



## UNIVERSITY EDUCATION COMMITTEE MINUTES – 5 OCTOBER 2022

Minutes of the 05/2022 meeting of the University Education Committee held at 9.30am on Wednesday 5 October via the Zoom video-conferencing platform.

### MEMBERS PRESENT:

Prof Theo Farrell (Chair)	Ms Nuala O'Donnell
Dr Kellie Buckley-Walker	Dr Germanas Peleckis
Ms Leanne Cambridge	Prof Nina Reynolds
Dr Ken Cliff	Dr Kellie Ridges
Mr Ray Coury	Mr Dominic Riordan
A/Prof Xiaoping Gao	Prof Ann Rogerson
Ms Theresa Hoynes	A/Prof Sibylle Schwab
A/Prof Julie Kiggins	Mr Manmeet Singh Batra
A/Prof Tracey Kuit	Ms Megan Smith
Mr Felix Lanceley	Mr Michael Valceski
Dr Kimberly McMahon-Coleman	Prof Wilma Vialle
Mr Jackson Cocks	Dr Elena Vlahu-
Prof Karen Walton	Gjorgievska Dr Noelene Weatherby-Fell

### APOLOGIES AND LEAVE OF ABSENCE:

Ms Margie Janetti	
A/Prof Montse Ros	Mr Narayan Khanal
Louise Hickman	Prof Trish Mundy
Alison Freeman	
Prof Honglin Chen	

### IN ATTENDANCE:

Ms Clare McKenzie, Library Services  
Ms Frances Windsor, Future Education  
Ms Katie McKenzie (Executive Officer)

## PART 1: OFFICIAL BUSINESS

### 1.1 Welcome and Acknowledgement of Country

The Chair welcomed all members and attendees and extended thanks to outgoing committee members Professor Julia Coyle and Mr Ben Hamill.

Mr Dominic Riordan gave the Acknowledgement of Country.

### 1.2 Apologies and Leave of Absence

The Chair noted the apologies as listed above.

### **1.3 Arrangement of Agenda**

#### **1.3.1 Conflicts of Interest**

No conflicts of interest were raised by the Committee.

#### **1.3.2 Confidential Items**

No confidential items are included in the agenda papers.

#### **1.3.3 Starring of items under General Business**

The following items were starred for discussion: 2.2, 3.1, 3.3 and 3.5.

#### **1.3.4 Adoption of Unstarred Items**

##### **RESOLVED 2022/58**

*that the University Education Committee adopt the resolutions that are put to the Committee unstarred.*

### **1.4 Confirmation of Minutes**

##### **RESOLVED 2022/59**

*that the minutes of the previous meeting held on 17 August 2022, as attached to the agenda paper, be confirmed, and signed as a true record.*

### **1.5 Business Arising from the Minutes**

Mr Ray Coury provided an update on the following action item from the August 17 UEC meeting:

*Mr Coury to follow up with Ms Leanne Cambridge and have further discussions on the alignment of the work of the Student Lifecycle Technology Committee and the Learning Platform Advisory Group*

Mr Coury advised the Committee that he had met with the Director of LTC to discuss feedback on the proposed Terms of Reference for the Student Lifecycle Technology Group. Feedback has now been incorporated into a revised Terms of Reference.

### **1.6 Chair's Report**

The Chair provided the following report:

#### **The PVCS Workplace Change Proposal**

The PVCS workplace change proposal is currently under consultation. Context surrounding the proposal is the urgent need to enhance our services and support for students, and thereby improve the student experience at UOW. There is opportunity to increase coherence on what we do in several areas and thereby enhance support for students:

- In student mental health and wellbeing, by merging teams currently distributed across SASD and PVCS.
- Improve coordination in our programs and activities to support young people on their post-school learning journeys by co-locating teams currently situated in SRD and PVCS.

We are extending the consultation to include a round of workshops with impacted teams to refine the proposal.

Some general observations relating to students and the student experience:

- At least one-in-four students experience mental health challenges. It is critical that we take decisive action to improve our support in this domain.
- Student success is about much more than learning support; in particular, student mental health and wellbeing are major drivers of student success.

- 30% of our students don't think that their degree prepares them for employment. We are well below the national average on this. We need to take decisive action to improve in this domain if we are to empower our students for their futures. I intend to scale up and unify our efforts on WIL and CDL, and to launch a new program also at scale on entrepreneurship.
- UOW has a proud history of support students from equity backgrounds to realise their ambitions. We will continue to be sector-leading in the work we do on outreach and transitions.

### Teaching Model for 2023

Consultation on the teaching model for 2023 will begin shortly.

- This semester we have returned 80% of classes to face-to-face for most students; the percentages are lower for our regional campuses.
- We have removed restrictions on large lectures. However, in most subjects, lectures continue to be delivered through digital means.
- Student footfall on campus continues to be below pre-COVID levels. We know from surveys that most students no longer feel a sense of belonging. We need to find ways to rebuild a sense of place and community for students.
- Last month, I visited three universities in Holland, two universities in Ireland, as well as UOW Dubai. In all seven universities, all classes & lectures have fully returned. The vibrancy of the campuses appears to be back to pre-pandemic levels.
- In the coming weeks consultation on our teaching model for 2023 will commence:
  - Gather information on student perspectives – focus groups
  - LTC focusing on improving quality in synchronous teaching
  - Return lectures to campus, most likely taking on a staged approach

Members discussed the Chair's Report and made the following observations:

### The PVCS Workplace Change Proposal

- UOW has performed well in some recent surveys, including the Good Universities Guide, however the Student Experience Survey results are still below pre-pandemic levels and there are areas that need improvement.
- Addressing student mental ill-health is complex and challenging. UOW has capability in this area, including a range of services for students, a Student Mental Health Advisory Group and a Student Mental Health Data Working Group.
- The portfolio changes within SASD and Student Life present an opportunity to review the current strategy, the delivery of the service offerings, and engage appropriate stakeholders. Particular attention may be directed to membership and Terms of Reference for the aforementioned groups and ensuring input from teaching academics, who have direct contact with students.
- Staff mental ill-health and the cumulative effect of the challenges presented by the pandemic and changes within the University is of concern.
- The Voice Staff Survey showed that inefficient systems are a significant pressure point and there are concerns about the variable quality provided to students. Process improvements have begun in SASD.

### Teaching Model for 2023

- It is likely that a move towards more face-to-face classes (in particular large lectures) will be broadly welcomed by Faculties and students, however consideration should be given to the timing and communication of any changes.
- A staged approach is favourable. BAL has already implemented a staggered lecture model and ASSH is exploring the development of 'impact lectures'.
- A dual delivery model will remain in place while there is a need to support international students studying offshore.
- Student engagement is substantially reduced compared to pre-pandemic levels. It is likely that there is a relationship between student engagement and student satisfaction. There is a fine line

in providing students with flexibility and ensuring a level of participation and engagement that is likely to maximise their student experience.

- Improving students' engagement with their Schools and Faculties is likely to deliver a more personalised experience. Acknowledging current resource restraints, exploring ways to enable this level of engagement would be welcome.

## **PART 2: COMMITTEE BUSINESS**

### **2.1 Student Academic Experience Subcommittee Minutes**

#### **RESOLVED 2022/60**

*that the University Education Committee note the minutes of the Student Academic Experience Subcommittee from the 31 August 2022 meeting, as provided in the agenda papers.*

### **2.2 UEC Membership Survey Results**

Ms McKenzie provided members with an overview of the results from the UEC, EPAQ and SAES membership surveys.

The Chair welcomed the feedback provided by members in the survey and suggested that in addition to reviewing the membership and Terms of Reference, the Chairs of UEC, EPAQ and SAES could meet regularly to discuss their respective committees' workplans. It was also suggested that UEC members be surveyed about their preference to return committee meetings to in-person attendance in 2023.

**ACTION 2022/10:** *UEC Chair to arrange initial meeting with the Chairs of EPAQ and SAES to discuss survey feedback in relation to committee membership, ToR and workplans for 2023.*

**ACTION 2022/11:** *UEC Executive Officer to survey members about their preference to return committee meetings to in-person attendance in 2023.*

#### **RESOLVED 2022/61**

*that University Education Committee note the UEC Membership Survey Report as provided in the agenda papers.*

## **PART 3: GENERAL BUSINESS**

### **3.1 Code of Practice- WIL Professional Experience Volunteering**

Mr Dominic Riordan provided the context in which the proposed amendments have arisen and outlined the changes to the Code of Practice- Work Integrated Learning (Professional Experience). The report for a major project led by the University of Adelaide into the legal issues associated with work integrated learning and the law, notably the Fair Work Act provisions regulating unpaid work was released in October 2021. Based on the report's findings, UOW's Work Integrated Learning Advisory Committee has identified opportunities to clarify and strengthen the Code.

The amendments clarify the issue of student-initiated placement opportunities operating outside of formal course or subject requirements. There are three cases where a student-initiated placement may, be lawful:

1. Where the student is volunteering (that is, unpaid work that is performed for an organisation with charitable purposes and where the student has no obligation to attend or perform specific work;

2. Where the student placement cannot be categorised as work (because the activities undertaken are not ‘productive work’ – that is, tasks that would ordinarily be undertaken by paid employees; because the primary beneficiary is the student; and because the main activities are learning activities); and
3. Where the student is in fact paid (and as such an employee of the placement provider), but provided they are paid the appropriate wage for the work undertaken.

The amendments make it clear in the Code that that anything else may be unlawful. FAQ resources are being developed by WILAC to support the amendments to the Code.

The Educational Policy and Quality Subcommittee reviewed the amendments at their 13 September meeting and sought clarification regarding the application of the code to offshore campuses. The Code does not apply to UOW College Australia or UOW Dubai but does apply to other offshore locations. It is proposed that the amendments be discussed with the relevant persons at those locations to ensure they are appropriate for implementation.

**RESOLVED 2022/62**

*that the University Education Committee:*

- i Endorse the amendments to the Code of Practice – Work Integrated Learning (Professional Experience) as detailed in the agenda papers; and*
- ii Note, that subject to the resolution of any offshore implementation issues, these provisions will be submitted to Academic Senate for endorsement before being submitted to the Vice Chancellor for approval, to become effective on approval.*

### **3.2 Annual Comparative Student Outcomes**

Mr Dominic Riordan, from the Academic Quality and Standards Unit, spoke to the Comparative Student Outcomes (CSO) and Interim Course Monitoring Report 2021

The following key findings from the Institutional Data Summary Report were highlighted:

- The effects of the pandemic have continued to influence student performance in a variety of ways.
- The performance gap between International and Domestic students has narrowed.
- Work is ongoing to address the higher attrition rates and comparatively poorer student performance at South Western Sydney campus.
- The performance of equity groups continues to improve.
- There was an overall improvement in attrition, excluding some increases in international student attrition attributed to the pandemic.
- Future work will take place to integrate pathways data into the ‘Data for Quality Assurance’ reports.

Members discussed the data used to compile the report and noted that while it is not statistically tested, other processes and contexts are used to make observations and flag any areas for further discussion or investigation.

The Chair highlighted several encouraging actions and themes arising from the report, in particular building on WIL opportunities, and thanks AQS and the Faculties for their involvement in the CSO process.

**RESOLVED 2022/63**

*that the University Education Committee note the Comparative Student Outcomes and Interim Course Monitoring Report for 2021 and endorse the actions to improve the student experience.*

### **3.3 Course Reviews Progress Update**

**RESOLVED 2022/64**

*That the University Education Committee note the report on course review activities conducted during 2022 as outlined in the agenda papers*

**3.4 Report on Academic Development and Support for Teaching**

**RESOLVED 2022/65**

*that University Education Committee note the Learning, Teaching & Curriculum 2022 (YTD) report on academic development and support for teaching, as provided in the agenda papers.*

**3.5 Update on Enhancement of Teaching Excellence Evidence-based Performance Metrics for Staff Promotion Cases**

Ms Leanne Cambridge, Director of Learning Teaching and Curriculum provided Members with a brief overview of the review that is currently underway.

Members discussed the range of evidence that academics can use to support their promotion and noted that participating in external benchmarking processes is not currently included.

Ms Cambridge also confirmed that peer review training would be increased to two sessions in 2023.

**RESOLVED 2022/66**

*that University Education Committee note the Learning, Teaching & Curriculum update on the Continuing Professional Development (Learning & Teaching) – (CPD) Review for enhancement of evidence-based performance evaluation, as provided in the agenda paper.*

**PART 4: OTHER BUSINESS**

**4.1 Other Business**

Members discussed issues arising with the implementation of the new Access Plan system, specifically, reporting features that have not been enabled and the occurrence of system errors. Due to the phase-out of the old Reasonable Adjustment system, staff are currently using both systems, increasing workload pressures.

Dr Kellie Ridges, Director of Student Life, advised that additional support from IMTS has been secured to prioritise the resolution of the Access Plan system issues.

**PART 5: NEXT MEETING**

This was the final meeting of 2022.

Signed as a true record:



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Chairperson