



Academic Board
Information for New Members
2021

Contents

About Academic Board

Legislation

Terms of Reference

Organisational Charts

Key Dates for 2021

Contact Information

Conducting Academic Board Business

Conducting Urgent Business

Responsibilities of Members

Report of the President 2019

About Academic Board

Every Australian University has a body known as the Academic Board, Academic Senate, or similar. As the University's peak academic body, the Monash University Academic Board is responsible for the maintenance of high standards in teaching and research and acts to assist the University in ensuring the highest quality of its academic endeavours.

The origins of academic boards lie in the tradition of the university as a community of scholars. It has been said that "they remain as perhaps the most significant, formal, contemporary expression of the mediaeval heritage of modern universities and the characteristic collegiality associated with the academy ..."¹

Key events in the history of the development of Monash's Academic Board include:

- The first meeting of the Professorial Board (the direct precursor to the Academic Board) - 8 November 1960.
- Change of name to Academic Board - 1990².
- First meeting chaired by an elected President - 7 April 2004.
- Adoption of formal Terms of Reference - 21 November 2007.
- Approval of revised membership by Council - 8 December 2008.
- Further refinement to the Board's membership approved by Council – 4 November 2010.
- Endorsement of revised Terms of Reference – 4 June 2014.
- Council approval of revised Terms of Reference – 25 June 2014.

Academic Board is chaired by an elected President (also known as the Chair), who is supported by two elected Vice-Presidents (Deputy Chairs.)

Legislation

The current Monash legislation relating to Academic Board – the Monash University Statute and subordinate Regulations - is accessible from the following legislation page of the University Solicitor's website:

<http://monash.edu/legal/legislation/current-statute-regulations-and-related-resolutions/index.html>

¹ Cited in Hilary Winchester "Academic Board and the Academy: Seizing the Moment", AUQF 2007, p.2

² *Monash University (Chisholm and Gippsland) Act 1990*, No. 22 of 1990

This page is intentionally blank

Academic Board Terms of Reference

Approved by Council 25 June 2014

(incorporating amendments as at 1 December 2019)

Preamble

Pursuant to section 20 of the Monash University Act 2009 Council has established the Academic Board and assigned to it a range of powers and functions (Council Regulation 10(2)). Establishment of the Academic Board is also necessary to ensure compliance with the Tertiary Education Quality and Standards Agency (TEQSA) Higher Education Standards Framework.

The Board is responsible for the maintenance of high standards in education and research, and acts to assist the University in ensuring the highest quality of its academic endeavours. Pursuant to the power granted by Section 29 of the Monash University Statute and its responsibility to Council for the maintenance of high standards, Academic Board therefore makes regulations with respect to a range of academic matters.

In addition to performing its critical functions in approving academic programs, the Board is an active contributor to debates regarding academic direction and quality at the University. The Board achieves many of its functions via its committees, which play a critical role prosecuting the academic plans of the University.

Terms of Reference

To discharge the remit conferred on it by Council, Academic Board will:

- Oversee the quality of the university's academic activities wherever and in whatever form they occur. This includes regular analysis of performance indicators and evaluation of programs and initiatives relating to improvement of the university's educational programs and research activities domestically and internationally.
- Monitor the outcomes of the university's education and research activities. This includes, but is not limited to, the approval and review of the development and implementation of courses of study, policies and procedures relating to, or otherwise affecting, education, research and research training.
- Monitor compliance with those of the Higher Education Threshold Standards relevant to its remit and with any other Standards established under the Higher Education Standards Framework or equivalent.
- Consider and make recommendation to Council and/or senior management on issues of academic strategic planning, including endorsement and review of the University's Academic Plan.

Academic Board makes regulations with respect to:

- Requirements for entry to the University and admission to or enrolment in courses or units of study including admission to candidature for a higher degree by research.
- The accreditation or re-accreditation of coursework courses of study, including course requirements, granting of credit towards a course of study, assessment, examination and other academic requirements.
- Exclusion for unsatisfactory progress or inability to progress by students enrolled in coursework courses of study.
- Accreditation and reaccreditation of courses of study for higher degrees by research, including study program, supervision and examination.
- Management of progress by candidates enrolled for higher degrees by research.

Academic Board does not have responsibility for making recommendations on budget or resourcing matters but may, where relevant to the academic affairs of the university, communicate its opinion on such matters to Council or the Vice-Chancellor.

Academic Board:

- Will facilitate provision and dissemination of appropriate information at the appropriate levels to relevant groups of the university community. In doing so, Academic Board will be cognisant of and respond to information from those groups.
- May request and obtain information relevant to the university's academic affairs from any board, committee, faculty or officer of the university.
- May require the monitoring of academic activities within the faculties and the subsequent reporting of outcomes.
- Will report to Council after each meeting and on an annual basis, and will also report on all matters submitted to it by Council for report.

Academic Board may constitute such standing committees as it thinks necessary to:

- Provide appropriate expertise in areas relevant to its deliberations and the discharge of its remit.
- Ensure rigorous assurance of the quality of Monash's academic endeavours.
- Provide for efficient carriage of its business.

Membership

Membership of Academic Board is governed by Council Regulation 12.

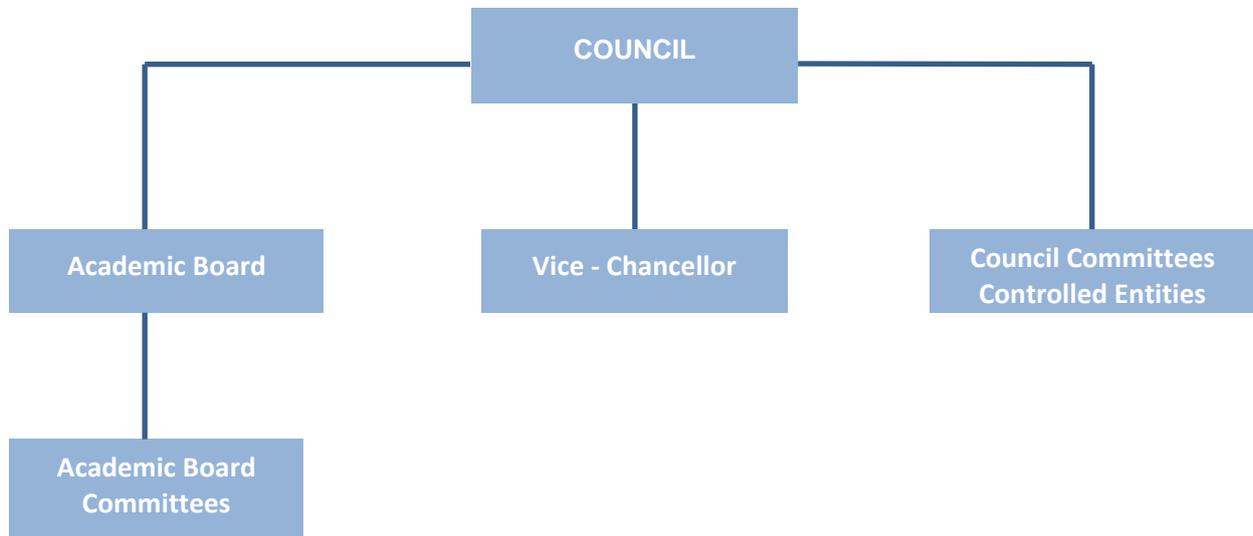
The Board's membership composition – a tripartite structure of approximately equal ratios - recognises that the Board should have the right membership mix to provide for efficient conduct of its business and enable meaningful participation from key stakeholders across the University:

- Ex officio members – the most senior members of the University with direct portfolio responsibilities for academic affairs.
- Heads of Academic Units – senior faculty staff responsible/accountable for overseeing/implementing the University's academic mission within their faculties.
- A cohort of elected members from the broader University community of staff and students, visibly reflecting elements of collegiality and democratic participation in university academic affairs.

Members of Academic Board add significant value by contributing broad experience and perspectives not otherwise available to the Board and:

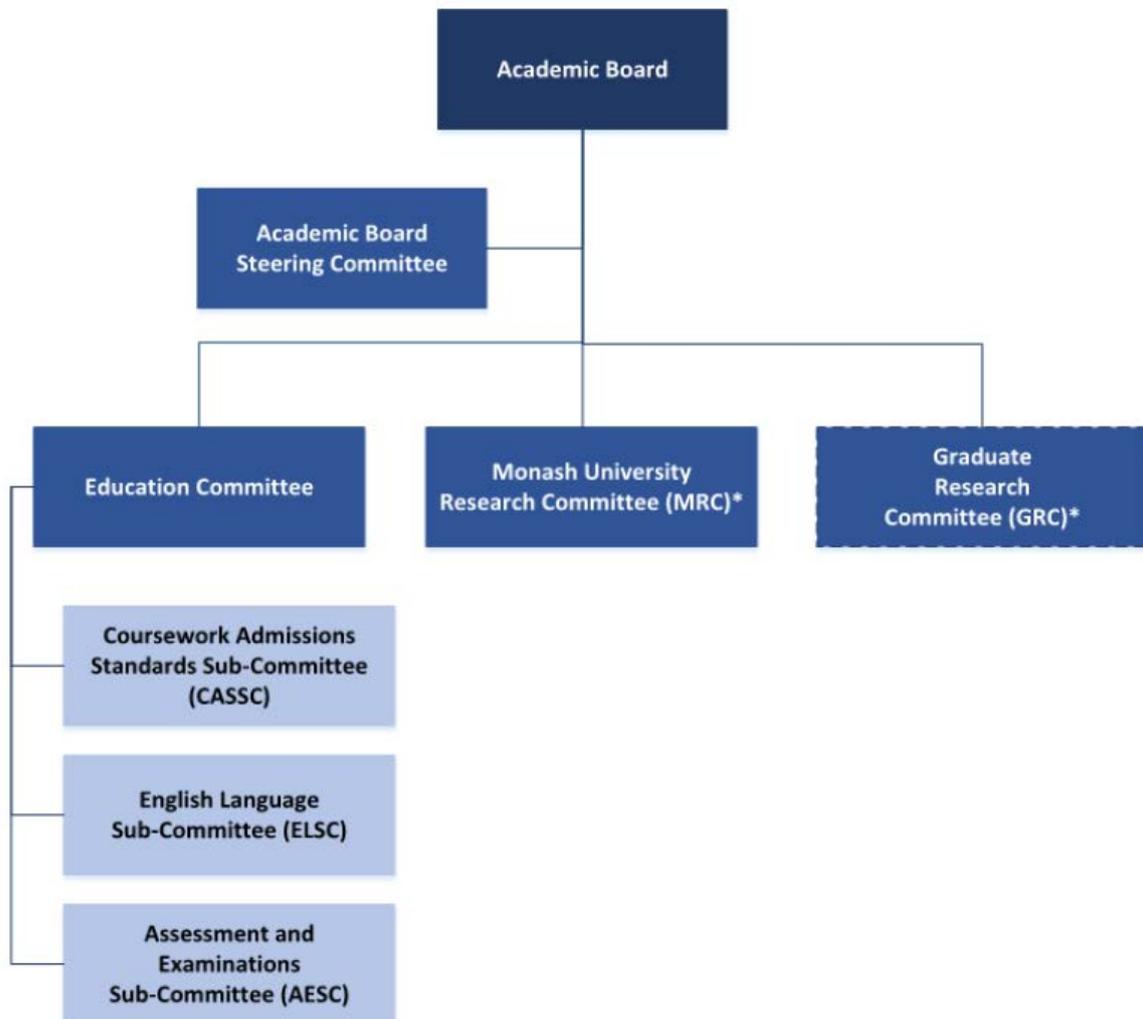
- While various perspectives are important and may be articulated during discussion, ultimately members are expected to act in what they honestly believe to be in the University's best interests.
- Are expected to diligently attend Board meetings or tender their apologies, and familiarise themselves with the agenda and supporting papers before meetings.
- Are obliged to disclose a conflict of interest in matters considered by the Board.
- Are expected to contribute to discussion, observing the Board's rules of debate.
- Will deal with confidential material appropriately and not disclose such information to a third party except where the disclosure is authorised by the Chair/proponent.

Overarching University Committee Structure



The Chair of Academic Board is an ex officio member of University Council and is also a member of the Vice-Chancellor’s Executive Committee.

Academic Board Standing Committees



Information on the Board's principal standing committees is available from the Academic Board Committees website:

<http://www.monash.edu/excerv/academic-board/committees-of-ab>

Key Dates for 2021

Academic Board will meet on the following dates (all Wednesday) in 2021:

Meeting 1/2021	17 February
Meeting 2/2021	31 March
Meeting 3/2021	5 May
Meeting 4/2021	16 June
Meeting 5/2021	28 July
Meeting 6/2021	8 September
Meeting 7/2021	20 October
Meeting 8/2021	24 November

Academic Board Steering Committee will meet on the following dates (all Tuesdays) in 2021:

Meeting 1/2021	9 February
Meeting 2/2021	23 March
Meeting 3/2021	27 April
Meeting 4/2021	8 June
Meeting 5/2021	20 July
Meeting 6/2021	31 August
Meeting 7/2021	12 October
Meeting 8/2021	16 November

This page is intentionally blank

Contact Information

President (Chair) of Academic Board

Professor Robert Brooks

Tel: (03) 9903 1423

Robert.Brooks@monash.edu

Deputy Chairs (Vice-Presidents) of Academic Board

Associate Professor Chivonne Algeo

Tel: (03) 9905 3987

chivonne.algeo@monash.edu

Professor Malin Premaratne

Tel: (03) 9905 5382

malin.premaratne@monash.edu

The Board is supported by the Secretary and staff from Executive Services.

Secretary to Academic Board

Ms Farrah Vintsarevich

Tel: (03) 9905 9008

Email: Farrah.Vintsarevich@monash.edu.au OR academicboard@monash.edu

Academic Board website:

<http://www.monash.edu/excerv/academic-board>

Details of current members of the Board are included in the cover sheet to the agenda for each meeting and are also available from the Board's website.

This page is intentionally blank

Conducting Academic Board Business

Papers for meetings of the Academic Board are distributed electronically (via email) following each meeting of Steering Committee – members can expect to receive their papers approximately one week before each Academic Board meeting.

Members will receive two PDF files – the first contains the agenda *per se* and papers on which the Board is being requested to make a decision, or which canvas key/strategic matters. The second file - or *ePortfolio* - contains supporting program development and review material and reports for noting.

Occasionally it may be necessary to disseminate late material to members immediately prior to a meeting, and this will also normally be done via email.

Academic Board papers will be sent to members at their regular Monash email address. Please advise the Board Secretary (academicBoard@monash.edu) if you have a different preferred email address.

Conducting urgent business

Procedures for approval of urgent items between regular meetings of Academic Board:

1. Criteria for utilising the Procedures

The Steering Committee of Academic Board shall resolve urgent items of business relevant to Academic Board that cannot be managed within the Board's regular schedule of meetings if:

- i. Academic Board approval of the item is required:
 - a. pursuant to Monash legislation or policy; or
 - b. the item is otherwise deemed to be relevant to the remit of Academic Board. In this context, the relevance of an item shall be determined by the President of Academic Board; and
- ii. Approval of the item is required as a matter of urgency and:
 - a. the item cannot be dealt with pursuant to the Academic Board's regular schedule of business; and
 - b. the President of Academic Board determines that it is impracticable for the item to be dealt with by a special meeting of the Board held pursuant to Council Regulation 18(2).

2. Procedures

- i. The President, Academic Board will determine to utilise the process for resolution of urgent items.
- ii. The Academic Board Secretary will circulate the item via email to members of the Steering Committee.
- iii. Within the time frame specified by the Secretary's email (not normally less than two working days from the date of the email), Steering Committee members will signify whether they:
 - a. approve the item;
 - b. do not approve the item; or
 - c. consider that the item should be resolved at a scheduled meeting of the Academic Board or by a special meeting of the Board held pursuant to Council Regulation 18(2).
- iv. Approval of the item requires a 2/3 majority of members (currently in office) of Steering Committee.
- v. Steering Committee resolution of an urgent item pursuant to these Procedures will be included on the agenda for noting at the next regular meeting of the Board.

This page is intentionally blank

Responsibilities of Members

To enable Academic Board to discharge the responsibilities conferred on it by University legislation and its Terms of Reference, members are expected to engage actively with the business of the Board by:

- familiarising themselves with the agenda prior to meetings
- attending meetings
- contributing constructively to discussion at meetings
- suggesting issues that require consideration
- participating as members of Working Parties when required
- participating as members of Standing and other University Committees when required
- where appropriate, by communicating and implementing decisions of the Board

Members of all University Committees are expected to act in the interests of the University as a whole, rather than to promote the interests of a particular person/group. A member will inevitably bring his/her own interests and background to bear on membership, and may take views of a constituency into account, all of which may be articulated during discussion. However, in the final analysis, members are expected to act in what they honestly believe to be in the University's best interests. Under s. 19 of the *Monash University Act*, the University must indemnify members of Academic Board 'in respect of any act or thing done or omitted to be done in good faith in the exercise or purported exercise of any power or duty conferred or imposed by or under this Act.'

If a member has a conflict of interest in relation to a particular item on a meeting agenda, the member must declare that conflict of interest to the President via the Secretary prior to consideration of the relevant item, and must not take part in a vote on any matter concerning it.

Members are expected to deal with confidential material appropriately - confidential information acquired by a member must not be disclosed to a third party except where the disclosure is authorised by the President.

If a member is unable to attend a meeting an apology must be lodged prior to the meeting by email (academicboard@monash.edu). If a member is unable to attend a series of meetings (due to OSP, leave etc), a request for special leave should be made (in advance) to the Secretary academicboard@monash.edu.

This page is intentionally blank

Introduction

The Australian tertiary education sector has become increasingly diverse, and Monash University's Academic Board has kept pace with this change in order to effectively discharge its statutory responsibility to Council for the maintenance of high standards in education and research. A significant proportion of the Board's activity during 2019 centred on the renewal of the University's registration as a Higher Education provider submitted to TEQSA in November 2019.

As foreshadowed by last year's Annual Report, the Board continued to focus on the 'closing the loop' agenda. A feature for the year was the improvement of analysis of data presented to the Board, and the monitoring of action items brought to the Board. In connection with this the inaugural Academic Board 'Closing the Loop' Conference engaged with colleagues beyond the usual Board membership, including professional and academic staff, and students. The conference discussed perspectives on academic governance at Monash University. It included an introduction to Council responsibilities; a panel discussion involving colleagues from Monash Malaysia; presentations on the University's TEQSA responsibilities and renewal of registration; and substantial Q&A.

It is necessary to ensure that the Board's standing committees – on which the Board relies to discharge a range of functions and provide appropriate academic quality assurance – are structured to be fit for purpose. In addition to receiving regular reports and items requiring action from its standing committees, Academic Board approved the creation of a single Education Committee. The Education Committee replaced the Learning and Teaching Committee, and Coursework Admissions and Programs Committee, removing the overlap between the two. Concurrent with this, a review of terms of reference and membership of the standing committees was undertaken to align common elements.

During 2019, Academic Board approved a range of initiatives designed to facilitate achievement of the University's academic strategies. This included the development of a quality dashboard of University data by University Planning and Statistics and Business Intelligence. The dashboard captures data at a faculty and departmental level on retention, progression and completion, as well as Student Evaluation of Teaching and Units data that can be interrogated by the Board, its standing committees, faculties, and departments.

To further serve the needs of Indigenous people and communities, Academic Board endorsed the William Cooper Institute, an initiative spearheaded by Pro-Vice Chancellor (Indigenous). The Institute will be responsible for coordinating the implementation of the Monash Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Framework: 2019-2030 and will serve to enhance the profile and coordination of Monash's Indigenous activities and units, and be a focal point for external engagement.

The Board also received the report on the promotion outcomes for the 2018 academic promotion round and changes proposed for the 2019 process.

The Board continues to value the contribution of its cohort of student members, which forms the basis for much interesting discussion. During 2019, Academic Board accepted a variety of matters submitted by its student members including contributions to education policy, and peer to peer mentoring for committee members.

Academic Structure

During the reporting year, Academic Board considered and endorsed the establishment of significant academic organisational units for approval by the Vice-Chancellor:

- Monash Centre for Membrane Innovation within the Department of Chemical Engineering in the Faculty of Engineering, will further Monash's contribution to energy reduction and will address the sustainability of oil, food and water. The Monash Centre for Membrane Innovation will promote interdisciplinary collaboration, and strengthen global engagement in this space.
- Monash Data Futures (a University-wide Institute) is an interdisciplinary offering of AI (artificial intelligence) and data science that will bring people together across disciplines via cross-faculty collaboration in this space. The breadth of analysing data across disciplines at Monash is considerable, and the scale of Monash studies in AI has brought about new tools and technologies

to provide a distinctive offering.

- Monash Blockchain Technology Centre will bring together world-leading expertise from across the University to explore and develop the technology of blockchain, and create impact to different industrial and societal sectors.
- The Monash Gender and Family Violence Centre is uniquely positioned to be a world leader in research on gender and the prevention of family violence and have a major impact on the transformation of policy and practice.
- The Department of Psychiatry within Central Clinical School and for Monash Alfred Psychiatry Centre (MAPrc) to be renamed as such, to better reflect the core business and course offerings of the department to industry, partners and students.
- The Centre to Impact Antimicrobial Resistance (“Impact AMR”), aimed to forge solutions to achieve AMR minimisation and reversal - an important topic for Australia.
- The William Cooper Institute mentioned above.

At year’s end, Academic Board approved the creation of Departments in the Faculty of Information Technology. This was motivated by unprecedented growth in IT student numbers over the last 3-5 years.

Academic Standards and Quality

During the reporting year, Academic Board considered a range of significant developments relevant to its focus on academic standards and quality. Key examples are listed below:

- Monash has a comprehensive and cohesive approach to retention, and as such, Academic Board approved the Monash Student Retention Strategy. The Strategy brings together initiatives with three broad aims (1) better utilise data and predictive analytics to allow for timely and relevant interventions, (2) strengthen students’ sense of belonging, starting at orientation and continuing throughout their learning journey, and (3) better understand the discontinuation experience, including providing students with an alternative to discontinuing.
- The University is active in supporting students in the development of their English language skills and is determined to uphold quality consistent with regulatory principles. The Board will continue to track performance of initiatives and monitor student cohorts. For example the Board and its standing committees discussed in depth the performance of students from English pathway programs offered at Monash College.

Previous Annual Reports have referred to the range of mechanisms available to the Board to assist its oversight of academic quality at Monash. In 2019, Academic Board initiated a to improve the recording and interrogating of data from Faculty Discipline Panels together with written reports that would help to contextualise decisions made by faculties. The Board continued to receive annual summaries and analyses of appeals received by the Exclusion Appeals Panel and Faculty Academic Progress Committees and the annual Report of Student Grievances. These are important tools that assist the Board to understand the patterns in academic issues and in developing appropriate responsive interventions to these issues.

Academic Program Development and Review

Academic Board continued to focus on a more detailed appreciation of coursework proposals that come to the Board, notably Program Development and Review (Coursework Proposals for Approval), the Extension of Accreditation Period without Review, and amendments to Graduate Research Degrees. The Board considered proposals relating to coursework courses, including:

- The development and accreditation of the new Master of Indigenous Business Leadership; an innovative course designed to enable Indigenous business sector practitioners to build on their own leadership and business practises.
- The accreditation of a number of new courses including the Master of Strategic Communications Management, Global Master of Engineering, Master of Regulation and Compliance, Master of Legal Studies, Master of Laws, Master of Commerce, Master of Advanced Health Care Practice, Bachelor of Health Sciences (Honours).
- Approved the re-accreditation of a number of courses, such as the Master of Interpreting and

Translation Studies, Master of Management, Bachelor of Arts and Bachelor of Fine Art, Bachelor of Arts (Honours), Bachelor of Arts, Diploma of Liberal Arts, Master of Pharmacy, Bachelor of Pharmacy (Honours), Master of Educational Leadership, Master of Educational and Development Psychology and Master of TESOL.

- Approval of a number of amendments to existing courses, such as the Master of Professional Counselling (offered in Malaysia), Graduate Certificate of Family Violence Prevention, Graduate Diploma of Family Violence Prevention.

The Board also endorsed disestablishment of a small number of courses during the year. As noted in previous reports, the need to consider disestablishment may be prompted by a number of factors, including changes in student demand, as a result of a major course revision, or from a change to strategic positioning. Following completion of the sale of Monash South Africa in April 2019, the teach-out plan (to be completed by 2022), was brought to the Board. The Board requested regular monitoring and updates on progress of students during the teach-out period.

During 2019, Academic Board received the Monash Course Portfolio for the year, the pro Undergraduate and Graduate Coursework Courses, a snapshot of future undergraduate and graduate coursework courses (by faculty).

In the higher degrees by research (HDR) portfolio, Academic Board approved a range of proposals relating to HDR programs including:

- A number of Graduate Research Industry Partnerships (GRIP), such as the Human-in-the-Loop Analytics (HILA) an interdisciplinary collaboration between world experts and PhD students from Monash University. Projects will span data analysis, artificial intelligence, social informatics, psychology, human-computer interaction and data visualisation.
- A number of joint PhD proposals including the Faculty of Information and Technology – PhD Course (Monash Suzhou).
- Endorsed an amendment to the testamurs of the joint PhD program offered in conjunction with the Indian Institute of Technology Bombay, for approval by Monash University Council.

During 2019, Academic Board approved a pilot program of the Monash English Placement Test and an interview conducted by qualified Monash College staff as meeting the English language entry requirement of the English Degree Program, as a pathway for students to enter into the Doctor of Philosophy (Joint PhD with Southeast University), Southeast University / Monash University Joint Graduate School (JGS), Suzhou, China.

Legislation Policy Development and Review

In line with the University's Policy Framework, which sets measurable and aspirational goals of teaching and quality at the University, Academic Board approved a number of policies. A small sample includes:

- Scholarships and Prizes Policy
- Enrolment and Timetable Policy
- Learning and Teaching Policy,
- Student Academic Progress Policy
- Grading Scale Policy
- Copyright Compliance Policy

Academic Board also approved various amendments to the Academic Board Regulations. These include:

- Determination of final results in units of study – concerning who may change a student's final results; and the management of deferred final assessment in units of study.
- Exclusion for Unsatisfactory Progress or Inability to Progress - concerning requirements of an academic progress committee.