



Research Induction Committee

Meeting 2/06 of the Research Induction Committee of the Faculty of Education held on Wednesday 24th May 2006 at 11.00 a.m. in the room 423, Clayton Campus

Mr Mayur Katariya - Executive Officer

1. Introduction to Formal Business

1.1 Present

Assoc. Prof Ilana Snyder (Chair), Dr Helen Forgasz, Assoc Prof Trevor Gale, Dr Amanda Berry, Dr Margaret Gearon, Dr Umesh Sharma, Mr Raquib Chowdhury, Ms Claire Charles

1.2 Observers

Mr Ed Irons, Dr Evan Kritikakos

1.3 Apologies

Dr Jill Brown, Dr Jenny Miller

1.4 Minutes

Mr Mayur Katariya (Executive Officer)

Chair introduced new Executive Officer Mr Mayur Katariya to the Committee. The new look of the meeting agenda document was noted.

2. Minutes

Motion:

The Minutes of meeting no. 01/03 of the Research Induction Committee held on Wednesday 8th March 2006 were confirmed as an accurate record.

Mover: Assoc. Prof Ilana Snyder

Seconded: Dr Amanda Berry

Carried: Unanimously

3. Starring of unstarred items

All items for discussion on the Agenda were starred.

4. Business Arising from Minutes

4.1 Dr Jenny Miller's report

Chair informed the Committee that Dr Jenny Miller's attempt to contact Kate Cadman, University of South Australia, was unsuccessful. Dr Miller will report at the next RIC.



5. Reports

5.1 MERC reported on the following matters.

- MUSO HDR Discussion forum

Ms Claire Charles reported on the functionality of the new HDR Discussion forum on MUSO. *RIC 01/02/2006 - Printout of the front page of this web-based tool* - was circulated with the meeting agenda. MERC organised a session to promote this tool. It was noted that HDR students should be encouraged to use this tool.

Action:

That MERC will consider organising a MUSO Promotion week at the beginning of the next semester, It will also be promoted in the MERC Conference. A bulk email will be sent to all HDR students.

- MERC Conference updates

Ms Claire Charles reported on the progress of the MERC Conference. The conference organising working party is meeting regularly and around 20 abstracts have been received.

Mr Mayur Katariya reported on the progress of Winter School.

5.2 Chair of the Committee and Associate Dean (Research Degrees and Induction) Assoc Prof Ilana Snyder reported on the following matters.

- Plans for Research Induction

RIC 02/02/2006 – document titled “*Aspects of the Faculty’s Operational Plan 2007-9 that relate to Research Induction*” – was circulated with the meeting agenda. While discussing the document, the Committee agreed on the listed objectives and related targets as the framework for 2007-9. Assoc Prof Ilana Snyder emphasized the scaffolding of HDR degrees, improvement of processes, enhanced provisions for Pathway degrees, supervision pedagogy as well as accreditation, and MEd by portfolio research.

The Chair said that supervisors with level 1 accreditation should endeavour to achieve level 2 accreditation. MEd Research students who may want to continue their candidature for PhD with a level 1 accredited supervisor may be disadvantaged as the supervisor will not be able to supervise at PhD level without level 2 accreditation.



- Introduction of mid-candidature milestone for doctoral students and Introduction of confirmation of candidature for MEd Research

A discussion paper -*RIC 03/02/2006*- was discussed along with Dr Evan Kritikakos's report - "Review by Circulation".

The Chair reported that some sort of milestone beyond the confirmation of candidature is in practice within other departments and outside the University.

Dr Evan Kritikakos' Review by Circulation model suggests that students circulate at least two chapters (perhaps Methodology/Literature Review or another chapter) to an academic who belongs to the main supervisor's research strength. If the progress is found to be worrying and completion within time unlikely, a panel would be convened. If progress seen as on target, the student could continue and hopefully complete within a year of fulltime candidature.

Dr Helen Forgasz suggested that confirmation of candidature provision may help to improve the attrition rate of MEd (Research) courses. Other possible process may involve the requirement for students to make a presentation on their progress in the MERC Conference or a special day for a number of presentations could be organized.

Dr Trevor Gale argued that workload is an issue and a simplified process could help to decrease not only the paperwork but also the staff resources.

Chair suggested that provision of confirmation of candidature for MEd Research as well as introduction of mid-candidature milestone for doctoral students are important matters and recommended the formation of a working party to consider the processes.

Action:

That the Working Party, consisting of Assoc Prof Ilana Snyder, Assoc Prof Trevor Gale, Dr Umesh Sharma and Mr Mayur Katariya, meet to prepare a recommendation for a form of confirmation of candidature for MEd students that will be piloted in semester 2 2006 and then considered in 2007 as a mid-candidature milestone for doctoral students. The Working Party's report will be presented at the next RIC.

- Scholarship cohort analysis

A document - *RIC 04/02/2006* - summarising a summary of the University's performance tabled at RGSC meeting was circulated



with the meeting agenda. It was noted that Scholarship cohort is performing increasing well across the University and the Faculty Scholarship cohorts overall have performed above the average in terms of the number and rate of completions.

- Anne Prince and the Language Support team

Chair mentioned that Ms Anne Prince is in process of finding useful web links for the Faculty research degrees website in relation to research and thesis writing skills.

- AARE Award

Chair informed that Dr Amanda Berry has been put forward as the Faculty candidate for the AARE Award this year.

- Appointment of MEd and PhD examiners

Chair reminded the MRGS requirement that nomination of examiners must be submitted at least 2 weeks prior to the PhD thesis submission. Chair acknowledged that it is getting increasing difficult to find examiners for MEd (Research) as well as PHD courses due to workload issues.

Chair suggested that the Annual Progress Report can include questions prompting students and supervisors to explore the possible nominations well before the thesis submission.

- A laptop for commencing PhD/HDR students

Chair informed the Committee that commencing full-time Doctoral students are receiving new laptops instead of desktop computers in some departments of the University. Prof Max King is encouraging other departments to consider this option. It was suggested that a new laptop may be more beneficial than an old PC which may require higher maintenance costs.

Action:

That the Committee investigates the possibilities of offering new laptops to commencing Doctoral students.

- PhD Scholarship Environmental Science

Chair informed the Committee regarding the possibilities of the one PhD Scholarship in Environmental Science. It was noted that half of the contribution will be made by the private sector and half by the Faculty. The scholarship will be offered and operated as per the Monash guidelines.

(Dr Evan Kritikakos left the meeting.)



- Communication with staff and students

Chair appreciated the diligent work put in by the Faculty web development team especially Faculty website content coordinator, Ms Debby Kloot. Research Degrees web site has been enhanced and ongoing improvements will be made by Mr Mayur Katariya.

- Website

Chair suggested that FAQs in line with the Faculty Honours web site be uploaded before the next meeting. Chair also suggested that new features like links to students' profiles, job ads etc should be worked on in the near future along with improved resources for HDR students such as hyperlinks to documents currently given to psychology students on literature reviews etc and a hyperlink to LMR's page on referencing styles.

Action:

The Research degrees office will proceed to implement the suggested improvements and report to the July meeting of the Committee.

- Dean's nominees

Chair mentioned that Dean's nominees are not yet confirmed.

Action:

That Committee will review its composition towards the end of the year.

- Email from Lexie Brans

An email from student - *RIC 05/02/2006* - was circulated with the Minutes. Chair finished the report with the happy note congratulating all the staff and academics involved in the development of the Faculty HDR Handbook.

Chair also reminded the Committee that Assoc Prof Trevor Gale will act as the Associate Dean (Research Degrees and Induction) in her absence. Chair is commencing her OSP the 1st of July 2006.

5.3 Co-ordinator Master of Education – Research, Assoc Prof Trevor Gale reported on the following matters.

- Supervision allocation



A briefing paper on the process of supervision allocation has been prepared. Mr Mayur Katariya is developing a flowchart depicting the process. This document will be uploaded on the Faculty web site and distributed to academics.

Assoc Prof Trevor Gale reported that 62.2% of HDR students in our Faculty have sole supervision.

Action:

Assoc Prof Trevor Gale will present his recommendations in relation to the high percentage of sole supervised HDR students to the next meeting.

Report from Assoc Prof Trevor Gale -*RIC 06/02/2006*, was circulated with the meeting agendas.

- Amendment to 3204 – Master of Education (Research)

Significant Amendment to a Course form –*RIC 07/02/2006*- was circulated with the meeting agenda. Assoc Prof Trevor Gale described the amendments; he reported that the new course will have a 40,000 words thesis which would be the aggregation of relatively smaller fragments: a structured research inquiry portfolio, work-based inquiry & dissertation.

Assoc Prof Trevor Gale also described the Cohort Supervision model for this course - Master of Education (portfolio and coursework).

Motion:

The Committee approves the Significant Amendment to course 3204 and requests Co-ordinator Master of Education – Research to present it in the Curriculum Committee and the Academic Board.

Mover: Dr Margaret Gearon

Seconded: Dr Helen Forgasz

Carried: Unanimously

Assoc Prof Trevor Gale also informed the Committee that in liaison with the Assoc Dean (Staff) he is working on a model that will best suit the requirements of the academic staff and the new course. The strategies to inform academic staff about the Cohort Supervision model will include seminars and discussion forums early in the second half of the year.

5.4 Director of Research Degrees Dr Helen Forgasz reported on the following matters



- New arrangements for research funding for students
Director of Research informed the Committee that the Research Degrees Office has started processing all students' funding requests and Ethics Approval applications. The transition of these matters from the Research Office to the Research Degrees Office took place in early May this year. The new arrangements have been communicated to the students and staff.

Director of Research Degrees briefed the Committee about the Research Degrees sub-committee meeting which took place just before this meeting. She mentioned that updated Examiners Reports for the MEd (Research) are approved and will be used from now on. She also mentioned that interim Annual Progress Reports (APR) should not be the replica of the APR. The Committee accepted that the form should be changed and simplified for the next round of the Annual Progress Reporting.

- 5.5 Dr Margaret Gearon was not able to attend the Curriculum Committee.
- 5.6 Dr Mandi Berry's report was circulated. She informed the Committee that no Honours students had withdrawn from the course in this half; however, a few deferrals have taken place.

The Committee endorsed Dr Mandi Berry's suggestion that Dr Zofia Pawlaczek report on her draft proposal for a four year Honours Program at its next meeting.

Meeting concluded at 1:15 PM.

6. Next Meeting

Wednesday 5 July	11:00 am	Room 423	Clayton Campus
Wednesday 23 August	11:00 am	Room 423	Clayton Campus
Wednesday 25 October	11:00 am	Room 423	Clayton Campus

Distribution

Committee members

Associate Professor Ilana Snyder – Chair
Dr Helen Forgasz
Associate Professor Trevor Gale
Dr Margaret Gearon
Dr Mandi Berry/Dr Jane Mitchell
Dr Jill Brown
Dr Jenny Miller
Dr Umesh Sharma

For information

Professor Jane Kenway
Ms Trudi Brunton

Student Representatives

Ms Claire Charles



Mr Raquib Chowdhury

Executive Officer: Mr Mayur Katariya
Administrative Officer: Mr Ed Irons