External Review of the Faculty of Human Sciences

October 2013

Faculty Response to the Review

March 2014

The Faculty of Human Sciences (FHS) was reviewed by an external panel in October 2013. The review document was finalised in January 2014. This report documents the Faculty’s response to the recommendations of the Review.

The Faculty extends its thanks to the review panel for the time and consideration it put into interrogating the information provided and in preparing a clear and succinct review document and accompanying set of recommendations. The panel reviewed the Faculty Self-Evaluation Report and other supporting documents and interviewed staff members of the Faculty and University, students and external partners over a 3 day period in October 2013. On the basis of this information, a final report and recommendations were formulated and these are attached in Appendix A to this response. The Executive Advisory Committee of the Faculty of Human Sciences met in early March 2014 to consider the Review Report. The Executive Dean also met with representatives of the Advisory Board to the Institute of Early Childhood, at their request, to discuss the outcomes of the review. This report documents the Faculty response to the recommendations of the Review and its proposed plan of action.

**Faculty of Human Sciences response to review recommendations**

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| Recommendation | Outcome of Faculty discussions | Timeline and Responsible Parties |
| R1. *The Panel recommends that the Department of Education and the Institute of Early Childhood merge into a single department. –* | In general, the two Departments did not support the merger for a variety of reasons including: loss of identity and therefore influence; different foci of the two departments (Education focuses on education from school-age across the life-cycle while IEC focuses on the early years and families and advocacy); loss of current momentum due to extra work to implement change; concern about job losses; concern about resourcing to co-locate and implement change.  The Institute Advisory Board of the IEC strongly rejects the merger on the grounds of loss of identity and influence; concern about loss of control of the IEC approach to teacher training; claims that MQU is breaching its promise to maintain IEC’s independence; concern that insufficient consultation with the EC sector took place during the review.  Both departments supported efforts to work more collaboratively such as, reconceptualising the degree structures, sharing support services, reducing administrative and academic workload by sharing efforts.  **Action**: It was agreed the Executive Dean(ED) would draft a document addressing the resourcing required for co-location of the departments, re-engineering of degree programs and support to implement these changes.  The ED will work with the departments to identify a unified structure that would allow the maintenance of each department’s identity and influence in their respective sectors while delivering efficiencies and greater sustainability.  Within this framework, consideration must be given to the overall student experience, the development of strong HDR, MRes, and Postgraduate Programs and to the reconceptualization of Education as a discipline at Macquarie University and institutional research that crosses the lifespan.  **Decision:** Once these activities are completed, the Departments will work towards a merger proposal that allows improved efficiency and effectiveness but maintains the distinctive strengths of each group. | **Timeline:**  **Document developed end of April 2014.**  **Consultation with departments 30 June 2014**  **Resource request developed for 2015 budget (September 2014)**  **Implementation of merger during 2015, contingent on resource availability with establishment of new entity 1 Jan 2016.**  **Responsible parties: ED, FGM and HoDs** |
| R2. *The Panel recommends that ASAM formally be established as a separate Department in the Faculty with the Dean of Medicine reporting directly to the Executive Dean of the Faculty and senior staff in the School being fully represented on the core Faculty committees.* | As ASAM is not fully integrated into FHS, it was not fully considered in the Review. The intent of the recommendation by the Review Panel was to provide clarity and appropriate recognition of the work the Faculty does for ASAM. The decision about where ASAM sits is part of larger considerations around the Hospital and the overall plan for a Health Precinct on campus. FHS do, however, need to be remunerated for the services it provides to ASAM.  **Decision R2:** FHS acknowledges thatdecisions regarding the position of ASAM within the University structure will be made at University level. However, the Faculty will seek financial support for the ongoing services it provides to ASAM until such time as a change in ASAM’s location is determined. | **Timeline: End of April 2014**  **Responsible party: ED** |
| *R3 The Panel recommends that the Department of Health Professions be strengthened through the:*   1. *shift of the other major health professional programs (Audiology and Speech Pathology) offered in the Faculty into the Department of Health Professions, and* 2. *introduction of additional teaching programs in the health professions*. | Change in the original focus of the Department of Health Professions as a graduate school, lack of physical co-location of the allied health disciplines, and growing academic and research links between Speech Pathology and Audiology with other disciplines and partners located in the Australian Hearing Hub (AHH) has caused the Faculty to reconsider the value of merging these areas. The future of Audiology and Speech Pathology is best placed in close proximity with developments in cognitive and language sciences as the Faculty builds the research and development potential of the AHH.  Physiotherapy has closer links with medicine and other allied programs such as occupational therapy, nuclear medicine and nutrition. Allowing the Department of Health Professions to plan a growth strategy that aligns more closely with its academic and professional underpinnings in anatomy, physiology and movement science will allow it to develop a more focussed suite of academic programs that complement its links with medicine and MUH.  **Decision R3a:** The Faculty does not support the proposal to move the allied health areas from Linguisticsinto Health Professions.  **Decision R3b**: In alignment with the University’s plans and direction for the health areas, the Faculty **a**grees to introduce additional programs into the Department of Health Professions  Irrespective of the co-location of existing health disciplines in a single department, the Faculty and University need to make a genuine effort to build opportunities for inter-professional engagement and education. It is proposed that a Committee for Inter-professional Practice be established to: encourage ‘cross fertilisation’ in clinical education across the health areas; and develop quality assurance policies and procedures that govern the clinical education and practice within the Faculty. This committee would include membership from the professional programs in psychology and any other allied health programs introduced in the future.  To be effective, this group will require administrative support to assist in common activities including: preparation for and reporting on professional accreditation; managing placements; reporting to State and National Health authorities; managing on-site clinical education and services. The Faculty will develop a Strategic Initiative for the resourcing of these activities to put to the 2015 Budget.  **Action**: The Faculty will establisha Committee for Inter-professional Practice in the Faculty of Human Sciences and seek appropriate resourcing of its activities in the 2015 budget.  The Faculty will conduct a process to identify the next allied health program for introduction in the Department of Health Professions and develop a strategic initiative bid for its resourcing for introduction in 2016. | **Timeline:**  **End of April to establish a Faculty Committee for Inter-professional Practice.**  **End of June to identify the next allied program for introduction to MQU.**  **End of June 2014 to develop strategic initiative bids to resource the work of the Committee for Inter-professional Practice and the establishment of a new allied health program in 2016.**  **Responsible parties: ED, FGM, Directors of Allied Health Programs, and Head of Health Professions in consultation with the wider University community and external stakeholders** |
| *R4 The Panel recommends that consideration be given to the future focus and sustainability of the Department of Linguistics and the potential advantages for both the Department of Linguistics and the Department of Cognitive Science were they to merge.* | Given R3a was not supported the proposed merger of Linguistics and Cognitive Science will need further consideration. The sustainability of both Departments will be monitored closely over the next 3 years and consideration will be given to appropriate combinations of departments and disciplines in the 2017 budget cycle.  **Decision:** The Faculty agrees to closely monitor the sustainability of Linguistics and Cognitive Science over the next 3 years and consider the options for mergers in preparation for the 2017 budget.  **Action**: The Faculty is to develop an International Marketing Strategy for Linguisticsas a matter of urgency. | **Proposed Merger**  **Timeline: Review in 2016**  **Responsible parties: ED, FGM and HoDs**  **Marketing Strategy**  **Timeline: End of March 2014**  **Responsible parties:**  **ED, FGM, HoD and Marketing Manager** |
| *R5. The Panel recommends that:*   1. *the number of Associate Deans be reduced to two: Associate Dean, Academic (subsuming quality/L&T) and Associate Dean, Research (subsuming research and research training) and that the Faculty Executive be reduced in size accordingly;* 2. *other roles, if required, be deemed as Directors or Assistant Deans who report to the relevant Associate Dean and attend Faculty Executive meetings only as required;* 3. *the new Associate Deans be designated as standing deputies for the Executive Dean; and that* 4. *delegated levels of authority be clarified for the two new Associate Dean positions* | There is a common AD structure across the Faculties at MQU. A change such as that proposed in the Review is something that would need to be considered in consultation with the other Faculties and the wider university as the ADs also align with University level portfolios. There is some variation in the fraction of appointment of ADs across faculties. All ADs in FoHS are 0.6 FTE while in other Faculties some AD positions are0 .8 or full-time. The ADs in FHS were not inclined to see the size of the role increase for two reasons: its impact on their research and concern regarding the anticipated increase in workload, particularly in the Research and HDR portfolios. As the HDR and research targets are set to triple over the next decade, it was felt the workload would be too onerous for a full-time AD to cover both portfolios.  There was strong support from the group for the establishment of a Deputy Dean role. It was suggested that the Deputy Dean could be recruited from within the Faculty . The role would need further thought and discussion.  **Decision:** The Faculty does not accept recommendations R5a and b. There will be no change to the current structure of Associate Deans at this time. The Faculty will give consideration to establishing a Deputy Dean position and to a review of the authorities delegated to the existing ADs.  **Action:** Further discussion to take place around the proposed role of Deputy Dean and the authorities delegated to the ADs and a case prepared for the establishment of the role. | **Timeline:**  **Discuss and develop a proposal for the establishment of the Deputy Dean role by the end of June 2014.**  **Responsible parties: ED and Faculty Executive** |
| *R6. In terms of budget issues that can be addressed at the Faculty level, the Panel recommends that:*   1. *consideration be given to a revision of the Faculty budget allocation model given the discrepant student-staff ratios across the Faculty;*   *and*   1. *appropriate training be undertaken to improve Heads’ understanding of the University and Faculty budget allocation model.* | All members of the Faculty Executive agreed with R6a and b. With respect to R6a, it was agreed that in reviewing and revising the Faculty budget allocation model to remove discrepancies in the SSR, consideration should be given the level (UG vs PG) and strategic value of programs, as well as their basic financial sustainability.  Regarding R6b – work has already begun to increase HoD understanding of the FFM at University and Faculty level.  **Decision**: The Faculty agrees to implement both recommendations R6a and b.  **Action:** The Faculty will review the budget allocation and work with the HoDs to develop sustainable budgets for each department over the next 2 years.  Training will be undertaken to improve HoD’s understanding of the University and Faculty funding allocations. | **Timeline: End of June 2014 – All Departmental Budget allocations will be reviewed and a strategy for sustainability developed for each.**  **End of April 2014 – all HoDs will receive additional training on the FFM**  **Responsible parties: ED, FGM , Finance Manager and HoDs** |
| *R7. The Panel recommends that the Faculty:*   1. *Clarify the role and focus of the proposed Bachelor of Human Sciences; and* 2. *Consider whether additional academic programs might be introduced in order to draw on the strengths in Education and Health in the Faculty.* | The initial role of the Bachelor of Human Sciences degree was to provide an entry path to Physiotherapy and other health related courses to be developed in future. In addition the Faculty has been working on introducing new majors that would be attractive as stand-alone qualifications with a particular focus on community health and education. The Faculty recognised the need to include a wider range of departments in the discussion around future development of the B Hum Sc and this is being undertaken in 2014. The overall strategy is to develop courses that meet the needs of the future jobs market. The public health major has been approved for introduction in 2015.  **Decision**: The Faculty agrees to implement recommendations R7a and b.  **Action:** The Faculty will develop a working party to clarify the focus of the B Hum Sc and develop new majors to advance its growth capitalising on the combined strengths of health and education taking into consideration the University level plans for the health area. | **Timeline: End of June 2014**  **Responsible parties: ED, AD CQA and Department representatives** |
| *R8. The Panel recommends that the Faculty reduce the relatively large number of postgraduate coursework programs with small enrolments and focus on courses of strategic significance and strong student appeal.* | The Faculty regularly reviews low-enrolment units but has been less consistent in reviewing courses. Each year there is a reduction in units but this should be considered in the broader terms of the sustainability of courses. Some courses have responded by reducing the number of electives offered; others have changed the number of offerings of a unit per year. It is recognised that the Faculty and University may choose to maintain some low enrolment courses, particularly in areas of professional need or where the University has research strengths.  **Decision**: The Faculty agrees to implement R8 taking due consideration of the issues raised above.  **Action:** The Faculty will commence a review of low enrolment courses including the following elements:financial modelling of course delivery to determine financial sustainability coupled with a consideration of the strategic value of each course. Key criteria to evaluate strategic value will be agreed. | **Timeline: End of July 2014 in preparation for 2015 budget**  **Responsible parties: AD L&T, FGM, HoDs and Course Convenors/Directors** |
| *R9. In order to improve research performance, the Panel recommends that the Faculty:*   1. *develops a clear research strategy for the future, with a specific focus on the research strategy for the Hearing Hub;* 2. *ensures that resource allocation is consistent within departments, particularly for research higher degree students;* 3. *reconsiders the definition of ‘research active’;* 4. *ensures that appropriate HR practices are in place to build the Faculty’s research capability (in relation to selection of staff, workload management, use of teaching-intensive positions, and rigour of the probationary review process).* | The Faculty supports this set of recommendations but wishes to note the following activities currently underway  9a. The Faculty is well advanced in the development of Research Themes and Streams for the future. The Hearing Hub research strategy is under development and should be ready for implementation in the second half of 2014. Hearing research is also embedded in the Faculty’s research theme development for 2014. It will play a more dominant role going forward. The AHH now has a Research Committee and a dedicated Project Officer to assist the ED to build greater collaboration with internal and external partners.  9b. HDR Students should be allocated a fair and equitable share of resources across all departments of the Faculty. Concerns have been raised that there is a lack of consistency across departments in HDR resource allocation. While it should be recognised that some HDR candidates may benefit differentially due to assignment to better resourced supervisors and departments, there is a minimum resource allocation that all candidates should receive. Departmental practices will be reviewed and a Faculty HDR Support Policy will be developed which aligns with University Policy and sets clearer parameters around minimum standards and reasonable student expectations.  9c. The definition of research active is a University level policy and, as such, cannot be changed by a Faculty. However, a faculty can define its expectations for research activity in its application in the Workload Model, its appointment of staff and its performance development and review. For example, the Faculty uses a different level of research activity in its application of teaching load in the Workload Model. The Faculty will review its working definition of research active with a view to raising the bar for future allocation of support and resources. Raising the bar for research activity is critical to achieving the targeted growth in research income and productivity expected by the University over the next 10 years.  However, raising the bar for the definition of Research Active in the allocation of HDR supervisors would have detrimental effects in the short term. The Faculty AD HDR has previously supplied an HDR Supervisory capacity snapshot to each department. We are already facing greater demand for supervision than we can meet, in part due to the percentage of staff meeting the RA criteria for eligibility to be placed on the Supervisor Register.  There is also a matter of workload allocation. Departments have to decide, is it better to have a staff member supervise 6 HDR candidates or teach 20 PG or 50 UG students?  9d. The Faculty has implemented a number of HR strategies to improve research productivity. Faculty policy requires either the ED or ADR to sit on all recruitment panels for new academic appointments. The Faculty has conducted PDR workshops focusing on addressing the issue of weak performance in research. However, we agree more work is needed.  The Dean reported that the DVC R expects us to triple research income by 2024. This will be achieved by a combination of strategic recruitment of new staff with strong research backgrounds and performance development and management of existing staff. The strategic use of both research–only and teaching-only positions will also be important considerations in meeting these targets. There are matters concerning the promotion opportunities and career paths of teaching-only positions that must be considered before implementing this strategy.  **Decision**: The Faculty agrees with R9 a,b,c and d but wishes to note the activity already underway in these areas  **Action**:  9a. A new targeted research strategy incorporating a focus on hearing research will be developed.  9b. HDR resource allocation across departments will be reviewed and a Faculty Policy developed.  9c. Consideration will be given to the Faculty definition of Research Active and its application in the allocation of workload and resources. A new Faculty definition and policy will be developed.  9d. The Faculty will review its current HR strategies to improve research performance with a view to finding new ways to build research productivity. | **Timeline:**  **9a Strategy complete 31 March 2014**  **9b Policy Developed 31 May 2014**  **9c Faculty Policy developed 30 June 2014**  **9d Review of current strategies – uptake and impact; and development of wider policy initiatives aligned with the EA 30 June2014**  **New initiatives to be implemented in 2015**  **Responsible parties: ED, FGM, ADs Research, HDR and L&T, HoDs** |
| *R10. The Panel recommends that the Faculty put in place a clear set of goals to increase the proportion of low SES and Indigenous students and that the Faculty’s leadership team ensure a Faculty-wide commitment to meeting such goals.* | While the Faculty has several pockets of support for the equity goals relating to low SES and Indigenous students. It does not have an overall strategy.  **Decision**: The Faculty agrees to implement R10.  **Action:** The Faculty will develop a clearly articulated Diversity Strategy with targets and timelines to increase the proportion of low SES and Indigenous students enrolled in and progressing through its courses. The strategy will include all departments and offices of the Faculty. | **Timeline: Strategy to be developed by end of May 2014.**  **Responsible parties: ED, ADL&T, Department representatives; Faculty Support Services** |
| *R11. The Panel recommends that the Executive Dean address the discrepancies in student-staff ratios across the Faculty.* | SSRs across the Faculty are highly variable, in part, due to different student profiles – Linguistics has a higher proportion of PG and HDR students while Education and IEC have higher proportions of UGs. The SSRs in Education and IEC are high for the sector but in Linguistics they are low. There are budget deficits in these departments which are being subsidised by other parts of the Faculty. For IEC and Education, the deficit is mainly attributed to the cost of practicum. Efforts have been made to reduce these costs over the last several years but the deficit remains. Concerns exist about the allocation through the FFM. The current SSRs indicate high efficiency yet the budget is inadequate. In Linguistics there is a structural deficit that will require correction over the next 12-24 months. Downturns in international enrolments at PG level have not been compensated sufficiently by growth in UG load. Review of the teaching models and course structures is required to find a more efficient approach. This must be coupled with a strong marketing strategy targeted at revitalising the international market.  **Decision**: The Faculty accepts R11.  **Action:**  The Faculty will conduct a review of course structures and funding over the next 3 months with a view to developing a strategy to rectify the discrepancies in SSRs and a more sustainable model of course delivery and funding over 2015 and 2016. | **Timeline: Plan developed by 31 June 2014; implementation complete end of 2017.**  **Responsible parties: ED, FGM and HoDs** |
| *R12 The Panel recommends that the Faculty develop a clearer, well-articulated internationalization strategy.* | The Faculty has developed an Internationalisation Plan that puts in the place the foundations for moving forward. The review recommends a more targeted approach with clearly articulated strategies  **Decision**: The Faculty accepts R12**.**  **Action**: The Faculty will develop a revised Internationalisation Plan with clear targets and strategies. It will consult with MI in the development of this plan. | **Timeline: Revised Plan in place by end of April 2014**  **Responsible parties: ED, ADI and HoDs in consultation with MI and the other ADs.** |