

**UNIVERSITY OF TECHNOLOGY, SYDNEY  
UNIVERSITY GRADUATE SCHOOL BOARD**

**Confirmed minutes of Meeting 0601 of the University Graduate School Board held on Tuesday, 7 February 2006, in Conference Room 6.295, Level 6, Building 10, City Campus at 9:30 am.**

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**Present:** Prof M Tennant (Chair), Assoc Prof P Hamilton, Prof A Benjamin, Assoc Prof J Hammond, Mr R Hill, Dr B Leigh, , Prof J McKeough, Assoc Prof C Mitchell, Ms N Muckle, Assoc Prof G Nicholson, (for Prof A Simpson), Prof H Nguyen, Prof I Palmer, Dr P Tooth, Prof Edward White, Prof C Zhang

**Apologies:** Professor J Hughes, Dr J McKenzie, Prof S Rowley, Prof A Simpson

**In attendance:** Mrs Alvina Mak (Secretariat)

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**1. WELCOME/APOLOGIES**

The Chair welcomed the following new members to the meeting:

- Associate Professor Jenny Hammond (Education), Acting Associate Dean, replacing Professor Alastair Pennycook
- Associate Professor Paula Hamilton (Humanities and Social Sciences), replacing Associate Professor Paul Ashton
- Professor Jill McKeough (Law)
- Associate Professor Graham Nicholson (Science), standing in for Professor Ann Simpson

The above apologies were received and noted.

**2. MINUTES**

The minutes of meetings 05/6 (15.11.05) and 05/07 (8.12.05) were confirmed and signed as a true record.

**3. BUSINESS ARISING FROM MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING**

**3.1 Graduate Attributes**

**For action: Dean, McKenzie, Mitchell**

The Dean would meet with Dr Jo McKenzie and Associate Professor Cynthia Mitchell to draft a proposal for consideration by the Board at the next meeting. It is intended that a statement of graduate attributes for UTS research students would be finalised before AUQA.

### 3.2 AUQA preparation

The AUQA Performance Portfolio is finalised and available on the UTSWeb. Members were advised to read the Portfolio, in particular, Chapter 7 on Research and Research Training.

[http://www.planning.uts.edu.au/auqa2006/auqa\\_documentation.html](http://www.planning.uts.edu.au/auqa2006/auqa_documentation.html)

### 3.3 Supervisors Register – definition of “research active”

#### For action: Dean

In discussing the Supervisors Register and the definition of “research active”, the following were noted:

- Current definition of “research active” and latest discussion by the RMC  
There was a discussion of the possibility for a revised definition of “research active” at a joint meeting of the Research Management Committee (RMC) and the Associate Deans (Research) in December 2003. No conclusive recommendation for changes to the definition was made. Hence the definition as follows remains valid:

“Research active - the academic receives at least \$10,000 in external research funds per annum or supervises a higher degree research student or has a publication that is eligible for inclusion in the higher education research collection.”

- Considerations for the Supervisors Register  
There was a general view that considerations for the Supervisors Register may be related but should not be confined to considerations for the definition of “research active”. The objectives or approach for the Supervisors Register, and the criteria for inclusion in and removal from the Register needed to be defined.

The Register could be a simple record of current and potential supervisors, the purpose of which would be similar to that for other professional registration bodies such as the Medical Board. Inclusion and removal of names should be in accordance with certain guidelines (for example, removal due to gross misconduct) but not necessarily associated with supervision performance. People may be included for their academic qualifications and/or specialisation in certain research areas but they may not be ‘research active’ as currently defined. The Register may be used as one but not the only tool for research training management. A separate framework and supporting processes for research supervision quality assurance is required.

In conclusion, members agreed that views of faculties and supervisors should be canvassed for:

- a review of the policy for the Supervisors Register;
- a framework for quality assurance for research supervision (including mechanisms and benchmarks in assessing supervision, opportunities for staff development), as a management guide across the University.

The Dean also undertook to seek RMC’s direction on the current definition of “research active” at the RMC meeting to be held in the afternoon.

## **4. DEAN'S REPORT**

### **4.1 Master of Research Management**

#### **For action: Dean**

As reported at the November 2005 meeting, UTS, with other ATN Universities, had won the CASR grant to establish an e-graduate school. Part of the funding had been used for the development of a nested Graduate Certificate and Masters coursework degree program, to provide pathways to a formal qualification in research management. The program is targeted at:

1. academic staff and researchers outside the university sector;
2. research managers and administrators in both the public and private sectors;
3. research students;
4. prospective research students.

The program is fee-paying and is intended to commence in 2007.

Relating to this, DEST has recently announced a Commercialisation Training Scheme (CTS) to fund a total of 250 places across the Australian higher education sector, with approximately \$5M allocated each year - \$8,000 tuition fee per annum per place. The ATN universities would be allocated 28 places. This presents a great opportunity for the e-graduate school to become a major educational provider for research management training, and is considered a clear market for the proposed degree course at Grad Cert level.

The Dean would circulate the Master of Research Management Stage I proposal to members. Views on the program were welcomed. They may also contact Dr Shanny Dwyer in the Research and Innovation Office or visit the following website for further information of the CTS

[http://www.dest.gov.au/sectors/research\\_sector/publications\\_resources/profiles/Commercialisation\\_Training\\_Scheme\\_Issues\\_Paper.htm](http://www.dest.gov.au/sectors/research_sector/publications_resources/profiles/Commercialisation_Training_Scheme_Issues_Paper.htm)

### **4.2 RQF**

Response from the Minister to the submission of the Expert Advisory Group is expected in mid February.

### **4.3 Proposal for the Research and Research Training Committee**

The PVC(R) and the Registrar had been preparing a proposal for the establishment of a Research and Research Training Committee (RRTC) under Academic Board. The current Vice-Chancellor's Research Management Committee would be disbanded. The new Academic Board RRTC would be responsible for advising Academic Board on all policy matters related to research. The PVC (R) would chair the Committee, with the Dean of UGS as the Deputy Chair. The other membership would include those of the current UGSB. Consequentially, the terms of reference and composition of the UGSB would be revised accordingly, focussing on matters related to the administration of research training. The Research Students Committee of the UGSB would likely to be disestablished, with its functions taken up by the UGSB.

The Dean would report on progress of the proposal at the next meeting.

## **5. RANKING AND STARRING OF AGENDA ITEMS**

Items 6.1 to 6.7 were starred for discussion.

## **6. POLICY AND PROCEDURE MATTERS**

### **\*6.1 Biannual review - offshore higher degree programs by research**

**For action: Dean, Chuah, Tooth**

The Board agreed that a standardized review process and supporting documents for research degrees would be helpful. Comments on the proposed review form in Document 6.1 were provided:

- The questions under the heading “Financial and Fee Management” do not seem to enable an effective review of the commercial aspects of the degree program. It was noted that the UTS Offshore may, with the assistance from the Commercial Director, provide separate financial information to the Commercial Activities Committee for the review. The Dean would however highlight this concern to the UTS Offshore.
- Since the review form is intended for all offshore research degree programs and not confined to those offered in Modern Standard Chinese (Chinese), the Appendix to the form detailing the language ability of supervisors may be amended to remove the specific reference to the Chinese language.
- The questions on Library services may need some clarification so that they would not be misread as questions about the technical side of accessibility, ie, the intention of the questions are not about the IT support and/or difficulty in accessing library resources. It was suggested that the UTS Offshore may consult the Library directly for some appropriate wording.

### **RESOLVED AGS/05/01**

that the advice of the University Graduate School Board on the pro-forma for the biannual review of higher degree programs by research be forwarded to UTS Offshore.

### **\*6.2 Research degrees in LOTE**

**For action: Dean**

**For noting: All members, Goodman, Chuah, Gray**

The proposed conditions for the offer of research degrees in LOTE were discussed.

For a program conducted in English but the thesis is submitted in LOTE, the following were agreed:

- The first dot point proposing that “*The student is having unforeseen difficulties in English expression*” seemed unnecessarily restrictive. The spirit of the Academic Board resolution was to allow research degrees to be completed in English or any Language other than English provided that teaching, supervision, research and examination resources are available in the appropriate LOTE. If the Academic Board proviso for adequate supervision resourcing is satisfied, students should be allowed to submit their thesis in their specified LOTE, without having to demonstrate any “unforeseen difficulties”. A view was also expressed that such flexibility would allow UTS a wider appeal to the international market.

The Board agreed that this dot point be deleted.

- The second dot point specifies that “*The supervisor is able to work in the LOTE*”. The word “*work*” needed to be further elaborated.
- There was a discussion as to whether a further condition be set to require translation of the thesis into English. It was agreed that a full translation would not be necessary but an abstract in English would allow wider access.

For a degree program offered in LOTE, the proposed conditions detailed in Document 6.2 were agreed:

Relating to the above discussion, members considered it most important that, in all circumstances and including degrees in English, a student should demonstrate that he/she has the capacity to participate in the UTS research culture.

#### **RESOLVED AGS/06/02**

that the conditions for the offer of UTS higher degrees in research in a language other than English (LOTE), as detailed in Document 6.2 and amended, be approved.

#### **\*6.3 2005 Research Student Satisfaction Survey**

**For action: Dean, Goarin, all members**

The Dean advised that the survey results revealed a high level of student satisfaction with a steady upward trend. He had requested Planning and Quality Unit:

- to revise the method of calculation for the Mean, to exclude the number of “NA” responses; and
- to provide faculty breakdowns.

Members may then take these results and consider strategies to maintain a high level of satisfaction as well as for further improvements.

A brief discussion was held and members agreed that the design of the questions may be reviewed especially that some do not seem to be entirely relevant for research degrees. The Dean would circulate e-copies of the survey results to members.

### **RESOLVED AGS/06/03**

that the 2005 results of the UTS Research Student Satisfaction Survey, by year administered, as detailed in Document 6.3, be noted.

#### **\*6.4 CSIRO– Postgraduate Awards - PhD Project Topics**

**For action: Dean, Nicholson/Simpson, Nguyen, Zhang**

The Dean advised that the University /CSIRO ICT Scholarships would be available to students undertaking a full-time PhD in a science, computer science or engineering discipline. CSIRO would contribute \$200,000 to establish the scholarship program. The scholarship would be used where possible to top-up an existing scholarship already awarded to the student (eg the APA). It would be awarded on the basis of academic merit and the relevance of the proposed topic to CSIRO's research direction. Document 6.4 therefore provides a list of the PhD project topics for reference. Where the student who has been awarded a scholarship is involved in undertaking research on a non-core project for CSIRO, ownership of the student IP arising out of the student's research on the project would vest in the student or in the University following the University's rules and policy.

The Dean would circulate the CSIRO Agreement and draft Protocol to the faculties concerned. Faculties are invited to advise the Dean if there are eligible commencing students who have been awarded a scholarship.

### **RESOLVED AGS/06/04**

That the CSIRO postgraduate awards PhD project topics be noted.

#### **\*6.5 UGS 2006 Research and Research Training Action Plan**

**For action: Dean**

The Dean invited advice from members on the draft UGS Action Plan for 2006 and the following were noted:

- Page 4 – *Develop strategies to recruit the best research students to UTS as academic staff*

Some doubt was expressed regarding the objectives of the above strategy. The difficulty in implementation was also noted, for example, funding difficulty and meeting external accreditation requirements for the qualification of all teaching staff. It was suggested that the wording may be revised to reflect more accurately on the intention to develop an early career researcher strategy. The Dean also suggested Professor Andrew Benjamin to circulate the DAB ECR strategies to members for reference. He would revise the wording for this item.

- Page 5 – *Enhance opportunities for students to disseminate their work to an international audience*

The Dean confirmed that the conference fund for 2006 had increased to \$85,000 which would partly support this strategy.

- Page 5 – *Seek new opportunities to recruit high quality international students. Provide targeted support for international students*

The Dean advised that the UGS had not had specific strategies or plans before for the recruitment of high quality international students. He looked forward to working with the faculties this year to further this objective.

- Page 5 – *Improvement of data integration of research training*

Members agreed that improvement to data integration of the various research training management systems (rather than ‘research training’) across the University was important.

#### **RESOLVED AGS/06/05**

that the draft 2006 Research and Research Training Action Plan 2006 for the University Graduate School, as detailed in Document 6.5 be noted.

#### **\*6.6 Allocation of APA and UTS Doctoral scholarships**

##### **For action: Dean, Mak**

The background to the current process and scoring system for the allocation of the APA and Doctoral Scholarships was noted. Members agreed that there were scopes for a review. For example:

- The score for research strength alliance (2 points) does not seem to be as meaningful now since almost all applicants are eligible for the score. The Policy on Research Strength itself is subject to review.
- Some members considered that the maximum score (8 points) for research publications, openly competitive prizes and professional achievements seemed too high especially that the evidence for achievements in these areas may not be that obvious. There was a suggestion that the main criterion for the awards should be on academic merits.

This is a complex process for review. The Board would consider the matter further at the next meeting.

**\*6.7 Length of scholarships**

**For noting: All members**

**RESOLVED AGS/06/06**

that no scholarships or extensions to scholarships be awarded beyond the maximum period of candidature (currently 4 years - 2006).

**7. REPORTS FROM UGSB COMMITTEES**

**7.1 Research Students Committee (RSC) – membership**

**7.2 Research Student Advisory Committee – membership**

The above two items were not discussed. Discussion in item 4.3 about the future of the UGSB and the RSC is relevant.

**8. DATE OF NEXT MEETING**

**For action: Mak**

**For noting: All members**

It was agreed that the next meeting of the UGSB be changed from Tuesday, 4 April to Tuesday, 28 March. The time and venue remain the same.

**9. OTHER BUSINESS**

There being no further business the meeting ended at 11:30 am.

**SIGNED AS A TRUE RECORD**

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**CHAIR**

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**DATE**