

THE UNIVERSITY OF NEWCASTLE

ACADEMIC STAFF CONSULTATIVE COMMITTEE (ASCC)

Notes of a meeting of the **Academic Staff Consultative Committee** held at 10:00am on Wednesday 10 June 2015 in The Canberra Meeting Room, The Chancellery.

PRESENT:

University – Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Academic) Professor Andrew Parfitt, Pro Vice-Chancellor, Faculty of Education and Arts Professor John Germov, Associate Director, Employee Relations Paul Munro and Senior Employee Relations Officer, Greg Kerr

NTEU – Dr Tom Griffiths, Associate Professor Suzanne Ryan, Dr John Lewer, Jenny Whittard, Lance Dale

APOLOGIES:

University – Director People and Workforce Strategy, Sharon Champness

NTEU – Associate Professor Wayne Reynolds and Dr Jenny Day

Chair: Dr Tom Griffiths – Union representative

Note-taker: Ruth Hartmann

1. FINANCIAL BRIEFING

NTEU representatives requested a briefing in relation to ‘budget savings’ being imposed on Faculties and Schools. The Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Academic), Andrew Parfitt responded that the budget cuts are a result of a shortfall in student revenue. The budget situation resulted in a requirement that \$10m savings are needed across University operations. This has been split between areas and managed overheads, with \$6m in savings spread across faculties and divisions and divided according to student load relative to the student shortfall.

NTEU representatives enquired as to what the savings may be at Faculty level. Professor Parfitt responded that Faculty savings are a decision for the relevant PVC.

NTEU representatives flagged an issue that casual lecturers that were to be brought in for trimester 2 work were told that the courses were cancelled on the Friday prior to commencement. They had already done preparation work for the courses, but because separate preparation is not included in the contract they are not being paid for the preparation work.

2. ACADEMIC WORKLOAD

2.1 CONSULTATIVE COMMITTEE (WORKLOAD) GROUP

The Associate Director, Employee Relations, Paul Munro reported that following the 23 April 2015 Academic Workload Working Group meeting, the Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Academic) Andrew Parfitt sent a letter to Heads of School regarding workload models. NTEU representatives requested that a meeting of the Workload Group be arranged at the end of June 2015.

Action 2.1: University – arrange meeting of Workload Group for end of June 2015.

2.2 PILOT FOR THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE STAFF WORKLOAD PLANNER SOFTWARE

The Associate Director Employee Relations, Mr Paul Munro, reported that the Staff Workload Planner software was demonstrated to the Faculty of Science and IT on 21 May 2015. Two demonstrations were also held with the Faculty of Engineering and Built Environment on 27 May and 9 June 2015.

Demonstrations with the Faculty of Business and Law and the HR Business partners are scheduled for 16 June 2015. A further demonstration for the Faculty of Science and IT is also being scheduled. At this stage the demonstrations are being held with Heads of School, School Executive Officers, Associate Directors, Faculty and staff that would be required to handle workload information. Pro Vice-Chancellor, Faculty of Education and Arts, John Germov indicated that the pilot is expected to be complete by the end of July 2015 and the program will be demonstrated more broadly then.

2.3 PROGRESS OF THE IMPLEMENTATION OF ACADEMIC WORKLOAD ALLOCATION MODELS (AWAM'S)

NTEU representatives expressed concern that some faculties may be more prepared than others for meeting the 30 June 2015 deadline for submitting their workload model. The Associate Director, Employee Relations, Paul Munro explained that submitting a draft model at this stage would be acceptable as the Academic Workload Working Group and the ASCC would review the models before going to the Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Academic). The draft models would be accompanied by an explanation of the consultation process undertaken to review the AWAM. Draft models without sufficient consultation would be sent back for further work.

Mr Munro reported that the University had previously written to Pro Vice-Chancellors regarding the process and timetable for the development of AWAMs and undertook to issue a further reminder by 19 June 2015.

Action 2.3: University – communicate to HOSs and PVCs a reminder of the timetable for development of AWAMs by 19 June 2015.

3. REVIEW OF POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

The following matter was discussed in relation to this standing item:

3.1 PERFORMANCE EXPECTATIONS FRAMEWORK (PEF)

The Pro Vice-Chancellor, Faculty of Education and Arts, John Germov reported that Research Services are in the process of gathering data which will provide an indication of how academic staff are tracking in relation to the research metrics in the PEF. The University will provide the report to the next ASCC meeting in August 2015.

Action 3.1: University – distribute report regarding research metrics indicating academic staff performance at August 2015 ASCC meeting.

4. OFFICE CONFIGURATION AND RELOCATIONS PROPOSAL FOR ACADEMIC STAFF

The Associate Director, Campus and Asset Planning, Julie Rich attended to discuss the review of the Space Management Policy. A hard copy of the policy was provided at the meeting and an electronic copy will also be distributed to Committee members. Ms Rich advised that a Guidelines document is

being developed that will sit alongside the Space Management policy. NTEU representatives enquired as to the consultation arrangements for the Guidelines. Ms Rich responded that she would be available to bring the draft document to the August 2015 ASCC meeting. NTEU representatives requested to have access to a copy of the draft Guidelines prior to the next meeting so that they may be more informed and able to provide constructive feedback.

Discussion followed regarding the opportunity to view the office prototype in the ATC building. Ms Rich invited the Committee to view the prototype and will put forward available dates for consideration. Ms Rich reported that 'open house' sessions will also be arranged for staff members to view the space. Information regarding the space and the opportunity to view will be published in an 'In the Loop' article.

Action 4: University –

- i. Distribute electronic copy of Space Management policy;
- ii. Arrange for Julie Rich to attend August meeting to discuss 'Space Management' Guidelines;
- iii. Send out electronic copy of draft Guidelines before August 2015 meeting;
- iv. Follow up with Julie Rich regarding dates for ASCC members to view office prototype.

5. ACADEMIC PROMOTION

NTEU representatives requested an update on the review of Academic Promotions policy. The Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Academic), Andrew Parfitt advised that there are minor administrative changes to the guidelines with clarification of the scope of the appeals committee still to be implemented.

NTEU representatives flagged that the Academic Promotions Toolkit is not consistent with the newest version of the Performance Expectations Framework. University representatives will follow up on this.

Action 5: University – follow up on consistency of Academic Promotions Toolkit with PEF.

6. CONTEMPORANEOUS MARKING

Associate Director, Employee Relations, Paul Munro provided a revised draft of the Contemporaneous Guideline that was developed in consultation with the ASCC. It was agreed that the University will forward a copy of the Guideline to Pro-Vice Chancellors, Heads of School, Faculty Associate Directors and School Executive Officers.

Action 6: University – distribute Contemporaneous Marking Guideline to Pro-Vice Chancellors, Heads of School, Faculty Associate Directors and School Executive Officers.

7. ACADEMIC ANNUAL LEAVE

The Associate Director, Employee Relations, Paul Munro reported that the HR Leave Specialist had met with representatives from the Faculty of Education and Arts to discuss issues in relation to academic annual leave. A further meeting is scheduled with the Faculty of Business and Law on 17 June 2015.

8. ENTERPRISE AGREEMENT IMPLEMENTATION – ACADEMIC SPECIFIC

The Associate Director, Employee Relations, Paul Munro reported that he had met with the HR Business Partners to identify Schools with a high concentration of casuals and scope for Scholarly Teaching Fellow (STF) positions.

The NTEU raised concern about the need to progress the implementation of the STF provisions of the Academic Staff Enterprise Agreement and requested that a special ASCC meeting be arranged in respect to STFs.

The Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Academic) Andrew Parfitt responded that the 2015 budget was set before the Enterprise Agreement was completed and STF positions were not included in this year's budget. University representatives undertook to discuss the scope for STFs with Heads of School. This discussion would also include consideration of shifting funds to STF positions in profile.

NTEU representatives stated that the provision of STF positions was a core commitment by University management as part of enterprise bargaining negotiations and funding should have been earmarked for implementing these roles when the Agreement was made.

NTEU representatives advised that they will continue to press for a separate meeting on STFs prior to the next ASCC meeting and are seeking to ensure that information from HOS's is provided as part of this special meeting.

In response to a request from NTEU representatives regarding the use of Personal Leave for domestic violence circumstances, Mr Munro advised that there had been no reports to date of leave being taken for this reason.

Following up on the NTEU's request for a report on the Special Studies Program (SSP), Mr Munro advised that the information was not available in time for this meeting; however, the Director, People and Workforce Strategy, Sharon Champness may be able to report on this item at the CSCC meeting scheduled for 11 June 2015.

Action 8: i. University – discuss scope for STFs with Heads of Schools.
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9. USE OF SEARCH FIRMS FOR PROFESSIONAL APPOINTMENTS

This item follows from last meeting in relation to the use of international search firms for Professorial appointments. Based on advice of the Director, People and Workforce Strategy, the Associate Director, Employee Relations, Paul Munro reported that international search firms are generally used for Professorial appointments to ensure the best possible candidate is sourced for the role. There is the option for Schools and Faculties to request to use a different sourcing strategy where they can demonstrate that a different approach will still result in the highest possible candidates. The recruitment team have this discussion with the hiring manager at the time of recruitment.

10. UON ACADEMY

The Associate Director, Workforce Strategy and Transformation, Tina Crawford and Workforce Strategy Officer, Kim Bromley attended the Committee to provide an update on UON Academy developments for 2015, which are detailed below:

- Streamlined appointment procedure piloted in School of Business and School of Education, process being refined before it is rolled out to the remainder of Schools.

- Schools encouraged to appoint casual academic staff for the entire year rather than per semester, to improve IT system and library access in between semesters/trimesters.
- Recruitment project commenced with the introduction of an Expression of Interest process for casual academic staff (currently optional for Schools). Recruitment guideline for casual academics being reviewed and refined.
- Data collected regarding payment and marking practices for casual academic staff for review and determination of next steps.
- Attendance at the BLASST National Leadership Summit and recommendations gathered to inform 2016 project priorities.
- Best practice examples of supporting casual academic staff gathered across UON and shared via the UON Academy Roadshow Wrap-Up Newsletter.
- Work being carried out to define the Course Coordinator role and responsibilities, including the leadership role they play in managing casual academic staff. The objective is to provide more comprehensive support and development to Course Coordinators.
- Mind Tools Connect promoted to Academy members – online resource that gives members access to more than 1,000 leadership and management development resources, with new tools and techniques added every week.
- Visited each School (including ELFS and Wollotuka) to showcase UON Academy past, present and future initiatives. Through this activity we were able to gain a much better understanding of the different cohorts of casual academics in each School.
- Postcards circulated and information on UON Academy membership included in contracts of employment.
- Further work undertaken on the website, with the aim of the site being a 'one stop shop' for casual academic staff information.
- Networking event planned for Semester 2, 2015, with keynote speaker.

NTEU representatives requested a copy of the UON Academy Roadshow. Discussion followed regarding the course coordinator work, the UON Academy Hotline and whether there could be a link to the ASCC on the website.

Action 10: University – forward copy of UON Academy Roadshow to ASCC members.

11. OTHER BUSINESS

NTEU representatives flagged an issue regarding academic staff members on probation up until 2015. The staff members have been advised that they are not eligible to apply for the Special Studies Program (SSP) as they were not required to participate in the Performance Review and Development (PRD) process during their probation. As this situation could only arise this year, NTEU representatives requested that an exemption be considered for these staff members.

Meeting closed approximately at 12.00pm
