

LA TROBE UNIVERSITY

ACADEMIC BOARD

Minutes of the four hundred and eighth meeting of the Academic Board held in the Council Chamber, John Scott Meeting House, La Trobe University, Bundoora Campus on Wednesday 7 June 2006 at 9.30am

**PRESENT:** Professor R W Parish (Chair), Professor C Adams, Ms E Brown, Professor M Chanock, Professor H Clarke, Dr L Crase, Dr R Croome, Professor S Crowe, Professor D de Vaus, Mr D Ensor (*vice* Mr R Goddard), Professor G Farrell, Professor C Handley, Professor R Harbridge, Dr T Hogan, Dr L Howie, Dr J Jackson, Professor M Lake, Ms L Lavender, Professor G Leder, Dr R Lewis, Professor L Ling, Dr A McClelland, Ms V Mansell Lees, Dr P Martin, Dr G Mayer, Dr G Murphy, Professor T Murray, Ms B Paton (*vice* Professor E Gow), Mr J Penwill, Professor V Prain, Mr K Reed, Mr P Richardson, Professor M Rimmer, Professor I Robinson, Dr J Russell, Ms F Sheean, Mr M Shivdasani, Dr K Souter, Professor B Stoddart (Vice-Chancellor), Mr D Stuchbery, Professor H Swerissen, Dr L Thwaites, Dr D Tillett, Professor R Wales and Dr H Westerbeek.

**SECRETARIAT:** Ms A Cowburn

**IN ATTENDANCE:** Professor A Aikhenvald, Professor R Brownlee, Professor L Cahill, Mr B Carboon, Professor J Chen, Mr R Cook, Dr K Ferguson, Professor B Graetz, Professor D Kirkpatrick, Ms B Knowles, Dr E Martens, Professor P Murphy, Professor D Phillips and Dr P Stacey.

**PART A: PROCEDURAL MATTERS**

**(i) Apologies and Attendance**

Apologies were received for Dr S Beeton, Professor K Dodd, Professor D Finlay, Mr B Goddard, Professor E Gow, Mr J Griffiths, Ms L Lang, Dr J Oates, Mr A Pagliaro, Professor S Paxton, Ms J Porter, Professor G Stephenson, Dr D Stockley, Ms G Verrinder, Dr A Vongalis-Macrow, Professor G Walker and Professor R Walker.

**(ii) Approval of Agenda and ordering of Agenda Items**

The Board resolved to approve the Agenda, as circulated.

The Board received the following tabled papers:

- AB06/81 *Attachment G*, Re-establishment of position of Professor/Associate Professor of Physiotherapy (Bayside Health)
- AB06/81 *Attachment H*, Re-establishment of position of Associate Professor, Quality Improvement Program
- AB06/83 Award of Degrees and Diplomas

**(iii) Outstanding Matters**

The Board received and noted report AB06/80.

**(iv) Matters approved on behalf of Academic Board**

The Board received report AB06/81 and noted the following matters which had been approved on its behalf since its last meeting:

- (a) Award of degrees and diplomas, as detailed in Attachment A to report AB06/81;
- (b) Membership of Committees:
  - (i) *Academic Promotions Core Committee and Faculty Panels*, as detailed in Attachment B to report AB06/81;

- (c) Course proposals:
- (i) Proposal from the Faculty of Science, Technology and Engineering to introduce a Bachelor of Information Technology (Professional) (BIT(Prof)) degree, as detailed in Attachment C to report AB06/81;
  - (ii) Proposal from the Faculty of Science, Technology and Engineering to introduce a Bachelor of Agricultural Science/Bachelor of International Development Studies (BAgrSc/BID) double degree, as detailed in Attachment D to report AB06/81;
  - (iii) Proposal from the Faculty of Science, Technology and Engineering to amend the Bachelor of Animal Science and to change the nomenclature to Bachelor of Animal and Veterinary Biosciences (BAnVetBioSc), as detailed in Attachment E to report AB06/81;
  - (iv) Proposal from the Faculty of Law and Management to introduce a Master of Financial Analysis (LMFA) and a Master of Financial Analysis/Master of Professional Accounting (LMFAPA), as detailed in Attachment F to report AB06/81;
- (d) Re-establishment of position of Professor/Associate Professor of Physiotherapy (Bayside Health), as detailed in confidential tabled Attachment G to report AB06/81; and
- (e) Re-establishment of position of Associate Professor, Quality Improvement Program, as detailed in confidential tabled Attachment H to report AB06/81.

**(v) Report of the Vice-Chancellor**

The Vice-Chancellor reported on a number of matters of current interest.

- (a) On Monday, the University Council decided to proceed with an executive search to fill the position of Vice-Chancellor as soon as possible. The Vice-Chancellor urged Board members to continue the push for progress with regard to research and learning and teaching this year.
- (b) The Vice-Chancellor had met with Ministers Bishop and Kosky regarding the proposed medical school and National Biosecurity Centre. There had also been a meeting with senior members of the Higher Education Group. The Vice-Chancellor was hoping to meet with Minister Abbott on Friday to discuss the proposed medical school and allocation of places. These meetings should assist in further raising the University's profile.
- (c) Congratulations to the Faculty of Law and Management with regard to an article in The Age on Monday which highlighted La Trobe University in a very positive way.
- (d) The role of universities in research and development was under the spotlight by the Productivity Commission Review into research and development in Australia. It was noted that La Trobe University's share of national research allocations were declining and that a great deal of work was required to increase research productivity and to realise the aim of becoming a recognised top 10 research institution in Australia. The Research Quality Framework guidelines had still not been established.

Professor Adams queried whether funding allocations for research income and PhD completions would remain the same, or would all research funding by the government be allocated under the Research Quality Framework. The Vice-Chancellor advised that it was likely that, for the time being, 50% of funding would be allocated through the RQF and 50% would use the current formula. However he noted that the Group of 8 would prefer to see all research income allocated through the RQF.

It was noted that only 22% of academic staff at La Trobe University were research active. It was queried whether this could hold up promotions for some staff. It was reported that the Pro Vice-Chancellor (Academic) was currently reviewing the criteria for promotions under the 2003 RRTNR. It was agreed that this was an issue that would be debated by Academic Board in the future.

- (e) The Council had adopted the Strategic Plan which had been submitted to it following an extensive consultation process. The final version of the Strategic Plan should be available through the University's website by the middle of this week. The Board noted that the Council approved Strategic Plan was similar to the draft that had been circulated to staff for comment and that work had begun on the Operational Plan which would be tied to it.

- (f) Mr Reed had the following queries:
- Are universities directly approaching the Minister regarding the huge increase in reporting requirements and administrative red tape?
  - With regard to Melbourne University's recently publicised two tier proposal would there be further debate regarding La Trobe University's broader strategy?
  - Is the percentage of full fee funding given to the University similar to the amount being delivered to the teaching units?

The Vice-Chancellor responded with the following comments:

- The Minister had been approached regarding the issue of increasing administrative and reporting demands made by the government. The Workplace Productivity Program grant application, recently made by the University to DEST, would internally review these issues. The Vice-Chancellor assured the Board that there would be no increase in administration requirements on academic staff.
- There would be a review of teaching programs in an attempt to decrease teaching requirements across the University. The Vice-Chancellor had been involved in discussion with the Vice-Chancellor of Melbourne University regarding opportunities for La Trobe University.
- The University does not have total discretion regarding the allocation of full fee funding. There are fixed mandatory fees which are removed prior to the University allocating the funding to teaching units.

## **PART B: MATTERS FOR APPROVAL**

### **408.1 CONFIRMATION OF THE MINUTES**

The minutes of the meeting held on 10 May 2006 [AB06/78(M)] were confirmed.

### **408.2 ITEMS APPROVED WITHOUT DISCUSSION**

#### **408.2.1 Award of Degrees and Diplomas**

The Board received tabled report AB06/83 and **resolved** to recommend to Council the award of degrees and diplomas as detailed therein.

EO(AB)

#### **408.2.2 Establishment of prizes**

The Board **resolved** to establish formally the following Prizes:

- (a) Science, Technology and Engineering: Esler & Associates Prize, as detailed in report AB06/84;
- (b) Science, Technology and Engineering: The Environmental Group Prize for Waste Water Management in the Bachelor of Science in Environmental Management and Ecology degree at Albury-Wodonga, as detailed in report AB06/85;
- (c) Science, Technology and Engineering: Information Technology Staff Awards [*amendment*], as detailed in report AB06/86;
- (d) Science, Technology and Engineering: The John Hill – Albury-Wodonga Campus Chemistry Prize [*amendment*], as detailed in report AB06/87; and
- (e) Science, Technology and Engineering: Bendigo United Friendly Societies Pharmacy Scholarship [*amendment*], as detailed in report AB06/88.

Fac. Reg.  
Ms S Went  
Ms A Forden

#### **408.2.3 Membership of Committees**

- (a) *Composition of Selection Committee: Professor/Associate Professor, Physiotherapy (Bayside Health)*

The Board **resolved** to appoint membership to the Selection Committee: Professor/Associate Professor, Physiotherapy (Bayside Health), as detailed in report AB06/89.

Dr J Carr

(b) *Personal Chairs Committee - composition*

The Board **resolved** to amend the composition of the Personal Chairs Committee, as follows:

- Pro Vice-Chancellor (Research)
- Chair of Academic Board
- Pro Vice-Chancellor (Academic)
- Three professors elected by the Academic Board (one Arts-based, one Science-based, one Professional-based) for three years.

The Board further **resolved** to appoint Professor Malcolm Rimmer as the professional-based Professor elected by Academic Board.

Dr J Carr

(c) *Selection Committees, Professorial appointments - composition*

The Board **resolved** to amend the composition of the Selection Committees for Professorial appointments, as detailed in report AB06/91.

The Board agreed that the reference to the University Development Committee in Section 4.1 of the Human Resources Manual should be removed, as this Committee had been disbanded.

Dr J Carr

(d) *Standing Committee on Level D Academics*

The Board **resolved** to appoint Professor D Altman (*vice* Professor J Brett) as nominee of the Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences to the Standing Committee on Level D Academics.

Dr J Carr

### 408.3 STANDING COMMITTEES OF ACADEMIC BOARD

#### 408.3.1 Report of Selection and Enrolment Committee: 12 April 2006

The Board received report AB06/92.

(a) *Membership*

The Board **resolved** to endorse the amendment of the membership of the Selection and Enrolment Committee by broadening the membership category "Pro Vice-Chancellor, Albury-Wodonga Campus or Nominee" to "*a nominee of the Pro Vice-Chancellor (Strategic Development) with expertise in the selection of regional students and the UAC system*".

Sec. SEC

#### 408.3.2 Report of Research and Graduate Studies Committee: 28 April 2006

The Board received report AB06/93.

(a) *Terms of reference*

The Board **resolved** to endorse the revised Terms of Reference of the Research and Graduate Studies Committee, as detailed in Appendix 1 to report AB06/93.

Mgr. RGSO

(b) *Review of the African Research Institute*

The Board noted that the Research and Graduate Studies Committee had considered the report and recommendations from the Review Panel for the African Research Institute, together with the submission prepared by the Institute and the response of the Institute to the Panel's report, as detailed in Appendix 2, Appendix 3 and Appendix 4 to report AB06/93.

The Board **resolved** to endorse the closure of the African Research Institute at the end of 2006.

Mgr. RGSO

(c) *Centre for Excellence in Coherent X-Ray Science*

The Board noted that the Centre for Excellence in Coherent X-Ray Science, co-funded by the Australian Research Council and the Victorian State Technology Initiative, was formally opened in April. It was also noted that the Centre would bring together physicists, chemists and biologists to develop fundamentally new approaches to probing biological structures and processes.

(d) *Australian Synchrotron*

The Board noted that the University, in conjunction with South Australian universities, would be contributing to the Australian Synchrotron, giving the University a half share in one tenancy, or 1.5% of the available beam time.

(e) *Institutional Repository of Research Outputs*

The Board noted that the University Librarian and Director of Library Corporate and Financial Services had briefed the Research and Graduate Studies Committee on developing an institutional repository of research outputs, including the reasons for the development of a repository. It was noted that the repository would be important in fulfilling the evidence requirements for the Research Quality Framework

(f) *Membership of RGSC Sub-Committees and Working Parties*

Publications Committee

The Board noted that Mr B Tadich (alternate: Dr J O'Shannessy) had been appointed to the Publications Committee to represent the Faculty of Education (*vice* Dr P Payne), until 31 December 2006.

**408.3.3 Report of Academic Committee: 23 May 2006**

The Board received report AB06/94.

(a) *Special and supplementary examinations/assessment and conceded passes*

In November 2005, Academic Board resolved that the amended "*Special and supplementary examinations/assessment and conceded passes*" policy be referred back to the Faculties for their comment, after Board members raised concerns about changes made to the supplementary assessment section.

The Board noted that Academic Committee had considered Faculty responses and agreed that the existing University policy on Supplementary Assessment should be retained until Academic Committee procure and analyse the data available regarding supplementary examinations/assessment. It was also noted that the Board had not queried the sections of the paper regarding special examinations and conceded passes.

Professor Robinson had the following queries:

- (i) Would students who were eligible for a conceded pass be able to elect to undertake supplementary assessment?
- (ii) If, as a result of supplementary assessment, a student met the conditions of a conceded pass would one be awarded?
- (iii) What accommodation is made for part-time students with regard to academic periods?

Dr Stacey, who Chaired the Working Party, responded as follows:

- (i) Yes, the current policy states that "a student who has obtained a conceded pass in a subject shall be offered supplementary assessment in that subject". It is not intended that this should change.
- (ii) No. However, if a student has initially been granted a conceded pass and elects to take supplementary assessment the conceded pass would not be taken from him/her. The current policy states that "a conceded pass shall not be awarded if a mark of 48 or 49 is obtained after supplementary assessment".
- (iii) "Academic periods" are defined by the Faculty.

The Board **resolved** to retain the current University policy regarding supplementary examinations/assessment

P Stacey/  
Dir. AS

The Board also **resolved** to endorse the recommendations as set out in Attachment A, to report AB06/94, as listed below:

Special Examinations

The Director, Academic Services, to consult with Faculties and subsequently provide recommendations on timetabling of special examinations and possible changes to the application form for special consideration.

Conceded Passes

The current University rules on conceded passes should be replaced by the following. Each Faculty should determine the academic period to be used in the application of these rules.

1. Subject to 2 to 9 below, a conceded pass will be awarded in an undergraduate unit when both of the following conditions are satisfied.
  - a. The mark obtained in the unit is at least 47% (but less than 50%).
  - b. The student's weighted average mark for the academic period is at least 50%.
2. No student will be awarded conceded passes totalling more than 20 credit points in any academic period.
3. No student will be awarded conceded passes for more than one-sixth of their total degree (e.g. no more than 60 credit points in a normal 360 credit point degree).
4. A conceded pass will not be granted for a final year core unit in the student's course of study. A core unit is one specified as being required for a degree.
5. A conceded pass will not be granted for a unit that is required for professional accreditation.
6. A conceded pass will not be granted for a unit where it is necessary for a student to demonstrate professional or clinical competence.
7. A conceded pass will not be awarded where a student fails a hurdle requirement.
8. All conceded passes are normally terminal: i.e. they are not able to satisfy prerequisite requirements.
9. A student who has obtained a conceded pass in a unit may be permitted to re-enrol in the unit.

(b) *Proposal to introduce a Master of TESOL*

The Board **resolved** to approve a proposal from the Faculty of Education to introduce a Master of TESOL (MTESOL), as detailed in Attachment B to report AB06/94.

(c) *Multi Campus Teaching Working Party*

The Board noted that Academic Committee had established a Multi Campus Teaching Working Party, consisting of the following members:

- Dr Kay Souter (Chair)
- Dr Tony Love, Psychological Science
- Ms Lyn Lang, Nursing & Midwifery
- Professor Rhett Walker, Law and Management, Bendigo (alt. John Griffiths, Bendigo)
- Professor Evan Willis, Humanities and Social Sciences, Albury-Wodonga
- Ms Debbie Neal, Education, Muldura
- Representative of the ADU

The Working Party would:

- Summarise common approaches to multi campus teaching at La Trobe and identify strengths and weaknesses of these;
- Identify other approaches to multi/cross campus teaching that could be considered at La Trobe; and
- Recommend components of policy framework to guide multi campus teaching addressing the key issues that have been identified in points 1 and 2.

The Pro Vice-Chancellor (Academic) suggested that, prior to the Working Party beginning their review and in the spirit of as wide as possible consultation, Academic Board may wish to provide advice of any issues that may be relevant to the review of multi campus teaching.

Dr Martens noted that there were many contradictory practices in this area and expressed the need for a review of multi-campus teaching.

P Stacey/  
Dir. AS

EO(AB)

PVC  
(Academic)/  
K Souter

Professor Handley suggested that the Working Party should review physical resources at the various campuses which often do not allow for teaching across campuses.

(d) *Development of Enabling Courses*

The Board noted that Academic Committee had considered a paper outlining the process that should be used when developing enabling courses and had agreed to endorse the process outlined in the paper "Development of Enabling Courses", as detailed in Attachment C to report AB06/94.

(e) *Quality Assurance of Unit Working Party*

The Board noted that Academic Committee had established a Quality Assurance of Unit Working Party, with the following membership:

- Dr Erika Martens (Chair)
- Dr Jennifer Sheed, Education
- Dr Kerry Fitzmaurice, Health Sciences
- Dr Kay Souter, Humanities and Social Sciences
- Professor Martin Chanock, Law and Management
- Dr Peter Stacey, Science, Technology and Engineering
- Ms Victoria Rayner, student representative

The Working Party would be responsible for the development of a standard QAU instrument to be used by all Faculties.

Academic Committee had agreed that any additional expertise required would be co-opted.

(f) *Faculty-specific common first year*

The Board noted that Academic Committee had received a discussion paper canvassing issues associated with the introduction of faculty-specific common first year academic programs and possible models.

The overarching rationale for introducing faculty-specific common first years across the University was to develop a more efficient curriculum model that would deliver improved student learning. This curriculum and renewal project was also intended to provide a mechanism for reducing staff workloads, providing more opportunity for research engagement.

The Board noted that Academic Committee members had raised a number of issues relating to accreditation, possible class size, effective curriculum design and teaching of first year, socialisation, specialisation and the need for wider consultation.

#### 408.4 OTHER MATTERS

##### 408.4.1 2005 Annual Report of the Institute for Advanced Study

The Board received and noted report AB06/95, the 2005 Annual Report of the Institute for Advanced Study.

##### 408.4.2 A More Active Academic Board

The Board received and noted circulated report AB06/96, *A More Active Academic Board*.

The Board noted that, after extensive consultation by the Chair, the following recommendations had been endorsed by the Vice-Chancellor:

1. A new permanent agenda item "Discussion" should be introduced. A Working Group, convened by the Chair of the Academic Board, and consisting of representatives from all five Faculties, following consultation, will determine which issues are to be discussed. The Working Group will establish small Expert Teams to prepare and participate in the relevant discussion/debate. Board members who are not members of an Expert Team would also participate. The discussions should not last more than 30 minutes.

Dir. AS/  
Fac. Regs.

2. A second new permanent agenda item "Questions with Notice" be introduced. Such questions must initially be provided in writing to the Chair of Academic Board, who will pass them on to the member concerned.
3. Chairs of the Policy Committees may submit brief reports identifying the implications of recommendations made by their Committees.
4. The Senior Management Group, having subsumed the University Development Committee, report to Academic Board on development related matters.
5. (i) The cost/benefit of videoconferencing meetings to regional campuses be determined  
(ii) Commitments of regional members at the Bundoora campus be linked with Academic Board dates.  
(iii) Roving microphones be available in the Chamber.

Professor Leder suggested that certain issues may require academic representation from areas of the University other than Faculties on the Working Group. The Chair advised that any suggestions would be welcomed.

Mr Reed reiterated his concern that Academic Board were not involved in financial decisions made by the University. The Chair advised that the Board has very specific responsibilities and that there were decisions required to be made by other areas of the University that Academic Board had no involvement in.

Professor Farrell asked if it would be possible for Academic Board to consider meeting in a regional location once a year. The Chair advised that the number of attendees (79 members, 11 in attendance and additional members of the professoriate who are not members) would make the logistics of doing this difficult.

## **PART C: MATTERS FOR INFORMATION**

### **408.5 ITEMS FOR INFORMATION**

#### **408.5.1 Minutes of the Faculty Boards**

The Board received and noted the following minutes of the Faculty Boards:

- |  |                  |
|--|------------------|
| (a) Health Sciences: 15 March 2006               | FHS/FB06/2M      |
| (b) Humanities and Social Sciences: 5 April 2006 | LHUSS/FB2006/51M |

#### **408.5.2 Minutes of the Library Committee: 21 April 2006**

The Board received and noted the minutes of the Library Committee, as detailed in report LIB06/12(M).

The meeting closed at 10.40am.

**NEXT MEETING:**     **9.30am**  
                          **Wednesday 9 August 2006**  
                          **Council Chamber**  
                          **John Scott Meeting House**  
                          **Bundoora Campus**

**CONFIRMED BY CHAIR** \_\_\_\_\_ **DATE** \_\_\_\_\_