Minutes extract of the Board of Studies for the Bachelor of Philosophy (Honours) meeting held on 23 Mar '12: For committee members' information

7. REPORT FROM THE ACADEMIC COORDINATOR FOR THE BACHELOR OF PHILOSOPHY (HONS) – Ref: F28852

Members were reminded that the BPhil (Hons) degree commenced in January 2012 with the six day summer residence which was held at St Catherine's College. As part of the BPhil (Hons) Academic Coordinator’s report for this meeting, a draft report outlined how the residential component was conducted.

The Academic Coordinator’s PowerPoint presentation to members highlighted the demographics and skill mix of the BPhil student cohort, and the course content, presentations and mentor support provided. The speed with which the group became a cohort was emphasised.

The following points were noted in the ensuing discussion:

- Although most students in the BPhilt cohort were assumed to be multilingual it was pointed out that all students, in accordance with rule 7 of the University approved operational rules for the BPhil, would be required to enrol in a language unit. Some members advocated that there should be exceptions to this requirement (for example, a student who already has a substantial capacity in a language other than English). As a way forward it was suggested it may be preferable to say that at the end of four years BPhil students should have met the language requirement.

- It was agreed the Academic Coordinator would determine the enrolment status of the BPhil students in a language unit, as a guide to a discussion of this topic at the next meeting.

- Information regarding the ongoing development of the cohort experience was requested; for example, information on future seminars or presentations that would be convened for this purpose. The Academic Coordinator agreed to provide details of the Semester 2 cohort events to the Board.

- Funding for the BPhil degree has been linked to cross subsidisation and a systematic approach was required to develop a financial model for future funding.

- A structured and proactive approach to the allocation of student research mentors needed to be established to ensure students received timely and accurate advice from a mentor who was widely connected in each student’s area of special interest. It was agreed the Academic Coordinator would develop a schedule for each student to meet with the DVC(R) who has agreed to put them in contact with suitable research mentors.

- The Student’s Unit Reflective Feedback (SURF) would be the instrument currently available to evaluate the GCRL1000 unit at the end of semester. The Centre for Advanced Teaching and Learning (CATL) has been developing a specialised tool for the evaluation of the GCRL1000. The Academic Coordinator would provide feedback on this at a future meeting.