
ACADEMIC STANDARDS AND POLICY COMMITTEE

2:00PM – 4:00PM, TUESDAY 14 MARCH 2017

Chair: Professor Jane Hanrahan

Committee Officer: Dr Matthew Charet

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University Secretariat | Office of the Vice-Chancellor

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Quadrangle (A14)

sydney.edu.au/secretariat/academic-board-committees/standards-policy-committee

NOTICE OF MEETING

Meeting 2/2017 of the **Academic Standards and Policy Committee** will be held from **2:00pm – 4:00pm** on **Tuesday 14 March 2017** in the Senate Room, Quadrangle. The Agenda for the meeting is below.

Dr Matthew Charet

Executive Officer to Academic Board

AGENDA

Non-confidential items

| | Presenter | Paper |
|--|----------------|-----------------|
| 1 WELCOME AND APOLOGIES | | |
| Apologies have been received from Dr Debra Shirley (Health Sciences). The committee is asked to welcome Dr Vasiliki Betihavas as representative of Sydney Nursing School. | | |
| 2 PROCEDURAL MATTERS | | |
| 2.1 Minutes of Meeting 1/2017 on 14 February 2017 | Chair | <i>attached</i> |
| 2.2 Business Arising | Chair | <i>verbal</i> |
| 3 STANDING ITEMS | | |
| 3.1 Report of the Chair | Chair | <i>verbal</i> |
| 3.2 Report of Academic Board | Tony Masters | <i>attached</i> |
| 4 ITEMS FOR ACTION | | |
| 4.1 Variation of Semester Dates | Tyrone Carlin | <i>attached</i> |
| 4.2 Policy on Continuing and Extra-curricular Education and non-AQF courses | Peter McCallum | <i>attached</i> |
| 5 ITEMS FOR NOTING | | |
| 5.1 Implementation of Anonymous Marking | Peter McCallum | <i>attached</i> |
| 6 OTHER BUSINESS | | |
| 6.1 Any Other Business | | |

Next meeting: 2:00pm – 4:00pm, **Tuesday 18 April 2017**
Senate Room, Quadrangle

Remaining meeting dates for 2017:

Tuesday 18 April
Tuesday 30 May
Tuesday 11 July
Tuesday 8 August
Tuesday 26 September
Tuesday 14 November

Academic Standards and Policy Committee - Terms of Reference

Purpose

The Academic Standards and Policy Committee assists and advises the Academic Board in ensuring the maintenance of the highest standards and quality in teaching, scholarship and research in the University of Sydney.

Terms of Reference

1. To play an active role in assuring the quality of teaching, scholarship and research in the University and co-ordinate and maintain an overview of the academic activities of all academic units.
2. To formulate and review policies, guidelines and procedures in relation to academic matters, particularly with respect to academic issues that have scope across the University, including equity and access initiatives.
3. To determine policy concerning the programs of study or examinations in any Faculty, college or Board of Studies.
4. To advise the Academic Board and Vice-Chancellor on policies concerning the academic aspects of the conditions of appointment and employment of academic staff.
5. To play an active role in assuring the quality of teaching, scholarship and research in the University by ensuring the body of academic policies and degree resolutions are self-consistent, incorporate the best ideas and are aligned with the strategic goals of the University.
6. In pursuit of the above objectives,
 - 6.1. request reports from, or refer matters to academic units for consideration and action as required;
 - 6.2. consider and take action as required on reports or academic submissions from academic units;
 - 6.3. initiate and oversee, in collaboration with the University Executive, a formal and regular program of review of academic activities of all academic units.
7. To actively seek and evaluate opportunities to improve the University's pursuit of high standards in all academic activities.
8. To ensure proper communication channels are established with other committees of the Academic Board and University Executive to promote cross-referencing and discussion of matters pertaining to academic standards and policy.
9. To receive regular reports from, and provide advice to the Deputy Vice-Chancellors pursuant to maintaining the highest standards in teaching, scholarship and research.
10. To exercise all reasonable means to provide and receive advice from the University Executive and its relevant subcommittees.
11. To provide regular reports on its activities under its terms of reference to the Academic Board.
12. To consider and report on any matter referred to it by the Academic Board, the Vice-Chancellor or the Deputy Vice-Chancellors.



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| Submission To | Academic Standards & Policy Committee |
| Date | 14 March 2017 |
| Item No | 2.1 |

Non-Confidential

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|--------------------------|--|
| Author | Dr Matthew Charet, Executive Officer to Academic Board |
| Reviewer/Approver | Professor Jane Hanrahan, Chair |
| Paper title | Minutes of the Previous Meeting |
| Purpose | To seek approval of the minutes of the previous meeting. |

RECOMMENDATION

That the Academic Standards and Policy Committee resolve that the minutes of meeting 1/2017, held on 14 February 2017, be confirmed as a true record.

MINUTES

ACADEMIC STANDARDS AND POLICY COMMITTEE

2:00pm – 4:00pm, Tuesday 14 February 2017

Senate Room, Quadrangle (A14)

Members Present: Professor Jane Hanrahan (Chair); Isabella Brook, President, SRC; Associate Professor Alex Chaves, Veterinary Science; Karen Cochrane, Nominee of the President, SUPRA; Dr Frances Di Lauro, Arts & Social Sciences; Associate Professor Geoff Frost, Business; Associate Professor Peter Gibbens; Engineering & IT; Professor Manuel Graeber, Medicine; Kerrie Henderson, Office of General Counsel; Associate Professor Glen Hill, Architecture, Design & Planning; Associate Professor Tom Hubble, Science (for Helen Agus); Associate Professor Veysel Kayser, Pharmacy; Dr Peter Knight, Medicine; Associate Professor Tony Masters, Chair of the Academic Board; Associate Professor Mark Melatos, Arts & Social Sciences; Professor Pip Pattison, Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Education); Associate Professor Maurice Peat, Business School; Associate Professor Jennifer Rowley, Sydney Conservatorium of Music; Professor Anne Twomey, Law.

Attendees: Dr Matthew Charet, Secretary; Dr Glenys Eddy, Committee Officer, Secretariat; Myrophora Koureas, Policy Analyst, SAS Program; Associate Professor Peter McCallum, Director, Educational Strategy.

Apologies: Helen Agus, Science (Associate Professor Tom Hubble attending instead); Associate Professor Tania Gerzina, Dentistry; Associate Professor Robyn Gibson, Education and Social Work; Dr Debra Shirley, Health Sciences; Associate Professor Ann Elias, Sydney College of the Arts.

UNCONFIRMED MINUTES

1 WELCOME AND APOLOGIES

The Chair welcomed new and returning members and conveyed apologies from those unable to attend.

2 PROCEDURAL MATTERS

2.1 Minutes of Meeting 7/2016 on 9 November 2016

The minutes of the previous meeting were approved as a true record.

Resolution ASPC17/1-1

That the Academic Standards and Policy Committee resolve that the minutes of meeting 7/2016, held on 9 November 2016, be confirmed as a true record.

2.2 Business Arising



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The Chair advised re: Action 5/2016 that she has contacted the DVC (Registrar) and has been advised that the Deputy Registrar will develop a solution to address the issue of automatic termination of candidature for students who have exceeded the time limit to complete the program of study in which they are enrolled. Given the small volume of students affected, the solution is likely to consist of a scheduled report identifying cases requiring action, followed by manual processing as necessary.

Associate Professor McCallum advised that Action 6/2016 is no longer necessary.

The Committee noted that Action 7/2016 was completed by circulation immediately following the previous meeting and can be closed as resolved.

Professor Graeber commended the inclusion in the minutes of his recommendation that the terms of reference be revised to incorporate the setting and monitoring of academic standards. The Chair advised that as part of the follow-on from the Review of the Academic Board, the structure of the Board and its committees would be reviewed and suggested that this activity be incorporated into discussions arising from the review.

Comment was made arising from the minutes for Item 4.1 Replacement Assessments, with the observation made that the DVC (Registrar) advised at that meeting that it was not part of the proposal put to the committee to require the submission of replacement examination scripts at the same time as the script for the original examination. Recent communication from the DVC (Registrar) suggests that simultaneous submission is required, and the Chair undertook to communicate this discrepancy to the DVC (Registrar).

Action 1/2017: Communicate with DVC (Registrar) to clarify expectation for the timing of lodgement of replacement examination scripts. Responsible: Chair. Timing: As soon as possible.

3 STANDING ITEMS

3.1 Report of the Chair

The Chair advised that she had nothing to report.

Resolution ASPC17/1-2

That the Academic Standards and Policy Committee note the report of the Chair.

3.2 Report of the Academic Board meeting, 2 November 2016

In addition to the written report circulated with the agenda, Associate Professor Masters advised that the report of the external review of Academic Board has been received and is currently with the Chancellor and Vice-Chancellor for comment before wider dissemination. It is anticipated that the report will be circulated with the agenda pack for the 28 February meeting of Academic Board.

Resolution ASPC17/1-3

That the Academic Standards and Policy Committee note the report of the Academic Board meeting held on 7 December 2016.

3.3 Committee Forward Plan

The Chair advised that this document has been developed to enable longer-term planning to assist the committee in meeting its responsibilities by identifying reports and essential actions that need to be undertaken through the year. Members were asked to provide any additional items to the Secretary.

Resolution ASPC17/1-4

That the Academic Standards and Policy Committee note the Committee Forward Plan for 2017, as presented.

4 ITEMS FOR ACTION

4.1 Decisions Matrix

Ms Koureas informed the committee that the Decisions Matrix has been previously approved by the Academic Board, and that this amendment incorporates revisions arising from the centralisation of examinations management. Several minor items of feedback have been provided



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by the University Executive Education Committee subsequent to the version distributed with the agenda, and that these will be incorporated before the proposal is presented to the Academic Board for approval. It is proposed to include a revised version of the Decisions Matrix as Schedule Three in the *Assessment Procedures 2011*.

In discussion, Ms Henderson advised that the formatting of the Matrix will be adjusted as appropriate for inclusion in the formal policy template and that no substantial changes will arise because of this. Concern was expressed that Unit of Study Coordinators do not have access to high-level data and members were advised that each faculty has Faculty Champions who can access more sophisticated data via enhanced system capability. Ms Koureas undertook to follow up how best the Faculty Champions can be identified to Unit of Study Coordinators. A mechanism for standardised management of responses to Special Consideration for group assessment was also requested and Ms Koureas undertook to follow up.

The proposal was endorsed, subject to incorporation of the minor amendments recommended by the University Executive Education Committee.

Action 2/2017: Provide Unit of Study Coordinators with identity of Faculty Champions to enable access to data relating to Special Consideration. Responsible: Myrophora Koureas. Timing: As soon as possible.

Action 3/2017: Mechanism for standardised management of responses to Special Consideration for group assessment to be sought. Responsible: Myrophora Koureas. Timing: As soon as possible.

Resolution ASPC17/1-5

That the Academic Standards and Policy Committee recommend that the Academic Board amend the Assessment Procedures 2011 to include as Schedule 3 the Decisions Matrix (Special Consideration and Special Arrangements), as amended, with effect from Semester 1 2017.

4.2 Strategic Review of Assessment

Associate Professor McCallum spoke to this item and advised that the paper is designed to initiate a broader conversation regarding assessment, as committed to in the Strategic Plan 2016 – 2020. The desirability of developing methods for measuring the effectiveness of assessment, increasing the authenticity and integrity of assessment and reducing the volume of summative assessment are points of emphasis in the paper. The formulation of assessment plans for majors, minors and programs of study is called for, relating to the volume of assessment and where and how to assess. To enable this, it is proposed to form a working party to enable University-wide consultation, and also to draw on expertise in the School of Education and Social Work. This working party is intended to be small but will consult widely, and will draw on participants invited by the DVC (Education) and Chair of Academic Board.

In discussion, Ms Henderson recommended that the working party liaise closely with the Organisational Design team to avoid clashes in timing of core activities. Professor Pattison advised that there is to be a discussion at the University Executive regarding timing, and that the review will be undertaken with sensitivity to the volume of other change processes that are currently underway across the University. The need for clear communications is also understood. Associate Professor McCallum observed that scoping will need to be undertaken regarding policy and procedural impacts arising from the review of assessment.

The possible impact of this review on the development and implementation of the new curriculum was raised, and Associate Professor McCallum suggested that it is anticipated that the two activities will take place in parallel. Possible tension between reducing summative assessment and needing to provide a mark for a unit of study was raised for further exploration, as was the accommodation of a diversity of discipline-specific variations in learning requirements and assessment practices.

The establishment of an Assessment Working Party was endorsed as presented.

Resolution ASPC17/1-6

That the Academic Standards and Policy Committee:

- (1) endorse the convening of an Assessment Working Party by the Deputy Vice Chancellor (Education) and the Chair of the Academic Board;*



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- (2) discuss the paper "Strategic Review of Assessment"; and
- (3) note the process for implementing goals in the University of Sydney Strategic Plan 2016 – 2020 relating to assessment.

5 ITEMS FOR NOTING

5.1 2015 Vice-Chancellor's Academic Misconduct and Plagiarism Taskforce Implementation Report

Associate Professor McCallum advised that this paper provides a twelve month follow-up on action taken arising from the report of the Vice-Chancellor's Academic Misconduct and Plagiarism Taskforce, as presented to Senate in 2015. It details the establishment of the Office of Educational Integrity and comprehensive record keeping which will enable the determination of whether measures to foster educational integrity are working. The process for educational integrity reporting has also been adjusted (as outlined in Item 5.4 below, approved by the committee by circulation in January) to allow faculties to spend more time analysing data and formulating strategies to address trends rather than collecting the data itself. Amendments to policy and procedures for addressing academic misconduct have also been enacted. Members were advised that the online Educational Integrity module has been improved and is easier to complete. Possible correlation between module completions and drop-out rates was suggested for further investigation.

The committee noted this report.

Resolution ASPC17/1-7

That the Academic Standards and Policy Committee note the report of the Vice-Chancellor's Academic Misconduct and Plagiarism Taskforce implementation program.

5.2 Academic Board / SEG Phase Four Faculty Review Report – Engineering and Information Technologies

The committee noted this report.

Resolution ASPC17/1-8

That the Academic Standards & Policy Committee note the Academic Board / SEG Phase Four Faculty Review Report for the Faculty of Engineering and Information Technologies.

5.3 Academic Board / SEG Phase Four Faculty Review Report – Education and Social Work

The committee noted this report.

Resolution ASPC17/1-9

That the Academic Standards & Policy Committee note the Academic Board / SEG Phase Four Faculty Review Report for the Faculty of Education and Social Work.

5.4 Educational Integrity Reporting – By Circulation

The committee noted this report.

Resolution ASPC17/1-10

That the Academic Standards & Policy Committee formally note its approval by circulation of a proposal relating to Educational Integrity reporting, as circulated in January 2017.

6 OTHER BUSINESS

6.1 Any Other Business

Ms Cochrane sought clarification regarding the method by which student involvement in the University is coordinated, and offered the assistance of SUPRA in this regard.

Next meeting: 2:00pm – 4:00pm, **Tuesday 14 March 2017**
Senate Room, Quadrangle



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A full copy of the Academic Standards and Policy Committee papers is available at:

<http://sydney.edu.au/secretariat/pdfs/academic-board-committees/academic-standards/2017/20170214-ASPC-Agenda-Pack.pdf>

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| Author | Matthew Charet, Executive Officer to Academic Board |
| Reviewer/Approver | Associate Professor Tony Masters, Chair of the Academic Board |
| Paper title | Report of the Academic Board meeting |
| Purpose. | To advise the Academic Standards and Policy Committee of the outcomes of the Academic Board's meeting held on 28 February 2017 |

RECOMMENDATION

That the Academic Standards and Policy Committee note the report of the Academic Board meeting held on 28 February 2017.

REPORT OF ACADEMIC BOARD MEETING

Items related to the Academic Standards and Policy Committee

The Academic Board:

- Noted the report from the meeting of the Academic Standards and Policy Committee held on 14 February 2017;
- Approved the amendment of the *Assessment Procedures 2011* to include as Schedule 3 the Decisions Matrix (Special Consideration and Special Arrangements), as amended, with effect from Semester 1 2017; and
- Noted the Academic Board/SEG Phase Four Faculty Review Reports for the Faculty of Engineering & Information Technologies and the Faculty of Education & Social Work.

Other matters

The Academic Board also:

- Received a verbal summary of the roundtable discussion held at the previous meeting;
- Approved changes to the membership of the Academic Board and its standing committees;
- Received a verbal report from the Chair on matters considered by Senate at its 12 December 2016 meeting;
- Received the Academic Board Review Report and extended thanks to the members of the review panel;
- Noted the verbal report of student members;
- Noted honours and distinctions, including inclusions in the Australia Day Honours;
- Noted the Acting Vice-Chancellor's Report on matters considered by Senate at its meeting of 12 December 2017;
- Noted the General Report of the Acting Vice-Chancellor; and
- Noted the report on the promotion of academic staff to Levels B, C, D and E in 2016.

- Noted the report from the meeting of the Admissions Committee held on 14 February 2017;
- Approved a proposal from the Sydney Law School to amend the Master of Labour Law and Relations and approve the amendment of Course Resolutions arising from the proposal, with effect from 1 March 2017; and
- Approved changes to the IELTS requirements that accompany the curriculum review, as endorsed by the Admissions Committee at its meeting of 9 November 2016.

- Noted the report from the meeting of the Undergraduate Studies Committee held on 7 February 2017; and
- Approved a proposal from the Faculty of Science to amend the course resolutions and degree table for the Bachelor of Science/Master of Nutrition and Dietetics, with effect from 1 January 2017.

- Noted the report from the meeting of the Graduate Studies Committee held on 7 February 2017;
- Approved the amendment of the Scholarship Ranking Guidelines, with immediate effect; and



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- Approved a proposal from the Faculty of Science to amend the table of units of study for the Doctor of Veterinary Medicine and Bachelor of Veterinary Biology/Doctor of Veterinary Medicine degrees, with effect from 1 January 2018.



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| Author | Professor Tyrone M Carlin, Deputy Vice Chancellor (Registrar), Professor Pip Pattison, Deputy Vice Chancellor (Education) |
| Reviewer/Approver | Prof. Tyrone Carlin, DVC Registrar, Prof. Pip Pattison, DVC (Education) |
| Paper title | Proposed Semester Date and Length Changes |
| Purpose | This paper sets out a proposal to alter semester dates and lengths from 2019 onwards. Effecting this change will confer a number of material benefits on the University. These include enhancing the University's capacity to expand Summer and Winter School offers, increasing the capacity of the University to attract international students from the United States and Europe and assisting the University to meet its stated target of 50% student participation in international mobility activities by 2020. |

RECOMMENDATION

That the Academic Standards and Policy Committee recommend that the Academic Board:

- (1) approve the proposed semester dates for 2019;*
- (2) approve the adoption of twelve week semesters in place of thirteen week semesters; and*
- (3) approve the preservation of the current commencement point of semester one and delay the commencement point of semester two by a fortnight relative to present practice with effect from 1 January 2019, as presented.*

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

During 2016, considerable discussion occurred throughout the University of a number of proposals with respect to future semester dates and lengths. Those discussions have resulted in the generation of a proposal to adopt revised semester dates and lengths as set out in this paper, from 2019 onwards.

Specifically, it is recommended that from 2019, the University adopt twelve week semesters in place of semesters of thirteen weeks in length. It is also recommended that the commencement point of semester one be preserved, but that the commencement point of semester two be delayed by a fortnight relative to present practice.

In the University of Sydney's 2016-2020 strategic plan, initiative three (3) of Strategy 4 sets an ambitious target, to send 50% of our students abroad on mobility activities by 2020. The current 4 week break between S1 and S2 is a significant barrier to achieving this target.

The amended semester dates proposed in this paper would lengthen the winter break sufficiently to allow our students seamless access to northern hemisphere summer school programs from high quality partner institutions. These programs can cater for substantial cohorts but are typically not accessible to our students because their length exceeds our current winter break length. A lengthened winter break would also allow us to offer better inbound opportunities to students from the U.S, Europe and Asia, facilitating strengthened partnerships with key target institutions.

In addition, the dates and semester lengths proposed in this paper preserve the capacity of the University to offer a diverse summer school program and confer substantially expanded flexibility with respect to the capacity to offer courses during the winter break, as well as provide enough time for research opportunities for students from domestic and international institutions, as are offered during the summer break.

To offset the reduced length of Semesters 1 and 2, it is proposed that the requirement for any preparatory activities for class as well as tutorials, laboratory and other small group and experiential activities should



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begin, wherever possible, in Week 1 of Semester rather than Week 2. This approach reflects the literature on class contact hours and educational gains which demonstrates that 'close contact' (involving personal interaction between teacher and students) and the total hours that the student invests in working on a unit are more important to educational gain than class contact hours *per se*.

BACKGROUND / CONTEXT

Currently the University operates with two semesters each of thirteen weeks duration with a short mid-semester break of 4 weeks in length. One consequence of this model is that University of Sydney students have very limited access to Northern Hemisphere short-term mobility programs which are typically 5 – 8 weeks in duration.

The change to the semesters would allow our students to access the following mobility opportunities which are currently not available without complex individual adjustments to their Sydney course structure:

- Short-term exchange
- US Summer Programs (5-8 weeks in duration)
- European/Canadian/Asian Summer programs
- International Internships
- International Research Placements
- Language Study
- Faculty-led programs

The growth in international mobility activity envisaged as a result of the capacity to provide our students with access to these activities, coupled with growth in semester and full year academic exchanges, will underpin fulfilment of the University's objective of achieving 50% participation in international mobility activities by 2020.

The revised semester dates and lengths would also allow the University to attract inbound study abroad students from a greater range of partner institutions in the U.S than is currently possible, enhancing student body diversity.

The mid-year break would also be advantageous from a research productivity and honours/HDR recruitment perspective. In a number of faculties, research groups currently provide research project opportunities to students during the summer period, when there is sufficient opportunity for students to undertake projects in research groups with enough time to produce results and have a meaningful experience. The summer break is not universally convenient for students, particularly international students, though many would be interested in undertaking experiences like this.

As an example, the Faculty of Science generally has over 100 second and third year students undertaking research projects during the summer break, with these experiences seen as critical for recruitment to the research honours year and the PhD program. In that faculty, requests for short-term projects during the winter break are common, but the short break does not provide enough time to offer meaningful project experiences. This would be resolved under the proposed new model for semester dates and lengths set out in this paper.

Finally, the proposed semester date and length changes should enhance the University's capacity to grow both summer and winter course offerings, should there be a desire to do so.

During 2016, a proposal to change semester dates but preserve semester lengths was the subject of substantial consultation. Whilst there was broad support for the examination of options that might support the achievement of the objectives described in this paper, there were concerns of substance in relation to the potential impact of the proposed semester dates on a variety of administrative processes and on some faculty based clinical placement activity. This revised proposal for a change of both semester lengths and dates flowed from a review of the feedback from across the University and should effectively mitigate identified concerns.

It is noteworthy that amongst the Group of Eight, Adelaide, ANU, Melbourne and Monash have already adopted twelve week semesters. Further, it has now been confirmed that UNSW will adopt a trimester model,



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plus optional summer school, effective 2019. This heightens the importance of a timely decision in relation to our semester arrangements.

RECOMMENDATION

Table 1 below encapsulates the recommendation.

Table 1 – Recommended Amended Semester Dates

| | 2019 Current | 2019 Recommended |
|--|---------------------------------|---------------------------------|
| Summer School | | |
| Summer School lectures begin | Mon 7 Jan | Mon 7 Jan |
| Summer School ends | Fri 1 March | Fri 1 March |
| First Semester | | |
| Lectures begin | Mon 4 March | Mon 4 March |
| UA Common Vacation Week/non-teaching Easter period | Fri 19 Apr – Fri 26 Apr incl. | Fri 19 Apr – Fri 26 Apr incl. |
| Study Vacation (stuvac) | Mon 10 June – Fri 14 June incl. | Mon 3 June – Fri 7 June incl. |
| Examination period (2 weeks) | Mon 17 June - Sat 29 June incl. | Mon 10 June – Sat 22 June incl. |
| Semester ends | Sat 29 June | Sat 22 June |
| Winter School | | |
| Winter School lectures begin | Mon 1 July | Mon 24 June |
| Winter School ends | Fri 26 July | Fri 09 August |
| Second Semester | | |
| Lectures begin | Mon 29 July | Mon 12 August |
| UA Common Vacation Week/non-teaching period | Mon 30 Sept – Fri 4 Oct incl. | Mon 30 Sept – Fri 4 Oct incl. |
| Study Vacation (stuvac) | Mon 4 Nov – Fri 8 Nov incl. | Mon 11 Nov – Fri 15 Nov incl. |
| Examination period (2 weeks) | Mon 11 Nov – Sat 23 Nov | Mon 18 Nov – Sat 30 Nov |
| Semester ends | Sat 23 Nov | Sat 30 Nov |



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Non-Confidential

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| Author | A/Prof Peter McCallum, Director, Educational Strategy |
| Reviewer/Approver | A/Prof Peter McCallum, Director, Educational Strategy |
| Paper title | Policy on Continuing and Extra-curricular Education and non-AQF courses |
| Purpose | To endorse the name aims, scope, governance framework and content of the proposed Policy on Continuing and Extra-curricular Education and seek feedback on issues relating to the development of the policy. |

RECOMMENDATION

That the Academic Standards and Policy Committee endorse the name, aims, scope and governance and section on partnerships, as presented.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Development of a policy on Continuing Education was recommended by the Continuing Education Strategy Working Party in November 2015 and endorsed by the (then) Senior Executive Group. During 2016 the Continuing Education Steering Committee, jointly established by the DVC Education and the Provost, undertook background work to understand the scope and potential of continuing education activities within the University and, along with the SEG Education Committee, endorsed proceeding with the recommendation for a policy development.

The attached paper gives further details of the proposed policy and recommends that the scope of the policy be expanded to cover all courses that are not part of an approved curriculum for a higher education award, including staff and student development, support and compliance courses, non-AQF awards and non-higher education courses offered in partnership with other providers.



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BACKGROUND / CONTEXT

The Continuing Education Strategy Working Party report (2015) recommended improvements to governance arrangements for continuing education within the University and the development and amendment of relevant policies to give effect to this (the Executive Summary of the Working Party report is appended at Attachment 1). With the rapid development of open courses, online delivery and the competition that these may provide for higher education programs (particularly in postgraduate coursework), continuing education is likely to become an area of increasing strategic focus. A clearly articulated policy on continuing education will provide clarity on responsibility levels and approval, assure quality and strategic alignment, and provide an appropriately flexible and agile foundation for development and innovation. The Continuing Education Steering Group, established jointly by the DVC Education and the Provost to oversee implementation of the Continuing Education Strategy, and the (then) SEG Education Committee considered this issue in 2016 and endorsed a recommendation to develop a policy.

ISSUES

Name

For the reasons discussed below, the suggested name is the Continuing and Extra-curricular Education, and non-AQF courses policy.

Aims of the Policy

The following aims are proposed:

- establish and formalise governance arrangements for continuing education as recommended in the working party report;
- provide a framework for integration of the continuing education strategies of faculties, centres and other academic units, including the Centre for Continuing Education;
- provide a foundation for alignment of non-award teaching with the University's engagement and education strategies; and
- foster strategic development and innovation in non-award teaching.

Scope

The Continuing Education Strategy working party defined 'continuing education' as any formal or informal educational activity offered by the University, which was not part of a higher education qualification as defined by the Australian Qualification Framework (AQF). The working party's focus was on courses offered to the public or to particular industry or professional groups. In developing a comprehensive policy attention also needs to be given to two other categories that do not fit this definition but which are of considerable and growing strategic significance; staff and student development, support and compliance courses which are not part of the approved curriculum (in some cases these overlap with continuing education courses offered to the public), and the possible offering, should the University choose to do so, of non-AQF qualifications as permitted under the *Higher Education Standards Framework*.¹ The increasing capacity to offer online and open courses creates great benefits for self-directed learning and development by staff and students and the existence of a policy giving clarity over responsibility and authority will enable flexible and responsive development as need and interest arise. In order to remove ambiguity and maintain an orderly profile, it is proposed that the policy include both of these categories, and encompass all formal and informal educational activity offered by the University which is not within the approved curriculum of a higher education award.

As defined in the Working Party report, the umbrella term 'Continuing Education' is taken to include:

- Continuing Professional Development
- Corporate Training
- Executive Education

¹ Offering a non-AQF qualification would require an amendment to The University of Sydney (Coursework) Rule 2014 which specifies the coursework award courses that are conferred or awarded by the University (1.3)



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- Non-award units (but not award units taken in a non-award capacity)
- Open Courses
- Pathway Programs
- Personal Interest
- Professional development

(The Working Party definitions of these terms is given in Attachment 2.)

Such courses will generally have an external focus but may be relevant and available to staff and enrolled students as well. 'Extra-curricular' education describes courses offered to staff and students for support, development and compliance reasons that do not lead to a qualification, while 'non-AQF courses' are courses that lead to a qualification outside the Australian Qualifications Framework.

Governance

The policy will enact the broad outline of governance and responsibility for Continuing Education proposed in the Working Party report.

The Dean of each Faculty (or delegate) should assume responsibility for the strategic value and quality of continuing education courses in the domain of faculty expertise, either directly where a program is wholly within the orbit of their expertise, or jointly through the Board of Interdisciplinary Studies (BIS), where programs touch on the expertise of multiple faculties. This should include:

- formal approval for the appointment of staff to teach in a non-award course;
- approval of the purpose and educational approach for the course;
- a systematic closed-loop approach to monitoring course quality (e.g. use of a brief feedback tool, with some standard University items).

The Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Education) should be given overall responsibility for coordination and whole-of-University monitoring of quality and strategic fit, ensuring that information is collected from faculties and the BIS and reported through to the Senior Executive Group and the Academic Board.

(Continuing Education Strategy Working Party Report: Recommendation 1)

This framework, which was approved in broad terms by SEG in 2015, is designed to ensure quality, oversight and alignment with faculty and the University's education strategy, while, at the same time, allowing for appropriate flexibility and agility.

It is proposed that a comparable model will be adopted for extra-curriculum learning and staff development. Where courses are generated by units that are not within a faculty, responsibility for, and approval of a course would belong to a faculty with relevant expertise or with the DVC Education or the relevant DVC. A principle for the approval and management of courses will be that where relevant expertise for a course exists within the University, it be appropriately consulted and utilized.

For non-AQF courses which result in the awarding of a University of Sydney qualification (albeit one not within the *Australian Qualifications Framework*), it is proposed that the approving body be the Academic Board. All awards of the University of Sydney are ultimately conferred by the Senate, and the Senate has delegated responsibility for all course approval to the Academic Board. As noted, any such proposal would require changes to the *Coursework Policy*.

Partnerships

A further possibility exists for a unit within the University to offer a course in partnership with another provider. This would be an option in the case, for example, of a faculty wishing to offer an AQF course which was not a higher education qualification, for example, a Certificate (the University only accredits higher education qualifications), or a non-AQF course outside the University's profile. The policy will clarify the delegations for approving such arrangements, adapting the broad levels of responsibility envisaged in the Working Party report.

An outline of the proposed policy is in **Attachment 3**.



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CONSULTATION**

The policy will be developed in consultation with the Centre for Continuing Education (CCE), faculties and relevant committees of the University Executive and the Academic Board which will be the final approving body. The Continuing Education Steering Committee and the (then) SEG Education Committee approved proceeding with the development of this policy in December 2016. This paper will be discussed by those groups and the University Executive in February, after which a policy will be drafted in collaboration with the Policy Management Unit. The draft policy will be circulated to CCE faculties for comment in March with a revised version to be considered by UE Education on 10 April, UE on 27 April and the Continuing Education Steering on 3 May. A final draft will be considered by the Academic Standards and Policy Committee on 30 May with a view to receiving final approval by the Academic Board on 13 June.

A timeframe is included in **Attachment 4**.

FINANCIAL CONSIDERATIONS

Financial matters relating to continuing education were considered by the Continuing Education Steering Committee in 2016 and are being developed further by the Centre for Continuing Education and the Provost's Portfolio in 2017.

ATTACHMENTS

- Attachment 1.** Executive Summary of the Continuing Education Strategy Working Party.
- Attachment 2.** Definitions used in the Continuing Education Strategy Working Party report.
- Attachment 3.** Policy outline
- Attachment 4.** Policy development timeline



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Attachment 1. Executive Summary of the Continuing Education Strategy Working Party.

From the Continuing Education Strategy: Report of the Continuing Education Strategy Working Party.
19 November 2015.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Continuing education is strategically important for the University and could well become more so. However, the current structure of continuing education at Sydney University does not encourage its alignment with broader University strategies, but rather encourages mission drift. Properly managed, it can form part of the University's response to anticipated structural disruption to the education sector and economic shifts that are resulting in declining employment rates for graduates. The University also faces an increasing need to enhance industry, professional and community engagement, for which continuing education can be an important tool. Some education competitors and large firms have shown an increasing preference for vertical integration of education and employment pathways, and the University must remain agile and responsive to the learning market beyond its core degree program.

For our graduates, continuing education could form part of the co-curriculum experience envisioned in the current University strategy process, and continue to support them in their transition to work. For alumni, it can assist with retraining and skills development for career progression. Forging relationships with professional communities and industry through continuing education can also help the University secure high-quality work placements, and build research dissemination and engagement, leading to greater research impact.

To realise these benefits in full, however, the University must modernise the current program offered through its various entities, ensure strategic alignment is encouraged through its structure and that quality can be assured. The working party has made several recommendations on how to reform the current entities that offer continuing education to assist in realising this vision. Modernisation does not mean abandoning educational richness, but adjusting its focus on student, graduate, employer, and community needs, and broadening its reach through technology.

Recommendation one is to improve the governance of continuing education across the University, and assure course quality through ensuring faculty oversight of courses, either singly or through the Board of Interdisciplinary Studies as appropriate. Infrastructure to support continuing education should also be harmonised and faculties incentivised through the budget process to fully leverage the strategic benefits of the continuing education courses that they offer. There are opportunities in a well-run continuing education program to build strong external partnerships that can support the University's teaching and research goals, serve a contemporary economy, maintain alumni engagement and provide a source of revenue to the University.

Recommendation two is to ensure that courses currently offered by the Centre for Continuing Education are overseen in the same way, and the Centre reviewed to assess the value of retaining it to provide cross-faculty courses and administrative support for continuing education.

Recommendation three is to discontinue offering Vocational Education and Training through Sydney Learning by allowing the Registered Training Organisation (RTO) registration to lapse at the end of 2018. Where faculties seek to offer VET qualifications, they should do so in partnership with a reputable and appropriately qualified organisation. The Diploma of Tertiary Preparation (DTP) should be discontinued, and the Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Registrar) in consultation with the Academic Board and the Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Indigenous Strategy and Services), should consider the strategic need to offer an academic preparatory program for domestic students.

Recommendation four is to bring the development of MOOCs, SPOCs and the Open Learning Environment envisioned in the education strategy papers into the same governance arrangements as continuing education. This should allow integration of systems, and in some cases allow courses to be offered to both current students and the general public simultaneously.

Once this reform process has taken place, the University will then be well-placed to consider a more ambitious vision for its work in continuing education. The working party noted the potential for significant expansion in this space, as anticipated changes to the economy, the structure of working



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life and digital education are realised. Such considerations are beyond the scope of this working party, but the University may wish to review and reflect on these as it approaches its next strategic plan.



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Attachment 2 Definitions used in the Continuing Education Strategy Working Party report.

From the Continuing Education Strategy: Report of the Continuing Education Strategy Working Party.
19 November 2015.

5.1 Definitions

Continuing education: any formal or informal learning delivered outside of schools and that is not part of a higher education qualification as defined by the Australian Qualification Framework. This includes vocational education and training.

Continuing Professional Development (CPD): courses undertaken by professionals to maintain their knowledge and skills related to their professional lives, as part of a professional accreditation obligation

eg Professional Plus+ (Sydney Law School)

Corporate training: courses commissioned by an employer to address a skill or knowledge gap in their workforce. The course is customised to the workplace and may or may not lead to the award of a qualification.

eg Sydney Learning corporate training

Executive education: academic programs targeted at business leaders and senior executives. These programs generally do not lead to a formal qualification but may tie into postgraduate programs.

eg Sydney Business School Executive education

Non-award: existing University of Sydney units of study being offered separate to a degree program. This is also often referred to as auditing a subject.

Open Courses: eLearning courses which are offered to an audience outside of a normal degree structure.

This includes both Massive Open Online Courses (MOOCs) where participation can be unlimited and open to non-enrolled students, and Small Private Online Courses (SPOCs) which are a version of a MOOC used locally with on-campus students.

Pathway programs: designed to provide bridging preparation for students who do not meet entry requirements to undertake a degree at the University. Pathways for admission are approved by the Academic Board and do not require a qualification but may include one.

eg The University of Sydney Foundation Program (University/Study Group partnership)

Personal interest: courses undertaken to expand the knowledge and skills of the learner in an area not directly related to an occupation. These courses do not lead to a formal qualification and are likely to be more informal in delivery.

eg A History of World Cinema Course with David Stratton (CCE)

Professional development: courses undertaken by the individual to improve their workplace knowledge, skills and abilities but which do not lead to a formal qualification

eg Critical skills for executive assistants (CCE)

Qualifications: anything awarded under the Australian Qualifications Framework (AQF).

Vocational Education and Training (VET): part of tertiary education and training which provides accredited training in job related and technical skills through the delivery of training packages and other ASQA accredited courses. AQF levels 1-5 are VET qualifications.

eg Diploma of Early Childhood Education and Care (Sydney Learning)



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Attachment 3 Policy outline

Policy on Continuing and Extra-curricular Education and non-AQF courses.
draft outline (20 January 2017)

1. Preliminary
 - a. Name of policy
 - b. Commencement
 - c. Policy is binding
 - d. Statement of intent
 - e. Application
2. Definitions
 - a. Continuing education
 - b. Continuing professional development
 - c. corporate training
 - d. executive education
 - e. open courses
 - f. pathway courses
 - g. personal interest
 - h. professional development courses
 - i. Staff development and support courses
 - j. Student support courses
 - k. award courses outside the AQF
3. Principles and purpose of continuing and extra-curricular education at the University of Sydney
4. Policy
 - a. Continuing education
 - i. continuing professional development
 - ii. corporate training
 - iii. executive education
 - iv. open courses
 - v. pathway courses
 - vi. personal interest courses
 - vii. professional development
 - b. staff development
 - c. Student support
 - d. Research development
 - e. Non-AQF qualifications
 - f. Courses offered in partnership with other providers
5. Roles and Responsibilities
 - a. within faculties
 - b. within Centres and other units
 - c. interdisciplinary and other courses
6. Development, approval and quality assurance
 - a. Course development and consultation
 - b. Approval
 - i. Within a faculty
 - ii. Within a centre
 - iii. For interdisciplinary and other courses
 - c. Complaints handling
 - d. Reporting and quality assurance



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Attachment 4 Policy development timeline

2016.

25 November. Consult over content with Continuing Education Steering Committee. Update policy request with OGC

6 December. Initial paper (draft 1) to CCE and Seg Education.

2017

February 2. Proposal paper to CCE and Continuing Education Steering Committee (CESC)

February (dates TBC). Proposal paper to non-award subcommittee of Board of Interdisciplinary Studies.

February 1 . Proposal paper to UE Education (meeting date 13 Feb).

February. Week 3. Policy draft 1

March. WB 27 Feb. Initial draft to faculties, CCI and ASPC (14th March) and SEG Ed (dates TBC) for consultation. (also CESC and non-award subcommittee as appropriate).

March – 10 April. Revised policy to UE Ed (Meeting date 10 April), CCE and CESC.

April 27. Revised policy to UE

May 16 – 30 MAY. Policy to ASPC (meeting date 30 May), CCE and CESC.

May 30 – 13 June. Policy to AB (meeting date 13 June).



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| Author | Tristan Enright, Manager, Educational Integrity |
| Reviewer/Approver | Brendon Nelson, Deputy Registrar Associate Professor Peter McCallum, Director, Education Strategy |
| Paper title | Implementation of Anonymous Marking |
| Purpose | To inform the Committee of the date determined by the Registrar for the implementation of anonymous marking in written assessments and formal examinations. |

RECOMMENDATION

That the Academic Standards and Policy Committee note the Registrar's determination that anonymous marking be implemented by the commencement of Semester 1, 2018.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Amended in late 2016, the *Assessment Procedures 2011* (the Procedures) now state, in subclause 5(7):

In examinations, tests or other assessments consisting of written elements, students should be identified on scripts, essay books or answers sheets by Student Identification Number only. Names should not be used.

The inclusion of this clause is to enable anonymous marking of written assessments and examinations wherever possible and practicable. Given that the implementation of this approach requires a number of local practices and University systems to be adapted, the Procedures also provide, in subclause 2(2), for the Registrar to determine the date by which anonymous marking is to commence.

This paper informs the Academic Standards and Policy Committee (ASPC) of the Registrar's determination that anonymous marking for centrally managed written exams is to be implemented for Semester 1, 2018. Faculties should seek to implement anonymous marking approaches sooner wherever possible, with full compliance also being required by Semester 1, 2018.



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BACKGROUND / CONTEXT

The absence of an explicit University policy on anonymous marking was first raised by the Students' Representative Council (SRC) with the Student Consultative Committee in 2015. A paper was subsequently presented to the ASPC on 20 April 2016 outlining the rationale for introducing anonymous marking at the University, an approach the ASPC endorsed in-principle at that time. At its meeting of 12 October, the ASPC then endorsed the amendment of the *Assessment Procedures 2011* to facilitate the use of anonymous marking in 'examinations, tests and other assessments consisting of written elements,' with students to be identified only by Student Identification Number on a date to be determined by the Registrar. The Academic Board subsequently approved the amendment at its meeting of 2 November 2016, to take effect from 2017.

ISSUES

To ensure that faculties and relevant professional services units have sufficient time to align their local processes and practices with the amended marking procedure, the Registrar has determined that implementation of anonymous marking for formal examinations managed by the Examinations Office be staged such that full implementation be required from Semester 1, 2018. Faculties and unit of study coordinators should implement anonymous marking sooner wherever they are in a position to do so, with the understanding that full implementation is required by Semester 1, 2018. Where a faculty or unit of study coordinator implements anonymous marking earlier, it should be done in a manner that is consistent for all students in the unit of study.

This staged approach to implementation provides the Examinations Office time to synchronise implementation of anonymous marking with other major systemic changes to the management of formal examinations occurring in 2017. It also provides the Educational Innovation team in the Education Portfolio with sufficient time to investigate any further changes that may be required to adapt current enterprise learning systems and tools (e.g., *Turnitin*) and, as necessary, to develop appropriate training resources for academic staff.

CONSULTATION

The approach outlined in this paper was developed through consultation with the, Director, Education Strategy, Deputy Registrar and Manager, Educational Integrity, and subsequently endorsed by the Registrar on 15 February 2017.

COMMUNICATION

On behalf of the Registrar, the Director, Education Strategy, will seek to inform faculties of the deadline by which full compliance will be required through the University Executive Education Committee at its meeting on 10 April 2017.