NOTES OF A MEETING OF THE FACULTY ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICERS/SUB DEANS’ GROUP HELD ON 3 OCTOBER 2008 IN THE CHANCELLOR’S ROOM

1. UPDATE FROM ACADEMIC COUNCIL MEETING

Trudi gave a short update on the meeting of the Academic Council of 1 October 2008 including:

Item 3 Proposed Joint or Double Badged PhD Programmes
A few problems had been identified with this proposal and it may need to go back to the BGRS

Item 7 Delegation from Academic Council – International Agreements – Ref – F7738
Council agreed to delegate authority to approve student exchange agreements, articulations and associated advanced standing arrangements and in-country study programmes and to make recommendations on transitional programmes to the Chair of the Academic Board on recommendation by the Director, International Centre and in consultation, as appropriate with the Pro Vice-Chancellor (Teaching and Learning).

Item 9 Equivalence of Honours (H1) for allocation of Australian Postgraduate Awards – Ref F20333
Council approved that the benchmark for deeming H1 equivalence for the purposes of awarding scholarships, be defined as a Scholarship Ranking Score of 80 or more in the final ranked merit list. A quota system will still exist.

2. UNIVERSITY GENERAL RULES – RECENT CHANGES

Changes to two rules were approved at the August Academic Council Meeting:

(i) Rule 1.2.1.1: Change of enrolment – Proposed Final Date for Withdrawal – Ref F10219
(ii) Rule 1.2.1.21: Special Consideration – Proposed Deadline for Submission of Applications – Ref F10219

In response to a question from a member of the group, Trudi emphasised that both of these rule changes are effective from 1 Jan 2009. It is not the University’s policy to change rules through the year unless this would be of advantage to the students.

3. FILES REFERENCES

Trudi asked that care be taken to ensure that file references are included on agenda and minutes and that all papers are filed appropriately.

4. REVIEW OF COURSE STRUCTURES

Trudi noted that the Academic Board would discuss the Review in November with the intention of making recommendations to Senate. Before this time Deans have been asked to ensure that the Report is discussed widely in their faculties and is on the agenda of all relevant faculty committees prior to the discussion of the November Academic Board (19 November 2008).

Trudi asked the group to continue their feedback to the Steering Group as this group would continue to meet.

Various items were highlighted and discussed by the Group in a short consideration of the 31 Recommendations made by the Review. The following points were noted.

- There was much support across the University for the Review recommendations but it was recognised that the transition period would be difficult.
- FNAS reported that the overall response from their faculty had been positive
• FAHSS reported that the School of Music was upset as the BMus would disappear as a degree.
• The proposal to introduce the BPhil was designed to attract students with a high TER. There will still some issues unresolved as to how the BPhil would work.
• Implementation groups had not yet been set up.
• Additional HECS places would have to be forthcoming or the change would not take place.
• A Board of Coursework Studies is to be set up which will deal with course recommendations for the Faculties to Academic Board.
• Only the names of the undergraduate degrees outlined in Recommendation 1 are to be stated. There will be no variations or parenthetical additions. Degree certificates will list majors and academic transcripts will convey the more specific information that employers and others may require.
• It was noted that each student would be required to do 20 hours community service. The question was raised as to what would happen if they didn’t do it.
• Under Recommendation 16 it was noted that a unit would be deemed equivalent to 150 hours of student workload per semester. It was important that rules for units are considered carefully.
• It was considered that if the number of units was reduced this would possibly double the workload for some staff at a time when funding is under threat. It was possible that the new structure may make courses unattractive resulting in loss of students e.g. Grad Dip Ed which would have to reduce its point value from 60 to 48 points.
• It was noted that concurrent Undergraduate Diplomas would continue.
• The Implementation Committee would include input on marketing, admissions, resourcing and financing.
• It is important that current courses are not devalued.

5. SPECIAL CONSIDERATION

A copy of the Special Consideration form was attached to the agenda. Changes were discussed a few meetings ago. Any further feedback needs to flow to Harvey in the near future. The changes in the form would be made for 2009. The application form would be looked at by the Working Party.

6. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

(a) New Academic Structure
For political reasons this had been announced early. The 2009 Handbook had already gone to print so any changes to titles would have to be made on the web. This was being considered at the moment. The faculties do not have to do anything. Changes would probably be made by HR.
(b) Fire Drills during Mid Semester Exams
It was reported that there had been a problem in the Arts building when a fire drill took place during a mid semester exam. Safety and Health are to be given a list of exam dates so that this does not happen again.
(c) Exams
There had been a recent case where a student was suspected of sitting an exam for another student. In future students will be required to produce their Campus Card. Posters will go up around the Campus to announce this.
(d) 2011 Exam Period
Harvey reported a possible problem in 2011 where exams finish on 28th Nov and results released on 20th December. There was a potential problem for the award of scholarships.
(e) Length of Exams
The question of whether the length of exams could be shortened now that continuous assessment is also used as part of the assessment process. This needs to be discussed in the faculties.

14 October 2008