

University of Tasmania
FACULTY OF BUSINESS ADVISORY BOARD
MINUTES

Meeting 3/2008 of the Faculty of Business Advisory Board was held at the Australian Innovation Research Centre, 33 Salamanca Place, Hobart on Tuesday 25 November commencing at 5.30pm

PRESENT

Mr. Mike Blake – Tasmanian Auditor General (Chair)
Professor Gary O’Donovan – Dean, Faculty of Business, University of Tasmania
Mr. Stephen Porter - Director of Searson Buck
Mr. Chris Lock - Director, Economic Policy - Department of Treasury and Finance
Ms Angelique Klasan – IBM Consulting Services
Mr Lee Whitely – Managing Director, Southern Prospects
Ms Jo Archer – Launceston Engagement and Development Manager, UTAS
Dr. Sarah Jennings - Head, School of Economics and Finance
Dr. Martin Grimmer - Head, School of Management
Dr. John Byrom, Associate Dean, Launceston and Cradle Coast Campuses, Faculty of Business.
Ms Sue Hrasky – on behalf of Victoria Wise – Head, Accounting & Corporate Governance
Mr. Craig French, Business Manager, Faculty of Business

APOLOGIES

Ms Lou Clark – Chief Executive Officer, Launceston Chamber of Commerce
Professor Victoria Wise - Head, School of Accounting and Corporate Governance
Ms. Jayne Wilson - Director, Wilson Management & Administration

In attendance

Ms. Tania Fothergill as secretary

Invited

Dr Rob Hecker (Agenda Item 5)
Mr Stuart Crispin (Agenda Item 8)

1. Welcome and Apologies

Mr Blake welcomed the Board and confirmed that a quorum was achieved

2. Minutes of prior meeting

The minutes of 2/2008 were accepted as read.

3. Actions Arising

a. Heads of School presentations (Plans for the School / 2007 annual report)

Carried forward

b. Heads of Schools to identify students and research topics for RHD presentations to future Board meetings

Carried forward

c. Updated meetings program – circulated

4. Dean's report and discussion

Report tabled – see attachment A – with the Dean speaking to major items in the report.

The Dean confirmed that the Launceston “Tapping the Potential” event would be rescheduled and this event would be used to launch the Community Friendship scheme.

The Dean emphasised the importance of external stakeholders and their involvement in the future of the University and the acquittal of its core business of Teaching & Research.

Action: The Board was invited and encouraged to provide comment and feedback on the Vice-Chancellor's “Building on Strength” proposal. Responses are requested by February 2009.

Action: The Dean to enquire regarding a specific template for feedback and commentary by external stakeholders regarding “Building on Strength”.

Action: Contact Mark Sayer re program initiative for details on his transition course and Skills Tasmania

5. Advice / discussion on specified teaching program – MBA (paper circulated)

Discussion in relation to first ToR.

Dr Rob Hecker, MBA coordinator, attended the meeting and presented a brief on the Faculty's new MBA online program.

Reasons for MBA online:

- Drag back students who have gone interstate
- Provide greater flexibility to existing students
- Provide students the opportunity to make an easy commitment to study.

The need for a strong information drive to raise the awareness of UTAS programs such as the MBA, particularly in areas such as Launceston, and specifically directed towards Tasmanian businesses and organisations, was highlighted by the Board.

The Board felt that a low profile launch/roll out was not an optimal strategy for such an important product for the Faculty. Dr Hecker argued, however, that the Faculty had proceeded cautiously to date to ensure that all resources and facilities for students were available before it was heavily promoted and that the Faculty was able offer everything it promised.

From a marketing point of view, there have been difficulties centrally due to the University Graduate School not being active with its marketing. This unit no longer exists and PG marketing is now located with central SR&M, who have recognised the need to aggressively market PG programs and create a greater awareness of PG study. Accordingly various activities and strategies are in process.

Dr Hecker mentioned a business / organisation database list that could be utilised to market the MBA online directly. The Board suggested this database should as a minimum include the +/- 60 largest businesses in Tasmania and government entities.

The need for web information to be accurate was highlighted.

The Board highlighted the attractiveness and potential need of more technological options for material delivery such as podcasts, vlogs and other web 2.0 delivery methods.

A residential program / component for the MBA was strongly recommended.

Action: Rob Hecker to provide list (to the Secretary) for a direct mail campaign of MBA online.

Action: Craig French to provide a sample CD of MBA coursework to the Board.

6. Mechanisms for assessing course adequateness in addressing industry needs

Discussion in relation to second ToR. What advice can the Board provide? The Board noted:

1. For new courses, draft Course Proposals will be submitted to the Board for comment and discussion.
2. For existing courses, when Course Reviews are conducted, the Board will be invited to provide comment and discussion as part of the Review process.

The University has an understanding of the graduate attributes and generic skills required by industry – and efforts are being made to address these needs and provide such skills to students through their study.

7. Discussion to identify opportunities for closer relations between the Faculty, business, industry and employers.

Discussion in relation to third ToR.

Board agreed it would be more useful to bring specific ideas and thoughts to the table rather than engage in a non-focussed, non-outcome discussion.

Sarah Jennings provided a brief outline of her Economic Fisheries project and the future of the new area of environmental finance as an example of how University's can set future trends rather than follow or react.

Action: Angelique Klassan and Jo Archer to prepare a paper for discussion based on experience in their sectors and how they see relationships between the University, industry and employers being developed and expectations managed.

8. Faculty marketing and research promotion.

Discussion in relation to fourth ToR.

Stuart Crispin (Chair of Marketing Committee) attended.

Mr Crispin advised that the Faculty marketing committee was established at the beginning of 2008. The committee has been working on identifying the marketing needs of the Faculty and implementing strategies and activities to promote its UG & PG programs

For example updating publications; presenting school visits; developing a specific Faculty of Business marketing website with the inclusion of Alumni profiles; direct mailouts; working with central Student Recruitment & Marketing to develop and progress marketing campaigns in print, media and cinema.

The Faculty is also undertaking marketing research which includes a phone campaign and focus groups to establish what the community understand and perceive about study, UTAS and the Faculty; why they might or might not study and where.

One of the biggest problems the Faculty faces is the various levels of marketing in the University and establishing who has responsibility for what activities and who should do what and who is going to pay for what.

It was suggested that a unit could be developed for year 12s (and possibly year 11s) to undertake as a first year unit, for example "Intro to Management" as a taste of University.

Or that year 12s enrol in a first year university unit and gaining a credit for that unit if they continue to University. This avenue does already exist through the High Achiever program but it is very selective.

One of the main problems highlighted was the lack of detailed and accurate information available to potential students, particularly through the High Schools and Colleges, especially in understanding precisely what Business entailed.

Action: Secretary to send the Board the marketing website link

9. Action List (circulated)

10. Other Business

The Dean thanked members of the Board for their time this year and for agreeing to participate and provide their valuable input and feedback on Faculty issues. The Faculty is finding the feedback useful.

11. Next Meeting (February / March 2009)