Please find following an update on the activities of Curtin University's Academic Board during the second quarter of 2016.

Academic Board has focussed on:
- Higher Education Standards Framework (Threshold Standards)
- National Science and Innovation Agenda
- Business Intelligence Data;
- Academic Assurance and Quality;

Strategic Conversations and Updates

Higher Education Standards

Dr Marco Schultheis, Chief Strategy Officer and the Director, Quality Enhancement and Ms Susan Takao outlined the University’s preparation for implementation of the Higher Education Standards Framework (Threshold Standards) 2015 effective 1 January 2017.

The new framework focusses on the student lifecycle with seven major domains. A taskforce has been established. Evidence of policies/procedures and controls, evidence of implementation and compliance practice is being collated to ensure that the University meets or exceeds each standard. Curtin’s focus is ensuring fitness for purpose of policies/compliance arrangements, identifying and addressing any gaps.

National Innovation and Science Agenda

Then Deputy Vice-Chancellor, Research, Professor Graeme Wright provided a presentation on the four key pillars of the National Innovation and Science Agenda (NISA):
- Culture and capital;
- Collaboration;
- Talent and skills; and
- Government as an exemplar
The consolidation of Research Block Grant Funding grants from six into two broad categories has provided greater recognition for industry-focussed research and encouraged greater collaboration between research and industry sectors.

A range of opportunities and focus areas were highlighted noting that while the vast majority of funding had been allocated to the first two pillars, the STEM agenda would also play a key part in helping ensure Curtin has the right talent and skills in place to drive innovation.

**Business Intelligence Data Dashboard**

Chief Strategy Officer, Dr Marco Schultheis outlined the history of business intelligence data warehousing development, work undertaken to ensure data quality and the current and future uses for data including forecasting, load planning and future development.

96 per cent of the University’s corporate systems data is currently stored in the data warehouse and the dashboard system is now ‘live’ with further dashboard development expected to inform course reviews and school reviews, strategy setting, HR requirements and research.

The Director, Business Intelligence and Analytics, Mr Greg Knight provided a demonstration of the dashboard noting current and future capabilities in line with user requirements.

**Academic Board Governance**

**Academic Assurance Statement**

In May an updated annual Academic Assurance Report was considered by the Board and recommended to Council. The updated report included reference to the new Higher Education Standards that will become effective on 1 January 2017 as well as the Key Risk Indicators in relation to Academic Governance and Risk that were approved by Academic Board in November 2015.

At the June meeting the Chair outlined her presentation to the 22 June 2016 meeting of Council on the role of Academic Board as a self-accrediting body and the role of Academic Board in providing assurance to Council on matters of quality and integrity. Academic Board will consider an Academic Assurance Statement in November for provision to Council at the end of the year outlining the activities undertaken by Academic Board in this regard.

**Monitoring Activities and Functions of Standing Committee through Regular Reports**

The following reports were noted by the Academic Board:

**Academic Promotions**

Academic Board considered the Academic Promotions 2015 Annual Report noting the University’s was concerned by the gender issues highlighted by the promotions process, particularly the number of women who applied to levels D and E.

Programs including SAGE Athena Swan and other support and guidance mechanisms were noted as methods currently being employed to address the substantial under-representation of women at senior academic levels across the University.

**Conceding English and Review of the Standards Applied when Conceding**

Academic Board noted the review considered the standards and process prescribed for concession and recommended an overall minimum of 6.5 IELTS (or equivalent) with a minimum in every sub-score of 6. The recommendation, supported unanimously by expert opinion and evidence, is expected to provide better student outcomes.
Exceptional Circumstances Credit for Recognised Learning

The report noted a proposal to streamline CRL approvals, improve the speed of approvals and reduce associated workloads is under consideration. Additionally feedback from industry and articulation partners has indicated more is required to be done in relation to CRL approvals.

Academic Services Committee is expected to provide a range of recommendations will be provided for consideration during the review of the policy later in 2016.

Trends in Graduate Studies

The report provided a breakdown of full-time and part-time student loads and additional benchmarking data previously requested by Academic Board, demonstrated the doctoral load is being managed efficiently and effectively and that Curtin is well-positioned in relation to the sector.

It was noted that as a larger institution, Curtin has modest HDR supervision loads with capability for larger numbers of HDR students.

Teaching, Learning and Student Experience Enabling Plan 2015 Progress Report

The Board noted positive outcomes in addition to a number of challenges within the report:

- Additional work is required to address issues around retention;
- Indigenous participation rates are tracking well;
- Results have exceeded targets in relation to Workplace Integrated Learning and Leadership

Report on Academic Integrity for 2015

The new report format comprising both academic misconduct and plagiarism was commended for providing a cohesive examination of challenges around the issue particularly in relation to technology.

Statute 10 and the associated rules are currently under preliminary review and wider consultation will be undertaken in due course. Changes to the AQP process have resulted in increases in compliance with plagiarism detection standards but room for improvement remains.

Increased engagement with and completion by students of Curtin’s Academic Integrity Program (AIP) is expected to contribute to a reduction in the number of incidents.

eVALUate University Aggregated Report – Semester 2, 2015

Academic Board noted that closing the loop in relation to changes made to units based on student feedback continues to be an issue. The Chair undertook to discuss the matter with stakeholders outside of the meeting given the need to ensure compliance with University policy.

Learning and Teaching Quality Dimensions April 2016 Report

The Board noted the Framework for Quality and Excellence in Teaching and Learning is to be reviewed to ensure alignment with the Higher Education Standards. Information is being gathered from across the University by the retention taskforce that may inform an amendment to the retention rate KPI.

Reports on Research Institutes and Centres

Academic Board noted the reports outlined recommendations, responses and action plans arising from performance reviews of research institutes.

Assessment Quality Process – University Level Report for 2015-H2

Academic Board noted the process is reaching a level of maturity and once embedded into a range of projects will give greater oversight to important strategies including moderation, academic integrity and integrity of student results.
The Board noted the improved compliance rates (89 per cent) and requested information on why the compliance rate was not at 100 per cent. Dr Price noted increased understanding and stabilisation of the AQP processes was expected to result in increased compliance.

On behalf of the Board the Chair congratulated Dr Price and her team on improvements to assessment quality and compliance across the University.

Academic Board also considered the Annual reviews and quarterly reports of branch campuses and transnational programs

Other


Academic Board noted the Disability Access and Inclusion Plan (DAIP) Annual Activity Plan 2016-2017 and the recommended responsible officers for each of the individual strategies contained therein and approved the Progress Report 2015-2016 for submission to the Disability Services Commission.

New Courses

Academic Board approved the deactivation of the Doctor of International Health (DC-INTHL).

For commencement in Semester 1, 2017, the following new courses, majors and streams have been approved by the Academic Board:

- Bachelor of Laws (Honours) (BH-LAWS);
- Master of Education (OpenUnis) (OM-EDUC)
- Master of Predictive Analytics (MC-PREDAN)
- Graduate Diploma in Predictive Analytics (GD-PREDAN)
- Graduate Certificate in Predictive Analytics (GC-PREDAN) (for commencement in Semester 2, 2016)
- Asset Management and Productivity Stream (STRP-ASMPR)
- Finance and Investment Analytics Stream (STRP-FIVAN)
- Resource Operations Engineering Stream (STRP-ROPEN)

Policies and Procedures

Academic Board approved or recommended the approval of the following policies and procedures:

- Intellectual Freedom Policy

Current University policies and procedures can be found on the Compliance, Legislation and Policy website at: http://policies.curtin.edu.au/findapolicy/

Associate Professor Linley Lord    Ms Sue Moore
Chair, Academic Board     Secretary, Academic Board
Manager, Secretariat

Email: secretariat@curtin.edu.au
Web: https://secretariat.curtin.edu.au/