

**THE UNIVERSITY OF MELBOURNE  
ACADEMIC BOARD**

**TEACHING AND LEARNING QUALITY ASSURANCE COMMITTEE**

**MEETING 9/06**

A meeting of the Teaching and Learning Quality Assurance Committee (TALQAC) was held at 2.15pm on Thursday 12 October 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 J Giles, Associate Professor J Lye, Ms S Daroesman, Professor P Bhalla, Professor T Goodwin, Associate Professor J George and Associate Professor L Hawthorne.

**Observers**

Ms D Harrison

**In Attendance**

Mr. M Brett, Manager DLU to present item 5.3 and Ms K Menezes (Committee Secretary)

**BUSINESS**

**1. Formal Matters**

**1.1 Welcome**

Professor Sterling welcomed Mr. Brett to the meeting.

**1.2 Membership**

There was no discussion under this item.

**1.3 Apologies**

The Committee received apologies from Professor P McPhee, Professor H Jackson, Professor J Borland, Associate Professor S Baker, Professor A Moffat, Professor P Griffin, Mr A Williams, Mr D Rizzetti, Ms D Harrison, Professor P Pattison, Associate Professor P Tregloan and Professor R James.

**2 Minutes of the Previous Meeting**

Minutes of the TALQAC meeting held on Thursday 7 September 2006 were accepted as an accurate record of the meeting.

**3 Matters Arising from the Minutes**

### **3.1 Action Sheet**

Item 2: Course Reviews – Ms Sleep from the University Planning Office to provide a report in November

### **3.2 Quality Assurance Processes Under the Melbourne Model**

Professor Sterling's paper was noted and the following points were discussed:

- Professor Sterling queried if the Standing Committees have a QA plan or if QA issues are to be addressed as they arise with the new degrees.
- Professor Skene noted that despite TALQAC undertaking QA activities with recommendations made to Deans and HODs, similar poor results are received the following year in some subjects and courses and recommended that TALQAC accomplish more in relation to underperforming subjects, though this may have HR implications.
- Professor Bhalla suggested that HODs could be asked to report within a few months of receiving evaluation reports as to actions that have been undertaken in response to issues highlighted in the reports.
- Professor Skene noted that a session on best practice could also be presented at the VC's Teaching and Learning Colloquium to assist staff. Associate Professor Hawthorne suggested a model whereby when QOT scores reach a defined level with visible comments on poor quality teaching, this could prompt certain actions such as the lecturer undertaking a course delivered by the CSHE or peer review of teaching could occur.
- Student representatives were keen for LMS to be utilised to give students feedback on how Faculties have responded to feedback received in the QOT survey.
- Professor Sterling put the following question to members: Does the TALQAC Committee consider an adjustment to the QA processes and instruments necessary to address a range of areas including variations in teaching and assessment practices, disparate levels of input from industry groups and students achieving graduate attributes to varying extents in the different courses.
- Professor Skene suggested that TALQAC and the Standing Committees could examine the current guidelines under which the School of Enterprise operates in relation to the issue of quality of teaching
- Ms Daroesman noted that there is an existing policy and procedures framework that could be utilised more effectively.
- Professor Sterling agreed to go through the course review schedule and extract a preliminary course review schedule as a quality assurance plan for the new generation degrees.
- It was agreed that a TALQAC working group be created to focus on the QOT framework, procedures and the survey questions to achieve relevant performance improvement outcomes. It was noted that outcomes will possibly have HR implications and Committee members recommended that Professor James be invited to join this working group.

### **3.3 Student Feedback on QoT. Report on Semester I 2006, Summer Semester 2006 and trend data**

Report is to be forwarded to Academic Board. Professor Skene to invite Ms Daroesman to present at the 26 October meeting of the Academic Board.

### **3.4 Dean's Meeting**

Professor Sterling noted as per correspondence received from Professor McPhee, that the Deans are to respond to concerns raised in the QOT Survey by 13 October 2006. Professor McPhee to report at the November meeting of TALQAC.

## **4 Other Committees**

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

In the absence of the Chair, Professor Sterling reported on some items discussed:

- a) The final Curriculum Commission Report has been approved by Academic Board and submitted to Council
- b) APC members discussed if tabled documents are public. TALQAC members were of the opinion that draft documents are not for public distribution, however once after they have been adopted by a Committee they can be made public.
- c) Mr. Hillbrich presented a paper on guidelines for the recognition of studies by students withdrawing early, e.g. students enrolled in a Masters Program but withdrawing after the completion of the requirements for a certificate or diploma. The change of program will appear on students' academic transcripts.
- d) Professor Elgar proposed that APC seek Academic Board approval for the offering of subjects in a language other than English before undertaking the work involved in developing guidelines for such offerings. APC members were informed that there are already some cases where course content is offered in languages other than English, and that overseas undergraduate clinical placements may involve delivery in languages other than English. A/Professor Hawthorne recommended that it would be worth liaising with Professor Jo Lo Bianco who chairs the Language Reference Group which is currently looking at Faculties using languages other than English in the delivery of curriculum.

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

The following points were presented from Professor Tregloan's email report:

- TaLMET has approved funding for 13 small project grants through the application process reported at the last meeting of TALQAC. Total TaLMET funds committed were around 50k matched by a similar amount from departments and faculties to support these projects. The focus was on existing resources from previous projects in need of extension or upgrading or being made LMS compatible.
- The process of nomination and creation of 'subject sites' for the LMS for Semester 1, 2007 is now underway. Total subjects to be capped at 1800. With a number of large faculties still to forward their 'priority 1' nominations, total nominations are currently around 700. These are now active and available to academic staff for development in preparation for 2007.
- TaLMET received a presentation at its September meeting from the project group of the PROFAS (Plagiarism Resources for Academic Staff) project. "Acknowledgement" is a web based set of resources for academic staff. Open access to the website will be available shortly and details will be forwarded.
- Work by the 'online subjects' and 'evaluation strategy' working groups is progressing and reported at the TaLMET meeting.

#### **4.3 Melbourne Experience Committee (MEC)**

There was no discussion under this item.

#### **4.4 Implementing the Melbourne Model Working Group**

There was no discussion under this item. To be removed from the November Agenda.

#### **4.5 School of Enterprise Committee**

As the School of Enterprise meeting will be held on Monday 16 October, there was no discussion under this item.

#### **4.6 Student Reports**

Mr. Fijn reported that a subject is currently being taught where a pre-requisite is being presumed by the Lecturer but not officially stated in the Course Handbook. Committee members recommended that a letter of complaint be sent to the HOD to address the issue.

Mr. Fijn also suggested that TALQAC conduct Course Reviews of the Honours programs as there was inconsistent performance across Faculties in the delivery of these programs. Honours programs in the current degrees are scheduled to be taught till 2011 and as TALQAC had not looked at the Honours component in the review of undergraduate degrees such as the B.A or B.Sc it was worth considering for 2007.

Mr. Fong reported that some students had been told that the QOT was not very useful so it was in the interests of the students to rank the subject high; the only valuable feedback was when the Department put in its own specific questions. Ms Daroesman noted that some lecturers have been proactive and inserted additional subject/department specific questions on the QOT. One model adopted by some institutions is to have a bank of questions from which staff choose relevant material. This discussion reinforced the issue of TALQAC revisiting the QOT and the evaluation cycle.

### **5 2006 Review Schedule**

**5.1 Discussion:** Proposal to Academic Board that it suspend Academic Board (TALQAC) Program Reviews for 2007 – 2009. Instead, TALQAC to undertake ‘desktop’ reviews of learning and teaching quality and outcomes, with the capacity to undertake a full scope program review on an as needed basis. One of the special roles for TALQAC to be quality assurance of programs being taught out.

- Ms Giles suggested that TALQAC receive a list of courses to be taught out, with an indication of the last intake in each of these courses and the load in each course, to determine the most effective way to monitor the courses. Secretary to access the paper prepared by Dr. Mary Emison for discussion at the November meeting of TALQAC
- Members agreed to discuss this issue in greater detail at the November meeting of TALQAC.

#### **5.2 SGS Report: Postgraduate Orientation and Transition Review**

Mr. Fijn reported that with the impact of the VSU Legislation, UMPA may not be in a position to run future Orientation Programs in a manner similar to previous programs due to reduced funding and staff cuts. This has the potential to further disadvantage off campus students in particular.

**5.3 Report from Mr. Brett, Manager of DLU, in relation to the availability of Course Materials in Accessible Formats for students with special needs. Report to be considered in conjunction with the National Disability Guidelines**

Mr. Brett reported that since the introduction of the Academic Board Guidelines in 2003, there has been a positive change to the timely receipt of reading packs prior to the commencement of Semester to enable their conversion to accessible formats. However there are still some difficulties in relation to the policy including the fact that there is no recognition of the student’s responsibility to inform the institution of their need for material in accessible formats. DLU wishes to develop a more dynamic policy and involve the Information Services Division in certain DLU functions to enable a conversion process of days rather than weeks.

Mr. Brett was invited to join the TALQAC/TaLMET Working Group on Support Technology for Academic Honesty and Other QA/IT Activities. The DLU paper will be forwarded to APC as well as the Examinations Working Group.

#### **5.4 Memo to Deans**

As recommended at the August meeting of TALQAC, a memo was sent to the Dean of Science, Music and Law to ascertain the benefits gained from the 2003 quality assurance review conducted by TALQAC. The Melbourne Law School responded noting that in view of the other reviews also conducted by the School in 2003 which yielded benefits in terms of ideas and initiatives, the 'process of compiling the submission to TALQAC and the Review Panel's visit and subsequent report were beneficial in confirming the Faculty's ongoing commitment to continuous improvement...'

Secretary to follow up responses from the Dean of Science and Music.

#### **5.5 ABP Review**

Ms Sleep from the University Planning Office to provide a report in November.

### **6 Working Groups**

#### **6.1 Faculty Assessment Practices**

Associate Professor Lye reported that eight Faculty interviews had been conducted and the responses revealed the disparities across campus in dealing with a range of issues including plagiarism, special consideration and alternative exams, extensions to assignments, scaling, transition and course advice. Professor Skene noted that the information would be useful in the development of an administration framework for the new Melbourne Model.

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

In the absence of Professor James there was no discussion under this item.

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

In the absence of Professor Pattison there was no discussion under this item.

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

Associate Professor Hawthorne reported that positive progress was being achieved by the working group.

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

In the absence of Professor Pattison there was no discussion under this item.

#### **6.6 Examinations Working Group**

Mr Fijn noted that at the next EWG meeting he would report feedback received on a range of issues including the use of calculators, alternative exams and the spelling errors contained in the EWG document Assessment Processing-Best Practice Guide.

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

Professor Sterling to convene a meeting and report at the next meeting of TALQAC.

### **7 Other Business**

There was no discussion under this item.

### **8 Next Meeting**

The final TALQAC meeting for 2006 will be held from 2:15-4:15pm on Thursday 9 November 2006 in the Jim Potter Conference Room, Old Physics Building, University of Melbourne.

The meeting closed at 4:05 pm.