

THE UNIVERSITY OF MELBOURNE

TEACHING AND LEARNING QUALITY ASSURANCE COMMITTEE

Meeting 7/08 — 14 August 2008

The Minutes of Meeting 7/08 of Teaching and Learning Quality Assurance Committee held on Tuesday, 14 August 2008, at 2.15 pm in the Jim Potter Conference Room, Old Physics Building.

**PRESENT:** Professor Lesleyanne Hawthorne (Chair)  
Professor Peter McPhee  
Professor Pip Pattison  
Professor Ron Slocombe  
Professor Prem Bhalla  
Mr Shaun Khoo  
Professor Richard James  
Professor Alistair Moffat  
Professor Lynn Meek  
Professor Gillian Wigglesworth  
Associate Professor Kim Watty  
Associate Professor Steve Holloway  
Associate Professor Mary Wlodek  
Professor Ken Gelder  
Mr Paul Fijn

**IN ATTENDANCE:**  
Ms Leanne Fisher (Committee Secretary)

**1. FORMAL MATTERS**

**1.1 Welcome**

Professor Hawthorne welcomed Dr Tony Weatherley to the Committee. Dr Weatherley has replaced Dr Rebecca Ford while she is on maternity leave. She further advised the Committee that Professor Peter McPhee and Associate Professor Mary Wlodek would be required to leave the meeting at 3.00 pm. Mr Paul Fijn will be arriving at the meeting at 3.15 pm. The Chair also welcomed Ms Sarah Quek, new MUOSS President to the Committee. It was noted that Assoc. Professor Marilys Guillemain will be absent from the Committee on LSP until late 2008.

**1.2 Apologies**

Professor Sue Elliott  
Associate Professor Nick Haslam  
Professor Richard Huggins  
Associate Professor Ray Misson  
Ms Suzanne Daroesman  
Ms Tammi Jonas

Ms Onagh Bishop  
Mr Jey Sern Choo  
Associate Professor Su Baker  
Associate Professor Marilyns Guillemin  
Associate Professor Jenny George  
Mr Shaun Ewen  
Dr Pat McLean  
Dr Marion Campbell  
Professor Camille Cameron

## **2. MINUTES FROM PREVIOUS MEETING**

The Minutes of Meeting 6/08 held on 10 July 2008, were confirmed.

## **3. ACTION SHEET AND MATTERS ARISING FROM PREVIOUS MEETING**

### **Minute 4.5 Steering Committee on Integrating Language and Disciplinary Teaching (July Meeting)**

Professor Ron Slocombe advised that a revised paper from the Steering Committee on Integrating Language and Disciplinary Teaching would be submitted to TALDEC at its September meeting.

### **Minute 5.1 Quality of Teaching Survey (July Meeting)**

It was noted that this matter would be discussed under Item 7.6 of the Agenda.

## **4. OFFICE OF THE PROVOST AND OTHER COMMITTEES**

### **4.1 Matters from the Provost's Office**

Professor Peter McPhee advised that Professor Sue Elliott and Professor Tom Kvan were at the University of Chile undertaking quality assurance of the University's programmes.

Professor McPhee spoke about the Quality of Teaching Survey Working Group Report on *Breadth Experience as Evidenced by QoT Semester 1, 2008*. He advised that this was the first survey under the new Melbourne Model and as such it is an important survey. The outcomes are much the same, however, there are some areas which will require further discussion. As Professor Moffat will not be able to attend Academic Board on 21 August to speak to the Report, Professor Hawthorne will report.

Professor McPhee advised the Committee that unfortunately Professor Marginson was misrepresented in *The Age* and Professor Marginson subsequently provided comments on the misrepresentation and Ms Sarah Quek had also written to *The Age* stating that *The Age* had misrepresented Professor Marginson.

He also advised that the Provost's Summit 2008 was successful and that some very good parallel sessions were held, i.e. classroom practice. A report from the Provost's Summit will be available for TALQAC at its September meeting.

Professor McPhee advised that the University received news of its excellent performance in the 2008 Australian and Teaching Council (ALTC) Citations. Seven academic and professional staff were recognised for their longstanding contributions to the quality of student learning. The recipients were Ms Lisa Hayes, the Melbourne School of Engineering; Mr Matthew Brett, the Disability Liaison Unit; Dr Brian Krongold, the Melbourne School of Engineering; Associate Professor Andrew Ooi, the Melbourne School of Engineering; Associate Professor Mary Ainley, the School of Behavioural Science, Faculty of MDHS; Associate Professor Peter Tregloan, Faculty of Science; and Professor Warren Bebbington, Pro Vice-Chancellor (Global Relations) and former Dean of Music. The recipients were honoured during an award ceremony hosted by the ALTC on 6 August at Federation Square. They will each receive \$ 10,000 to advance their teaching careers and to support continuing excellence in teaching.

#### **4.2 Academic Programs Management Committee**

Professor Ron Slocombe advised that the Committee had received a proposal for a University breadth subject, however, this was not approved as clarification was required for the criteria required to be met before an approval should be given. He advised that perhaps current subjects may require review against these criteria.

Professor Pip Pattison commented that the definition of breadth is currently being looked at by Professor Sue Elliott and herself. They will be reviewing the policy and approval process for graduate programme approval. Because emphasis has been placed on developing Graduate Schools, programmes require review and they need to look at what other Faculties are offering.

Professor McPhee commented that he would like to see Faculties drawing on their strengths and discussing programmes before they are submitted to the Melbourne Model Committee for consideration. There are a number of Faculties offering the same subject and the subject is listed on a number of websites.

Professor Ron Slocombe advised that the Melbourne Graduate School of Education is proposing to offer an undergraduate breadth subject. *Universitas 21* Global also intends to offer one or two breadth subjects. Professor Slocombe advised that outline and clarity is required in pathways. He asked if Professor Elliott could provide reports from the Melbourne Model Committee in future.

#### **4.3 Undergraduate Programs Committee (UGPC)**

This item was reported under Item 4.2.

#### **4.4 Postgraduate Coursework Programs Committee (PCPC)**

Professor Ron Slocombe reported that the postgraduate coursework list had to be finalised quickly for Open Day, which required some flexibility of the Committee. He reported that a large number of programme proposals have been received by the Committee.

#### **4.5 Teaching and Learning Development Committee (TALDEC)**

Professor Richard James advised that TALDEC has put forth two recommendations to Academic Board:

**(a)** Proposals for an Australian Higher Education Graduation Statement

Professors James and Meek provided the Committee with a briefing on the proposal. The Australian Higher Education Graduation Statement will align the Australian higher education sector with international trends in providing enhanced documentation to graduates to improve the transparency and portability of qualifications, and to facilitate international mobility. Graduation Statements have the potential to make Australian awards better understood internationally, thus enhancing the international mobility of Australian graduates for further study or employment and Australian competitiveness in the international education export market. Professor James pointed out that the Transcript and Graduation Statement are completely two separate documents. A Graduation Statement is only issued once in a student's career, where transcripts are issued at regular intervals.

The proposal recommends that the Commonwealth Government provide a one-off sum of \$ 150,000 to assist universities implement the initiative. An announcement on DEEWR's position is expected soon.

TALDEC has recommended that a Working Group be established to examine the implications should the University of Melbourne decide to develop and implement the Australian Higher Education Graduation Statement. The Working Group should have membership from key stakeholders, including School of Graduate Research, Student Records and Careers.

**(b)** e-Portfolios

The purpose of the paper is to document the potential benefits of e-Portfolios and to explore issues associated with their implementation. Seven points were outlined in the paper. TALDEC thought that the paper was helpful for those people who have not thought about e-Portfolios.

TALDEC believes that the paper should maintain a watching brief on points 3 to 7. The paper is a positive initiative and would be of value for students. e-Portfolios would also enhance reflection on learning. Students have a general unawareness of what is available to them. The paper has been referred to Academic Board and TALDEC has recommended that the policy position outlined in the e-Portfolio Discussion Paper be adopted by Academic Board.

Professor James advised that a theme has been set down for the Vice-Chancellor's Colloquium 2008 — Graduate Education. Associate Professor Kim Watty and Ms Tammi Jonas are on the planning committee for the Colloquium.

Professor James was asked about the paper that the Steering Committee on Integrating Language and Disciplinary Teaching has prepared. Professor McPhee commented that this was a complex area and there are lots of different approaches to ESL. Professor James commented that we need to see where the University's obligations to our international students are in terms of training and graduate outcomes. Professor Hawthorne noted that the English level is a large determinant in graduate salaries etc, with major differentials for former international students as demonstrated by Australia's 2006 skill migration review. The University needs to ensure that students have strong communication skills. Ms Sarah Quek and Mr Shaun Khoo both commented that encouraging interaction within the classroom is important.

Writing and reading is usually easier for ESL students than speaking, so opportunities for pro-active improvement of communication skills should be built into courses. It was also suggested that this could be done in group work. It was suggested that ESL be part of the orientation programme as it sets the scene.

Another area is the examination process — the phraseology of questions — which can become lost in translation. Some Faculties are already conducting ESL programmes, however, a more comprehensive approach is required.

Professor Pattison advised that she had attended a meeting and the group has determined that this issue is a priority, there is a lot of work to do in a very short time. Professor Pattison will be developing a paper to include a set of recommendations on a comprehensive programme on ESL.

A revised paper from the Steering Committee on Integrating Language and Disciplinary Teaching will be presented to TALDEC at its September meeting.

#### **4.6 Policy and Procedures Working Group (PPWG)**

Professor Ron Slocombe reported that two policies are under consideration, Special Consideration and Extension and Academic Transcripts.

#### **4.7 Reports from Student Representatives**

Students did not have anything to report under this item.

### **5. EMERGING INNOVATIONS**

There was nothing to report under this item.

### **6. EVALUATION CYCLE**

#### **6.1 Evaluation Cycle**

There was nothing to report under this item.

#### **6.2 Quality Measures**

There was nothing to report under this item.

### **7. WORKING GROUPS**

#### **7.1 Course Evaluation Strategy and Design Working Group**

The Chair acknowledged the work being undertaken by the University Planning Office and thanked TALQAC members and co-opted members for providing their commitment to the various Review Groups.

The Chair advised of the following newly promoted Professors (non-TALQAC members) who have been appointed to the current Review Groups to add additional academic representation:

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| Professor Ian Woodrow (Botany)                                       | Engineering and Dental Science Review Panel.         |
| Professor Dianne Otto (Law)  | VCA Review Panel.                                    |
| Professor Saman Halgamuge (Mechanical and Manufacturing Engineering) | Course Evaluation Strategy and Design Working Group. |

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| Professor Nikos Papastergiadis (Culture and Communication) | VCA Review Panel.                                    |
| Professor Bill Harley (Management and Marketing)           | ABP Review Panel.                                    |
| Professor Robert Dixon (Economics)                         | Course Evaluation Strategy and Design Working Group. |

Professor Hawthorne and Ms Sue Sleep have inducted these new Panel members. Ms Sleep provided a briefing to the Committee on the Review Groups. She advised that the Australian Universities Quality Agency has a new manual and the University has shifted its focus to performance standards outcomes. Under the Melbourne Model there are courses which do not necessarily equate with the Faculty and custodial Deans are being used.

## **7.2 ABP Review Group**

Associate Professor Kim Watty reported that the Faculty has identified a number of areas for improvement. Students are enthusiastic about courses but still frustrated on a range of communication-related and advisory issues, to be followed up by this part two review process .

## **7.3 Dental Science Review Group**

Ms Sleep reported that Review Group has received accreditation documents.

## **7.4 VCA Review Group**

Professor Gillian Wigglesworth reported that the Review Group is looking at selection, assessment and special consideration processes against the University's own processes.

## **7.5 Engineering Review Group**

The Chair reported that a meeting has been scheduled for this Review Group.

## **7.6 Quality of Teaching Survey Working Group (QoTSWG)**

Professor Alistair Moffat provided the Committee with an overview of the Quality of Teaching Survey *Report on the Breadth Experience as Evidenced by the QoT Semester 1, 2008*. The paper had been circulated to members and the purpose of the paper is to present an early summary indication of new general students' reactions to and experience of breadth, and to identify any immediate issues which may need to be taken into account in planning for and offering future breadth study options. The analysis was initiated by the TALQAC Quality of Teaching Survey Working Group and is part of a broader project to assess the appropriateness of the Quality of Teaching survey instrument as a quality assurance and evaluative tool in new generation degrees and Melbourne Model programmes more generally.

The "breadth" study that is a key component of the six new generation degrees introduced in 2008 is an exciting and challenging innovation. Results by and large were pleasing. At the same time a number of issues were noted, for further development. One challenge that arises is that of defining expectations for cross-Faculty teaching, and of ensuring holistic delivery, avoiding fragmentation and presenting truly integrated programmes.

Professor Moffat provided an outline of the survey and advised that students were given a range of choices when completing the survey. Some important points to note about the limitations of the data and the report.

- All subjects included in the analysis were being offered for the first time, and therefore were vulnerable to the normal challenges of newly developed subjects.
- The analysis covers only a small number of subjects — five UB subjects and nine non-UB subjects out of a normal undergraduate subject count of 1,700.
- Caution is warranted in comparing overall outcomes across years and between types of subjects, or drawing any definitive conclusions from the outcomes presented.

The general assessment or overview would suggest that:

- despite some obvious frustrations, mainly around planning, co-ordination and delivery, staff involved in presenting UB subjects regard them as being pedagogically positive and exciting;
- clarification is required on access to appropriate funding for development of UB subjects; and
- students' responses are generally positive. However awareness of subject expectations is an important issue to address, and the perceived structure and coherence of a subject could be problematic. Students sought clarification of the expected level of knowledge for breadth subjects, as well as assessment requirements.

Professor Leslyanne Hawthorne will comment to the August meeting of Academic Board, following the Provost's report on the evaluation. The Committee **recommended** that the report be considered by Academic Board.

#### **7.7 Examinations Working Group (EWG)**

The Committee noted the Report from the Examinations Working Group meeting held on 21 July 2008.

#### **7.8 TALQAC/TALDEC Working Group on Support Technology for Academic Honesty and Other QA/IT Activities**

There was nothing to report on this item.

### **8. FOR INFORMATION**

There was nothing to report on this item.

### **9. OTHER BUSINESS**

There was nothing to report on this item.

**10. NEXT MEETING**

The next meeting of the Teaching and Learning Quality Assurance Committee will be held on **Thursday, 11 September 2008**, at 2.15 pm in the Jim Potter Conference Room, Old Physics Building.