NOTES FROM A MEETING OF THE FACULTY ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICERS/SUB-DEANS’ GROUP HELD FRIDAY 3 JUNE 2011 IN THE SENATE ROOM

Sylvia welcomed Professor Ian Reid, Senior Academic Reviewer, and Claire Foster, Project Officer NC2012 FNAS, to the meeting.

1. UNDERGRADUATE DIPLOMAS - A discussion paper - Ref F26592

Sylvia introduced this item noting that the discussion paper had been circulated to members by email on 3 May with a request that members consider the document, liaise with colleagues and provide feedback at the meeting. Members were, in particular, asked to consider sections 3 (definitional matters), 4 (scope of diplomas) and 5 (approval and administration).

The following points were raised:

(i) should the scope of diplomas be extended beyond skills-based study

Some members indicated that there was considerable demand from students wishing to take on an extra major or units, and extending the scope for undergraduate diplomas would provide an avenue to achieve this: the diplomas could also provide a ‘stepping stone’ into honours or master’s courses.

It was suggested that an assessment of past numbers of undergraduate diploma and postgraduate diploma (eg diploma in Arts) enrolments should be obtained to ascertain their viability for NC2012. It was also queried whether undergraduate diplomas were a financially viable option for the University to pursue. Members were mindful to avoid creating a large edifice for a small number of students.

A member from LPS noted that diplomas provided a good option for graduates wishing to enrol in double majors, particularly in psychology where it is a requirement for accreditation purposes. It was also noted that a large number of psychology students moved into honours programs via the diplomas and there was a justification to give special consideration for that discipline.

(ii) would cross crediting rules apply and how

Members were asked should diplomas be available only as concurrent enrolment or should they be also available to graduates. The possible issue of ‘points variability’ when students are enrolled concurrently was raised.

There were mixed feelings about the notion of undergraduate diplomas and concurrent enrolment. Most members did not support cross crediting. Sylvia noted that the Credit Policy has been approved through Academic Council. It provides for normally up to half the value of a course to be credited on the basis of prior study (except in the case of courses with a value of 24 points, where no credit is possible for prior completed courses).

(iii) would progression rules apply

It was noted that the ‘diploma structure’ allowed students to ‘compress’ their studies, depending on the area. Members were reminded that there should not be any compromise on the prerequisite requirements of NC2012 and progression would be subject to unit availability. It was stressed that learning progress within a discipline should be maintained.

(iv) should Honours be available and how

Most members supported the notion that Honours would be dependent on the student meeting eligibility requirements over the entire period of study ie over the course of the undergraduate degree as well as the diploma studies.
Members agreed that the diploma would be processed by the relevant faculty board/s for submission to the relevant IBoS for BCS and Academic Council approval. The diplomas would be administered as with the new undergraduate degrees.

Most members supported a consistent approach across faculties with nomenclature corresponding to the relevant degree to avoid a proliferation of diploma titles.

Professor Reid noted that the discussion paper is in draft and has been forwarded to the Teaching and Learning Committee for consideration following which the paper will go out to the wider University for further consultation.

Any feedback should be emailed to Professor Ian Reid ian.reid@uwa.edu.au

2. UPDATE FROM ACADEMIC COUNCIL

The minutes of the 1 June meeting of Academic Council are available at http://committees.intranet.uwa.edu.au/acaboard/academic_council_from_2010/minutes/2011/1_june

Sylvia provided the following update:

2.1 IBoS PROGRESS REPORTS ON COURSE DEVELOPMENT AND APPROVAL PROCESS FOR NEW UNDERGRADUATE DEGREES OFFERED IN 2012 – Refs F28847, F28848, F28850, F28851

Sylvia noted that the meeting acknowledged the formal approval of the new courses, majors and units going through the Interim Boards of Studies, and the legislative framework underpinning the new courses for 2012.

Sylvia noted also that the undergraduate rules are missing ‘progress status’ and that a working party will be set up to put something in place, keeping in mind the ESOS requirement of placing intervention strategies for at risk students. It was noted that a recent audit had identified some concerns with this process within the university.

Sylvia encouraged members to consider the IBoS progress reports, which represented a massive amount of work undertaken across the University. Sylvia congratulated all those involved on their efforts.

2.2 UNIVERSITY POLICIES – Refs F35198, F35197, F35324

The following policies which reflect current rules and include decisions made in relation to NC2012, were approved:

- UP on Graduate Certificate Courses
- UP on Graduate Diploma Courses
- UP on Higher Degree by Research Preliminary Course

2.3 NEW COURSES 2012 – COURSE ADMINISTRATION: ISSUES FOR CONSULTATION – Ref F34091

Sylvia noted that this item relates to administration issues in the new NC2012 climate and was related to current academic governance arrangements.

In answer to a query as to whether the role of the faculty boards would change with the introduction of NC2012, it was noted that the aspects of decision-making that would have to be re-considered in light of NC2012 would be those relating to courses that were interfaculty in nature, eg decisions about student progress in a course.
Sylvia noted that a project would commence to consider the appeals process and student complaints process in light of the introduction of the new bachelor’s degree courses.

2.4 UNIVERSITY POLICY ON HONOURS AWARD – Ref F20333

Sylvia noted that the policy was approved by Council, subject to amendments as noted on the minutes. Sylvia encouraged members to consider the policy and email any feedback/comments to Sylvia Sylvialang@ua.edu.au

2.4 UNIVERSITY POLICY ON BACHELOR OF PHILOSOPHY (HONOURS) – Ref F35960

Sylvia reminded members that the position for a Coordinator for the Bachelor of Philosophy (Honours) degree course has been advertised and an appointment should be announced shortly.

Sylvia noted that the admissions regulations for the course were discussed and will be based on ATAR to start with, subject to be review at a later stage. Sylvia also noted that sub-quotas have been put in place for Indigenous, rural, low SES background and international students as well as for students who have completed one year of tertiary study. It was noted that BPhil (Hons) students would have to meet specific course entry requirements for courses such as Medicine and Dentistry.

Council approved the policy subject to amendment as noted on the minutes.

2.5 STUDENT RULES – Ref 36454

The Student Rules for NC2012 were approved by Council. Sylvia encouraged members to consider and email any feedback/comments to Sylvia Sylvialang@uwa.edu.au or Claire McIlroy Claire.McIlroy@uwa.edu.au

2.6 NEW COURSE – GRADUATE CERTIFICATE IN FORENSIC INVESTIGATION- Ref F36447

Council approved this new course for commencement in Semester 2, 2011.

3. LAUNCH OF FUTURE STUDENTS WEBSITE

Rachel Schmitt, Marketing Manager (New Courses 2012), spoke to this item noting that the Future Students website is now live http://www.aps.uwa.edu.au/__data/page/20818/2011_Draft_Schedule.xls. It was noted that there had been some problems with the ‘search’ button but these appear to be have been resolved.

Rachel noted that Barbara Goldflam is currently working on the ‘drill down’ feature for undergraduate units which should be available by end next week (10 June).

A new prospectus for year 10 and 11 students providing an overview of each degree is now available in hard copy.

Rachel noted that the postgraduate web pages are currently being developed on the site, including a postgraduate database. It is envisaged that the postgraduate site will be available before October.

Faculties are reminded that postgraduate courses to be offered to international students should be prepared well in advance as international courses must have CRICOS registration before being advertised.
A brochure of ‘Broadening Units’ in hard copy is currently awaiting approval and should also be available on-line shortly. Any feedback would be appreciated by email to Jon Stubbs jon.stubbs@uwa.edu.au or Sonia Nottle sonja.nottle@uwa.edu.au.

Members are encouraged to have a look at the website, any feedback should be emailed to Rachel Schmitt Rachel.schmitt@uwa.edu.au

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