ADMISSIONS COMMITTEE

11:00am – 12:00pm, Wednesday 9 November 2016
Western Tower Boardroom

Members Present: Associate Professor Tim Wilkinson, Chair; Alison Byrne (for Kubra Chambers); Professor Tyrone Carlin, Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Registrar); Jas Chambers, nominee of the Dean of Science; Associate Professor Rae Cooper, nominee of the Dean of Business; Associate Professor Wendy Davis, Chair, Undergraduate Studies Committee; Maxwell Hall, UG Student; Tom Greenwell, President, SUPRA; Felicity Kiernan, Head of Admissions (Development) (for Wencong Chai); Professor Michelle Lincoln, nominee of the Dean of Health Sciences; Professor Alyson Simpson, nominee of the Dean of Education.

Attendees: Jill Baker (Chair, Academic Board Review panel); Linda Carmichael Information Management Officer; Dr Matthew Charet (Secretary); Associate Professor Peter McCallum, Director, Educational Strategy (for Item 4.1).

Apologies: Professor Barbara Caine, Dean, Arts & Social Sciences; Wencong Chai, Head of Admissions; Kubra Chambers, Director, Planning and Information Office; Peter Finneran, nominee of Director, Student Recruitment; Associate Professor Tony Masters, Chair, Academic Board; Associate Professor Kirsten McKenzie, Chair, Graduate Studies Committee; Mary Teague, Head, Widening Participation.

MINUTES

1 WELCOME AND APOLOGIES

The committee noted apologies as recorded above.

2 PROCEDURAL MATTERS

2.1 Minutes of Previous Meeting

Resolution AB Adm 2016/6-1
That the Admissions Committee resolve that the minutes of meeting 5/2016, held on 12 October 2016, be confirmed as a true record.

2.2 Actions Arising

There were no actions arising.

3 STANDING ITEMS

3.1 Report of the Chair

The Chair advised that he had nothing to report.

Resolution AB Adm 2016/6-2
That the Admissions Committee note the report of the Chair.

3.2 Report of the Academic Board meeting of 2 November 2016

A written report of this meeting was tabled. In the absence of Associate Professor Masters, the Chair highlighted the approval of the curriculum reform package, as well as the endorsement of the University of Sydney (Governance of Faculties and University Schools) Rule 2016 and the University of Sydney (Delegations of Authority – Academic Functions) Rule 2016, neither of which will affect the operation of the Admissions Committee.

Resolution AB Adm 2016/6-3
That the Admissions Committee note the report of the Academic Board meeting held on 2 November 2016.

3.3 Report of the Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Registrar)

Professor Carlin advised that the University has participated for the first time in the October UAC offer round, and that data had been circulated to relevant stakeholders. This has enabled the
University to make a good head start on achieving the admissions targets set in the 2017 budget. Planning for the main admissions season is well underway, and revised procedures for the award of scholarships to high-achievers have recently been sent to faculties.

Resolution AB Adm 2016/6-4
That the Admissions Committee note the report of the Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Registrar).

4 ITEMS FOR ACTION

4.1 Curriculum Reform: IELTS Requirements

Associate Professor McCallum attended to speak to this item, which arose from the curriculum reform proposal that had been approved at the 2 November meeting of the Academic Board. The current proposal maps English language requirements for the new degree structure to the current equivalent degrees.

In discussion, it was observed that the IELTS scores for degrees in Engineering and Information Technologies is blank in the proposal, and that these should be set at minimum 7.0 overall, with a minimum 6.5 in each band. The values for Education and Social Work also differ from those in the proposal, and are currently set at a minimum 7.5 overall, with minimum 7.0 in Reading & Writing and 8.0 in Listening & Speaking. It was agreed that the values in the proposal be updated to reflect this, subject to confirmation by the faculty. Further adjustment of the schedule will also be necessary as the University implements changes to organisational design through 2017.

Subject to confirmation of the amended IELTS values for admission to the Faculty of Education and Social Work, the Committee approved the proposal.

[Note: subsequent to the meeting, the Faculty of Education and Social Work confirmed the stated values as correct.]

Resolution AB Adm 2016/6-5
That the Admissions Committee approve minimum English Language Standards for streams and degrees created in the 2016-2020 Curriculum Reform package to commence in 2018, and note clarifications, as amended.

4.2 Faculty of Medicine: Master of Bioethics, Graduate Diploma in Bioethics, Graduate Certificate in Bioethics

The Chair advised that this proposal intends to align IELTS for Bioethics with other postgraduate courses of a similar nature. As international student recruitment collateral for 2017 is already in circulation advising of the current admission standards, it was agreed that the new standard be implemented from Semester 1, 2018 rather than Semester 2, 2017 as initially proposed.

The proposal was approved as amended.

Resolution AB Adm 2016/6-6
That the Admissions Committee approve the request to increase IELTS score requirements for the Bioethics Coursework degree programs at the University of Sydney, to an IELTS requirement of: “An overall band score of 7.0 or better, with a minimum of 6.5 in each band”.

4.3 Faculty of Education and Social Work: Initial Teacher Education

Associate Professor Simpson spoke to this paper which contains three components, each of which was discussed separately.

The first component requires the creation of non-academic admission pathways, as will be required under new national standards set by the Australian Institute for Teaching and School Leadership. The Faculty proposes to introduce a pathway similar in application to the current E12 scheme, with recommendation made by the Principal based on a set of criteria. The Faculty have investigated and are comfortable with the academic outcomes of E12 entrants, and inclusion of an interview process is also under discussion but recognised as logistically challenging. Members were informed that UAC has expressed a desire to implement a national admissions process and the University could wait for this solution to be developed, but there is uncertainty that a UAC-led process will be developed in time for mandated implementation in 2018. The Faculty is therefore keen to develop an E12-based solution as well, and both can be run in parallel. Because part of the requirement will be to track the academic performance of students admitted under such pathways, Professor Carlin
suggested that this might be regarded as a candidature management issue and not an admission matter. Associate Professor Simpson advised that the Faculty’s reading of the requirements indicated that we need to develop both a non-academic admissions pathway and a means to track the success of that pathway in selecting academically-capable students. Advocacy for non-recent school leavers under the propose scheme requires clarification and it was agreed that the Faculty should discuss the matter further, incorporating whatever advice can be obtained from UAC.

The second component presented for discussion relates to transparency and the establishment of justifiable selection processes. In discussion, Professor Carlin observed that the University already publishes its ATAR enrolment data, and advised that guidelines on requirements for alternate admission pathways are being developed. Circulation of this information is anticipated before the end of 2016.

The third matter raised for discussion regards the LANTITE national literacy and numeracy test, which from 2017 will have to be completed by students before they undertake their final placement. A number of possible scenarios were discussed, including the incorporation of the LANTITE as an admission requirement and as a progression milestone in First Year; this latter would avoid the need to make conditional offers for admission and would enable students to undertake placements. The University’s non-engagement with the provision of an AHEGS Statement was also noted in connection with where completion of the LANTITE would be recorded. It was agreed that the matter required further discussion within the Faculty and would be brought back to the Committee if required.

Resolution AB Adm 2016/6-7
That the Admissions Committee discuss the implementation of processes to address three new Program Entry standards for Initial Teacher Education degrees:

1. a non-academic entry tool for candidate selection based on principal’s recommendation (Standard 3.2);
2. the public availability of selection processes for entry into initial teacher education programs, including student cohort data on the university website from 2018 (Standard 3.3); and
3. the introduction of the test for personal literacy and numeracy LANTITE (Literacy and Numeracy Test Initial Teacher Education) as an entry requirement for initial teacher education programs (Standard 3.5).

4.4 Additional New Schedules for 2017 Admissions
Ms Kiernan advised that this proposal reflects changes to UAC admissions, and that the Recruitment and Admissions teams have indicated comfort with the changes. It was noted that the approval of the proposal would allow direct processing by UAC of applications from countries not currently permitted.

The proposal was approved as presented.

Resolution AB Adm 2016/6-8
That the Admissions Committee approve the adoption of the following schedules:

1. Slovakian Maturita 2005 onwards;
2. Japanese National Center Test results;
3. South Pacific Board for Education Assessment (SPBAA); and
4. South Pacific Form Seven Certificate (SPFSC) with immediate effect.

5 ITEMS FOR NOTING

6 OTHER BUSINESS

6.1 Any Other Business

The Chair advised that this meeting was Mr Hall’s last due to the expiration of his term of office on 31 December 2016. Mr Hall was thanked for his active participation in the work of the Committee.

Next meeting: 10:00am – 12:00pm, Tuesday 14 February 2017
Western Tower Boardroom, Quadrangle
The agenda and papers for this meeting are available from sydney.edu.au/secretariat/pdfs/academic-board-committees/admissions/2016/20161109%20Admissions%20Agenda%20Pack.pdf