

**THE UNIVERSITY OF MELBOURNE  
ACADEMIC BOARD**

**TEACHING AND LEARNING QUALITY ASSURANCE COMMITTEE**

**MEETING 10/06**

A meeting of the Teaching and Learning Quality Assurance Committee (TALQAC) was held at 2.15pm on Thursday 9 November 2006 in the Jim Potter Conference Room, Old Physics Building, The University of Melbourne, Parkville.

**MINUTES**

**PRESENT**

**Committee Members**

Professor L Sterling (Chair), Mr P Fijn, Mr H Fong, Professor L Skene, Ms S Daroesman, Professor P Bhalla, Professor H Jackson, Professor T Goodwin, Professor P Pattison, Associate Professor P Tregloan, Professor A Moffat, Mr A Williams and Professor A Jackson.

**Observers**

Ms D Harrison

**In Attendance**

Mr. M Coyle, Manager, Student Directories Project to present item 4.3, Professor L Sonenberg as Acting DVC (Academic) and Ms K Menezes (Committee Secretary)

**BUSINESS**

**1. Formal Matters**

**1.1 Welcome**

Professor Sterling welcomed Mr Coyle and Professor Sonenberg to the meeting.

**1.2 Apologies**

The Committee received apologies from Professor P McPhee, Associate Professor J Lye, Professor J Borland, Associate Professor S Baker, Professor P Griffin, Professor R James, Associate Professor J George and Associate Professor L Hawthorne.

**2 Minutes of the Previous Meeting**

Minutes of the TALQAC meeting held on Thursday 12 October 2006 were accepted as an accurate record of the meeting subject to the substitution of 'UMPA will' with 'UMPA may' and the addition of the word 'further' prior to 'disadvantage' in item 5.2. *Postgraduate Orientation and Transition Review*.

**3 Matters Arising from the Minutes**

**3.1 Action Sheet**

Item 1: Academic Honesty: Melbourne Monash Report was discussed under item 4.2 of the Agenda  
Item 2: The report on the Review of ABP has been rescheduled for February 2007

Item 3: TaLMET Evaluation Strategy Group Faculty Report will be available in 2007

Item 4: Report to TALQAC after meeting with Deans was discussed under item 3.3 of the Agenda

Item 5: TALQAC responsibilities for 2007, discussed under 3.2 and 5.2 of the Agenda, discussion to continue in 2007.

Item 6: QA Plan for the New Generation Degrees, discussed under 3.2 of the Agenda

Item 7: Create a new working group to focus on the QOT framework was discussed under item 5.2 of the Agenda.

### **3.2 Preliminary Course Review Schedule as a Quality Assurance Plan for the New Generation Degrees**

Professor Pattison noted that the *Course Reviews: Guidelines for Course Evaluation by Faculties 2006* was a good generic document and suggested that TALQAC send it to the Chairs of the Standing Committees to consider incorporation of aspects of the content into the New Generation Degrees.

It was recommended that:

- a) The Course Reviews document be presented to the Board of Undergraduate Studies (BUGS) to consider this in the design of the new degrees to enable the development of a statement of QA processes with each degree.
- b) The document also be sent to Professor Jeff Borland, Chair of APC, to consider in the course approval process.

### **3.3 Report by Deans**

Professor Sonenberg informed Committee members that Professor McPhee, in his capacity as DVC Academic, had written to Deans and reported on the Deans' responses at the October meeting of Academic Board. He was satisfied that there was recognition of the issues identified in the QoT with measures being undertaken for improvement. Student representatives and non Academic Board members expressed interest in the responses being made available to TALQAC as well.

Subsequent discussion raised TALQAC's role in determining what is to be distilled from surveys such as the QoT, which may affect management needs for data to take management actions. For example, should TALQAC revisit repeat poor performing subjects in the next QoT Report to monitor if intervention had occurred and the necessary improvements made.

Discussion also raised the issue of delineation of TALQAC's responsibilities from those of the Office of the DVC (Academic). It was acknowledged that there were no clear boundaries, nor should they be insisted upon.

## **4 Other Committees**

### **4.1 Academic Programs Committee (APC)**

Professor Sterling clarified that *The Guidelines for Assessment Processing* had been prepared by Mr Hillbrich, General Manager, Student Administrative Services.

At APC, Professor Borland reported on discussions that he and Professor Pattison had held with representatives from the Faculty of Law concerning the use of a final examination to provide 100% of assessment and that the Faculty had provided a strong rationale for such assessment. APC members were still concerned that while the list is diminishing, there are still subjects using a final examination to provide 100% assessment when this is against University Policy.

### **4.2 Teaching and Learning (Multimedia and Educational Technologies) Committee (TaLMET)**

Professor Tregloan reported that a presentation on PROFAS had occurred to the TaLMET Committee and TALQAC members would be informed when the final website was ready for use by academic staff.

1300 staff are currently involved in LMS and the target is to have approximately 1800 subject up by Semester I 2007. Webrft will be decommissioned by the end of Semester II 2007 and the current version of LMS will be upgraded to 7.1 with additional functionality by mid 2007.

### **4.3 Melbourne Experience**

Mr Coyle, Project Manager, presented a report on the Student Directories Project. The proposal is to have the directories organised by theme and content rather than by organisational unit. Consequently there will be a:

- a) Uni Life/Services Directory which will consist of a list of services, providers and how to access them
- b) Admin/Studies/How To Directory for student administrative functions
- c) Policy Directory consisting of regulations and guidelines that govern students.

The three Directories will be available through the Student Portal. There will be a phased implementation with completion targeted for the end of 2007. Mr Coyle requested members' contribution for Faculty related information in the Directories and highlighted the current inconsistencies that exist in relation to student issues such as special consideration. Professor Skene noted that with the New Generation Degrees consistency of policy implementation was vital and that the role of Faculties would change. It was recommended that Mr. Coyle present this report to BUGS to enable this request for information to reach Faculties via the member Deans.

### **4.4 School of Enterprise Committee**

The School of Enterprise will be working with the University Planning Office on aligning their teaching evaluation forms with those of the rest of the University.

### **4.5 Student Reports**

Mr. Fijn presented a report on the timetabling of 2 and 3 hour exams which may be an issue for the Faculty of Science with the introduction of standard and expanded majors. Mr Fijn suggested that TALQAC direct EWG to reconsider the Policy and examine more closely the prospect of conducting 2 and 3 hour exams concurrently but in different venues.

## **5 Evaluation Cycle and Quality Measures**

### **5.1 Discussion: 2007 Quality Assurance Work Plan for TALQAC. *Curriculum Commission Report: Appendix 10 – List of new and continuing degrees, timing of shift to graduate entry in professional programs***

This item has been carried over to February 2007. Ms Daroesman suggested that with the ABP Review Report to be presented in February 2007, it would provide a framework for discussion of this item.

### **5.2 Discussion: Running Quality of Teaching Surveys in 2007**

The Memo sent by the Executive Dean of the School of Enterprise was noted. Professor Skene commented that students tended to tick 'Neither Agree nor Disagree' for questions which are inapplicable and this tends to bring down the scores of intensive subjects. This has a significant impact on the School of Enterprise as many of their corporate contracts require a minimum score of 4.0 or more. Professor Moffat suggested that students be directed to leave inapplicable questions blank, a

proposal Ms Daroesman seconded. Student representatives were concerned about intensive subjects being delivered without any feedback and suggested modifications to delivery to record some limited feedback. Professor Pattison also suggested that with intensives an alternative question on evaluation of student learning could be asked. Another suggestion was the breakdown of the question into three sections to record the three different aspects of feedback to match the subject being evaluated.

Professor Sterling pointed out that 2007, prior to the introduction of the New Generation Degrees, provided an opportunity to amend the QoT as most groups agreed that there are aspects that need further refinement. Professor Moffat suggested that it may not be prudent to change both the QoT and have a new set of degrees simultaneously in 2008 as this did not allow for valuable comparisons to be made by the University between the old and new degrees. A staged approach was better, changing one factor at a time. Ms Daroesman also pointed out that any change involves substantial costs in terms of systems and software, in addition to there being practical issues such as Summer Semester commencing in early January 2007. QoT data is used by a number of users including Departments, Faculties, in Operational Reviews, budget incentives, by DEST and in the LTPF distribution of funds.

Professor Bhalla questioned the reaction of students who may feel that their concerns have not been heard if the QoT Survey is not conducted at all. One approach suggested was that changes be made to the QoT in 2007 with the new form trialled on a targeted group of students but still use the original QoT with the major student cohort. Professor Pattison suggested that in considering amendments to the QoT, incorporating issues such as Knowledge Transfer also be considered.

Committee members agreed that the Summary Proposal of the Discussion Paper presented to TALQAC by Ms Daroesman be endorsed by TALQAC as recommendations to Academic Board in relation to future developments of the QoT.

1. While the current QoT survey instrument will be used in the University during 2007, departments and teaching staff should be encouraged to make more effective use of the current QoT instrument. For example, to provide department-, subject-, or teacher-specific information through batching of QoT survey forms, or by overprinting of additional questions, or by a combination of the two methods.
2. Current policy and procedures be revised to elaborate on and explicate current options available to department and teaching staff.
3. The CSHE be asked to assist the University Planning Office to develop a library of questions to evaluate teaching and learning for use in departments.
4. Resources such as revised procedures and the question library be made more easily accessible to departments and staff through a relevant website.
5. In light of the perceived shortcomings of the current instrument, TALQAC convene a working group in the coming year to discuss requirements for, and develop, a new instrument more suited to the University's needs in the implementation of Growing Esteem, with a view to its partial implementation in 2008 to enable a comparison of data received under the old and new degrees and a complete implementation in 2009.

### ***5.3 Implementing Course Advice Under the Melbourne Model: A Headstart Discussion Paper***

This was handled under Item 6.4.

### **5.4 Response to the TALQAC Memo sent to Deans of Music, Law and Science**

The responses received from the Deans of Music, Law and Science in response to TALQAC's query in relation to the value of the 2003 Quality Assurance Reviews conducted by TALQAC were noted. Ms Daroesman commented on the merit of Professor Falk's comment that future reviews ask specific questions about teaching and learning based on particular issues being considered by University committees in relation to the quality of teaching and learning.

It was recommended that it would be beneficial to obtain responses in 2007 from the Deans of Faculties that were reviewed by TALQAC in 2004.

### **5.5 2006 Course Review: Review of ABP**

Ms Sleep reported via email that the report on the review of quality assurance processes for teaching and learning in the Faculty of Architecture Building and Planning has been delayed due to the recent transfer of the ABP general manager to another faculty and to work load issues in the University Planning Office with the implementation of Growing Esteem. The draft report should be available at the first meeting of TALQAC in 2007.

## **6 Working Groups**

### **6.1 Faculty Assessment Practices**

Mr Fijn reported that the working group was awaiting one more response and would present a report to TALQAC in February 2007.

### **6.2 Peer Review of Teaching**

CSHE is conducting a project on peer review of teaching using LTPF funds, and this has subsumed the Working Group. Professor James will report next year.

### **6.3 Acquisition of Generic Skills**

Professor Pattison reported that this has been delayed as measures are being taken to connect this to another project.

### **6.4 Transition Programs and Course Advice**

On behalf of Associate Professor Hawthorn, Professor Sterling reported that work was progressing well and the working group had received the Headstart Project Report, *Implementing Course Advice Under the Melbourne Model: A Headstart Discussion Paper*

### **6.5 Assessment Implementation Working Group**

Professor Pattison reported that the working group had one more meeting and one more task to complete.

### **6.6 Examinations Working Group**

The University Council has rejected the EWG recommendations in relation to heating for the Royal Exhibition Buildings and alternatives are to be considered. Mr Matthew Brett, Director of the Disability Liaison Unit, has been co-opted to the Working Group and EWG is considering the provision of print materials for students with disabilities. The management by Departments of alternative examination arrangements is being discussed. In relation to policy for the use of electronic devices in examinations, the group is re-evaluating the use of graphics calculators.

TALQAC members recommended that the EWG monitor all exams not just those held in the official Examination Period.

### **6.7 TALQAC/TaLMET Working Group on Support Technology for Academic Honesty and other QA/IT Activities**

The working group had met and confirmed the need for regular interaction between Academic Board and Information Services on issues where policy and implementation need clarification. The initial TORs of the Working Group need to be refined to include identification of areas where policy needs to be produced or updated to reflect developments in software and hardware. Plagiarism detection software will be integrated with the LMS and TaLMET will have control of this. Turnitin reports will now proceed through TaLMET.

Mr Fijn requested that a student representative be a member of the Working Group.

## **7 For Information**

### ***7.1 First Year Students' Experiences with Technology: Are they really Digital Natives?***

The report was noted.

## **8 Other Business**

Professor Sterling announced he would be stepping down as Chair of TALQAC, and thanked the members for their support. He also thanked Professor Skene and Associate Professor Tregloan for their valued contribution to TALQAC. Professor Skene thanked Professor Sterling on behalf of members for dealing with the challenges facing the Committee and setting the future direction of TALQAC. Professor Pattison also thanked Professor Sterling for the collegial manner in which TALQAC proceedings were conducted over his term as Chair.

## **9 Next Meeting**

The next TALQAC meeting will be held from 2:15-4:15pm on Thursday 8 February 2007 in the Jim Potter Conference Room, Old Physics Building, University of Melbourne.

The meeting closed at 4:25 pm.