Board Representative); Jeffrey Khoo (UG Student); Associate Professor Tony Masters (Chair of Academic Board); Dr Slade Matthews (Academic Board Representative); Associate Professor Kathleen Nelson (Chair, HDRES); Dr Carl Schneider (Academic Board Representative); Kate Small (University Quality Manager).

Attendees: Dr Matthew Charet (Secretary); Tristan Enright (Manager, Educational Integrity); Associate Professor Peter McCallum (Director, Educational Strategy); Meredith Tucker (Senior Administration Officer - Educational Integrity).

Apologies: Dr Tooran Alizadeh (Architecture, Design & Planning); Dr Betty Chaar (Pharmacy); Kubra Chambers (Director, Institutional Analytics & Planning); Dr Mark Halaki (Health Sciences); Rebecca Johnson (Nominee of the President, SUPRA); Professor Pip Pattison (Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Education)).

MINUTES

1 WELCOME AND APOLOGIES

The Chair welcomed members and noted apologies, as recorded above.

2 PROCEDURAL MATTERS

2.1 Minutes of the Previous Meeting

The minutes of the meeting held on 20 February 2018 were confirmed as a true record, as presented.

Resolution AQC18/2-1

The Academic Quality Committee resolved that the minutes of meeting 1/2018, held on 20 February 2018, be confirmed as a true record.

2.2 Business Arising

Action 1/2018 is included in the agenda as Item 2.4.

Regarding Action 2/2018, a preliminary version of the requested statistics was tabled. The Committee requested additional data to allow finer analysis of some of the categories (for example, to determine whether no information was available because the candidate is new to candidature, has submitted their thesis for examination, has withdrawn or was not engaged with the APR process). Data about articulation from MPhil to PhD candidature would also be helpful. Clearer definitions as to the reporting categories would also be helpful, as well as capture of candidates assessed as ‘marginal’.

Regarding Action 4/2018, the Secretary advised that Law has yet to be asked to provide an update in 2019 addressing the recommendations in the Faculty Review Report, as discussed at the previous meeting. This will be communicated before the next meeting.

Members noted the updates to business arising.

Resolution AQC18/2-2

The Academic Quality Committee noted updates on business arising.

2.3 Terms of Reference

The Chair reminded members that draft Terms of Reference had been endorsed at the previous meeting, for presentation to and approval by the Academic Board on 6 March. The approved
version of the Terms of Reference was circulated with the agenda pack, including the full text of the specific HESF Standards for which the Terms of Reference make the Committee accountable.

In discussion, the inclusion of Standard 2.2 relating to equity and diversity was questioned, and it was suggested that this standard could be monitored either as a component of other proposals and reports (for example, as part of the course review process) or as a separate piece of work. The University Quality Manager informed members that the course review template includes a section to reflect on equity and diversity. Professor Cooper sought clarification as to whether equity data (such as number of students that are first-in-family to attend university) is readily available through the course dashboard and it was agreed that Institutional Analytics and Planning would be asked to advise. The Chair of the Academic Board suggested an off-line discussion of how the institution monitors equity, acknowledging that the Committee does not need to undertake all of the work directly but needs to know if it is being done and request reports where appropriate.

Standards 6.3.2(a) and (f) were also individually discussed, and it was agreed that the educational integrity reporting process provides an excellent model for how the Committee can monitor 6.3.2(a) and that 6.3.2(f) via the course review process ("what have you changed?").

The University Quality Manager informed members that she has a meeting in April with the Policy Management Unit to discuss a review of policies and standards and would advise the Committee of the outcome of that discussion.

**Resolution AQC18/2-3**
The Academic Quality Committee noted the approval of Terms of Reference by the Academic Board at its meeting of 6 March 2018, as presented.

**Action 5/2018:** Advise Committee on what equity data is available in the student dashboard. **Responsible:** Director, IAP. **Timing:** Next meeting.

### 2.4 Forward Plan

The Chair informed members that she, the Chair of Academic Board and the Secretary had formulated the forward plan as circulated with the agenda, on which further feedback was invited.

Members agreed it would be desirable to obtain some statistics on faculty-level resolution of appeals; these are not reported to the Student Appeals Board and, therefore, are not institutionally captured. To reduce the administrative burden on faculties, it was suggested that a simple template be developed to capture this data. Information from faculties on how they perform informal appeals was also requested.

Ms Grant inquired as to whether student complaints should be monitored by the Committee, and was advised that the complaints process does not involve academic decisions, and that human resources (HR) is often involved in complaints that involve staff matters, so this is outside the scope of the Committee. It was suggested that the Committee might ask the Office of General Counsel (OGC) about the range of complaints raised and resolution mechanisms to determine which (if any) might be of interest to the Academic Board.

**Resolution AQC18/2-4**
The Academic Quality Committee provided feedback on the 2018 Forward Plan.

**Action 6/2018:** Template for reporting of faculty-level appeals to be developed and circulated to faculties, for return of data to a future meeting. **Responsible:** Chair / Secretary. **Timing:** Circulation, before next meeting; return of data, to be determined.

**Action 7/2018:** Contact OGC to determine range of complaints and mechanisms for resolution to determine whether any of these are of interest to the Academic Board. **Responsible:** Secretary. **Timing:** Next meeting.

### 3 STANDING ITEMS

#### 3.1 Report of the Chair

The Chair advised that she had nothing additional to report.
Resolution AQC18/2-5
The Academic Quality Committee noted the report of the Chair.

3.2 Report of the Academic Board
The Chair of Academic Board drew the attention of members to the written report circulated with the agenda, and highlighted the endorsement by the Board of the Terms of Reference for the first University Executive (UE) / Academic Board Phase 5 thematic review on Student Wellbeing and Safety. This review will concentrate on how the university discharges our legal responsibilities in these areas, with the intention of ensuring that we are compliant, and is anticipated to report to UE and the Board in late 2018.

Resolution AQC18/2-6
The Academic Quality Committee noted the report of the Academic Board meeting held on 6 March 2018.

3.3 Report of the HDR Examinations Sub-Committee
Associate Professor Nelson advised that she had nothing to add to the written report circulated with the agenda.

Resolution AQC18/2-7
The Academic Quality Committee noted the Report of the HDR Examinations Sub-Committee meeting of 27 February 2018.

3.3.1 HDRESC Terms of Reference
Associate Professor Nelson informed members that the Terms of Reference have been revised to better reflect the delegated authority of the Sub-Committee, as well as clarifying several areas about which the Terms of Reference were previously silent (such as permitting a standing alternate, appointing a Deputy Chair and allowing co-option).

Resolution AQC18/2-8
The Academic Quality Committee approved the amendments to the Terms of Reference of the Higher Degree by Research Examinations Sub-Committee, with immediate effect.

4 ITEMS FOR ACTION

4.1 Course Review Process and Schedule
The University Quality Manager spoke to this item and suggested that clarity is needed as to how faculties will manage the course review process and how the Committee will receive the reviews. It was suggested that reviews might be undertaken by the Committee in bundles to enable higher-level analysis, and that the undergraduate liberal studies award courses might best be reviewed by major than at a whole-of-degree level. Members were advised that it is not anticipated that the Committee will need to approve the reviews, but will instead have a quality assurance role to monitor that faculties are undertaking reviews in a thorough and timely manner. It would therefore be anticipated that the reports received by the Committee will include feedback provided by the faculty to address any concerns that are identified by the review process. It is also intended to synchronise these reviews with accreditation to avoid duplication of effort via cross-reference to accreditation documentation within the University review. It was also agreed that course reviews would remain confidential and not be made available online.

The status of reviews that are currently overdue was questioned, and Ms Currie undertook to follow up progress on Nursing’s outstanding reviews.

The University Quality Manager advised that she would roll out the template with the course dashboards (prepared by Institutional Analytics and Planning) to faculties and University schools for upcoming reviews.

Resolution AQC18/2-9
The Academic Quality Committee requests from faculties and University schools:
(1) copies of any current reviews, once completed; and
(2) information about the schedule for any courses for which review dates are overdue or unknown.
4.2 Educational Integrity Annual Report 2017

Mr Enright was thanked for his preparation of the current report, which clearly demonstrates the impact of mandatory educational integrity education since 2016. In discussion, the 2017 data indicates ongoing concerns with international student compliance, perhaps partially reflecting larger international student enrolments. To address this, additional sessions of the “Quoting, Summarising and Paraphrasing” course have been scheduled, but it is acknowledged that there is more to do in this area. Possibilities include a library project involving reading exercises, and the provision of slides or templates for unit of study coordinators to present early each semester. Against this context, it was positively reported that 12,000 students have already completed the module in 2018, of a total commencing student population of 18,000.

It was observed that the majority of incidents are reported in a small number of units of study, which may variously indicate that many unit of study coordinators are addressing the issue effectively; a genuine improvement with student compliance; or – more worryingly – under-reporting. Effective monitoring and implementation at the faculty level is essential, as well as including educational integrity as an area for academic workload and performance management discussions.

Early diagnosis of concerns is a key to improving long-term outcomes, and faculties are encouraged to develop mechanisms to ensure buy-in from all students. Professor Cooper provided advice as to the detection and remediation processes in place in the Business School, which include combining educational integrity education with assessing and supporting English language proficiency and offering mandatory support when required. The faculty approaches training as an educational experience to explain in context what the rules mean, rather than simply “these are the rules” or a “can / can’t” binary. The diagnostic is relevant to the content of study, and is presented as support rather than punishment.

The possibility of training staff in reporting requirements (what, why and how) was raised, and Mr Enright advised that it is intended to develop a core resource for staff, noting that not all faculties induct new academics in educational integrity. It was acknowledged that such training may best be delivered by faculties in the context of their disciplines.

Ms Grant suggested the need to ensure avoidance of staff burnout (especially for those staff who conduct student interviews). The Director, Educational Strategy, advised that a professional development module was initiated in 2015 for Educational Integrity Coordinators (EICs), and that workload (as well as induction, implementation and support) is left to faculties to manage. The Educational Integrity Office also meets regularly with EICs to develop shared standards, while allowing for disciplinary complexity.

As to next steps, members were advised of the following:

- developing strategies to further assist international students;
- an awareness campaign for detection and avoidance of ghost writing; and
- efforts to reduce the relatively high number of incidents of fraudulent medical certificates.

The Chair observed a decline in the number of cases referred to the Registrar and expressed concern that this may reflect faculties “giving up” reporting due to the delay in resolution or dissatisfaction with the resolution of referred cases. The Director, Educational Strategy, advised that until a new Registrar is appointed, he is the Acting Registrar for student misconduct and appeals. He agreed to provide data on Registrar referrals and processing times to the next meeting.

Members sought advice as to what action can be taken to address on-campus advertising of essay writing services or other integrity-breaching enablers, and were informed that Campus Infrastructure Services (CIS) is aware of the matter and acts, when possible, to remove physical advertising. Students should be made aware that there is a high level of risk involved with providing personal details to such sites or services, with no assurance that personal and credit card data will not be misused.

Resolution AQC18/2-10

The Academic Quality Committee reviewed the Educational Integrity Annual Report 2017 and recommended steps to be taken by each faculty to further ensure the academic integrity of their courses.
Action 8/2018: Provide data on Educational Integrity cases referred to the Registrar in 2017 with time taken to resolve. Responsible: Director, Educational Strategy. Timing: Next meeting.

4.3 Student Appeals
This was discussed under Item 2.4 above.

5 ITEMS FOR NOTING
There were no items for noting.

6 OTHER BUSINESS
6.1 Any Other Business
There being no other business, the meeting concluded at 3:59pm.

Next meeting: 2:00pm – 4:00pm, Tuesday 8 May 2018
Senate Room, Quadrangle