

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

Confirmed minutes of Meeting 07/05 of the University Graduate School Board held on Thursday 6 December 2007, in the Harry Heath Room, Level 3 Building 1, City Campus at 9:30 am.

Present: Prof D Boud (Chair), A/Prof C Chappell, Prof Kees Dorst, Prof D Elliott, A/Prof P Hamilton, Dr J McKenzie, Ms N Muckle, Ms S Ng, Prof Hung Nguyen, Prof A Simpson

Apologies: A/Prof C Mitchell, Dr K Schlunke, A/Prof D Zowghi

In attendance: Ms F Zhu (Meeting Secretary), Ms A Anderson

1. WELCOME/APOLOGIES

The Chair welcomed Prof Kees Dorst and Ms Stella Ng.
The above apologies were received and noted

2. MINUTES

The minutes of meeting 07/04 (13/11/2007) were confirmed and signed as a true record.

3. BUSINESS ARISING FROM MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETINGS

3.1 DEST RTS income allocations to Faculties / Central 2004 - 2007 and funding per EFTSL

Further to the discussion at the previous meeting, UGS was asked to provide a breakdown on the RTS places and funding to each Faculty / Institute in the last 6 years. As a follow up on this request, Document 3.1 on the RTS income allocations to Faculties was tabled.

The Dean and Ms Muckle advised that since 2004 the funding has been allocated based on the average completions of each Faculty / Institute in the last 2 – 3 years. Also the funding from DEST to UTS is based on the average completions from other universities as well.

4. DEAN'S REPORT

The working party has been progressing well, and more detailed data will be ready to report to the Board in early next year.

5. POLICY AND PROCEDURE MATTERS

5.1 Cross Faculty Supervision

The Dean advised that the cross faculty Supervision program has been supported by Prof Sue Rowley, DVC (Research).

The Dean also advised that issues in this program have been discussed at a recent meeting with the Research and Research Training Committee, as well as with the Deans from different Faculties and Institutes. Feedback from those meetings has been incorporated into document 5.1. This document was to develop more transparent procedures and to assist in the interpretation of cross faculty supervision.

RESOLVED AGS/07/20

.1 that proposal on Document 5.1 Cross Faculty Supervision be accepted by the Board

The Dean suggested a sub – committee might need to be established to look into individual cases in the pilot funding program, and to develop a more systematic guideline on cross faculty supervision.

The following points were also raised from the discussion –

1. the terminology of ‘joint-supervision’ should be used in all official records, including CASS. However the system currently is not able to accommodate this requirement.
2. that infrastructures / hardware supports from the ‘home faculty’ should be considered as well.

5.2 APA & UTS DOCTORAL Scholarships discussion and decision

Document 5.2 on the 2008 scoring for scholarships and RTS was tabled. The document was supplemented by an illustrative table regarding the allocation quota.

The Dean explained the process of ranking in Document 5.2 in detail as follows:

1. All applications were scored by individual Faculties / Institutes
2. An experienced moderator, Emeritus Professor Tony Moon, was commissioned to check through the faculty scores and conduct moderations as necessary.
3. The outcome after moderation was sent to Faculties and Institutes for challenge.
4. 67 scholarships are available for 2008, which is more than the number last year (43 in 2007)
5. 26 is the lowest point for being granted first round scholarships and 22 is the lowest score to be admitted into an HDR program.

RESOLVED AGS/07/21

the APA and RTS scholarships for 2008 be allocated in accordance with the document 5.2 ‘2008 Consolidated List’.

The Dean advised that some issues were raised by Emeritus Professor Moon during the review of the applications and the scoring system. These issues are as follows:

Regarding Academic Merit

Rating an H1 (especially where there is very little consistency on what constitutes an H1 project in excellence and length) in comparison with a Masters by Research or a Masters Honours (there is no consistency in what the latter means, but in many cases it involves a graded project at least as demanding as an Honours project). Similarly does an H1 in

discipline “A” say anything at all about research potential in an unrelated discipline “B” of the research topic?

Ongoing candidates

A student who has a 2(1), has enrolled for one year and passed the doctoral assessment scores 19 under the current system. In terms of academic merit, it could be argued that all students at this point in a PhD candidature all should rank equally on the merit criteria.

Overseas qualifications

NOOSR does not rate some qualifications adequately. As an example a German or Dutch Diplom is not simply "bachelor's equivalent" but is a 5 year qualification with a graded, lengthy project. It is at least the equivalent of an Australian Honours degree. NOOSR does not have a category for Honours equivalent as ‘Honours’ is not formally part of the Australian Qualifications Framework.

Prizes

What constitutes a national competitive prize? In my view this relates to an openly competitive prize in a discipline area related to the proposed research. A summer vacation scholarship at a local university does not meet this criterion; An AFI ‘best film in category’ award does (if the research proposed is in a related area). A (single author) ‘best student poster prize’ at an international conference deserves some recognition but certainly not at the level of say a Fulbright – I would rank the former at “1”; the latter at “2”.

Publications

It needs to be made clear that where there are multiple authors, the score is divided by the number of authors. Academics who claim this discriminates against scholarship applicants should think again when they allow ‘names’ to appear on a paper which have no real claim for inclusion. See <http://www.star.uts.edu.au/thesis/authorship.html> or <http://www.nhmrc.gov.au/funding/policy/researchprac.htm#7>

The exception to this rule is for completing honours students who are able to have a publication etc accepted for publication within their honours year. I have always interpreted this generously.

Professional Experience

This scoring area seems to cause most confusion, over-scoring and often double counting. My understanding is that this ‘professional experience’ should be interpreted as professional experience related to, and demonstrating capacity for, the proposed research project. One year’s first year level casual tutoring experience counts for nothing in this regard (in my view); one year’s senior level lecturing experience in an area related to the thesis topic area enhances research capacity.

RESOLVED AGS/07/22

that the report from Emeritus Professor Tony Moon was noted by the Board.

Also the issue was raised about the current scoring system, which gives more points to Bachelor (Honours) graduates, than to graduates with Masters degree by Research. There was concern this might discriminate against some Faculties, who intend to encourage more young students with honours degrees yet the others are having more mature age students, with strong professional backgrounds / experience.

FOR ACTION: CHAPPELL, DORST AND ELLIOTT

The Board agreed to a Working Party to undertake an analysis on establishing mid-career scholarships, which can be offered to students of mature age with professional experience. The Working Party composition is:

A/ Professor Clive Chappell
Professor Kees Dorst
Professor Doug Elliott

5.3 RL Werner and Sir Gerard Brennan Scholarships

RESOLVED AGS/07/23

.1 that the RL Werner scholarship for 2008 will be awarded to the top ranking candidate at a later stage, when the scoring has been finalised.

.2 that no suitable candidate was nominated for the Sir Gerard Brennan Scholarship for 2008.

6. COURSE MATTERS

There were no course matters raising at the meeting.

7. OTHER BUSINESS

7.1 HDR student candidature assessment

Prof Elliott suggested having a discussion at the next Board meeting early next year, to compare the different ways that Faculties / Institutes conduct Doctoral and Masters Assessments. This is to share experiences within the university and to improve the procedure.

7.2 IPRS

Professor Nguyen suggested more IPRS places should be provided to outstanding international students. The Dean advised that he has discussed this issue with Professor Sue Rowley.

7.2 Meeting dates in 2008

The Board agreed that the meeting in early February 2008 should be cancelled.

The meeting closed at 11.15 am

SIGNED AS A TRUE RECORD

CHAIR

DATE