MINUTES OF THE FAO GROUP HELD ON MONDAY 17TH MAY 2004 AT 2:15PM
IN THE CHANCELLOR’ S ROOM, LEVEL 1, WINTHROP TOWER

Present: Maz Schneider (Chair), Jannette Barrett, Zan Blair, Felicity Gouldthorp, Marjan Heibloem, Claire McIlroy, Robyn King, Deborah Rhys-Jones Marianne Rogers, Larissa Stone, Felicia Symonds

Apologies: Judy Fetherston, Elizabeth Oliver

1. BUSINESS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES OF 19TH APRIL 2004

1.1 Status Forms

The Chair reported that the Faculty Deans were able to delegate the signing authority for status forms to a FAO. The Secretariat has been informed, and the policy available at: www.secretariat.uwa.edu.au/home/policies/admissions/statappr has been amended accordingly.

2. SIMS REPORT

2.1 Weighted Average Mark (WAM)

Members made the following comments in relation to the introduction of a WAM within Callista:
- Agriculture, Law and Education had discussed the WAM in their Faculties, and did not want a weighting on the levels (eg. so that a Level 3 unit would be worth more than a Level 1 unit).
- There is a difficulty in weighting the levels, because the definition of a "level" is diverse, according to each Faculty. It would also not be desirable as students entering with different requirements (eg. Graduate entry streams) would end up with an advantage.
- It would be useful to have the average of EACH course, when a student was doing a combined degree, as well as the overall combined average.
- There was concern over the "duplicate" unit issue - it was understood that this item was under discussion at present.

It was agreed by consensus that the FAO Group would prefer the following:
1. an average of each academic year
2. the course average (which was weighted by points, but not level)
3. the Grade Point Average (GPA)

Action: The Chair would report back to SIMS

3. RE-DRAFTING OF SPECIAL APPROVAL FORM

The Group reviewed the updated version of the Special Approval form. Thanks were given to Robyn for her efforts with this task.
It was agreed that the updated Special Approval form was approved by the FAO Group.

Action: The Chair would forward the updated form to Harvey Von Bergheim.

4. PROVISIONAL AND CONFIRMATION OF ENROLMENTS

The Faculty of Engineering, Computing and Mathematical Sciences reported that there had been difficulties with students not contacting them in relation to their provisional enrolment. It was suggested that it be emphasised to students the importance of contacting their Faculty in relation to confirming their enrolment. Several Faculties stated that they contact students adequately (phone, email and letter) but if students do not respond by the required deadline, their enrolment is cancelled. It was noted that students need to take responsibility for their course and enrolment, and they are able to be re-instated if required.

It was agreed that FECM would decide how to approach this issue internally.

5. 2005 COMBINED DEGREE RULE DEADLINES

It was noted that it was not clear how existing combined degree rules should be submitted to the Secretariat. It was understood that new combined degrees would be sent with the Faculty that had the ‘later’ submission deadline.

Action: The Chair would ask Sylvia Lang for clarification on combined degree rules submission.

6. HANDBOOK

6.1 Handbook Reference Group

It was noted that Jannette Barrett had withdrawn from the Handbook Reference Group.

It was agreed that Maz Schneider would replace Jannette on the Handbook Reference Group.

6.2 Handbook Feedback

It was noted that the rule relating to deferred examinations only being available on the Crawley Campus was being adjusted. This would ensure that the rule included offshore groups sitting deferred exams, such as Singapore.

There was discussion on the pros and cons of alphabetical order of unit descriptions in the Handbook and the introduction of short descriptive titles. It was noted that some Faculties had developed a “mini” handbook to better suit the needs of their Faculty. It was noted that there was a facility on the web to print out the rules relating to your Faculty.
Action: Staff were requested to feedback any Handbook issues to the Handbook Reference Group.

7. POSTGRADUATE ORIENTATION

Members were reminded to send information on Postgraduate Orientation activities to Daniel Renton. It was discussed that several Faculties felt it would be useful to have a generic local Postgraduate Orientation session, but that it would have to be held at a suitable time.

Action: The Chair would give feedback to Daniel Renton, and invite him to the next meeting.

8. BEST PRACTICE

8.1 FAO Group website

It was noted that the Senior Managers Group had a website which includes agendas/minutes of meetings, staff profiles etc.

Action: Jannette Barrett would investigate the feasibility of developing a site.

9. FAO EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

It was suggested that a strategic, lobby group be formed from the FAO Group. It was envisaged that this group would meet on an ad hoc basis and would act strategically in pro-active ways to issues on campus. It was noted that the FAO Group should also become more involved on University Committees and the University community. It was thought that there would be approximately 4 members on the Executive, however, this would depend upon interest of the group.

Action: The Chair would discuss with the Secretariat how to inform FAO members of vacancies on committees.

Action: Members to email the Chair “Expressions of Interest” by the 21st May 2004.