

**THE UNIVERSITY OF MELBOURNE
ACADEMIC BOARD**

TEACHING AND LEARNING QUALITY ASSURANCE COMMITTEE

MEETING 4/06

A meeting of the Teaching and Learning Quality Assurance Committee (TALQAC) was held at 2.15pm on Thursday 11 May 2006 in the Jim Potter Conference Room, Old Physics Building, The University of Melbourne, Parkville.

MINUTES

PRESENT

Committee Members

Professor L Sterling (Chair), Ms S Daroesman, Mr P Fijn, Associate Professor P Bhalla , Ms J Giles, Professor T Goodwin, Associate Professor J George, Professor H Jackson, Professor P Griffin, Professor R James, Associate Professor J Lye, Professor A Moffat, Professor P Pattison, Mr D Rizzetti, Ms J Stephens, and Mr A Williams.

Observers

None

In Attendance

Ms K. Menezes (Committee Secretary)

BUSINESS

1. Formal Matters

1.1. Apologies

The Committee received apologies from Professor J Borland, Associate Professor S Elliott, Professor L. Skene, Associate Professor L Hawthorne, Associate Professor P Tregloan, Associate Professor S. Baker and Ms Diana Harrison

2. Minutes of the Previous Meeting

Two modifications were recommended for the Minutes of the previous meeting held on Thursday 13 April 2006. Both were noted and the Minutes of TALQAC Meeting 3/06 were updated to reflect the changes.

3. Matters Arising from the Minutes

3.1. Action Sheet

Item 7 on the Action Sheet, the reports by the TALMET Evaluation Strategy Group on Faculty visits will be made available to TALQAC at the June meeting by Associate Professor Peter Tregloan.

Item 9 was taken off the Action Sheet as it is the responsibility of the Commercialisation Office and not an issue for Academic Board.

4. Other Committees

4.1. Academic Programs Committee (APC)

In the absence of the Chair of APC, Professor Sterling reported that the first draft of the *Core Principles for Undergraduate Courses* is due to be presented by the Curriculum Commission to Academic Board in May 2006.

4.2. Teaching and Learning (Multimedia and Educational Technologies) Committee (TALMET)

In the absence of the Chair of TALMET, the Chair discussed Professor Tregloan's email correspondence regarding TALMET's May Meeting. The following points were reported:

- The Online Subjects Working Group is preparing a 'Subject Readiness Checklist' and this draft will be presented to the June meetings of both TALMET and TALQAC
- The nomination and implementation process for up to 600 Blackboard-LMS subjects, involving up to 25,000 students for Semester 2, 2006 is on track; 509 subjects have been nominated to date and subject sites for these will be available in the next few days for staff to use as part of Semester 2 preparation
- TALMET is actively involved in discussions with MIT, the iCampus network and the University's participation in this program. A 'Pan-Australian' network meeting is scheduled at the University of Queensland in mid-June. Members can contact Associate Professor Tregloan if interested in this project.
- The Melbourne/Monash collaborative program is involved in a project to develop on-line resources for staff concerning plagiarism issues. Mr. Kevin Sweeney in MDHS can be contacted for more information on this project.

Professor Griffin enquired if any discussion had taken place with regards to the package 'Illuminate.' Associate Professor Sue Elliott can be contacted for more information on this issue.

4.3. Melbourne Experience Committee

The Secretary of the Melbourne Experience Committee (MEC), Ms Menezes reported on the work of the Committee on behalf of Associate Professor S Elliott. Ms Menezes reported that the MEC Work Plan for 2006 has been completed. The document *Dimensions of Student Experience*, a conceptual framework of the MEC Work Plan for 2006 is contained in Appendix 1.

4.4. Student Reports

Mr. Williams raised the issue of Email Abuse and enquired as to which committee is responsible for dealing with this issue: Academic Board, TALQAC or MEC. Ms Stephens commented that this may be one of the responsibilities of the Student Communications Working Group (SCWG) and their 2006 Terms of Reference need to be referred to.

With regards to the issue of QOTs, Mr. Rizzetti reported that students would like to add more information as in its current form it appears simplistic and students are unaware of the importance given by the University to the Survey. Ms Daroesman commented that

the form was deliberately the size it was as with all the other surveys that students need to fill out over the year the Planning Office would not like students to suffer 'Survey Fatigue'.

Mr. Fijn questioned if all research students were surveyed including those who had lapsed. Ms Daroesman said only completing students were surveyed as it was difficult to locate all non-completing students. Professor Alun Jackson commented that the Arts Faculty had conducted a survey obtaining feedback from Supervisors as to why research students had not completed and what steps had been undertaken to enable the student to complete. Ms Daroesman commented that it would be good for Faculties to inform the Planning Office of the administration of such surveys to enable better collation of information across the University.

Ms Jenny Stephens raised an issue that has caused some concern at the ISCC Meetings where international students have expressed concern that they would like Course Planning and Advice delivered by academic staff rather than purely by professional staff. International students feel that the quality of course advice is inconsistent across the campus and lacks input from academic staff. The Survey of Final Year International Students (2004) revealed similar feedback from students. Professor James mentioned that the issue of Course Advice would be even more critical with the new Melbourne Model and that he and Dr. Krause had presented a discussion paper to the Curriculum Commission, *Possibilities and Issues Associated with the 'General Education' Component of the Melbourne Model*, which addressed the imperative for more sophisticated Course Advice to students with the adoption of the new model. Professor James gave the example of US Universities where Course Advisers have designated professional roles and recommended that it would be worth exploring successful examples of this. A way forward may be for the University to have trained course advisers who could counsel students from both a content and process perspective. Professor Sterling expressed the concern that it was not always possible across all discipline areas for professional staff to have content knowledge similar to that of academic staff.

Ms Stephens suggested that the issue was partially addressed by Careers and Employment staff but not to the extent that students stipulate they require. Ms Giles recommended that the Committee investigate current practices in Faculties to determine best practice. It was recommended that this could be a project for the Head Start Program

It was decided that TALQAC should send a memo to Deans and Heads, MEC and the Curriculum Commission noting that TALQAC had identified Course Planning and Advice as an issue and would appreciate a response.

5. 2006 Review Schedule

Professor Sterling informed the Committee he would meet with the Faculty of Architecture, Building and Planning in July to discuss the schedule for reviewing the Faculty's Postgraduate Coursework Programs.

6. Evaluation Cycle and Student Administration

6.1. Academic Honesty: Turnitin

In response to the correspondence received from Ms Sally-Anne Leigh in relation to Turnitin, Professor Sterling raised the concern that it is unclear as to which body makes the economic decisions to fund the operation and support of Turnitin and the problems that the software poses for the University with not being compatible with LMS.

Professor Pattison to follow up with Associate Professor Sue Elliott and Ms Sally-Anne Leigh prior to the next meeting in light of the fact that bids for PBC funding need to be made in June.

6.2. Quality of Administrative and Support Services for Students (QASSS)

Ms Daroesman reported that the overall tone of the responses in the QASSS Survey were positive. The findings revealed that students were reasonably happy, with improved levels of satisfaction for services like the provision of computer labs and library services which mostly does well. There were some persistent issues such as the opening hours and access to services and dissatisfaction with regards to the inconsistency in the quality of customer service and facilities across campus. Course advice was one such issue where students complained about being handballed from staff member to staff member. Professor Sterling recommended that it would be beneficial to pick out examples of best practice with regards to the administration of Course Planning and Advice from the QASSS Survey responses. Ms Daroesman to liaise with Professor Sterling for this.

Ms Daroesman also commented that the Planning Office spends enormous amounts of time putting in student's comments as it was felt that the qualitative data not only added colour but in some instances assisted with understanding the quantitative data.

Another issue was students' frustration with the long queues involved in physical enrolment and Ms Giles mentioned that although online enrolment was a University initiative to deal with this, there was the danger of the system crashing with the increased traffic with enrolment continuing to be an area of dissatisfaction for students.

Associate Professor Jenny George mentioned that enrolment has also been a concern for the MBS. Resources have been offered to pay for additional computers and staff but this has not been taken up and the problems with enrolment persist. It is important for there to be some collaboration with Faculties to improve the process.

6.3. Postgraduate Induction Programs

Mr. Williams expressed concern about the Faculties that had not responded and so were not part of the Postgraduate Induction Programs table. It was recommended that this table form an appendix to the Academic Board Report. Concern was expressed as to the quality of the induction programs and whether the support given to students at the time of induction was then maintained through out the academic year. Mr Fijn mentioned that some Departments have Postgraduate Associations which give commencing and current students the opportunity to liaise with and seek the assistance of senior students.

7. Working Groups

7.1. Faculty Assessment Practices

The Draft TORs were discussed and the updated Terms of Reference are contained in Appendix II

7.2. Peer Review of Teaching

The Draft TORs were discussed and the updated Terms of Reference are contained in Appendix II

7.3. Acquisition of Generic Skills

The Draft TORs were discussed and the updated Terms of Reference are contained in

7.4. Transition Programs and Course Advice

In the absence of the Chair, Professor Sterling informed members that Ms Clare Rhoden, Manager Transition, had been invited to join the group. Ms Stephens recommended that Ms Barbara Hammond, General Manager Careers and Employment also be invited to join this Working Group so that the skills of 'Transition In' as represented by Ms Rhoden and 'Transition Out' as represented by Ms Hammond would be present.

7.5. Assessment Implementation Working Group

There was no discussion under this item.

7.6. Examinations Working Group

Professor Pattison advised that as Associate Professor Hawthorne was part of the Examinations Working Group it was appropriate that she be the member reporting to TALQAC in future. There was also consensus that the Errors in Examination Papers Report should first go to the Examinations Working Group which should then report to TALQAC.

Members considered the Examination Working Group's Report to APC and TALQAC recommending a cost effective long term heating plan for the Royal Exhibition Buildings (REB). Ms Daroesman mentioned that in the QASSS Survey students had also mentioned the lack of adequate heating in the REB during exams. It is not feasible to provide heating for the 2006 period but this should be accomplished for 2007.

TALQAC members endorsed the recommendations mentioned in the report for the University to consider cost effective long term heating in the REB.

Professor Sterling informed the members that all Working Groups were to report at the November meeting of TALQAC.

8. Other Business

The following points were discussed under this item

- Associate Professor Jenny George brought up the issue of the lack of guidelines for Academic Misconduct other than plagiarism. There is not much in terms of procedures or guidelines for other forms of academic misconduct. Associate Professor George to put a discussion paper together on this issue. Mr. Williams commented that UMPA may also put a paper together on the issue to present to TALQAC and Academic Board.
- Associate Professor Jenny Lye brought for the consideration of the committee the concerns raised in the email correspondence received from Associate Professor Hirschberg raising the concern of the possibility of student penalties for email abuse being scaled up. Currently, the most common form of email abuse is selling textbooks using the subject email list, though Committee members acknowledged that there have been instances of more serious offences as well. The penalties which may include exclusion from LMS, using labs for tutorials and assessment, will affect students' participation in their academic activities and impinge upon the teaching and learning process. Once the Student Portal is implemented this ban will have the potential of even more serious consequences for students. The Faculty of Economics and Commerce has proposed the imposition of fines but student representatives

consider this inappropriate in light of the financial hardships that many students already experience. Committee members were of the opinion that the penalties need to be reviewed in light of the increased online delivery and assessment in various subjects.

It was decided that an email be sent to Professor Geoff Stevens, Chair of the Student Communications Working Group (SCWG) to check if the issue of appropriate penalties for email abuse forms part of their work plan for 2006.

There was concern raised that a University wide issue such as this needs to be dealt with centrally and policy developed by Academic Board.

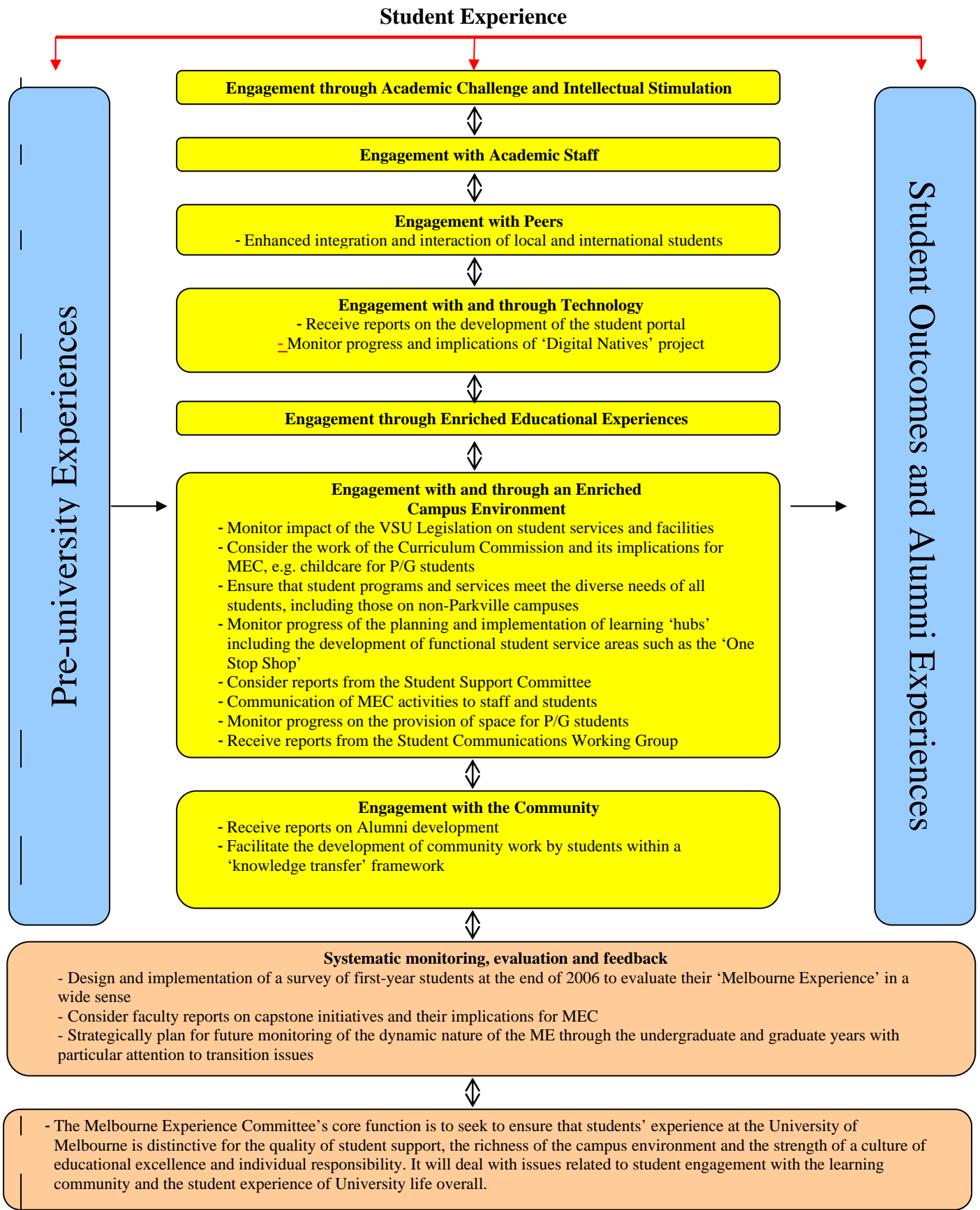
- Professor Sterling noted that this was Ms Stephens last TALQAC meeting and thanked her for her valued contribution to the Committee.
- Members also commented that a request be put in for plunger coffee to be available at future TALQAC meetings

9. Next Meeting

The next meeting will be held from 2:15-4:15pm on Thursday 8 June 2006 in the Jim Potter Conference Room, Old Physics Building, University of Melbourne.

The meeting closed at 4:10 pm.

Dimensions of Student Experience



Adapted from *Student Success in College, Creating Conditions That Matter*, George D. Kuh et al, 2005

Appendix II

Terms of Reference for TALQAC Working Groups

Terms of Reference for the Faculty Assessment Practices Working Group

- To investigate if Faculties have a policy of assessment
- To examine how Faculties and Departments within Faculties comply with this policy
- To examine how Faculties and Departments within Faculties apply the assessment policy consistently
- To examine how these practices are moderated

Terms of Reference for the Peer Review of Teaching Working Group

- To examine the extent, nature and effectiveness of existing approaches to peer review within the University
- To consider and make recommendations for the elements of an institution-wide framework for the peer review of teaching
- To examine the possibilities for how information from peer review might complement Quality of Teaching survey data
- To provide support and advice to the CSHE during the design and implementation of a project on peer review funded through the Learning and Teaching Performance Fund allocation
- To provide advice on how information from peer review of teaching might relate to confirmation and promotion policies and procedures

Terms of Reference for the Acquisition of Generic Skills Working Group

- To briefly review and report on educational, professional and workforce arguments and evidence concerning the acquisition of generic skills
- To review and report on available data on the acquisition of generic skills at the University of Melbourne, including evidence from student surveys and focus groups as well as academic and other assessments
- To review and report on Faculty approaches to the acquisition and assessment of generic skills
- To report and make any recommendations to TALQAC on possible ways of enhancing student experiences in the acquisition of generic skills