

A meeting of the Research Education and Development Committee will be held in the Research Education Programs Seminar Room, Level 13, 10 Pulteney Street, at 2:30pm on 5 March 2007.

AGENDA

FORMAL MATTERS

1. * Apologies
2. * Conflicts of interest
For declaration by Committee members
3. * Starring of items
Recommendation: that the Research Education and Development Committee adopt any recommendations contained in the unstarred items.
4. * Minutes
Minutes of the meeting held on 5 February 2007
Recommendation: That the Research Education and Development Committee approve the minutes of the meeting held on 5 February 2007.
5. * Business arising from the minutes (not otherwise listed on this agenda)
(Item 5)

MAJOR REPORTS or ITEMS FOR APPROVAL

6. * Promoting the aims of the IBP-R and the responsibilities of supervisors involved in the IBP-R to supervisors and postgraduate co-ordinators
Professor Russell to report
7. * Policy on the Recognition of Eligible Research Supervisors/Can a Staff Member be a Principal Supervisor Before Supervising a Student to Completion as a Co-Supervisor?
Professor Russell to report
8. * General Program Rules for Higher Doctorates at the University
Professor Russell to report

9. * **Towards an English Language Policy for the University**
Document "English entrance requirements and on-going support for International Postgraduate Students" is attached for discussion (Item 9)
10. * **Completion rates and their impact on the University**
Professor Russell will give a PowerPoint presentation
11. * **Award for Excellence in higher degree by research supervision**
Documents "Proposal to offer an Award for Excellence in higher degree by research supervision" and "Nomination guidelines" are attached for discussion (Items 11a and 11b)

**REPORTS FROM RESEARCH EDUCATION & DEVELOPMENT
COMMITTEE WORKING PARTIES**

12. **Student Matters**
To note the unconfirmed report of the meeting held on 2 February 2007
13. **Doctoral Education**
No further meetings held
14. **Quality Issues Working Party**
No further meetings held

UNSTARRED ITEMS FOR APPROVAL OR NOTING

15. **Web sites for supervisor training and RED programs**

To note that the above web sites are now active
16. **Other Business**
17. **Next Meeting**
The next meeting is scheduled for 2 April 2007 in the Research Education Programs Seminar Room, Level 13, 10 Pulteney Street

ROSANNA SCARSELLA
Acting Secretary
F: 2006/4348

FOR APPROVAL

ITEM 4

MINUTES OF MEETING 1/07

A meeting of the Research Education and Development Committee was held in the Research Education Programs Seminar Room, Level 13, 10 Pulteney Street from 3.00 pm on 5 February 2007.

Present: Professor Richard Russell (Convenor), Dr Kate Cadman, Dr Kimi Coaldrake, Professor Ted Nettelbeck, Dr Bertram Ostendorf, Dr David Walker; Professor John Taplin (from 3.10 pm), Mr Simon Brennan (from 3.10 pm)

In attendance: Miss Rosanna Scarsella (Acting Secretary), Ms Anne Witt, Ms Adrienne Gorringer (for discussion of Item 10)

FORMAL MATTERS

1. Apologies/Announcements

Apologies were noted from the following: Ms Felicity Rai, Professor Richard Pomfret and Professor John Wallace

Professor Russell welcomed Drs Bertram Ostendorf and David Walker to their first meetings. Dr Ostendorf had replaced Professor Sally Smith and Dr Walker had replaced (until 30 June 2007) Dr Anthony Zander.

Professor Russell apologized for the late re-scheduling of the meeting start time to 3.00 pm. This had been necessitated by the timing of the Research Quality Framework (RQF) Board Meeting.

2. Conflict of Interest

No conflicts were declared.

3. Starring of Items

Items 8, 9, 11, 12, 13, 14, 16, 18 and 19 were starred. The Committee resolved:
to adopt the recommendations contained in the unstarred items.

4. Minutes of Meeting

The Committee resolved:
to approve the minutes of the meeting held on 11 December 2006.

5. Business arising from the minutes

Members noted the status of actions arising from previous meetings of REDC, as detailed in Item 5.

MAJOR REPORTS and ITEMS FOR APPROVAL

6. Policy on the recognition of eligible research supervisors/Can a staff member be a principal supervisor before supervising a student to completion as a co-supervisor?

Professor Russell reported that a register of supervisors had been created and that it would be housed in "Research Master". Executive Deans would be invited to comment on the list and nominate changes.

The availability of forms from the web would be linked to the launch of the register which was expected to be in early March 2007.

Action:	Responsible:
Write to Executive Deans (copies to Postgraduate Co-ordinators and REDC members) advising of the availability of the list for comment	Professor Russell
Write an article about the Supervisor Register for the AGC newsletter and write to Executive Deans (with copy to the PGC net mailing list)	Professor Russell

7. Thesis format and Examination issues (encompassing former agenda items: PhD by publication and authorship; Inclusion of unpublished material in theses by publication; and thesis length)

It was decided to re-convene the Doctoral Education Working Party (DEWP) to discuss the following:

inclusion of unpublished material in theses by publication;
thesis length;

authorship order; and

deletion of references requiring examiners to confine requested amendments to contextual statement in theses by publication.

(The last – about deletion of references – had already been approved in principle by REDC but would be included in the DEWP discussion brief.)

DEWP would prepare a briefing paper for a future REDC meeting.

Action:	Responsible:
Organize DEWP meeting	Miss Scarsella
Prepare briefing paper for REDC	Professor Russell

8. General and Specific Program rules for Professional Doctorates at the University

Professor Russell reported that the program rules had been referred to Academic Board, via the University Research Committee, for approval.

9. 2007 Research Student Handbook

Professor Russell advised that 9.00 am on Tuesday, 6 February 2007, was the absolute deadline for lodging any comments.

Action:	Responsible:
Provide comments regarding the Handbook to Miss Scarsella	REDC members

10. Scholarship ranking and usefulness of referees' reports

The formula for the ranking list comprised 50% Honours result; 40% last two years' undergraduate results; and 10% referees' reports. Referees' reports should continue to be collected, but the question had arisen during the last scholarship round as to whether or not the referees' reports should be included in the ranking formula.

During the discussion the following points were made:

if there were a standard Honours grade, then the score on the referees' reports could be used; unfortunately, while there might be standardization within this University, there still existed differences in Honours grades between outside universities;

the current system needed "accountability";

the referees' written reports were important when awarding scholarships outside the Major Round;

the "numbers" on reports were used subjectively;

it might be useful to do a dummy run of the order of merit list, leaving out all referees' reports, to see how the applicants would "rank" and to look at Honours banding and referees' reports;

it would be helpful to be given examples of what would constitute equivalence in the scholarships ranking document;

it would be helpful to see how other universities incorporated referees' reports into scholarship ranking lists; and

an analysis to see if the "numbers" corresponded to the comments would be a useful undertaking.

Action:	Responsible:
Prepare a paper, incorporating the correlation between the "numbers" and the comments, the Honours banding and referees' reports and the results of the dummy run order of merit (minus referees' reports) for discussion at the April REDC meeting.	Professor Russell/Anne Witt

11. Inclusion of information about timeframes for submission, the examination process and desired behaviours, in Postgraduate Co-ordinator and supervisor training programs

Professor Russell reported that the information had been incorporated into the training programs.

It was suggested that Convenors of Faculty Higher Degrees Committees be included in the workshops.

Action:	Responsible:
Include Convenors of Faculty Higher Degrees Committees in the workshops	Dr Cadman

12. Ensuring that information about completion rates and times and the impact on RTS income is incorporated into supervisor training programs

Professor Russell reported that the information had been incorporated into the programs and would appear in the first program for 2007.

He further advised that 8 APAs and 2 IPRSs had been lost this year.

The general issue of completions was being looked at by the Office of Planning & Quality (OPQ) which would shortly forward completion numbers to Professor Russell and Ms Witt.

It was pointed out that load targets had been met because continuing students had exceeded estimates and that specific completion targets (not just the number of recruitments) should be built into the existing system and consideration given to a reward system for Faculties which achieved those targets.

Professor Russell advised that Deloitte had carried out a survey into the risk in research supervision and the report would be forwarded to the Vice-Chancellor's Committee (VCC) on 7 February 2007. Two of the survey's recommendations were about specific completion targets and a reward system.

13 Quality Assurance Framework for Learning and Teaching

Professor Russell reported that the University had not yet officially launched the QAF.

14. Promoting the aims of the IBP-R and the responsibilities of supervisors involved in the IBP-R to supervisors and postgraduate co-ordinators.

Dr Cadman reported that:

initial interviews had been strengthened;
the documentation had been made clearer; and
the monitoring was now tighter (by both the academic area and REP).

The number of sessions in the "Effective Supervisor" module had been increased from three to five and it was now proposed that a workshop for Heads of Schools and Postgraduate Co-ordinators (which dealt with all expectations and responsibilities of those roles) be established.

Action:	Responsible:
Advise REDC of progress regarding establishment of a Heads/PGC workshop	Dr Cadman

15. Management of extended leave of absence on medical grounds

Professor Russell reported that most universities experienced the same difficulties as did Adelaide with regard to this type of leave.

In response to a suggestion that new rules be established for a maximum of period of leave of absence (LOA) on medical grounds, it was pointed out that even with a "maximum rule" a student could appeal the decision (on grounds of definable disability) and that the University would not be able to enforce such a rule.

Notwithstanding this, members wanted the possibility of a "maximum" rule further investigated.

Action:	Responsible:
Further investigate the possibility of fixing a maximum period of LOA on medical grounds	Professor Russell

16. Re-location of the AGC

Professor Russell reported that it had now been decided that the AGC would not move.

17. Australasian Digital Thesis Program

Professor Russell reported that all students who lodged a “notification of intention to submit” from 1 February 2007 onwards would be required to lodge (at the end of the examination process and once all amendments – if applicable – had been made) three hard-bound (paper) and one digital thesis copies. Exceptions would be those students whose theses were under embargo.

It was hoped that an on-line version of the digital thesis documentation/information would be available by the end of March 2007.

Following on from this discussion, Professor Nettelbeck queried the usefulness of exit surveys when small numbers were involved. It was pointed out that since it was compulsory for all students to complete an exit survey (either prior to, or at the time of, submission) it seemed unusual for a report to contain so little information.

Action:	Responsible:
Ascertain source of report figures and advise Ms Witt	Professor Nettelbeck

18. Towards an on-line Exit Survey

Professor Russell reported that an on-line version of the survey would be available shortly.

19. Towards an English language policy for the University

Professor Taplin reported that a recent survey/report questioned the English language competency of international students who graduated from Australian universities. It seemed that upon becoming permanent residents and applying for jobs, their difficulty/impossibility in conversing with clients had come to light.

Professor Taplin outlined the four factors which this University had in place to help with English language competency.

1 IELTS score

The overall IELTS was 6.0. Professor Taplin was awaiting feedback from the Vice-Chancellor to a proposal that the IELTS be raised to 6.5 for all programs. It was pointed out that any change could not be implemented until 2009.

2 IBP

The IBP was an important aspect of the University's approach to English language competency.

3 Research presentations, by students to peers and others with similar interests, as part of the Structured Program. It was pointed out that this was not as closely monitored as the IBP.

4 Editing assistance

The following points were made:

- the University needed to be pro-active in encouraging students to use English (and not their first language) as the medium of communication;
- the CLPD did provide conversational opportunities;
- data should be collected on students' English language use throughout their candidatures;
- in order to integrate language development into the work done in disciplines, mechanisms to follow up on gains achieved could be implemented;
- the IBP continued throughout a student's candidature;
- postgraduate workshops/camps were held periodically throughout candidature but many international students did not participate;
- mentoring and focus groups were helpful;
- a report on the interaction between international and domestic students would be available shortly.

REPORTS FROM RESEARCH EDUCATION & DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE WORKING PARTIES

20. Student Matters

The unconfirmed minutes of the Student Matters sub-committee meeting held on 19 December 2006 were noted.

21. Doctoral Education

See Item 7.

22. Quality Issues

Nothing to report.

UNSTARRED ITEMS FOR APPROVAL OR NOTING

23. Change of membership

The change in membership was noted.

24. General Program Rules for Higher Doctorates at the University

The due date for feedback regarding the draft rules was noted.

Action:	Responsible:
To provide feedback regarding the draft rules and (if applicable) any draft specific program rules to Professor Russell by 23 March 2007	REDC members

25. Other Business

There was none.

26. Next Meeting

The next meeting was scheduled for 2.30 pm on Monday, 5 March 2007.

The meeting concluded at 16:50.

ROSANNA SCARSELLA
Acting Secretary

CONFIRMED:

Day Month Year
Date CONVENOR

FOR NOTING

ITEM 5

BUSINESS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES

MEETING 1/07

ACTION	RESPONSIBILITY	STATUS
<p>7. Thesis format and Examination issues (encompassing former agenda items: PhD by publication and authorship; Inclusion of unpublished material in theses by publication; and thesis length – Items 9, 10 and 11 from Meeting 9/06)</p> <p>Organize DEWP meeting</p> <p>DEWP to discuss the following:</p> <p>inclusion of unpublished material in theses by publication; thesis length; authorship order; and deletion of references requiring examiners to confine requested amendments to contextual statement in theses by publication; and</p> <p>prepare briefing paper for future REDC meeting</p>	<p>Miss Scarsella</p> <p>Professor Russell</p>	<p>In progress</p> <p>Pending</p>
<p>10. Scholarship ranking and usefulness of referees' reports</p> <p>Prepare a paper, incorporating the correlation between the "numbers" and the comments, the Honours banding and referees' reports and the results of the dummy run order of merit (minus referees' reports) for discussion at the April REDC meeting</p>	<p>Professor Russell/Ms Witt</p>	<p>In progress</p>
<p>11. Information about timeframes for submission, the examination process and desired behaviour, in Postgraduate Co-ordinator and supervisor training programs</p> <p>Include Convenors of Faculty Higher Degrees Committees in the workshops</p>	<p>Dr Cadman</p>	<p>In progress</p>

ACTION	RESPONSIBILITY	STATUS
<p>14. Promoting the aims of the IBP-R and the responsibilities of supervisors involved in the IBP-R to supervisors and postgraduate co-ordinators Advise REDC of progress regarding establishment of a Heads/PGC workshop which dealt with all expectations and responsibilities of those roles</p>	Dr Cadman	In progress
<p>15. Management of extended leave of absence on medical grounds Further investigate the possibility of fixing a maximum period of LOA on medical grounds</p>	Professor Russell	In progress
<p>17. Australasian Digital Thesis Program Ascertain source of report figures and advise Ms Witt</p>	Professor Nettelbeck	Completed

MEETING 9/06

ACTION	RESPONSIBILITY	STATUS
<p>8. Policy on the Recognition of Eligible Research Supervisors/Can a Staff Member be a Principal Supervisor Before Supervising a Student to Completion as a Co-Supervisor? Advise Postgraduate Coordinators and Supervisors of the Committee's decision during the implementation of the Supervisor Register in 2007.</p>	Professor Russell	Pending
<p>Write an article about the Supervisor Register for the AGC newsletter and write to Executive Deans (with copy to the PGC net mailing list) – added from Meeting 1/07</p>	Professor Russell	Completed
<p>13 General Program Rules for Higher Doctorates at the University Present the draft Higher Doctorate rules to the Faculty Higher Degrees Committee for consideration, and/or endorsement and forward comments to Professor Russell by 23 March 2007.</p>	Faculty representatives	In progress
<p>Prepare draft specific program rules for Faculty based Higher Doctorates where considered necessary and forward to Professor Russell by 23 March 2007</p>	Faculty representatives	In progress

MEETING 8/06

ACTION	RESPONSIBILITY	STATUS
<p>7. Higher Degree by Research Completions</p> <p>Ensure that information about timeframes for submission, the examination process and desired behaviours is included in Postgraduate Co-ordinator and supervisor training programs.</p> <p>Consider the introduction of financial incentives for submission within 3.5 years FTE from commencement.</p>	<p>Dr Cadman/Professor Russell</p> <p>Professor Russell/Mrs Witt</p>	<p>Completed</p> <p>In progress</p>
<p>10. The Core Component of the Structured Program and Plagiarism</p> <p>Assess the feasibility of making completion of the REP online module in plagiarism a compulsory part of the Core Component of the Structured Program</p>	<p>Professor Russell</p>	<p>In progress</p>

MEETING 7/06

ACTION	RESPONSIBILITY	STATUS
<p>7. Higher Degree by Research Completions</p> <p>Ensure that information about completion rates and times and the impact on RTS income is incorporated into supervisor training programs.</p>	<p>Professor Russell</p>	<p>Completed</p>
<p>10. Towards the development of an online integrated bridging program – research</p> <p>Provide further information about progress towards the development of an online ECR qualification and online IBP-R when available.</p>	<p>Professor Russell</p>	<p>In progress</p>

MEETING 5/06

ACTION	RESPONSIBILITY	STATUS
<p>6. Supervisory Issues</p> <p>Promote the aims of the IBP-R and the responsibilities of supervisors involved in the IBP-R to supervisors and postgraduate coordinators.</p>	<p>Dr Cadman</p>	<p>Completed</p>

MEETING 4/06

ACTION	RESPONSIBILITY	STATUS
7. Towards an English Language Policy for the University Prepare a draft English language policy for postgraduate research students for review by REDC.	Ms Frost	In progress (see Item 9)

MEETING 5/05

ACTION	RESPONSIBILITY	STATUS
5.1 Proposal to Reconceptualise the Doctor of Clinical Dentistry as a Research Professional Doctorate Develop instructions to examiners for Faculty Higher Degree Committee and REDC consideration.	Professor John Spencer, Dental School	Pending

ROSANNA SCARSELLA
Acting Secretary

English Entrance Requirements and On-going Support for International Post-graduate Students

Concerns have recently been raised concerning international student graduates' English language proficiency. These concerns are mainly as a result of a study by Birell (2006) which compares data from students' pre-enrolment and post-graduation International English Language Testing System (IELTS) scores to suggest that international students' proficiency in English actually declines over the period of their enrolment at university. Additionally, anecdotal evidence suggests that post-graduate supervisors are dissatisfied with international students' communication skills in English and believe that this 'deficiency' results in academic difficulties. There have thus been calls at the University of Adelaide for an increase in the required IELTS scores for students entering Australian universities. There have also been suggestions that on-going language support should be provided to these students during their research degrees. This report addresses the issues mentioned above by answering the following questions:

1. Is a high IELTS score a predictor of academic success?
2. Do the IELTS tasks, in particular the writing and speaking tasks, relate to the tasks required of post-graduate students?
3. How can the University of Adelaide ensure that post-graduate research students improve their English communication skills during their studies?

Is a high IELTS score a predictor of academic success?

A higher IELTS score does not necessarily predict academic success:

- There is very little relationship between English proficiency as measured by IELTS and the academic success of international undergraduate students (Hill *et al.*, 1999; Cotton & Conrow, 1998; Kerstjens & Nery, 2000; Dooley & Oliver, 2002).
- A higher IELTS score is only “moderately predictive” of academic success for post-graduate course work students (Woodrow, 2006).
- The IELTS reading subtest does, however, relate more strongly to academic achievement than the other subtests for listening, writing and speaking (Dooley & Oliver, 2002; Kerstjens & Nery, 2000).

Do the IELTS writing and speaking tasks relate to the tasks required of post-graduate students?

The tasks tested in the IELTS productive skills subtests (speaking and writing) bear little or no relation to the skills and attributes required of university students.

The IELTS reading subtest is possibly a better predictor of success because it tests skills such as the “identification of a writer’s views/claims”, “classification”, “note taking skills” and identification of information in a text which reflect the type of reading/ researching skills required by both undergraduate and post graduate students.

The other subtests, especially those which test the productive skills of writing and speaking do not relate to the skills/ tasks required of university students, especially post-graduate research students. The relationship between IELTS tasks/ skills and university tasks/ skills is summarised in Figure 1 below:

Task	IELTS	University
Writing Task 1: “Describing information” (graph/ table/ chart diagram)”	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Organizing, presenting and comparing data; or - Describing the stages of a process or procedure - Explaining how something works (IELTS Handbook 2006) - No speculation on the reasons for data, procedures or the way something work are permitted * 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Organizing, presenting and comparing data; or - Describing the stages of a process or procedure - Explaining how something works and many other tasks - All data should be incorporated into a ‘critical approach’. Reasons are suggested for data and procedures are critiqued
Writing Task 2: “Essay”	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Presenting a written argument or case on a given topic, resembles university “essay” - Information only from the prior knowledge of the candidate, no referencing, conclusions based purely on anecdotal evidence (unacceptable in university context) - Focus on moral/ social desirability of practices - Focus on only concrete objects of enquiry (Moore & Morton, 2005) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Many types of writing including “essays”, case study reports, research reports - Information from primary research sources or secondary sources, appropriate citation vital. - Focus on scientific validity or summarising views related to practices - Focus on both concrete and abstract objects of enquiry (Moore & Morton, 2005)
Speaking subtest	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The same content/ task types as the “General IELTS” examination - Providing basic personal information, expressing opinions, explaining, suggesting, justifying opinions, speculating, summarising, 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Specific field-related content/ task types - Communicating complex ideas and/or independent research clearly and concisely (Extrapolated from ‘Graduate Attributes’, University of

	contrasting (IELTS Handbook, 2006) - Interacting in an interview with one examiner and a one to two minute individual 'turn' (IELTS Handbook, 2006) - Information only from the prior knowledge of the candidate, no referencing, conclusions based purely on anecdotal evidence (unacceptable in university context)	Adelaide Research Student Handbook) - Presenting at specialist and generalist national and international conferences, public forums and other professional contexts, interacting with colleagues at an advanced level socially and in complex debates (Extrapolated from 'Graduate Attributes', University of Adelaide Research Student Handbook) - Information from independent research and/or respected secondary sources, must be appropriately acknowledged
--	---	--

Figure 1

* From instructions given to IELTS writing examiners

Because of the significant differences in task types, source of information and mode of communication between the tasks required in the IELTS and in post-graduate research, it is very difficult to judge a students' possible academic success and even proficiency in English by looking at his/her IELTS scores.

Another issue is that international students often attend IELTS Preparation courses just prior to taking the IELTS where they are 'taught to the test'. This can result in a masking of their true level of proficiency, while a lack of proficiency in English is quickly revealed when students are required to interact on a more sophisticated level within their faculties and disciplines.

Therefore, it is unlikely that lifting the required overall IELTS score from 6.0 to 6.5 will have any significant effect on the students' ability to communicate more effectively within their faculties and/or after graduation. The only likely effect would be an up to fifty percent reduction in the number of international students (Feast, 2002). Research has also indicated that issues such as professional experience, knowledge of the research culture, study problems, personal problems such as homesickness and family issues and motivation are far greater predictors of academic success than a high IELTS score (Cotton & Conrow, 1998; Kertjens & Nery (2000

How can the University of Adelaide ensure that post-graduate research students improve their English communication skills during their studies?

Raising the IELTS score is not likely to improve post-graduate research students' English language proficiency, especially after three years of study where their emphasis is on their research, rather than on English. It is thus important for the

University to provide disciplinarily-embedded opportunities for the students to interact in English. This is particularly pertinent since:

- International students often feel isolated in the new culture and seek out friends from the same language/ cultural group. Thus the faculty/ research group could be their only opportunity to interact in English
- Research has shown that disciplinary embedded “situated practice” is the most effective way of improving Cognitive Academic Language Proficiency (CALP) in research contexts as opposed to the Basic Interpersonal Communication Skills (BICS) which I contend are tested in the IELTS (Cummins 2000).

The following initiatives are therefore suggested:

- Continuing and extending the offerings of the Integrated Bridging Program Research (IBP-R) which is currently undertaken by research students in their first semester. Note: In the IBP-R program, students are taught the skills to identify the language, skills and practices required in their disciplines. Closer contact between the IBP lecturers and faculties would increase the ‘situated’ nature of this learning opportunity.
- Opening a “drop-in” centre at the Researcher Education and Development Unit (Adelaide Graduate Centre) where all research students can meet with RED lecturers and work on research and English language issues. This project will be piloted with the IBP-R students in Semester 1, 2007
- Providing and resourcing regular (monthly) research conversation groups for international or local EAL (English as and Additional Language) research students with a focus towards publication. Students in similar disciplines could meet and share their research outputs with colleagues and RED lecturers and gain feedback on their English communication in a non-threatening environment.
- Encouraging disciplinary research discussion groups within faculties/ disciplines
- Providing international and EAL students with systematic opportunities to practice their conference/ faculty presentations with RED assistance

Michelle Picard
February 2007

PROPOSAL TO OFFER AN AWARD FOR EXCELLENCE IN HIGHER DEGREE by RESEARCH SUPERVISION

Proposal

That REDC approve the Award for Excellence in Research Higher Degree Supervision for endorsement by the URC to Academic Board.

Background

At the meetings of the Selection Committee for the Australian Awards for University Teaching (now referred to as the Committee for Learning and Teaching Awards [CLTA]) of June 15, June 29 and then July 20 of 2006, there was general discussion about the desirability of aligning the University of Adelaide's teaching awards with those of other Go8 institutions.

An examination of university websites indicated that it is common among the Go8 to offer an award for the supervision of postgraduates working toward a degree by research because research and research supervision is so much a part of the fabric of those institutions.

Subsequently, a set of criteria and guidelines was developed for an award for the supervision of HDR candidates and approved by the CLTA for submission to REDC for the Committee's consideration, with particular reference to the need for establishing an appropriate Selection Panel for this award.

For the Committee's information, the Committee for Learning and Teaching Awards consists of:

- Director, Centre for Learning and Professional Development (Convenor)
- Nominee of the Executive Dean [usually the Associate Dean (Learning and Teaching)] of the:
 - Faculty of Engineering, Computer and Mathematical Sciences
 - Faculty of Health Sciences
 - Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences
 - Faculty of the Professions
 - Faculty of Sciences
- Dean of Graduate Studies
- Director, Student Support Services
- Director of Wilto Yerlo and Centre for Australian Indigenous
- University Librarian
- One academic staff representative who has previously won a Carrick Institute award
- One professional staff representative who has previously won a Carrick Institute award
- One currently enrolled undergraduate student representative
- One currently enrolled postgraduate student representative

Recommendation: that REDC

- i. determine the composition of the Selection Panel for the Award for Excellence in Higher Degree by Research Supervision*
- ii upon determination of the Selection Panel, endorse the Guidelines for the Award for Excellence in Higher Degree by Research Supervision for approval by the ULTC and the URC*

Attached:

1. Nomination guidelines for the Award for Excellence in Higher Degree by Research Supervision

Nomination guidelines for the University of Adelaide Award for Excellence in Higher Degree by Research Supervision

The University of Adelaide Award for Excellence in Higher Degree by Research Supervision has been implemented in order to recognise, encourage and reward sustained excellence in research higher degree supervision, education, mentoring and guidance at the University of Adelaide. One award is available each year from the University.

GUIDELINES FOR NOMINATION AND SELECTION

Nomination process

1 Eligibility

- All University of Adelaide academic staff with advisory responsibilities for research higher degree students, including those persons with affiliate, adjunct or clinical status, are eligible to apply.
- Applicants must have a minimum of five years research higher degree supervisory experience at the University of Adelaide.
- Recipients of the Award are eligible to re-apply six years after receiving the Award. New evidence of supervisory excellence will be expected.
- Applications are valid for two years; and unsuccessful applications are automatically considered the following year, when they may be updated by the nominee.
- An Early Career Advisor Award (less than five years experience) may be granted at the discretion of the Selection Committee in addition to or instead of the standard Award if an advisor who has been supervising for less than five years is brought to the selection committee's attention by an Executive Dean, a Director of a Research group or Head of School.

2 Nomination

- Applications are valid for two years.
 - Applicants may not self-nominate.
 - Nominations must be submitted on the nomination form provided with these guidelines.
 - Applicants for the Supervision Excellence Award must nominate at least four referees who can be asked to provide written statements (of no more than one A4 page in length) on their research higher degree supervision practices with respect to the selection criteria. The nominated referees must include:
 - the Head of School (Executive Dean if the applicant is the Head of School) **OR**
 - the Postgraduate Coordinator (Head of School if the applicant is the Postgraduate Coordinator)
- AND** all of the following:
- someone who has been a member of an advisory team with the applicant and/or a research colleague who can comment in detail on the applicant's supervision of research higher degree students
 - one (1) currently-enrolled research higher degree student
 - one (1) research higher degree students who has successfully completed under the applicant's supervision.

Note: It is also possible for a group of students to nominate a supervisor, electing one of the group to act as the spokesperson on their behalf.

Selection criteria

The list below sets out a range of areas in which supervision excellence can be demonstrated. It takes into consideration Responsibilities of Supervisors as outlined in Appendix 1 of the 2007 *Research Student Handbook* (<http://www.adelaide.edu.au/policies/1523>).

Applicants are assessed on the basis of their applications, submissions and written references. The selection criteria will be given equal consideration by the Selection Committee for University Teaching Awards and Grants, which may contact nominees and/or referees for clarification or further information. Shortlisted applicants may be interviewed.

Applicants should address in turn each criterion that is relevant to their supervision practices and should build the profile that best highlights their particular personal strengths as a research higher degree advisor. Applicants are not expected to demonstrate excellence in all of these areas.

In assessing nominations against the selection criteria, the Review and Selection Committee will, however, specifically take into account:

- excellence in mentoring and guiding of honours when research has been a significant component of the program
- the applicant's mentorship of other staff members in research higher degree supervision
- the applicant's contribution to improvements in a School's research supervision practices.

Criteria

1. The extent and range of supervision activity

Which may include: the number of candidates supervised, the number of completions and the range of projects supervised; the nature of the research program and academic profile that attracts high calibre research students.

2. The outcomes for students

Which may include: supervision practices that lead to research projects and research theses judged by examiners to be of outstanding quality; supervision practices that lead to students publishing books, chapters and articles, presenting papers at prestigious conferences, and winning prizes and awards; supervision practices that ensure students successfully complete their research and thesis writing in a timely manner.

3. Support for the development of students as individuals

Which may include: the engagement of research students in the broader intellectual life of the school/discipline, faculty and University; support and encouragement for students to develop as independent researchers; support and encouragement for students to develop the full range of graduate attributes.

4. Support for students' career development

Which may include: the induction of students into the national and international research communities in their fields; the mentoring of students in their career development following completion of their research higher degrees.

5. A contribution to the development of excellent supervision practices within faculties or the wider University

Which may include: the mentoring of staff new to supervision; involvement in and contribution to supervisor workshops and training; development of faculty and school/discipline policies and programs to enhance the postgraduate community and the quality of the environment for postgraduate research.

Essential documentation

All nominees for the University of Adelaide Award for Excellence in Research Higher Degree Supervision must provide the following documents:

- Nomination form (proforma provided)
- Written statement, including an overview and an argument addressing each of the five selection criteria (no more than 9 pages) (see Layout below)
- Four references (a single A4 page each)
- A selective curriculum vitae of no more than four pages (citing activities/accomplishments relevant to the application)
- **Nomination form.** The completed nomination must be signed by the Executive Dean of the Faculty or a delegate. The Nominators must sign the form and provide their rationale for nominating the individual or team in the space provided.
- **Written statement.** The candidate's written statement is the central element in the nomination. It provides the opportunity for candidates to describe their supervision and demonstrate its excellence. Each of the five selection criteria must be specifically addressed.

The written statement should be presented under the following five headings, in order.

- 1 **Overview**
- 2 **The extent and range of supervision activity**
- 3 **Support for the development of students as individuals**
- 4 **Support for students' career development**
- 5 **A contribution to the development of excellent supervision practices within faculties or the wider University**

The overview provides the opportunity for nominees to commence the written statement with a focus on the specific character of their supervision. It is recommended that the overview be no more than one page and that it include the nominees' educational philosophy and beliefs, a description of the supervisory context and an integrated summary of the claims relating to the selection criteria. The majority of the written statement should be devoted to addressing each of the five criteria in turn. Nominees must provide evidence in support of their claims against these criteria. The written statement is limited to 9 A4 pages in total.

▪ **Layout**

Layout should be as follows:

Margins: L=1.5; R=1.5; T=1.5; B=1.7

Font: Times New Roman 11pt with 13pts of space (leading) or Verdana 9pt with 13pts of space (leading)

Alignment: Justified or aligned left

- **References.** Four references, of no more than one A4 page each, must be provided by people who are able to comment on the nominee's supervision against the selection criteria as already indicated in point 2: Nomination.
- **Selective curriculum vitae.** The curriculum vitae should outline the nominee's educational qualifications, career history, research activity and supervisory experience in relation to the criteria.
The curriculum vitae is limited to four A4 pages.

OPTIONAL SUPPORTING MATERIALS

Selection is based primarily on the written statement addressing the selection criteria. However, nominees may include selected teaching materials. Examples of supporting documentation that may be listed in addition to the completed application include:

Examiners' reports where these reflect on the quality of your supervision of the thesis

- Evidence of participation in relevant professional development activities
- Evidence of contributions to the literature on supervision.

Only one copy of supporting materials should be provided.

PRESENTATION

There is no advantage in elaborate presentation of nominations. The nomination form (provided) is adequate as a cover page. If optional supporting materials are included, these should be separately packaged and labelled as Supporting Teaching Material. The label should also include the date and the name(s) of the nominee(s).

LODGEMENT AND PROCESSING OF NOMINATIONS

Submission of applications

Nominations should be sent to Barbara Brougham, Project Officer, Major Projects, Office of the DVC&VP(A), Mitchell Building to arrive on or before Friday 7 September 2007.

Receipt of nominations

Receipt of all nominations will be acknowledged by email by the Project Officer, Major Projects. If you do not receive a confirmatory email within a week of postage, please contact

barbara.brougham@adelaide.edu.au.

The Selection Panel for the Award for Excellence in Higher Degree by Research Supervision

To be determined.

NOTIFICATION

The winner of the Award for Excellence in Higher Degree by Research Supervision will be notified in October. They will receive a certificate recognising their accomplishment and a grant for \$8,000, to be paid through academic units and used by the winners to assist with their professional development. They may be asked to provide a half page biography accompanied by a good quality passport size photograph, and be invited to an informal function with the Selection Committee. The names of Award winners will be made public on the University of Adelaide website and in the *Adelaidean*.

STUDENT MATTERS SUB-COMMITTEE
MEETING 07/2 – 16 MARCH 2006



FOR APPROVAL

MINUTES OF MEETING 07/1

A meeting of the Student Matters Sub-committee was held in the Old Optical Room, from 10 am on Friday, 2 February 2007.

Present: Professor Richard Russell (Convenor); Professor John Wallace;
Dr Kimi Coaldrake; Dr Liz Cousins; Ms Felicity Rai (in her capacity as President of the PGSA)

In attendance: Miss Rosanna Scarsella

FORMAL MATTERS

1. **Apologies/Announcements**

Professor Russell welcomed Dr Cousins to her first meeting of SMS. Dr Cousins kindly agreed to be available as a "reserve" member on a permanent basis.

2. **Conflict of Interest**

Professor Wallace did not participate in discussion of Item 4.1 and Dr Coaldrake in Item 4.3.

3. **Minutes of Meeting**

The minutes
of the meeting held on 19 December 2006
were approved.

MAJOR ITEMS FOR DISCUSSION/APPROVAL

4.1 **Doctor of Philosophy examination case 07_1_1**

SMS noted one examiner's concerns that the student had shown little understanding of the genetic principles underlying the thesis. The supervisors had suggested that amendments could be made and that re-examination of the thesis would not be helpful in addressing the examiner's concerns. The supervisors had further suggested that ascertaining the student's degree of understanding about the genetic principles could be established by requiring the student, as first author, to write a paper (which had to be accepted by a reputable, international journal) covering work outlined in the thesis.

SMS did not believe that writing a paper was an acceptable means of ascertaining a student's degree of understanding.

After consideration, SMS decided that the thesis be sent to an arbitrator who, in addition to the usual instructions, was to be advised that the writing of a paper was not to form any part of any recommendation and was to answer the question: "Were Examiner 1's views on the misconceptions of the thesis valid?"

4.2 Doctor of Philosophy examination case 07_1_2

SMS believed that as the research centred on consultation with the rural community in the identification of its health care needs, it would have been appropriate to focus on the rural group and not broader South Australia. In addition, a focus group of six was insufficient and the pilot study should have led into the PhD instead of being its focus.

SMS noted that the supervisor(s), in their report, did not address the key criteria of the PhD.

It was decided (d) that the student be invited to revise and re-submit the thesis.

4.3 Master of Arts examination case 07_1_3

There were concerns with the structure of the thesis, but the most damning criticism was that of plagiarism. The third examiner had provided Professor Russell with the article which was the subject of the plagiarism.

SMS decided (e) that the candidate be not awarded the degree.

5. Other Business

5.1 Item 06_8_1 from Meeting 06/8

Professor Russell reported on the final outcome of this examination case. The two examiners had recommended (d) and (c) respectively and the supervisor(s) (c). The Convenor of the HDC had endorsed the (c). Professor Russell had requested SMS consideration: SMS decided to send the thesis to an arbitrator. The arbitrator's recommendation of (c) had been executively approved by Professor Russell on behalf of SMS.

5.2 Item 06_9_2 from Meeting 06/9

SMS had decided (g) that the student be not awarded the PhD and be not awarded the appropriate Master.

The other three actions decided by SMS were to have been subject to approval by the University's Chief Prudential Officer. Professor Russell reported that Items 2 and 3 would not be carried out and that Item 4 was still under consideration.

6. Next Meeting

The next meeting would be scheduled as required.

The meeting concluded at 11 am.

ROSANNA SCARSELLA
Secretary

CONFIRMED:

.....
CONVENOR

