

Academic Board (AB) Minutes of Meeting



DATE: 15 September 2020
TIME: 10am – 12pm via Microsoft Teams

PRESENT:

1. Professor D Cohen, AB President and Chair
2. Professor M-L McLaws, AB Deputy President
3. Associate Professor G Forsyth, AB Deputy President
4. Professor I Jacobs, President and Vice-Chancellor
5. Scientia Professor J Roberts, Business School
6. Professor C Annesley, Dean of Arts & Social Sciences
7. Professor M Crossley, Deputy Vice-Chancellor, Academic
8. Professor T Cumming, Arts & Social Sciences
9. Professor M Davis, Such other Person (SoP), Pro-Vice-Chancellor, Indigenous
10. Professor A Deletic, Pro-Vice-Chancellor, Research and Acting DVCR
11. Professor N Di Girolamo, Medicine
12. Professor A Durbach, Law
13. Professor S Foster, Dean of Engineering (Acting)
14. Professor M Frater, Rector of UNSW Canberra
15. Professor M Green, Such other Person
16. Professor E Johnston AO, Dean of Science
17. Professor N Kessissoglou, Engineering
18. Professor H Lochhead, Dean of Built Environment
19. Professor G Lodewijks, Science
20. Professor S Loo, Art & Design
21. Professor J Morris, Dean of Graduate Research
22. Professor A Munster, Art & Design
23. Professor S Parameswaran, Engineering
24. Professor V Perkovic, Dean of Medicine
25. Professor J Seidel, Science
26. Professor A Simmons AM, Provost
27. Professor A Steel, Law
28. Professor C Styles, Dean of Business School
29. Professor M Tani Bertuol, UNSW Canberra
30. Professor M Uncles, Business
31. Professor S Zlatanova, Built Environment
32. Professor A Zwi, Arts & Social Sciences
33. Associate Professor J Bryant, Arts & Social Sciences
34. Associate Professor S Egan, Science
35. Associate Professor H Kleine, UNSW Canberra
36. Associate Professor L Lixinski, Law
37. Associate Professor M Michael, Arts & Social Sciences
38. Associate Professor M Nehme, Law
39. Dr N Castano Rodriguez, SoP, Chair of the Early Career Academic Network
40. Dr S Clark, Engineering
41. Dr G Edwards, SoP, Chair of the Re-enrolment Appeals Committee
42. Dr J Galliot, UNSW Canberra
43. Dr R Green, Art & Design
44. Dr A Kayis-Kumar, Business School
45. Dr D Moreau, Engineering
46. Dr B Oo, Built Environment
47. Dr M Pervaz Iqbal, Medicine
48. Dr J Steele, Science
49. Dr A Unnikrishnan, Medicine
50. Ms N Bhattacharya, SoP, International Student Representative

51. Mr A Bin Ramizi, Undergraduate Student
52. Mr R Challis, Undergraduate Student
53. Ms S Kong, Higher Degree Research Student
54. Ms S Nandakumar, Chair of Arc @ UNSW Board
55. Mr M Raman, Postgraduate Student
56. Ms E Risoldi, President of the UNSW Student Representative Council (SRC)
57. Mr R Roy, Postgraduate Student
58. Officer Cadet C Wooding

APOLOGIES: Scientia Professor M Santamouris, Built Environment
Professor N Fisk AM, Deputy Vice-Chancellor, Research (DVCR)
Professor A Lynch, Acting Dean of Law
Professor R McLaughlin, UNSW Canberra
Professor E Scheer, Acting Dean of Art & Design
Professor R Wilkinson, Pro-Vice-Chancellor, Education & Student Experience (PVCE)
Associate Professor C Collins, Business School
Mr N Bedford, SoP, Indigenous Student Representative
Mr J Fox, Built Environment
Ms N Laba, Higher Degree Research Student
Ms B Shi, President of Postgraduate Council (PGC)

IN ATTENDANCE: Scientia Professor G Williams AO, Dr S Telfser, Mr M Borchert, Mr J Fitzgibbon, Ms S Lightfoot, Ms S Mohamed, Mr N Morris, Ms M Pavelkova, Mr J Rogers

SECRETARY: Ms F Velosa, Senior Governance Officer

Quorum: 20
RAMS: 2020/000201

For convenience, items were taken out of agenda order.

A PROCEDURAL MATTERS

1. Welcome and apologies

The Chair extended his respects to Elders past, present and emerging, and acknowledged the Traditional Custodians of all the lands from which members were joining the meeting.

The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting and the Academic Board accepted the apologies received from members for this meeting.

The Academic Board noted that Deputy AB President Associate Professor Forsyth was attending his last AB meeting as he had resigned from the AB, with his last day being Friday 2 October 2020. The Chair thanked Associate Professor Forsyth for his tremendous contributions to the Academic Board and the University over many years, and wished him well for his retirement.

On behalf of the Academic Board, the Chair congratulated Dr Kayis-Kumar (Business) on her election as Deputy AB President from 3 October 2020 to 31 December 2020 – to fill the casual vacancy arising from the resignation of Associate Professor Forsyth. The Chair thanked Dr Kayis-Kumar for her excellent participation on the Board thus far, and reported that he looked forward to her future contributions as Deputy President.

The Chair acknowledged the outstanding work of Professor Harley (Dean of Art & Design) on the Board and for the Faculty and the University. The Board noted that Professor Harley had left the University on 28 August 2020 (after the last AB meeting).

2. Minutes of the previous meeting held on 28 July 2020

RESOLVED

The Academic Board confirmed the minutes of its meeting held on 28 July 2020 as an accurate record and authorised the Chair to sign them digitally.

2.1 Electronic circulation of 19 August 2020 – to approve programs 3444 and 3925

RESOLVED

The Academic Board noted its electronic circulation completed on 19 August 2020 to approve the following undergraduate program revisions:

Faculty of Arts & Social Sciences

- 3444 Bachelor of Arts and Business

Faculty of Science

- 3925 Bachelor of Science and Business

3. Matters arising and business carried forward, other than business covered on the agenda

The Academic Board noted that the matters arising and business carried forward had either been completed or were in progress.

4. Starring of items, adoption of unstarred items and rearrangement of the agenda

The Academic Board starred items 14 (HDR Supervision Policy and Procedure) and 15.1-15.3 for discussion. The Chair rearranged the agenda for Professor Morris to discuss item 14 directly after item 9. The Academic Board received and carried a motion to adopt all the unstarred items.

5. Confirmation of confidential items

The Academic Board confirmed that parts of the DVCR report were marked confidential and there were no other confidential items.

B PRESIDENTS' BUSINESS

6. Report from the AB President (Chair)

The Academic Board received and noted the report of the AB President. The Chair also reported that the NSW/ACT Chairs of Academic Boards and Senates (CABS) had met on 11 September 2020 and discussed key issues, including updates from the NSW Education Standards Authority (NESA) on decluttering the K-12 syllabus and reviewing the trend of over-assessment (and balancing formative and summative assessment). The Board noted the importance of NESA and universities working in parallel to consider the expectations of the knowledge and skills that students gained through HSC and transitioning to university or TAFE. The Chair reported that there were opportunities to nominate University staff to sit on committees that provide advice to NESA, and that he would contact Faculties in this regard.

6.1 [UNSW Rules](#) updates endorsed by ABAC (approved by Council on 17 August 2020)

RESOLVED

The Academic Board received and noted the updates to the UNSW Rules, which included the removal of references to the names of UNSW Faculties as AB electorates in anticipation of the AB and Faculty Board elections to be held later in 2020.

6.2 AB nomination to the Honorary Degrees Committee of Council – Emeritus Professor Richard Henry AM

RESOLVED

The Academic Board recommended that Council approve the nomination of Emeritus Professor Richard Henry AM to the Honorary Degrees Committee of Council, as one of the Academic Board nominations, for a term from 1 January 2021 to 31 December 2022.

7. Report of the President & Vice-Chancellor (VC)

The VC thanked:

- staff for their work on the virtual UNSW Open Day on Saturday 5 September 2020 as it had been very successful for the University, and
- Associate Professor Forsyth for his contributions to the University and congratulated Dr Kayis-Kumar on her election to the role of Deputy President of the Academic Board.

The Board noted that some senior academics who were leaving the University were being awarded the title Emeritus. The VC noted their departure with sadness and wished everyone the very best at this difficult time for staff and the University.

The VC reported on the following:

- He would explain the next steps in the University's response to the COVID-19 pandemic in an all staff email on 16 September 2020. The VC noted that the University community had worked together, coping with uncertainty and stress to respond to the disruptions forced on all aspects of work and life. He acknowledged that the University had demonstrated solidarity and professionalism in continuing to deliver services, teaching and research, and everyone would need to show collegiality and compassion in taking the next steps to address the financial burden of the COVID-19 crisis, which involved deeply painful job losses.
- The University would circulate the workplace change (WPC) proposal to all staff on 16 September 2020. Staff would be able to submit feedback on the proposals via the HR Hub site during the consultation phase, which would end at 5pm on Monday 12 October 2020. The VC expressed deep regret about the impact on staff losing their jobs, noting that the University would do everything possible to support and assist them in the next steps in their career.
- Other staff would experience a degree of uncertainty as existing roles in the University became disestablished – and there would be opportunities to explore new roles in the University's proposed new structures. The University would complete this process in a way that would ensure fairness and equity.
- The external University environment remained challenging, including intense scrutiny of the Federal Government Job-ready Graduates Package of reforms to higher education job readiness of graduates and fee increases in some disciplines. The University had made a submission to a Senate Enquiry on freedom of speech, noting that UNSW had the strongest freedom of speech statement (Academic and Intellectual Freedom at UNSW).

Though providing little consolation at a difficult time for everyone, the VC reported on the following positive news for the University:

- University income from grants, industry, philanthropy and other sources was increasing.
- University ranking results were improving, as reported in the DVCR Report (item 10).

In response to questions from AB members, Professor Simmons:

- advised that HR would continue to accept expressions of interest for salary reductions and FTE changes from staff;
- reported that staff could request information about categories of staff and levels of seniority of people who had accepted voluntary redundancy from their respective

Faculty/Division as privacy requirements prevented the University-wide announcement of that information; and

- reported that the University was awaiting advice from Federal and State governments on pilots for international students to return to Australia, which were still on hold due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

The Chair thanked the VC for his report and Professor Simmons for her updates.

8. Questions on notice – Nil

C PRESENTATIONS AND DISCUSSION TOPICS

9. PhD Program Review

The Dean of Graduate Research, Professor Morris, discussed his presentation and provided an overview of the academic program review (APR) of the PhD, one of UNSW's flagship programs, under the following headings:

- Snapshot of Higher Degree Research (HDR) candidates, supervisors and research activity.
- UNSW HDR strategy to build research capacity, enhance research experience and train future researchers.
- The APR held in late 2019, chaired by Professor Fabian, which included extensive surveys of candidates and academics.
- The APR terms of reference, which included program objectives, strategic alignment, positioning, demand, recruitment and compliance; supervision quality; examinations; and candidate support, wellbeing and experience – for which recommendations were made.
- Key recommendations and actions, completed or in progress, subject to funding, including the review of policies and procedures on supervision quality and training, admissions and scholarships.

The Board noted the following:

- The PhD APR presented a valuable opportunity to take stock and assess the direction of the program.
- Some APR recommendations had been referred to relevant Faculties/Divisions if deemed to be outside the remit of the Graduate Research School (GRS) or the Dean of Graduate Research.
- Overall, the program was delivering on what UNSW expected from its PhD programs.

Professor Morris concluded that the University had the opportunity to work on candidate experiences and support to ensure that PhD candidates continued to make a global impact.

In response to questions from Board members, Professor Morris reported on the following:

- The University needed to improve its harnessing of the work and success of UNSW Alumni, and help prepare HDR candidates for the variety of careers outside of academic research as the traditional PhD route tended to focus on preparing candidates for conducting academic research.
- UNSW was committed to deferring international scholarship holders who had not been able to obtain their visa to arrive on campus by the start of T2 or T3 2020 to T1 2021.

Board members noted that they would receive the presentation after the meeting and could liaise directly with Professor Morris on their ideas and comments on the PhD program.

The Chair thanked Professor Morris for his presentation and commended the excellent work of the APR panel.

D REPORTS

10. Deputy Vice-Chancellor, Research

The Academic Board received and noted the report of the Deputy Vice-Chancellor, Research (DVCR). The Chair invited the Acting DVCR, Professor Deletic, to provide an update.

Professor Deletic highlighted the following, as detailed in the DVCR report:

- Research funding outcomes, including the ARC Future Fellowship, the NHMRC Scheme and the Medical Research Future Fund (MRFF).
- The 2020 HERDC submission, finalised on 30 June 2020 for income in 2019, which had increased by 15.2% for 2019.
- Rankings results for the:
 - 2020 Academic Ranking of World Universities (ARWU), in which UNSW had risen 20 places to 74th place in 2020;
 - 2021 Times Higher Education (THE) World University Rankings, in which UNSW had risen 4 places to 67th place; and
 - Aggregate Ranking of Top Universities (ARTU), in which UNSW ranked 44th in QS (ARTU 2020 would be released in October 2020).
- HDR enrolment and completion updates.
- Update on the implementation of the outcomes of the UNSW Centres and Institutes Review according to the new UNSW Centres and Institutes Procedure published in 2019.
- The joint Research Planning Day of the UHDC and the URC to be held on 8 October 2020 would include discussions on strategies to maximise the synergies across the integrated portfolios of research and enterprise in the proposed new Division of Research and Enterprise.
- The response of the Divisions of Research and Equity, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) to support Early Career Researchers (ECRs) affected by COVID-19 to focus on measuring research achievements equitably, relative to opportunity during the severe disruption of the pandemic.
- ARC's comprehensive review of the assessments of Excellence in Research for Australia (ERA) as well as Engagement and Impact (EI) to seek feedback on whether the current objectives and methodologies of ERA and EI would meet the future needs of the university sector.

The Chair thanked Professor Deletic for her summary.

11. Deputy Vice-Chancellor, Academic

The Academic Board received and noted the report of the Deputy Vice-Chancellor, Academic (DVCA).

Professor Crossley welcomed everyone to T3 2020, which had started the previous day (14 September 2020) with appropriately social distanced tutorials and practicals being held on campus, but lectures still delivered online. He thanked everyone for their good work in T2 2020 in teaching, assessment and marking, which the students appeared to appreciate. Professor Crossley reported that the University had received fewer special consideration requests than expected.

Professor Crossley echoed the VC's gratitude for the good work of University staff during the virtual Open Day on 5 September 2020. He reported that the University had received about 6000 registrations to attend the Open Day, of which about 4500 had logged in on the day.

The Board noted the following:

- The University was exercising flexibility in its enrolment strategies due to the COVID-19 pandemic, including accepting the UNSW Global English test, expanding the education

access points for domestic students, and increasing the HSC+ criteria in line with the tertiary education sector.

- The University had agreed on conditional offers for HSC students to enrol in UNSW programs, which would help to increase diversity in attracting students from schools that would have had few students enrolling in the past.
- Domestic and international student enrolments were still low and difficult to estimate for 2021 and beyond, though the University believed that domestic students would not take a gap year in 2021. As Professor Simmons had indicated, there were questions around when the Commonwealth would lift travel restrictions to allow international students to return to Australia.

Professor Crossley noted the importance of building on enrolments to sustain as many jobs as possible at UNSW.

The Chair thanked Professor Crossley for his report.

11.1 Student Surveys

Professor Steel presented on the *myExperience* T2 2020 survey results, which were summarised under three headings: key highlights, comments and learnings.

- The highest result for undergraduate student satisfaction with teaching since the launch of *myExperience* was recorded in T2 2020, despite the difficulties of the pandemic. This was a strong endorsement by students of the effort and care colleagues had taken in teaching this year.
- UNSW Canberra had recorded its highest satisfaction for courses and teaching across undergraduate and postgraduate cohorts in S1 2020.
- UNSW Online had recorded its highest satisfaction with teaching in HEX 4.
- Postgraduate students cited lower satisfaction with courses in T1 compared to previous terms, but there had been an uplift in T2 2020.
- Postgraduate satisfaction with teaching had suffered a significant drop in T2 2020 but this was largely in high enrolment programs and was being addressed.
- The proportion of negative comments related to assessment and feedback was increasing.
- Response rates over time varied across Faculties, 6 of which had response rates less than 40% for both T1 and T2 2020.

The Board noted that, based on the learnings, the University would:

- work to address the low response rates as higher response rates provide more reliable information;
- focus on international students, especially the postgraduate cohort, as they reported lower satisfaction in T1 and T2 2020; and
- develop strategies to improve assessment and feedback.

Board members noted that they would receive an e-copy of the presentation after the meeting.

Professor Steel reported that the QILT survey had opened at the start of T3 2020, which was to the University's advantage compared to 2019 when the survey had been conducted in the lead-up to the examination period. He asked the Associate Deans Education to monitor the response rates.

The Chair thanked Professor Steel for summarising the *myExperience* survey results.

11.2 Update on TEQSA-related matters

The Academic Board received and noted the update on TEQSA-related matters.

E POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

12. COVID-19 Policy Addendum

The Academic Board received and noted the COVID-19 Policy Addendum.

13. *Conditions for Award of Doctor of Philosophy Policy* **RESOLVED**

The Academic Board received and endorsed the *Conditions for Award of Doctor of Philosophy Policy*.

14. *Higher Degree Research (HDR) Supervision Policy and Procedure*

14.1 *Higher Degree Research Supervision Policy*

14.2 *Higher Degree Research Supervision Procedure*

RESOLVED

The Academic Board received and endorsed the *Higher Degree Research Supervision Policy* and the *Higher Degree Research Supervision Procedure*.

Note for the record

The Board raised some concerns about the responsibilities of the Faculty/School versus the responsibilities of the Graduate Research School (GRS) with respect to the proposed Supervisor Register. The Board noted that the Head of School was critical in the process, especially in regard to removal from the Register. The mechanisms for appeal were covered in the Procedure and would continue to exist, and the University had a responsibility to provide good supervision and support supervisors with training, which was covered by the framework set up for supervisor training for various levels of experience.

The issue of Emeritus Professors providing supervising was discussed, with Professor Morris indicating that it had been a longstanding policy that they could be involved as secondary supervisors. The Board noted that there may be some challenges regarding Emeritus Professors as primary or joint supervisors because the University did not have the same authority over them that it had over employed members of staff.

The Chair thanked Professor Morris for the work undertaken to complete the review of the *HDR Supervision Policy and Procedure*.

F ACADEMIC OFFERINGS

15. Academic Programs (new and revised) (recommended by ABPC of 7 August 2020)

RESOLVED

The Academic Board approved the following program proposals, as detailed in ECLIPS:

Arts & Social Sciences

Postgraduate (Revisions)

15.1 8623 Master of Environmental Management

15.1.1 ENVPZS Environmental Management C

15.1.2 ENVPYS Environmental Management B

15.2 5499 Graduate Diploma in Environmental Management

15.3 7339 Graduate Certificate in Environmental Management

Note for the record

The Academic Board considered items 15.1 to 15.3 together. The Chair commended UNSW staff in the Faculties of Arts & Social Sciences (FASS) and Science for their collegial approach

to this suite of programs and for recognising the value of inter-disciplinary and inter-Faculty collaboration.

Professor Johnston (Dean of Science) thanked Professor Annesley (Dean of FASS) as well as Associate Professor Ellis (FASS) and Associate Professor Beavis (Science) for their constructive discussions around some interdisciplinary contributions to the revised programs. Professor Johnston also acknowledged the productive connection established between Heads of Schools – Professor O’Leary (Humanities & Languages) and Professor Poore (Biological, Earth and Environmental Sciences) – in discussing ways in which Environmental Sciences could contribute to the programs. The Board noted that in the current situation of constrained resources, there would be real benefits for students and the University in finding opportunities to collaborate on courses and programs across all Faculties and Divisions.

- 15.4 8281 Master of Public Relations and Advertising
 - 15.4.1 MDIAIS PR & Advertising C (new)
 - 15.4.2 MDIAFS PR & Advertising B (revision)
 - 15.4.3 MDIAES PR & Advertising A, (revision)
- 15.5 8234 Master of Public Relations and Advertising/Master of Design
 - 15.5.1 MDIAGS (96 UOC) – Public Relations & Advertising/Design A
 - 15.5.2 MDIAHS (144 UOC) – Public Relations & Advertising/Design B
- 15.6 8232 Master of Journalism and Communication
 - 15.6.1 MDIAJS Journalism & Communications C (new)
 - 15.6.2 MDIADS Journalism & Communications B (revision)
 - 15.6.3 MDIACS Journalism & Communications A (revision)

Medicine

Undergraduate (revision)

- 15.7 3880 Bachelor of International Public Health

DVCA Board of Studies (BOS)

Undergraduate (revision)

- 15.8 7004 Diploma of Business

16. Higher Doctorates – Confidential – Nil

17. Academic Partnerships – Nil

G MINUTES

18. Academic Board & University Committees, DVCA Board of Studies & Faculty Boards

RESOLVED

The Academic Board received and noted the following minutes:

- 18.1 Academic Board Programs Committee (ABPC) – 7 August 2020 (unsigned)
- 18.2 University Academic Quality Committee (UAQC) – 12 August 2020 (unsigned)
- 18.3 Program Review Committee (PRC) – 14 May 2020
- 18.4 Program Review Committee (PRC) – 16 July 2020 (confirmed)
- 18.5 University Higher Degree Research Committee (UHDRC) – 20 August 2020 (unsigned)
- 18.6 University Research Committee (URC) – 27 August 2020 (unsigned)
- 18.7 DVCA Board of Studies – 9 July 2020
- 18.8 Art & Design – 20 May 2020
- 18.9 Arts & Social Sciences – 18 May 2020
- 18.10 Engineering – 3 July 2020
- 18.11 Engineering – 7 August 2020
- 18.12 Medicine – 9 June 2020

- 18.13 Science – 28 May 2020
- 18.14 UNSW Business School – 7 May 2020
- 18.15 Built Environment – 31 August 2020

H OTHER BUSINESS

- 19. Proposed 2021 AB meeting dates (and governance approval timelines for 2022 offerings)**
The AB received and noted its proposed 2021 meeting dates and the governance approval timelines for 2022 offerings.
- 20. Business without notice**
There was no business without notice.

The Chair declared the meeting closed at 11.55am.

Next scheduled meeting: Tuesday 20 October 2020 at 10am.



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Professor David Cohen

Chair
20 October 2020