UNIVERSITY OF MELBOURNE

Selection Procedures Committee

Reviews of Selection 2010 – 2013

Introduction

Selection Procedures Committee's terms of reference include the following:

> **4.4** To review annually admissions under Statute 11.1.5 and to make such comments and recommendations as the Committee sees fit.
>
> **4.5** On the initiative of the Committee or on referral from the Board to investigate and make recommendations concerning any matters pertaining to selection. To ensure that the selection policies and procedures of the University lead to the selection of students of the highest quality, to monitor annually the quality of the intake and, where appropriate, to make recommendations to the Academic Board. In doing so the Committee shall take into account national and international best practice.
>
> **4.6** To advise the Academic Board on the operation and quality assurance of Access programmes.
>
> **4.7** To advise faculty and graduate school selection committees in their development of criteria for identification and ranking of applicants for selection into Access programmes.

Under these provisions, the Committee conducts regular review of selection into University courses.

Reviews of Selection into Undergraduate Programs

As a result of the introduction of the Melbourne Model and the widespread discontinuation of the use of middle band selection, the selection of applicants into undergraduate programs now involves automated processes in nearly all cases, except where auditions are required, eg in music and performing arts programs. There is thus no longer a need for active reviewing of undergraduate selection processes of the kind that has occurred in the past. Selection Procedures Committee has therefore determined that, in respect of undergraduate programs:

- The Admissions Office will provide an overall report, based on VTAC data.
- VCAM will be asked to submit a brief report on the process of selection for each course in which auditions are used.
- Access Melbourne will be asked to provide a report on the processes of selection for students entering through that pathway.

Reviews of Selection into Postgraduate Programs

Selection Procedures Committee has determined that:

- Selection reviews should be undertaken on a faculty/graduate school basis, with each faculty/graduate school being reviewed on a four year cycle.
- Reviews should examine the processes of selection broadly for all postgraduate coursework programs, including honours, in the faculty/graduate school, and a representative sample of courses should be identified for in-depth examination.
- Reviews should consider broadly whether the relevant resolutions on selection had been honoured and how academic judgement had been exercised in making selection decisions.
- Each review should be undertaken by a senior academic staff member of SPC, who would be asked to write a report of one to two pages on each faculty/graduate school,

identifying any problems to be addressed and good practices that might be noted and applied elsewhere.

The faculties/graduate schools to be reviewed over the coming four years are as follows:

2010 Melbourne School of Land and Environment, Melbourne Graduate School of Management, Melbourne Business School and Melbourne Graduate School of Education
2011 School of Law, Faculty of Science, Faculty of Arts
2012 Faculty of Medicine, Dentistry and Health Sciences, Melbourne School of Engineering, Faculty of Architecture, Building & Planning
2013 Faculty of the VCA & Music, Faculty of Veterinary Science, Melbourne Consulting and Custom Programs.

Any additional graduate schools created will be assigned to 2012.

The details of the process of review are at Appendix A.

Appendix A

Guidelines for Review of Selection into Postgraduate Courses

In many cases, applicants are selected continuously throughout the year, rather than in a single round. If this is so, the reviewer monitors the selection process over an extended period, typically 6 months. If there are a small number of well-defined selection rounds, the review process may be more compressed. The following actions take place.

(A) Before commencing review:

- Meet with the Chair of Selection Procedures Committee to discuss any specific issues that may require special attention and to agree on the time over which the review process is to take place.
- For reviewers undertaking a review for the first time, meet with an experienced reviewer to obtain additional advice on the review process
- Meet General Manager of the Faculty or Graduate School to discuss documentation that needs to be provided to the reviewer before or during the review and to have the details of the selection process explained.
- Ascertain critical dates in the process and determine which committee meetings the reviewer will attend and which individuals will be interviewed.
- Ascertain whether the Faculty or Graduate School uses working groups in selection rather than full committee meetings and arrange to attend a random sample of working group meetings.

(B) During the review period:

- Attend meetings of Selection Committees or other committees or working groups as arranged.
- Interview staff as arranged, and examine any documentation requested.

(C) At the end of the review period:

- Meet with Faculty or Graduate School General Manager to discuss the outcome of the selection process during the review period and to clarify any details relevant to the report.
- Write selection report and submit to SPC. The report is allowed to lie on the table and is sent to the Faculty for response in time for the next SPC meeting.
- Speak to the Faculty or Graduate School response to report at SPC. Revise report as needed. Submit final report.

A major component of the review process is attendance at Selection Committee meetings. The reviewer may ask questions comment on processes during the meeting, but the reviewer is not expected to and should not actively participate in selection decisions.

The report needs to include a careful discussion of the extent to which there is active academic involvement in selection decisions, whether there are effective committee structures, whether decisions are made with proper authority and documented, and whether the number of skilled personnel involved is small enough to render the process vulnerable if any one individual is unavailable.

In preparing the draft report, the reviewer may seek clarification of specific issues from the Faculty or Graduate School, including confirmation that descriptions of processes are correct, but the draft report and recommendations should not be submitted to the Faculty or Graduate School before they are considered by SPC. The Faculty or Graduate School has the opportunity to respond to the draft report once SPC has seen it, and its response should be addressed in the final version of the report.

SPC, 7 September 2009

Selection Procedures Committee

Report on Selection into Postgraduate Courses

Faculty or Graduate School:

Period covered by the report:

Name of reviewer:

Names of courses covered by this report:

Reviewer's overall assessment (Explain a “no” answer)

To the best of the reviewer's knowledge, the selection process complies with the policies, statutes
and regulations, and obligations of the University. Yes/No

Summarize good practices that may be applicable to other Faculties or Graduate Schools.

List changes that may lead to improvements in the process.

Reviewer's signature: Date:

Please attach a written report of up to four pages total length. If arrangements vary between courses, ensure that all variations are discussed.

• Describe the selection arrangements, including the appropriate committees involved (list the membership of the committee and the dates of its meetings, indicating any attended by the reviewer).
• Discuss the extent of actual committee participation in the process (either by scheduled full committee meetings or working groups).
• Comment on the extent to which there is active academic staff involvement in the selection process.
• Note if there are not enough staff involved to ensure safe continuation of the process if one staff member leaves.
• Comment on whether the documentation adequately records the reasons for the acceptance or rejection of applications, and by whom the decision was made.
• Comment on the overall process and state formal recommendations if appropriate.