

Academic Senate *Communiqué*

1st November 2023



Membership Update

Welcome to the new Chancellor:

Hon. Patricia Forsythe AM

Thank you to the following Members whose term expires on 31st December:

- Dr Greg Preston
- Dr Mehdi Khaki
- Mr Thomas Johnson
- Associate Professor Karen Blackmore
- Professor Nathan Bartlett
- Dr Marcus Rodrigs
- Professor Anna Giacomini
- Ms Shireen Sidhu
- Ms Tamara Asmus
- Mr Richie Mondido
- Mr Edward Bissaker
- Mr Rustin Lam
- Mr Andrew McIlwraith



Governance Matters

Strategic Thinking Workshop

PAS advised members of the recent Strategic Thinking Workshop, noting that the workshop allowed for an exploration of how the co-design approach to strategic planning can benefit the acceptance and integration of strategic plans at all levels in the University, and completed Recommendation 16 of the *External Review of Academic Governance (ERAG) 2020*.

University Policy Framework

PAS advised all members of amendments to the University's Policy Framework stating that confirming our policies align with the policy framework ensures compliance, achieves strategy, enables process efficiencies, social responsibility, and upholds standards of behaviour.

Terms of Reference

- Teaching and Learning Committee
- Research Committee
- Education Quality Enhancement Sub-Committee
- Human Research Ethics Committee Constitution

Policy / Rule Changes

- Education Quality Assurance Policy
- Academic Integrity and Ethical Academic Conduct Policy
- Program Management Manual
- Course Management and Assessment Manual
- Course and Program Performance Procedure
- Animal Research Regulatory Manual
- Enabling Programs Schedule
- Code of Practice for Higher Degree by Research Candidature
- Jointly Awarded Doctoral Degrees and Dual Award Doctoral Degrees Policy
- Research Thesis with a Creative Component Procedure
- Outbound Global Experience Procedure
- Timetabling Policy and Procedure
- Maximum Time Completion of Programs Schedule
- Academic Integrity and Ethical Academic Conduct Policy

Awards and Programs Schedules

- Associate Degree
- Bachelor of Education Studies
- Bachelor of Health
- Bachelor of Psychology (Honours) and Bachelor of Psychological Science
- Bachelor Honours Degree (80)
- Bachelor Honours Degree (320)
- Bachelor Honours Degree (240)
- Master's Degree (Extended)
- Master's Degree (Coursework – including models for 160, 120, 80)
- Graduate Diploma

Rescinded Documents:

- Animal Research S4 and S8 Drug Use Guidelines
- Animal Research Competency Guidelines
- Animal Research Monitoring and Adverse Event Guidelines.

Next Meeting 13th February 2024



Reports

PAS Report

PAS noted items raised at the meeting with student representatives included the length of interval before mid-semester break (after Week 10); the HDR Festival; student engagement and potential causes; the international student experience; and WIL. The PAS also noted the recent document [TEQSA Assessment reform for the age of artificial intelligence](#).

VC's Report

The VC noted government consultation concerning the *Australian Universities Accord* and the *Higher Education Support Act Amendment 2023*, noting the strengthening of student and staff safety and underpayment would key issues for Council. The VC noted other government papers - *Draft National Science and Research Priorities*; response to the *Nixon Review*; the *Employment White Paper*; the *NSW VET Review*; and the *Jobs and Skills Australia (JSA) reports*. The VC noted several Ministerial visits, and the success of the inaugural Industry Open Day; HDR Festival; and the Times Higher Education subject rankings. The University Early Entry program and prospective student numbers for 2024 were advised, and international student numbers noted.

Strategic Issues and Innovations

Innovations from Members

The following innovations were noted: upcoming talks at CHSF on teaching and learning in the age of AI and Chat GPT focusing on crafting assessment tasks; innovating advertising of the new Graduate Diploma in Teaching; and the Bachelor of Mathematics graduate opportunities. Note was made of several initiatives involving high schools including: the University STEM Excellence Awards; micro enabling courses; and the HunterWise program for girls. Discussion was had around issues for staff and students in relation to Program Planner, with feedback to be taken to the development team for improvement.



Annual Academic Integrity and Risk Reports

The Annual Academic Integrity Report was presented by the Lead SACO which outlined how the University has met its obligations under the *Tertiary Education Quality Standards Agency Act 2011*, and various specific requirements are outlined under the *Higher Education Standards Framework (Threshold Standards) 2021 (HESF2021)*. Discussion centred around generative AI, the decision to utilise the detection feature of Turnitin, and resources available for both staff and students. The PVC R gave a presentation on the academic risk in research, outlining the risk context for research, support structures, existing preventative controls and reactive controls should non-compliance be suspected or realised.



Forum Items

Academic Risk

Members were advised of the outcomes from the recent Academic Risk Workshop which discussed "Integrity and Performance (Teaching and Learning)" with further work to continue in 2024 with the Office of DVCA. The first "deep dive" using the TEQSA Risk Monitor Dashboard looking at student-based indicators occurred with further discussion of these indicators planned

following the release of new data in February / March 2024.

Career Ready Placements

The Director of SPP and the DPAS (T&L) gave an update on the Career Ready Placement project (formerly WIL) restating the aims of the project. The key milestones achieved in 2023 of the WIL Guiding Principles, Industry Open Day and Industry Prospectus were outlined. Members were advised that the focus in 2024 will consist of enrolment and duration process; standardised placement agreement; updating the methodology; increased resourcing; impact and reach of industry engagement plan; systems (SONIA) risk mitigation planning; system replacement requirements; and alignment with the EDI strategy.



Committee Updates

Teaching and Learning Committee (TLC)

The PVC EI gave an update on behalf of the DVCA and Chair on the Program Progression Project (PPP); the Education Quality Enhancement Sub-Committee; the Artificial Intelligence Working Group; Indigenous Strategy and Leadership; and the SACO Coordinator. The PVC EI noted proposed structural changes to the Bachelor Degrees, noting that amendments to the Program

Management Manual would be required.

Research Committee (RC)

The PVC R spoke on behalf of the DVCRI highlighted the results and recommendations following the Human Research Ethics Committee (HREC) pilot for low-risk applications with Senate endorsing the implementation of the College Ethics Review Panels, University-wide. Other items noted included changes to the *Human Research Ethics Committee (HREC) Constitution*; and the *Animal Research Regulatory Manual*. The Dean of Graduate Research outlined the HDR Rationalisation Project had significantly reduced the number of programs to focus on research qualification AQF 9 and 10, leaving three PhD programs remaining.

Program and Course Approval Committee (PCAC)

The PVC EI advised on behalf of the DVCA and Chair of amendments to the *Program Based Credit Limits and Currency* for the Laws program to recognise workforce participation and delays in applications of programs and courses was preventing implementation in semester 1, 2024.

College of Health Medicine and Wellbeing (CHMW) College Board

The PVC and Chair of the CHMW highlighted the move to CESE of the discipline of Exercise and Sports Science; the Joint Podiatry Program for 2024 with Western Sydney University at Ourimbah; and laboratory science in Singapore.

College of Engineering Science and Environment (CESE) College Board

The PVC and Chair of the CESE advised that new programs were currently in development in 2024; and noted that effectiveness of teaching in the College will be analysed. Congratulations were extended to Professor Anna Giacomini for her appointment to Fellow of the Australian Academy of Technological Sciences and Engineering (ATSE).

College of Human and Social Futures (CHSF) College Board

The PVC and Chair of the CHSF highlighted the success of the Centre for Active Living and Learning, Daughters and Dads project in Scotland on prisoner welfare.

Pathways and Academic Learning Support (PALS) Board

The PVC EI advised Academic Senate on the importance of the pathway programs such as Yapug, Diplomas and NewPrep micro courses, with the Cultural Capability and Equity micro course developed with Indigenous Strategy and Leadership team highlighted.

Want More Information?

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