ACODE 68
BUSINESS AND NETWORKING
MEETING Minutes

2.30-5.30pm, Monday 29th June 2015

Auckland University of Technology

PART A: PRELIMINARY BUSINESS

1.0   Welcome from President – Helen Carter

The President welcomed attendees to the meeting and advised the meeting would be chaired by Stephen Marshall.

2.0   Attendance and apologies:

Attendees:

Auckland University of Technology	Mark Northover
Australian Catholic University	Veronica Hendriks
Charles Sturt University	Philip Uys (Executive Member)
Edith Cowan University	Mark McMahon
Federation University	Tulsa Andrews
Flinders University	Colin Carati
Flinders University	Nicola Parkin
Griffith University	Sheila McCarthy
Macquarie University	Helen Carter (President)
Manukau Institute of Technology	Greg Duff
University of Canberra	Jenny Millea
University of Melbourne	Deborah Jones
University of Southern Queensland	Michael Sankey (Executive Member)
University of Tasmania	Gerry Kregor
University of Waikato	Nigel Robertson (Executive Member)
University of Waikato	Stephen Harlow
University of Western Sydney	Carol Russell
Victoria University	Lisa Germany (Executive Member)
Victoria University Wellington	Stephen Marshall (Vice-President)

Apologies:

Karen Halley, Patrick Stoddart, Colin Lowe, Cathy Gunn, John Supple

3.0   Minutes of previous meeting

Moved – Michael Sankey   Seconded – Nigel Robertson

Noted that ACODE 70 will be held at Charles Sturt University.

4.0   Identification of unstarred items for discussion
Nil

5.0   Adoption of items not starred for discussion
Nil

6.0   Matters arising from previous Business & Networking Meeting
Nil

7.0   Executive Officers Report
Read by Stephen Marshall. LTLI 2015 – 27 registrations to date with more expected. The website is attracting a good audience, as has the Twitter feed. There continues to be a good response to the online discussion – members were asked to encourage people to engage with this. THETA 2015 was a successful conference and thanks go to Sheila McCarthy from Griffith University – the local rep on committees. Final figures have yet to be received from CAUDIT.
Moved that the report be accepted – Chair.

PART B: ITEMS FOR DISCUSSION

8.0   ACODE Executive Report
The President reported on her attendance at the ICDE forum in Paris which was sponsored by UNESCO. ACODE is affiliated with the ICDE (International Council for Distance Education) and this provided a great networking opportunity. The Asian Association of Open Universities is keen to liaise with ACODE (43 institutions); a Mongolian institution is keen to have support; and there is a new Turkey Distance Education Association wanting contact as well as an organisation from Israel. Approximately 150 organisations attended. The President re-established contact with Contact North (a Canadian society). We expect to begin to see some sharing of information, joint projects, etc.

The President has been approached by Pearson about setting up an innovative educator's award and shaping this for ACODE. This has not been resolved as the Executive has not yet met to discuss the proposition.

9.0   THETA update
Sheila McCarthy and Karen Halley were the ACODE representatives on the THETA Organising Committee. Sheila reported that the conference was a success with approximately 800 attendees. There were good keynotes and feedback was positive. A joint CAUDIT/ACODE/CAUL meeting was held during the conference (CAUDIT underwrites THETA). Out of that came a joint Digital Literacy project, which Nigel Robertson has been asked to represent ACODE. Nigel then reported that a document on this was currently being prepared and he hopes to report on this after a further meeting has been held.

Action: Nigel Robertson to provide a report on the joint CCA Digital Literacy Project at the next ACODE business and networking meeting

10.0 LTLI update

Michael Sankey reported that the Institute will be held 17-20 August. Registrations are currently at 30 from 21 universities and will be capped at 42. There will be seven groups of six participants going through an activity and advising on setting up learning spaces, and technological aspects involved – their vision for a new university. There is a good range of speakers and sponsors will be capped at 7.

11.0 Surveys (ICDE, Babson, other)

Stephen Marshall reported on negotiations with the producers of the Babson online learning survey in the US. This survey provides a helpful, high level view of technology issues affecting various organisations. There is a formal commitment from Ako Aotearoa to fund a New Zealand contribution to the project. ACODE is endeavouring to negotiate with OLT, however if support is not received other avenues will be explored. The cost is approximately US$50,000 for the survey (this is the starting point for negotiation).

ACODE has also been approached by ICDE who are proposing to undertake a survey of institutions use of online. As yet it is unclear who would be included, the questionnaire itself, and the reporting methodology. This is likely to be a free survey.

Stephen Marshall is looking at different ways of gathering information on a high level of technical issues across Australia and New Zealand. There was general agreement for enquiring about support (24/7) for students as well as staff. Sheila McCarthy suggested memberships could be added to the survey. Carol Russell suggested asking what devices students are using.

12.0 ACODE Learning Spaces Project

Lisa Germany provided an update on this project - the basis of the site has been formed. There should be a relevant page for each university and Lisa asked for everyone to send a link to the relevant pages on their websites and if you have a particular university contact please send details to Lisa. There will be more blog posts about building projects or refurbishment that universities have undertaken, etc. These will include design context and evaluation and will be mostly pictorial. Contributions are invited and feedback requested. The intent is to embed this within the ACODE website. Michael Sankey advised the page would be public.

Action: ALL – check site listed for your university and send updates to Lisa; send Lisa the name of the appropriate representative at your institution to talk to about possible content for the site; send Lisa other useful sites or other resources you are aware of and that would make good additions to the site.

Action: Michael to embed the current edublogs site within the ACODE website and make publicly available.

13.0   Liaison with other Organisations

Helen Carter advised that she and the CADAD President (Ian Solomonides) had met with Gary Williams who has drafted a set of recommendations, including a model of working together.

Helen Carter advised that she had raised the issue of software licencing with CAUDIT following the issue with Mindink. She also took the opportunity to ask about Lynda.com. CAUDIT has been unable to negotiate a site licence with Lynda.com. A number of institutions do have subscriptions on an individual basis. Mark Northover advised that Lynda.com has recently been purchased by LinkedIn.

14.0   Benchmarking 2016

Michael Sankey advised the next round will occur in June/July 2016. Members were asked to consider which particular benchmarks they would like to be involved in. Twenty-four institutions were involved in the last benchmarking process. Carol Russell has received funding to travel (hopefully in February/March 2016) and work with institutions to assist in choosing their benchmarks. The intention is to create a resource for others to assist with this decision making, using benchmarks to link to institutional priorities. There are eight benchmarks but it is possible to do four in 2016 and the remaining four in the next round.   Carol intends to start with a document analysis to look at strategic documents at the various institutions to check priorities and context. An indication of interest was requested and suggestions on the process for contacting people. The President suggested some meetings could be scheduled around the ACODE meeting to be held in Melbourne in March. There was a caution about confidentiality agreements and the need for an ethics application. Michael Sankey hopes to send an email towards the end of the year asking for early indications of who would like to be involved.

Action: Michael Sankey to send out an expressios of interest by the end of October

ACODE is looking for an institution to host the benchmarking in June/July 2016. This may be "the workshop" for that meeting. Members will be updated with proposals to maximise attendance.

15.0   Fee Increase 2016

Nigel Robertson advised that as agreed at the 2013 AGM there will be an annual increase of fees by $250 – making the new ACODE subscription cost $3,250. This will apply to fees for 2016.

There was discussion about the benefits of membership. Travel is an additional expense as members find the face-to-face meetings are beneficial. Staffing is the greatest overhead. Stephen Marshall commented that added value next year will be in participating in the benchmarking activity.

ACODE have been increasingly trying to include online activities around the meetings in future. The Executive are happy to have feedback from members about things that are particularly challenging for organisations where it would be helpful to have peer engagement such as addressing particular changing environments.

16.0   Hot Topics
- *Supporting Academic Integrity – Nigel Robertson:*
  Trying to think how we support students to be good academic learners without using the language of discipline and punishment. What resources do other institutions have?
  - The University of Auckland has an online module which all students are required to complete.
  - York University has something similar – through Epigeum. This module is being redeveloped.
  - The University of Canberra have implemented the Epigeum product. They are using educational designers to help teaching staff think more about authentic assessment which cannot be replicated. Students who do the Epigeum module receive a digital badge that is recorded. They are looking at doing something similar for research integrity. Trying to take an educative, proactive role with students from the beginning.
  - Flinders University use Turnitin. A consortium of Australasian universities is talking to Turnitin to develop a security contract.
  - Colin Carati would like to see a discussion through ACODE about academic integrity.
  - The Victoria University of Wellington Law School is exerting pressure regarding the use of digital devices in exams.
  - The University of Wollongong has a compulsory module.
  - At Edith Cowan University the responsibility is with the Head of School. Academic staff are calling for guidance and there are some inconsistencies across schools.
  - There may be an opportunity for ACODE to draft a statement about a recognised approach that could be taken.
  - The issue is there is a reluctance to do anything new in terms of assessment.
  - The Chairs of Academic Boards meet in November. A best practice document is needed before that meeting.

  Action. Michael Sankey will set up a wiki page for discussion.
  Action. ACODE notes this as a potential meeting topic for 2016.

- *Minimum online standards – Lisa Germany*
  VU has drafted some minimum online standards which will go out for consultation soon, then roll out in semester one. How have they worked for you?
    - The University of Western Sydney has had minimum online standards for some time and in the last couple of years has developed advanced standards. These are embedded in some of the training. They have a booklet and occasionally do an audit of a sample of courses.
    - The University of Queensland has a 5 percent audit each year. There is a set of standards and procedures. Responses are given to students within 48 hours.
    - Edith Cowan University has minimum standards. Most of their courses are blended. They now have students expecting lectures to be recorded which is raising issues around the technical infrastructure needed to support this.
    - Federation University has just released their BOLD initiative (Blended Online and Digital learning) with minimum standards. There are issues with IT support, eg recording lectures. They are redeveloping courses – some are blended, some fully off-campus and online.
    - University of Tasmania has a blended learning model which specifies that all content should be available online, the majority of communication online, and assessments should be submitted online. Academics should justify why they are bringing students onto the campus. Every unit has to have some online learning by 2020.
    - Manukau Institute of Technology have historically had course descriptors in Blackboard. Technology is not always supported. They are looking at redeveloping courses which will include some minimum standards and a potential change of LMS.
    - University of Wollongong introduced a digital learning threshold about 18 months ago and set out minimum standards to be implemented over a two year period. All course outlines have to be on a Moodle site and they are moving to having online assessment submission and feedback. They also have a series of advanced standards (good practice) – not mandated, but encouraged.
    - Marking methodology is often the problem.
    - Students complain about not getting enough feedback – with online marking you give more feedback and this is a good driver.
    - Flinders University undertook a survey which found academics said marking was faster.
    - University of Southern Queensland has four levels – policy, procedure, good practice guidelines using Blackboard Collaborate etc and they are backed up by good practice examples.
    - Macquarie University has no minimum online standards. Each of the faculties has moved forward in different ways. Staff have received considerable support and have good examples and templates.
    - Victoria University of Wellington has no minimum standards. They are trying to encourage all academics to have a course on the LMS. Linking to other initiatives

- automating transfer of basic information about courses into a standard template.
- University of Melbourne has produced a booklet with academic rationale suggesting good practice and built a framework with consultation which was well received. They are finding people want common modules that are built around academic skills to attach to courses.
- University of Waikato does not have university wide standards. Some faculties have mandated online submission.
- AUT introduced a minimum threshold about seven years ago in response to increasing use of Blackboard as the course delivery system. There is an automated creation of course shell, then a course descriptor, assessment schedule and documents that are managed internally within the faculties. The University has just implemented a data warehousing system and the intention is to be able to measure student activity and engagement with aggregated data. This is in response to a management request for measurement.
- Griffith University in 2008 released minimum presence guidelines to accompany a strategic blended learning strategy. There is also a strategy for analytics.
- Charles Sturt University has an overall standard about online presence for all subjects. Certain faculties have very stringent standards about what must be included. The default is now that all assessments are submitted online and all marking is done online. Some faculties have specific templates. There is debate about innovation versus prescription. The site must be ready two weeks before the session; assignments must be marked within 15 working days. They have developed a marking tool and recommended apps people can use. There are useful analytics.
- Australian Catholic University recently started a project with stakeholders from all faculties. Many academics are asking for guidelines about using video. They are looking at bringing together policy areas, plagiarism software, lecture capture, and guidelines on how to use these.
- Flinders University has had a minimum presence for about 10 years and gradually added to that. Their strategy is to test processes in one school prior to a university-wide roll-out. They are also looking at Web 3.0 with minimum standards for every topic. They are looking at the broader issue of how to store critical topic information, putting in a database as a single source of truth with a greater capacity to provide a more reliable online environment.

*PART C: ITEMS FOR NOTING

17.0   Future workshops and meetings
- Flinders University City Campus, 5-6 November 2015.
  Convenor – Grette Wilkinson. Executive Contact – Lisa Germany
- Charles Sturt University – Orange Campus, 17-18 March 2016.   Convenor – Philip Uys.