

What happened @ Academic Board

4 JUNE 2025

1. FAREWELLS

- Farewell to Zohar Berchik, Course Coordinator of the Counselling and Psychotherapy suite of courses. The Institute is sincerely grateful to her for her contribution over the past four years

2. KEY DECISIONS/ACTIONS BY THE ACADEMIC BOARD

- Course Standards Committee unanimously approved changes to:
 - Graduate Diploma and the Bachelor level Personality units - PSY204 Personality
 - These changes involved alignment and updates to the unit outlines and assessments
 - It was noted that moving forward, units with the same name across different courses and/or AQF levels, will be changed to mitigate the risk of confusion for students

3. STAFF REPRESENTATIVE UPDATES

- Academic Board thanked Zohar Berchik for her contribution as a Staff Representative. The Board are sincerely grateful for her contribution and wish her all the very best in her future endeavours
- Academic Board is now seeking a new Staff Representative. Nominations for this position will open soon and further details will be shared with staff shortly

4. STUDENT REPRESENTATIVE UPDATES

- Deborah Adelin thanked Dr Chris Kilby for his dedicated efforts in ensuring that student representatives are introduced to one another
- Feedback from students across the courses has been overwhelmingly positive
- Students have expressed their appreciation for the small class sizes and intimate learning environment

Flexible tutorials

- It was acknowledged that tutorial classes during traditional work hours (9am-5pm) is a barrier for some students in the Graduate Diploma
- Discussions will continue around the feasibility of delivering flexible out of hours tutorials

Canvas

- Students have requested access to their Canvas sites for the entirety of their studies at the institute
- It was noted that students do have full access to their previous Canvas sites
- Dr Chris Kilby will post an announcement to students, demonstrating how to locate archived Canvas sites

Mentoring

- Students have expressed an interest in a mentoring program
- This has been trialled before. Historically the challenge has been securing volunteer mentors at higher course levels and due to the lack of volunteer engagement this program is currently not sustainable

Building access for students

- Discussions continue around allowing students to have access to the building until later in the evening now that the building closes at 8pm.
- Out of hours access and opportunities for students to remain on the premises for longer periods of time continues to be discussed at an Executive level

Pathways in psychology

- Students have expressed interest in receiving more information about potential career pathways following completion of their courses
- Additional resources are currently being developed and will be made available on the Career Hub at a later date

CSP funding

- CSP funding is not provided to students studying at non-university higher education providers such as the Cairnmillar Institute
- The Institute is acutely aware of the financial challenges this presents to students
- The Board acknowledged the unfortunate reality that this remains a considerable barrier for many capable students wanting to progress at the Institute

Hybrid tutorials

- It was acknowledged that students would like to have hybrid tutorials, to enable them to study from home when they are unwell
- At present the Institute are unable to accommodate this request as investing heavily in hybrid recording infrastructure is not feasible
- Hybrid classrooms are a complex issue, first in relation to confidentiality because of the personal nature of the discussions in tutorials, second because of the technological issues related to sound quality

5. STUDENT LEARNING SUPPORT

- There has been a significant increase in the demand for student support
- The number of students applying for special consideration has increased considerably
- The Institute is undertaking significant work in this area to ensure that student support is delivered effectively and continues to meet the evolving needs of its student community

6. POLICY UPDATES

- The Staff Promotion Policy was unanimously approved subject to the agreed changes. These are to:
 - Include in this policy a reflection of lived experience upon service, discipline and community engagement
 - To include an emphasis on innovation

7. REPORT FROM THE DEAN

- Prof Linda Byrne attended a HODSPA conference recently
- Debate continues regarding the future direction of professional pathways within psychology, the role of psychology within the broader mental health landscape and the evolving Government objectives

- There were discussions around the optimal duration of psychology courses and the development of new funding models
- Prof Byrne emphasised the importance of ensuring that the Institute prepare students to become safe and competent clinicians who are well-equipped to serve the community upon graduation

8. SHORT COURSES – VET

- The Institute now have funding approved for students, as well as a dedicated room for VET training

9. RESEARCH UPDATE

- There are currently 20 peer review publications, which is comparable to last year, with an average Impact Factor of 4.1
- The Institute have been very successful in acquiring grant funding with three out of five grants applied for, awarded.

Annual Research Conference and Seminars

- Planning for the Annual Research Conference is underway
- Academic seminars have been progressing well in Semester 1, and Semester 2 is fully booked
- There is a waitlist for this seminar series for Semester 1, 2026

10. REPORT FROM STUDENT SERVICES

- Student evaluations are underway and these will close at the end of this week
- There will be a final round of communications sent to students to encourage them to complete the survey
- Mid-year application numbers remain strong
- There has been a strategic focus on increasing international student numbers

Chatbot

- The Institute is undertaking substantial work to ensure student support is delivered effectively and meets the evolving needs of the student community
- The new chatbot is undergoing its third round of internal testing
- The team aim to launch the Chatbot in mid to late June, in time for the commencement of Semester 2
- It is intended that the new Chatbot will enhance the overall student experience by offering quick answers to a wide range of questions

11. MEETINGS IN 2025

- Wednesday 12 February
- Wednesday 16 April
- Wednesday 4 June
- Wednesday 13 August
- Wednesday 8 October
- Wednesday 26 November