



## Management of Change Process

School of Physical Education, Sport and Exercise Sciences

Division of Sciences

July 2017

Final decisions and response to staff and union submissions

## *Background*

On 25 May 2017 I commenced formal consultation around proposed changes to the School of Physical Education, Sport and Exercise Sciences. The changes proposed were in response to the current financial challenges that the School faces and the need to reduce the deficit. Sustainable resourcing is key to ensuring a viable School that can continue to contribute to the University's aspirations and deliver a future-focussed curriculum grounded in research excellence (refer to 1.2 'Future resourcing', Staff Consultation Document, 25 May 2017).

## *Consultation process*

Consultation included one-on-one meetings, and meeting with the School. Some individuals also took up the opportunity to meet with me, or Jane Stumbles (Divisional HR Manager) during the consultation period to seek further clarity about the proposal and provide their initial feedback before making a submission.

Consultation closed at midday on 16 June 2017. In total, 19 written submissions were received. These were a mix of group and individual submissions, including one from the School as a whole, and one from the TEU on behalf of its members.

## *Process of reviewing submissions*

On 21 June, an advisory panel of me (Chair), Associate Professor Janice Murray (Associate Dean, Academic), Jan Flood (Registrar), Associate Professor Sarah Young (Dunedin School of Medicine), and Associate Professor Jim Cotter (School representative, PESES), met to carefully consider all information provided through written submissions.

Human Resources (HR) support was provided by the Divisional HR Manager, Jane Stumbles.

## *Themes of submissions and the panel's response*

Firstly, I wish to state that I am grateful to those who accepted the invitation to engage in the consultation process. I was appreciative of the verbal feedback provided during the consultation period, and the panel and I were impressed with the submissions received. A number of alternative views and suggestions were proposed, which were carefully considered by the panel.

There seemed to be an acceptance that change was necessary, and an understanding of the need to focus on developing a future-focussed curriculum delivered from a sustainable financial platform. There were differing views about how the change was being implemented, and what the future academic focus of the School should be.

A full summary of all themes contained in the submissions, and the response to those themes, is detailed below.

*Feedback about the proposed academic selection process and criteria (both in submissions, and verbal discussions):* The final selection criteria have been modified to incorporate feedback received. In particular the selection criteria will be based directly on the academic promotion criteria. An explicit reference to collegiality will be removed and the supporting personal statement may be up to three pages long. The indicative curriculum will not have a role in staff selection.

The Pro-Vice-Chancellor considered the School's suggestions and decided that an internal senior academic outside the Division of Sciences and the School would be equally appropriate and would allow the process to continue without delay. Professor Helen Nicolson, Deputy Vice-Chancellor (External Engagement) is a senior academic who is independent of and external to the School. Professor Nicholson has a comprehensive understanding of academic promotion criteria, and is familiar with the academic offerings of the School of Physical Education, Sport and Exercise Sciences. The University is confident that this is an appropriate choice, and Professor Nicholson has agreed to participate in this process.

*Several submissions referred to the financial model and subventions:* Questions were raised about the subvention, and other financial activities. To clarify, the need to reduce staffing is because of the financial situation – the School is over \$2.5m in deficit. Some level of ongoing subvention will be provided as the School turns around its financial performance. Future subvention levels will be determined strategically by the PVC in consultation with Heads of Department and Advisors.

*Questions were raised about EFTS and reimbursements:* The School does not receive EFTS credit for subjects taken outside the School by its own major-subject students. This can be balanced by EFTS credit from students taking majors outside the School who enrol in papers taught by School staff.

The School is currently reimbursed the salary cost of the staff member on secondment to the Divisional Office.

*Clinics:* There was some concern that these may be discontinued. The PVC and the University supports retention of the clinics provided they have a strong research and academic focus. There needs to be clear articulation of the strategic benefit, value and purpose; e.g. teaching and academic purpose, value to the community etc.

*Concern about the impact of reducing the level of Laboratory Technician resourcing:* Several submissions urged this decision to be delayed until the future curriculum is clear. There were also views that the Senior Laboratory Technician/Health and Safety role should be included in scope. It has been agreed to defer any decisions about changes to Laboratory Technician resourcing until such time as the future curriculum is

confirmed. At that time, technical staffing requirements will be assessed in order to determine what changes may be required. The panel noted that there is currently no workload model for the Technical Team, and encourages the current Dean, together with the Technical Team Leader, to develop a workload model for technical staff based on the existing curriculum. The workload model can be reviewed when the new curriculum is developed.

*Enthusiasm about the future:* It was encouraging to see the enthusiasm for the future of School of Physical Education, Sport and Exercise Sciences, and acknowledgement for the need for change.

*The need for a comprehensive strategic plan:* The panel agrees with this suggestion. While the PVC is happy to help establish a strategic committee for the School, ultimately this activity needs to be driven by senior academics in the School.

*Comments about the remaining Professional Practice Fellow (PPF) position that was excluded in the proposal:* This position was out of scope because resourcing is required to continue to teach the current curriculum through 2018. Once the new curriculum is developed, consideration will be given to whether the support requirements are appropriate. If it is considered necessary to make changes to ensure optimal resourcing, staff would be consulted about this.

*That the curriculum should have been developed and finalised before decisions on staffing were made:* The immediate priority is to address the financial problems. It is reasonable to downsize the school before developing a future curriculum. The PVC and panel noted that the highest performing Departments (in both research and teaching) follow a policy of recruiting the academically strongest staff they can. Furthermore the academic capabilities among the School's academics will be broad enough to allow the School to develop a strong curriculum with wide appeal.

*Logistics Coordinator's position description:* Submissions seemed to reflect the PVC's proposal that the Job Description for this position needs to wait until the curriculum content is developed and finalised. We will work with the incumbent through this process, later in 2018.

*The indicative curriculum put forward in consultation:* A number of comments were made about the indicative curriculum documents, including a view that Physical Activity and Health was ignored. The panel recognised that Physical Activity and Health is strategically valuable. The curriculum presented in the proposal was used to test whether the proposed level of resourcing would be sufficient to deliver a sustainable academic programme, and was simply indicative. The important point to bear in mind is that the final curriculum (to be developed by staff) must follow the principles outlined in Section 1.3 of the proposal.

The PVC is open to the suggestion of two first-year PESES papers. However, these papers must be taught within the constraint of the final number of academic staff. Also, it is important (i) not to create barriers to entry to 200-level (or higher) study in the School and (ii) to ensure a pathway exists for students exiting First Year Health Science to undertake a course of study in the School.

*Comments about general administration staff including why these positions were excluded from the Management of Change proposal:* The PVC gave careful consideration to this at the time of developing the proposal, and in light of the Support Services Review (SSR), no changes were proposed. The panel carefully considered this and agreed with the PVC's decision. However, this does not preclude proposing further changes in the future, if this is deemed necessary. The panel notes that the Dean needs to actively manage existing staff to ensure the School operates effectively. It is his responsibility to take an active role in overseeing administrative activities over the coming months, and the Division's Business Manager will support this. If it is determined that additional general staff resourcing is needed while the SSR progresses, the PVC will consider how best to organise and resource this. The PVC recognises that when the current Administration Manager/EA retires, the Dean will need some support. To mitigate risk, the Divisional Business Manager has been asked to work with the Dean to provide administrative oversight.

*Dance:* A number of submissions referred to the proposed disestablishment of the Dance specialisation. Some agreed with this proposal, some did not. Some submissions made suggestions to retain the Senior Lecturer associated with Dance elsewhere in the University. The PVC and his panel all acknowledge the unique capabilities of the Dance Senior Lecturer, and her alignment with the University's Māori Strategic Framework and the Pacific Strategic Framework. Any solution to retain the Senior Lecturer would be facilitated through a redeployment arrangement outside the School.

*ATP Administrator:* There was a submission about the workload and physical location of this position. The panel was not convinced that relocating the ATP Administrator would be detrimental to the School as a whole. Ultimately the physical location of general staff is for the Dean to decide. No increase in ATP administrative support is being proposed or envisaged at this time.

*Alternative EFTS data and graphs including illustrating EFTS and primary major:* All data have been carefully considered. The panel concluded that regardless of how EFTS data are presented, the fact remains that all programmes have relatively low numbers of students. This reinforces the current lack of financial viability and the need for immediate change. The School and the Division now need to focus on developing a future-focussed curriculum that conforms to the strategic imperative of research-led excellence, and the panel did not accept that the different interpretations justify considering alternative proposals.

*Camps and Outdoor Education:* The PVC reiterates that camps and other activities can still continue as practical components but must conform to the principle that they have an academic focus and build on a theoretical foundation.

*The loss of the Mechanical Workshop Technician:* The panel recognised that the disestablishment of this position would result in a loss of internal specialty support. The School has an operational budget, and it was noted that capability does exist across the Division and the University. The School may be able to utilise existing capability, reallocate activities elsewhere in the School, the Division, or the University (e.g. Property Services), and/or outsource any specialist work that is deemed necessary.

*The proposed Technical Team Leader/Electronics Technician Job Description:* Additional feedback provided has been accepted. It is important to note that the Job Evaluation process is undertaken centrally; the panel cannot advocate for individuals or influence the eventual final grade.

*Suggestion that the School undertakes ESSA accreditation:* The panel agreed that this suggestion appears to have strategic merit, and encourages the School to explore and pursue this if it chooses. It is noted that accreditation can be expensive, so again, this proposal would need to be carefully considered on its merit, and a strategic decision made.

*Marketing support:* The panel noted that the School will require Divisional support for marketing a new programme, and agree that this is strategically important. The PVC reiterates that the Division is committed to supporting the School in its marketing initiatives, including committing financial support for marketing.

*Part-time Teaching Fellow:* Accepts being transferred into the Division of Humanities.

*Senior Teaching Fellow/Course Advisor position:* Some comments were presented regarding this position including a suggestion that this become a Professional Practice Fellow and be excluded from the academic selection process. While the panel recognised the valuable service that is provided, it did not agree with this proposal. Retention of specialist student advice expertise will not be justified under the new curriculum and additionally, the School will not have the resources to support it.

## *Final decisions*

### Laboratory Technicians

The information provided during the consultation phase has convinced me that it would be premature to make decisions about Laboratory Technician resourcing without first having clarity about the future curriculum. Therefore my amended recommendation is to make no changes to Laboratory Technician positions at this time. The Vice-Chancellor agreed to this on the understanding that when the curriculum is developed, we will then review all support roles including the remaining technical positions and the remaining Professional Practice Fellow. This review will be to determine whether the School has the appropriate structure in place to effectively support the programme and the research activities of the School. If the review suggests a need for change, then any proposed changes will be subject to further formal consultation.

### Dance specialisation

- The fulltime Senior Teaching Fellow and the fulltime Senior Lecturer positions associated with the Dance specialisation will both be disestablished from the School of Physical Education, Sport and Exercise Sciences. The University is committed to exploring redeployment for staff at risk of redundancy and as part of this process, we are continuing to consider whether the Senior Lecturer position could be retained elsewhere in the University.
- The 0.5 FTE Teaching Fellow position associated with the Dance specialisation will transfer to the Department of Music, Theatre and Performing Arts on 1 February 2018, or an alternative date as agreed with the Head of Department.
- The Caroline Plummer Fellow in Community Dance will be transferred to the Department of Music, Theatre and Performing Arts. The Plummer family have been advised of this decision.

### Changes to other (in-scope) academic positions

The Vice-Chancellor approved the recommendation to reduce in-scope academic positions by four positions (~4.0 FTE). I am in the process of establishing a selection panel to facilitate this process; the finalised selection criteria and process are attached to this document.

During this period, one request for voluntary severance has been submitted, and accepted by the University. As a result of this, the selection process will be to reduce by three academic positions (~3.0 FTE).

### General staff positions

- The Logistics Coordinator and Outdoor Education Technician will reduce from 1.0 FTE to 0.5 FTE.
- The incumbent Technical Team Leader/Electronics Technician has been confirmed into this permanent position, and the vacant position of Electronics Technician has been disestablished.
- The fulltime Mechanical Workshop Technician position will be disestablished.
- The (vacant) position of Application Software Developer has been disestablished.

## *Next steps*

We are now working on an individual basis with those staff who are impacted by the changes announced today. I will be asking Professor Booth, as Dean, and Nigel Barrett, as Team Leader of the Technical Team, to work through the operational implications of these decisions. My staff are available to assist in this process.

I now need to work with the Dean and appropriate staff to determine the support and teaching resources required to teach out the Dance specialisation (2018, and beyond). I will be consulting those staff currently teaching in the Dance specialisation.

## *Selection process for academic (in-scope) staff*

The selection process will commence immediately. Staff are invited to compile their documentation for the panel. In-scope academic staff will be invited to a 15-minute interview with the selection panel. If individuals are unable to make their allocated time then they should advise Kim Dobier ([pvc.sciences.ea@otago.ac.nz](mailto:pvc.sciences.ea@otago.ac.nz), extension 7978) so that we can consider what alternative arrangements are required. Staff should also advise Kim if they do not wish to meet the panel. Key dates are as follows:

- Written portfolios submitted by 9.00 a.m. on Friday 21 July 2017 to [pvc.sciences.ea@otago.ac.nz](mailto:pvc.sciences.ea@otago.ac.nz).
- Interviews will occur during the week of Monday 24 July 2017 (TBC).

## *Curriculum development*

I have asked Associate Professor Janice Murray (Associate Dean, Academic) to assist the School with developing the new curriculum. Further communication about this process will be forthcoming from my Office, in due course.

## *Conclusion*

In closing, I have appreciated the way that staff have engaged with me through this process to date. I also thank you for your professional and respectful approach towards your colleagues who have been impacted through this process. I am very mindful that this process will continue to be challenging, as we work through next steps including the academic selection process. If you have any questions in relation to this document, or would like to discuss any aspect of your submission that you do not feel is addressed above, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Professor Richard Barker, Pro-Vice-Chancellor (Sciences)

12 July 2017