1. Course/unit approval system

Judy Fetherston and I were invited to a meeting with Jackie Massey, Trudi McGlade, Rob McCormack and Jon Stubbs to discuss a proposal submitted by Jon Stubbs regarding the approval system of units and courses. In his proposal, Jon Stubbs indicated that he felt there was a need to refine current university processes and suggested that a private consultant be employed to conduct a review; others present did not necessarily agree. It was agreed that the issue should go to the FAO group for discussion. After the meeting, Jon Stubbs forwarded the following email to those who had attended the meeting:

There is enormous value in fully understanding and documenting the issues before looking for a solution. After labouring this point for a few lines I will then do exactly what I have argued against & suggest a solution.

In this regard I would strongly recommend that if we move forward it is with a review of our business processes surrounding course and unit development, approval and publication (to discover where change should be made and just what such a system will need to support). The review should look at such things as:

- what our current processes are (and how many versions of them exist)
- how well they work - their weaknesses and strengths
- how good (or bad) communication surrounding these processes is (both to people and systems)
- the extent to which there is redundancy of data across systems
- any places where the university is exposed - legally and otherwise
- the reliability, currency, completeness, consistency of published data (web and print)
- the appropriateness of published data to its purpose and the target audience
- the ease with which students (and others) can find the published information they are looking for

Once this is complete, we will know what we are looking for in a course and unit approval system. Possible solution QUT and UNE (having completed their business reviews) have decided to undertake a proof of concept exercise with a product called The Academic Database developed and marketed by Distinction Systems in the UK - see following link for a 4 page brochure:

http://www.distinction-systems.co.uk/Education/Higher%20Education/QLS%20HE%20Product%20Information

I understand the system can be sourced through Solidity Technologies (http://www.solidity.biz/solidity/companyInfo/aboutUs.asp) within Australia. Solidity sells Distinctions QMS system in the Australian TAFE sector.
Ian McDonald at QUT is coordinating the proof of concept. I haven’t spoken directly with Ian at this stage but understand he would welcome UWAs participation in the POF if we wanted to join in. I don’t know the terms but would be happy to find out if you are interested.

2. **Membership of Academic Council**

Trudi’s response to my request for FAO representation on Academic Council - for discussion.

"With regard to FAO representation on Council. There is general staff representation (20) called for on the Board, not directly to Council. Then people are voted from Board on to Council. General staff representation on Council would depend on gaining enough votes at the Board for this. The FAOs could, if they wished, decide to nominate one (or more) of their number (but this could split the vote) to the Board and then nominate for Council. There will be an opportunity to do this shortly as we will be beginning the election process. I can understand your interest and it would be good to have an FAO on the Council, however the same could be said of many groups across the place and so I believe the only way to go is to first of all get a representative on the Board, nominate for Council and hope to secure a sufficient number of votes. Election to Council is by and from the Board, so all Board members vote."

3. **Best Practice**

4. **New Business**