REVIEW OF THE SCHOOL OF NURSING

SUMMARY OF PANEL REPORT

March 2008

The review of the School of Nursing took place from 20th to 22nd November 2007. It was chaired by Professor Denise Dignam, Acting Dean of the Faculty of Nursing, Midwifery and Health at the University of Technology, Sydney. The other external panel member was Adjunct Professor Phillip Della, Chief Nursing Officer of the Department of Health, WA. The internal panel member was Dr Judy MacCallum from the School of Education.

The panel met with members of the Senior Executive Group on the South Street campus on the first morning of their visit. The remaining two and a half days were spent on the Peel Campus, during which time they toured the campus facilities. The panel also interviewed a variety of school and university student support staff as well as undergraduate and postgraduate students and alumni. A large group of external stakeholders, including the Mayor of the City of Mandurah, partners from the Peel Education Campus and local health service providers, also met with the panel.

The school received a number of commendations in the panel report. There was great praise for the school’s achievements in community engagement, borne out by industry and other local stakeholders who appreciated the school’s collaborative and consultative style of engagement. The school’s research activities and research infrastructure also received commendations, the panel noting the growth and attraction of research grants and funding, which it considered outstanding for such a recently established school. Comment was also made about the space and physical resources available to the school, which the panel saw as “aesthetically and functionally excellent for teaching activities”. The indigenous program, Koort Mooditj, was also commended. Additionally, staff from the school, Teaching and Learning Centre, Student Services and Library were praised for their spirit of collaboration and dedication to student learning and support.

The panel was happy to affirm the future directions for growth and development within the school, as highlighted in the school’s own action plan for improvement. However, the panel did encourage the school to measure their intentions for growth of new courses against the need to consolidate the existing offerings. Additional market research was also deemed essential to ongoing strategic development. Furthermore, the panel considered it important that the school set a target for its international student intake to help it determine future support requirements, given the limitations of existing services for international students on the Peel Campus.

The panel affirmed the school’s decision to relieve the Head of School of some administrative roles such as that of program chair and recommended that formal training be put into place for staff taking on these new positions of responsibility. The creation of adjunct positions to acknowledge the contribution of senior nursing personnel was also considered valuable to the school. Feedback from students led the panel to a recommendation that the school establish a student representative feedback forum so as to provide direct feedback to staff on curriculum and support issues.