

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

Minutes of meeting (06/1) of the Committee of Chairs held at 9.30 am
on Thursday 30 March 2006 at Charles Sturt University, Bathurst.

PRESENT: Tony Baker (UTS)(Chair), Roger Bronks (SCU), Peter Camilleri (ACU), Linda Connor (Newcastle), Anne Cusick (UWS), Tony Dooley (UNSW), Ruth Foxwell (Canberra), David Green (CSU), David Griffiths (UOW), Bruce Kercher (Macquarie), Eilis Magner (UNE) and Tony Masters (USYD).

Megan Bond (CSU) and Megan Kemmis (USYD) attended as observers. George Cooney (Chair, Technical Committee on Scaling) attended by invitation.

IN ATTENDANCE: Des Petersen and Sita Chopra (UTS).

1. APOLOGIES and WELCOMES

Apologies were received from Malcolm Gillies (ANU).

The Chair welcomed members to the meeting and thanked David Griffiths for chairing the August meeting and Tony Dooley for organising the October national meeting. He also welcomed Megan Bond (CSU) and Megan Kemmis (USYD), attending as observers.

2. MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF 11 AUGUST 2005

The minutes of the previous meeting were confirmed with a minor typographical amendment.

3. BUSINESS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES

3.1 Role and Purpose of Academic Boards/Senates

The statement developed at the October meeting was endorsed unanimously. Tony Dooley informed members that copies had been sent to the AVCC, AUQA and the National Institute for Governance at University of Canberra.

Learning and Teaching Fund

Members noted the tabled paper comprising the response on behalf of the Chairs to DEST regarding the Learning and Teaching Fund. The members expressed their appreciation to Tony Dooley for coordinating the response.

3.2 Category A Reviews

This matter was dealt with under item 4 below.

3.3 Student Progression

This matter was dealt with under item 7.6 below.

4. HSC CATEGORY A COURSE REVIEWS

4.1 Category A Reviews

Categorisation reports for the following courses were received:

- Drama
- Senior Science
- Visual Arts.

cont'd/-

4.1 Category A Reviews (cont'd)

An additional categorisation report was called for the following courses:

- Studies of Religion I, II (ACU) and Studies of Religion Stage 6 (including clarification of the nomenclature) (UNE).

The following reports are currently outstanding:

- Arabic Beginners (Sydney)
- Classical Greek Continuers and Classical Greek Extension (ACU)
- Community and Family Studies (SCU)
- Health and Physical Education (SCU)
- Latin Continuers and Latin Extension (ACU)
- Music, I, II and Extension (Wollongong)(agreed to shift from UWS)
- Personal Development (SCU).

The following courses were notionally categorised as **Category A**, pending confirmation at the next meeting:

CATEGORY A

Aboriginal Studies
Agriculture
Ancient History
Biology
Business Studies
Chemistry
Dance
Design and Technology
Drama
Earth and Environmental Science
Economics
Engineering Studies
English (Advanced)
English (Standard)
English as a Second Language (ESL)
English Extension
Food Technology
General Mathematics
Geography
History Extension
Information Processes and Technology
Legal Studies
Mathematics
Mathematics Extension 1
Mathematics Extension 2
Modern History
Physics
Senior Science
Society and Culture
Software Design and Development
Textiles and Design
Visual Arts

LANGUAGES

Arabic Continuers
Arabic Extension
Armenian Continuers
Chinese Beginners
Chinese Continuers
Chinese Extension
Chinese Background Speakers
Classical Hebrew Continuers
Classical Hebrew Extension
Croatian Continuers
Dutch Continuers
Filipino Continuers
French Beginners
French Continuers
French Extension
German Beginners
German Continuers
German Extension
Hindi Continuers
Hungarian Continuers
Indonesian Beginners
Indonesian Continuers
Indonesian Extension
Indonesian Background Speakers
Italian Beginners
Italian Continuers
Italian Extension
Japanese Beginners
Japanese Continuers
Japanese Extension
Japanese Background Speakers

LANGUAGES (Cont'd)

Khmer Continuers
Korean Beginners
Korean Continuers
Korean Background Speakers
Macedonian Continuers
Malay Background Speakers
Maltese Continuers
Modern Greek Beginners
Modern Greek Continuers
Modern Greek Extension
Modern Hebrew Continuers
Persian Background Speakers

Polish Continuers
Portuguese Continuers
Russian Background Speakers
Serbian Continuers
Spanish Beginners
Spanish Continuers
Spanish Extension
Swedish Continuers
Tamil Continuers
Turkish Continuers
Ukrainian Continuers
Vietnamese Continuers

The following courses were categorised as **Category B**, pending confirmation at the next meeting:

CATEGORY B

Industrial Technology.

The Committee noted in discussion that there were several courses, such as Senior Science and Mathematics, which were satisfactory in giving a basic groundwork for higher education study in a broad sense, although not necessarily being direct preparation for specific higher education subjects. They needed to be categorised according to the former rather than the latter criterion.

The Category A review process would be concluded at the next meeting of the Committee.

5. FINANCIAL STATEMENT

A statement would be provided to the next meeting.

6. CONFERENCES AND MEETINGS

The Chair agreed to obtain information regarding the next annual meeting, which is being held at University of South Australia. Ruth Foxwell obtained details of the next Governance Conference organised by the National Institute for Governance, which would be in November. She would encourage the Institute to invite Chairs directly.

7. OTHER BUSINESS

7.1 ARC Grants 2005

Linda Connor agreed that the full wording of the University of Newcastle resolutions and letter from the Chancellor to the Minister could be circulated to members. The Committee endorsed the action taken by the University of Newcastle and UTS, and agreed to revisit this matter if required after the outcome of the next ARC grants round has been concluded.

7.2 AVCC Common Vacation Weeks

This matter had originated in the UTS Faculty of Business, which was recommending that for the purposes of the academic calendar the first AVCC common week be linked to Anzac Day rather than to Easter. Reactions were mixed, with many members of the Committee pointing out that staff tend to rely on the AVCC week coinciding with the school vacation, even though these had not always coincided. It was also pointed out that the recommendation could have an adverse impact on the organisation of vacation schools across the sector. Anne Cusick reported that UWS had recently been surveyed by AVCC regarding advanced planning for common weeks. The Committee noted that UTS would forward its proposal to the AVCC as an option.

7.3 UDBEC Principles and University Engagement with Schools

The following were among the points raised in general discussion:

- regional universities may be disadvantaged in relation to UDBECs by having few large schools to draw on, and insufficient resources to establish UDBECs
- UDBECs were intended to replace Distinction courses but this had not happened in practice
- it is possible for a large and well resourced university to establish UDBECs as a student recruitment strategy
- quality assurance of UDBECs might be improved and credibility enhanced if it is a requirement that UDBECs must be recognised by more than one university
- the HECS implications need to be explored (in terms of students gaining access to HECS places and funding issues within universities).

The Committee agreed to revisit this matter in about a year's time.

7.4 Board of Studies Decisions

The summaries of decisions of recent meetings were noted.

Steering Committee for “All my own work”

The Chair sought nominations for the “All my own work” steering committee. Anne Cusick expressed interest in nominating.

7.5 Appointments to Board Curriculum Committees

The Committee discussed the draft criteria for selecting nominees for Curriculum Committees. The consensus of the group was that nominees for curriculum committees should be experts in the discipline, as opposed to being expert in the field of discipline education, and should also be able to demonstrate some effectiveness as advocates. These wishes were expressed particularly in relation to nominees for the Maths curriculum committee. The criteria would be revised accordingly.

7.6 Student Progression

Student progression information from UWS and UTS was received and noted. Anne Cusick pointed out that the progression and appeals process was a good way of testing the accuracy of the institution's student system, as errors are often uncovered. It was also noted that DIMIA now undertakes audits of particular student cases where international students have been identified as being 'at risk' academically.

APPRECIATION

On behalf of the Committee, the Chair thanked the staff of CSU and UTS for the hospitality, support, and arrangements made for the meeting, which was greatly appreciated by the group.

CLOSURE

The meeting closed at 12:40 pm.