NOTES FROM A MEETING OF THE FACULTY ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICERS/SUBDEANS
GROUP HELD FRIDAY 5 AUGUST 2010 IN THE SENATE ROOM

Sylvia welcomed Danni Wick, Marketing Manager NC2012 from Public Affairs and Betty Verhelst, Manager, Student Affairs, from the Faculty of Engineering, Computing and Mathematics.

1. UPDATE FROM ACADEMIC COUNCIL

Sylvia Lang provided the following update on Part 3 items from the Academic Council meeting held Wednesday 3 August 2011:

(i) CYCLE 3 WORKING PARTY REPORT – Ref F30657

Sylvia reminded members that the Cycle 3 Working Party Report had been considered by the Academic Board at its meeting in November 2010 where the Board recommended further consultation with the Faculties and Board of the Graduate Research.

The following points were raised at Council:

- a major issue for consideration has been the proposal that Masters by Thesis and Coursework be renamed Master of Philosophy, there was no support at this stage. It was agreed that Master’s courses administered by the Graduate Research School and having common rules be renamed ‘Master of Philosophy’
- all professional doctorates must be RTS compliant
- clinical doctorates must have a 25% research component
- that the award of ‘distinction’ be discontinued for RTS compliant degrees and replaced with a Dean’s list
- defining theses and how they differ for Professional Doctorates and PhD
- it was agreed that there was a need to clarify the English language admission requirements for PhD students
- more use to be made of CELT and Student Services to assist students experiencing English language difficulties when undertaking higher degrees by research studies
- a master’s degree achieved by way of a combined course with a PhD would not be called a Master of Philosophy but would be a named degree

(ii) VC REPORT TO AUGUST ACADEMIC COUNCIL

The Vice-Chancellor had expressed concern regarding a drop in the rate of completions per separation for the PhD. It was highlighted that there were some limitations in the calculation process for reporting these. There were various ways to calculate and report performance in Higher Degrees by Research across the Group of Eight and the University was investigating these as well as the factors that may have led to a decline in completions. The Vice-Chancellor added that the booming WA economy would be attracting prospective Master’s by Coursework and Higher Degrees by Research students into the lucrative job market.

The full minutes of the Academic Council meeting held 3 August are available at the following link: http://committees.intranet.uwa.edu.au/acaboard/academic_council_from_2010/minutes/2011/3_august

2. UNIVERSITY POLICIES AND RULES

Sylvia provided an update on University Policies which had been written as a result of the decision to separate policy from rules governing what students must do. Members are encouraged to visit the website at the following link http://www.universitypolicies.uwa.edu.au/ A copy of the PowerPoint presentation is attached.

With regard to student-related policies Sylvia noted that a ‘Student’ page is currently being developed on the University Policies website. She reminded members that the rules would
state what students have to do and the policies would provide the policy context. Links would
be made from the rules to the policy.

Sylvia noted that the University General Rules would no longer exist and have been replaced by:
• Student Rules (to apply to both existing and new students)
• University Policies (statements of the principles that govern decision-making)
• Master’s degrees by Research rules (transitioning to policy).
• PhD rules (transitioning to policy). Sylvia noted that the BGRS have a half-way house
approach for 2012. The Master’s by Research Rules will appear separately to the PhD
rules (so that each set will be self-contained). These have been approved by Academic
Council in the interim with the plan to develop rules for HDR students and a suite of
relevant policies before the end of 2012.

Sylvia pointed out that the new Admission Regulations had now been approved by Senate
and the following University Policies (approved by Council in April) would be posted to the
web.

Executive Officer’s Note: The following are now available at the University Policies site:

• University Policy on Admission to undergraduate degree courses
• University Policy on Deferral for commencing domestic undergraduate students
• University Policy on English Language Competence for admission to a course of the
University
• University Policy on Prerequisites for entry to undergraduate majors

With regard to Faculty Rules, Sylvia noted that the following would be published in handbooks
for 2012:
• Existing bachelor degree rules
• Undergraduate diploma rules (A paper addressing the future of such diplomas is currently
progressing through the committee system with the aim to be finalised in time for 2012)
• Postgraduate rules (including Graduate Certificate, Graduate Diploma, Master’s),
Professional Doctorates and Clinical Doctorate rules (with each set of course rules being
designed to stand alone)

The new undergraduate degree courses would be governed by the Undergraduate Degree
Course Rules (approved by Academic Council and due to be submitted to the Legislative
Committee in September for any final drafting).

Members with queries relating to rules were asked to contact the Senior Legislative Officer,
Dr Claire McIlroy.

There was some discussion regarding successive failure of units, particularly with regard to
students who failed a core unit twice in an existing course and whether they would be eligible
to re-enrol in that unit in 2012. Sylvia pointed out the existing University General Rule, which
reads as follows:

Successive failures in the same unit

1.2.1.28 Students who fail a unit twice are not permitted to enrol again in that unit
unless the faculty approves otherwise.

It was pointed out that this rule applied whether the student had failed the unit twice within the
course in which the student was enrolled or within a course in which a student was previously
enrolled or once within one course and once within another.

Member supported the principle that there should be provision for discretion in determining
whether or not a student who had failed a unit twice should be permitted to re-enrol.
Executive Officer’s Note: The new policy on Academic Progress is available on the University Policies website at: http://www.universitypolicies.uwa.edu.au/search?method=document&id=UP11%2F26
Clause 4 deals with successive failures:

4 Successive failures in the same unit

4.1 Students who fail a unit twice are not permitted to enrol again in that unit unless the relevant faculty or board approves otherwise in recognition of significant mitigating circumstances.

In response to a query concerning whether students who were suspended at the end of 2011 should be permitted to transfer to one of the new Undergraduate Degree Courses Sylvia sought the views of members. She pointed out that students currently were suspended from the course in which they were enrolled when they failed to make satisfactory progress but not suspended from other courses. She stated that in her view, to the extent possible in the context of the new courses, the same principles should apply. However this was complicated by the breadth of study permitted in the new courses. Ought students to be prevented from enrolling in a particular major, for example? Sylvia agreed to pursue this matter and report back.

3.      MARKETING AND COMMUNICATIONS FOR NC2012

Rachel Schmitt, Marketing Manager (postgraduate) and Danni Wick Marketing Manager (Undergraduate) for NC2012 provided the following update:

OPEN DAY (Sunday 18 August) – Public Affairs had prepared a toolkit for Open day comprising a booklet, logistics guide for the day and program which were distributed together with Open Day t-shirts to Open Day volunteers.

Public Affairs have produced a brochure “Broaden your horizons at UWA” which provides information for students on broadening units, these are available from Public Affairs on request.

Rachel noted that staff are addressing concerns with the ‘Future Students’ website but those issues are being processed on a ‘first come first served’ basis. Members were advised that if they had an issue with the site which requires urgent resolution, they should contact the Admissions Centre direct for prompt attention.

4. OTHER BUSINESS

(i) ADVANCED STANDING WORKING PARTY

Harvey noted that a meeting of this group had recently taken place. There were approximately 5,000 students who had completed 48 points and potentially might transfer into one of the new undergraduate degree courses. These students would be sent an email inviting them to attend an information session (to be held on 1 and 2 September) which would be used to assess eligibility to transfer and whether it would be beneficial for particular students or groups of students.