

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

Unconfirmed minutes of Meeting 08/02 of the University Graduate School Board held on Tuesday 13 May 2008 in Conference 4b, Building 1, City Campus at 9:30 am.

Present: Prof D Boud (Chair), Prof K Dorst, Prof D Elliott, Prof P Griffith, A/Prof P Hamilton, A/Prof C Mitchell, Dr M Mikula, Ms N Muckle, Prof H Nguyen, Prof I Palmer, Dr K Schlunke, Prof G Skilbeck, A/Prof D Zowghi,

Apologies: A/Prof C Chappell, Dr J McKenzie and Ms S Ng

In attendance: Ms F Zhu (Meeting Secretary), A/Prof S Schuck (standing in for A/Prof Clive Chappell)

1. WELCOME/APOLOGIES

The above apologies were received and noted

2. MINUTES

The minutes of meeting 08/01 (25/03/2008) were confirmed and signed as a true record.

3. BUSINESS ARISING FROM MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETINGS

There was no business arising from the minutes of the previous meeting.

4. DEAN'S REPORT

4.1 Change of UGS staff members

Professor David Boud will step down as Dean of University Graduate School in mid June. Professor Mark Tennant will resume the role of Dean of UGS effective 1 July and A/Prof Paula Hamilton will be the Alternate Dean during this transition.

The Board thanked Professor David Boud for his great job of chairing the Board as well as his initiatives of leading the positive changes to research training at UTS.

Prof Boud also announced that Fiona Zhu will no longer be the secretary to the UGS Board as she will take on a new role at UTS: Alumni & Development Office in June.

4.2 Report on a recent ATN DDoGS meeting

The Dean advised that the ATN DDoGS had agreed to undertake a benchmarking exercise of research training at ATN universities. Areas which will be reviewed include the completion rate, time take to complete, supervisors load and examination results achieved.

The Dean also urged Faculties and Institutes to use the completion project money wisely so that the completion rate can be improved.

4.3 The Challenge of more Scholarships

The Board noted the report from the Dean, and discussed the actions which were suggested to be taken in this report.

The Dean emphasised the importance of ensuring a good pool of well qualified applicants. It was agreed that preference would be given to top-ups and to provide greater financial support to international students through the consequential release of UTS scholarships. However, determining which of the two would be given priority differed between the Faculties and Institutes. Some Faculties prefer to provide more top-ups to local scholarship recipients while other Faculties suggested providing more scholarships to outstanding international applicants.

Members agreed to have further discussions within their Faculties / Institutes on how to increase the quality of their applicant pool, so that any increase in the number of scholarships is able to be fully allocated to the most meritorious applicants.

4.4 Preparing for Registration as a Principal Supervisor

For action: All

The document titled 'Prepare for Registration as a Principal Supervisor' was tabled at the meeting.

The Dean advised that in addition to the successful completion of a doctoral student as a Co-Supervisor, Supervisors are expected to undertake further activities as outlined in the tabled report.

The tabled report indicated ways in which the pathway for registration of new supervisors can become clearer, and how supervisors can be adequately supported in the process and develop the skills they will need to deploy.

The Dean also encouraged Faculties / Institutes to review arrangements for supervision so that Co-Supervisors / Alternate Supervisors who were aspiring to become Principal Supervisors are able to be more actively involved in supervising HDR students throughout candidature.

Other issues which were discussed:

- Explicit definitions of Principal Supervisors and Alternate Supervisors are needed
- Strong support to Category 2 Alternate Supervisors at Faculty level are required
- Some Faculties have problems with getting experienced supervisors to take part in skills development workshops / seminars
- Some Faculties find it hard to keep track of records as the database doesn't accept more than one Alternate Supervisor

RESOLVED AGS 08/02

That Faculties / Institutes be requested to discuss the paper titled 'Preparing for Registration as a Principal Supervisor', which was tabled at the Board meeting

5. POLICY AND PROCEDURE MATTERS

5.1 Research Program Provision at UTS

For action: All

The Board discussed the final report from the Working Party and endorsed the paper.

The Dean recommended that a pilot project be established as the first step, and then the second step is to facilitate further discussions on this project.

RESOLVED AGS 08/03

1. That the reports of the Working Party including attachments be referred to Faculties to assist them in the consideration and development of research education programs, and that the framework of minimum level and good provision of programs discussed by UGSB be commended to them.
2. That a project be established by the University Graduate School to assist Faculties develop candidature plans (learning agreements) through the provision of guides and the briefing of supervisors. The project should consider consequential changes that might be required for the structure of progress reports and the candidature summary statement.
3. That Faculties be requested to respond to University Graduate School Board by March 2009 on the steps they have taken to strengthen their programs and how the framework needs to be extended or modified to further enhance the quality of UTS research education.
4. That the Dean, UGS be asked to convene a new Working Group to advise on (a) a proposal for a distinctive UTS profile for research education consistent with being an ATN university and in the context of UTS policy on research positioning, (b) a framework for the qualities of research degree graduates and standards for research degrees, and (c) to identify implications for assessment and examination.

6. COURSE MATTERS

6.1 Phasing out and discontinuation of C02014 and C03013

RESOLVED AGS 08/04

The Board noted that the Academic Board had approved the following courses in Groundwater management offered by the Faculty of Engineering to be phased out and discontinued once all currently admitted students have completed:

- C02041 Doctor of Philosophy
- C03013 Master of Engineering in Groundwater Management

7. OTHER BUSINESS

7.1 Inquiry into research training and research workforce issues in Australian Universities

The Board noted both the letter and submission information on the inquiry into research training and research workforce issues in Australian Universities, from the House of Representatives Standing Committee on Industry, Science and Innovation.

The following were discussed as possible issues for a submission:

- The place of coursework in research training programs
- How to ensure that Australian research qualifications are internationally recognised
- The use of pre-doctorate courses and the availability of scholarships for such courses

7.2 Discussion of best practice in doctoral assessment

The Board discussed the paper prepared by Prof Doug Elliott.

It is recognised that the assessment procedures vary from Faculty to Faculty. Some Faculties invite external people to the committee panel and provide both oral and comprehensive written feedback reports to students. One Faculty requires students to have re-assessment in 14 days to address any outstanding issues which are pointed out by the panel during the assessment presentation. Some Faculties run pre-assessment workshops for students to help them to better prepare for the activity.

The Dean advised that detailed procedures should be available for both students and Assessment Committee members.

The meeting closed at 11.30 am

SIGNED AS A TRUE RECORD

CHAIR

DATE