

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

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Minutes of meeting (06/2) of the Committee of Chairs held at 9.30 am on Thursday 15 June 2006 at the University of Western Sydney, Parramatta Campus.

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**PRESENT:** Tony Baker (UTS)(Chair), Linda Connor (Newcastle), Anne Cusick (UWS), Tony Dooley (UNSW), Ruth Foxwell (Canberra), David Griffiths (UOW), Bruce Kercher (Macquarie), Majella Franzmann (UNE) and Bruce Sutton (USYD). Gordon Stanley, Andrew Goodyer and George Cooney also attended.

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

### **1. APOLOGIES and WELCOMES**

Apologies were received from Professors Peter Camilleri (ACU), David Green (CSU) and Malcolm Gillies (ANU).

The Chair welcomed members to the meeting and thanked Anne Cusick and Martin Derby for making all the necessary arrangements for hosting the meeting in the historic Female Orphan School building.

### **2. MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF 30 MARCH 2006**

The minutes of the previous meeting were confirmed.

### **3. BUSINESS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES**

#### **Category A Reviews**

This matter was dealt with under item 4 below.

#### **Report on HSC 'All my own work'**

Anne Cusick had represented the Committee of Chairs and participated in reviewing the project brief and providing detailed comments for the aim, content, objectives and outcomes of the program at the steering committee held in May 2006. Gordon Stanley reported to the meeting that the input of the Committee of Chairs to the work of the project group, via its representative Anne Cusick, had been invaluable, and he thanked Anne Cusick for her contribution.

The project had arisen out of the State Government initiative to include a 'respect and responsibility' element into the curriculum from Year 10. The 'All my own work' modules will be available on-line and would have to be completed by all students before sitting for the HSC.

### **4. HSC CATEGORY A COURSE REVIEWS**

#### **4.1 Category A Reviews**

Categorisation reports for the following courses were received:

- Arabic Beginners (Sydney)
- Classical Greek Continuers and Classical Greek Extension (ACU)
- Latin Continuers and Latin Extension (Newcastle)
- Music (Wollongong).

It was noted in response to the additional categorisation report for Studies of Religion I, II (ACU) and Studies of Religion Stage 6 that these courses had been included in the original review under the broad title of 'Studies of Religion'.

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## 4. HSC CATEGORY A COURSE REVIEWS (cont'd)

### 4.1 Category A Reviews (cont'd)

It was noted that the following reports are currently outstanding, and the courses would therefore have to be considered as remaining as Category A pending any subsequent review:

- Community and Family Studies (SCU)
- Health and Physical Education (SCU)
- Personal Development (SCU).

### RESOLVED (06/1):

- .1 that the HSC Stage 6 courses listed below be confirmed as Category A (noting that Community and Family Studies, Health and Physical Education, and Personal Development are yet to be formally reviewed):

Aboriginal Studies	Textiles and Design	Khmer Continuers
Agriculture	Visual Arts	Korean Beginners
Ancient History	<b>LANGUAGES</b>	Korean Continuers
Biology	Arabic Beginners	Korean Background Speakers
Business Studies	Arabic Continuers	Latin Continuers
Chemistry	Arabic Extension	Latin Extension
Community & Family Studies	Armenian Continuers	Macedonian Continuers
Dance	Chinese Beginners	Malay Background Speakers
Design and Technology	Chinese Continuers	Maltese Continuers
Drama	Chinese Extension	Modern Greek Beginners
Earth and Environmental Science	Chinese Background Speakers	Modern Greek Continuers
Economics	Classical Greek Continuers	Modern Greek Extension
Engineering Studies	Classical Greek Extension	Modern Hebrew Continuers
English (Advanced)	Classical Hebrew Continuers	Persian Background Speakers
English (Standard)	Classical Hebrew Extension	Polish Continuers
English as a Second Language (ESL)	Croatian Continuers	Portuguese Continuers
English Extension	Dutch Continuers	Russian Background Speakers
Food Technology	Filipino Continuers	Serbian Continuers
General Mathematics	French Beginners	Spanish Beginners
Geography	French Continuers	Spanish Continuers
Health and Physical Education	French Extension	Spanish Extension
History Extension	German Beginners	Swedish Continuers
Information Processes and Technology	German Continuers	Tamil Continuers
Legal Studies	German Extension	Turkish Continuers
Mathematics	Hindi Continuers	Ukrainian Continuers
Mathematics Extension 1	Hungarian Continuers	Vietnamese Continuers
Mathematics Extension 2	Indonesian Beginners	
Modern History	Indonesian Continuers	
Music	Indonesian Extension	
Personal Development	Indonesian Background Speakers	
Physics	Italian Beginners	
Senior Science	Italian Continuers	
Society and Culture	Italian Extension	
Software Design and Development	Japanese Beginners	
Studies of Religion	Japanese Continuers	
	Japanese Extension	
	Japanese Background Speakers	

#### **4. HSC CATEGORY A COURSE REVIEWS (cont'd)**

##### **4.1 Category A Reviews (cont'd)**

##### **RESOLVED (06/1): (cont'd)**

- .2 that the HSC Stage 6 courses listed below be confirmed as Category B:

Industrial Technology.

#### **5. FINANCIAL STATEMENT/CONTRIBUTION**

##### **RESOLVED (06/2)**

that the annual contribution to the Committee of Chairs be \$2,400 (excl. GST) with effect from 1 July 2006

#### **6. CONFERENCES AND MEETINGS**

The Committee noted that the National Colloquium of Chairs of Academic Boards/Senates will be hosted by the University of South Australia on Monday 23 October and Tuesday 24 October 2006.

In general discussion it was agreed that the first meeting for 2007 of the Committee of Chairs should be held at a Sydney metropolitan campus and should include an opportunity for the Support Staff group to meet.

#### **7. VET SUBJECTS**

The Committee considered a proposal put to the NSWVCC by the Minister for Education and Training that VET Category B subjects be re-classified and that traineeships be made four unit rather than two unit HSC courses. In effect, these recommendations, if carried out, would eliminate the need for categorisation. Gordon Stanley provided some general background to the Minister's request and the context in which it had arisen. In discussion, the Committee noted that the language of categorisation (in terms of 'A' and 'B') might be problematical in that it could be perceived as implying a difference in quality. The Committee agreed generally that the issue is 'fitness for purpose', and that any differences were in kind rather than in quality. It was also pointed out that under the DEST 'Building Diversity' initiatives, the traditional pathways to university had substantially changed and there are now many different options for students to enter university, for example via TAFE articulation arrangements. Changing the Category B status of VET courses was neither necessary nor useful, and might disadvantage the students that such courses are designed to help. In addition, no data had been presented that would indicate how the changing of traineeships from two to four unit HSC courses would improve the current situation or add value to the courses.

The Chair would advise the Minister, via the NSWVCC, in terms of the above discussion, that the Committee does not support the recommendation that traineeships be made four unit rather than two unit HSC courses, and that the Committee does not support the recommendation that VET Category B subjects be re-classified.

#### **8. ELECTION OF CHAIR**

##### **RESOLVED (06/3)**

that the Committee of Chairs elects Professor Anthony Baker to the position of Chair of the Committee of Chairs of Academic Boards/Senates of Universities in NSW and the ACT for the period from 1 August 2006 to 31 July 2008, subject to the Chair remaining a member of the Committee.

The Chair thanked members for their support and expressed his appreciation for the UTS support staff who had assisted him in fulfilling the demands of the role. His comments were supported by acclamation.

## **9. AUSTRALIAN CERTIFICATE OF EDUCATION**

The Committee considered the recommendations of the Australian Council for Educational Research report *Australian Certificate of Education: exploring a way forward*. Gordon Stanley led discussion of each recommendation.

It was acknowledged that the Australian Certificate of Education (ACE) was a central platform of the Commonwealth Government's education policy. It also appeared to have the strong support of groups such as the Australian Chamber of Industry and Commerce and the Business Council of Australia. There was an opportunity to influence the shape the ACE takes. Discussion focused particularly on difficulties associated with the Key Capabilities Assessment and deciding on common achievement standards. For example, it was suggested that a risk with the Key Capabilities Assessment is that it may adversely affect students' engagement with subject content. The impact of the Key Capabilities Assessment on consideration of university entry (e.g. its place in the UAI) would also need to be considered by the universities.

## **10. OTHER BUSINESS**

### **10.1 UDBECs**

In general discussion it was noted that the issue of UDBECs would need to be taken up at some time by the Board of Studies, perhaps in the context of considering options in relation to the proposed Australian Certificate of Education.

### **10.2 COMMITTEE OF CHAIRS MEETING SCHEDULE**

Members were asked to consider whether it would be useful to change the current practice of meeting for dinner on Wednesday evening and in committee on Thursdays, and instead meeting for dinner on Thursday evening and in committee on Friday. Many members pointed out that Thursdays tend to have fewer meetings (some university Councils meet on Fridays). It would only be feasible to change the current arrangement if the setting of Committee of Chairs meeting dates is delayed until after the member universities set their Council meeting schedule.

### **10.3 BOARD OF STUDIES DECISIONS**

The summary of decisions of the 9 May 2006 meeting was noted.

## **APPRECIATION**

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

## **CLOSURE**

The meeting closed at 12:45 pm.