

LA TROBE UNIVERSITY

ACADEMIC BOARD
Wednesday, 14 May 2008

Report of the Vice-Chancellor

1. University Financial Position

- As part of the Workplace Productivity Programme supported by a Commonwealth Government grant, the University has commissioned external consultants Phillips KPA to review, and recommend changes to, the planning and budget framework of the University. The initial diagnostic work involved interviews with 59 La Trobe University staff in a wide range of roles in Faculties, central administration, regional campuses, residential services and the Library. A diagnostic report has now been delivered to the University, and work to design a new architecture for planning, budget and accountability frameworks will commence shortly. This will provide a new structure for development of the 2009 budget.
- The work undertaken by Phillips KPA has coincided with the identification of several points of apparent deviation of projected expenditure from the planned expenditure set out in the 2008 budget. Further work is being undertaken to determine the extent to which this can be accounted for by timing variances. A full report will be made to the Finance and Resources Committee on 19 May.

2. People

- Professor Robert Manne, Politics Program, Professor Judith Brett, Politics Program and Head of School of Social Sciences, and Dr Julian Meyrick, Post Doctoral Fellow in the Drama Program, were participants at the Prime Minister's 2020 Summit.
- Dr Julie Jackson, Pro Vice-Chancellor (Quality Enhancement) has recently returned from quality audit visits to Sur University College in Oman and Newcastle University, Australia. Julie has been appointed as the Victorian Vice-Chancellor's Committee nominee to the Victorian Higher Education Advisory Committee (a ministerial advisory committee).
- Dr Gary Thomas, Director, Indigenous Education, has been leading an Indigenous Higher Education delegation at the United Nations Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues in New York over the past two weeks. This is the first meeting of the Permanent Forum since the adoption of the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous peoples at the general assembly last September. As the current Chair of the National Indigenous Higher Education Network (NIHEN), Australia, Mr Thomas has led a delegation of ten Indigenous Australian heads of programs from around Australia

3. Operations

- A Memorandum of Understanding between the Greater Shepparton City Council and La Trobe University was signed at a ceremony in Shepparton on Wednesday, 9 April 2008.
- The Joint Venture Deed of Agreement between DPI and La Trobe has now been signed, and the call to the market for registrations of capability was issued on 30 April. The BRC will be located in the space currently occupied by Car Park 4.

4. Awards/Honours

(a) Staff

- Library

- Dennis Warren, Law Librarian, was presented with the annual Ted Glasson award for the most outstanding feature length article in the journal Australian Law Librarian (2007).

- Faculty of Law and Management

- Congratulations to Professor Don Harding, from the Department of Economics, who has been awarded one of the prestigious Thompson Scientific Citation Awards for 2008. The accolade places Professor Harding in the top ten cited researchers in Australia, and the leader in his field of economics.
- Congratulations to the Faculty winners of the 2008 La Trobe University Citations for Outstanding Contribution to Student Learning.
- Tom Fisher (Law), for introducing academic programs which inspire students through innovative and engaging experiential teaching together with unceasing enthusiasm, curiosity and rigour in the field of conflict resolution.
- Rajiv Khosla (Business), for outstanding contributions to student learning and development by mapping diverse learning needs of undergraduate and postgraduate students to innovative industry-orientated teaching and learning resources.

Faculty of Science, Technology and Engineering

- Professor Ian Robinson (Head of School of Engineering and Mathematical Sciences) has been nominated as La Trobe University's representative on the newly formed Australian Council of Deans of ICT

(b) Students

Faculty of Law and Management

- Congratulations to La Trobe law students, Hannah Nijam and Matthew Raggart, who have been successful in gaining a place in the Aurora Native Title Internships Program. The program places students for work experience with a range of organisations related to Native Title and/or indigenous affairs. For the current round of applications, 108 law students applied from 23 Australian universities, including five students from La Trobe.
- In what is believed to be a first for the Law School, Florian Schwaz, an international student from Germany, has been admitted to practice as a solicitor in Victoria. Florian initially started out in the La Trobe Masters of Law (International) program and then decided to also complete the graduate-entry undergraduate law degree. After completing his law degree, with Honours, Florian then needed to complete his year of practical legal training to be admitted. He completed a distance education program through the College of Law in NSW, which was the only practical legal training provider to offer its on-campus component overseas. Being based in London, Florian then had to apply to the practical component of his training year to be completed overseas as well. Florian now has both a common law and a civil law degree, with a Masters of Law (International), which includes units from the Global Business Law (GBL) program. As a result of this background, he is about to start work with one of the 'magic circle' firms in Germany, Freshfields. Congratulations to Florian.

Faculty of Science, Technology and Engineering

- Congratulations to 4th year Electronic Engineering student Glenn Boardman who won the Institution of Engineering & Technology (IET) Student Prize for Victoria. Glenn is the fourth La Trobe final year student to have won this prize in recent years.

5. Research Achievement

Faculty of Science, Technology and Engineering

- Professor Reinout Quispel (Mathematics and Statistics) has received a funding extension of the Centre of Excellence MASCOS to the end of 2010.
- Mr John McDonald (Science Peer Mentor Program Co-ordinator) received \$100,000 for In2Science from the George Alexander Foundation, this being in addition to the \$260,000 the program received recently from The Department of Education and early

Childhood Development (DEECD). Both of these are for a period of two years. This scheme involves La Trobe University, the University of Melbourne and Monash University.

- Head of the Physics Department, Associate Professor Paul Pigram's LIEF funding (comprising a total of \$700,000 over 2007-2008) for Advanced Surface Characterisation Facility funds are now available and he will receive the payment in June 2008 – congratulations, Paul.
- Head of the Chemistry Department, Professor Bob Brownlee's LIEF funding (comprising a total of \$320,000 over 2007-2008) for Enhanced NMR Research, characterisation and Analysis Facility funds are now available and he will receive the payment in June 2008 – congratulations, Bob.

Faculty of Education

- The Trust of the Sir Edmund Hillary Outdoor Pursuits Centre of New Zealand has invited Dr Andrew Brookes, Associate Professor in La Trobe University's Centre for Excellence in Outdoor and Environmental Education, to join New Zealand QC Mr Bruce Corkill in a two person Review Team to prepare a report on the recent tragedy in which six students and one teacher died on the Mangalepopo River. Dr Brookes is recognised internationally as a leading authority on safety in outdoor education and related pursuits.

6. External Visitors/International Delegations

- Senator Kim Carr, Minister for Innovation, Industry, Science and Research, visited the Bundoora campus on 18 April to visit the Centre for Dialogue (Professor Joe Camilleri) and to discuss research funding with Profs Johnson, Probert, Brown, Hoogenrad and Vaux.

Paul Johnson
Vice-Chancellor