
ACADEMIC STANDARDS AND POLICY COMMITTEE

2:00pm – 4:00pm, Tuesday 18 April 2017

Senate Room, Quadrangle (A14)

Members Present: Professor Jane Hanrahan (Chair); Helen Agus (Science); Dr Vasiliki Betihavas (Nursing); Isabella Brook (President, SRC); Karen Cochrane (Nominee of the President, SUPRA); Dr Frances Di Lauro (Arts & Social Sciences); Associate Professor Geoff Frost (Business); Professor Manuel Graeber (Medicine); Kerrie Henderson (Office of General Counsel); Associate Professor Glen Hill (Architecture, Design & Planning); Georgia Mantle (Student, Arts & Social Sciences); Associate Professor Mark Melatos (Arts & Social Sciences); Associate Professor Maurice Peat (Business); Dr Debra Shirley (Health Sciences); Professor Anne Twomey (Law).

Attendees: Dr Matthew Charet (Secretary); Associate Professor Ross Coleman (Director, Graduate Research) (for Items 5.1 and 5.2); Dr Glenys Eddy (Committee Officer, Secretariat); Tristan Enright (Manager, Educational Integrity) (for Item 4.1).

Apologies: Associate Professor Tim Allender (Education & Social Work); Professor Adam Bridgeman (Director, Educational Innovation); Associate Professor Alex Chaves (Veterinary Science); Associate Professor Tania Gerzina (Dentistry); Associate Professor Peter Gibbens (Engineering & IT); Associate Professor Robyn Gibson (Education & Social Work); Associate Professor Veysel Kayser (Pharmacy); Dr Peter Knight (Medicine); Associate Professor Tony Masters (Chair of the Academic Board); Professor Pip Pattison (Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Education)); Associate Professor Jennifer Rowley (Conservatorium); Amy Wenham (Student, Nursing).

3/2017

MINUTES

1 WELCOME AND APOLOGIES

Apologies were noted as recorded above.

2 PROCEDURAL MATTERS

2.1 Minutes of Meeting 2/2017 on 14 March 2017

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

Resolution ASPC17/3-1

That the Academic Standards and Policy Committee resolve that the minutes of meeting 2/2017, held on 14 March 2017, be confirmed as a true record.

2.2 Business Arising

There was no business arising.

3 STANDING ITEMS

3.1 Report of the Chair

The Chair advised that she had nothing to report.

Resolution ASPC17/3-2

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

3.2 Report of Academic Board

The Chair drew the attention of members to the written report circulated with the agenda. She highlighted the Academic Board's approval of the broad recommendations made in the Report of the Review of Academic Board, and advised that the future structure of the Board, as agreed by a working party, was presented to and approved at the meeting. The Office of General Counsel is currently drafting a new *University of Sydney (Academic Board) Rule 2017*, to replace the existing *University of Sydney (Academic Governance) Rule 2003 (as amended)*, to be presented to Senate

for approval.

The Chair also advised that the proposal to change semester duration and dates, as endorsed at the last meeting of the committee, was not supported by the Academic Board.

Resolution ASPC17/3-3

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

4 ITEMS FOR ACTION

4.1 Educational Integrity Reports 2016

Mr Enright spoke to this item and advised members that these are the first reports utilising the new pre-populated template. The Office of Educational Integrity has prepared an extensive summary report which provides the broader context for the reports of individual faculties. The reports indicate that faculties are overwhelmingly supportive of the new Educational Integrity policy and procedures, and the new reporting process has allowed faculties to focus on identifying gaps and address issues in implementation.

In discussion, the Chair sought clarification of the status of students who have not completed the online module. Members were informed that to date, 18,000 students have completed the module and that those who have yet to do so have been identified and advised to complete before the end of Semester 1 2017 or risk having their academic record suppressed.

Ms Brook sought an update of the University's trial of Cadmus, noting that a pilot had been conducted in the Business School. A meeting is scheduled with the Deputy Dean (Education) in the Business School to assess whether this tool will be adopted more widely, and if so a proposal to this effect will be circulated via the appropriate committees in due course. Ms Brook also suggested that induction of new academic staff should include training in Educational Integrity. Ms Mantle asked that future development of the module take into consideration opportunities to broaden accessibility, and Mr Enright advised that no negative feedback has been provided by Disability Services relating to the current module but that the program welcomes any further comments in this regard.

It was observed that the statistics provided demonstrate an imbalance in rates of reporting incidents across the University, with Business and Engineering reporting a significantly higher number of incidents than other faculties. The significance of this was discussed, with members being informed that Business was an early adopter of Turnitin and so staff have received more training and are more familiar with its use than staff who have recently adopted its use. Under-detection and under-reporting need to be identified at faculty level, and members were advised that faculty Educational Integrity Coordinator has access to unit of study-level data to enable this. Several members reported that colleagues have expressed reluctance to have incidents recorded on a student's academic record and so have potentially under-reported, not understanding that Educational Integrity reporting is held in a separate administrative file and is not included on a student's transcript. There are also possible gaps between the ability to detect incidents and the ability to report on them, suggesting that further training for unit of study coordinators may be desirable.

It was recognised that student communications and education are a key component in fostering academic honesty, and that some forms of assessment are more open to misuse than others. Adjusting the type of assessment was also raised as a possible means of reducing infringement. It is also important to ensure that staff establish a balance between the educational outcomes required for the unit of study with the need to ensure educational integrity, with acknowledgement that it is possible to achieve both objectives through skilful assessment.

The possibility was raised of including in the report the number of students enrolled as well as the number of incidents, with the observation made that this would enable clearer comparisons to be drawn between units of study with different levels of enrolment. Resourcing was identified as the main constraint to providing this level of detail, and that future reports will include the ability to track incidents by faculty of enrolment as well as unit of study.

The committee noted the report and agreed to recommend that the Academic Board constitute a working group to develop University-wide guidelines for the determination of outcomes and penalties.

Resolution ASPC17/3-4

That the Academic Standards and Policy Committee:

- (1) *review the Educational Integrity Annual Report 2016, the faculty educational integrity reports and recommend steps to be taken by each faculty to further ensure the academic integrity of their courses;*
- (2) *recommend that the Academic Board constitute a working group comprised of faculty Educational Integrity Coordinators and supported by the Office of Educational Integrity to develop University-wide guidelines for the determination of outcomes and penalties; and*
- (3) *recommend that the Academic Board discuss the feasibility of constituting and resourcing a cross-faculty research group to conduct in-depth analysis of the incidence of plagiarism and academic dishonesty at the University.*

5 ITEMS FOR NOTING

5.1 Identifying the academic integrity and milestone actions within the *Progress and Planning for Higher Degree by Research Students Policy 2015*

Associate Professor Coleman spoke to this paper, advising that the proposal emerged from the recommendations of the Educational Integrity Taskforce regarding HDR students. It is proposed to amend the *Progress and Planning for Higher Degree by Research Students Policy 2015* to require the submission by HDR students of a substantial piece of written work at the end of the first year of candidature, which will then be checked using Turnitin. Any educational integrity issues that might be identified via this process can then be addressed by the supervisor in the early stages of candidature. Implementation will necessitate the development of a Turnitin site for all supervisors as well as training in how to use the tool, which has delayed implementation at the beginning of 2017. Training and support tools are currently in development and will be rolled out following the approval of this proposal.

In discussion, members were informed of student concern regarding the retention of draft material in Turnitin, and Associate Professor Coleman advised that material will be retained in Turnitin, but that supervisors can turn off checking against previous versions. The saved content is also not accessible to external users without the express permission of the Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Education), which will only be granted in exceptional circumstances. Compliance with the process will be reported as part of the Annual Progress Review, with no other data reported to the Educational Integrity or Research Offices.

The committee noted this proposal, which will be presented to the Academic Board for approval with the endorsement of the Graduate Studies Committee.

Resolution ASPC17/3-5

That the Academic Standards and Policy Committee note the proposed amendment of the Progress Planning and Review for Higher Degree by Research Students Policy 2015 for the purpose of implementing an integrity check as a component of the first year HDR milestone.

5.2 Accountability changes within the *Supervision of Higher Degree by Research Students Policy 2013*

Associate Professor Coleman spoke to this paper, advising that the maintenance of a University Supervisor Register was a key outcome of the University's last TEQSA review. The addition of staff to the Register is currently delegated to the Chair of the Graduate Studies Committee and it is proposed to delegate this activity to faculty or University school Associate Deans, enabled by the amendment of the *Supervision of Higher Degree by Research Students Policy 2013*. It is believed that as faculties have sufficient expertise to appoint academic staff, they will also be well-placed to assess the suitability of staff to act as supervisors or auxiliary supervisors.

The committee noted this proposal, which will be presented to the Academic Board for approval with the endorsement of the Graduate Studies Committee.

Resolution ASPC17/3-6

That the Academic Standards and Policy Committee note the proposed amendments to the Supervision of Higher Degree by Research Students Policy 2013, as presented.

5.3 Simple Extension Data, Semester 2 2016

The Chair opened discussion of this item by advising that the paper incorrectly asserts that Pharmacy does not allow simple extensions; this is not the case and the information was provided in error. Members noted that many faculties had not provided data, and that of the faculties that had, there were many gaps in response. It was also unclear whether a response of zero indicated that no applications have been made and approved, whether data was not available, or whether unit of study coordinators had advised students that simple extensions were not available. Strategies for better communicating the collection of data to unit of study coordinators were discussed. It was also noted that simple extensions were intended to be a simple administrative process and that it was therefore important not to over-formalise it.

The committee noted this report.

Resolution ASPC17/3-7

That the Academic Standards & Policy Committee note the data provided by faculties on Simple Extensions for Semester 2, 2016.

6 OTHER BUSINESS

6.1 Any Other Business

Mrs Agus raised an issue regarding the transfer of students who are facing exclusion in one degree (but who have not yet been excluded due to their case awaiting final assessment by the Student Appeals Body) into a combined degree program which includes the original degree. The desirability of a strategy to close this loophole (which also applies to transfers administered by UAC) was discussed and the difficulty was identified with acting pre-emptively when a decision is still pending. It was also observed that it is impossible to know whether an external applicant is in a similar situation and so there are also equity concerns with penalising a Sydney University student over an external applicant. The related issue of the current practice of resetting progression to Stage 0 when a student transfers to a new degree was also raised, and it was agreed that these concerns might benefit from further discussion. Ms Henderson sought advice regarding the volume of such incidents, noting that policy is not generally written to focus on exceptions to the norm.

There being no other business, the meeting concluded at 3:29pm.

Next meeting: 2:00pm – 4:00pm, **Tuesday 30 May 2017**
Senate Room, Quadrangle

A full copy of the Academic Standards and Policy Committee papers is available at:
sydney.edu.au/secretariat/pdfs/academic-board-committees/academic-standards/2017/20170418-ASPC-Agenda-Pack.pdf.