

Academic Board (AB) Minutes of Meeting



DATE: Tuesday 30 March 2021
TIME: 10am-12.30pm via Microsoft Teams

PRESENT

1. Professor D Cohen, AB President and Chair
2. Professor M-L McLaws, AB Deputy President
3. Associate Professor A Kayis-Kumar, Business School, AB Deputy President
4. Professor I Jacobs, President and Vice-Chancellor
5. Scientia Professor J Roberts, Business School
6. Scientia Professor S Rogge, Pro-Vice-Chancellor, Research
7. Scientia Professor G Williams AO, Deputy Vice-Chancellor, Planning & Assurance
8. Professor C Annesley, Dean of Arts, Design & Architecture
9. Professor E Baldry AO, Deputy Vice-Chancellor, Equity, Diversity & Inclusion (EDI)
10. Professor M Crossley, Deputy Vice-Chancellor, Academic & Student Life (DVCASL)
11. Professor T Cumming, Arts, Design & Architecture
12. Professor N Di Girolamo, Medicine & Health
13. Professor N Fisk AM, Deputy Vice-Chancellor, Research & Enterprise (DVCRE)
14. Professor S Foster, Dean of Engineering (Acting)
15. Professor M Green, Such other Person
16. Professor E Johnston AO, Dean of Science
17. Professor N Kessissoglou, Engineering
18. Professor L Lixinski, Law & Justice
19. Professor S Loo, Arts, Design & Architecture
20. Professor J Morris, Pro-Vice-Chancellor, Research Training & Entrepreneurship and Dean of Graduate Research
21. Professor A Munster, Arts, Design & Architecture
22. Professor S Parameswaran, Engineering
23. Professor T Ray, UNSW Canberra
24. Professor J Seidel, Science
25. Professor H Sidhu, Rector of UNSW Canberra (Acting)
26. Professor A Simmons AM, Provost
27. Professor A Steel, Law & Justice
28. Professor C Styles, Dean of Business School
29. Professor M Tani Bertuol, UNSW Canberra
30. Professor M Uncles, Business School
31. Professor R Wilkinson, Pro-Vice-Chancellor, Education & Student Experience (PVCESE)
32. Professor S Zlatanova, Arts, Design & Architecture
33. Professor A Zwi, Arts, Design & Architecture
34. Associate Professor J Bryant, Arts, Design & Architecture
35. Associate Professor S Clark, Engineering
36. Associate Professor C Collins, Business School
37. Associate Professor S Egan, Science
38. Associate Professor H Kleine, UNSW Canberra
39. Associate Professor M Michael, Arts, Design & Architecture
40. Associate Professor M Nehme, Law & Justice
41. Dr N Castano Rodriguez, SoP, Representative of the Early Career Academic Network (ECAN) Executive Committee
42. Dr R Green, Arts, Design & Architecture
43. Dr D Moreau, Engineering
44. Dr B Oo, Arts, Design & Architecture
45. Dr J Steele, Science
46. Mr T Abdulsalam, Higher Degree Research Student
47. Mr J Fox, Arts, Design & Architecture
48. Mr M Gajdhar, Undergraduate Student
49. Mr S Kaura, Postgraduate Student

50. Mr T Kennedy, President of the UNSW Student Representative Council (SRC)
51. Ms SS Kumar, Postgraduate Student
52. Ms S Nandakumar, Chair of Arc @ UNSW Board
53. Mr J (S) Ofor, Postgraduate Council President
54. Officer Cadet D Allen

APOLOGIES: Scientia Professor M Santamouris, Arts, Design & Architecture
Professor M Davis, Such other Person (SoP), Pro-Vice-Chancellor, Indigenous
Professor G Lodewijks, Science
Professor A Lynch, Dean of Law & Justice (Acting)
Professor V Perkovic, Dean of Medicine & Health
Dr J Galliot, UNSW Canberra
Dr M Pervaz Iqbal, Medicine & Health
Dr A Unnikrishnan, Medicine & Health
Ms N Laba, Higher Degree Research Student
Mr R Loo, Undergraduate Student
Ms L Montague, Indigenous Student Representative

IN ATTENDANCE: Professor N Klein, Associate Professor T Wilcox, Mr M Borchert, Ms Y Chan (for item 11.7), Mr J Fitzgibbon, Mr D Gleeson, Ms S Mohamed, Mr N Morris, Ms M Pavelkova, Mr J Rogers and Ms S Telfser

SECRETARY: Ms F Velosa, Senior Governance Officer

Quorum: 20
RAMS: 2021/000280

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 first 2,5-hour AB meeting and the first AB meeting of 2021, especially the new members as detailed in his report (item 6). The AB accepted the apologies received from AB members for the meeting.

On behalf of the AB, the Chair congratulated the following AB members on recent achievements:

- Professor Lixinski on his promotion to Professor, effective from 1 January 2021, and
- Professor Baldry for her appointment as an Officer of the Order of Australia (AO) in the 2021 Australia Day Honours.

2. Minutes of the previous meeting held on 24 November 2020

The Academic Board received and noted the minutes of the meeting held on 24 November 2020, approved via email circulation and signed on 10 December 2020.

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

3.1 Transitional 2021 AB and Faculty Board (FB) elected membership arrangements: Council resolution of 14 December 2020 – amendments to the UNSW Rules

The AB noted the Council resolution of 14 December 2020, which included the extension of the terms of office of elected AB academic staff members as well as staff and student members of Faculty Boards from 31 December 2020 to 30 June 2021.

3.2 Reappointment of Such other Persons to the AB: Council resolution of 14 December 2020

The AB noted the reappointment of the following Such other Persons to the AB:

1. Identified positions to the Academic Board for a term from 1 January 2021 to 31 December 2022:
 - Pro-Vice-Chancellor, Indigenous
 - One representative of the Early Career Academic Network (ECAN) Executive Committee, nominated by the President of the Academic Board
2. The following staff for a term from 1 January 2021 to 30 June 2021:
 - Professor David Cohen
 - Professor Melissa Green

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

The AB did not star additional items for discussion, and received and carried a motion to adopt all the unstarred items.

5. Confirmation of confidential items

The AB confirmed that items 11.7, 12 and 17 were confidential, as indicated on the papers presented.

B PRESIDENTS' BUSINESS

6. Report of the AB President (Chair)

The AB received and noted the Chair's report. As the agenda was quite full, the Chair requested that members focus on the matters at hand without curtailing debate. The AB members noted that questions could be addressed under relevant items or under item 8.

6.1 Appointment to AB as Such other Persons

RESOLVED

The Academic Board recommended that Council approve the appointment of the following identified positions to the Academic Board under the Such other Persons membership:

1. the Postgraduate Re-enrolment Appeals Committee Chair, Professor Natalie Klein, from 12 April 2021 to 31 December 2022; and
2. the Program Review Committee Chair, A/Professor Tracy Wilcox, from 12 April 2021 to 30 June 2023.

Note for the record

Professor Klein and A/Professor Wilcox would replace Associate Professor Graham Forsyth after his departure from the University in October 2020.

6.2 Elections schedule, T1 2021, for:

- AB staff, and
- Faculty Board staff and students

The AB noted the election schedule for T1 2021 and that the Elections Office would release the results of the valid self-nominations in due course for electronic elections to be held – for the relevant electorates – from 14-21 April 2021 via BigPulse.

6.3 Amendments to the UNSW Rules (Terms of Reference of Committees)

RESOLVED

The Academic Board recommended that Council approve the proposed amendments to the Terms of Reference of the Academic Board Advisory Committee (ABAC), the Academic Board Programs Committee and the Board of Studies as detailed in the documents presented.

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

The VC, Professor Jacobs, acknowledged the extraordinary efforts and resilience of staff and students in 2020 and into 2021, as evident from the reports on academic matters, research activities, university rankings and student surveys presented to the AB for discussion.

The VC congratulated numerous staff on a range of achievements and awards received since the 24 November 2020 AB meeting (as detailed in the VC's messages in [Inside UNSW](#)).

The AB noted that:

- at the 19 March 2021 inquiry of the federal parliament's Joint Committee on Intelligence and Security into national security risks affecting the Australian higher education and research sectors, the UNSW testimony had acknowledged the risk of foreign interference,
- the University continued to work closely with a range of government agencies to avoid, identify and address issues when they arise, and
- the said committee would report to the Minister of Home Affairs by July 2021.

The VC encouraged everyone to attend the inaugural David Cooper lecture on 14 April 2021 by Dr Anthony S Fauci who would discuss HIV and COVID-19.

The Chair thanked the VC for his report.

8. Questions on Notice (QoN)

The AB noted the responses to the questions received from student members and circulated to AB members ahead of the meeting, which included questions about the following:

- actions relating to mechanisms to allow international students offshore to enter Australia and study on the UNSW campus/es,
- when the Main Library and other UNSW libraries would likely return to full-time access,
- developing policies on student representatives in each course, including enhancing the student voice, and
- UNSW's monitoring of mandated universal recordings of lectures and access during term for enrolled students.

The Chair reported that the relevant speakers would address other questions during the discussion of their reports/items.

C PRESENTATIONS AND DISCUSSION TOPICS

9. Synchronous and Semi-Synchronous Lectures

Mr Kennedy summarised the students' discussion paper on standards relating to synchronous versus semi-synchronous and asynchronous lectures.

The AB noted the following:

- It was evident that there were significant differences between disciplines (between and within HASS and STEM) regarding the demand and need for providing scheduled time in courses for synchronous Q&A sessions on the lecture content.
- One size did not fit all as different students needed and preferred different things.
- Student responsibility as well as Faculty responsibility were an important part of improving learning outcomes.
- There were two separate but related issues of lecture quality and lecture engagement; the intention of the paper was to address the latter.

Professor Wilkinson offered to discuss this matter and other student feedback with Mr Kennedy and other students offline as he had data on both the quality of delivery and student engagement from student surveys.

On behalf of the AB, the Chair referred this item to the University Academic Quality Committee (UAQC) for the development of a set of guidelines, with input from the students, for course conveners and relevant staff.

The Chair thanked Mr Kennedy and the student members for their paper.

10. Lessons Learnt from COVID

The Director of Teaching Strategy, Professor Steel, presented a summary of the lessons learnt from the pandemic in 2020, as discussed at UAQC meetings.

The AB noted that the recommendations echoed the issues relating to approaches to remote teaching, student support, staff-student interaction in online courses or course components, work practices and staff development as well as the University's assessment practices.

Professor Steel asked AB members to provide further comments and feedback to him for the UAQC to consider in developing guidelines and best practice, as appropriate.

The Chair thanked Professor Steel, the Associate Deans and everyone who had provided feedback on the lessons learnt from COVID-19, and noted that irrespective of COVID, the delivery of courses remained an important topic for consideration at UNSW.

D REPORTS

11. Deputy Vice-Chancellor, Academic & Student Life

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

Professor Crossley highlighted the following:

- The T1 2021 planned student load had been achieved for all major coursework cohorts, except domestic postgraduate and exchange/study abroad students.
- The new commencing overall student load was just below plan at 97%.
- UNSW had received the Australian Financial Review's Most Employable University Award for the second year in a row.

The Chair thanked Professor Crossley for his report.

11.1 Quality Indicators for Learning and Teaching (QILT)

Professor Wilkinson presented an analysis of the recently released 2020 QILT Student Experience Survey (SES) results, which included the following:

- While assessment/student feedback remained a key area for improvement, UNSW's performance in the QILT SES survey relative to Go8 universities had improved in various criteria, notably in teaching.
- The overall satisfaction with educational experience by postgraduate coursework students was the 2nd highest in the Go8 and their overall satisfaction with teaching was the top of the Go8.

Professor Wilkinson reported that his Portfolio:

- was prioritising the development of digital tools to reduce the burden on academic staff, and to improve relevant and timely feedback to students, especially focusing on what a student should do next time and in future courses, and
- would develop a survey for staff to provide their comments and feedback.

AB members noted they would receive a copy of the presentation, which included undergraduate and postgraduate results summaries, key messages and a qualitative summary.

The Chair thanked Professor Wilkinson for his report on student surveys.

11.2 Strategy of PVCESE Portfolio

Professor Wilkinson discussed the initiatives of the final draft of the PVCESE Portfolio Strategy 2021-2025, which would revolve around the three key drivers of Listening, Challenging, Supporting, under the following themes:

- Acting on insight
- Educators of excellence
- A demanding standard
- Building community

Professor Wilkinson invited AB members to send him further comments on the strategy. The AB noted that Professor Wilkinson would update the AB and UAQC regularly on the PVCESE strategy and initiatives.

The Chair thanked Professor Wilkinson for his update.

11.3 General Education (GE) Update

The AB discussed the paper emanating from the faculty DDEs/ADEs and noted the following:

- GE was not limited to the completion of two GE courses by single degree undergraduate students outside their broad disciplinary field.
- GE was meant to be embedded in all undergraduate programs and contribute to inculcation of the UNSW graduate attributes.
- Various technical and philosophical issues had arisen in the implementation of the rules concerning admissible GE courses, depending on a student's main discipline.
- Some issues had been exacerbated by the recent merger of faculties.

Based on the discussion, the Chair took a straw poll (using Polly in Microsoft Teams) to ascertain the direction the AB members wished the UAQC to take in revising the GE rules and course offerings, with student input. The results of the poll were:

- | | |
|--|-----|
| 1) Retain the current GE course requirements, with some changes to the courses that can be (offered or) taken (for GE) | 12% |
| 2) Convert the 12 UOC GE course requirements to 12 UOC of free GE electives (<i>i.e. eliminate the "home faculty rule"</i>) | 39% |
| 3) Convert the 12 UOC GE course requirements to 12 UOC of free electives (<i>i.e. eliminate compulsion to complete GE courses</i>) | 28% |
| 4) No opinion on the matter | 21% |

The Chair thanked the AB members for their participation and reported that the matter would return to the UAQC for further consideration and a review of the GE rules.

11.4 Awarding of Posthumous Degrees

RESOLVED

The Academic Board endorsed the Awarding of Posthumous Degrees paper, subject to the addition of the following words: 'acting on advice of the relevant Program Authority' when updating the relevant policy.

11.5 UNSW Diplomas Academic Entry Settings Review

The AB received and noted the review of the UNSW Diplomas Academic Entry Settings.

11.6 Amendments to Cross-Institutional Studies (CIS) Guidelines

RESOLVED

The Academic Board endorsed the amendments to the Cross-Institutional Studies (CIS) guidelines.

11.7 Student Conduct and Complaints Annual Report – Confidential – UNSW distribution only

The Academic Board received and noted the confidential Student Conduct and Complaints Annual Report, 1 January to 31 December 2020.

12. Deputy Vice-Chancellor, Research and Enterprise (DVCRE) – Confidential

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

Professor Fisk summarised the University's grant income performance, including the following:

- In 2020, UNSW was ranked 3rd among the Go8 for new ARC funding and 5th among the Go8 for total new NHMRC funding.
- In the 2021 QS World University Rankings by Subject, the best discipline at UNSW is Engineering – Mineral & Mining at 5th globally.
- The current numbers of Scientia PhD candidates, Scientia academics and SHARP hires.

In response to a question about communicating the changes in the DVCRE Divisional Structure (Organisational Chart on the [DVCRE website](#) and in Attachment 7 to the DVCRE report) to Faculty members who needed to submit research grants and contracts, Professor Fisk reported that the new divisional structure had been communicated via the University Research Committee, the AB, and the workplace change documents. The AB noted that research matters and structures had not changed in a way that would affect workflows in the Faculties; the workplace changes would affect the Division rather than the Faculties. Professor Fisk offered to discuss this further with Associate Professor Collins offline.

The Chair thanked Professor Fisk for his report.

12.1 Managing HDR enrolments during the COVID Pandemic

Professor Morris presented on the management of Higher Degree Research (HDR) enrolments during the COVID-19 pandemic and the relevant challenges.

The AB noted the following:

- The principles and requirements for current candidates who had not been able to enter or re-enter Australia, which classed them as external candidates and prevented them from receiving scholarships due to Federal Government legislation,
- non-financial support for HDR candidates used in 2020 and 2021,
- data on the candidates stranded overseas in T1 2020 versus T1 2021, and
- increased stipends would mean that the University would have to offer less scholarships unless the University received increased funds for scholarships.

AB members thanked Professor Morris and the Graduate Research School for their work during the pandemic.

The Chair thanked Professor Morris for his presentation, a copy of which AB members would receive after the meeting.

E POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

13. *Academic Promotions Policy and Academic Promotions Procedure*

The AB received and noted:

- minor updates to the [Academic Promotions Policy](#) and [Academic Promotions Procedure](#), both of which included hyperlinks to supporting documents, including ROPE (Relative to Opportunity Performance Evaluation), and could be found in the Academic Promotions section of the [HR Hub](#),
- the overall outcomes of the 2020 academic promotions rounds, and
- the Academic Promotions Manager, Mr David Gleeson, continued to provide information sessions to aspiring applicants for promotion, which included detailed and frank advice on preparing cases by various DVCs, former Heads of School and members of the Scientia Education Academy.

14. *Academic Freedom and Freedom of Speech Code of Conduct*

RESOLVED

The Academic Board:

- 1) noted the passing of the Higher Education Support Amendment (Freedom of Speech) Bill 2020 and the Commonwealth Government's expectation that universities adopt the Model Code as soon as possible,
- 2) noted the feedback received on the UNSW Code during the University-wide consultation, and
- 3) endorsed, by a majority vote, the *Academic Freedom and Freedom of Speech Code of Conduct* for Council approval.

Note for the record

Scientia Professor Williams summarised his paper and the AB noted the following:

- Although UNSW had existing and effective policies in this area (which the AB endorsed at its meeting on 16 October 2018), this Code had been developed in response to the outcomes of the French Review and subsequent actions by the Federal Government.
- Whereas UNSW would likely agree to adopt a large component of the proposed national Model Code (being consistent with existing principles in force at UNSW), the University would not agree to parts of three of the sections relating to controls over student representative bodies, over-specificity of the relationship between the Code and other policies, and the requirement that external visiting speakers could be excluded on the grounds that they might fall short of 'scholarly standards'.

The Chair thanked Scientia Professor Williams for his update.

15. Higher Degree Research (HDR) Policy Items

15.1 *Conditions for Award of Master by Research Policy*

15.2 *Variation of Candidature Procedure*

RESOLVED

The Academic Board endorsed the *Conditions for Award of Master by Research Policy* and the *Variation of Candidature Procedure* for approval in accordance with the Register of Delegations.

F ACADEMIC OFFERINGS

16. **Academic Programs & Specialisations (new & revised), recommended by ABPC of 5 March 2021**

RESOLVED

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

Arts, Design & Architecture

Postgraduate (revisions)

- 16.1 9313 Master of Design (MDes)
- 16.2 SRAPES Public Policy & Governance A
- 16.3 SRAPDS Public Policy & Governance B
- 16.4 SRAPCS Public Policy & Governance C

Postgraduate (new)

- 16.5 5203 Graduate Diploma in Translation and Interpreting
- 16.6 7204 Graduate Certificate in Translation and Interpreting

Board of Studies – Non-award (new)

- 16.7 6557 Transition Program Online

Business School

Postgraduate (revision)

- 16.8 MARKGS Marketing Analytics (Major)

Postgraduate (new)

- 16.9 7413 Graduate Certificate in Business

Engineering – Undergraduate (new)

- 16.10 ELECC1 Quantum Engineering (Major)
- 16.11 BIOMES Biomedical Engineering (8621)

Medicine & Health (Science) – Postgraduate (new)

- 16.12 5420 Graduate Diploma in Orientation and Mobility

17. Higher Doctorates – 1

RESOLVED

The Academic Board approved the award of the Doctor of Science to Professor Peter McCluskey.

18. Academic Partnerships – Nil

G MINUTES

19. AB Committees, University Committees, Board of Studies (BoS) & Faculty Boards

The Academic Board received and noted the following minutes:

- 19.1 Program Review Committee (PRC)
 - 12 November 2020
- 19.2 Academic Board Programs Committee (ABPC)
 - 5 March 2021 (unconfirmed)
- 19.3 University Research Committee (URC)
 - 18 February 2021 (unconfirmed)
- 19.4 University Higher Degree Research Committee (UHDRC)
 - 19 November 2020
 - 25 February 2021 (unconfirmed)
- 19.5 Board of Studies (BoS)
 - 1 September 2020
 - 10 February 2021 (unconfirmed)
- 19.6 Arts & Social Sciences
 - 26 October 2020

- 19.7 Business School
 - 15 October 2020
 - 10 December 2020
- 19.8 Law
 - 7 October 2020
- 19.9 Engineering
 - 6 November 2020
 - 4 December 2020
 - 5 March 2021 (unconfirmed)
- 19.10 Medicine/Medicine & Health
 - 8 December 2020
 - 9 February 2021 (unconfirmed)
- 19.11 Science
 - 19 November 2020
- 19.12 UNSW Canberra
 - 30 November 2020

H OTHER BUSINESS

20. Business without notice – Nil

The Chair declared the meeting closed at 12.20pm.

Next scheduled meeting: Tuesday 11 May 2021, 10am to 12.30pm



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Professor David Cohen

Chair
11 May 2021