

Report of the President, Academic Board

The Monash University Academic Board (the Board) is responsible to Council for, *inter alia*, supervising and directing Monash University academic affairs, including maintaining high standards in teaching and research (Statute 2.1). To discharge its remit effectively and efficiently, and to contribute to the achievement of the University's strategies, the Board undertook a range of activities in 2011.

In a time of significant challenge and renewal for the sector and Monash, Academic Board continued to work steadily through a range of priorities key to Monash's drive for research and education excellence. During its deliberations, members of the Board continued to be informed about the environment in which it and the wider Monash operate, including regular briefings on topical issues such as the strategic approach to the uncapping of Commonwealth Supported Places from 2012, contemporary TEQSA developments including passage of enabling legislation and implementation of its regulatory functions, approval of the Australian Quality Framework and compliance requirements, the Tertiary Education Reviews of the South East and Gippsland, and the recommendations and expected impact of the Knight Review. Senior management also provided regular reports of progress towards significant international collaborations to Academic Board.

Direction of Academic Affairs

The Board approved or endorsed a range of initiatives during 2011, designed to underpin Monash's drive towards academic excellence including:

- Key Portfolio plans - International Plan 2011-2015, Research Strategy Implementation Plan 2011-2015 and the Education Strategic Plan 2011-2015.
- A range of reforms to Monash coursework offerings:
 - Approval of the Monash Curriculum Principles and underpinning targets and strategies.
 - Approval of the five defining features for Bachelor Degrees at Monash.
 - Approval of proposals to expand and optimise Monash's provision of double and joint coursework degrees.
 - Approval of a range of proposals designed to further advance the Monash Passport, including minimum specifications for Advanced Studies Units and Co-Curriculum Programs.
 - Proposals to optimise provision of Monash Extension as a pathway for highly talented students undertaking senior secondary studies in programs recognised by the Victorian Curriculum and Assessment Authority.
- Recommendations for achieving alignment with the Bologna process and a range of initiatives around implementation of the revised Australian Qualifications Framework at Monash.
- Academic Board strongly endorsed the proposal that Monash adopt the concept of differentiated testamurs, with the understanding that this could be accompanied by a lower minimum or floor ATAR entry level. In so doing, the Board recognised the need to take account of a range of imperatives, not least its duty of care to its students, and to honour its compact with government.
- Proposals for accreditation of supervisors and membership of the Monash Institute of Graduate Research (MIGR).
- The Community Engagement Framework.

Academic Board also received and considered a range of significant strategic institutional documents and reports, including:

- Monash's Mission-Based Compact.
- The revised *Monash Directions 2025*.
- The Monash Strategic Plan 2011-2015.
- The 2011 Annual Plan Mid-year Progress Exceptions Report, the 2012 Annual Plan and an overview of the University's 2012 Budget.
- Regular reports from the Vice-Chancellor on developments relating to the tertiary education sector and Monash, and updates from the Deputy Vice-Chancellors on key Portfolio (Research, Education, and Global Engagement) initiatives.

Committees Review

Whilst there was, during the reporting year, less of a focus on Academic Board committees' structural change, nevertheless several sub-committees took the opportunity to review and make changes to their operating frameworks and membership, including a change to the membership of Steering Committee so as to better align with the Board's membership composition, and review of the terms of reference, operating procedures and membership of the International Committee, which is now known as the Global Engagement Committee.

Supervision of Academic Affairs

University Academic Structure

In 2011, Academic Board approved or endorsed changes to a number of academic organisational structures. These included, in particular:

- The change of name of the Centre for Australian Indigenous Studies to the Monash Indigenous Centre and the change of name of the School of Journalism and Australian Studies to the School of Journalism, Australian and Indigenous Studies.
- The change of name from the Faculty of Art & Design, to the Faculty of Art, Design & Architecture.
- The change of title for the Centre for Stellar and Planetary Astrophysics (CSPA) to the Monash Centre for Astrophysics (MoCA).
- The proposal to disestablish the Gippsland Medical School as a stand-alone School, and its amalgamation with the School of Rural Health.
- The proposal to change the name of the School of Arts at Monash South Africa to the School of Social Science.
- The proposal for restructure of the Central Clinical School, Faculty of Medicine Nursing and Health Sciences.

The Board also approved:

- Establishment of the Centre for the Advancement of Law and Mental Health (CALMH).
- Establishment of the Monash Institute for Brain Development and Repair (MIBDR).
- Establishment of the Centre for Medieval and Renaissance Studies, and disestablishment of the Centre for Comparative Literature and Cultural Studies.

Academic Program Development and Review

July 2011 saw the commencement of Academic Board's exercise of its remit to accredit, disestablish and approve major change to coursework courses. A number of proposals for accreditation of new programs and major amendment to existing courses were approved by the Board in the second half of 2011. Academic Board also disestablished a small number of courses during this period.

During 2011, Academic Board approved or endorsed a range of proposals relating to PhD programs including the proposed Joint Award Agreement with Goethe University, and disestablished the degree of Doctor of Psychology (Organisational Psychology).

Key Policy Debates

During 2011, members of the Board engaged in debate over a wide range of key policy matters. Whilst initiatives relating to Monash Future featured significantly in these debates, the reporting year also saw the Board devote significant time to consideration of other issues, including:

- The Student Charter.
- Endorsement of incorporation of the principle of assessing 'achievement relative to opportunity' within Monash University policies and performance standards.
- Approval of the adoption of Turnitin (from 1 January 2012) as an Enterprise-Level Educational Technology that enables education in the ethical treatment of materials at Monash.
- The revised coursework course approvals framework.
- Approval of the rollout of the Student Evaluation of Teachers and Units (SETU) in Semester 1/2011 and approval of the trial of the draft Monash Peer Review of Teaching Instrument.

Maintenance of Academic Standards

During 2011, Academic Board continued its focus on maintaining academic standards by considering the requirements of and preparations for the TEQSA Quality Audit. At its last meeting for 2012, the Board was advised that TEQSA proposed to cease the quality audit process and instead focus activities on the system of institutional re-registration.

At this last meeting for the year, the Board also approved the indication of support by Monash for participation in the operationalisation of the G08 Quality Verification System (QVS) in 2012. The QVS will provide external, discipline-led, academic peer review of final year undergraduate programs at all levels of achievement.

During the reporting year the Board also approved the implementation plans arising out of a number of cyclical academic reviews.

Academic Board received and considered a number of other significant items providing it with an overview of academic and institutional standards including:

- A number of reports on University Rankings.
- The University-wide Key Performance Indicators report.
- The VTAC Admissions and Student Load 2011 Report.
- Overview of the Good Universities Guide 2011 edition.
- Progress report on the development and implementation of the University Policy Bank.
- The Coursework and Higher Degree by Research Annual Report of Student Grievances, submitted jointly by the Offices of the Deputy Vice-Chancellors Education and Research

Governance

Legislation

Significant pieces of legislation endorsed by Academic Board for submission to Council during 2011 included:

- A range of proposals for regulatory change reflecting revised faculty and faculty board organisational arrangements.
- Amendments proposed to Statute 2.5 – Research Graduate School Committee, which effected two key changes - renaming of the Research Graduate School Committee (RGSC) as the Graduate Research Committee and establishment of the Monash Institute of Graduate Research.
- Statute 6.1.4 – Admission with Credit, which makes provision for the granting of credit at any time during the undertaking of a degree.
- Statute 6.2 - Exclusion for Unsatisfactory Progress or Inability to Progress.
- The Student Discipline Regulations – applicable to and customised for Monash Australia, South Africa and Sunway campuses.

Regulations made by Academic Board included:

- The first tranche of legislation made pursuant to the revised approach to accreditation of coursework courses at Monash, amendment to the Faculty of Arts Regulations, updating the list of degrees to include the new Bachelor of Social Science and the honours degree of Bachelor of Social Science to be delivered at the South African campus.
- Regulations amending the University Entrance and Admission to Course work Courses and Units of Study, regulations governing Disestablishment of Courses of Study, Higher Degrees by Research and Assessment and Exclusion for Unsatisfactory Progress or Inability to Progress.

Policy Development and Review

Academic Board discussed a range of new and amended policies (and, where applicable, noted associated procedures). Following is a sample of policies approved by the Board:

- Departments and Schools Policy and Guidelines
- Responsible Conduct of Research Policy
- Changes recommended to the Special Entry Access Schemes (SEAS) for 2012 Selection.
- The amended Monash Graduate Attributes Policy.

- Student Evaluation Policy.
- ESOS Students under Age 18 Policy and Procedures.
- Higher Degree by Research Course Accreditation Policy.
- Course Design Policy, which applies to coursework courses proposed or reviewed from 1 July 2011 and to all coursework courses from 1 July 2015.
- The Coursework Course Review Policy.

Reports from Standing Committees, Faculty Boards and Faculty Discipline Committees

Each of the Board's Standing Committees and the Faculty Boards is required to report after each meeting. During the reporting year, Academic Board received regular reports from the faculties, the Education Committee, General Library Committee, Monash University Research Committee, Research Graduate School Committee and the Global Engagement Committee. Academic Board also received the Annual Reports of the Monash University Museum of Art and the Monash Library.

Academic Board also received and noted reports on proceedings of Faculty Discipline Committees as required by Statute 4.1 – Discipline, Clause 17 and the annual summary of appeals received by the Exclusion Appeals Committee under Statute 6.2 - Exclusion for unsatisfactory progress or inability to progress.