

Review of Academic and Administrative Organisational Structures

Through the Consultation Paper *Transitional Structures for Federation University Australia in 2014* released on 14 August 2013, I highlighted that the process of finalising the organisational structures for Federation University Australia would begin in early 2014.

The transitional arrangements announced in 2013 were based on two key principles:

1. **Stability.** *The need to allow the processes of integration of academic and professional services activities across the campuses of the University to occur without significant disruption to the ongoing business of the University.*
2. **Balancing autonomy and integration.** *In the transition process it will be important that the autonomy of the Schools and Faculties are balanced by the need to integrate the academic operations across the University. The best way to achieve this is to design and implement arrangements that will help to integrate effective academic and administrative structures across all campuses of the University. However, it is acknowledged that this needs to occur in a timely way to prevent ongoing instability.*

It was recognised that ongoing work and consultation would be required in 2014.

During the next few months, two reviews will take place: a review of academic organisational structures and a review of administrative support structures.

Review of Academic Organisational Structures

From 1 January 2014, after a consultation process in 2013 with academic staff in Schools at Gippsland and Ballarat, four new Faculties were created to provide cross-campus integration of the University's academic activities. Four Executive Deans were appointed on a pro tem basis to lead each of the new Faculties:

Professor John McDonald	Education and Arts
Professor Terri Joiner	Business
Professor John Yearwood	Science
Professor Penny Paliadelis	Health

At the time of these appointments, it was foreshadowed that a further review of the Schools and academic disciplines that constitute the new Faculties would take place in early 2014. This review will make recommendations to the Vice-Chancellor on the following issues, taking account of the importance of ongoing financial sustainability:

1. The most appropriate alignment of academic disciplines in Faculties;
2. The organisational structures for Faculties and Schools; and
3. Formally designated leadership and management roles within Schools and Faculties.

The nature of administrative support for Schools and Faculties will be addressed in the concurrent review of administrative support structures (see below).

The Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Academic), Professor Andrew Smith, will have responsibility for the academic organisational structures review. Should you have any questions or issues you want to raise about this review, Professor Smith's email address is: andy.smith@federation.edu.au

It is critical to the success of the review that staff of the University have a major input. The review process will provide maximum opportunity for staff involvement including school-based discussion groups, briefings by senior staff, consultation with unions and email feedback. Submissions to the review can be sent to: review@federation.edu.au

Timelines

The review will take place during March and April, concurrent with the review of administrative support structures.

The review process will begin with the publication of a short discussion paper to provide a focus for the consultation in mid-March.

Consultation processes will take place during March and April with a final paper released to staff in May outlining the recommendations of the review.

It is anticipated that the new academic organisational structures will be implemented from 1 July 2014.

Review of Administrative Support Structures

This review of the support structures that provide a range of student administration and academic services to Schools, Faculties and the University will commence in March.

This review will elicit the views of staff through a series of focus groups, briefings by senior staff, union consultation and e-mail feedback. Submissions to the review can be sent to: review@federation.edu.au

The focus of this review is on the alignment of structures that sit around the provision of student administration, academic support services and associated School and Faculty arrangements including the support of online learning. It will also take into account the importance of ongoing financial sustainability in the alignment of structures.

The review will therefore provide recommendations to the Vice-Chancellor primarily on: **organisational structures for the effective delivery of administrative and academic services and support particularly across Ballarat and Gippsland campus locations.**

The review will examine relevant and selected aspects of the current service delivery models, functions and structures involving Student Administration and Academic Services (Ballarat and Gippsland); the Centre for Learning Innovation and Professional Practice (CLIPP) (Gippsland); and the Schools and Faculties (Ballarat and Gippsland).

The Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Learning and Quality), Professor Marcia Devlin, will have responsibility for the administrative support structures review. Should you have any questions or issues you want to raise about this review, Professor Devlin's email address is m.devlin@federation.edu.au

Timelines

The review will be conducted during March and April 2014.

An external consultant will undertake focus group work in March and April on behalf of the University with staff, managers, Heads of Schools, Faculty Executive Deans, Deputy Deans and Directors to determine preferences, options and models for structure and support arrangements.

The dates, times and locations of the focus group sessions will be made available on FedNews.

A consultation paper will be released in mid-April to enable further staff feedback along with senior staff forums and consultation with the unions.

A final paper will be released to staff outlining the recommended organisational structures for the effective delivery of those aspects of administrative and academic services and support that are the focus of the review.

Other Matters

In the context of these two reviews, and as was foreshadowed late last year, some staff may want to consider the option of a Voluntary Redundancy Package (VRP). Staff can request a VRP application form from: hr@federation.edu.au

Also please be aware that all staff have access to the Employee Assistance Program (EAP) free of charge. The EAP service is available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week by ringing 1300 OUR EAP (1300 687 327) or 03 8681 2444.

David Battersby
Vice-Chancellor
6 March 2014