TAFE QUEENSLAND AND GRIFFITH UNIVERSITY LINKS COMMITTEE

A meeting of the TAFE Queensland and Griffith University Links Committee was held at Griffith University, Nathan Campus, between 12-2.00 pm on Tuesday, 30 May in Room 2.06, Bray Centre (N54).

MINUTES

PRESENT:
- Chair - Professor John Dewar
- Dr Lyn Holman
- Professor Max Standage
- Mr Fred Beven
- Ms Leesa Wheelahan
- Mr Chris Robinson
- Ms Robyn Tyler
- Mr Greg Harper
- Mr John Blakeley
- Ms Linda Brown
- Ms Deb Daly

By Invitation
- Mr David Edwards

APOLOGIES:
- Professor Ian O'Connor
- Mr Scott Flavell
- Mr Colin McAndrew
- Mr Sam Ragusa
- Mr Craig Sherrin
- Ms Janine Schubert
- Mr Steve Ghost

Secretary - Ms Mary Hassard

1.0 CONFIRMATION OF MINUTES

The minutes of the 2/2005 meeting of the TAFE Queensland and Griffith University Links Committee were taken as read and confirmed.

2.0 CHAIRPERSON’S REPORT

2.1 The Chair welcomed new members, Professor Standage Pro Vice Chancellor, Community Partnerships and Ms Linda Brown, Director, Moreton Institute of TAFE and expressed thanks to outgoing members, Professor Sharon Bell and Mr Greg McMillan, for their significant contribution to the Committee and links with TAFE.

2.2 The Chair expressed his appreciation to the TAFE Directors for their willingness to continue to work with Griffith to discuss issues of mutual interest and benefit to institutions. Recent meetings with Southbank, Logan, Moreton and Gold Coast Institutes will assist Griffith in the planning of additional pathways.

Towards the end of 2006, the Chair will again write to Institutes requesting nominations for dual offer places for 2008. The University considered dual offers as a first stage in that they provide incentive for more development which can lead to tailoring curriculum for good student outcomes. Griffith is
currently working with Logan Institute of TAFE building a pathway from TAFE Certificate to University Masters and views this as its “flagship” for future pathways.

2.3 The Chair was pleased to advise that in 2006, all students enrolling in degrees from the Griffith University Logan Tertiary Access program received scholarships. The University considered the offering of scholarships to all TAFE students presented an opportunity for students to think about University study and the financial assistance available. TAFE students are eligible for the Sir Samuel Griffith Scholarship for high achieving students and The Chancellor’s Scholarship which is equity based.

2.4 The Chair sought the assistance of TAFE Directors to communicate within the Institutes the opportunities already developed for access, direct entry, scholarships and credit transfer into Griffith University degree programs for TAFE Graduates.

2.5 The Deputy Director-General thanked the Chair for this strategy of real cooperation and congratulated the Committee on the progress and benefits that were very evident as a result of Griffith/TAFE Qld links.

2.6 Members noted that dual sector Universities such as RMIT enjoyed advantages that separate institutions must develop. To meet the future needs of school leavers, better packaging of pathways is required. The growth in apprenticeships in non-traditional areas such as Business will change the nature of current pathways.

3.0 QUEENSLAND SKILLS PLAN

3.1 The Deputy Director-General, Department of Employment and Training, presented an overview of the Queensland Skills Plan which has implications for the way that universities and TAFE institutions need to work together, as a result of the reforms proposed in the Plan.

3.2 In 2005, the Queensland Government undertook a comprehensive review of the State’s vocation education and training system and found two major skills deficits in Queensland’s economy i.e. an urgent shortage of trades skills and an underqualified associate professional workforce. A final package of reforms has been developed as the Queensland Skills Plan.

3.3 A turnaround in the labour market has resulted in a changing labour market with the lowest unemployment and tightest labour market for 30 years. Strong growth has occurred in high skill occupations, including a boom in the skilled trades, with less consistent growth in lower skills occupations with some on the rise whilst others are declining due to globalization and technological change.

3.4 Whilst between 50-85% of higher skilled job holders hold tertiary qualifications, 57% of lower skilled jobs holders do not hold qualifications but a training package does exist for these areas of employment. The Government does not consider such a qualification gap of over 50% in the lower skilled jobs area to be satisfactory as skills are a key driver of economic growth.
3.5 The **Queensland Skills Plan** aims to better align training delivery to changes in skill needs and labour demand, introduce reforms to the training system, engage directly with industry, provide individuals with good information about work opportunities and skilling options and improve participation for the under-skilled. Total recurrent funding over the next 4 years is $801 million which is the largest investment across Australian in skills development.

3.6 Reforms to training systems include the creation of specialist TAFE Institutes as lead centres for skills and reforming delivery in Brisbane. The Southbank Institute of TAFE will become the Southbank Institute of Technology specializing in providing programs designed for articulation into Universities and postgraduate vocational programs for professionals and para-professionals. Yeronga, Moreton and Logan TAFEs will be combined into one Institute, Metropolitan South Institute of TAFE, and be responsible for training for a number of designated industries including vocational trainer training. This reorganization into Lead Institutes with specific responsibilities should assist Universities in that there will be fewer Institutes to work with for articulation planning.

3.7 In terms of current practices of Universities and the reforms outlined in the **Plan**, the Deputy Director-General envisaged the typical worker may see upgrading to University as “uninviting” unless Universities package qualifications appropriately, recognize skills developed outside the University and offer much smaller programs of study to enable workers to become University trained. More students will be bypassing Year 12 and undertaking vocational studies whilst still at secondary school. Two in every three learners are over 30 years with little time to study, wishing to be assessed first for existing skills to shorten the time required to upskill within flexible frameworks and timeframes. The same challenges will apply to all training organizations if more workers are to be encouraged to undergo further training and obtain tertiary qualifications.

Approximately 1 in 4 jobs require University qualifications and many of these are where the University must provide the training. There is potential for growth in the market for degrees and areas where this could occur is adult re-skilling and upgrading para-professional skills and trade qualifications to professional qualifications. The Deputy Director-General considered that the pathway work being completed by this Committee was on the right track in that it was targeting both entry level and older students moving from VET to University.

3.8 Members queried the performance of the new Australian Training Colleges to deliver to the expectations of the Federal Government. The Deputy Director-General advised that the Colleges were not yet attracting large numbers of students, were unable to cover sufficient training areas and their locations have proven to be problematic. It was considered that VET in schools with part-time apprenticeships and working with the current TAFE Colleges offered a more suitable model for the Federal Government.

3.9 Members recognized that students no longer consider that their choice of tertiary pathway is either solely TAFE or University. Outcomes from TAFE include both industry skills and study skills for higher education. More opportunities for reverse articulation from University to VET should be available to permit University graduates to obtain workplace qualifications and many TAFE qualifications could be embedded in University degrees.
3.10 The Chair thanked the Deputy Director-General for the fascinating presentation and his succinct observations regarding the future of training in Queensland. The presentation answered many questions which will inform the Committee in future deliberations when addressing the requirements of workers wishing to upgrade skills or obtain new skills via a University education.

4.0 PATHWAYS PROJECT - LOGAN INSTITUTE OF TAFE/GRIFFITH UNIVERSITY

4.1 The report commissioned by Griffith University and Logan Institute of TAFE sought to review, develop and extend pathways between the two institutions, to provide more opportunities for the Logan community to participate in tertiary education. The first stage of the project evaluated the Logan Tertiary Access Program (LTAP) and provided recommendations for future development to provide access to and prepare students for studying in degrees at Griffith. The second stage focused on pathways between Logan Institute of TAFE and Griffith University based on Training Package qualifications that prepare students for particular occupations in the workforce.

4.2 Mr Greg Harper, Director, Logan Institute of TAFE firstly thanked Ms Leesa Wheelahan for her outstanding work and contribution to the report. Her passionate commitment to and research expertise in the planning and development of cross sectoral links greatly assisted the project members to provide a set of key messages and recommendations for use by both institutions in creating strategies for Griffith University/TAFE Links in the Logan region.

4.3 The Director advised that whilst this project included an in-depth analysis of the Logan area and the findings and recommendations focus on the needs of the Logan community, the framework is much broader than the Logan Institute of TAFE. Key messages included the importance of embedding University skills in VET qualifications and improving communication for students from TAFE Qld, TAFE Institutes and Griffith University with regard to available choices for study paths for designated career outcomes.

4.4 Ms Wheelahan advised that key issues identified by the project were:

. Graduates of the LTAP program were high performers at University and that such a program not only prepares students for University but in most cases has the potential to transform lives. It should be retained but a number of recommendations for its future delivery have been proposed for consideration by Logan TAFE and Griffith University.

. Student Focus Groups identified the need for better information to be available with regard to pathways and career outcomes at the commencement and end of their TAFE program and at the time of transition to University including assistance in applying for credit transfer.

. There is no single approach to meeting the needs of learners, the community and employers in the Logan Region. Strategies targeted at prioritised specific groups need to be developed in partnership through developing formal consultative mechanisms. Two key areas identified were health and community services and business services.
Whilst traditional pathways are demand driven, a “skills eco-system” approach was viewed as more likely to take into account the broader needs of the community and industry. An early childhood pathway starting in TAFE and ending at postgraduate level at University was proposed based on the eco-systems model. Multi-skilling was considered desirable across the childcare, social work, school and education sectors.

Community Consultative and Industry Advisory Committee should be formed to plan qualifications that meet community needs. Joint development of curriculum will ensure programs in each sector are complementary, provide students with a coherent learning environment and ensure knowledge and skills are scaffolded from one qualification to the other.

4.5 Mr Harper concluded that the report recommendations provided a work plan within the framework of the overarching Memorandum of Understanding between TAFE Qld and Griffith University. A Partnership Committee should take responsibility for enacting the Report.

4.6 Ms Linda Brown advised that a number of issues such as student retention rate, the amount of funding required for the enhanced delivery and the cost to students were being considered in regard to the current delivery of the LTAP program in comparison to other tertiary preparation programs.

4.7 The Chair thanked Mr Harper and Ms Wheelahan and advised that this Report had been presented to the Griffith University Logan Task Force which was examining current operations at Logan Campus. This campus has a special contribution to make in serving the needs of the local community and therefore strategies for deepening links with TAFE and industry are crucial for future development. The University is very much looking forward to working with the new Metropolitan South Institute. Already arrangements have been finalised to share facilities in the Health area.

5.0 SCIENCE PATHWAYS

5.1 The Chair welcomed the Director, Teaching and Learning, Griffith Science and Technology, Mr Dave Edwards, who circulated a report on current TAFE links with programs offered by the Griffith Science and Technology Group, planned arrangements yet to be finalised and an overview of undergraduate offerings in 2007.

5.2 The Group comprises the four areas of engineering, environment, information technology and science and is in the process of revising the major degree programs it offers into cross-campus consistent programs from 2007. This will allow a much more consistent approach to articulation arrangements as currently many arrangements are campus based only.

5.3 Mr Edwards advised that the Group is keen to increase the pathways with guaranteed credit and access from TAFE Diploma and Advanced Diploma level studies as well as improving credit transfer for TAFE studies into Griffith Science degree programs generally. The Group is endeavouring to identify potential pathways and all TAFE units of competency for which credit transfer may be awarded for courses taught across Science programs at Griffith.

5.4 The Science experience is that articulation pathways work best when there is collaboration between the Institute and Griffith to ensure the best advice to
students at the planning stage about study paths and career outcomes and to ensure the pathway is kept up to date. TAFE Graduates articulating from a planned arrangement are adequately prepared to value add a University degree in the same field.

5.5 The Chair thanked the Director for having a coherent plan to improve pathways for TAFE students into Griffith Science and Technology programs and encouraged the Group to monitor both the numbers and flow of students.

6.0 GRIFFITH UNIVERSITY/TAFE REPORTS

The Chair invited Members, who may wish to do so, to give a short oral report on current issues affecting their roles in TAFE/University links.

6.1 Ms Deb Daly, Director, Gold Coast Institute advised that the Coomera Project was now planned for commencement in 2010. Alternative locations were being considered. The Institute was pleased with the approved dual offers and the plans to extend the articulation work across other areas.

6.2 Moreton Institute of TAFE Director, Ms Linda Brown, advised that she welcomed the introduction of the new Metropolitan South Institute and the opportunity to create articulation arrangements for qualifications with common quality and specific units which can be transferred across the campuses. The first major initiative involved joint development of a Nursing pathway. The Moreton Institute is the Lead Centre for TAFE teacher training and the pathway recently finalised with the Griffith Bachelor of Training was certainly a major selling point to TAFE teachers to extend their studies to a degree. The Institute had received 300 applications from Trade Teachers. Ms Brown thanked Fred Beven for his work with the Institute in this area.

6.3 Mr Fred Bevan advised that the new model of Cert. IV/Diploma in Training and Assessment/Bachelor of Training has resulted in additional credit transfer due to the inclusion of Griffith based mentoring and project requirements as part of the TAFE studies. This new opportunity for TAFE Teachers to upskill and gain a University degree is very timely considering the proposed reforms outlined in the Skills Plan.

6.4 Director Education Services, Southbank Institute, Robyn Tyler reported on the new vocational graduate qualifications (nine) being planned for delivery from 2007. The Curriculum Development Advisory Committees included staff from higher education and the Director wished to thank Griffith for its contribution in this area. Academic staff from Griffith also assisted in the development of Associate Degrees including Popular Music.

6.5 Mr John Blakeley, Director, Open Learning Institute, advised of the pending merger of Open Learning Institute with Brisbane North Institute and of the recent development of a Vocational Graduate Certificate and Graduate Diploma in Strategic Business to be offered from 2007.
7.0 TAFE ARTICULATION STATISTICS

Members were provided with schedules listing the following statistics:

1. Total number of students admitted to Griffith University on the basis of TAFE studies in 2006, plus breakdown of numbers from 2000-2005.
2. Total number of students awarded credit transfer towards Griffith programs on the basis of TAFE studies in 2006, plus breakdown of number from 2000-2005.
3. Breakdown of number of students awarded credit by TAFE Institute and Griffith University degree program.
4. Listing of approved dual offers by TAFE Institute and Griffith Group program.
5. Information on scholarships and the Partnership Admission Scheme.
6. Griffith programs being offered for mid-year entry.
7. Details of the Griffith University TAFE Information Services for credit and admission.

8.0 NEXT MEETING

The Chair advised that the next meeting was planned for October/November at a time to be advised.

Confirmed: ………………………………………………………………………

Professor John Dewar (Chair)

Date: ………………………………………………………………………
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Professor John Dewar

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Mr Colin McAndrew

Academic Registrar, Griffith University
Dr Richard Armour

Director, Office of Facilities Management, Griffith University
Mr Sam Ragusa

One group Pro-Vice Chancellor nominated by the Vice Chancellor
Professor Max Standage, Pro Vice Chancellor, Community Partnerships

Up to two members of the academic staff of the University nominated by
the Deputy Vice Chancellor (Teaching and Learning) and Deputy President
Mr Fred Beven, School of Vocational Technology & Arts Education
Ms Leesa Wheelahan, School of Vocational Technology & Arts Education

TAFE representatives nominated by the Director-General,
Department of Education, Training and the Arts
Mr Rod Arthur – Deputy Director-General, Department of Education, Training and the Arts
Mr Craig Sherrin – Director, Southbank Institute of Technology
Ms Janine Schubert – Director, Product Services, IT and Product Services
Ms Carol Webb – Director, Open Learning Institute of TAFE
Ms Linda Brown – Director, Moreton Institute of TAFE
Ms Peter Newnham – A/Director, Gold Coast Institute of TAFE

Secretary
Ms Mary Hassard, Manager Credit Transfer and Articulations, Griffith University

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