

LA TROBE UNIVERSITY

ACADEMIC BOARD

Minutes of the four hundred and forty-eighth meeting of the Academic Board held in the Council Chamber, John Scott Meeting House, La Trobe University, Melbourne Campus on Wednesday 11 May 2011 at 9.30am.

Present: Professor Malcolm Rimmer (Chair), Professor Simon Crowe (Deputy Chair), Professor Carol Adams, Professor Tom Angelo, Professor Paula Baron, Ms Lee Ann Bassler, Mr George Bath, Professor Judith Brett, Professor Philip Broadbridge, Dr Andrew Brookes, Professor Tim Brown, Mr Bruce Carboon, Mr Rick Churchill, Professor Lin Crase, Dr Megan Davidson, Professor Ainslie Dewe, Professor Leigh Drake, Mr Neil Fetting, Professor Paul Fisher, Dr Kerry Fitzmaurice, Ms Margarita Frederico, Dr Elspeth Frew, Professor Noel Gough, Professor Nick Hoogenraad, Dr Peter Hughes, Dr Julie Jackson, Dr Tony Jarvis, Dr Elizabeth Johnson, Professor Paul Johnson (Vice-Chancellor), Dr Terri Joiner, Dr Stephen Kent, Professor Jae Kim, Professor Lorraine Ling, Dr Sue Martin, Dr Geoffrey Mayer, Professor Brian McGaw, Dr Howard Nicholas, Dr Suzanne O'Keefe, Professor Roger Parish, Professor John Rosenberg, Dr Kay Souter, Professor David Spencer, Professor Annette Street, Dr John Tebbutt, Dr Brian Usher, Dr Caroline Walta, Mr Alexander van de Water, Dr Julie White, Dr David Wilkinson, Professor Evan Willis and Ms Lily Jade Chung Kim Yuen.

Secretariat: Angela Cowburn, Senior Executive Officer , Governance Services

In Attendance: Professor Christine Bigby, Professor Nick Bisley, Professor Jianfu Chen, Professor Geoff Crouch, Mr David Ensor, Professor Don Harding, Professor Gavin Jack, Professor Timothy Marjoribanks, Professor Joanna Poyago-Theotoky, Dr Jack Reynolds, Professor Mike Ryan, Professor Jack Singh, Professor Gillian Sullivan Mort

PART A – PROCEDURAL MATTERS

| | ACTION |
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| <p>(i) Attendance/Apologies</p> <p>The Chair welcomed Adrienne E Clarke, Chancellor, and Dr Jack Reynolds, representing the NTEU, to the meeting.</p> <p>Apologies were received from Professor Andrew Brennan, Ms Kirsty Duncan, Dr Jacinta Douglas, Dr Kerry Ferguson, Professor Tanya Fitzgerald, Dr Mary Kennedy-Jones, Ms Liz Lavender, Dr Katherine Legge, Dr Bill McGuinness, Mr Venkat Narayanan, Ms Kathleen Pleasants, Professor Belinda Probert, Dr John Russell, Mr Andrew Skewes, Professor Hal Swerissen and Dr Pamela Wallace.</p> | |
| <p>(ii) Approval of Agenda</p> <p>The Board resolved to approve the Agenda, as circulated.</p> | |

(iii) Outstanding Matters

The Board received and noted report AB11/38.

(iv) Matters Approved on Behalf of Academic Board

The Board received report AB11/39 and noted the following matters which had been approved on its behalf since the last meeting:

- (a) Award of degrees and diplomas, conferring of awards *in absentia* and higher degrees, as detailed in Attachment A to AB11/39.
- (b) Establishment of prizes:
 - (i) Alumni and Advancement Office: The Richard Zann Memorial Bursary, as detailed in Attachment B to AB11/39.
 - (ii) Health Sciences: Continence and Womens' Health Physiotherapy Australia Prize [change of name], as detailed in Attachment C to AB11/39.
 - (iii) Health Sciences: Musculoskeletal Physiotherapy Prize [amendment], as detailed in Attachment D to AB11/39.
 - (iv) Health Sciences: National Neurology Group Prize [amendments], as detailed in Attachment E to AB11/39.
 - (v) Health Sciences: APA Paediatric Physiotherapy Group Prize [change of name], as detailed in Attachment F to AB11/39.
 - (vi) Health Sciences: Cardiorespiratory Physiotherapy Australia Prize [reinstatement of prize], as detailed in Attachment G to AB11/39.
 - (vii) Health Sciences: Physiotherapists Registration Board of Victoria Award [recision], as detailed in Attachment H to AB11/39.
 - (viii) Science, Technology and Engineering: Fleur Connell Memorial Prize, as detailed in Attachment I to AB11/39.
- (c) Academic Quality Committee: membership, as detailed in Attachment J to AB11/39.
- (d) Coursework program revisions:
Proposal from the Faculty of Health Sciences to revise the Master of Health Sciences and Master of Health Science – Bendigo, as detailed in Attachment K to AB11/39.

(v) Report of the Vice-Chancellor

The Board received and noted circulated paper AB11/40, the Report of the Vice-Chancellor, which can be located at the following link:
<https://intranet.latrobe.edu.au/academicboard/assets/downloads/vc-reports-2011/40-VC'sReportMay2011.pdf>. The Vice-Chancellor spoke to the report.

It was noted that Dr Miranda Rose had been awarded a Future Fellowship.

A brief update on the impact of the Federal Budget on higher education was provided.

The Board congratulated Professor Roger Parish, Head, School of Life Sciences, on being awarded the title of "Charles La Trobe Professor". It was noted that Professor Parish had a long, varied and distinguished career at La Trobe which included holding the positions of Chair of Academic Board and Acting Vice-Chancellor.

PART B – MATTERS FOR APPROVAL

448.1 Confirmation of Minutes

The minutes of the meeting held on 9 March 2011 [AB11/36(M)] were confirmed.

448.2 Matters Arising

448.2.1 Internationalisation Plan: response to query regarding student access to housing (*min ref. 447.5.2 – 09.03.11*)

The Board received and noted report AB11/41, the response to a query regarding student access to housing raised at the previous meeting.

It was noted that student safety was paramount and it was critical that the University ensured that international students were made aware of their rights.

It was suggested that the University organise seminars to provide advice to students (including representation from the Tenants Union and Victoria Police) throughout the year, rather than just during orientation and make an official statement condemning the criminal actions of employers/landlords in the area.

The Chair thanked everyone for their input and requested that management follow-up on the issues raised.

448.3 Items for Approval not requiring discussion

448.3.1 Award of Degrees and Diplomas

The Board received report AB11/42 and **resolved** to endorse the award of degrees and diplomas, conferring of awards *in absentia* and higher degrees, as detailed therein.

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448.3.2 Establishment of Prizes

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

- (a) Education: John Martin Memorial Award [amendment], as detailed in report AB11/43.
- (b) Education: The Australian Literacy Educator's Association Award [amendment], as detailed in report AB11/44.
- (c) Education: The Bruce Palmer Award [amendment], as detailed in report AB11/45.
- (d) Education: Design and Technology Teachers Association Award [amendment], as detailed in report AB11/46.
- (e) Education: The George Colson Memorial Award [amendment], as detailed in report AB11/47.
- (f) Education: The Mike Molnar Memorial Award [amendment], as detailed in report AB11/48.
- (g) Health Sciences: Aidacare – Student of the Year Award [name change], as detailed in report AB11/49.
- (h) Law and Management: School of Economics and Finance Honours Scholarship in Economics, as detailed in report AB11/50.

Ms D Lynn
Ms K Allitt
Dirs.O&P

- (i) Law and Management: School of Economics and Finance Honours Scholarship in Finance, as detailed in report AB11/51.
- (j) Law and Management: School of Management Honours Scholarship, as detailed in report AB11/52.
- (k) Law and Management: School of Accounting Honours Scholarship in Accounting, as detailed in report AB11/53.
- (l) Law and Management: The Institute of Chartered Accountants in Australia Introductory Financial Accounting Prize, as detailed in report AB11/54.
- (m) Law and Management: The Institute of Chartered Accountants in Australia Accounting and Accountability in the Public Sector Prize, as detailed in report AB11/55.
- (n) Law and Management: The Institute of Chartered Accountants in Australia Advanced Financial Accounting Prize, as detailed in report AB11/56.
- (o) Law and Management: The Institute of Chartered Accountants in Australia Excellence Prize, as detailed in report AB11/57.
- (p) Law and Management: Crescent Investments Australasia (CIA) Best Student in Islamic Capital Markets subject FIN5CAP, as detailed in report AB11/58.
- (q) Law and Management: Thomson Reuters Prize in Financial Planning, as detailed in AB11/59.
- (r) Law and Management: NAB Sheikh Fehmi El-Imam Scholarship, as detailed in report AB11/60.
- (s) Law and Management: The MCCA Best Student Prize in Islamic Banking and Finance subject FIN5BNK, as detailed in report AB11/61.
- (t) Science, Technology & Engineering: La Trobe University Warrungal Conservation Society Prize, as detailed in report AB11/62.

448.3.3 Committee Membership

- (a) Library Committee

The Board **resolved** to approve the updated membership of the Library Committee, as detailed in AB11/63.

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448.4 Standing Committees of Academic Board

448.4.1 Report of Education Committee: 23 March 2011

The Board received report AB11/64 and noted that the Education Committee had considered the following items at their most recent meeting:

- (a) Revisions to Articulation Procedures.
- (b) Report and minutes of the Programs Committee: 10 March 2011.
- (c) Learning Management System Update.

The Board **resolved** to endorse:

- (a) the revisions to Articulation Procedures, as detailed in Attachment A to AB11/64;
- (b) Course Revisions: A change of award title of the following Faculty of Education courses (as detailed in Attachment B to AB11/64):
 - Bachelor of Arts (Nature Tourism) to Bachelor of Nature Tourism.
 - Bachelor of Arts (Natural Resources Education) to Bachelor of Natural Resources Education.

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- Bachelor of Arts (Outdoor Education) to Bachelor of Outdoor Education.
 - Bachelor of Arts (Outdoor Environmental Education) to Bachelor of Outdoor Environmental Education.
 - Bachelor of Arts (Outdoor Recreation Education) to Bachelor of Outdoor Recreation Education.
- (c) New courses – double degree programs:
- Bachelor of Health Sciences and Master of Exercise Physiology, as detailed in Attachment C to AB11/64; and
 - Bachelor of Health Sciences and Master of Clinical Audiology, as detailed in Attachment D to AB11/64, conditional upon:
 - the faculty taking all reasonable steps to facilitate the movement of students from these programs to the restructured programs that will be AQF-compliant;
 - no students experiencing any disadvantage from enrolling in the non-compliant programs, particularly financially; and
 - the Faculty reviewing and revising the course structure by the end of 2011.

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448.4.2 Report of Education Committee: April 2011

The Board received report AB11/65 and noted that the Education Committee had considered the following items at their most recent (virtual) meeting:

- (a) New AQF Transition Policy, Procedures and Plan.
- (b) Bachelor Honours Policy and Procedures.
- (c) English Language Entry for Faculty of Education Courses.
- (d) Major Revision to the Bachelor of Science (Wildlife and Conservation Biology).
- (e) New Course: Bachelor of Business Information Systems.
- (f) Course Closures:
 - Bachelor of Information Systems; and
 - Bachelor of Information Systems and Bachelor of Business.
- (g) Change of IELTS for Nursing Courses.
- (h) Disestablishment of the Committee for Admissions Retention and Success for Students

The Pro Vice-Chancellor (Educational Partnerships and Quality) gave a brief outline of the AQF Transition Policy and the importance of complying with TEQSA requirements.

The Board **resolved** to endorse:

- (a) Course Revisions, as detailed in Attachment A to AB11/65:
 - Bachelor of Science (Wildlife and Conservation Biology)
 - Change of IELTS for the following Nursing courses:
 - HBN Bachelor of Nursing – BN(Prereg)(Bun);
 - HBNPRW Bachelor of Nursing – BN(Prereg)(AW);
 - RBN Bachelor of Nursing – BN(Prereg)(BE);
 - HBNM Bachelor of Nursing – BN(Prereg)(MI);
 - HBNUP Bachelor of Nursing – BN(Prereg)(SH);
 - HSBNCW Bachelor of Nursing (Division 2 Conversion)– BN(Conv)(AW);
 - BEBND2 Bachelor of Nursing (Division 2 Conversion);
 - HBNCM Bachelor of Nursing (Division 2 Conversion)–

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| - HSBNC | BN(Conv)(Mildura); Bachelor of Nursing (Division 2 Conversion)– BN(Conv)(Bundoora); | |
| - HBNCP | Bachelor of Nursing (Division 2 Conversion) – BN(Conv)(SH); | |
| - HBNPRG | Bachelor of Nursing (Graduate Entry)– BN(PreRegGrad)(Bun); | |
| - HZNMD | Bachelor of Nursing/Bachelor of Midwifery – BN/BMid(Bundoora); | |
| - HSBNW | Bachelor of Nursing – BN(Post)(Wodonga); | |
| - RBNP | Bachelor of Nursing (Post Registration) – BN(Post- Reg)(Bendigo); | |
| - HBNP | Bachelor of Nursing (Post Registration) – BN(Post- Reg); | |
| - HBNPGW | Bachelor of Nursing – BN(PreRegGrad)(Wod); | |
| - BEBN2 | Bachelor of Nursing – BN(GradEntry)BE; | |
| - HPMS | Postgraduate Diploma of Midwifery Science | |
| - RPMS | Postgraduate Diploma of Midwifery Science | |
| (b) New course: | | |
| • | Bachelor of Business Information Systems, as detailed in Attachment B to AB11/65. | EO(EC)/ DirAS/ DirO&P |
| (c) Course closures, as detailed in Attachment C to AB11/65: | | |
| • | Bachelor of Information Systems (from 01.01.12); and | |
| • | Bachelor of Information Systems and Bachelor of Business (from 01.01.12) | |
| (d) AQF Transition Policy, for referral to Council, Procedures and Plan, as detailed in Attachment D to AB11/65. | | EO(FRC)/ EO |
| (e) A proposal from the Faculty of Education (as detailed in Attachment E) that from 11 May 2011, the only approved test scores for assessing English language proficiency of prospective students for pre-service teaching courses in the Faculty of Education would be IELTS and TOEFL; and that the Faculty of Education be invited to review this position at such time that La Trobe Melbourne undertakes benchmarking of two cohorts of its graduates of the appropriate level of ELICOS course to demonstrate that they meet the required test score standards. | | EO(EC) |
| (f) That the Committee for Admissions, Retention and Success for Students (CARSS) be disestablished and the Terms of Reference for the Standing Committees of Academic Board (Education Committee and Programs Committee), be revised, as outlined in Attachment F, to continue work previously undertaken by CARSS. It was noted that an invitation would be provided to the Planning and Resources Committee, via endorsement by the relevant Committees, to amend the Terms of Reference of the Access and Achievement Committee and the Course Load Planning Sub- Committee. | | EO(EC)/ EO |
| (g) The Bachelor Honours Policy, for referral to Council, and Procedures, as detailed Attachment G to AB11/65. | | EO(FRC)/ EO |

448.4.3 Report of Research and Graduate Studies Committee: May 2011

The Board received and noted paper AB11/66, the report of the Research and Graduate Studies Committee that provided information regarding matters considered at meetings held on 26 November 2010, 22 February 2011, 25 March 2011 and 29 April 2011.

The Board noted that the following items had been considered by the Committee:

- (a) New Use of External Data Policy.
- (b) New Research Data Retention and Disposal Policy.
- (c) Human Ethics Committee Annual Report.
- (d) Animal Ethics Committee Annual Report.
- (e) Sustainable Research Excellence: DIISR's transparent costing trial and the approved costing methodology.
- (f) Excellence in Research Australia: outcomes of assessments.
- (g) Conduct of the ARC's major grants round 2011.
- (h) Changes to the ARC Discovery Funding Rules 2011.
- (i) NHMRC Equipment Grants 2010.
- (j) HERDC Specifications 2011.
- (k) Recognition of workload under the Workload Management System: HDR Research Progress Panels (RPP) and Panels for Expedited Ethical Review (PEER).
- (l) Development of Human Ethics On-Line System and on-line systems for HDR processes and Research Funding Applications and Approvals.
- (m) Proposed Framework for projects involving genetically modified organisms in the AgriBio Centre.
- (n) Review of the Centre for Technology Infusion.
- (o) Centre and Institute Constitutions: Institute for Social and Environmental Sustainability and Centre for Technology Infusion.
- (p) Reports of Sub-Committees and Working Parties:
 - Human Ethics Committee: 14 February 2011.
 - Animal Ethics Committee: 11 November & 9 December 2010, 10 February & 3 March 2011.
 - Higher Degrees Committee (Research): 13 October, 10 November & 3 December 2010, 2 February & 2 March 2011.
 - Genetic Manipulation Supervisory Committee: 16 February 2011.
 - Research Misconduct Procedures Working Party: 27 October 2010.
 - Research Data Retention and Disposal Working Group: 28 October 2010, 7 March & 6 April 2011.

Dr Jack Reynolds, as a representative of the NTEU, spoke to the proposal, outlining that there had been continuing email dialogue between the NTEU, the Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Research) and the University and advised that the NTEU hoped that there would be a proper Board of Review and appeals process at Faculty level. There was agreement to amend some of the wording in the proposal. [*Secretariat Note: the document has been revised and is attached.*]

The Board **resolved** to endorse:

- (a) the proposal for a research excellence framework for La Trobe, as detailed in Attachment A to AB11/66, **subject to** some minor amendments to wording as agreed between the Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Research) and the NTEU. It was noted that the proposal detailed the consultative steps to a new Research Plan (based on Vision 2015) which would be considered by the Board in October 2011.
- (b) the Research Data Retention and Disposal Policy, for referral to Council, as detailed in Attachment B to AB11/66.
- (c) the Use of External Data Policy, for referral to Council, as detailed in Attachment C to AB11/66.

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| (d) the Report of the Review of the Centre for Technology Infusion, as detailed in Attachment D to AB11/66, and the continuation of the Centre for a further five years. | DirRS |
| (e) an amendment to the Constitution of the Centre for Technology Infusion to provide for additional representation by government and international research institutes on the Centre's Advisory Committee, as detailed in Attachment E to AB11/66. | DirRS |
| (f) amendments to the Constitution for the Institute for Social and Environmental Sustainability to clarify the relationship between the Institute and the Dean of the Faculty of Law and Management, as detailed in Attachment F to AB11/66. | DirRS |

PART C – MATTERS FOR INFORMATION

448.5 Items for Information

448.5.1 Sustainability Report 2010

The Board received and noted AB11/67, *Responsible Futures – Sustainability Report 2010*. The Pro Vice-Chancellor (Sustainability) gave a brief introduction to the report.

448.5.2 Adjunct Appointments

The Board received report AB11/68 and noted that the Vice-Chancellor had recently made the following adjunct appointments:

- (a) Adjunct Professor: Professor Edith Bavin, School of Psychological Science (re-appointment – 3 years).
- (b) Adjunct Associate Professor: Professor Torbjorn Falkmer, Curtin Health Innovation Research Institute (CHIRI), Faculty of Health Sciences (appointment – 3 years).
- (c) Adjunct Associate Professor: Dr Daryl Nielsen, MDFRC (appointment to 30.06.2012).
- (d) Adjunct Associate Professor: Dr Darren Baldwin, MDFRC (appointment to 30.06.2012).
- (e) Adjunct Associate Professor: Dr Gavin Rees, MDFRC (appointment to 30.06.2012).
- (f) Adjunct Professor: Professor Andrew Podger, China Health, School of Public Health (appointment – 3 years).
- (g) Adjunct Professor: Dr Laurens Tan, Media and Cinema Program, Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences (appointment to 31.03.2013).
- (i) Adjunct Professor: Timothy Nohe, Media and Cinema Program, Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences (appointment to 31.03.2013).
- (j) Adjunct Professor: Professor Fred Coalter, School of Management (appointment – 3 years).
- (k) Adjunct Professor: Professor Margot Prior, School of Psychological Science (appointment – 3 years).
- (l) Adjunct Professor: Professor Anthony Love, School of Psychological Science (appointment – 3 years).

- (m) Adjunct Associate Professor: Dr Michael Murray, ACEBAC, Faculty of Health Sciences (re-appointment – 3 years).

448.5.3 Report of Academic Promotions Committee: May 2011

The Board received the Report of the Academic Promotions Committee: May 2011 and noted that the persons named therein had been promoted, as detailed in report AB11/69.

448.5.4 Senior Academic Appointments

The Board received report AB11/70 and noted that the following senior academic appointments had recently been made:

- Audrey Saftlas, Professor in Epidemiology
- Carol Tishelman, Professor in Nursing
- Stephen Duckett, Professor in Health Policy
- Jim Mansell, Professor in Disability Studies
- Jeff Racine, Professor in Economic Research
- Domenico Giannone, Professor in Economic Research
- Iain Fraser, Professor in Economic Research
- James Crawford, Professor in Law
- Benn Lawson, Professor in Management
- Frank Jackson, Distinguished Professor
- Richard Simpson, Professor in Biochemistry
- Jenny Graves, Distinguished Professor

448.5.5 Minutes of the Faculty Boards

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

- (a) Education: 15 July 2011 [FOE-FB10-006M]

PART D – DISCUSSION

448.6 Meet the Chancellor

The Chair welcomed the Chancellor, Adrienne E Clarke.

The Chancellor provided the Board with a brief verbal report which included the following information:

- The Role of Council and the powers as given in the La Trobe University Act.
- Membership of Council and members experience.
- The process of appointing a new Vice-Chancellor.
- The transitional arrangements:
 - Professor John Rosenberg, Senior Deputy Vice-Chancellor, to work closely with the Vice-Chancellor during this transitional period.
 - The Vice-Chancellor to provide Council with a plan outlining what he will achieve in the next 200 days and what he would have liked to achieve in the next 3 years.

The meeting closed at 11.00am.

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| 448.7 Next Meeting 9.30am Wednesday 8 June 2011 Council Chamber John Scott Meeting House Bundoora Campus | |
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Chair: _____

Date: _____

A research excellence framework for La Trobe

Context and Process

Research is fundamental to the purposes of La Trobe University. One of the four goals in *Vision 2015*, the University's strategic plan, is to create new and useful knowledge through increased research activity. This new knowledge will inform other academic practitioners, will be relevant to professional users in the private, public and not-for-profit sectors, and will promote and inform discourse and dialogue locally, nationally and internationally.

La Trobe receives more than \$55 million per annum in direct funding of research and research training, and directs more than \$30 million of core resources to support further research activity without counting academic staff time. The majority of this quantum of research funding is derived from public sources, and the Australian government is now seeking explicit reassurance from universities that this taxpayer resource is being effectively managed and is producing worthwhile outcomes.

The 2010 ERA evaluation of research quality was explicitly designed to identify those fields of research in which each university's collective endeavour was producing research at or above world standard. The second round of ERA in 2012 will further refine the research evaluation metrics. A review of the funding and operation of the Research Training Scheme which is expected to be undertaken in 2011 will direct similar attention to the quality and efficacy of PhD training programs. The Minister for Industry, Innovation, Science and Research, Senator the Hon. Kim Carr, has been quite explicit about the government's intentions. When speaking at La Trobe on 28 February 2011, he stated that the government will not use taxpayers' money to support research activity that is below world standard.

La Trobe is committed in its *Research Plan* to evaluate the quality of research through ERA but also through broader measures for research whose usefulness goes beyond driving new knowledge. ERA arguably does not examine the broader societal consequences of research, aiming its evaluation at quality as measured by peer-reviewed publications and national competitive grants. University Analysis of Research Quality (UARQ) will be trialled in 2011. Once the University's confidence in its evaluations has been established, the University will treat any requested evaluations under UARQ with the same seriousness as ERA. UARQ will objectively measure the need for, conduct of and consequences of research for society. Whilst funding and traditional publications can establish quality in these terms, evidence can also be gathered by surveys of users and customers of research as well as through specially commissioned expert review of the quality of conduct of research. UARQ will report using the same descriptors as ERA. Research and Graduate Studies Committee (RGSC) will examine the outcomes of the trial when ready later in 2011 and determine whether the trial processes are adequate or need refinement and/or addition.

For the remainder of this document, non-specific references to *world standard*, *above world standard* or *well above world standard* will refer to an ERA or a UARQ evaluation or both.

We can reasonably expect that two policy initiatives will be developed to give effect to this intention. First, research disbursements from government are likely to be targeted on institutions and organisational units that can unequivocally demonstrate, by means of ERA or otherwise, that

they perform at or above the relevant world standard. Secondly, institutions are likely to be required to demonstrate that they are targeting their research effort and internal resources to areas and activities that are at world standard. La Trobe needs to plan and take action now to prepare for this new research-funding environment.

In implementing the La Trobe's vision, La Trobe will strive for research to be at or above world standard. It will focus University investment in research to lift defined areas to this standard as well as to improve defined areas to above world standard or well above world standard.

Faculties have already produced draft proposals at the February meeting of Research Income and Expenditure on this. Further information will be requested through the proposals here, with a brief written report on progress from Associate Deans Research at May RGSC, highlighting any difficulties in implementation of the proposals and progress made to date.

The University is committed to updating the Research Plan in the light of *Vision 2015* and the new information on research quality. The new Research Plan will be developed through Faculty Deans, following implementation of the relevant Proposals below. It will be discussed at RGSC in draft form in July. Full consultation will follow with individual Schools, Centres and Institutes in August and September leading to:

Proposal 1

A Revised Research Plan be discussed at RGSC in September with a view to recommending a development of it to Academic Board in October following the consultation outlined above.

Research Performance at La Trobe

Indicators of research activity at La Trobe show an improved performance over the past three years, after an extended period of relative decline. Measures of research quality (competitive grants, fellowships and prizes, as well as ERA) show that some academic areas are demonstrating national and international research leadership, while others are no better than mediocre. In ERA, 12 of the 21 broadfields in which the University was assessed were rated at or above world standard, as were 29 of the 49 specific disciplines. The ERA outcomes are consistent with other indicators of research excellence which have consistently shown that the University has concentrations of research quality in parts of the Faculty of Science, Technology and Engineering (STE), and in parts of the Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences (HUSS), with smaller areas of excellence distributed across the other faculties.

These concentrations of research excellence are largely the result of the sustained effort and ability of staff in the respective areas, rather than the outcome of differential funding by the University. For a long period the University lacked a coherent research strategy, and it is only in the past three years that there has been a conscious investment in the staff and infrastructure needed to sustain and develop areas of research excellence. It might also be noted, in passing, that there is no apparent

trade-off, at a faculty level, between research excellence and student satisfaction: in the 2009 CEQ and AUSSE surveys, the faculties with the highest overall satisfaction scores were HUSS and STE¹.

We need to recognise and confront the reality that the quality and intensity of publicly funded research in La Trobe ranges from the outstandingly good to the unacceptably poor. We will need to continue to invest in and support areas of success and strength, identify areas we need to develop, and determine where we should diminish or terminate our research efforts because the current and likely future returns to expenditure are inadequate². This will mean making some tough choices. If we shirk our responsibility to face up to these choices, we will undermine the long-run research standing and capability of the university, and we will all be the poorer for that.

The remainder of this paper establishes proposals for developing a research excellence framework for La Trobe. The paper will deal, in turn with research training, the organisation of staff research effort, and research resources.

Staff Research

It is clear from the University's ERA submission that research activity among academic staff is patchy. Of the 987 staff in teaching and research or research-only positions at level B and above who were included in the ERA headcount, 21% had no reported publications in the assessment period (2003-8), and a further 35% made a substantial contribution (at least five articles or one book) for this period. Of these 987, only 209 (21%) made a substantial contribution to one or more of the 29 specific disciplines in which La Trobe's output was judged to be at or above world standard.

We need to provide better support to staff who are research active at an international level, both to be fair to them in relation to workload relative to other staff but also to maintain and improve the research performance of the university. This requires some organisational support, some focusing of financial resources, and some reallocation of staff time. Better support for researchers, and a stronger internal research culture, will benefit everyone, allowing a complementary focus on teaching excellence. The national and international reputation of the University will be enhanced, more external research income will be earned, more and better-quality students will be attracted to study at La Trobe, and more staff will be able to be engaged in PhD supervision as principal or supplementary supervisors whilst assuring the quality of supervision and research leadership in a transparent way.

Proposal 2

Deans, in association with Associate Deans (Research) and Faculty Research Committees, be asked to propose at June RGSC processes to define areas of research focus examining organisational

¹This is not a claim of a causal or other link between research excellence and student satisfaction although there are definitely clear examples at La Trobe and elsewhere of areas that excel in both teaching and research. Leaders teaching and research may be different in such areas but they typically exhibit high commitment to excellence in both, valuing the fact that individuals can contribute to this excellence in different ways.

²Areas that do not have clear evidence of world standard research are of two distinct kinds. Where an area has strong demand for the curriculum it provides, investment can be made from the resultant income in developing staff to research at world standard. Where an area does not have strong demand for its teaching, consideration of its future will be more complex. There will also need to be variation between the career goals of different staff at different stages of their career with differing emphases on teaching and research. The Collective Agreement recognizes this in talking of "individual engagement profiles" for teaching-and-research staff.

support for staff, aiming that each teaching-and-research staff member in the Faculty have access to a world standard research environment whether inside or outside existing Centre, Institute, School or Faculty boundaries.

Proposal 3

The University examine, following the adoption of a new Research Plan, a system of research clusters, whose aims would be to enhance existing processes and structures to assist with development of research at or above world standard. Consideration be given to support of any such clusters in future years through the former Institute of Advanced Studies budget. Clusters would all have evidence of operations at world standard or plans, with measurable steps for achievement, for operations at this standard.

Proposal 4

Deans, in association with Associate Deans (Research) and Faculty Research Committees, be asked to propose at June RGSC processes to ensure teaching-and research and research-only staff are developed to research at or above world standard in their area³.

Proposal 5

Deans, in association with Associate Deans (Research) and Faculty Research Committees, be asked to propose at June RGSC appointment processes to ensure standard teaching-and-research appointees are capable of operating at or above world standard in research on a defined timescale. In cases where market or other reasons may require the appointment of teaching-and-research staff who are yet to clearly demonstrate capability of research at world standard, the position description should identify this possibility where a Dean can predict this in advance. A development plan for the research of such a staff member must be identified in the letter of appointment for cases where the appointment committee has identified that the applicant has not yet clearly demonstrated capability of research at world standard.⁴

Research Training

We can expect that the government will use ERA, and the priority in the review of the Research Workforce Strategy to review of the Research Training Scheme, to ensure that it is not supporting research training that does not connect with research that is at or above world standard in ERA. We

³It is important to note that the consideration of whether staff are performing in research at or above world standard will need to be discipline specific but not based directly on the overall ERA or UARQ assessment of the discipline. Criteria for the assessment of whether staff are operating at or above world standard in research will be developed through advice from Faculty Research Committees, Directors of cross-Faculty Centres and Institutes and the ERA panel of the University. The representatives of the NTEU appointed under Proposal 10 will be consulted as criteria are developed. It is also important to note that these criteria will need also to be supplemented with development plans for staff to research at world standard – such development plans might include association of researchers with broader research projects or programs. These criteria will be clear in outline in the Research Plan but application and refinement will occur as part of that plan.

⁴The criteria developed for Proposal 4 will assist the Appointment Committee. It is expected that Deans will identify, at the time of forming position descriptions, teaching-and-research positions in which it can be predicted that the successful applicant may not yet have evidence that they are capable of researching at or above world standard. In these cases, the position description will not only identify this but the appointment committee should be consulted on the development plan for the appointee.

therefore need to be certain that our internal structures and processes will be consistent with research training benchmarks and standards that are unequivocally at the highest professional level. In order to demonstrate that our research students receive training and advice that reflects international best practice, we must ensure that supervisors are fully engaged in research at this level. This will require substantial changes to current practices, as set out in the proposals below:

Proposal 6

No member of staff may normally concurrently be principal supervisor to more than ten equivalent full-time doctoral students.

Proposal 7

High Degrees by Research Committee be asked to report for June RGSC on active management of the register of supervisors, and associated backup procedures, to ensure that:

- (a) on a defined timescale each research progress panel has a member who has recently demonstrated research at or above world standard⁵
- (b) in the event that this member is not the principal supervisor, how it is ensured that the research project of the student is defined and conducted at an appropriate level consistent with research at or above world standard
- (c) where appropriate, external supervision to ensure contact with active research at or above world standard⁶.

Resources

In order to sustain and improve research excellence the University will need to ensure, and be able to demonstrate, that internal resources are being appropriately allocated to world-class research. This will require a reallocation both between individuals, and between organisational units within the University, including, where necessary for the conduct of research at or above world standard, the redirection of resources to research investment, research services and the Library.

The University will require extra resources to sustainably operate research at or above world standard. Such resources will come from additional research and operating revenue. The latter will be dependent on successful implementation of educational reform through *Design for Learning*, crucially also through the research reputation of the University. Delicate balance between teaching and research investment will be necessary.

Currently the largest University allocation of resources is for the time of staff. The salary bill, including oncosts, for the 987 staff (see top p. 3) is estimated at \$125 million. With the Collective Agreement starting point for allocation of staff time of 40% for research, this is notional expenditure of \$50 million on staff salaries per annum on research. The Workload Management System specifies an allocation of 20% or above for research. The University needs to ensure that time above the 20%

⁵The criteria developed for proposal 4 will inform decisions on research progress panels but consideration will also need to be given to supervisory capacity and experience.

⁶Appropriate external examination is the endpoint quality assurance for high quality PhD's – this proposal will minimise the chances of external feedback on any inadequacies

minimum is being allocated⁷, taking into account all other constraints on supervisors, Heads of School and Deans, to maximise research at or above world standard.

Proposal 10

- (a) Deans, in association with Associate Deans (Research) and Faculty Research Committees, be asked to propose at June RGSC processes to ensure workload allocations above 20% for research maximise University research at or above world standard⁸.
- (b) The new Research Plan contain proposals for University wide implementation of the processes.
- (c) The Workload Management System and, where appropriate, Performance Development Systems be used to implement these proposals.
- (d) The National Tertiary Education Union be invited to appoint two representatives to participate in consultation on this aspect of the Plan following June RGSC clarification of the proposals.

The Government has signalled that ERA will influence allocations of Sustainable Research Excellence funding.

Proposal 11

Twenty per cent of Sustainable Research Excellence funding will be allocated to Faculties on the basis of Australian Competitive grant income. Eighty per cent will be allocated to Faculties on the basis of weighted publications with weights in the ratios 1:2:5 for specific disciplines rated 3, 4 or 5. This funding is also contingent on approval of Faculty plans for expenditure to maintain and improve research performance in the areas of focus defined in Proposal 2 as well as covering indirect costs.⁹

Feedback on the current University budget process suggests that it does not address *ab-initio* incentives for increasing research income, higher degree by research students and research quality. These will be needed to meet University targets and make all the initiatives in the Research Plan financially responsible and sustainable at Faculty and School level, especially those in Proposal 10.

Proposal 12

The University will revise its internal budget model to remove any financial disincentives that currently apply to units that are particularly successful in obtaining external research funding, particularly national competitive grants. A change in budget principles will be necessary also

⁷The collective agreement specifies 40% research time as the starting point for discussions on workload allocations. The Faculty proposals will need to take account of this for teaching and research staff unless "varied in an "individual staff member's engagement profile" (as specified in the collective agreement). For staff who are clearly actively researching at world standard, faculty proposals should consider allocating 40% or more time for research, thus encouraging these staff to continue with their successful research. For other staff members, faculty proposals should consider allocating 40% when there is an approved development plan with measurable targets on a defined timescale.

⁸Consideration will need to be given to current evidence on staff collected using the criteria developed in proposal 4 but also to opportunities for development and association of staff with projects and programs will be an important factor. The proposals from Faculties will need some central alignment – opportunities will be taken to share best practice where this will lead to better outcomes. Supervisors and Heads of School will continue to play the key role in implementation – proposals will give guidance not determine outcomes, not least because the stage of career and aspirations will be crucial.

⁹Research Income and Expenditure Subcommittee in February agreed that this would apply from 2011.

to drive the new Research Plan, meeting research targets and improving ERA performance. The budget principles will address University distribution to and within Faculties.¹⁰

APPROVED AT ACADEMIC BOARD MAY 2011

¹⁰ Research Income and Expenditure Subcommittee minutes in February agreed to this in principle, with phasing and quantum to be determined when more data and modelling is available – initial consultation on this will occur through PRC and its budget reference group.