

MACQUARIE UNIVERSITY

LEARNING AND TEACHING COMMITTEE

Minutes of a meeting of the Learning and Teaching Committee held on 3 October 2007 at 9.30am in the Senate Room 1, Level 3, Lincoln Building.

Present: Dr M Hughes-Warrington (Chair)
Ms M Baillat
Mr A Burrell
A/Professor S Burton
A/Professor P Coutts
Mr J De Meyrick
Mr T Hendry
Dr M Hitchens
Dr J Homewood
Ms S Jeffares
Professor M Johnson
Dr J Lattas
Professor S Marshall
A/Professor K McCracken
Professor J Sachs
A/Professor J Shepherd
Mr D Spencer
Mr D Szambowski

In Attendance: Ms B Kosman
Ms B McLean
Ms R Myton
Ms J Peasley

1. APOLOGIES

The Committee noted that apologies were received from:
Ms M Brodie, Ms K Shorrock.

2. MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING

The Committee **APPROVED** the minutes of the meeting of 20 August 2007 as a true and correct record.

3. BUSINESS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES

3.1 Information Ethics Committee – Terms of Reference

The Committee discussed the terms of Reference of the Information Ethics Committee and its status as the sub-committee of the Learning and Teaching Committee.

The Learning and Teaching Committee unanimously **RESOLVED** to accept the Information Ethics Committee as its sub-committee for a trial period of 12 months after which renewal of the Information Ethics Committee's status will be possible.

3.2 Draft Learning and Teaching Plan 2008-2012

Professor Sachs presented a final draft of the Learning and Teaching Plan 2008-2012 for the Committee's consideration.

Most of the comments made by members of the Learning and Teaching Committee were related to the role of the Associate Deans in implementation of the proposed Learning and Teaching Plan:

- How the plan will impact on a workload of the Associate Deans;
- Whether or not the Associate Deans will have adequate powers to implement the Learning and Teaching Plan under new academic structure.

The Committee passed a motion to **RECOMMEND** that Academic Senate endorse the Learning and Teaching Plan 2008-2012.

Professor Sachs acknowledged the work of members of the drafting group: Professor Hedberg, Dr Hughes-Warrington, Professor Johnson, Professor Marshall, A/Prof McCracken, A/Prof Shepherd.

The Committee also agreed to include in agenda of its future meetings the reports on implementation of the Learning and Teaching Plan.

4. REPORTS

4.1 Chair

The Committee noted the written report of the Chair (can be viewed online at: <http://senate.mq.edu.au/ltagenda/1007/chairreport1007.doc>).

4.2 Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Provost)

The Provost reported to the Committee on the following topics:

- Teaching Performance Fund – how to improve data collecting strategies; educating both students and staff about importance of collecting performance data; problems with student surveys and how to overcome them.
- Provost lunch for students held every three months – students appreciated a chance to meet the senior academic and administrative staff.
- AUQA – the AUQA review visit at Macquarie is scheduled for April 2009. The review will be focused on internationalisation.

4.3 Reports of Associate Deans

The Committee noted the reports of the Associate Deans, Learning and Teaching, from:

- ELS
- ICS
- Humanities
- Law
- ACES
- EFS
- SCMP
- Linguistics and Psychology
- MGSM

4.4 Student Feedback Sub-Committee

The Committee noted the tabled report on the meeting of the Student Feedback Working Party held on 6 September 2007.

A/Professor Marshall reported on:

- The role of the Student Feedback Working Party;
- Issues discussed at its September meeting including:
 - the type of data that we want to collect from students;
 - what we want to do with such data;
 - how we want to manage the data.

4.5 Assessment Working Party

The Chair reported on the first meeting of the Assessment Working Party held on 13 September 2007. The Committee noted the minutes of the meeting and **RECOMMENDED** that the working party undertake an assessment benchmarking with other universities.

4.6 Carrick Research and Teaching Nexus

Dr Lattas reported on the Carrick Research and Teaching Nexus Conference and gave a brief account of the key speakers. The Committee discussed the current situation with the Macquarie applications for the Carrick awards and how to improve future applications.

5. WEBCT UPGRADE REPORT

Mr Burrell briefed the Learning and Teaching Committee on the update of Blackboard CE6 (formerly known as WebCT). He presented to the Committee:

- The data on WebCT units and active WebCT units by Divisions;
- Important dates in upgrading Blackboard CE6;
- Memo to Associate Deans, Learning and Teaching, with a checklist for the upgrade project.

Mr Burrell asked the Associate Deans' assistance in informing their staff about the upgrade of Blackboard CE6.

The Committee **RECOMMENDED** to send the information regarding the upgrade project to the I.T. Planning for Academic Priorities Committee for its consideration.

6. COMMITTEE STRUCTURE

Professor Sachs reported that as a result of the current review of academic structure, the presented draft of the Committee Structure was prepared as a guideline for the University's staff. The document contains a structure of the current and new facilitative committees of the University. Among new committees are:

- Internationalisation Committee
- Student Experience, and
- Faculty Committees.

The Learning and Teaching Committee noted a draft of the Committee Structure (can be viewed online at:

http://senate.mq.edu.au/ltagenda/1007/COMMITTEE_STRUCTURE.doc).

7. ASSOCIATE DEAN ROLE DESCRIPTIONS

The Chair presented a draft of the Associate Dean Role Descriptions (can be viewed online at: http://senate.mq.edu.au/ltagenda/1007/ASSOCIATE_DEANs_Role.doc). Associate Deans – members of the Learning and Teaching Committee, were invited to discuss the document at the divisional level.

Action: Associate Deans to discuss a proposed draft of the Associate Dean Role Descriptions in their Divisions and provide a feedback to the next meeting of the Learning and Teaching Committee.

8. OTHER BUSINESS

Review of the Teaching Policies Available on the Macquarie University Website

Professor Sachs presented a report prepared by Ms Kosman which identifies the current teaching policies available to staff via the Macquarie University website. The report raises concern that the teaching policies are “either unable to be located or if found, lacking currency, clarity or consistency at the University level.” Professor Sachs noted that the review of the teaching policies is an ongoing project coordinated by Ms Kosman’s. The Committee noted the report and its recommendations and agreed to monitor the project’s progress.

The meeting concluded at 11.35am.

Dr M Hughes-Warrington
Chair