ACADEMIC SENATE IN-BRIEF

An update on the key decisions made and matters discussed by Academic Senate on 18 February 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 7 April 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 17 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 (Res 20/05)

In addition to ratifying Executive Actions related to curriculum matters (see below under “Other Matters” for further details), Academic Senate received a presentation on actions being taken by the University in response to COVID-19 travel restrictions and endorsed:

i. the delegation of the approval of temporary revisions to existing units via executive action by the Chair of the relevant committee (i.e. ASQC or Faculty Board) in accordance with the level of unit revision approvals under Shared Governance, provided they are satisfied that the proposed changes maintain equivalence to the approved unit with respect to:
   - the academic standard of the unit’s content, learning activities and assessment,
   - the alignment of assessment tasks to Unit Learning Outcomes, and
   - academic integrity, and
   that as much as possible unit revisions include opportunities for active learning and collaboration between students equivalent to those in the already approved version of the unit;

ii. provision of online tutoring for students unused to this mode of study, noting that this may require a more intensive form of tutor facilitation and that developmental support for tutors, to ensure that they are appropriately equipped for this task, will be provided by the Learning Innovation Hub; and

iii. the “flexible online study” options will not be available to students at academic risk (as per their progression status) for the duration of the current disruption to study for students affected by the travel ban.

POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

Academic Promotion Policy and Procedure Update (Res 20/06)

Academic Senate endorsed the proposed changes to the Academic Promotion Policy and Procedure.

GOVERNANCE AND STRATEGY

Report of the External Review of Academic Senate (Res 20/11)

Members noted the report of the external review of Academic Senate by Emeritus Professor Richard Henry and approved the formation of a working group to develop a response to the report’s recommendations.

2020 Projects for Academic Senate (Res 20/12)

Academic Senate endorsed the list of 2020 projects for Academic Senate as amended and approved by the Academic Senate Standing Committee and noted the timelines for projects.

2019 Annual Report of Academic Senate (Res 20/13)

Members endorsed the 2019 Annual Report of Academic Senate for presentation to University Council.

Post-Implementation Review of Shared Academic Governance (Res 20/14)

Academic Senate resolved to approve the Project Overview for the Post-Implementation Review of Shared Academic Governance.
Academic Senate and Committee membership: Response to Disestablishment of the Faculty of Human Sciences (Res 20/08)

Academic Senate resolved to:

i. approve the retention of the current elected academic staff and student membership from the Faculty of Human Sciences on Academic Senate and its committees, until the conclusion of their current terms of Academic Senate membership;

ii. approve the principle of maintaining the current balance between elected and ex-officio members, and accordingly the co-option of an ex-officio member to Academic Senate to restore the balance until the conclusion of the current term of membership for elected academic staff members (31 December 2020);

iii. approve the extension of the term of membership for all current student members by six months (to 30 November 2020), whilst updates to the student system are completed to reassign students currently associated with the Faculty of Human Sciences to their new faculties;

iv. approve the formation of a working group to review the composition of Academic Senate prior to the commencement of the next terms of staff and student members;

v. note that the Office of the Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Academic) is undertaking a review of Faculty Board composition, and Academic Senate will participate as a stakeholder to ensure Faculty Boards can perform the functions delegated to them by Academic Senate; and

vi. note that the Academic Senate Standing Committee will develop a process for the appointment of a casual staff member to Academic Senate, on a rotating basis between Faculties.

Research and Research Training Committee Terms of Reference: Amendment to Composition (Res 20/10)

Academic Senate resolved to approve the amendments to the composition of the Research and Research Training Committee as set out in its terms of reference, with immediate effect.

Approach to Review of Terms of Reference of the Academic Standards and Quality Committee (ASQC) and Senate Learning and Teaching Committee (SLTC) (Res 20/15)

Academic Senate resolved to approve the immediate establishment of a working group to jointly review the Terms of Reference of ASQC and SLTC and to provide feedback to Academic Senate for consideration.

OTHER MATTERS

• The Vice-Chancellor updated members on the University’s response to the travel ban imposed by the Federal Government to deal with COVID-19 (novel coronavirus) and gave a separate presentation on the development of the Operating Plan 2020-2024 (Res 20/04);

• Academic Senate noted advice from the Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Academic) on preparations for the University’s application for re-registration with TEQSA;

• Members received the report of the working group established to review the Practice-based Curriculum Taskforce report (Res 20/07) and resolved to:
  o acknowledge and support the work encapsulated in the Practice-based Curriculum Taskforce report presented to Academic Senate’s meeting of 22 October 2019;
  o recognise the concept of practice-based curriculum as an important element of the distinctive pedagogy at Macquarie University as outlined in the 2019 Learning and Teaching Framework; and
  o not endorse the specific recommendations in the taskforce report but refer the report to the Pro Vice-Chancellor (Learning and Teaching) for incorporation into the development of relevant strategies under the Learning and Teaching Framework;

• A nomination for the title of Emeritus Professor was endorsed by Academic Senate and recommended to Council (Res 20/09);

• The meeting received an update on the Freedom of Speech Policy (Res 20/16); and

• Members ratified executive action taken by the Chair of Academic Senate to approve late changes to 2020 curriculum, approved the revised Academic and Workplace Ethics (AWE) Module for offering to MUIC students from 1 January 2020 and to approve changes to the membership of Academic Senate and the Academic Standards and Quality Committee, the Senate Learning and Teaching Committee, the University Medal Committee and the Thesis Examination Subcommittee (Res 20/17).

Committees of Academic Senate and Faculty Boards

Committees of Academic Senate

Academic Senate noted the reports of the meetings of the Academic Senate Standing Committee held in December 2019 and the Academic Standards and Quality Committee held in January 2020.
Faculty Boards
Academic Senate noted the report of the meeting of theFaculty of Arts Faculty Board, the Macquarie Business School Faculty Board, the Faculty of Human Sciences Faculty Board, the Faculty of Medicine and Human Sciences Faculty Board and the Faculty of Science and Engineering Faculty Board held in December 2019.

University Discipline Committee
Academic Senate noted the summary reports for University Discipline Committee meetings held in December 2019.