1. UPDATE FROM ACADEMIC COUNCIL (Part III items only)

Sylvia Lang provided the following update from Part III items of the Academic Council meeting held on Wednesday 5 August 2009:

- **Amended Requirements for approval of Joint/Double-Badged PhD Programs**
  The Board of the Graduate Research School noting a growing misunderstanding that cotutelle arrangements provide a mechanism for fee waiver for international study at UWA has proposed that information highlight their purpose of facilitating co-operative research collaborations. The BGRS has also recommended that the approval process for cotutelle arrangements require that the University must be satisfied of existing collaborative research or good potential for future collaborative research between the institutions.

- **Conflict of Interest Policy and Independence of Examiners**
  The BGRS proposed a draft policy addressing the independence of examiners in higher degree by Research theses which was endorsed by Academic Council subject to some minor amendments.

- **BGRS – Proposal to permit selected Visiting International Research Students to be enrolled as not for Degree Students at UWA**
  This item was approved by Council. However there was discussion that this should apply to all visiting students undertaking research at the University and it was agreed that this be explored.

- **New Courses – AHSS – GradCertIntRelns, GradDipIntRelns, MIntRelns**
  This item was approved with Council noting that the courses were not aligned with a recommendation from the Working Party on Postgraduate Coursework and endorsed by Council in early 2008 however a case had been made on the basis of national and international best practice with regard to similar courses and sufficient supporting documentation provided to show that the courses are well aligned with similar courses in other Australian universities.

- **New Course – LPS – MFoodSc**
  This item was approved with an amendment to the expected student enrolments.

- **New course – LPS – GradCertIntHumSt**
  This item was approved.

- **Major Change – ECM – GradDipFinMaths**
  The major change referred to an increase of total points required for the course to 96. A related proposal to permit credit up to a value of 48 points for completed undergraduate units had been withdrawn.

- **Major Change – ECM – BE,BMus**
  The major change referred to the introduction of the Civil Engineering program to the combined course, this item was approved.

- **Major Change – LPS – Graduate Diploma in Science (Biological Arts) and Master of Science (Biological Arts)**
  Council approved the change of name of the above to Graduate Diploma in Biological Arts (GradDipBiolArts) and Master of Biological Arts (MBiolArts).

- **Major Change – LPS – Bachelor of Science Honours Course in Pharmacology**
  Council approved the change to the admission requirements for the above course to permit admission to the course of candidates who have not completed a major in pharmacology but who wish to undertake an honours project in research areas with which pharmacology staff are associated. Such candidates will be required to have reached a certain level of academic
achievement, have completed at least one Level 3 unit in Pharmacology and have an appropriate academic background for their chosen area of research.

- **Major Change – NAS – Introduction of New Major, Land, Soil and Water**
  Council approved the introduction of the above new major and the phasing out of the majors in Soil Science and Land and Water Management.

- **Future Framework Implementation Progress Report**
  Professor Ian Reid gave an update on the implementation of the future framework noting that spreadsheets had been forwarded to the faculties indicating enrolment numbers for units, highlighting those with low enrolments. It had been noted that the spreadsheets were relatively complex and seminars have been advertised to assist in working with the spreadsheets and also to clarify the next steps in the process.

  It was noted that the FFIC and its subcommittees are currently processing decisions made by the Review working parties. These recommendations will then be considered in accordance with established decision-making processes. The Board of Coursework Studies would scrutinise any proposals regarding elements of the new courses framework and would make recommendations on these and any related policy matters to the Academic Council and/or Board.

- **Future Framework Implementation – Proposed Constitution and Membership – Board of Coursework Studies**
  Council endorsed the draft constitution for submission to the Academic Board.

- **Vice-Chancellor’s Report to the Academic Council**
  The Vice-Chancellor congratulated all winners of ALTC awards.

  The Vice-Chancellor said that ERA will be used as the driver for the allocation for future research funding. Paper addressing compacts and ERA will be distributed shortly via the Senior Management Group.

Full minutes of the Academic Council meeting will be available at the Committees site from 14 August: [http://committees.uwa.edu.au/acaboard/council/minutes/2009/5_august](http://committees.uwa.edu.au/acaboard/council/minutes/2009/5_august)

2. **OFFERS TO INTERNATIONAL STUDENTS – SPECIFICATION OF UNITS OF CREDIT (ADVANCED STANDING)**

  The above was forwarded for inclusion in the agenda, but following discussions with the International Office, Garry Hendy has offered to hold a meeting with interested parties. Sylvia will be emailing Sub-Deans with details.

3. **WEB SECURITY – PLACEMENT OF DOCUMENTS ON THE INTERNET/INTRANET**

  Sylvia reminded members that the issue of internet security and the placement of committee documents had been addressed some years ago, however there have been recent discussions and queries concerning appropriate levels of access particularly with regard to committee agendas and minutes on the Committees website located at: [http://committees.uwa.edu.au/home](http://committees.uwa.edu.au/home)

  Sylvia reminded members the current policy is that Senate and Academic Board/Council agendas and minutes are placed on the internet with sensitive material placed at the discretion of the Executive Officer in consultation with the committee Chair as appropriate. Agendas and minutes of committees below the level of Academic Board/Council should be
placed on the intranet, again with sensitive material placed at the discretion of the Executive Officer in consultation with the committee Chair as appropriate.

For anyone seeking assistance in the establishment of a site or placement of documents, the Web Office can be contacted via email weboffice@uwa.edu.au

3. APPLICATIONS FOR TRANSFER

(a) Spreadsheet – request to align columns frequently used by faculties to the left-hand-side

After some discussion, members agreed that while the majority of columns relevant to faculty officers were to the left and were easily managed, the columns containing “Current Course” and “Major/Program Desired” should be moved to the left adjacent to these columns.

In addition, it was suggested that the data be sorted by either student name or number as this would greatly facilitate matching the data reports with student transcripts.

Mary Carroll agreed to pursue effecting changes as requested.

(b) Students transferring back to a previous course

A sub-dean requested that data on applicants wishing to transfer back to a previous course be integrated with the other students’ data as it is cumbersome to have a separate page of the spreadsheet to check, and as the columns are different from the main spreadsheet it is difficult to copy these ‘re-transfers’ on to the main list.

Harvey noted that there were technical issues that would not allow Callista to merge the data onto one sheet. However, Harvey said that it would be possible for Student Administration to add the data to the bottom of the page rather than have it on a separate spreadsheet.

(c) Discipline area (major/program) of interest

A member pointed out that it is helpful to faculties, and can influence decisions (e.g. because of student's appropriate or inappropriate background, or timing of transfer), that applicants for transfer indicate the discipline area (program/major) in which they want to study in a new course. It would be appreciated if the application website indicates that this information is preferred, though not obligatory.

Harvey noted that this is possible and a column would be entered as requested.

(d) Encouraging applicants to provide a supporting statement

Members are reminded that the former paper application form for transfer included the words:

"You may want to submit additional information to the Faculty concerned in support of your application (e.g. detailed reasons for your request to transfer, reasons for poor results in your present/past course)."

One faculty has noted that mid-year applicants for transfer did not provide such a statement, and has queried whether the words formerly included in the paper application appear on the web application form. As there are quite a few applicants who are not attractive on the basis of their academic record and who could improve their chances by providing a statement, it would be beneficial for students to encourage them to provide a supporting statement if their academic record is less than good.
From a faculty perspective, extra time is spent contacting applicants and suggesting that they should send a statement which causes extra work for Student Administration, because decisions are delayed.

It is suggested that wording (or similar) should be prominently displayed at the web application site:

"You may want to submit additional information to the Faculty concerned in support of your application (e.g. detailed reasons for your request to transfer, reasons for poor results in your present/past course). This may significantly affect the outcome."

Harvey noted that while there is currently provision for applicants to submit additional information, the current wording on the web would be expanded to encourage students to submit such information.

4. APPLICATIONS FOR RE-ADMISSION: PERSONAL STATEMENT

(a) Personal statement

A member has suggested that the wording inviting extra information from applicants requesting re-admission should not be limited to students who have been excluded, and all students should be encouraged to put up a supporting case.

Possible wording could be:

"You may wish to include a personal statement, addressing the following points. This is mandatory if you are an Excluded Domestic Student and is recommended for any applicant with previous poor results."

There was some discussion of the fact that, unless an exception had been approved in the case of a particular course, eg Medicine, Dentistry or Music, decisions on admission to undergraduate courses were intended to be made on the basis of academic criteria alone, ie there were no interviews or other opportunities to provide additional information.

It was pointed out that some applicants for readmission wished in fact to transfer to a different course. If they went through a different route, e.g. as new admissions rather than re-admissions, they would be very much disadvantaged if that prevented them from providing a supporting statement.

5. ‘WA’ WITHDRAWALS AND ENDING PROGRAMS & MAJORS

There were concerns that when a faculty withdraws a student from a unit using WA, the student can regardless, add the unit in again through Student Connect.

Mary noted that an encumbrance can be placed on the system to stop the student re-entering the unit, on receipt of a request from the faculty concerned.

Similarly, there is concern where a faculty ends a program and/or major on a student's record because of breach of a rule; the student can add it again through StudentConnect.

Mary Carroll noted that a stop can be placed on Callista so that the option for students to enter majors/programs is available only in the first three weeks of semester.

Harvey Von Bergheim pointed out that faculties should not add units on behalf of students after week three. Students needed special approval to do this and were required to pay the appropriate fee.
6. FORM FOR LATE/AMENDED RESULTS

(a) Instructions at top

A member has pointed out that the current heading reads:

‘Submission of late or amended results (ONLY to be used after a Board of Examiners and release of results)’.

This is misleading, as in fact results are late as soon as the exam register has been printed; it leads schools/disciplines to send late results direct to Exams (too late to go in the register).

Suggested replacing wording with:

‘Submission of late or amended results to Faculty (To be used after due date for submission of results)’.

Harvey agreed to make the amendments as requested.

(b) Course code

It has been suggested that as there seems to be a lack of clarity on what a course code is, it would be useful to provide an example, eg: ‘Course code (e.g. 40110)’

Harvey noted that the forms would be amended as requested.

(c) Approval

It has been noted that these forms are regularly approved by sub-Deans and their counterparts. This was indicated on the previous version (which included 'Dean/sub-Dean or equivalent'). However, the current version indicated 'Dean / Faculty Administrative Officer'. It was suggested that reference to sub-Deans should be reinstated.

Harvey noted that the forms would be amended as requested.

7. TRAINING COURSES – PREPARATION OF AGENDAS AND MINUTES

Sylvia noted that Governance Services is planning to offer workshops in late September and early October on the preparation of Agendas and Minutes. The workshops will be offered through OSDS with the Agenda workshop to be presented by Jannette Barrett and the Minutes workshop to be presented by Kabilan Krishnasamy. OSDS will be advertising the workshops shortly.

8. OTHER BUSINESS

(a) Final Examination Marks

Harvey noted that in the last examinations round, some schools had assumed, incorrectly, that the practice of avoiding the mark of “49” applied also to marks of “59”, “69”, 79 etc and had rounded the marks up accordingly.

Members were reminded that there was no rule that required marks of 59, 69 etc to be adjusted.
(b) **Uploading Examination Marks**

Harvey noted a situation where the faculty had entered final examination marks for students completing a unit which was taught by a discipline in the faculty. The marks had been entered incorrectly. Harvey requested that the relevant discipline upload the marks onto the system.

(d) **Appropriate Mark to record for students who have a result of FC and subsequently fail a supplementary assessment in the failed component**

It was agreed that a result of FS 48 should be recorded for students who had previously failed a component of a unit, had been granted an opportunity for supplementary assessment in the failed component and had subsequently failed the supplementary assessment.

(c) **Students sitting for Deferred Exams**

Harvey noted that there is an increasing number of students requesting a deferral of already deferred exams.

It was agreed that students must be strongly encouraged to sit a deferred exam at the scheduled time. If it was impossible for students to sit in the deferred exam period then they would normally have to wait until the next scheduled exam period. In some cases it may be necessary to withdraw students without academic penalty.

(d) **Suspension**

Harvey noted that there has been some inconsistency in the application of 12 months’ suspension across faculties for students who have been given a suspension. It was suggested that the policy be revisited to ensure a consistent approach across the University.

**Chair’s Note:**
Given that the issues of whether or not students can be permitted to re-enrol before completing a period of suspension and whether they can or should be permitted to receive credit for units completed during a period of suspension have been raised again, it may be worth exploring the current rules surrounding them.

The University General Rules address progress status as follows:

**Satisfactory Progress, Unsatisfactory Progress and Progress Status**

**Satisfactory Progress**

1.2.1.29(1) Subject to (2), to make satisfactory progress in a calendar year a student must—

(a) pass units to a value of at least half the total value of units in which they remain enrolled after the final date for withdrawal without academic penalty [see Rule 1.2.1.2(3)]; and

(b) satisfy any additional requirements which a faculty determines and states in its rules.

(2) For students in an honours course or in another course with a research component, the faculty will normally determine whether satisfactory progress has been made having regard to the report of the student's supervisor.

**Progress Status**

1.2.1.30(1) A student who makes satisfactory progress is assigned the progress status of 'good standing'.

(2) A student who does not make satisfactory progress has 'unsatisfactory progress' recorded on their academic record and may be assigned one of the following by the faculty:

- **On Probation**—must see Academic Adviser before re-enrolling in the course and conditions may apply to re-enrolment
**Suspended**—not permitted to re-enrol in the course for a period of 12 months

**Excluded**—not permitted to re-enrol in the course.

(3) A faculty must specify in its rules the progress status that it assigns to students who do not make satisfactory progress and the circumstances under which each status is applied.

**Appeals against Progress Status**

1.2.1.31 Students may appeal against their progress status in accordance with the appeals procedure, details of which can be accessed on the University's web site at [http://www.secretariat.uwa.edu.au/page/20777](http://www.secretariat.uwa.edu.au/page/20777).

**Application to Re-enrol following Exclusion**

1.2.1.32 A student who—

(a) has been excluded from a course; and

(b) has not had their progress status changed as the result of an appeal or a request for special consideration; and

(c) believes that their case has changed since their exclusion may, after a period of at least 12 months has elapsed since their exclusion, apply to the faculty to re-enrol in the course.

1.2.1.30(3) gives responsibility to an individual faculty to determine the progress status it applies to students who do not make satisfactory progress and the circumstances under which each status is applied.

Some faculties give themselves discretion in their rules to take into account exceptional circumstances when making decisions about progress status. If a faculty has such discretion under its rules then clearly it may exercise it. This means that, although a particular student's academic performance over a period would normally lead them to be suspended or excluded, the faculty may decide that, given exceptional circumstances that have been brought to its attention, whatever these exceptional circumstances may be, it will not impose a status of 'suspended' or 'excluded' in the case of that individual student (but perhaps place the student on probation or simply allow them to re-enrol).

Once a status of 'Suspended' or 'Excluded' has been allocated, however, unless it is the subject of a successful appeal under the formal appeal process on the basis that it was incorrectly applied in terms of the rules, or a successful appeal in relation to academic assessment results in the status being amended, there is no provision in our existing rules for the status of "Suspended" to mean other than that what it currently means ie "not permitted to re-enrol in the course for a period of 12 months".

Currently there is no general provision for students to be re-admitted before the end of a period of suspension and no rules surrounding this.

As stated above, a status of "Suspended" means that a student is prohibited from re-enrolling in the course from which they have been suspended for a period of 12 months. As members will be aware, it does not mean that the student is prohibited from enrolling in another course. Some students may apply and be permitted to enrol in another course at this University or at another institution or in units through University Extension. Such students returning to study in a course after the period of suspension from the course is complete may then seek to have the units they have undertaken through Extension or elsewhere credited towards the course from which they were suspended. Unless the faculty's rules or other written policies prohibit the awarding of credit for units undertaken during a period of suspension, the faculty may grant credit for such units (although there is a general limit on the amount of credit that can be given for units passed through University Extension).

The question of whether it is inconsistent with the purpose of suspending a student from a course to then allow them to credit units that they have completed during the period of suspension is one which remains to be determined on a University-wide basis. There is at least one faculty that currently does not permit units completed through University Extension.
during a period of suspension or exclusion to be credited (except in exceptional circumstances).

Perhaps this is a matter that members may wish to explore with their respective faculties, or to have referred to the Board of Coursework Studies for consideration in the context of the Future Framework

(e) **Special Units**

Harvey noted that a number of students are completing ‘special units’ and has requested detail of what comprises a “Special Unit” as a formal comment needs to be placed on the student record. It was noted that special units were normally created for individual students to cater for their particular circumstances (eg the student has previously completed units similar to ones required in their course but may still need to complete certain unit components) and a policy existed to govern this. It was proposed that Special Topics units were the appropriate solution in cases where faculties wished to take advantage of the expertise of visiting staff.

(f) **Calculator Policy**

Harvey advised that the current policy re taking calculators into examinations was not functioning properly and requested that it be given some further thought.

(g) **Query Database**

Marcy Carroll advised that a staff member had sought access to the Student Information Management system as a student. Mary advised that anyone wishing such access should contact her direct.

10 August 2009