ACADEMIC SENATE IN-BRIEF

An update on the key decisions made and matters discussed by Academic Senate on 28 May 2020

Overview

The agenda of matters considered at this meeting is available on the Academic Senate website. The resolutions and minutes of the meeting remain subject to change and will be published on the website following ratification at the next Academic Senate meeting, scheduled for 21 July 2020.

Key agenda items, outcomes and resolutions are highlighted in this brief and are not intended to replace the full minutes.

Matters resolved

Academic Senate passed 21 resolutions at this meeting. Information on outcomes of specific agenda items may be found in this report or within the minutes.

COURSES: NEW AND CHANGES

Undergraduate and Graduate Certificates under the Federal Government’s Higher Education Relief Package. (Res 20/60) Academic Senate ratified the introduction of seven Undergraduate Certificates and 2 Graduate Certificates:

i. Undergraduate Certificate of Business Analytics.
ii. Undergraduate Certificate of Engineering.
iii. Undergraduate Certificate of Engineering Fundamentals.
iv. Undergraduate Certificate of Information Technology.
v. Undergraduate Certificate of Information Technology Fundamentals.
vi. Undergraduate Certificate of Mathematics.
vii. Undergraduate Certificate of Science.
viii. Graduate Certificate of Environment; and
ix. Graduate Certificate of Information Technology.

TOEFL@ Home tests and Duolingo English Language test (Res 20/48 and Res 20/57) Academic Senate approved the acceptance of TOEFL@ Home tests for the purpose of satisfying the University’s Higher Degree Research English language entry requirements, with immediate effect, for as long as regular testing is disrupted by the COVID-19 pandemic, and ratified the approval of the temporary use of the Duolingo test for English language entry requirements to MUIC programs and coursework courses at the University.

Proposals approved by Executive Action. (Res 20/59) Members ratified other course proposals, including proposals related to PACE and Capstone units, which were approved under Executive Action.

POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

Amendments to Policies and Delegations of Authority in Response to COVID-19 Pandemic (Res 20/42 and Res 20/43) Academic Senate noted a summary of amendments to policies and Delegations of Authority that have been approved to respond to the COVID-19 pandemic, and ratified the Executive Action taken by the Chair of Academic Senate, as amended, to approve that:

i. a student will be assigned an “SC” grade which is a grade not recorded due to special circumstances, if they fail a unit undertaken during the COVID-19 emergency; and

ii. an SC grade may be used in future emergency circumstances as determined by Academic Senate.
Higher Degree Research Variations to Candidature Policy: Further amendments to Policy (Res 20/44)
Further to the 7 April 2020 amendments, Academic Senate approved a subsequent amendment to the Higher Degree Research Variations to Candidature Policy to align the provisions for extension of candidature for the combined Master of Psychology and PhD programs with the Higher Degree Research Rules, with immediate effect.

Inherent Requirements Statement (Res 20/45)
Academic Senate approved the introduction of an Inherent Requirements Statement to replace the current Inherent Requirements Framework and endorsed related amendments to the Admissions (Coursework) Policy for approval by the Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Academic).

Exemption from Lodging Final Examination papers in Library (Res 20/46)
Academic Senate approved the following recommendations from the Academic Standards and Quality Committee in relation to Schedule 4 requirement of the Assessment Policy to publish final examination papers in the Library:

i. that the list of exempted pre-2020 units be updated to reflect the codes and names of the current versions in the 2020 curriculum;
ii. an amendment be made to the Policy to introduce a regular three-year period of review of all approved exemptions to determine if there is an ongoing need for the exemption; and
iii. the inclusion of Psychology units granted exemptions under the former Final Examinations Policy be transitioned into the list of exemptions in Schedule 4 of the Assessment Policy.

Award of Emeritus Professor Policy and Procedure: Amendments (Res 20/47)
Academic Senate endorsed, and recommended to Council for approval, the new Professor Emerita/Emeritus Policy, Procedure and Criteria to replace the existing Emeritus Professor Policy and Procedure.

Academic Senate noted a list of policies under review/development as of 20 May 2020 and the Standard Operating Procedure on Policy Amendment (including review) and Development. Academic Senate also ratified amendments approved under Executive Action by the Chair of Academic Senate to the Supporting Evidence Schedule of the Special Consideration Policy and the Special Consideration Policy.

GOVERNANCE AND STRATEGY

Response to the Recommendations from the External Review of Academic Senate: Report from the Working Group (Res 20/51)
Academic Senate approved the Response and Implementation Plan for the Recommendations from the External Review of Academic Senate and agreed to recommend to Council approval of a related amendment to the Academic Senate Rules.

Composition of Academic Senate: Report from the Working Group (Res 20/52)
Academic Senate approved changes to the ex-officio, elected staff and elected student membership of Senate and agreed to recommend to Council approval of related amendments to the Academic Senate Rules. Members also endorsed and recommended the Academic Senate Standing Committee approve amendments to the Academic Senate Standing Orders to include a process for assessing gaps in expertise, equity and strategic priorities, and co-opting additional members to fill any gaps.

Amendments to Research and Research Training Committee Terms of Reference (Res 20/58)
Members noted a report on proposed amendments to the Terms of Reference of the Research and Research Training Committee.

Updates from Working Groups (Res 20/50 and Res 20/53)
Updates were noted from the General Coursework Rules: Review of the Requirements for Practical, Clinical and Professional Courses Working Group; and the Joint Review of Academic Standards and Quality Committee and Senate Learning and Teaching Committee Terms of Reference Working Group.
OTHER MATTERS

- The Vice-Chancellor gave his thanks to staff and students for the extraordinary work and support for the University’s response to the unexpected COVID-19 pandemic. He reported on a range of matters including the Federal Government’s approach to international travellers, including students; the delivery of units in Session 2 noting most will be delivered online with some on-campus activities; and the launch of the University Operating Plan 2020-2024;
- Student members of Academic Senate raised questions on notice regarding the student support package, opportunities for students to catch up on face to face activities and experience, and the impact on some students arising from assessment format changes in Session 1 (Res 20/20);
- Academic Senate endorsed the formation of an Academic Integrity Task Force under the leadership of the Pro Vice-Chancellor (Learning and Teaching) (Res 20/54) and noted an update on Academic Integrity actions and initiatives (Res 20/55).
- Highlights from the Macquarie University 2019 Performance and Overview Report from Open Universities Australia (OUA) were noted (Res 20/56).
- The Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Academic) reported on the approach for TEQSA re-accreditation noting the importance of our Policy framework to support and enhance the University's approach to quality and meet our internal and external obligations. The Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Academic) also noted that Cohort monitoring is gaining momentum.
- Members ratified executive action taken by the Chair of Academic Senate (Res 20/59) to approve:
  - membership changes to the Committees of Academic Senate and MUIC Subcommittee.
  - the GPA to WAM conversion for future Academic Excellence Awards, and the award of the Macquarie University Award for Academic Excellence to coursework and MUIC graduands.
  - the use of a Weighted Average Mark (WAM) of 55 for Special Articulation from Macquarie University International College to bachelor’s degrees; and
  - the approval in conjunction with the Executive Director, Student Engagement and Registrar of the draft principles for the conduct of exams in Session 1 2020.

COMMITTEES OF ACADEMIC SENATE AND FACULTY BOARDS

Academic Senate noted reports from the following Committees and Faculty Boards April-May 2020:
- Academic Standards and Quality Committee.
- Research and Research Training Committee.
- Senate Learning and Teaching Committee.
- the report of a circular resolution dealt with by the Academic Senate Standing Committee in April 2020.
- Faculty of Arts Faculty Board.
- Macquarie Business School Faculty Board.
- Faculty of Medicine, Health and Human Sciences Faculty Board.
- Faculty of Science and Engineering Faculty Board.

Academic Senate noted the summary reports for University Discipline Committee meetings held in March and April 2020, including explanatory advice from the Acting Chair of the Committee.