

**THE UNIVERSITY OF MELBOURNE
ACADEMIC BOARD**

TEACHING AND LEARNING QUALITY ASSURANCE COMMITTEE

MEETING 8/06

A meeting of the Teaching and Learning Quality Assurance Committee (TALQAC) was held at 2.15pm on Thursday 7 September 2006 in the Jim Potter Conference Room, Old Physics Building, The University of Melbourne, Parkville.

MINUTES

PRESENT

Committee Members

Professor L Sterling (Chair), Professor P McPhee, Mr P Fijn, Mr A Williams, Mr H Fong, Professor L Skene, Professor R James, Associate Professor J Lye, Ms S Daroesman, Professor A Moffat, Professor P Griffin, Associate Professor L Hawthorne and Associate Professor P Tregloan.

Observers

Ms D Harrison

In Attendance

Dr. S Arkoudis, CSHE, for item 6.1 and Ms K Menezes (Committee Secretary)

BUSINESS

1. Formal Matters

1.1 Welcome

The Chair welcomed Professor Moffat as Professor Evans' (Dean of SGS) nominee on TALQAC from July 2006 – June 2007. Professor James will take the place of Professor Moffat on TALQAC till the end of 2006. Membership will be reviewed in 2007.

Professor Sterling also welcomed Dr. Arkoudis to the meeting.

1.2 Membership

There was no discussion under this item.

1.3 Apologies

The Committee received apologies from Professor Borland, Associate Professor Baker, Associate Professor Bhalla, Mr Rizzetti, Professor Pattison and Ms Giles.

2 Minutes of the Previous Meeting

The minutes of the previous meeting were accepted as an accurate record of the meeting.

3 Matters Arising from the Minutes

3.1 Action Sheet

Item 2, 4 and 5 on the Short Term list and item 1 in the Long Term section were discussed as Agenda items.

3.2 VC's Colloquium on Teaching and Learning

Professor Sterling reported that the following items were being discussed for inclusion in the TALQAC session during the VC's Colloquium:

- An overview of the role of TALQAC
- Faculty of Music's scheme of standardising marks over many performance examiners
- Faculty of Science scheme of course progression rules for students
- Faculty of Architecture Building and Planning's management of international students
- Faculty of Engineering's program within Computer Science of casual tutor training

3.3 Availability of Course Materials in Accessible Formats

Professor Sterling noted that he discussed the memo with Mr. Brett, Manager DLU, who mentioned that the policy was effective and high quality packs in Braille, audio and electronic text format were being produced for students with a disability within reasonable time frames. A report from the DLU will be presented to TALQAC at the October meeting. Professor McPhee mentioned that it would be worthwhile considering the report in conjunction with the National Disability Guidelines. Professor Skene commented on the technology set up by Mr. Brett in the Copland Theatre for hearing impaired students (a useful resource for ESL students as well), where text appears on a screen as it is spoken. The technology however is expensive as it requires the services of a stenographer.

4 Other Committees

4.1 Academic Programs Committee (APC)

In the absence of the Chair, Professor Sterling reported that there was discussion of the relationship between the Standing Committees, the Board of Undergraduate Studies (BUGS), the Faculties, APC and Academic Board. It was likely that while the standing committees would be responsible for the design of the new degrees, BUGS would be in charge of the governance of these degrees with APC as well as Academic Board responsible for quality assurance.

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

The following points were discussed under this item:

- Professor Tregloan informed the Committee that the expressions of interest put in by Faculties for small projects as a result of the reallocation of \$60,000 would be announced at the next meeting of TaLMET.
- The Forum for Faculty LMS contacts was held on 22 August 2006. It is expected that in Semester 1, 2007, there will be approximately 1,800 subjects on the LMS involving an estimated 30,000 students and 1,500 academic staff.
- TALQAC members were invited to the 12 September meeting of TaLMET where Ms Linda O'Brien, Vice Principal, Information Services, will present a paper (previously presented to the Curriculum Commission) on how the e-Learning Policy will form part of the new Melbourne Model.

- At the September meeting of TaLMET, Dr. Kathleen Gray will also deliver a presentation on PROFAS, the Melbourne/Monash project on academic honesty which will provide academic staff with advice on how to deal with reports delivered by plagiarism detection software such as Turnitin

4.3 Melbourne Experience Committee (MEC)

Professor McPhee reported that MEC endorsed the Student Communication Policy submitted by the Student Communication Working Group (SCWG). This policy aims to coordinate communication with students as the current system whereby students are inundated by repeat information from a number of sources across the University is counter productive.

MEC has also endorsed the Eastern Precinct Learning Hub Project Brief which encompasses the ERC, Frank Tate and the external Plaza area. These areas are being redeveloped to become a flexible learning resource space for students. This is interconnected with the Engineering Library Project and the timeline is for sections of it to be operational for student use at the commencement of Semester I 2007.

4.4 Implementing the Melbourne Model Working Group

The working group is focussed on a uniform application of academic policy for the new undergraduate degrees to enable all students to receive consistent course advice and support. The working group will be putting a proposal to PBC for the creation of BUGS. BUGS will be involved with the Standing Committees in the design of the new degrees and will ensure that they remain true to the core principles of the Melbourne Model. TALQAC's responsibilities will essentially remain the same which will be quality assurance of the new degrees in addition to the current degrees which will take 10 years to be taught out.

Professor Sterling questioned if the new course proposals need to be explicit about their quality assurance activities. Professor Skene noted that the Standing Committees would already be checking if the new courses met the Graduate Attributes, the depth and breadth components, the knowledge transfer and internationalisation principles and when the degrees were running then it would be TALQAC's responsibility through the existing quality assurance mechanisms to ensure that the degrees are up to appropriate standards.

4.5 School of Enterprise Committee

As the School of Enterprise meeting will be held on 11 September, there was no discussion under this item.

4.6 Student Reports

There was no discussion under this item.

5 2006 Review Schedule

5.1 Review of ABP

The review process is ongoing and Ms Sue Sleep from the Planning Office is working with ABP towards this.

5.2 Memo to Deans

As recommended at the last meeting of TALQAC, a memo has gone out to the Dean of Science, Music and Law to ascertain the benefits gained from the 2003 quality assurance review conducted by TALQAC. Professor Sterling questioned the role of TALQAC beyond 2007 in terms of quality assurance. Professor Skene noted that the monitoring of current degrees which are being taught out was an important responsibility for TALQAC. One way the monitoring could be done was through the review of QoT reports and the canvassing of student sentiment through student representatives. Mr. Fijn suggested that most Faculties have Staff Student Liaison Committees and it may be beneficial to consult them in terms of student feedback on courses. A list of continuing courses is contained in the Curriculum Commission Report.

Professor McPhee noted that with the new graduate programs in the Melbourne Model it would be beneficial for TALQAC to conduct a review of a Postgraduate program. Professor Hawthorne suggested a review of the MBBS graduate entry program on the following basis:

- It will be useful to see how this continuing course can be fine tuned in terms of the new Melbourne Model
- TALQAC can assess what has worked effectively in terms of a graduate entry model
- An examination of the degree to which enrolling graduate students from atypical backgrounds have been successful and needed differential academic support (including bridging course for those from non-cognate areas) including any significant differences in academic outcomes
- the results can be used as an exemplar of a graduate professional course

The TALQAC review would provide valuable feedback, of relevance to a broad range of graduate courses in the new Melbourne Model.

6 Evaluation Cycle and Quality Measures

6.1 Arkoudis, S *Teaching International Student: Strategies to Enhance Learning*

The following points were presented and discussed:

- Dr. Arkoudis gave some background to the document mentioning that the purpose was to produce an easily accessible resource for staff interested in developing strategies to engage their students. Academic staff were interviewed with the view that it was academics addressing academics.
- Professor Moffat mentioned that while the staff quotes were useful it would be good to juxtapose them with student comments as well. Ms Daroesman noted that relevant comments from students in the CEQ and Survey of Final Year International Student could be extracted to assist Dr. Arkoudis.
- Mr. Fong mentioned that additional strategies were needed on how staff could engage international students in Lectures where students find it difficult to respond to questions quickly. Also in certain Faculties, where international tutors have been recruited in an attempt to reflect the diverse student population, tutors have limited experience and need supplementary strategies on how to engage students in tutorial discussions.
- Professor McPhee noted that it would be useful for Dr. Arkoudis to have a discussion with MUOSS as well as to relate this to the Cultural Diversity Checklist that went through Academic Board in 2005.
- Professor James noted that the resource would be published by CSHE and launched at the VC's Colloquium in December.
- Student representatives noted that it was important that the resource reached casual teaching staff who are often not on Department email lists nor given the opportunity to attend department meetings. The one day devoted to tutor training already covers an extensive range of topics. Professor Moffat also noted that it would be useful to have the key information in a few slides which could be presented on the tutor training day.
- Professor James noted that he and Associate Professor Johnston are working on a project on issues related to casual teaching.

6.2 Student Feedback on QoT. Report on Semester I 2006, Summer Semester 2006 and Trend Data

Ms S Daroesman presented the draft report to TALQAC members. The following points were discussed under this item:

- The QoT survey for Semester I 2006 shows a positive outcome, with students to be largely satisfied with most aspects of the experience in their subjects although outcomes in Question 9 (overall satisfaction) and Question 2 (well taught) were marginally lower compared to the previous semester
- In relation to *overall satisfaction with the quality of the learning experience in this subject*, 75.1% of respondents in the UG subjects agreed, down from 76.6% in Semester II 2005 and 76.8% of PG respondents agreed, down from 77.2%
- The Faculties of Music, Arts, Vet Science, the VCA and Law have maintained a high level of agreement on Question 2 (well taught) and Question 9 (overall satisfaction)
- The Faculties of Science and Economics and Commerce are showing consistent improvement on key questions
- Outcomes in engineering subjects is comparatively low, and have not improved since the Semester II 2003 survey
- Overall satisfaction in LFR subjects has fallen for the third consecutive semester, and (although from a higher base) for the second semester in Education
- Ms Daroesman raised the following areas of concern in the QoT as issues that need to be addressed by TALQAC:
 - There are a small number of subjects frequently rated low. Nearly one quarter of the subjects rated less than 3.2 on Question 2 in Semester I 2006, were rated 3.2 or lower three or more times since Semester I 2000, including six subjects on six or more occasions.
 - In the response to Question 4, just over half the UG students responded that they did not receive helpful feedback. More than a third disagreed that they received helpful feedback in 11% of UG subjects
 - Overall 24 subjects were not surveyed, over half of these being from the same Faculty.
- Professor Skene put forward the view that there ought to be no tolerance level of non-surveyed subjects (without exemption) or poor quality outcomes. Poor outcomes should be followed up with Deans, and their response sought, possibly at the time of Faculties' operational performance review
- It was recommended that when this report is presented to Academic Board areas of praise as well as concern need to be highlighted
- Professor McPhee noted that he would report at the October meeting of TALQAC after his meeting with Deans

7 Working Groups

7.1 Faculty Assessment Practices

Associate Professor Lye reported that the Faculty of Engineering had been interviewed and presented the following points:

- The Faculty of Engineering is establishing a Teaching and Learning Unit
- First year students in all streams will be doing two common units
- The Faculty is concerned about the lack of University guidelines in relation to Alternative Exams and the time lines for expert marking

- In order to ensure that assessment is consistent, the Faculty is considering the publication of a handbook on assessment

7.2 Peer Review of Teaching

Professor James reported that Dr. Kerri-Lee Harris from the CSHE, was working on the project and her work would add valuable information to the HR processes that are being considered in relation to the promotion of academic staff.

7.3 Acquisition of Generic Skills

In the Chair's absence Professor James reported that Professor Pattison had employed a research assistant resourced by LTPF funds allocated for specific projects. Professor James also invited TALQAC members to the ACER session on *Graduate Skills Assessment for Testing Generic Skills* to be held at 4:30 pm on Thursday, 12 October 2006.

7.4 Transition Programs and Course Advice

Associate Professor Hawthorne noted that the membership of the working group had been adjusted to balance the number of academic and professional staff. It was acknowledged that the TORs were extensive and so a staged approach would be adopted with attention being given in the first instance to the provision of Course Advice from first to third year in the new undergraduate degrees. The working group will be meeting with Professor Pattison's Headstart Group to clarify the audience, expectations and roles of each group. The Faculties of Education, ABP and IT will be used as test cases to ascertain what issues arise at a Faculty specific level.

7.5 Assessment Implementation Working Group

There was no discussion under this item.

7.6 Examinations Working Group

Professor McPhee commented that the Examinations and Graduations team had made remarkable progress with the achievement of no errors in Semester I 2006 which involved 68,135 examinees sitting exams for 624 subjects.

7.7 Support Technology for Academic Honesty and other QA Activities

Professor Tregloan suggested that the name of the working group needs to acknowledge the joint TALQAC and TALMET membership. It was also recommended that the TORs be broadened to include a student representative and Associate Professor Sue Elliott, as the approval of content placed on the academic honesty website was part of her role.

8 Other Business

There was no discussion under this item.

9 Next Meeting

The next meeting will be held from 2:15-4:15pm on Thursday 12 October 2006 in the Jim Potter Conference Room, Old Physics Building, University of Melbourne.

The meeting closed at 3:45 pm.