1. **UPDATE FROM ACADEMIC COUNCIL**

Trudi McGlade provided an update on the Academic Council meeting held on Wednesday 3 September 2008.

(i) **International Agreements**
*The following had been noted:*
Student Exchange Agreement between The University of Western Australia Faculties of Life and Physical Sciences and Engineering, Computing and Mathematics and Nanyang Technological University, Singapore

(ii) **Financial Studies Discipline Group**
It had been noted that the above group had been renamed the Accounting and Finance Discipline Group to better reflect the areas of study within the group.

(iii) **Summer Session 2009: Proposed Offerings**
Faculty of Business: ACCT2201 Introduction to Corporate Accounting
In accordance with administrative procedures applying to the offering of summer session units, the Chair of the Board had granted approval for the above unit to be offered in the 2009 summer session.

(iv) **Academic Year Planning Committee Report**
Dates of the 2011 Academic Year, which had been previously set tentatively, had been confirmed subject to confirmation of the school holiday dates.

Dates of the 2013 Academic Year had been set tentatively.

Trudi advised the group that she had been told of concerns expressed by academic staff regarding the lack of time available to them for marking examination papers, particularly in the period between semesters one and two. She pointed out that the principles governing the structure of the academic year had been amended to provide for a break of seven weeks and, if possible, eight weeks between these semester. This principle was reflected in the 2011 academic year dates. Trudi said that she had heard it suggested that despite the introduction of continuous assessment, examinations continued to be of three hours duration. It had been suggested that a reduction to two hours might be considered as a strategy to address the volume of work associated with examination marking.

(v) **Proposed Establishment of Centres**
Trudi reminded members of the need to adhere to the policy and procedures associated with the formal establishment of centres, particularly in view of the forthcoming AUQA visit. She advised that there had been some discussion at Council concerning the proposed names for certain centres, in particular the use of “Futures” and “Economics”.

(vi) **Proposed New Units**
Introduction of new units by the Faculties: Life & Physical Sciences, Medicine Dentistry & Health Sciences, had been noted.

(vii) **English Language Competence: Conceding ELC for Year 12 Students**
Council had accepted a recommendation of the Admissions Committee that English Language Competence be automatically conceded for Western Australian Year 12 students who had achieved a standardised school assessment mark or standardised examination mark of 60 or more irrespective of whether the scaled score was below 50. Such students were currently required to sit the second-chance STAT test, which presented practical difficulties for some students and for which they were required to pay a fee. Trudi pointed out that evidence showed that students who had achieved
standardised marks of 60 were low risk and that very few failed the second-chance STAT test. Moreover UWA was currently the only WA university that did not concede English language competence for such students.

(viii) **Mature-Age Entry: Change to Requirements for Calculation of two-subject TER**
Council had approved a recommendation of the Admissions Committee that:

a) the STAT requirements be decoupled from the calculation of a TER and that, for mature-age students, a TER be calculated from the best two TEE/WACE subjects; and

b) STAT could be used to satisfy the university’s English Language Competency requirements, but should not be compulsory for the calculation of a TER.

(ix) **Faculty of MDHS: Proposed Introduction of Master of Nursing Science**
Council had approved the introduction of the Master of Nursing Science, a two-year master’s degree course that, once accreditation had been obtained, would qualify graduates to be registered nurses.

(x) **Vice-Chancellor’s Report to Council**
The Vice-Chancellor had reminded Council of the need for staff to notify HR of their qualifications and to register any updates.

A member of the Group suggested that there was a need to streamline the process and for Human Resources to be more proactive.

The Vice-Chancellor had advised Council that the University had been invited to join the World Wide Universities Network.

(xi) **Reviews**
*UWA Extension*
Trudi advised that an issue raised in relation to the review report had been the positioning of ACCESS UWA given the Mature-Age Provisional Entry Scheme.

2. **I POINT**

The following information on I-point had been referred for the attention of the group:

(1) **INTERNAL APPLICATIONS FOR HONOURS**

“How do I apply for End-on Honours?”

Answer:

End-On Honours applications for Semester 1, 2009 will be made online via studentConnect.

**Eligibility**

To qualify for a place in End-on Honours you must successfully complete your current undergraduate degree, usually with an average pass mark of 65% or more.

**Starting End-on Honours in 2009**

You need to submit your Honours application form online from **Wednesday 8 October to Tuesday 16 December 2008** for semester one 2009 commencement.

You will be advised in writing of the outcome of your application”

The following concerns had been raised in connection with this question and answer:

*The student's first responsibility is to discuss his/her aspirations/eligibility and the availability of a suitable project and supervisors with the relevant honours coordinator, and get a signed recommendation on the application form, which is then forwarded to the Faculty for a*
decision. How is this compatible with an application online? Moreover, students who have taken time off since their pass degree are still internal applicants but presumably no longer have access to Student Connect.

It has been suggested that it might be a good idea to remove the “Usually with an average pass mark of 65% or more”, as this is probably only true for a couple of faculties.

It has been suggested also that the information direct students to discuss their eligibility and availability of supervision with their honours coordinator.

One faculty does say that they could cope with an on-line application after the students have discussed the matter with an honours co-ordinator. The faculty wouldn’t want a large number of people applying ‘blind’ with having first spoken to the relevant co-ordinator.

Concern was expressed about how the process would work in practice and whether it would involve faculties in more work than was presently the case. Currently the onus was on students to find out whether they were eligible for honours and whether an appropriate supervisor was available for their proposed project. Doubt was expressed about whether there was sufficient opportunity before the end of the year to introduce honours co-ordinators to a new application system and a member queried whether an on-line process was indeed appropriate for the purpose of honours applications given the various factors associated with honours applications, including that details were subject to change.

It was agreed that the I-Point Question and Answer be amended as appropriate by Student Administration and that Jenny Gamble would call a meeting of interested parties, including honours co-ordinators, to discuss the honours application process.

In relation to this item and to an item raised under Other Business there was a brief general discussion about I-Point. Whilst the many benefits of I-Point were acknowledged, including that it could save time, particularly in answering frequently asked questions; that it could log and track queries; and that it had an in-built review facility, it was pointed out that there were some issues that needed to be addressed. For example, there was a danger in repeating or paraphrasing policy or procedures on I-Point. It was suggested that there be a principle that I-Point link to authoritative versions of policy or procedure wherever possible. A member pointed out that I-Point information was frequently not appropriate to offshore students. Relevance of I-Point information was also of concern in relation to research students.

There followed a discussion about archived pages on the web and whether a system of indicating that a page was no longer current could be introduced. It was pointed out that students (and staff) frequently used searches to find the information they needed and that these could bring up out-of-date information. Currently there was no way of knowing whether a document was current or not. It was agreed that Sylvia Lang would raise this issue with the Web Office.

3. Other Business

(a) Information re Re-enrolment/Re-admission
A member raised concerns about information on the Student Administration website regarding processes for re-enrolment or re-admission in different circumstances. It was agreed that Anthony Turner would organise a meeting to discuss the details of information that needed to be included on this page.

(b) MAP Students (Mature-age Access Programme)
Mary Carroll advised that a means had been devised of identifying and calling up MAP students. Mary informed the group that Lisa Howard would send out an email with details of how to call up such students.

Elizabeth Oliver advised that there had been some very good feedback from AHSS MAP students in Albany, particularly with respect to the induction that had been provided.
(c) Suspensions and Completions

Harvey raised the issue of students being allowed to complete while they were officially suspended and sought the agreement of the group that a completion should not be recorded until the period of suspension was finished.

There followed discussion about the issue of suspension and its purpose. There was agreement that, if there was a way for a student to be readmitted before the period of suspension was over, this should be explicit and that the current situation, whereby some students argued against their suspension and were allowed to re-enrol mid-year, was inequitable.

The group was asked whether suspension was appropriate when students were required to contribute to the cost of their education. Could it be argued that, if they were prepared to pay the price, they should be allowed to continue?

It was pointed out that allowing weak students to continue in a course could impact on other students, for example in a tutorial setting. In view of the University’s aspiration to be one of the world’s leading Universities, was it appropriate to permit students who were struggling to continue?

A member argued that suspension could be beneficial for some students, for example if there were maturity issues or students were unsure about what they wished to study.

There was general agreement that the University's current system of suspension was not working as it should. Trudi advised that she would draft an issues paper and bring it back for consideration by the group.

16 September 2008