10 August 2005

The Board of Trustees met on Wednesday 10 August 2005, in the Boardroom, Building AD, Werrington North Campus.

Confirmation of Minutes

The minutes of the June meeting were confirmed.

SECTION A - MAIN ITEMS CONSIDERED BY THE BOARD

Strategy and Resources Committee Report

Income projections are currently slightly ahead of budget and expenditure projections are consistent with the budget. The University expects it will meet its budget targets for 2005. In particular, international onshore fee income is higher than forecast, while expenditure on casual salaries is reduced. The University is continuing to pursue a disciplined approach to management of its finances.

Medical School

The Western Sydney University Medical School has received approval from the Australian Medical Council of its first stage submission. The submission detailed plans and preparations for the School to date including, for example, mission and objectives, the curriculum, student assessment, academic staff and clinical teachers, educational resources, course evaluation and governance and administration.

Professor Neville Yeomans and Mr Tim Wills gave a detailed presentation to the Board on the progress, issues and requirements in relation to development of the Medical School facility at Campbelltown campus. The Board discussed issues such as: the need to meet the proposed timeline; financial estimates; benefits such as increased student enrolments in allied courses; the fact that the Western Sydney University Medical School will provide students with an opportunity to learn in a complex and multi-dimensional environment.

The Board determined to move ahead on the basis of the preferred development option for Stage 1, at a cost of $29.5M ($25M in Government funding and $4.5M of internal borrowings) subject to any new options at tender stage and further feasibility testing including seeking expert advice on the development proposals. In addition, to set aside $1M for renovations to the Liverpool TAFE site in 2006.

Fee-Paying Places for Australian Medical Students

The Board was asked to consider increasing opportunities for access for Australian students to a high demand course and who may be expected to practice in Australia after they graduate, through an allocation of fee-paying places to local students.

After extensive consideration of the information provided by Professor Yeomans in support of this proposal, the Board approved the request to replace 8 of the proposed 20 international fee places with fee paying places for local students for the Medical School's first intake in 2007. These 8 fee-paying places will be for Australian citizens, in addition to the 80 approved HECS-funded places. Pending further investigation by Professor Yeomans, the Board agreed that this offer should also include Australian permanent residents.

Voluntary Student Union Legislation

The Board is considering the consequences of the possible implementation of VSU, which include not only financial impacts but also the impact on students of a reduction in current services and facilities provided by student organisations.

A report will be provided to the next Strategy & Resources Committee meeting on the implications of VSU. The Board will have more detailed discussions on the impact of VSU at its October meeting.

Audit and Risk Management Committee Report

The ARMC reported to the Board on a number of current issues and the Board endorsed the Western Sydney University Corruption Prevention Strategy.

SECTION B - OTHER MATTERS CONSIDERED BY THE BOARD

Vice-Chancellor's Report

The Vice-Chancellor presented a written report to the Board and spoke on a number of current issues including VSU, the Medical School and the University's financial situation, addressed elsewhere in this summary.

University of Western Sydney By-Law 2017

The Board approved changes in the Western Sydney University By-Law to accord with the requirements of the Commonwealth's National Governance Protocols. The By-law deals mainly with the technical aspects of membership of the Board – election of office holders and procedures for elections for the five elected member positions.

Report from Chair of Academic Senate

The Board approved the current terms of office of the College-elected members of the Academic Senate being extended to 31 December 2005, and college elections being conducted in November and December 2005 to fill positions on the Academic Senate for two-year terms beginning on 1 January 2006.

Western Sydney University Library Report on Nationally Benchmarked Survey

The Library participates biennially in the Council of Australian University Libraries (CAUL) Client Satisfaction Survey. Western Sydney University recorded an overall score of 765 points (77%), bringing it into the top quartile in comparison with other CAUL libraries.

Other Reports and Items Considered by the Board

The Board received reports on a range of less substantial issues:

- Procedures adopted for the leasing of photocopiers
- Progress on the new teaching building at Parramatta
- Academic Program Review – Progress Report
- Progress report on the Realignment of the Colleges and Schools
- Progress report from Board Strategy Day
- Postgraduate Coursework Offerings
- National Governance Protocols Return
- Offshore Income
- Campus Development Committee
- Remuneration and Nominations Committee
- Board Standing Committee
- Western Sydney University Foundation
- Occupational Health and Safety
- Staffing Matters

There were also reports from the various committees of the Board:

- Campus Development Committee
- Remuneration and Nominations Committee
- Board Standing Committee