**COMMITTEE OF CHAIRS OF ACADEMIC BOARDS/SENATES
OF UNIVERSITIES IN NSW AND THE ACT**

Minutes of meeting (04/4) of the Committee of Chairs held at 9.30 am
on Thursday 4 November 2004 at the University of Sydney.

PRESENT: Tony Baker (UTS) (Chair), Peter Camilleri (ACU), John Carter (Sydney), Linda Connor (Newcastle), George Cooney (Macquarie), Anne Cusick (UWS), Ray Cooksey (UNE), Tony Dooley (UNSW), David Griffiths (Wollongong), Bruce Kercher (Macquarie), John Rayner (Canberra) and Erica Smith (CSU). Tony Blake attended for item 5.

IN ATTENDANCE: Des Petersen (UTS).

1. APOLOGIES/WELCOMES/FAREWELLS

Apologies were received from Malcolm Gillies (ANU) and David Green (CSU).

The Chair welcomed Anne Cusick to her first meeting of the Committee.

As this was Ray Cooksey's last meeting before going on leave, the Chair thanked him for the contribution he had made to the Committee, particularly through his analysis of trends in the AUQA reports. On behalf of the Committee, the Chair wished him well on his long service and study leave in 2005. The Committee expressed its support by acclamation.

It was noted that in 2005 Majella Franzmann would replace Ray Cooksey on the Committee.

2. MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF 26 AUGUST 2004

The minutes of the previous meeting were confirmed.

3. BUSINESS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES

Foundation Studies Programs

Foundation outlines submitted to date were noted. In a general discussion it was agreed that cross recognition of programs is a desirable goal to work towards. One approach could be to base assessment of each Foundation program on the outcomes data relating to the academic success in university courses of students graduating from that Foundation program. It was agreed that members should base their evaluation of Foundation programs on a core set of agreed standards. It was therefore agreed that a small working group comprising Tony Baker, Tony Dooley and Linda Connor would draft a set of criteria to facilitate the recognition of Foundation programs by each university. Their proposal would be considered at the next meeting of the Committee.

Particular matters were also considered, including the process for recognising Foundation programs within each institution, and the nuances of students graduating from Foundation programs being 'eligible' for entry to universities or having a 'guarantee' of entry.

IT Curriculum Committee

Subsequent to the previous meeting of the Committee, a request was made for nominations for the IT Curriculum Committee, with a closing date of 24 September. The Chair had submitted a nomination to the Board of Studies prior to the closing date, and before another had been received. He apologised to the Committee, and tabled the curriculum vitae of the nomination submitted. The other nomination had been forwarded to the Board of Studies as a reserve.

3. **BUSINESS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES (cont'd)**

    Membership of Curriculum and Examination Committees

    It was agreed in general discussion of Industry Curriculum Committees that it would be useful for members to have the complete membership details of all Industry Curriculum Committees and Examination Committees.

    Metal and Engineering Curriculum Committee

    The Chair tabled a request from the Board of Studies for nominations to the Metal and Engineering Curriculum Committee. Nominations were sought urgently.

    MCEETYA Recommendations

    It was agreed to invite George Cooney to attend the April 2005 meeting to inform members about how the IB is treated in calculating the UAI.

4. **HSC CATEGORY B COURSES**

    4.1 Review of Category B Courses

    The following documents were received for consideration:

    > Accounting, Business Services, Construction, Industrial Technology, Metal and Engineering, Primary Industries and Tourism.

    Each review was considered separately. In relation to the review of Industrial Technology, John Carter declared an interest in that he is a member of Engineers Australia, a body that supports Industrial Technology being changed to Category A. His abstention from voting is recorded under .4 below. In discussion of Industrial Technology, it was agreed that, although it was recommended to be kept as Category B, there may be some scope for it to be reconsidered in 2005 in conjunction with a number of subjects in cognate areas. It was acknowledged that it was closer to Category A than the other courses reviewed.

    RESOLVED CoC 04/3

    .1   that Accounting remain as a Category B course and, in consideration of the course rationale, it be noted that it would be inappropriate to consider moving it to Category A;

    .2   that Business Services remain as a Category B course and, in consideration of the course rationale, it be noted that it would be inappropriate to consider moving it to Category A;

    .3   that Construction remain as Category B course and, in consideration of the course rationale, it be noted that it would be inappropriate to consider moving it to Category A;

    .4   that Industrial Technology remain as a Category B course and, in consideration of the course rationale, it be noted that it would be inappropriate to consider moving it to Category A at this stage; (John Carter abstaining)

    .5   that, as part of the Category A reviews to be commenced in 2005, Industrial Technology be reconsidered in conjunction with a relevant grouping of subjects in cognate areas, the grouping to be approved beforehand by the Committee of Chairs in planning the schedule of Category A reviews;

4.1 Review of Category B Courses (cont'd)

RESOLVED CoC 04/3 (cont'd)

.6   that Metal and Engineering remain as a Category B course and, in consideration of the course rationale, it be noted that it would be inappropriate to consider moving it to Category A;

.7   that Primary Industries remain as a Category B course and, in consideration of the course rationale, it be noted that it would be inappropriate to consider moving it to Category A;

.8   that Tourism remain as a Category B course and, in consideration of the course rationale, it be noted that it would be inappropriate to consider moving it to Category A;

.9   that a small working group comprising Tony Baker, David Griffiths and George Cooney be requested to draft a plan for the Category A review process, for consideration at the next meeting of the Committee.

4.2 Categorisation Review Schedule

The completion of all Category B reviews under the Categorisation Review Schedule for 2004 was noted.

5. HEAC

Tony Blake (Chair of HEAC) attended the meeting to inform members about HEAC's role in the registration of private higher education providers and the accreditation of courses offered by private higher education providers in NSW. He outlined the history of HEAC, particularly in relation to the advent of Greenwich University (a private institution) some years ago, and its current role. In particular, it is involved in the registration of institutions (for example, overseas universities) wishing to operate in the state, and also the accreditation of courses offered by private providers. It is able to examine the financial viability of providers, although there are also stringent audit requirements in place for private providers. To date there has not been any application for accreditation of associate degrees.

Particular questions were discussed, including:

- the possibility of a private provider gaining accreditation of its courses in another state, and then using that as leverage for gaining accreditation in NSW;

- the tacit use of existing university Library facilities by students of private providers, and the consequential pressures on such facilities;

- the implications (for example financial and intellectual property implications) to the partner university if a private provider with whom it is in partnership goes bankrupt.

6. FINANCIAL STATEMENT

The financial statement was noted.

7. CONFERENCES AND MEETINGS

Ray Cooksey had attended the Fourth Annual National Conference of University Governance in Sydney on 22-23 October. His report was noted.

7. CONFERENCES AND MEETINGS (cont'd)

Anne Cusick provided comments on the National Chairs of Academic Boards/Senates in Melbourne on 21-22 October. The AVCC would be publishing three key manifesto documents in the near future. The establishment of the Carrick Institute was also discussed, and the advantages of the national Chairs group as a possible reference group for the Carrick Institute. The presentations would be made available to Committee members.

Tony Baker provided comments on the Sydney conference. Discussion focussed on aspects such as the evaluation of the performance of Council members and the risk analysis of Academic Boards, that is, the risk to which an Academic Board can expose a university in achieving its goals.

In relation to the national Chairs group, Tony Dooley pointed out that its next meeting would be held in Sydney in 2005, and UNSW would be the organising host. The Committee of Chairs would be called upon to assist as required.

8. DUTIES OF CHAIRS/PRESIDENTS

It was agreed that a preliminary analysis of the survey of Chairs/Presidents would be useful, pending the receipt of all responses. All members present agreed that their own responses could be circulated.

9. OTHER BUSINESS

Board of Studies – Decisions of the Meetings held 14 September and 26 October 2004

Both reports were noted.

Combined Degrees

Linda Connor raised questions relating to how each university administers combined degrees, particularly in relation to what goes on the UAC preference list, the minimum UAI for eligibility to enrol, the most common combinations, enrolment numbers and combinations with low enrolments.

In discussion, a number of options, including the offering of double majors within single degrees, and letting the market 'set' the UAI, were discussed. Implications for double degrees under the Higher Education Support Act were noted.

10. NEXT MEETING

It was noted that the next meeting would be held at ANU in April 2005. The option of exchanging the UNSW/UNE meetings later in 2005, to accommodate the national meeting of the Chairs closer to its 12 month anniversary, would be explored. Following the meeting, UNE confirmed that a change in dates could be accommodated.

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting adjourned at 12:45 pm.

11. JOINT MEETING OF COMMITTEE OF CHAIRS WITH ACADEMIC BOARD/SENATE OFFICERS

At 2:00 pm the Committee of Chairs met with the Academic Board/Senate Officers Group. Tony Baker outlined the discussion from the morning's Committee of Chairs meeting, and Stephen Harding summarised the discussion of the Academic Board/Senate Officers' Group. The Academic Board/Senate Officers' Group had focussed its discussion on:

- topical issues of Academic Boards/Senates
- use of technology to assist meetings

- professional development for Board members, in particular induction of new members and the relevance of the National Governance Protocols

- careers and succession planning for support staff

- the function and role of Academic Board, especially the feedback loop between the Board and faculties, liaising with the Chair, its role in the wider University

- future meetings, including a proposal that joint meetings occur twice in 2005, with one being a conference dealing with a particular area or theme.

The Committee of Chairs recognised the merit of the future meeting proposal, especially a conference focussed on aspects of University best practice. Suggested topics included course approval processes and the feedback loop between Academic Board and Faculties/Units. It was further agreed that the format for dual meetings between the Committee of Chairs and the Academic Board/Senate Officers Group could be improved by the introduction of a formal agenda.

Members expressed appreciation of the efforts of Professor Baker and Mr Petersen in arranging the meetings. Thanks were also extended to University of Sydney staff for their hospitality and assistance.

CLOSURE

The meeting closed at 3pm.