GRIFFITH UNIVERSITY

UNIVERSITY ASSESSMENT COMMITTEE

NOTICE OF MEETING

A meeting of the University Assessment Committee will be held at 1.00 pm on Monday 8 September 2014, video-conferenced between room 2.06 Bray Centre (N54) Nathan campus and room 2.27 Information Services (L03) Logan campus and room 1.04 The Chancellery (G34) Gold Coast campus.

Apologies may be advised by emailing Donna Kalaentzis at d.kalaentzis@griffith.edu.au or by telephoning ext 57879.

DISTRIBUTION LIST

Committee Members

The Chairperson of the Committee appointed by the Deputy Vice Chancellor (Academic), in consultation with members of the University Assessment Committee
Associate Professor Heather Alexander Two years, up to 31 December 2014

Deputy Chairperson of Academic Committee ex officio
Associate Professor Wendy Loughlin

Deans (Learning & Teaching) ex officio
Arts, Education and Law
Professor Glenn Finger
Griffith Business School
Professor Lorelle Frazer
Griffith Health
Professor Nicholas Buys
Griffith Sciences
Professor Richard John
Dean, Learning Futures or nominee
Associate Professor Heather Alexander

Director, Student Administration or nominee
Ms Cathy McGrath
Deputy Academic Registrar or nominee
Ms Karen van Haeringen
Director, Information Services (Learning and Teaching) or nominee
Mr Bruce Callow
Up to two members of Academic Staff with specialist expertise, appointed by the Deputy Vice Chancellor (Academic)
Associate Professor Ray Tedman up to 31 December 2015
Associate Professor Mark Brimble up to 31 December 2015

One student representative nominated by the Chair of the Learning and Teaching Committee up to 31 December 2014
By invitation:
Ms Rebecca Seymour

Secretary:  Ms Rachel Farnsworth

Other Copies (with attachments)
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AGENDA

1.0 APOLOGIES

Apologies may be advised by emailing Donna Kalaentzis at d.kalaentzis@griffith.edu.au or by telephoning ext 57879.

2.0 CONFIRMATION OF ACTION SHEET

The minutes of the 6/2014 meeting of the University Assessment Committee have been circulated.

To be taken as read and confirmed

3.0 DECLARATION OF INTEREST

Members are required to identify any conflict of interest, including family or other personal relationship/s as outlined in the University policies on Conflict of Interest and Personal Relationships in the Workplace, which exist in respect of any of the items on the agenda. When an interest has been declared, the Chair may resolve that the member:

- Leaves the meeting while the item of business is discussed; or
- Participates in the discussion but withdraw from the meeting before the vote and/or decision; or
- Stays but does not participate in either the debate or vote/decision; or
- Stays with full debating and voting/decision rights.

All declarations of interest will be recorded in the minutes, together with any ensuing action.

4.0 CHAIR’S REPORT

The Chair will report on the following items of business:

4.1 Streamlining Assessment - Gradebook Project

At the last meeting of the Streamlining Assessment Project Board it was confirmed that the Gradebook Project would be wound up. This decision was reached following the Project Board’s consideration of the impacts of customising Blackboard, a sector-wide benchmarking exercise with other Blackboard and PeopleSoft universities, and the finding that using Learning@Griffith, the macro and MESS in combination is a more automated and sophisticated system than those in use across the higher education sector.

The Board has recommended that an analysis be undertaken to look at improvements to the MESS and the macro with a view to automatically bringing in more information from PeopleSoft to minimise manual data entry and double handling.
4.2 **Professional Learning**

The Chair shall provide a verbal report on the Developing your Course Profile Workshops conducted from 19-20 August 2014 and the SAO Forum on 4 September 2014.

4.3 **Inherent Requirements Project at UWS and the potential for its wider application**

Associate Professor Amanda Johnson and Ms Kirrilee Phillips will talk on the University of Western Sydney's *Inherent Requirements* Project and the potential for its application across universities and disciplines. The seminar will include both presentation and workshop discussion, and involve colleagues from other institutions. WHERE: Room 1.19, Sir Samuel Griffith Centre (N78), Nathan campus. WHEN: Thursday September 18, 9am-2pm. COST: Free. Morning tea and lunch are provided. CONTACT: Ms Joanna Peters x57470 mailto:j.peters@griffith.edu.au

4.4 **Change of Grade/Unfinalised Grade Reports**

Examinations and Timetabling have reported receiving a concerning number of Change of Grade/Unfinalised Grade Reports from Schools requesting that an SSP or SUP grade is changed to a grade of 2.

Schools are reminded that in accordance with Section 8 of the Assessment Policy: *A student who gains a Pass mark for the supplementary assessment item is awarded a grade for the course no higher than 4. Where a Pass mark is not achieved for the supplementary assessment item the original grade of 3 for the course will remain.*

Committee members’ assistance is requested in reminding Schools to ensure accuracy in the change of grade information provided and that duplicate requests should not be sent and only slows processing times. Please refer to the email communication from Examinations and Timetabling dated 26 August 2014.

For noting

**ORDERING OF THE AGENDA**

At this point in the agenda, members may propose that any matter on the agenda, not included in Section I, be so included.

**SECTION I: MATTERS FOR DEBATE AND DECISION**

5.0 **CHANGES TO ASSESSMENT POLICY AND GOVERNANCE OF ASSESSMENT AND ACADEMIC ACHIEVEMENT STANDARDS**

5.1 At the 6/2014 meeting the Committee discussed the delegations for special consideration and deferred examination applications. The University Assessment Committee was asked to consider changes to the business process for the management of special consideration applications and deferred examination applications.

5.2 As a result of its discussion the Committee agreed to make the initial decision-maker for special consideration applications and deferred examination applications the Course Convenor.

5.3 As a result, the changes as per the marked up attachments, are proposed to the Assessment Policy (2014/0000530) and the Governance of Assessment and
Academic Achievement Standards (2014/0000531) for implementation in Semester 1, 2015.

Recommendation

5.4 The University Assessment Committee is asked to recommend to Learning and Teaching Committee, changes to the Assessment Policy and the Governance of Assessment and Academic Achievement Standards for implementation in Semester 1, 2015.

For Discussion

6.0 GOVERNANCE OF ASSESSMENT IN OUA COURSES

6.1 Learning and Teaching Committee at its 1/2014 meeting considered University Assessment Committee’s recommendation that the transfer of OUA Assessment processes to the Schools proceed in semester 2, 2014.

6.2 At the 6/2014 University Assessment Committee meeting the Committee reviewed and provided feedback on the proposed business process and workflow document. The final version of the document is attached for the consideration of the Committee prior to sending to Learning and Teaching Committee.

Recommendation

6.3 The University Assessment Committee is asked to recommend to Learning and Teaching Committee the business process (2014/0005301) for governance of assessment in OUA courses.

For Discussion

7.0 DATA RELATED TO SEMESTER 1/2014 ASSESSMENT PROCESSES

7.1 Each year the University Assessment Committee considers data about the implementation of assessment policies and processes to consider their impact on student learning and achievement standards. At the 6/2014 meeting the Committee reviewed the following data for semester 1, 2014 sourced as follows:

- **Academic standing** – failure in a designated course and failure in a course three times – data source is academic standing data
- **Academic standing** – increased the threshold GPA for academic standing in undergraduate programs to 3.5 - data source is academic standing data and GPAs of graduates
- **Deferred and Supplementary Assessment** – data source is examination sittings
- **Review and appeal of grades application processes** – data source is application data.
- **Assessment applications for special consideration, deferred assessment and review of grade**

7.2 In addition to assessment data, the Committee also considers the year to date Graduation data. Attached for the Committee’s consideration is the Graduation data (2014/0005299) as at 28 August 2014. The Committee noted that this data was year to date only and while trends could be identified comparisons are unable to be made until the availability of data following the end of year graduation ceremonies.

7.3 Following policy changes in 2012 to raise the GPA for academic standing to 3.5 there has been a downward trend in graduates with very low GPA’s. Year to date figures show:
16 postgraduate and 58 undergraduate students have graduated with a GPA of less than 3.5
In 2013 – 25 postgraduate and 159 undergraduate students graduated with a GPA of less than 3.5
In 2012 – 24 postgraduate and 198 undergraduate students graduated with a GPA of less than 3.5
It is anticipated that the downward trend in completions of programs with variations will continue. In 2014 (year to date) 3.33% of completions had variations

7.4 The Committee also requested that the percentage of exam attendance for Semester 1 2013 be reviewed prior to forwarding to Learning and Teaching Committee. Examinations and Timetabling can confirm that this data was incorrectly reported as 82% and has now been updated as per the attached (2014/0005302).

7.5 Members also expressed interest in viewing exclusion check data. Examinations and Timetabling has prepared data on the number of students identified as being eligible for exclusion (exclusion check) compared to those who are actually excluded as per the attached (2014/0005303).

7.6 Data about grade changes after conferral of degrees over the period 2001 to the current conferral round will be tabled at the meeting for discussion.

Recommendation

7.7 The University Assessment Committee is asked to consider the year to date graduation data and revised data provided by Examinations and Timetabling and provide a report to the Learning and Teaching on its monitoring of data in relation to assessment and student achievement outcomes.

For consideration

8.0 SCHOOL ASSESSMENT BOARD PROCESSES FOR SEMESTER 1, 2014

8.1 The Matters of Policy and Precedent for Semester 1, 2014 was provided to School Assessment Boards to inform them of recent changes in the University’s assessment practices. School Assessment Boards were asked to address and provide feedback in relation to a number of policy areas.

8.2 The School Assessment Boards Sharepoint site was introduced in semester 2, 2013. Assessment Board information was managed through the site before and after the meeting, the site serves as the recordkeeping repository.

8.3 Attached for consideration of the Committee is a Summary of the Minutes of School Assessment Boards for Semester 1, 2014 (2014/0005304). School Assessment Boards were asked to provide feedback in relation to

- Responses to changes to Policy
- Non Invigilated Quizzes
- Resubmission of Assessment for Academic Recovery
- Marks and Grades Integrity in Honours Dissertations
- Supplementary Assessment
8.4 There are a number of issues reported by School Assessment Boards which the Committee needs to consider:

- Technical issues in relation to use of the My Marks macro, consensus moderation reporting in the MESS and use of Turn-It-In.
- Issues with student feedback and delays with returning assessment through Assignment Handling Services.
- Use of online quizzes and screen capture technology.
- Some schools reporting that they have changed from two internal Honours examiners to one internal and one external.

8.5 In a number of School Assessment Board Reports there is discussion of referral of issues to the School/Department Learning & Teaching Committee. Attached for the consideration of University Assessment Committee is a discussion paper about whether communication channels should be initiated from University Assessment Committee with both School/Department Assessment Boards and Learning and Teaching Committees:

- Assessment and the Governance of Learning and Teaching at Group and School Level (2014/0005305).

Recommendation

8.6 The University Assessment Committee is asked to consider:

- feedback from School Assessment Boards and whether any specific issues need to be addressed in terms of policy, practice, process and professional development for the semester 2, 2014 assessment period.
- whether it wishes to initiate communications with School/Department Learning and Teaching Committees.

For consideration

9.0 FEEDBACK ON TEMPLATE LETTER APPEAL AGAINST A REVIEW OF GRADE OUTCOME

9.1 At the 5/2014 and 6/2014 meetings the Committee discussed the Student Review and Appeals Policy and Procedure and the Student Complaints Policy and Procedure. The Committee was advised of student focus group sessions which were held at the Nathan and Gold Coast campuses. At the 6/2014 meeting the student feedback on the policies, procedures and forms was presented and the Committee supported the progress of the documentation for consideration by Executive Group.

9.2 In addition to the forms, templates for correspondence to support business processes are currently in development. As part of the feedback process it is proposed that a template letter for appeal against a review of grade outcome be trialled for use in semester 2, 2014. Feedback from Deans Learning and Teaching following the trial period would then inform the final version of the template for use under the proposed Student Review and Appeals Policy and Procedure and the Student Complaints Policy and Procedure.
9.3 Attached for the consideration of the Committee is letter template (2014/0005300) appeal against a review of grade outcome. Committee members are asked to provide feedback on the letter and the proposed trial in semester 2, 2014.

For Noting

SECTION II: MATTERS REQUIRING RATIFICATION OR EXECUTIVE ACTION

NIL

SECTION III: MATTERS FOR NOTING AND WHERE APPROPRIATE, ACCEPTANCE OF RECOMMENDATIONS

NIL

10.0 OTHER BUSINESS

11.0 NEXT MEETING

The next meeting of the Assessment Committee will be held on Monday 13 October 2014 at 1.00pm.

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