

12 April 2006

The Board of Trustees met on Wednesday 12 April 2006, in the Boardroom, Building AD, Werrington North. A summary of resolutions and other items is provided below.

Confirmation of Minutes

The **minutes** of the February meeting of the Board of Trustees were confirmed.

Audit by the Australian Universities Quality Agency (AUQA)

After substantial discussion about the audit at its Strategy Day in March, Board members were keen to contribute to the draft portfolio. A number of suggestions for improvement were offered. They will be taken into account in future drafting.

Voluntary Student Unionism (VSU)

The Board passed the following resolution:

The Board reaffirms its recognition of the value of strong and independent student associations to the life of the University and to the quality of students' university experience.

Board members expressed their concern at the implications of VSU, for students and the University. It will be necessary to renegotiate the Deed previously agreed between the University and the associations as it would be unworkable post-VSU. The Board resolved that the renegotiation should be done in good faith, respecting the concerns of all parties. It noted that decisions on the various services presently provided by the associations and uwsconnect are being made in a climate of tight fiscal control, with any financial support provided from University funds having direct implications for funding available to other parts of the University.

2005 Audited Accounts

The University's external Auditors attended the meeting and reported that they were able to give an unqualified audit report on the Financial Statements for the year ended 31 December 2005. The University has a small surplus on recurrent operations in the order of \$2.0m. This represents a substantial improvement on the 2004 figure (deficit on recurrent operations in the order of \$9m) and on the 2005 budget (operating deficit of \$6m). However, it is below the relevant benchmark issued by DEST, which would be consistent with an operating surplus of \$17m. The Board commended the efforts made by all involved, which had produced the 2005 figures.

Development of the School of Medicine

The Board received a report on the planned growth of the School of Medicine, including the impact of various factors limiting student numbers, and the schedule for recruitment of staff.

Report on UWS Offshore Activities

The Board received a report on the status of agreements with offshore partner institutions, and strategies to lift the quality of future offshore relationships, including the principles to be followed when selecting overseas partner institutions.

Audit and Risk Management Committee and Strategy and Resources Committee Report

The Chairs of these Committees have recommended some changes to their roles, which will be formalised at the next Board meeting. These relate to reviewing the financial statements, risk management, and monitoring risk management.

Strategy and Resources Committee Report

One of the Key Performance Indicators (staff costs as a percentage of total expenditure) shows that UWS is above the sector average, and at its last meeting, the SRC discussed a report analysing staff costs relative to sector comparators. Further analysis will be conducted, and a full report will go to the next Board meeting. This preliminary discussion suggested that comparison with other New Generation Universities (NGUs) will be more useful than broad sector comparisons.

Academic Senate Report

The Chair of Academic Senate reported that feedback since the implementation of the new academic governance structures has pointed to some fine-tuning that may be necessary.

Increasing opportunities for Board members to engage with core UWS activities

Board members have indicated that they value opportunities to visit other campuses, meet staff and students, and deepen their understanding of core activities. Discussions focussed on strategies to increase such opportunities for Board members.

Report by the Graduate Member

The Board was briefed on issues under discussion at the Alumni Development Advisory Committee (ADAC) including a survey of alumni on the Graduate Life publication, recommendations on raising the profile of Alumni services to undergraduate students, and preliminary discussions on the membership of ADAC given the growing number of Alumni chapters.

Delegations

The Board approved minor changes to Delegations F7 and F9.

Analysis of UWS Corporate Media Coverage October to December 2005

In the fourth quarter of 2005, UWS had 2,226 positive messages and 9 unfavourable ones. The positive messages were that:

- UWS has strong links with external organisations (378 items)
- UWS is well managed and innovative (328 items)
- UWS has applied courses and research, good students (255 items)

- UWS is an outspoken and progressive institution (220 items).

The negative stories included local newspaper reports of an end to a community engagement project with Tourism Macarthur.

Next meeting of the Board

The next meeting of the Board of Trustees is scheduled to be held at 9.00am on Wednesday 14 June 2006, in the Boardroom, Building AD, Werrington North Campus.

Other reports and items considered by the Board

- Vice-Chancellor's Report
- University College of Western Sydney
- Research Investment Report
- Occupational Health and Safety
- Staffing Matters
- UWS Business and Industry Advisory Panel
- Report of the Board Strategy Day on 3 March 2006
- Progress Report of Major Capital Buildings Projects
- UWS an Employer of Choice for Women
- Divisional Review Implementation Project
- Report on Progress of Callista Services Agreement