

**THE UNIVERSITY OF MELBOURNE**  
**ACADEMIC BOARD**  
**TEACHING AND LEARNING QUALITY ASSURANCE COMMITTEE**

**Meeting 1/09**

**MINUTES**

A meeting of the Teaching and Learning Quality Assurance Committee was held at 2.15-4.15pm Thursday 12 February 2009 in the Moot Court Room, Old Quad, The University of Melbourne, Parkville.

**PRESENT**

**Board Members**

Professor Leslyanne Hawthorne (Chair), Mr Paul Coats, Ms Suzanne Daroesman, Professor Sue Elliott, Professor Nick Haslam, Professor Richard James, Mr Anwar Shah, Professor Ron Slocombe, Professor Geoff Stevens and Associate Professor Mary Wlodek.

**Others Attending**

Ms Karen Roe (Committee Secretary) and Ms Sue Sleep (present for items A-G only).

**BUSINESS**

**A. Formal Matters**

**A.1 Apologies**

Professor Prem Bhalla, Ms Elizabeth Capp, Professor Camille Cameron, Mr Shaun Ewen, Dr Rebecca Ford, Ms Sarah Quek, Associate Professor Kim Watty and Professor Gillian Wigglesworth.

**A.2 Welcome**

The Chair welcomed the new committee members, Mr Anwar Shah and Mr Paul Coats, and offered to meet with them out of session to discuss the nature of the committee and their role.

**A.3 Membership**

The Chair noted there are six vacant membership positions on the committee. Professor Stevens undertook to provide advice out of session. Notes of thanks will be sent to the retiring members as well as induction information to the new members.

**A.4 Congratulations**

The Chair congratulated Professor Stevens on becoming President of the Academic Board and Professor Slocombe on becoming Vice-President of the Academic Board.

## **B. Minutes of the Previous Meeting**

Minutes of the previous meeting held on Thursday 13 November 2008 were adopted as a correct record by the committee and signed by the Chair.

## **C. Matters Arising from the Minutes**

### **C.1 Action Sheet**

The committee reviewed the action sheet and noted the action items were completed or ongoing.

## **D. University Reports**

### **D.1 Matters from the Provost's Office**

The committee received a verbal report from Professor Sue Elliott. The Provost's Office is involved in the Responsible Division Management project at the university. She will advise if any outcomes of the project are relevant to the evaluative processes of the committee. As part of the Melbourne Student Services Model, there will be a review of breadth subjects including an investigation into how students choose breadth subjects and their level of understanding of how breadth can bring flexibility to and, in some instances, shorten postgraduate studies.

### **D.2 Heads and Deans Conference at Mt Eliza**

The committee received a verbal report from Professor Leslyanne Hawthorne about the 2009 Heads and Deans Conference. Keynote speakers included Mr Alan Kohler on the current economic crisis and Professor Denise Bradley on the Bradley review of higher education. The committee noted that large investment will be required to establish the infrastructure to meet the review recommendations; however, it has become clear the implementation of the review will be aligned with the May federal budget and the affect of the economic downturn, so cost cutting measures may follow. There was important discussion at the conference about the future focus and priorities for the university, including in relation to the teaching, research and internationalisation portfolios. Lively discussion also occurred in relation to student selection. For example enter scores remain the key determinant of university entry, although some departments use other tests such as interviews. The extent of departure from the enter score in the interests of equity and access differs from faculty to faculty.

## **E. Emerging Innovations**

The committee noted this is a standing item arising from a recommendation by the Teaching and Learning Development Committee that TALQAC and other committees provide an opportunity for members to discuss emerging innovations. Professor Stevens undertook to email to the committee members a report on self-assessment of teaching processes that he received from the Provost's Office. Professor James reported verbally the university is participating in the AHELO (Assessing Higher Education Learning Outcomes OECD) project which will assess higher education learning outcomes across language, culture etc.

## **F. Evaluation Cycle**

### **F.1 Graduate Destination Survey 2008 – Preliminary Outcomes**

The committee received and noted an evaluation cycle report from the University Planning Office (UPO) entitled 'Graduate Destination Survey 2008 – Preliminary Outcomes: Bachelor and Postgraduate Coursework Graduates'. Ms Suzanne Daroesman reported verbally on key issues arising from the survey which is sent to Australian graduates to examine their activities and workplace outcomes at specified dates following their graduation. Full-time employment outcomes for Australian citizens and permanent residents who graduated from the university increased in 2008 from the previous year. In line with the strength of the economic cycle at that time, unemployment rates were the lowest since 2004. The bachelor employment rate was at its highest point since 2000. For non-residents, outcomes for postgraduates improved substantially, but employment rates for bachelor non-residents declined. It was found that non-residents who stayed in Australia could expect a longer gap between graduation and employment compared to those who returned to their home country.

### **F.2 Course Experience Questionnaire 2008 – Preliminary Outcomes**

The committee received and noted an evaluation cycle report from the UPO entitled 'Course Experience Questionnaire 2008: Preliminary Outcomes for the University of Melbourne'. Ms Suzanne Daroesman reported verbally on key issues arising from the questionnaire which screened the views of University of Melbourne graduates who completed a course of study in 2007. The 2008 questionnaire for the university showed improved levels of satisfaction within the 'good teaching' and 'learning community' scale for bachelor and postgraduate coursework graduates. Preliminary results show an upward trend in satisfaction levels at the bachelor level for some faculties, but less positive results for others. Further analysis is forthcoming.

### **F.3 Preliminary Results from the Melbourne Experience Survey of First Year Students 2008**

The committee received and noted a report from the UPO entitled 'Preliminary Results from the Melbourne Experience Survey of First Year Students 2008, Including Comparisons with Selected 2007 Outcomes'. Ms Suzanne Daroesman reported verbally on key issues arising from the survey which evaluated first year students' experiences in the transition to and introduction of the Melbourne Model, and gauged student perceptions of the quality of their course, support services and the social dimensions of their university experience. The 2008 survey revealed that most first year students felt positively about their university experience. Student perceptions tended to be more negatively affected in faculties which had made the largest adjustment for new generation courses, particularly Arts, Economics and Commerce, MDHS and Science. Survey results confirm a direct correlation between student progress and their overall level of satisfaction. The number of working hours in proportion to studying hours had an affect on a student's perception of their overall experience also. The optimum number of hours of work for a student is equivalent to around two days of work per week.

### **F.4 Melbourne Experience Survey 2008: Preliminary Outcomes**

The committee further received and noted a report from the UPO entitled

'Melbourne Experience Survey 2008: Preliminary Outcomes'. Ms Suzanne Daroesman reported verbally on preliminary survey results at November 2008. There was a mix of negative and positive responses on the quality of student advice. Committee members expressed concern that some students were not aware of existing services, even where most relevant to their circumstances. It was suggested the UPO investigate possible trends and causes. Ms Daroesman requested that members send her suggestions for aspects that could be included in this report.

The Chair thanked the UPO for their systematic and meticulous work over the summer period in order to provide the committee with the above reports.

## **F.5 Online Quality of Teaching Survey**

The committee received and noted a report from the Provost's Office entitled 'Online Quality of Teaching Survey'. The discussion included the following points:

- placing the survey online may increase administrative and cost efficiency.
- such an online system must however follow the purpose and functionality of the survey, and the requirement for strong response rates. Merlin was determined to be unsuitable for online application of the survey, given its impending replacement. Other suitable IT systems may also be investigated including the Learning Management System. The committee cautioned that continuity of the data may be lost if moved to a new system.
- while original guidelines for the survey stated that it should not be used in judging staff performance and/or suitability for promotion, survey results have nonetheless been used in some instances for these purposes by some departments regardless. If the online system is designed to constrain the existing breadth of activities, departments may need to seek an alternate method to obtain additional information from the survey for the above purposes.
- it would be useful to match survey completion rates with attendance rates at lectures, so the demography of the survey respondents can be identified.

The committee resolved to defer consideration of the recommendations within the report until the March meeting when membership vacancies have been filled and student representatives are present. In regard to recommendation 2, the committee nominated Ms Daroesman to represent TALQAC on the project working group to scope QoT practices and requirements and investigate survey tool requirements, especially at policy level. The committee further recommended to the Provost's Office that Professor Alistair Moffat be invited to participate in the project working group, given his expertise.

## **G. Quality Measures**

### **G.1 Student Advice Program**

The committee received and noted a report from the Academic Registrar entitled 'Student Advice Program: Training Attendance Rates to Date (Tuesday 18 November 2008)'. Questions were raised about whether students are able to see academic course advisers, whether academic course advisers are trained and whether there is data on actual attendance rates by academic staff compared to enrolments, and whether a suitable balance of training is undertaken by all faculties. A combination of advice from professional and academic staff is best, but mostly professional staff provide the advice. The ratio of advisers to students is

reportedly problematic. The Secretary was requested to write to the Academic Registrar, cc the Provost, thanking her for the data and inviting her to attend the March meeting to discuss the report further.

## **G.2 Retention Rates for Australian and International Students**

The committee received and noted a report from the Melbourne International Office entitled 'Staying the Course: Retention and Attrition in Australian Universities: Analysis for the Group of Eight (Go8) Universities'. It was noted the report did not cover differential grades, just pass or fail.

## **G.3 AUQA Processes and Timelines of Relevance to TALQAC**

This item was deferred until the next meeting.

## **H. Review Panels**

### **H.1 ABP Review Panel**

The Chair advised that a draft review report on the ABP had been prepared by the UPO and was nearly ready for circulation.

### **H.2 Dental Science Review Panel**

The Chair advised that the review on Dental Science had been delayed and awaited direction from the Dean.

### **H.3 Engineering Review Panel**

The Chair advised that a draft review report on Engineering had been prepared by the UPO and was nearly ready for circulation.

### **H.4 VCA Review Panel**

The Chair advised the review report on the VCA will not be finalised until after it has been presented to Professor Sharman Pretty who takes up the position of Dean of the new Faculty of the VCA and Music this year. After the above four review reports have been finalised, these will be sent to the relevant Deans for comment before being tabled at the March meeting for approval and recommendation to the Academic Board.

## **I. Working Groups**

### **I.1 Course Evaluation Strategy and Design Working Group**

The Chair reported verbally that two meetings of the Course Evaluation Strategy and Design Working Group are planned for March and April 2009. Two key issues, as part of this process, need to be addressed: quality assurance in teaching and the jurisdiction of deans compared to heads of departments. It is proposed to run separate workshops to discuss each issue. Four people are sought to participate in each workshop, with draft text provided to the UPO. It is anticipated that draft guidelines will be presented to the committee in April, and a final draft will be presented in May for recommendation to the Academic Board in June. This timeline will allow the guidelines to be incorporated in the 2009 course reviews.

**I.2 Quality of Teaching Survey Working Group**

The committee resolved to place the Quality of Teaching Survey Working Group on hold until the proposal for an online survey (above minute item F.5) has been resolved. At that time, a new chair of the working group will be elected.

**I.3 TALQAC/TALDEC Working Group on Support Technology for Academic Honesty and Other QA/IT Activities**

This item was deferred until the next meeting.

**J. Other Committees**

**J.1 Melbourne Model Committee**

This item was deferred until the next meeting.

**J.2 Academic Programs Committee**

This item was deferred until the next meeting.

**J.3 Teaching and Learning Development Committee**

The committee noted that a nominee from within the committee membership is required to represent TALQAC on the Teaching and Learning Development Committee.

**J.4 Policy and Procedures Working Group**

This item was deferred until the next meeting.

**J.5 Reports from Student Representatives**

This item was deferred until the next meeting.

**K. Other Business**

Nil.

**L. Forthcoming Meetings**

The committee noted that forthcoming meetings will be held at 2.15-4.15pm Thursday 12 March, 30 April, 25 June, 13 August, 17 September, 22 October and 19 November 2009 in the Jim Potter Conference Room, Old Physics Building, The University of Melbourne, Parkville.

Signed by the Chair: \_\_\_\_\_ and dated: \_\_\_\_\_

## **DISTRIBUTION**

### **Committee Members**

Professor Leslyanne Hawthorne (Chair), Professor Prem Bhalla, Professor Camille Cameron, Ms Elizabeth Capp, Mr Paul Coats, Ms Suzanne Daroesman, Professor Sue Elliott, Mr Shaun Ewen, Dr Rebecca Ford, Associate Professor Jenny George, Professor Nick Haslam, Professor Richard James, Professor Lynn Meek, Ms Sarah Quek, Mr Anwar Shah, Professor Ron Slocombe, Professor Geoff Stevens, Associate Professor Kim Watty, Professor Gillian Wigglesworth, Associate Professor Mary Wlodek

### **Observers**

Ms Diana Harrison and Ms Sue Sleep

### **Committee Secretary**

Ms Karen Roe, Committee Secretary, University Secretary's Department, tel: 8344 7528, fax: 8344 6897, email: k.roe@unimelb.edu.au

### **For Information (confirmed minutes)**

Ms Elizabeth Capp, Ms Kris Day, Ms Mariann Fee, Mr Richard Frampton, Ms Sandra Gordon, Associate Professor Jenny George, Dr Anthony Grigg, Ms Sarah Griggs, Ms Diana Harrison, Ms Aileen Loi, Mr Ian Marshman, Mr Robert Northey, Ms Linda O'Brien, Ms Jane Prior, Mr Neil Robinson, Ms Marion Schoen, Dr Christopher Stewardson, Ms Teresa Tjia

### **File Copy**

Minutes Office, University Secretary's Department

## **REVIEW PANELS**

### **ABP Review Panel**

Professor Leslyanne Hawthorne (Chair), Mr Guy Edwards, Associate Professor Marilys Guillemain, Mr Shaun Khoo, Ms Sue Sleep, Associate Professor Kim Watty

### **Dental Science Review Group**

Professor Nick Haslam (Chair), Dr Marion Campbell, Associate Professor Jenny George, Ms Tammi Jonas, Dr Pat McLean

### **VCA Review Group**

Professor Gillian Wigglesworth (Chair), Professor Prem Bhalla, Ms Onagh Bishop, Associate Professor Steven Holloway, Associate Professor Kim Watty

### **Engineering Review Group**

Professor Leslyanne Hawthorne (Chair), Professor Camille Cameron, Professor Ken Gelder, Ms Sarah Quek, Associate Professor Mary Wlodek

## **WORKING GROUPS**

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

Professor Leslyanne Hawthorne (Chair), Professor Prem Bhalla, Ms Suzanne Daroesman, Mr Shaun Ewen, Dr Rebecca Ford, Professor Nick Haslam, Professor Richard James, Mr Bill Jones, Dr Pat Mclean, Professor Lynn Meek, Ms Sarah Quek, Ms Sue Sleep, Associate Professor Kim Watty, 2 x

Associate Dean Teaching and Learning (co-opted members to be determined), GSA representative,  
UMSU representative

### **Quality of Teaching Survey Working Group**

*Working group placed on hold until the proposal for an online survey has been considered*

Chair – vacant, Ms Suzanne Daroesman, Professor Richard James, Mr Bill Jones, UMSU representative,  
GSA representative

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

Professor Richard James (Chair), Dr Alan Arnold, Mr Peter Jones, Associate Professor Jenny Lye, Ms  
Gillian Luck, Professor Philip Smith, Professor Liz Sonenberg