Academic Board
Confirmed Minutes

Meeting No: AB 2/14

Date and Time: Wednesday 26 March 2014 @ 1.30pm

Venue: Council Room, Mt Helen Campus teleconferenced to Gippsland Campus

Present:

- Dr Elisa Backer
- Mr John Blair
- Mr John Dixon
- Ms Katie Donnelly
- Dr Kim Dowling (Chair)
- Associate Professor Singarayer Florentine
- Dr Nina Fotinatos
- Associate Professor Shirley Fraser
- Dr Nicola Johnson (via teleconference link up)
- Associate Professor Mark Myers (Deputy Chair)

- Mr Bob O'Shea
- Professor Penny Paliadelis
- Ms Laura Ryan
- Professor Andy Smith
- Professor Erica Smith
- Dr Lara Wakeling
- Dr Helen Weadon
- Professor Todd Walker
- Associate Professor Barry Wright
- Professor John Yearwood

Executive Officer:

- Ms Janet McGhie

In attendance:

- Ms Valma Ffrost
- Ms Joey Hutchinson

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Formal Matters

1. Welcome

The Chair welcomed members to the meeting.

The Chair welcomed Mr Chris Robinson, Chief Commissioner and CEO of the Australian Skills Quality Authority (ASQA) to the meeting noting the Academic Board was grateful for his time and that she would invite Professor Andy Smith to formally introduce Mr Robinson later in the meeting.

The Chair welcomed Dr Lara Wakeling, Deputy Chair, Appeals Committee as an alternative representative for Mr Eric Holm, Chair of the Appeals Committee; Mr Bob O’Shea as Acting Executive Dean, Faculty of Business; and Mr John Blair, Chief Operating Officer.

The Chair welcomed new members namely Ms Laura Ryan, Student Senate Representative; Ms Katie Donnelly, General Staff Member; Dr Helen Weadon, VET Teaching Staff Member; and Dr Nicola Johnson (via teleconference link up) and Dr Elisa Backer, Higher Education Staff Members.

The Chair welcomed Ms Janet McGhie as Executive Officer for the Board and Ms Joey Hutchinson and Ms Valma Ffrost in attendance from the Academic Secretariat.

The Chair welcomed Mr Peter Whitley and Ms Carol Elliot from Gippsland TAFE, Dr Jeremy Smith, Ms Julienne Krusche, Ms Ruth Bartlett and Ms Lyn Reeder in attendance to hear Mr Robinson's presentation to the Board.
2. Apologies
Apologies were received from Professor David Battersby, Ms Bonnie Chew, Professor Marcia Devlin, Mr Darren Holland, Professor Guojun Lu, Professor John McDonald, Ms Leeanne Pitman and Professor Frank Stagnitti.

3. Strategic Matters

3.1 Australian Skills Quality Authority (ASQA) Presentation
Professor Andy Smith introduced Mr Chris Robinson indicating he had been involved with the VET system for many years and has held significant positions in relation to Vocational Education. Mr Robinson worked with John Dawkins on reform of the university system and also held the role of Advisor to Paul Keating and John Howard. Mr Robinson was Managing Director at the National Centre for Vocational Education Research (NCVER) and has since held a number of senior government positions in education and related fields including Chief Executive Officer of the Department of Education and Children’s Services, South Australia and Deputy Director-General of the Department of Employment and Training, Queensland where he introduced controversial reforms. In 2011 he became Chief Commissioner for ASQA and it is the first time we have had a national regulator for Vocational Education.

Mr Robinson expressed his appreciation for the opportunity to speak to the Board and commenced by requesting attendees around the table introduce themselves and advise their role within FedUni.

Mr Robinson noted it was an interesting time to be at FedUni when it was developing new linkages with organisations in other parts of the state and noted FedUni’s vast experience as a dual sector organisation.

Mr Robinson advised whilst ASQA is the organisation that regulates the VET sector there are other kinds of regulating licensing bodies that interface with VET and higher education. The VET sector is an important but often underrated sector which relates to three quarters of the workforce in terms of “skills imparting”. Education and training is a major export for this country, we are third or fourth in the world which is a massive achievement for a country of this size. It is a crucial and major industry which requires good regulation.

Mr Robinson advised the VET sector is very varied, there are 5000 providers most of which, unlike FedUni, are very small organisations specialising in a number of training areas, some are extremely good but some are not. An important issue for ASQA is to make sure we are regulating in a way that allows us to take strong action against poor quality providers and to make sure providers that have a proven track record are able to get on with work without interference from the regulator.

Whilst a great deal of work has to be done at the institution level to develop the curriculum, the training institutes are not always incorporating the industry perspective. Training content is not determined by institutions but around occupational requirements and a lot of the work of ASQA is ensuring people are getting from training providers the training that has been prescribed as necessary by industry.

ASQA genesis occurred when the government decided to set up a body to regulate nationally with more powers than the State bodies they replaced. There has been a “mixed bag” in terms of quality and type of providers that are RTOs. Some of them we think of as “trading” – they enrol students, take money and issue certificates but training and
assessment may not feature. ASQA is able to take action and we have cancelled approximately 200 licences.

Mr Robinson advised in establishing ASQA State parliaments passed legislation to confer their powers in this area to the Australian Government. Victoria and Western Australia chose not to proceed and in those two states ASQA regulates all of the providers who have overseas students or deliver in other states. In Victoria ASQA regulates half the providers including all the largest and multi sector.

To date, there have been 18,000 applications from RTOs with the bulk of applications to change scope to add new courses. This institution has had 70 over that time. Nationally, we have not reregistered 17.5% none of which have been public providers or multi sector and most will come up for reregistration in the next one to three years. In the VET Sector there are 50 public providers of which FedUni is one and they would provide half the total delivery in the system.

In relation to his overall impressions of the quality of VET, Mr Robinson advised specifically ASQA has carried out some 3000 audits and has found 20% of RTOs are fully compliant. The Act requires people are fully compliant with the Standards at all times and ASQA is required to take action and give people an opportunity to address the issue. Much of the sector struggles with assessment and doing it properly, training providers understand training better than assessment. The standards themselves haven’t been written sufficiently clearly with much scope for interpretation and some people do not pay any attention at all to the standards.

In the Aged Care Sector ASQA found 70% of providers are not providing programs of at least one year duration and one third of providers were providing programs in less than sixteen weeks. The whole training sector is built around competency; however, it appears the thinking of some providers is “getting rid of everything to do with timelines as long as it leads to the outcome”. It must be understood that the quality of input has something to do with the quality of the outcome. This is a major issue in the VET system with too many people offering shorter and shorter periods and not allowing enough time to assess competency.

Going forward, we need to come to terms with “fundamental quality” and how the market system has had unintended consequence. There needs to be enough hours around the product to ensure consistent quality by all providers. Because a lot of VET students are adults in the workplace it is for good reason to have a flexible system. Short programs are appealing to customers and there is a lot of market pressure on VET providers to go in the wrong direction to keep a competitive product. This is a big dilemma and one of the overall findings having an impact on other providers and not helping to maintain quality provision.

Mr Robinson advised that one benefit of a national regulator is that particular state–based issues can be highlighted. Mr Robinson advised he had written to the Chair of the National Skills Standards Council (NSSC) raising concerns in relation to large providers and the number of times training packages changed i.e. 5,000 applications out of 18,000 have been upgrades of training packages with some having changed fifteen times in the last three years. The concept of an “industry led” system is totally appropriate but the discipline with which change is implemented needs a fair bit of work. We are refining how we work as a regulator and working on change mechanisms and we will get some changes in this space for some of it. Mr Robinson advised ASQA is working on a game plan in relation to excessive numbers of changes and his suggestion was there shouldn’t be more than one over a year.
In relation to consolidation of VET providers in Victoria and what regulator guidance would be provided, Mr Robinson advised that if a new legal entity comes into existence, a new registration is required. However, where basically the ownership remains unchanged it will be a fairly straightforward process and that the amalgamation process would be the time to scrutinise.

The Chair thanked Mr Robinson for his presentation to the meeting.

Mr Chris Robinson, Mr Peter Whitley, Ms Carol Elliot, Dr Jeremy Smith, Ms Julianne Krusche, Ms Ruth Bartlett and Ms Lyn Reeder left the meeting.

4. **Vice-Chancellor’s Report**

4.1 **Vice-Chancellor's Report**

The Chair noted the Vice-Chancellor is an apology for the meeting and invited Professor Todd Walker to speak to items in the Vice-Chancellor’s Report.

**Review of Administrative and Academic Structures**

Professor Walker noted he would like to draw to the Board’s attention that the Reviews of Administrative and Academic Structures are underway.

Professor Andy Smith advised “face to face” sessions had been conducted at Gippsland and Ballarat campuses and last week a series of questions were sent out. A consultant has been engaged to collate responses and reports will come back before the middle of the year.

**Victorian Government Ministerial Changes**

Professor Walker advised that since the last meeting, the Minister for Higher Education and Skills, the Hon. Peter Hall has resigned and retired. He has been very close to this university and his replacement is the Hon. Nick Wakeling, the member for Ferntree Gully. The Vice-Chancellor has a meeting with the Minister this Friday to touch base and will communicate our respect, admiration and thanks to the former Minister for his past assistance and support.

4.2 **Questions to the Vice-Chancellor**

There were no questions to the Vice-Chancellor’s report.

The Chair thanked Professor Walker for the update.

5. **Chair’s Report**

5.1 **Academic Board nomination**

The Chair acknowledged the excellent engagement at the election for new members of the Board noting the interest was very heartening with more candidates than ever before. The Chair expressed her congratulations to the new members and that she looked forward to their contribution.

The Chair acknowledged Nicola Johnson was taking part in the meeting via teleconference from Gippsland and advised the University is working on video conferencing for this meeting room. In the future we are hopeful we can move away from telephone link up which will be very good for our standing committees and it is planned that standing committees and Academic Board will chair at least one meeting per year in Gippsland for which at least the Chair and Secretariat will travel.
Professor Walker queried the possibility of utilising the Royal Society of Victoria (RSV) Building situated in Victoria Street in the Melbourne CBD.

The Chair advised she would take on notice this question.

*John Blair left the meeting.*

The Chair noted at the last meeting a document was tabled in relation to members we would like to co-opt and it seemed prudent to move to co-op Mr John Blair as Chief Operating Officer. Mr Blair’s role in the Gippsland integration is incredibly important and his ability to update us on that coming together could be very important going forward.

**Resolution AB2/14/1**
Academic Board approved the nomination of the Chief Operating Officer as an appointed member of Academic Board from 26 March 2014 to 31 December 2014.

*John Blair returned to the meeting.*

5.2 2015 Academic Calendar
The Chair advised the 2015 Academic Calendar had been included in the agenda papers for members’ instructions.

6. Starred Items
6.1 Starred Items
There were no further items starred.

6.2 Non-Starred Items
**Resolution AB2/14/2**
Academic Board resolved that all items on the agenda not “starred” be adopted without discussion, and the action recommended be taken or the information therein noted.

7. Minutes
Professor Nina Fotinatos queried if there was an action sheet from the minutes of meeting AB1/14 highlighting Item 5.2 wherein a flow diagram illustrating reporting requirements of the Faculty Board was to be circulated.

The Chair advised this is still an item that is open and that Professor Smith had agree to construct the diagram.

Academic Board confirmed the minutes from meeting AB1/14 held 12 February 2014.

**Resolution AB2/14/3**
Academic Board confirmed the minutes of Academic Board meeting AB1/14 held 12 February 2014.

8. Schedule of Business
The Chair informed members the Schedule of Business is still in draft form and will be brought to the next meeting for endorsement noting that feedback from members would be appreciated.
9. **Report from Academic Board Executive Committee**
The Board noted the minutes of the Academic Board Executive Committee Meeting held on 13 March 2014.

**Reports from the Standing Committees**

10. **Report from Appeals Committee**
Dr Lara Wakeling, Deputy Chair of the Appeals Committee advised to date there have been 111 appeals for 2014 which is 20% up on this time last year. Three quarters of these appeals relate to exclusion and the remainder final grades. There have been no hearings at all for 2014 at this point. At the moment there are issues relating to applications being assessed and there is a slight backlog.

The Chair advised work is being undertaken to ensure there are grounds for appeals in each lodged appeal noting many appeals have no grounds whatsoever. Further, the Chair of the Appeals Committees and support staff are looking at better ways for communicating with students i.e. culturally appropriate and engaging.

Mr Bob O’Shea noted typically a lot of students do not address the criteria; they leave that part blank and rely only on their story.

The Chair thanked Dr Wakeling for her report.

11. **Report from Curriculum Committee**
Associate Professor Myers advised at the last Curriculum Committee meeting ninety course outlines were approved that had all been transferred to the new Course Outline form and were modified to meet AQF compliance. These will be brought to the next Academic Board meeting.

Associate Professor Myers advised the vast majority are meeting AQF standards; however, the Committee has concerns in that we are finding too many small errors. As a result, Curriculum Committee is talking to program committees about the degree of scrutiny we require as the approval process becomes very difficult if what we get from Boards contains a lot of errors.

The Chair commended the diligent work of the Curriculum Committee and thanked Associate Professor Myers for his report.

**Resolution 2/14/4**
Academic Board noted the non-award Course Licensed Electrical Assessment

12. **Report from Learning & Teaching Committee**
The Board noted the minutes from the Learning and Teaching Committee Meeting 1/14 held 26 February 2014.

The Chair invited Dr Nina Fotinatos to provide a report to the Board.

Dr Fotinatos advised the first meeting of the Learning & Teaching Committee was held after the last Academic Board meeting and the second meeting will be held next week chaired from Gippsland. The Learning & Teaching Committee had been focusing on various items including the Assessment Working Party, a “roll out strategy” for the Student Plagiarism Procedure, the FedUni Learning & Teaching Interim Plan 2014, development of the 2015-2017 FedUni Learning &
Teaching Plan and eVALUate improvements. In terms of dissemination involvement the Committee has been in discussions with the FedUni legal community (around Special Consideration) and the Gippsland Education Working Group. In supporting innovation and growth the Committee has been reporting and making suggestions towards improving issues that are hindering innovation and best practice and looking at improving e-learning and difficulties staff are experiencing.

Student Plagiarism Procedure
Dr Fotinatos advised the Student Plagiarism Procedure is the culmination of two years of work by the Working Party led by Dr Richard Dazeley.

Clarification was sought on whether or not a student will automatically have a hearing and concern around detection of plagiarism was raised in that we do not have a good process in place.

The Chair agreed to report back on the University process and legal position with respect to *Turn it In*.

Dr Fotinatos advised Dr Richard Dazeley and she were meeting to discuss professional development to be rolled out across the university.

**Resolution 2/14/5**
*Academic Board approved the Student Plagiarism Procedure.*

**Chairs Note**: Discussions took place subsequent to this meeting to determine if the editorial changes were consistent with the intentions of the working party and the consultation process. Conflicts were identified and the Chair requested further deliberation by the Learning and Teaching Committee. The matter will return to Academic Board in a revised form.

Interim Learning and Teaching Plan for 2014
Dr Fotinatos advised the Interim Learning and Teaching Plan for 2014 was the culmination of three meetings held last year which looked at the Monash Education Plan and tidied up and improved the component and responsibility areas within the current 2012-2014 Plan.

Minor editorial amendments were discussed.

**Resolution 2/14/6**
*Academic Boards endorsed the Interim Learning and Teaching Plan for 2014.*

**13. Report from Research Committee**
The Board noted the minutes from the Research Committee Meeting 2/14 held 6 March 2014.

The Chair invited Associate Professor Singarayer Florentine to provide a report to the Board.

Associate Professor Florentine advised in relation to development of the Research Strategic Plan two successful workshops were held in February at the Mt Helen and Gippsland Campus respectively and from those workshops it was noted the development process of the plan should be transparent and involve all levels of researchers from the university research community; the working party membership should include Indigenous representation, have a gender balance and include no more than 12 members; and the Research Strategic Plan should be a plan “by and for researchers”.

Associate Professor Florentine advised the Committee is progressing well and hoping to finalise the draft during August to present to Academic Board.

**Research Committee Terms of Reference**
Professor Florentine advised when establishing the new Research Committee Terms of Reference a recommendation was put forward to remove the representatives from each Gippsland Faculty from the membership as Gippsland was being overrepresented. Further, the membership be amended so the Higher Degree by Research Student (Mount Helen and Horsham) and Higher Degree by Research Student (Gippsland) members were ‘elected’ and not ‘co-opted’ on to the Committee.

The Chair thanked Associate Professor Florentine for his report.

**Resolution AB2/14/7**
Academic Board approved the revised Research Committee Terms of Reference.

14. **Report from Student Senate**
The Chair advised she was grateful to have to the Student Senate representative in place and that she had extended her willingness to speak to the Senate if they thought it would be useful. The Senate will bring their minutes to Academic Board.

The Chair thanked Ms Laura Ryan for being present.

**Reports from other Committees**

15. **Report from Council**
Academic Board noted the extract of minutes from Council Meeting 1/14 held 8 February 2014.

16. **Internationalisation of the Curriculum Working Party**
Academic Board noted the minutes from the Internationalisation of the Curriculum Working Party meeting 1/14 held 11 February 2014.

**Resolution 2/14/8**
Academic Board approved the revised Internationalisation of the Curriculum Working Party Terms of Reference.

17. **Report from International & Partners Committee**
No minutes were received from the International & Partners Committee.

18. **Report from Legislation Committee**
The Chair relinquished the Chair to the Deputy Chair, Associate Professor Mark Myers in relation to the Report from Legislation Committee.

Academic Board noted the minutes from the Legislation Committee meeting 1/14 held 6 March 2014.

The Chair noted concern had been raised that Certificate level graduates do not have the same
style of academic dress. Currently there are discrepancies between Certificates I & II and Certificate III & IV.

Resolution 2/14/9
Academic Board approved and recommends to Council Executive for approval the amendments to Regulation 4.1 – Academic Dress.

The Chair noted that University of Ballarat students before 1 January 2014 had the option to graduate with a University of Ballarat degree or award within a period of six years. This amendment allowed this intention to be actioned. If enrolled as a Federation University student, however, they are a Federation University student.

Resolution 2/14/10
Academic Board approved and recommends to Council Executive for approval the amendments to Regulation 5.6 – Admission to and Granting of Academic Awards From 1 January 2014 – Persons Enrolled As A Student Of The University of Ballarat.

The Chair noted it is part of the “bookkeeping requirement”. Students are permitted to be accompanied by an observer who is not legally qualified. This is consistent with the wording in other University Regulations were observers are permitted.

Resolution 2/14/11
Academic Board approved and recommends to Council Executive for approval the amendments to Regulation 6.1 – Student Discipline.

The Chair noted this regulation has been amended to replace “lawyer” with “a person with legal qualifications”. This is consistent with the wording in other University Regulations where observers are permitted.

Resolution 2/14/12
Academic Board approved and recommends to Council Executive for approval the amendments to Regulation 5.3 – Assessment.

19. Report from Policy Committee
No minutes were received from the Policy Committee.

20. Report from Quality Committee
Academic Board noted the minutes from the Quality Committee meeting 1/14 held 3 March 2014.

Eligibility to Graduate (Higher Education) Audit Report
The Chair noted the Eligibility to Graduate (Higher Education) Audit Report had been tabled at a recent Quality Committee Meeting. Ms Claire Shaw, Manager Internal Audit is completing required background work to ensure our systems are robust enough so students put up to graduate have met the criteria and she will report at the next Academic Board meeting.

Concerns were raised with reference to validation of this data and it was agreed to report on this at the next meeting,

The Chair advised in terms of transparency it is important we are aware this is a problem and not a problem going forward.
21. **Reports from Faculty Boards**

21.1 **Business**
No minutes were received from the Faculty of Business.

21.2 **Education and Arts**
No minutes were received from the Faculty of Education and Arts.

21.3 **Health**
21.3.1 Academic Board noted the minutes from the Faculty of Health Board Meeting 1/14 held 30 January 2014.

21.3.2 Academic Board noted the minutes from the Faculty of Health Board Meeting 2/14 held 20 February 2014.

21.4 **Science**
21.4.1 Academic Board noted the minutes from the Faculty of Science Board Meeting 3/14 held 20 February 2014.

21.4.2 Academic Board noted the minutes from the Faculty of Science Board Meeting 4/14 held 13 March 2014.

21.5 **Federation College**
No minutes were received from Federation College.

21.6 **Industry Skills Centre**
Academic Board noted the minutes from the Industry Skills Centre Board Meeting 1/14 held 14 February 2014.

22. **Report from Dual Sector Project**
Academic Board noted the update from the Director of the Dual Sector Project.

23. **Awards Approvals**
Academic Board noted the awards that were approved by the Chancellor and the Chair, Academic Board, in between meetings of the Board.

**Resolution AB2/14/13**
Academic Board noted, registered and forwarded to Council for noting, the awards that were approved by the Chancellor, and the Chair, Academic Board, in between meetings of the Board.

**Information for Members**

Nil

**Other Business**
Resignation of Ms Valma Ffrost as Executive Officer to the Academic Board

The Chair put forward a vote of thanks to Ms Valma Ffrost noting Valma has been a wonderful supporter and contributor to this Board. The Chair advised Valma is not leaving the University but is moving on to the office of the Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Academic) and both personally and on behalf of the Board thanked Valma for her contribution.

Date of Next Meeting

The next meeting of Academic Board will be held on Wednesday 7 May 2014 @ 1.30pm in the Council Room, Mt Helen Campus.

Meeting concluded at 3.35 pm