

ACADEMIC BOARD MEETING – 19 February 2019

TEQSA Re-registration Condition

On 24 May 2018, the University of Southern Queensland received notification from the Tertiary Education Quality and Standards Agency (TEQSA) of the University's re-registration in the category of Australian University. The re-registration has one Condition related to "Governance and accountability reporting obligations", applicable to both USQ Council and Academic Board. Standard 6.3 "Academic Governance" of the Higher Education Standards Framework (HESF) requires that Academic Board:

- provide competent advice to the corporate governing body and management on academic matters, including advice on academic outcomes, policies and practices; and
- develop, monitor and review academic policies and their effectiveness.

Academic Board's first report to TEQSA addressing the requirements of the University's re-registration condition is due for submission in June 2019. The Chair thanked members of the Academic Board Working Groups for their participation and acknowledged that the work of these groups is integral in meeting requirements of the TEQSA condition. Current working groups include the Governance of Academic Quality Framework Working Group, Academic Board Self-assessment Survey Working Group, Academic Delegations Schedule Working Group, and the Draft Academic Risk Register Working Group. The Chair provided an update on the progress of a number of actions currently underway, and noted that the Board is on track to meet the deadline for the report.

Delegation of Approval Authority for Academic Quality Policy

In order to demonstrate compliance with Standard 6.3 "Academic Governance" of the Higher Education Standards Framework (HESF), findings from the 2017 Academic Board Internal Audit recommended that:

- for academic governance oversight and leadership, a separation between Policy and Procedure on specific academic activities is not desirable; and
- consideration of Policy and Procedures through Academic Board would assist Academic Board to initiate, review and revise Policy and Procedures concurrently.

The Board resolved to recommend to Council at the 25 March 2019 meeting the delegation of approval authority for Academic Quality Policy from USQ Council to Academic Board, along with endorsement authority for Academic Board in relation to any subordinate University Procedures.

Academic Freedom

In response to discussions regarding Academic Freedom at the 20 November 2018 Academic Board meeting, the Chair presented a discussion paper for review by the Board. Such is the current interest in this area that the Federal Government recently requested that former Chief Justice of the High Court and Chancellor of the University of Western Australia, Robert French AC, review the health of freedom of speech on Australia's university campuses. Whilst USQ does not currently have a standalone policy on Academic Freedom, elements of this are contained within both the Code of Conduct Policy and the Media Engagement Policy. The Board agreed to establish a working group to review the University's existing approach to Academic Freedom, with a view to developing a standalone USQ policy.

Student Representatives on Academic Board and Standing Committees

Special acknowledgement was given to the Board's current student representatives who have each elected to continue their memberships on the Board for a further 12 months. Student members are elected for an initial one year term running from 1 April to 31 March the following year, with an annual opportunity to continue their membership to a maximum term of three years without the need for an election. Academic Board's current student representatives are Phil Margetts (Undergraduate), Harsh Patel (Postgraduate Coursework), and Courtney Feldman (HDR).

Nominations are currently underway through Student Life for an undergraduate student representative on Education Committee. Education Committee is a Standing Committee of Academic Board providing leadership in relation to academic activities, including learning and teaching, programs and courses, and educational partnerships. Nominations close at 5.00pm on Friday 8 March 2019 and can be made via the USQ Current Students website at <https://www.usq.edu.au/current-students/life/leadership/representation>

Academic Board Minutes, Agendas and Bulletins

Academic Board minutes, agendas and bulletins can be accessed on the Academic Board website at www.usq.edu.au/about-usq/governance-leadership/governance/academic-board

Next meeting of Academic Board

The next meeting of Academic Board will be held on 16 April 2019 at 1pm. If you wish to attend Academic Board as an observer, please forward your request to attend to the [Secretary \(Academic Board\)](#) a minimum of one business day prior to the meeting.

If you have any questions regarding the activities of Academic Board or its Standing Committees, feel free to contact academic.board@usq.edu.au