

LA TROBE UNIVERSITY

ACADEMIC BOARD

Minutes of the four hundred and nineteenth meeting of the Academic Board held in the Council Chamber, John Scott Meeting House, La Trobe University, Bundoora Campus on Wednesday 10 October 2007 at 9.30am

**PRESENT:** Professor R W Parish (Chair), Professor C Adams, Dr A Brookes, Dr L Crase, Professor S Crowe, Dr M Davidson, Professor D de Vaus, Dr J Douglas, Professor P Dyson, Ms M Frederico, Ms C Freebody, Professor E Gow, Mr J Griffiths, Professor F Hardman, Professor N Hoogenraad, Dr L Howie, Dr J Jackson, Professor P Johnson (Vice-Chancellor), Professor M Lake, Ms L Lang, Professor L Ling, Dr J McArdle, Mr A Pagliaro, Professor S Paxton, Mr A Plaisted, Professor V Prain, Mr P Richardson, Professor M Rimmer, Professor I Robinson, Dr D Rogers, Dr J Russell, Dr M Sandeman, Dr K Souter, Professor H Swerissen, Dr D Tillett, Professor H Westerbeek and Mr Y Yang.

**SECRETARIAT:** Ms A Cowburn

**IN ATTENDANCE:** Ms L Carey, Mr D Ensor (*vice* Mr B Goddard), Dr K Ferguson, Mr P Gould, Professor C Handley, Dr E Martens, Professor P Murphy, Professor J Singh, Dr P Stacey and Ms S Went.

**PART A: PROCEDURAL MATTERS**

**(i) Apologies and Attendance**

Apologies were received for Professor Geoffrey Durden, Professor Gerald Farrell, Mr Kent Farrell, Professor David Finlay, Mr Bob Goddard, Professor Noel Gough, Professor Raymond Harbridge, Dr Bruce James, Ms Liz Lavender, Professor Sandy Leggat, Ms Virginia Mansel Lees, Ms Frances Sheehan, Professor Gordon Walker and Professor Rhett 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:

- AB07/143 *Attachment H*, Appointment by invitation: Professor in Electronic Engineering
- AB07/144 Award of Degrees and Diplomas

The Chair reported that the Academic Board Working Group had suggested that all Reports of Standing Committees of the Board be starred on the agenda, with the Chairs of the Committees providing a brief verbal report to the Board.

EO(AB)

The Chair also advised that the discussion item at the final Academic Board meeting of the year would be "La Trobe University – the next five years".

EO(AB)

**(iii) Outstanding Matters**

The Board received and noted report AB07/142.

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

The Board received report AB07/143 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 AB07/143;
- (b) Membership of Committees:
  - (i) *Faculty-based Academic Promotions Committee for Promotion from Level A to Level B Academic or Level B to Level C Academic – Faculty of Education*, as detailed in Attachment B to AB07/143;

- (ii) *Selection Committee: Associate Professor/Senior Lecturer in Aged Care*, as detailed in Attachment C to AB07/143;
- (iii) *Selection Committee: Professor of Dentistry*, as detailed in Attachment D to AB07/143;
- (c) Establishment of Position & Composition of Selection Committee:
  - (i) a proposal from the Faculty of Health Sciences to re-establish the position of Director of Nursing Research, based at the Alfred Hospital, and the composition of the selection Committee for that position, as detailed in Attachment E to AB07/143;
  - (ii) a proposal from the Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences to establish a position at Level D in International Relations, in the School of Social Sciences, and the composition of the selection Committee for that position, as detailed in Attachment F to AB07/143;
- (d) Appointment of Visiting Professor:
  - (i) Faculty of Education: Professor Maurice Galton, University of Cambridge, as detailed in Attachment G to AB07/143.
- (e) Appointment by invitation:
  - (i) Professor in Electronic Engineering, as detailed in confidential tabled Attachment H to AB07/143.

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

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

- (a) *Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Academic) and Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Research)*  
The Board noted that an announcement had been made advising that Professor Tim Brown, currently Dean of the College of Science at the Australian National University, had accepted an offer to the position of Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Research).

An announcement had since been made that Professor Belinda Probert, former Dean of Arts at the University of Melbourne, would take up the post of Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Academic).

The newly appointed Deputy Vice-Chancellors would commence at La Trobe in January 2008.

- (b) *Biosecurity Research Centre*  
A formal heads-of-agreement with the Department of Primary Industry to establish a Biosecurity Research Centre at the Bundoora campus had been signed by the Vice-Chancellor. It was noted that this was a major development for the University and many years of work had been undertaken to broker this deal.
- (c) *Shepparton Campus*  
The Federal Government had announced that they would provide \$3.5 million funding from the Capital Development Pool to assist in the building of a facility at Shepparton. This was in addition to \$2 million that the State Government had previously pledged and a further \$1.5 million to be provided by the Federal Government.
- (d) *Climate Change Adaptation Research Facility*  
The University were still awaiting a response regarding a proposal for the Climate Change Adaptation Research Facility which had been short-listed.
- (e) *Research Grants*  
Congratulations to the staff who received approximately \$10 million in NHMRC and ARC grants this year. It was noted that the University had received more than \$11 million last year. Although the success rate had risen marginally, the reason the University had received less funding was the number of applications – 111 applications this year compared to 136 applications last year.

The Vice-Chancellor advised that there was a relatively small cohort of academic staff who submitted applications regularly and suggested that this was an issue that would need to be addressed by Deans and Heads of Schools. Research needed to be seen as a collective activity at La Trobe and a more supportive and co-operative structure to support individuals applying for research grants was required.

(f) *Learning and Teaching Performance Fund*

La Trobe had received a grant of \$500,000 in the Learning and Teaching Performance Fund. It was noted that the University's scores had declined in comparison to other universities. Detailed data would be provided to the Deans and there were areas which the University would need to focus its attention on.

The Board noted that there were various University working parties reviewing issues such as graduate attributes, e-portfolios and student engagement and that the Vice-Chancellor was hopeful of being able to provide students with better incentives to study at La Trobe by mid 2008, in time for recruiting for the 2009 academic year.

(g) *POP Poll Data*

It was noted that there had been a 2% decline in the number of first preferences across the State and a 9% decline for La Trobe. The following were the results for some of our competitors:

- University of Melbourne: down 4%;
- Monash University: increased 5%;
- Deakin University: increased 5%.

With the changes in funding rules, whereby DEST will provide full funding up to 105%, the University may struggle to achieve its student load next year.

Professor Hoogenraad stated that the ARC/NHMRC grants issue was complex, with staff members only able to apply for a certain number of grants and if successful this making them ineligible for any further funding.

The Vice-Chancellor suggested that this was why more academic staff should be applying for research grants.

Professor Lake recommended that all academic staff be required to apply for research grants, as part of their contract, if they wished to be regarded as research staff. Staff should not underestimate the value of applying for grants.

The Vice-Chancellor agreed that there should be some discussion regarding requiring staff to submit research applications, but noted that there would probably be some protest from staff if the University did attempt to require staff to do so.

Professor Lake also noted that the University had fallen into a void between the prestigious and older universities (University of Melbourne, Monash University) and the new innovative universities (Deakin University).

The Vice-Chancellor agreed that the image of the University was difficult to define. It was noted that La Trobe should not be disadvantaged because of its focus on 'academic' degrees. The Vice-Chancellor reported that employers highly regard the communication and interpersonal skills which were acquired when studying the arts, humanities and social sciences. The University needed to review how potential employers could be shown that our students were acquiring these highly regarded skills.

Dr Howie queried how staff could retain optimism amid the increasing challenges faced by the University.

The Vice-Chancellor advised that there was great scope within the University to go forward. The La Trobe community needed to accept that it would always be dealing with changing circumstances and much work was required to implement institutional wide strategies regarding our profile and student engagement/enrichment.

Professor Westerbeek suggested that it may be worthwhile reviewing Deakin University's marketing plan which appeared to have been quite successful in the last six or seven years.

The Vice-Chancellor advised that Deakin University had spent almost half of their marketing budget, which was relatively small in comparison to some other higher education institutions, on market research in an effort to explore what would appeal to school leavers.

Mr Russell suggested that issues such as sustainability, climate change and the lack of water were concerns for young people and that the University should be anticipating what would be happening in the coming years.

The Vice-Chancellor agreed that outside the University there would not be any perception that La Trobe was committed to sustainability and that what was currently done at La Trobe could be presented in a much improved way. The University should probably be more aggressive regarding its approach to sustainability. The University community needed to think carefully about how the University should position itself regarding the issues of climate change and sustainability.

Mr Russell recommended that these types of issues be embedded in the University Strategic Plan. The Chair suggested that there be further discussion regarding these issues in the discussion item for the next Academic Board meeting.

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

### **419.1 CONFIRMATION OF THE MINUTES**

The minutes of the meeting held on 12 September 2007 [AB07/140(M)] were confirmed.

### **419.2 ITEMS APPROVED WITHOUT DISCUSSION**

#### **419.2.1 Award of Degrees and Diplomas**

The Board received tabled report AB07/144 and **resolved** to recommend to Council the award of degrees and diplomas as detailed therein.

EO(AB)

#### **419.2.2 Establishment of prizes**

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

- (a) Faculty of Health Sciences: Benalla Hospital Award for Health, as detailed in report AB07/145;
- (b) Faculty of Health Sciences: Foot Solutions Podiatry Scholarship, as detailed in report AB07/146;
- (c) Faculty of Health Sciences: The Bendigo Health Care Group Foundation Charitable Trust Scholarship for Undergraduate Nursing Students, as detailed in report AB07/147;
- (d) Faculty of Health Sciences: The Bendigo Health Care Group Foundation Charitable Trust Scholarship for Mental Health Nursing, as detailed in report AB07/148;
- (e) Faculty of Health Sciences: Zonta Club: Heather Winderlich Award [*amendment*], as detailed in report AB07/149;
- (f) Faculty of Health Sciences: Royal College of Nursing Gerontic Nursing Prize [*cancellation*], as detailed in report AB07/150;
- (g) Faculty of Health Sciences: Bendigo Community Health Services Award [*amendment*], as detailed in report AB07/151;
- (h) Faculty of Health Sciences: The David Jolley Leadership Award, as detailed in report AB07/152;
- (i) Faculty of Science, Technology and Engineering: Chris Smith & Associates/La Trobe University Civil Engineering Scholarship Program, as detailed in report AB07/153; and
- (j) Faculty of Science, Technology and Engineering: Nanotechnology/Science Entrance Scholarship (Rio Tinto Technology and Innovation), as detailed in report AB07/154.

Fac. Reg.  
Ms L Smith  
Ms A Forden

### 419.3 STANDING COMMITTEES OF ACADEMIC BOARD

#### 419.3.1 Report of Academic Committee: 25 September 2007

The Board received report AB07/155. Professor Chris Handley, Acting Chair, Academic Committee, spoke to the report.

- (a) *Proposal for the Albury-Wodonga University Bridging Program to be approved as an enabling course*

The Board **resolved** to endorse a proposal from the Faculty of Education to introduce a University Bridging Program at the Albury-Wodonga campus as an enabling course, as detailed in Attachment A to report AB07/155.

Fac. Reg.

- (b) *Proposal to suspend the 1<sup>st</sup> year intake into the Master of Speech Pathology for 2008*

The Board **resolved** to endorse a proposal from the Faculty of Health Sciences to suspend the first year intake into the Master of Speech Pathology for 2008, as detailed in Attachment B to report AB07/155.

Fac. Reg.

- (c) *Proposal for the cessation of intakes into two double degrees:*

- *Bachelor of Occupational Therapy/Bachelor of Ergonomics, Safety and Health; and*
- *Bachelor of Physiotherapy/Bachelor of Ergonomics,*

The Board **resolved** to endorse a proposal from the Faculty of Health Sciences for the cessation of intakes into the following two double degrees:

- Bachelor of Occupational Therapy/Bachelor of Ergonomics, Safety and Health; and
- Bachelor of Physiotherapy/Bachelor of Ergonomics,

as detailed in Attachment C to report AB07/155.

Fac. Reg.

- (d) *Proposal to amend the Graduate Certificate and Graduate Diploma in Management at Albury-Wodonga*

The Board **resolved** to endorse a proposal from the Faculty of Law and Management to amend the Graduate Certificate and Graduate Diploma in Management at Albury-Wodonga, as detailed in Attachment D to report AB07/155.

Fac. Reg.

- (e) *Proposal to change a unit in the international business major in the Bachelor of Business offered in partnership with Ecole Superieure de Commerce, Montpellier, France*

The Board **resolved** to endorse a proposal from the Faculty of Law and Management to change a unit in the international business major in the Bachelor of Business offered in partnership with Ecole Superieure de Commerce, Montpellier, France, as detailed in Attachment E to report AB07/155.

Fac. Reg.

- (f) *Academic Committee meeting dates 2008*

The Board noted that Academic Committee had resolved to endorse the following meeting dates for 2008:

Tuesday 26 February	Tuesday 26 August
Tuesday 1 April	Tuesday 23 September
Tuesday 20 May	Tuesday 21 October
Tuesday 17 June	Tuesday 18 November
Tuesday 22 July	

#### 419.3.2 Report of Selection and Enrolment Committee: 20 September 2007

The Board received report AB07/156. Dr Peter Stacey, Chair, Selection and Enrolment Committee spoke to the report.

(a) *Discussion paper on Tertiary Selection and Middle Band*

The Board received and noted a discussion paper circulated by VTAC on Tertiary Selection and Middle Band, as detailed in Attachment 1 to report AB07/156.

The Board **resolved** to endorse the response to the VTAC discussion paper on Tertiary Selection and Middle Band.

Sec.,SEC

(b) *English, English Language, Literature and ESL prerequisites*

The Board received and noted a Report of the VTAC Working Party on English and ESL, as detailed in Attachment 2 to report AB07/156, and response sent to VTAC by the Acting Vice-Chancellor, as detailed in Attachment 3 to AB07/156.

The Board **resolved** to endorse the response sent to VTAC by the Acting Vice-Chancellor.

Sec.,SEC

#### 419.4 OTHER MATTERS

##### 419.4.1 2006 Annual Reports of the Faculties

(a) *Science, Technology and Engineering*

The Board received and noted the 2006 Annual Report of the Faculty of Science, Technology and Engineering, as detailed in report AB07/157.

#### PART C: MATTERS FOR INFORMATION

##### 419.5 ITEMS FOR INFORMATION

##### 419.5.1 Minutes of the Faculty Boards

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

- |   |                  |
|---|------------------|
| (a) Humanities and Social Sciences: 6 June 2007 | LHUSS/FB2007/74M |
| (b) Law and Management: 7 August 2007           | FLM/FB07/04M     |

#### PART D: QUESTIONS WITH NOTICE

There were no "Questions with Notice" provided.

#### PART E: DISCUSSION

##### 419.6 UNIVERSITY STRATEGIC PLAN

Professor Paul Johnson, Vice-Chancellor, gave a presentation on the "*University Strategic Plan*", as follows – cross references to the Green Paper (GP) proposals given in parenthesis.

##### La Trobe University Strategic Plan

- Proposals in Green Paper broadly supported by University community
- A digest of principal comments will be prepared and put on website Strategic Planning Workshop (7/9/07)
- Participants: Deans, Registrars, Heads of Division
- Lessons:
  - Easy to write a bad strategic plan
  - Most strategic plans contain 'weasel words'
  - Many university strategic plans are unrealistic
  - Many targets are inappropriate

Desirable features of LTU Strategic Plan

- Short
- Simple language
- Measurable and meaningful goals/targets
- Be relevant at all levels of LTU
- Translatable into an operational plan

General goals of LTU

- We engage with and enrich our communities
  - Produce graduates who are well educated and highly regarded
  - Transfer knowledge and expertise
  - Produce high-quality high-impact research
  - Promote critical enquiry
  - Have strong and strategic relationships
  - Are socially and environmentally responsible

Outline structure of LTU Strategic Plan

- Statement of purpose
- VC preamble
- Statement of Institutional Values (GP #1)
- Strategic Priorities
- Enabling Priorities
- Risk Analysis

Statement of Institutional Values

- Social responsibility
- Environmental responsibility
- Community engagement
- Critical/radical enquiry
- Inclusiveness
- Freedom of expression
- Promotion of high ethical standards
- *Create small working group to devise concise statement*

Strategic Priorities

- Should relate to the two core elements of the University's activities – teaching and research
- Should be focused wherever possible on outputs rather than inputs
- Should have simple performance measures
- Should readily map onto operational plan

Strategic Priority 1: Produce graduates who are well educated and highly regarded

- Emphasis on full student experience: support services, quality of facilities, opportunities beyond formal study (GP #2)
- Academic offerings to meet changing needs (GP #3 #6)
- Strong focus on quality teaching and academic support (GP #5)
- Access to educational opportunity for diverse range of students (GP #7 #8)
- *Possible performance measure: graduate employment statistics*
- Related Operational Plan measures may include:
  - ENTER scores
  - Retention rates
  - Pass rates
  - CEQ/QAU/SET data
  - Number of students from specified equity groups

Strategic Priority 2: Enhancing a High Quality, High Impact Research Capability

- Increase opportunities for research (GP #4 #10)
- Cross-disciplinary approaches to research (GP #9)
- Focus on research strengths (GP #11)
- *Possible performance measure: Revenue from research*
- Related Operational Plan measures may include:
  - Number of research grants
  - Number of research-active staff
  - Number of postgraduate research students/applications/scholarships/completions
  - Quantum of internationally-recognised publications

Enabling Priorities

- Staff
- Organisation
- Infrastructure
- Internationalisation
- Resources
- Reputation

Enabling Priority 1: Staff

- High quality engaged staff supported by:
  - Career and promotion pathways (GP #12)
  - Staff development and rewards (GP #5)
- Leadership and co-operation across the university (GP #7 #9)
- Possible performance measure: staff survey*

Enabling Priority 2: Organisation

- Flexible, efficient, responsive organisational structure
- Streamlined policy and processes that support quality learning, teaching and research (GP #13)
- Possible performance measure: cost of administrative support relative to teaching and research income; ratio of academic staff to support staff*

Enabling Priority 3: Infrastructure

- Flexible, fit for purpose infrastructure that can respond quickly to changes in learning and teaching needs and research practices (GP #3)
- Possible performance measure: student and staff satisfaction surveys*

Enabling Priority 4: Internationalisation

- Increase international student enrolment (GP #6)
- Strengthen strategic international partnerships (GP #15)
- Possible performance measure: number of international students*

Enabling Priority 5: Resources

- Reduce administrative burdens/overlaps (GP #13)
- Implement transparent cost-based budget processes (GP #14)
- Increase revenue (GP #6 #9 #16)
- Possible performance measure: resources available for strategic investment*

Enabling Priority 6: Reputation

- Make LTU a university of choice for enthusiastic, capable students (GP #2)
- Strengthen external communication (GP #15)
- Build stronger links with external communities/ stakeholders
- Expand alumni relations (GP #16)
- Possible performance measure: ENTER scores*

**Discussion:**

The Vice-Chancellor advised that the Strategic Plan would have the core activities at the beginning with the enabling strategies following. He reported that the notes presented above were very preliminary and that a copy of these would be circulated to Deans, Heads of Schools and members of the Academic Board for their comment.

Professor Rimmer noted that the presentation had included measurable objectives but no mention of reporting cycles.

The Vice-Chancellor advised that the Strategic Plan would need to be reported against annually to Academic Board and Council. The measures would be set out over five years and responsible areas would need to report against these. Each division would have a number of operational targets that they would need track against.

Dr Tillett recommended that the University should be completely radical and break out of what it was currently doing and suggested that one way of doing this would be to re-establish La Trobe as a completely new University.

The Vice-Chancellor agreed that La Trobe needed to change a great deal, but that the University community also needed to be realistic. There were significant constraints, but the University was capable of great change in the next 24 months.

Professor Lake noted that other Victorian universities have very distinctive images and suggested that the University should put some thought into exactly the image La Trobe wanted to portray.

The Vice-Chancellor agreed that La Trobe was invisible and suggested that there needed to be a collective vision of what the University could offer. The University should offer a more holistic experience to students, who should be delivered a valuable university experience. The University should be committed to a broader view of social justice and important social issues.

Professor Murphy noted that the University was working in a changing environment and that a five year plan could create a static situation. He queried whether the Vice-Chancellor had thought about ways in which the University could be flexible and innovative *and* have a five year plan.

The Vice-Chancellor advised that the Strategic Plan would be reviewed annually and would be a “living” document, responsive to organisational and funding changes.

The Board noted that one of the major tasks of the new Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Research) would be establishing the structures to encourage innovation in research.

The meeting closed at 11.05am.

**NEXT MEETING:**       **9.30am**  
                              **Wednesday 14 November 2007**  
                              **Council Chamber**  
                              **John Scott Meeting House**  
                              **Bundoora Campus**

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