MINUTES

1 WELCOME AND APOLOGIES

The Committee noted apologies as recorded above.

2 PROCEDURAL MATTERS

2.1 Minutes of Previous Meeting

Members confirmed the minutes of the previous meeting, held on 4 July 2017, as an accurate record.

Resolution GSC17/6-1

That the Graduate Studies Committee resolve that the minutes of meeting 5/2017, held on 4 July 2017, be confirmed as a true record.

2.2 Actions Arising

There were no actions arising.

3 STANDING ITEMS

3.1 Report of the Chair

Professor McKenzie resumed the Chair after her leave in Semester 1 and extended thanks to Associate Professor Kertesz for ably acting in the role during her absence. The Chair also thanked Dr Eddy for supporting the committee while the Committee Officer was on leave.

Resolution GSC17/6-2

That the Graduate Studies Committee note the report of the Chair.

3.2 Report of the Academic Board

In addition to the written report, Associate Professor Masters informed members that at the meeting, the Board discussed and resolved to recommend the inclusion of ex officio members of Academic
Board in the electorate for the election of the Chair, as captured in the proposed University of Sydney (Academic Board) Rule 2017. Ordinarily, such a motion would have been advised to the Academic Board’s committees before approval, but in this instance timing precluded such consultation as the proposal needs to be considered by Senate at its next meeting.

Resolution GSC17/6-3
That the Graduate Studies Committee note the report of the Academic Board meeting held on 25 July 2017.

3.3 Report of HDR Examinations Sub-Committee
Associate Professor Nelson advised that she had nothing to add further to the circulated report, which the committee duly noted.

Resolution GSC17/6-4
That the Graduate Studies Committee note the report of the HDR Examinations Sub-Committee meeting of 27 June 2017.

3.4 Report of HDR Scholarships Sub-Committee
Associate Professor McCrystal provided a verbal update and advised members that the Sub-Committee had met three times since the last Graduate Studies Committee meeting. The May meeting was primarily focussed on discussion of mechanisms for determining the R value for allocation of scholarships (a revised version of which is on the agenda as Item 4.14), as well as consideration of exceptional applicants and of travelling scholarships. The June meeting focussed on the assessment of domestic and international applications, and resolved to award 31 domestic and 26 international scholarships. The July meeting also determined scholarship awards, and awarded 35 domestic and 11 international awards, as well as awards under the Vice-Chancellor’s Research Scheme, award top-ups and grants in aid. Members were informed that 2018 awards will be commencing shortly, and that the next meeting is intended to award any outstanding 2017 funds. Associate Professor McCrystal advised that at the commencement of allocation for 2017, it was agreed to set aside three awards for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander applicants, and that these have all been awarded.

In discussion, the proportion of accelerated awards made via the new allocation process was raised, and members were advised that this would be monitored over the remainder of the year.

4 ITEMS FOR APPROVAL

Major Course Proposals

4.1 Medicine: Graduate Certificate in Child Health
Professor Frommer informed members that this proposal arises from a revision of a non-award Diploma of Child Health that was established some years ago as a University-badged program delivered by staff in the Sydney Children’s Hospitals Network (SCHN), many of whom are also staff or affiliates of the University. To ensure that this program complies with TEQSA’s requirements, it has been revised and transformed into the Graduate Diploma in Child Health, as proposed. The program has an annual enrolment in the hundreds, primarily attracting non-specialists with an interest in paediatrics.

Noting that discussion between the Provost, DVC (Education) and SCHN is ongoing regarding the setting of fees, the proposal was endorsed for presentation to the Academic Board.

Resolution GSC17/6-5
That the Graduate Studies Committee recommend that the Academic Board:
(1) approve the proposal from the Sydney Medical School to introduce the Graduate Certificate in Child Health;
(2) recommend that Senate endorse the Academic Board’s approval of the proposal and approve amendments to the Resolutions of Senate related to the Degrees, Diplomas and Certificates in the Sydney Medical School;
(3) approve the implementation of the course resolutions arising from the proposal; and
(4) approve the implementation of the table of Units of Study arising from the proposal, with effect from 1 January 2018.
Minor Course Proposals

4.2 **Arts: Master of Development Studies**

Associate Professor Ramia advised that this proposal reflects the enablement of an optional specialisation within the degree by shortening the capstone unit of study. In discussion, it was questioned whether this would limit opportunities for graduates to pursue HDR study following award, and members were advised that students opting for a specialisation are unlikely to be interested in pursuing HDR study. Those who do wish to do so have the option of not undertaking a specialisation.

The proposal was endorsed as presented.

**Resolution GSC17/6-6**

That the Graduate Studies Committee recommend that the Academic Board:

1. approve the proposal from the Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences to amend the Master of Development Studies;
2. approve the amendment of the course resolutions arising from the proposal; and
3. approve the amendment of the table of Units of Study arising from the proposal, with effect from 1 January 2018.

4.3 **Arts: Master of Political Economy**

Associate Professor Ramia spoke to this proposal, which establishes a new specialisation in the program.

The proposal was endorsed as presented.

**Resolution GSC17/6-7**

That the Graduate Studies Committee recommend that the Academic Board:

1. approve the proposal from the Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences to amend the Master of Political Economy;
2. approve the amendment of the course resolutions arising from the proposal; and
3. approve the amendment of the table of Units of Study arising from the proposal, with effect from 1 January 2018.

4.4 **Arts: Postgraduate Specialisations**

Associate Professor Ramia spoke to this proposal, which establishes new specialisations in a number of programs.

The proposal was endorsed as presented.

**Resolution GSC17/6-8**

That the Graduate Studies Committee recommend that the Academic Board:

1. approve the proposal from the Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences to amend the Master of Human Rights, Master of International Relations, Master of International Security, Master of International Studies, Master of Public Policy, Master of Political Economy, Master of Development Studies and Master of United States Studies;
2. approve the amendment of the course resolutions arising from the proposal; and
3. approve the amendment of the table of Units of Study arising from the proposal, with effect from 1 January 2018.

4.5 **Dentistry: Doctor of Dental Medicine**

Dr Xaymardan advised that this proposal calls for the extension of the maximum time permitted to complete the Doctor of Dental Medicine to seven years, to align with offerings in Medicine and to enable an opportunity for students to re-attempt failed assessment. Associate Professor Masters advised that to enable this, a change must also be made to the *University of Sydney (Coursework) Rule 2014*, the latter of which can only be amended by Senate, and so the Academic Board can only provide a partial endorsement of the proposal and make an appropriate recommendation to Senate to amend the Rule. The Secretary undertook to liaise with the faculty to facilitate the drafting of a revised proposal to include this recommendation.

Subject to the provision of a revised proposal to include a recommendation to Senate to amend the *Coursework Rule*, this proposal was endorsed for presentation to the Academic Board.
Resolution GSC17/6-9
That the Graduate Studies Committee recommend that the Academic Board:
(1) approve the proposal from the Faculty of Dentistry to amend the Doctor of Dental Medicine;
(2) recommend that Senate approve the amendment of the University of Sydney (Coursework) Rule 2014; and
(3) approve the amendment of the faculty resolutions arising from the proposal, with effect from 1 January 2018.

4.6 HDREC: CoI Process for HDR Examinations
Associate Professor Coleman informed members that this proposal has arisen from feedback provided by the academic community following an earlier revision of the Thesis and Examination of Higher Degrees by Research Policy and Procedures requiring potential examiners to complete a Conflict of Interest declaration prior to appointment. Concern has been expressed that this causes potential examiners to question the trust of their colleagues, and that this is arguably an administrative process rather than an academic one. It is therefore proposed to revert to the previous practice of supervisors attesting to the absence of conflict in recommending appointments, with the HDR Administration Centre to conduct spot checks to ensure compliance.

In discussion, it was observed that it is difficult for a supervisor to definitively know of any conflict, and that asking supervisors to confirm the absence of conflict is a relatively simple process but one that is difficult to monitor. The opinion was also expressed that confirming directly with potential examiners is useful, but that the process should be an administrative rather than an academic activity. Dr Carayannopoulos advised that adherence to the current policy is irregular, and that institutions in the Go8 and others put the onus on the supervisor to declare any conflicts rather than on the examiner. It was observed that unless we are asking the examiners directly, the supervisor can only be asked to attest that they are “not aware” of any conflict, not that there is no conflict, as there may be conflicts of which they are unaware.

The desirability of having a central examinations management tool was highlighted as an ideal means of addressing this. In the absence of such a tool, it was agreed that the requirement to declare a conflict would be added to the Guidelines for Examiners or to the examiner appointment letter, with suggested wording to the effect of, “on receiving this thesis, you are agreeing that there is no actual or perceived conflict of interest”; a declaration can then be made by the examiner if needed. The committee supported this recommendation and agreed to recommend the amended proposal to the Academic Board.

Resolution GSC17/6-10
That the Graduate Studies Committee recommend that the Academic Board:
(1) approve the proposed amendments to the Thesis and Examination of Higher Degrees by Research Procedures; and
(2) approve the proposed workflow for appointment of examiners and adopt the modified appointment of examiners form to reflect the new process.

4.7 HDREC: Thesis Examination Guideline amendment
Associate Professor Coleman advised that this proposal has arisen due to lack of clarity regarding the recommendations available to examiners following an earlier revision of the Examiner’s Report Form and the Guidelines. This confusion has led to a significant increase in contested examinations and ‘revise and resubmit’ recommendations. It is therefore proposed to clarify the wording of the recommendations to distinguish the making of corrections of any type from the need to revise and resubmit. It was further suggested that the wording be changed to “non-award and revise and resubmit” to clarify that the degree is not to be awarded without further examination.

The proposal, as amended, was endorsed for presentation to the Academic Board.

Resolution GSC17/6-11
That the Graduate Studies Committee recommend that the Academic Board:
(1) approve the proposed amendments to the Thesis and Examination of Higher Degrees by Research Guidelines for Examiners 2017; and
(2) approve the proposed amendments to the Higher Degrees by Research Examiner’s Report on Thesis.
4.8 **Medicine: Doctor of Medicine**

This proposal was withdrawn by the Faculty.

4.9 **Medicine: Elective Units for various courses, for noting**

Associate Professor Kelly advised that this is an amended version of the proposal submitted to the previous meeting, as requested at that meeting, and is presented for noting.

The committee noted the amended proposal.

**Resolution GSC17/6-12**

That the Graduate Studies Committee recommend that the Academic Board:

1. note the proposal from Sydney Medical School to amend the Master of Medicine/Science in Medicine (Clinical Epidemiology) (Metabolic Health), Master of International Public Health, Master of Health Policy, Master of Public Health, Master of Public Health (Professional Practice) and Master of Surgery and related embedded programs; and

2. note the changes to the Unit of Study Tables arising from this proposal, with effect from 1 January 2018.

4.10 **Medicine: Infection and Immunity embedded Course sequence**

In discussion of this proposal, a number of amendments were suggested to clarify admission and other requirements. It was agreed that a revised version of the resolutions would be circulated for the information of the committee before the proposal was presented to the Academic Board.

Subject to the making of the identified amendments, this proposal was endorsed for presentation to the Academic Board.

**Resolution GSC17/6-13**

That the Graduate Studies Committee recommend that Academic Board:

1. approve the proposal from the Sydney Medical School to amend the Master of Medicine/Master of Science in Medicine (Infection and Immunity);

2. approve the amendment of the course resolutions arising from the proposal; and

3. approve the amendment of the table of Units of Study arising from the proposal, with effect from 1 January 2018.

4.11 **Science: Doctor of Veterinary Medicine**

Dr Bathgate advised that this proposal enables re-assessment through an amendment to the progression framework for the degree.

This proposal was endorsed for presentation to the Academic Board as presented.

**Resolution GSC17/6-14**

That the Graduate Studies Committee recommend that the Academic Board:

1. approve the proposal from the Faculty of Science to amend the Doctor of Veterinary Medicine;

2. approve the amendment of the course resolutions arising from the proposal, with effect from 1 January 2018.

4.12 **Science: Master of Clinical Psychology and Master of Clinical Psychology/Doctor of Philosophy**

Dr Newsome advised that this proposal has two parts, the first of which is the re-instatement of progression requirements, which had been deleted following an earlier revision of the program. The committee endorsed the presentation of changes to the progression requirements to the Academic Board.

The proposal also seeks to clarify course transfer arrangements, noting that although the academic admission criteria for the stand-alone and combined degrees are identical, students entering the combined degree have less stringent interview requirements. The discipline is keen to prevent students from entering the double degree then transferring to the single degree, to which they may not have been eligible for admission if it had been applied for originally.

In discussion, it was suggested that rather than having separate admission criteria for both degrees, transfer from the double degree to the stand-alone Master of Clinical Psychology might be based on alternative measures of academic suitability (such as the completion of 48 credit points of the
combined program to a set minimum standard). This component of the proposal was not endorsed but referred back to the faculty for further development.

**Resolution GSC17/6-15**

That the Graduate Studies Committee recommend that the Academic Board:

1. approve the proposal from the Faculty of Science to amend the Master of Clinical Psychology and Master of Clinical Psychology/Doctor of Philosophy, as amended; and
2. approve the amendment of the course resolutions arising from the proposal, with effect from 1 January 2018.

4.13 **Science: Master of Nutrition and Dietetics**

Dr Newsome advised that this proposal clarifies the background knowledge required for entry to the program, to meet accreditation requirements.

This proposal was endorsed for presentation to the Academic Board as presented.

**Resolution GSC17/6-16**

That the Graduate Studies Committee recommend that the Academic Board:

1. approve the proposal from the Faculty of Science to amend the Master of Nutrition and Dietetics; and
2. approve the amendment of the course resolutions arising from the proposal, with effect from 1 January 2018.

**Higher Degree by Research**

4.14 **Education Strategy: Refined R Implementation**

Associate Professor Coleman advised that this proposal is necessitated by the desire expressed in the Strategic Plan 2016-2020 to award scholarships to HDR candidates in areas determined to be of strategic importance. One component of this – the more speedy consideration of awards to outstanding applicants – has been successfully enacted, and mechanisms for the determination of which areas are of strategic importance have been in development since the idea was approved in principle by the Academic Board in November 2016. Implementation of the model presented at that time has been challenging because the model lacked clear and implementable delineation of the identified areas of strategic importance, and the model has subsequently been revisited. The outcome is presented for consideration by the committee.

The proposal has two core elements: the identification of areas of research undertaken by Multi-Disciplinary Research Initiatives (MDRIs) as identified in the Strategic Plan and as revised periodically by the Pro Vice-Chancellor (Strategic Collaborations and Partnerships); and research undertaken in disciplines with an ERA 5 status, connoting recognised excellence rather than aspiration (as might be associated with ERA 4). The Office of the Provost maintains a list of staff members of MDRIs, and this is currently being refined to include affiliates and auxiliaries. Inclusion of a supervisor in either category will make eligible any potential student for consideration for a strategic award.

In discussion, it was observed that it will be essential for the list of staff associated with an MDRI to be updated regularly in response to changes. Members were advised that the proposed allocation model would also be reviewed in the next 2-3 years to ensure that the desired outcome is being achieved.

The proposal was endorsed for presentation to the Academic Board.

**Resolution GSC17/6-17**

That the Graduate Studies Committee recommend that the Academic Board approve the proposal from the DVC Education Portfolio to amend the procedure for the implementation of R to the award of HDR scholarships.

**New Course Proposal**

4.15 **Engineering and IT: Graduate Certificate and Graduate Diploma in Computing**

Associate Professor Roehm spoke to this proposal, which has been revised since it was discussed at the previous meeting. He advised that the proposal seeks to address a gap in the provision of training for non-IT professionals by enabling the teaching of foundational subject matter in a dedicated sequence within a shortened Graduate Diploma in Computing. Completion of the first 24
credit points of the Diploma could be recognised with the award of a Graduate Certificate to enable early transfer to the Master of IT or Master of IT Management. This pathway would enable the full requirements of the accredited Master of IT to be delivered in two years rather than requiring an additional six months, as currently. Acknowledging that this is a complex mechanism to provide non-IT students with a professional IT qualification in the briefest possible time, the committee was advised that the Master of IT program will be comprehensively reviewed when it is next accredited around 2019.

This proposal was endorsed for presentation to the Academic Board, with a date of commencement of 1 January 2018 supported on the proviso that the necessary administrative activities required to offer the courses can be completed by then.

**Resolution GSC17/6-18**
That the Graduate Studies Committee recommend that the Academic Board:
(1) approve the proposal from the Faculty of Engineering and Information Technologies to introduce the Graduate Certificate in Computing and amend the Graduate Diploma in Computing;
(2) recommend that Senate endorse the Academic Board’s approval of the proposal and approve amendments to the Resolutions of Senate related to the Degrees, Diplomas and Certificates in the Faculty of Engineering and Information Technologies;
(3) approve the implementation or amendment of course resolutions arising from the proposal; and
(4) approve the implementation or amendment of the tables of units of study arising from the proposal,
with effect from 1 January 2018.

5 ITEMS FOR NOTING

5.1 Education Strategy: Higher Education Standards Framework and University Policy
Associate Professor Masters informed members that changes to several policies are required to ensure that the University is compliant with the Higher Education Standards Framework and that these papers address changes to or the implementation of policies that address third party agreements and the qualifications of those teaching University courses. Members were advised to provide any feedback directly to Associate Professor McCallum.

**Resolution GSC17/6-19**
That the Graduate Studies Committee:
(1) note the proposed creation of a Collaborative Education and Research Training Agreements Policy 2017 (provisional name);
(2) note amendments to the Learning and Teaching Policy 2015; and
(3) amendments to the Student Placement Policy (new name Student Placement and Projects Policy).

6 OTHER BUSINESS

6.1 Any Other Business
Associate Professor Masters informed members that any further course proposals submitted this year for implementation in 2018 must take into consideration any administrative deadlines that must be met to enable changes. The Academic Board is therefore unable to guarantee that any approved proposal can be implemented for Semester 1 2018.

There being no other business, the meeting closed at 4:18pm.

Next meeting: 2:00pm – 4:00pm, Tuesday 19 September 2017
Senate Room, Quadrangle