

LA TROBE UNIVERSITY

ACADEMIC BOARD

Minutes of the four hundred and twenty-fourth meeting of the Academic Board held in the Council Chamber, John Scott Meeting House, La Trobe University, Bundoora Campus on Wednesday 4 June 2008 at 9.30am

**PRESENT:** Professor M Rimmer (Chair), Ms L Basser, Mr L Batchelor, Dr S Beeton, Dr A Brookes, Professor J Chen, Dr L Crase, Professor D de Vaus, Mr K Farrell, Dr K Ferguson, Ms M Frederico, Professor N Gough, Professor C Handley, Professor R Harbridge, Dr L Howie, Dr R Hoye, Dr J Jackson, Dr T Jarvis, Professor P Johnson (Vice-Chancellor), Ms Helen King, Dr D Kirkby, Ms L Lavender, Dr K Legge, Professor L Ling, Dr J McArdle, Ms V Mansel Lees, Ms S Morrissey, Professor P Murphy, Professor T Murray, Dr H Nicholas, Ms K Nix, Dr J Oates, Dr S O'Keefe, Professor R W Parish, Professor S Paxton, Professor V Prain, Professor I Robinson, Dr D Rogers, Dr M Ryan, Dr J Sita, Dr P Stacey, Professor R Wales, Dr D Wilkinson, Professor E Willis, Professor P Wilson and Dr L Yates.

**SECRETARIAT:** Ms A Cowburn

**IN ATTENDANCE:** Mr D Bainger, Mr P Boyle, Professor R Brownlee, Mr B Carboon, Ms S Donping Huang, Professor A Frost, Professor R La Polla, Dr E Martens, Professor D Phillips and Professor G Stephenson.

**PART A: PROCEDURAL MATTERS**

**(i) Apologies and Attendance**

Apologies were received from Professor Andrew Brennan, Professor T Brown, Dr Graeme Byrne, Professor Simon Crowe, Professor David Finlay, Mr Peter Foreman, Mr Bob Goddard, Professor Nick Hoogenraad, Dr Bruce James, Ms Heather King, Dr Anna Kokavec, Professor Marilyn Lake, Dr Geoffrey Mayer, Dr Ewen Michael, Dr Geoff Prince, Professor Belinda Probert, Ms Joanne Rayner, Mr Paul Richardson, Professor Margaret Robertson, Professor Mark Sandeman, Dr Jennifer Sheed, Dr Ewen Silvester, Professor Hal Swerissen and Professor Leann Tilley.

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

The Board resolved to approve the Agenda, as circulated.

It was noted that a revised paper had been circulated via email prior to the meeting:

- AB08/67 - "Proposal for a Creation of a Student Representative Network".

**(iii) Outstanding Matters**

The Board received and noted report AB08/58.

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

The Board received report AB08/59 and noted the following matters which had been approved on its behalf since its last meeting:

- (a) Award of degrees and diplomas and conferring of awards *in absentia*, as detailed in Attachment A to AB08/59;
- (b) Establishment of Prizes:
  - (i) Bendigo Campus: City of Greater Bendigo Community Leadership Award, as detailed in Attachment B to AB08/59;
- (c) Membership of Committees:
  - (i) *Selection Committee: Associate Professor in Special Needs Education*  
Professor Noel Gough, Faculty of Education, to be removed from membership;

- (ii) *Selection Committee: Professor of Educational Leadership and Management*  
Appointment of additional committee members to provide Bundoora focus:
  - Dr Ramon Lewis;
  - Professor Roger Wales;
- (iii) *Faculty-based Academic Promotions Committee for Promotion from Level A to Level B Academic or from Level B to Level C Academic – Faculty of Law and Management*, as detailed in Attachment C to AB08/59;
- (d) Refilling of Positions and Composition of Selection Committees:
  - (i) Associate Professor of Physiotherapy and Head of School, as detailed in Attachment D to AB08/59;
  - (ii) Chair in Accounting; Chair in Finance; Chair/Associate Professor in Management; and Chair/Associate Professor in Finance, as detailed in Attachment E to AB08/59.

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

The Board noted that the Vice-Chancellor had not provided a written report and would not be providing a verbal report.

**PART B: MATTERS FOR APPROVAL**

**424.1 CONFIRMATION OF THE MINUTES**

The minutes of the meeting held on 14 May 2008 [AB08/56(M)] were confirmed.

**424.2 ITEMS APPROVED WITHOUT DISCUSSION**

**424.2.1 Award of Degrees and Diplomas**

The Board received report AB08/61 and **resolved** to endorse the conferring of awards *in absentia* and award of higher degrees as detailed therein.

AEGTO/  
RGSO

**424.2.2 Membership of Committees**

(a) *Standing Committee on Level D Academics – annual review of membership*

The Board received report AB08/62 and **resolved** to endorse the membership of the Standing Committee on Level D Academics contained therein.

Mr K Brown

**424.3 STANDING COMMITTEES OF ACADEMIC BOARD**

**424.3.1 Report of Research and Graduate Studies Committee: 28 March 2008**

The Board received and noted report AB08/63.

(a) *Virtual Beamline, Australian Synchrotron*

The Board noted that the Committee had discussed the proposed installation of a virtual beamline, via the University's association with VERSI, which would enable off-site management of experiments at the synchrotron as well as providing a state of the art innovative teaching facility. The Committee had agreed that the Research Investment Fund's e-Research funding scheme would contribute a maximum of \$50,000 to the beamline and the Faculty of Science, Technology and Engineering would be approached for a contribution.

(b) *Reviews of Research Centres*

The Board noted that consideration was being given to the review of the Institute for Advanced Study, the Research Centre for Linguistic Typology and the National Centre for Hellenic Studies and Research, but that before formal review proceedings could commence it would be necessary to seek copies of their constitutions.

The Board also noted that the Associate Deans (Research) had reported that the following research centres within their Faculties were to be reviewed in 2008:

Education:	Adult Migrant Education Program Research Centre
Health Sciences:	Australian Institute for Primary Care Ergonomics and Human Factors Research Centre
Humanities and Social Sciences:	Institute of Latin American Studies Refugee Health Research Centre Thesis 11
Law and Management:	Centre for Sustainable Regional Communities
Science, Technology and Engineering:	Biotechnology Research Centre Centre for Materials and Surface Science

#### 424.3.2 Report of Research and Graduate Studies Committee: 24 April 2008

The Board received and noted report AB08/64.

(a) *Reviews of Research Centres*

The Board received and noted the template constitution, provided by the University Solicitor's Office, which would be available as a model for prospective new research centres and institute to use as a basis for developing their own constitutions, as detailed in Attachment 1 to report AB08/64.

(b) *Australian Institute for Molecular Medicine*

The Board received and noted the Constitution of the Australian Institute for Molecular Medicine, as detailed in Attachment 2 to report AB08/64.

(c) *Musculoskeletal Research Centre*

The Board received and noted that the Annual Report of the Musculoskeletal Research Centre 2006-2007, as detailed in Attachment 3 to report AB08/64.

(d) *Higher Degrees Committee (Research)*

The Board noted the appointment of Professor M Robertson, Faculty of Education, to the Higher Degrees Committee (Research) for the period 31 May 2008 to 31 May 2010, with Dr R Lewis as alternate.

(e) *Human Ethics Committee*

The Board noted the appointment of the following new members (to 31 December 2009) to the Human Ethics Committee:

- Ms Alison Finn, as a new Category C member (laywoman not associated with the University);
- Ms Lauren Howe, as a new Category C member;
- Ms Mary-Anne Lewis, as a new Category C member;
- Mr David Belton, as a new Category D member (layman not associated with the University);
- Mr Stephen Carter, as a new Category D member ;
- Mr Victor Del Rio, as a new Category D member;
- Ms Alice Sidhu, as a new Category G member (legal representative); and
- Ms Frieda San Jose, as a new Category G member.

#### 424.3.3 Report of Research and Graduate Studies Committee: 30 May 2008

The Board noted that this item had not been provided and would be deferred until the next meeting.

424.3.4 Report of Academic Committee: 20 May 2008

The Board received and noted report AB08/66.

- (a) *Proposal to amend the course structure of the Bachelor of Computer Science in Games Technology*

The Board **resolved** to endorse a proposal from the Faculty of Science, Technology and Engineering to amend the course structure of the Bachelor of Computer Science in Games Technology, as detailed in Attachment A to report AB08/66.

Fac. Reg.

- (b) *Faculty Approval of Units and Minor Course Amendments*

The Board **resolved** to endorse the following recommendations:

1. All new units and course amendments must be approved by Faculty Board.
2. A senior staff member in each Faculty would be appointed to be responsible for ensuring that any new units or amendments to existing units or courses are in accordance with University policy and guidelines.
3. The ASCED (discipline) of any new unit must be agreed to by the Director, Academic Services. The Faculty representative will forward a memorandum with the title of the unit and the proposed ASCED to the Director for confirmation before the unit is given final approval by Faculty Board.
4. The Faculty representative will be responsible for ensuring that all changes are made within the current deadlines set by Academic Committee to ensure that University publications are an accurate reflection of what is to be offered in a given teaching year.
5. Amendments to units are only possible prior to the commencement of classes for the semester.
6. The Faculty representative is responsible for ensuring that units do not overlap with disciplines offered by other Faculties. If an issue of overlap arises the Faculty representative must communicate with staff in the other Faculty to discuss the impact of the overlap and to get agreement in writing from the other Faculty prior to final approval.
7. Any course change described below would be considered to be a substantive change and would require Academic Committee approval:
  - any change to a course name
  - any change to the length or credit point requirements of a course
  - inclusion of Honours into the degree structure
  - any change to course level
  - any change that will have an impact on other Faculties of the University (these would need to be discussed with the other Faculty and then forwarded to Academic Committee for final approval).
8. There will be a formal reporting process (to Academic Committee) of new/revised units and minor course changes that the Faculty representative has approved.

Dir. AS/  
Fac. Reg.s

- (c) *Proposal for the Master of Teaching to be split into two courses: Master of Teaching (Primary) and Master of Teaching (Secondary)*

The Board **resolved** to endorse a proposal from the Faculty of Education for the Master of Teaching to be split into two courses: Master of Teaching (Primary) and Master of Teaching (Secondary), as detailed in Attachment B to report AB08/66.

Fac. Reg.

- (d) *Proposal to amend the existing Bachelor of Urban, Rural and Environmental Planning*

The Board **resolved** to endorse a proposal from the Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences to amend the existing Bachelor of Urban, Rural and Environmental Planning, as detailed in Attachment C to report AB08/66.

Fac. Reg.

(e) *Proposal to amend the existing postgraduate programs in Community Planning and Development*

The Board **resolved** to endorse a proposal from the Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences to:

Delete the existing programs:

- Graduate Certificate Rural and Regional Planning
- Graduate Diploma Rural and Regional Planning
- Master of Arts (Community Development)

Introduce the:

- Graduate Certificate of Community Planning and Development
- Graduate Diploma of Community Planning and Development
- Master of Community Planning and Development

with the following three streams:

- Urban and Rural Planning
- Community Development
- Environmental and Social Policy

as detailed in Attachment D to report AB08/66.

Fac. Reg.

(f) *Proposal to introduce the Masters of International Relations*

The Board **resolved** to endorse a proposal from the Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences to decommission the Master of International Policy Studies (MIPS) and introduce the Masters of International Relations (MIR) and the Masters of International Relations with Honours (MIR Hons), as detailed in Attachment E to report AB08/66.

Fac. Reg.

(g) *Proposal to introduce the Masters of Global Communications*

The Board **resolved** to endorse a proposal from the Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences to introduce the Masters of Global Communications (MGC) and the Masters of Global Communications with Honours (MGC Hons), as detailed in Attachment F to report AB08/66.

Fac. Reg.

(h) *Proposal for change of unit offerings for the Master of Nursing Science in Child, Family and Community Nursing*

The Board **resolved** to endorse a proposal from the Faculty of Health Sciences for change of unit offerings for the Master of Nursing Science in Child, Family and Community Nursing.

Fac. Reg.

(i) *Proposal for change of unit offerings for the Postgraduate Diploma of Nursing Science in Child, Family and Community Nursing*

The Board **resolved** to endorse a proposal from the Faculty of Health Sciences for change of unit offerings for the Postgraduate Diploma of Nursing Science in Child, Family and Community Nursing.

Fac. Reg.

(j) *Proposal to introduce the Bachelor of Nursing and Bachelor of Nursing (Honours)*

The Board **resolved** to endorse a proposal from the Faculty of Health Sciences to replace the current undergraduate nursing program with the Bachelor of Nursing (BN), Bachelor of Nursing (GE) (BN), Bachelor of Nursing (Division 2 conversion) (BN), Bachelor of Nursing (Post Reg) (BN) and Bachelor of Nursing (Honours) (BN(Hons)), as detailed in Attachment G to AB08/66.

Fac. Reg.

(k) *Policy Proposal: Testamurs Policy*

The Board noted that Academic Committee had endorsed the proposal from the Academic Services Division to introduce a Testamurs Policy and Procedures and agreed that this was essentially an administrative policy and once amended to the newly approved policy format should be forwarded to the Senior Management Group for approval.

(l) *University Graduate Attributes Working Party*

The Board noted that Academic Committee had received the final report of the University Graduate Attributes Working Party, which would be referred into the Curriculum Task Force to be established in June.

**424.4 OTHER MATTERS**

**424.4.1 Proposal for the creation of a Student Representative Network at La Trobe University**

The Board received and noted revised report AB08/67, a modified proposal from the Students' Representative Council (SRC) for the creation of a Student Representative Network at La Trobe University. Mr Peter Boyle, President, SRC; Mr Dennis Bainger, President, BSA; and Ms Sally Donping Huang, LUPA, all spoke in support of the proposal. The Board agreed to amend the recommendations to include LUPA.

The Board **resolved** to endorse the following recommendations:

1. That a Student Representative Network be created, to be co-ordinated by the Students' Representative Council in consultation with the regional student associations and LUPA, as detailed in Appendix 1 of report AB08/67.  
The aims of the network will be:
  - To increase the involvement of the general student population in University decision-making structures.
  - To co-ordinate student representation to ensure that student voices and concerns are heard and that the nature of the issues facing students across the university are reported to all student associations.
  - To provide support and training to student representatives throughout the entirety of their term.
2. That University policy and practice reflects a commitment to student engagement in University decision making processes, and to the coordination of representation through the Student Representative Network.
3. That University regulations/practice be reformed so that:
  - a. All Faculty Board elections are held at the same time.
  - b. That the SRC and LUPA be informed of faculty board elections and be invited to nominate students. Regional student organisations, such as the BSA, should also be notified of faculty board elections and invited to nominate students. The faculties will also seek nominations from their enrolled students. In the event of nominations exceeding the number of positions available an election will be conducted.
  - c. That one undergraduate position on each faculty board is reserved for a student elected from the regional campuses.
  - d. That existing postgraduate positions on faculty boards are retained for post graduate students.
4. That a meeting of student leaders from all LTUB campuses be held after 12 months of commencement of the SRN, to review the performance of the SRN, taking into account
  - The performance and suitability of the induction and training.
  - The SRN communication with all student associations across LTU
  - The performance of the SRN in regards to ensuring that participation of all students in the SRN, including the accessibility of SRN activities to regional students.
  - The satisfaction of members of the SRN with their overall experience.
5. That Student leaders from the regional campuses enter into negotiations for the implementation of a regional arm of the SRN.

Pres. SRC

Legal  
Services/  
Fac. Reg.s/  
Pres. SRC

Pres. SRC

Pres. BSA

**424.4.2 2007 Annual Report of the Centre for Dialogue**

The Board received and noted report AB08/68, the 2007 Annual Report of the Centre for Dialogue.

**PART C: MATTERS FOR INFORMATION**

**424.5 ITEMS FOR INFORMATION**

**424.5.1 Minutes of the Faculty Boards**

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

- |  |                  |
|--|------------------|
| (a) Education: 21 February 2008                  | FOE-FB08-006(M)  |
| (b) Education: 20 March 2008                     | FOE-FB08-013(M)  |
| (c) Humanities and Social Sciences: 2 April 2008 | LHUSS/FB2008/24M |

**424.5.2 Minutes of the Library Committee: 2 May 2008**

The Board received and noted the minutes of the Library Committee, as detailed in report LIB08/13(M).

**PART D: QUESTIONS WITH NOTICE**

There were no "Questions with Notice" provided.

**PART E: DISCUSSION**

**424.6 Changing La Trobe: A Program for Renewal**

Professor Paul Johnson, Vice-Chancellor, spoke to report AB08/69 "*Changing La Trobe: A Program for Renewal*".

It was noted that the University's financial situation was very difficult. The Vice-Chancellor reported that the Victorian Auditor-General had provided a paper to parliament yesterday outlining the performance of each Victorian university in 2007. The average university had a 7% surplus and La Trobe had a turnover deficit of 0.1%. The main issue was seen to be a shortfall in revenue, with La Trobe not having driven full-fee income as much as other universities. Other universities had an average of 22% of their students paying full-fees, La Trobe had 14%.

There was a clear need to increase the number of full-fee paying students to between 20-25% or the University could be forced to reduce in size by one third. It was noted that increasing numbers in some commonwealth funded courses could disadvantage the university and to increase full-fee at undergraduate level, pathway programs were required. Pathway programs had been successful elsewhere and allowed the university some control over supply. The University currently had some pathway programs running through La Trobe International and were investigating options for the development of further pathway programs, either with an external partner or on their own.

It was noted that the push for additional full-fee paying students would place particular strain on the Faculty of Law and Management and the faculty would require additional support.

The University community needed to think about the programs currently on offer and how they are delivered and how the University could develop, as part of the curriculum review, programs to ensure they provide additional revenue streams. Further development of Masters programs, with certificate and diploma options, to make them more attractive was required.

In the short term the University needs to reduce costs and grow revenue in the future.

The Vice-Chancellor reported that the Pro Vice-Chancellor (Quality Enhancement) had undertaken some analysis of the 2007 CEQ responses and found that the University scored well on the following:

- staff quality and attitude;
- accessibility of staff; and
- social affinity – student like being at LTU.

And rated poorly in:

- course design/structure;
- infrastructure and learning environment; and

- assessment.

The Vice-Chancellor advised that consultants PhillipsKPA were reviewing the budget structure and had advised that immediate action needed to be taken.

Discussion:

The Chair, Academic Board, congratulated Dr Kerry Ferguson, Pro Vice-Chancellor (Equity and Student Services), on her appointment as the person chosen to facilitate the change process across the University.

Professor Handley queried whether the University would be going ahead with the proposed city campus and noted that when the Faculty of Health Sciences had moved certain courses to the campus in Franklin Street, numbers had increased. The Vice-Chancellor advised that further analysis was being undertaken regarding the benefits of a city campus and how the Argus Building would be utilised. The results of this analysis would be reported to Academic Board.

In response to a query, the Vice-Chancellor advised that the University had a borrowing capacity to invest in innovation, but that Council would not allow the drawing down on reserves or borrowing to cover operational costs.

Ms Lavender queried whether the pathways programs would be located at Bundoora or the city. The Vice-Chancellor advised that market research undertaken had suggested that it would be in the University's best interests to locate the pathways programs at Bundoora as there could be leakage to other city centre universities if they were located in the city.

Professor Parish queried whether the issue of indexation would be on the agenda at the meeting of Universities Australia in Sydney next week. The Vice-Chancellor advised that it would be unlikely that this issue would be taken up with the government before the release of the report of the Higher Education Review in October.

Dr Sita queried whether there would be adequate support services for additional numbers of students and whether there were budget implications regarding the University's plans for environmental sustainability.

The Vice-Chancellor agreed that student support was an important issue and noted that there had been a fragmented approach to support services including infrastructure, administrative support and learning support across the University. If there was an influx of international students this would need to be carefully reviewed. With regard to environmental sustainability, the Vice-Chancellor was asking the University community to provide him with some innovative ideas.

Professor Phillips queried if there were any priorities for how the \$14.3m University Renewal Fund provided for capital works would be spent. The Vice-Chancellor advised that the government had advised that the University would have until June 2011 to spend the funds and guidelines were yet to be provided. The University could not plan until these had been received.

Mr Batchelor queried what the University was doing to preserve its current "unique" offerings. The Vice-Chancellor advised that the University would be reviewing every area of operation in the University to decide if they were viable – and this did not necessarily mean financially viable as it was important to support scholarship. The government may be negotiated with for additional funding for "unique" offerings.

Professor Murphy suggested that many universities when reenergizing turn to their alumni and the corporate sector and queried what La Trobe was doing in this way. The Vice-Chancellor advised that the Alumni Office had been attempting to make contact with alumni, with a process of reengagement and relationship building underway. It was agreed that more action was required with regard to engaging the corporate sector.



Professor Paxton queried whether there were any resources available to faculty staff to obtain advice on how to grow the appeal of their courses to increase overseas full-fee income. The Vice-Chancellor advised that there were resources available – a market research capacity in the Future Students office and a similar resource in the International office, but that they were not sufficiently integrated with each other. It was noted that this would be a focus of the Curriculum Task Force operating in the second half of the year.

Dr Jarvis noted that the Green Paper had implied a shift in teaching from undergraduate to postgraduate, but that the discussions regarding pathways programs concentrated on undergraduate positions. He also queried whether any thought had been given to the positive impact that academics could have when they travel with the international office to overseas campuses.

The Vice-Chancellor advised that a shift towards taught postgraduate programs was required. Pathway programs would initially concentrate on undergraduate programs. Analysis was required regarding whether the University had the correct mix of teaching and whether La Trobe were correctly allocating their resources. The role of academic staff in recruiting international students was important but needed to be well structured and planned.

The meeting closed at 11.00am.

**NEXT MEETING:**      **9.30am**  
                             **Wednesday 13 August 2008**  
                             **Council Chamber**  
                             **John Scott Meeting House**  
                             **Bundoora Campus**

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