THE AUSTRALIAN NATIONAL UNIVERSITY

THE GRADUATE SCHOOL

Review Of Graduate Coursework: A Report To The Graduate School Of The Australian National University

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A Report to the Graduate School of The Australian National University

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Table of Contents

1 Introduction

2 Graduate Coursework at the ANU
   2.1 Development of Graduate Coursework at the ANU
   2.2 Funding Arrangements
      2.2.1 Domestic Students
      2.2.2 International Students
   2.3 Rationale for Graduate Coursework
   2.4 Capacities of the ANU for Graduate Coursework

3 Coursework Degrees, Diplomas and Other Awards
   3.1 Master Degrees
      3.1.1 Nomenclature
      3.1.2 Admission and Course Length
   3.2 Master of Letters
   3.3 Graduate Diplomas
      3.3.1 Nomenclature
      3.3.2 Undergraduate Content
   3.4 Graduate Certificates
   3.5 Non-Award Graduate Enrolments
   3.6 Short Courses

4 Good Practice in Graduate Courses
   4.1 Faculty of Law
   4.2 Master of Arts (International Relations)
   4.3 International Students

5 New Initiatives

6 Central Administration and Co-ordination
   6.1 Administration
   6.2 Co-ordination
1 Introduction

In response to a proposal from the Dean of the Graduate School the Vice-Chancellor in June 1996 provided an allocation from the University's Strategic Initiatives Fund for a Review of Graduate Coursework Degrees. In September the Dean proposed the following terms of reference:

1. To identify examples of good practice.
2. To determine the extent of undergraduate content in such awards, and to assess the desirability or otherwise of such content.
3. To report on the extent to which graduate coursework is targeted to particular professional groups.
4. To recommend areas in which the ANU should develop new courses, particularly having regard to the implications of the recent federal budget.
5. To consider how the ANU's offerings might be rationalised, eg by reducing the proliferation of named awards.
6. To consider ways in which the ANU’s graduate coursework offerings might be made more attractive to international students.

The Graduate Degrees Committee, at its meeting of 5 December 1996, referred to the Review an additional term of reference:

1. To examine explicitly the relationship of graduate diplomas to honours degrees and to the possible introduction of professional Master degrees as outlined in Professor Poole's memorandum of 25 November 1996 on re-naming of graduate diplomas.

The Review was conducted from February through May 1997 and additional information was gathered in July and August during the preparation of this report. Apart from documentation on graduate coursework degrees at the ANU, most data were obtained through interviews with Deans and Directors, members of the Graduate Degrees Committee, Graduate Program Convenors, administrative staff in Faculties, Centres and central administration, and especially with those responsible for organising and teaching graduate coursework. Informal meetings were held with groups of students from various courses, and student impressions were also sought through the Dean of Students and the Study Skills Centre. Data on comparator universities, especially others in the Group of Eight, were obtained through handbooks, websites and telephone interviews with deans of graduate studies or their equivalents.

The terms of reference were interpreted broadly, as interviews revealed a number of significant issues which had not been specifically assigned. Although there was no scope for market research in the present study, assessment of prospective demand for present and new courses was obtained from teaching areas. Since the University's arrangements for student recruitment are currently under review, these are not considered in the present study.

After surveying the historical development of graduate coursework at the University, the report examines the complex funding arrangements which determine the shape of graduate courses more heavily than they do undergraduate studies and higher research degrees. The rationale for graduate coursework within the University and its capacities and limitations for mounting graduate courses are briefly appraised.

Each of the graduate coursework degrees and awards is outlined in terms of the issues raised by each, and recommendations are made on current rules and their operation. Two coursework programs from among the most successful in the University are reviewed for examples of good practice, and some lessons from the experience of coursework designed for international students are drawn. Finally directions for potential new initiatives in graduate coursework are outlined and reforms in central administration and co-ordination are addressed.

2 Graduate Coursework at the ANU

The Australian National University has its origins in a research institute offering the degree of Doctor of Philosophy and in a college providing under-graduate education in non-professional disciplines and Law. This has meant that graduate coursework has developed only in the interstices between these central concerns. The legitimacy and academic respectability of teaching courses within the Institute of Advanced Studies have often been challenged, while the development of graduate coursework within the Faculties has in many instances been ad hoc and given limited acknowledgment. Annual reports of each faculty and department provide detailed statistics on undergraduate student enrolments and note PhD and MA theses under way or completed, but seldom mention the existence of graduate coursework degrees and diplomas.
Despite this, the number of graduate coursework enrolments at the University has risen steadily since the mid-1970s, and particularly over the past decade. This reflects a national trend in which coursework Master programs have been the most rapidly growing category of courses in Australia. In the decade 1987-1996, while undergraduate enrolments grew by 80% and those of graduate research students by 131%, coursework Master enrolments grew by 238% from a small base and other graduate coursework enrolments by 50%.

Though the factors influencing this growth have not been the subject of any detailed study, they are clearly a complex mix of market forces and social trends, including the influence of mass undergraduate education, the knowledge and skills required to adapt to social and technological change, the growth in specialised professional career positions, and, not least, increasingly competitive labour markets. (Craig McInnis et al, The Masters Degree by Coursework, DEET 1995: 3)

Given the predicted decline in numbers of undergraduate students at the ANU, and only modest growth in graduate research scholarships, fee-paying graduate coursework is forecast as the only likely area of significant further growth in the University's enrolments.

On the basis of 1996 statistics ANU's profile of enrolments is not significantly out of line with that of other Group of Eight universities. While research students constituted 12% of ANU's enrolment, in most other GO8 universities they were between 9 and 10.7%. ANU coursework degree postgraduates (Master students) were low at 4.3%; apart from the Sydney universities (which offer a Master (Pass) degree instead of a Graduate Diploma), other GO8 ranged from 4.5% to 6.2%. The ANU's other postgraduate coursework students (Graduate Diploma and Graduate Certificate) at 7.2% were average among GO8 universities, as were its undergraduates at 74.8% of total enrolment.

### Table 1: ANU Enrolments by Degree and Award, 31 March 1997

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Enrolment</th>
<th>Full-time</th>
<th>Part-time</th>
<th>Full Fee Internal</th>
<th>Other</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>PhD</td>
<td>911</td>
<td>207</td>
<td>272</td>
<td>846</td>
<td>1118</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Master Research</td>
<td>48</td>
<td>44</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>78</td>
<td>92</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Master C/work</td>
<td>172</td>
<td>259</td>
<td>112</td>
<td>319</td>
<td>431</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grad Diploma</td>
<td>250</td>
<td>366</td>
<td>108</td>
<td>508</td>
<td>616</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grad Certificate</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cross Institution</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Non-award</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>51</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>65</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>47</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>48</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>48</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total postgrad</strong></td>
<td><strong>1454</strong></td>
<td><strong>926</strong></td>
<td><strong>607</strong></td>
<td><strong>1773</strong></td>
<td><strong>2380</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Undergrad</td>
<td>5654</td>
<td>1902</td>
<td>364</td>
<td>7192</td>
<td>7556</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total ANU</strong></td>
<td><strong>7108</strong></td>
<td><strong>2828</strong></td>
<td><strong>971</strong></td>
<td><strong>8965</strong></td>
<td><strong>9936</strong></td>
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</table>
Table 2: ANU Graduate Coursework Enrolments, 31 March 1997

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Discipline</th>
<th>Master (coursework)</th>
<th>Grad Dip</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Faculties</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Arts</td>
<td>14 MA + 33 MLitt</td>
<td>49</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Applied Linguistics</td>
<td>not offered</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Australian Studies</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Middle East &amp; CAsian</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Public Policy</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>42</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Asian Studies</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>41</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Economics &amp; Commerce</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Commerce</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Economics</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Statistics</td>
<td>not offered</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Law</td>
<td>48</td>
<td>36</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Legal Studies</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>70</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Legal Practice</td>
<td>not offered</td>
<td>96</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Science</td>
<td>1 (Regolith Studies)</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Clinical Psychology</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>not offered</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Forestry</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>not offered</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Resource &amp; Envir</td>
<td>1 (Envir Science)</td>
<td>17 (R&amp;E Mgt)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Scientific Communctn</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Institute of the Arts</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Electronic Arts</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Music</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Visual Art</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Institute of Advanced Studies</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>National Centre for Development Studies</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Development Admin</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Economics of Dev</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Envir Mgt and Dev</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Demography</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Business Admin.</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>not offered</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>International Relations</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Strategic Studies*</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>NCEPH</strong></td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Applied Epidemiology</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>not offered</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Population Health</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>431</strong></td>
<td><strong>616</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* not offered after 1997
2.1 The Development of Graduate Coursework at the ANU

A few years after the amalgamation of the University and Canberra University College, proposals for the development in the faculties of post-graduate teaching and research beyond the Master-by-research was a contentious issue between the two components of the ANU. During the first decade after amalgamation, staff in the faculties were able to supervise doctoral students enrolled in the Research Schools, while all post-graduate matters were dealt with by a Committee on Degrees under the Board of the Institute. Amendment of the ANU Act in 1971 enabled the faculties to offer the PhD and at that time a Graduate Degrees Committee was established as a joint committee of the two Boards.

The earliest graduate coursework was offered within the social sciences and Psychology in the faculties and was open to students with a Pass degree. In Sociology, before undergraduate units became available, a coursework MA was offered from 1964 to 1971, while Political Science from 1966 through 1968 announced its intention to replace the MA by research with a year of coursework and a sub-thesis, but in practice enrolled no students and reverted to the MA by research. From 1968 Psychology offered a two-year Master program incorporating a year of Honours coursework, and during the 1970s several departments in the Faculty of Arts began to offer the MA by coursework and thesis.

In 1969 Bob Gregory was appointed in Economics RSSS, with responsibility for developing graduate coursework, adapting the US model. This coursework, open to PhD students from all the Economics departments, was at first taught jointly by staff from the Research Schools and the Faculty of Economics, and then exclusively from the Faculty. A Diploma, as alternative to the Honours year, was offered from 1970 and a coursework Master of Economics from 1974, informally part of the PhD course until it became a formal progress requirement in 1986.

Apart from these early variations to the conventional Honours degree and Master by research, two kinds of graduate coursework programs developed from the mid-1970s. The first were “intermediate awards” which grew up within faculties as alternatives to the standard Honours qualification for admission to research degrees; these were almost invariably based on existing undergraduate and Honours coursework. The second were courses of professional training at both Graduate Diploma and Master level, organised primarily around dedicated coursework.

Until the late 1970s, though faculties varied in the level of Honours required for admission to Master candidacy, the sole alternative was a Master (Qualifying) program whose content (usually including coursework and sub-thesis components of the Honours program) was determined by each department and which carried no University award. The Diploma in Economics was the first variation to this arrangement, and in 1978 the Faculty of Arts, rejecting the title of Diploma as vocationally oriented, adopted an 18-month Bachelor of Letters degree, modelled on that offered at the University of New England. This required one year of coursework and a semester's sub-thesis, and served several purposes in addition to that of providing qualification for admission to a research degree.

The first review of graduate education in the University, chaired by Professor Wang Gungwu, reported in 1978. Among other recommendations the review sought standard rules for a one-year Graduate Diploma as the intermediate award throughout the University, but when such rules were developed by a new Intermediate Awards Committee they were judged by the faculties to be premature. Economics continued with a coursework Graduate Diploma and Science established a flexible Graduate Diploma based on its previous Master Qualifying arrangements, but Arts and Asian Studies chose to maintain the Bachelor of Letters. For a few years the LittB attracted sufficient numbers of students for some departments to offer dedicated units separate from Honours, but most incorporated their LittB students into existing undergraduate and Honours units. In 1990 the Faculty of Arts replaced the LitTB with a Graduate Diploma and Master of Letters, the first requiring one year of coursework, the second a year or more of coursework (or the Graduate Diploma) and a sub-thesis. Asian Studies adopted these arrangements in 1992 but had abandoned the MLitt by the end of 1994.

Meanwhile professionally oriented graduate coursework had begun to develop, often in response to external demand. The Legal Workshop, established by the Faculty of Law in 1971, established a novel alternative to taking articles for professional entry. A Master-by-coursework degree in Forestry Management was introduced in 1973 and the Faculty of Economics established a Master in Administrative Studies for public servants (1975-80, later reconceived as the Public Policy Program). At the request of the Department of Foreign Affairs the Faculty of Law launched a Graduate Diploma and Master of International Law in 1979; this was the first integrated Diploma/Master course in the University, with provision for transfer to the higher degree on completion of coursework offered to students enrolled for both awards.

The Research Schools were reluctant to become involved in teaching programs. When a Master in Agricultural Development Economics was established for overseas students by staff of the Research School of Pacific Studies in 1972, it was located nominally in the Faculty of Economics. In 1975 it was transferred to the new Development Studies Centre (the future National Centre for Development Studies).
within RSPacS, where it was joined a year later by a Master of Arts in Demography, both supported in part by Australian overseas aid funds. In 1975 the Department of International Relations in RSPacS, with no undergraduate education available in its field, established a Master of Arts (International Relations), and this soon attracted Ford Foundation and other external support for overseas students. For a few years in the late 1970s the Centre for Resource and Environmental Studies also offered a Master by coursework.

During the 1980s there was a proliferation of Graduate Diploma and coursework Master degrees, particularly in the Faculties of Economics and Law and the National Centre for Development Studies, but also in Clinical Psychology, Applied Linguistics, Public Policy, Strategic Studies and Asian Studies, the last an exceptional joint coursework enterprise on the part of a Faculty and a Research School. While most graduate coursework degrees were introduced as a result of local initiatives within existing departments or centres, exceptions were the Public Policy Program (1984) and the Business Administration in Asia course (1994), both established after lengthy negotiation with substantial input from Chancery.

From 1990 the pace of proliferation quickened, with the addition, among others, of new programs in Middle Eastern and Central Asian Studies, Scientific Communication, Population Health, Applied Epidemiology, and Resource and Environmental Management, as well as additional programs within Arts, Science, Law, Economics and Development Studies and graduate coursework in the Institute of the Arts. While government department subsidies had for some years supported courses in the National Centre for Development Studies, Strategic Studies and NCEPH, a new species of government-commissioned graduate coursework was offered as in-service education through the Graduate Diploma in Foreign Affairs and Trade (1990-1994), the Graduate Certificate in Language Teaching (1992-1995) and the Master in Public Health (1998- ).

Despite the prevalence of local initiatives, some measure of co-ordination and quality control was maintained through the Graduate Degrees Committee and an Intermediate Awards Committee, established in 1979 to ensure uniform standards among the growing array of diplomas offered in both the Faculties and the Institute. The Graduate Students Section, within the Registrar's (later Academic Registrar's) office monitored compliance with rules and standards, while detailed administration of graduate coursework degrees was carried out there and within the offices of Prescribed Authorities in the Faculties, Research Schools and Centres.

At the establishment of the Graduate School in 1990 it was initially uncertain whether intermediate awards, primarily Graduate Diplomas, would be brought within its purview. Largely at the insistence of graduate coursework students they were incorporated within the Graduate Programs created within the Graduate School. The work of the Intermediate Awards Committee was absorbed by the Graduate Degrees Committee, with the Dean of the Graduate School as its chair. Since then at least half of the work of the GDC has been devoted to coursework and coursework-and-research degrees.

In the late 1980s, after the establishment of the Unified National System, there was a further proliferation of graduate coursework degrees and a very substantial increase in enrolment throughout Australian universities. In response to concern about the maintenance of standards, the Higher Education Council undertook a major review of Higher Education Courses and Graduate Studies in Australia. Its report produced guidance to universities, and particularly a recommendation that the degree of Master be awarded only on the basis of a minimum of five years of tertiary education, with at least one year for a Master course.

In 1990 a working party of the Graduate Degrees Committee was established to examine the nomenclature and structure of intermediate awards and graduate degrees, and it undertook the first thorough review of graduate coursework throughout the ANU. At the same time the Graduate School Handbook brought together for the first time all graduate course rules and offerings. Following recommendations of the GDC the Boards of The Faculties and of the Institute agreed in mid-1992 on course lengths for Graduate Diplomas and Master degrees within the HEC guidelines, on a uniform grading system, and on a requirement (re-enforced by DEETYA guidelines) that no more than one-third of a graduate course be composed of undergraduate units.

Following on this a GDC working party on entry standards and course length for graduate coursework was established late in 1992 and drew up norms for each graduate degree. All coursework degrees were found to conform with these norms, with the exception of the Master of Letters. The working party met seven times, but its report has been stalled for four years while awaiting a response from the Faculty of Arts.

2.2 Funding Arrangements
Government regulations have had a shaping effect on graduate coursework, by making some courses more viable and some students more lucrative than others. They have also shaped University accounting practices: the internal financial monitoring of dedicated programs was initially driven by the stipulation that no recurrent funds be used to subsidise international students. No planning of future graduate coursework programs can be undertaken without an understanding of the complex funding arrangements which now bear upon them.

Table 3: Enrolments by fee status at 31 March 1997

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Funding</th>
<th>Master cwork</th>
<th>Grad Dip</th>
<th>Grad Cert</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Grad Tuition Fee</td>
<td>163</td>
<td>357</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>528</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HECS liable</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>150</td>
<td></td>
<td>153</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HECS exempt</td>
<td>153</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>153</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total Domestic</strong></td>
<td><strong>319</strong></td>
<td><strong>407</strong></td>
<td><strong>8</strong></td>
<td><strong>834</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FFP</td>
<td>61</td>
<td>58</td>
<td></td>
<td>119</td>
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<tr>
<td>FFP Sponsored</td>
<td>51</td>
<td>50</td>
<td></td>
<td>101</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total Internatl</strong></td>
<td><strong>102</strong></td>
<td><strong>108</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td><strong>220</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>431</strong></td>
<td><strong>616</strong></td>
<td><strong>8</strong></td>
<td><strong>1055</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

2.2.1 Domestic Students

From the abolition of tuition fees in 1973 government funding for higher education complemented the Commonwealth government stipendiary scholarships for graduate research degrees for Australian citizens and permanent residents. Under the Dawkins reforms the Higher Education Contribution Scheme (HECS) was introduced in 1989 and applied, with a few exceptions, to all domestic students not paying full fees or holding government-funded scholarships; "domestic" students for this purpose includes all Australian and New Zealand citizens and permanent residents of Australia (but not of New Zealand). At the same time universities were permitted to charge their own fees for those postgraduate courses designed as professional upgrading or as extension of employment. Permission for fees was broadened in 1993 to all graduate courses, with a few exceptions not relevant to the ANU. In common with other universities the ANU adopted a Graduate Tuition Fee (GTF), which it applied initially only to part-time students, most of whom were presumed to be in employment.

In 1994 the University's decision to set an annual fee of $5000 for the Graduate Diploma in Legal Practice, and to move progressively towards full cost recovery, raised substantial student protest. Other coursework courses which, before 1997, were offered on a HECS-liable basis for full-time students, will continue on that basis unless otherwise approved by Council. The fee-liability status of full-time students in new courses is determined by the Finance Committee of Council.

The University's current policy on Graduate Tuition Fees is that

1. Postgraduate non-overseas research students are not charged GTF.
2. Part-time non-overseas postgraduate coursework students are charged GTF. [An exception is made for ITA students].
3. Full-time students on certain courses which meet professional, vocational or qualification upgrading needs of students with the capacity to pay fees, and where there is an identifiable market for the course, are charged GTF. The University is at present reviewing a number of its generic postgraduate courses with a view to establishing which should be phased out and which could be replaced with targeted GTF-based courses.
4. Access and equity provisions are in place for both full and part-time GTF-liable graduate students. [In practice, those part-time students who hold government-funded pensions and allowances can claim exemption from GTF and undertake their course on a HECS-liable basis.]

Graduate Tuition Fees are charged for all graduate coursework offered within the Institute of Advanced Studies and the Faculty of Law. Most GTF-liable courses are set for 1998 at $4000 per EFTSU (the fee for most of these courses since 1994), which is also the fee charged to all part-time students in HECS-liable courses and to most non-award graduate students. The main variations are the fees for the Master in Business Administration, set at $25,000 for three semesters, the Graduate Diploma in Legal Practice, set at $6,925, and the graduate Law courses, set at $450 per point. According to one University planning projection, the average GTF per EFTSU would need to be $6000 for 1999 and 2000 to meet the University's fee income targets for those years, though some fees would presumably be no higher than HECS. For full-time students on GTF-liable courses the University provides access to a bank-operated loan scheme.

For 1998 graduate coursework courses in The Faculties, other than those in the Faculty of Law, have retained HECS liability for full-time domestic students. HECS charges for students enrolled before 1997
are set by DEETYA at $2478 per EFTSU: for those beginning courses in 1997 HECS charges per EFTSU are $3300 for Humanities, Social Sciences and Visual and Performing Arts, $4700 for Sciences, Engineering, Economics and Commerce, and $5500 for Law. Contribution levels are reviewed each year. Whereas GTF must be paid on enrolment, HECS payment may be deferred.

Certain courses are exempted from HECS under government guidelines. These include all courses for which fees are charged, as well as sponsored courses in which all student places are covered by externally funded scholarships: at the ANU the Master of Applied Epidemiology, Master of Public Health and Graduate Diploma in Scientific Communication. Australian Postgraduate Awards (APA) without stipend, which are effectively HECS exemptions, are allocated to universities on the basis of a complex formula based on research student numbers, course completions and the research quantum. Under government guidelines APAs without stipend are provided to all students who receive Australian Postgraduate Awards with stipend, and other higher degree research students are given priority. If there are sufficient exemptions allocated to the University, it may also award them to students enrolled in HECS-liable Master-by-coursework degrees. Under a University Council decision at the time the Institute of the Arts was amalgamated with the University, its graduate students are also exempt from HECS and fees. Master-by-coursework students are eligible for ANU Master scholarships awarded by the Faculties, and these have carried exemption from fees and HECS.

Whereas in previous years the ANU’s allocation of HECS exemptions was insufficient to cover all research students, in 1997 a substantial increase to 1074 EFTSU enabled the ANU to award exemptions to almost all of the 836.8 research EFTSU and 132.3 coursework Master EFTSU who were eligible. Although the ANU’s allocation is projected to remain at the current level, an increase in numbers of higher degree research students is predicted to absorb all of them by 1999; hence coursework Master students are seen as unlikely to continue to receive HECS exemptions.

There is currently no procedure in place for determining priorities in the allocation of HECS exemptions, beyond the government guidelines requiring research scholars to take precedence over coursework degree students. If the University receives a sufficient number of exemptions to cover some coursework students, or decides to award exemptions beyond its allocation by carrying the cost, some form of determination needs to be specified. Since all other forms of subsidy are becoming matters of open debate within the University, it would appear that this should also be publicly determined.

Recommendation 1: That a transparent procedure for determining the internal allocation of HECS exemptions (APA scholarships without stipend) be established and referred for comment to the Graduate Degrees Committee.

Full-time Graduate Diploma and Graduate Certificate students in HECS-liable courses are currently eligible, together with undergraduates, for Commonwealth government study allowances (Austudy). Without Austudy some Graduate Diploma programs are thought to be non-viable.

Current arrangements for University funding provide a Commonwealth operating grant with targets for total student load and minimum undergraduate load expressed in EFTSUs. The University has over-enrolled for several years, with no corresponding increase in government funding. The University’s Strategic Plan for 1995-2004 sets the objective of increasing the percentage of post-graduate students from 23% to 30% by 2004. Reductions in the government-funded undergraduate load and total student load have led the University to propose in its Educational Profile for the 1996-98 Triennium (30 June 1997) a further reduction in its undergraduate load in order to maintain funding for graduate places.

By 1999 the University’s projected higher degree research student EFTSU would be higher than the difference of 915 EFTSU between its funded total load and its funded undergraduate load. This implies the elimination of all HECS-liable postgraduate courses or their conversion to fee-paying courses; the alternative is that the University carry the full cost of these courses without recompense. As a result the Resources Committee has decided that the Faculties, where almost all HECS-liable courses are based, will receive no funding by 1999 for HECS-liable graduate places. However, according to the Profile, “there is an on-going need to retain about 100 places [cf current 303 enrolments] at the postgraduate coursework level for allocation on equity criteria and to preserve specific courses having significant educational value which would not survive on a fee-paying basis.” This is subject to further negotiation with DEETYA.

2.2.2 International Students

International students began in 1980 to be assessed an Overseas Student Charge, paid to the government and initially set at 20-30% of full course cost. In 1988 the government announced that international students would pay full fees to universities and that no Commonwealth funding could be used to subsidise international students. All fee income is attributable directly to the universities, which are encouraged to play an entrepreneurial role.
Each April the University sets International Student Fees (ISF) for the following year. For 1998, annual fees for graduate courses at the ANU range from $12,500 to $17,000, with the exception of the Graduate Diploma of Scientific Communication, set at $20,500, and the Master courses in Business Administration and Public Policy, set at $25,000 for three semesters. The average ISF in 1996 was $12783 per EFTSU. Under some projections, in order to meet fee income targets set in the University budget, the average ISF per EFTSU would need to be set at $14500 in 1999 and $16000 in 2000.

International students exempt from paying full fees include those sponsored under a foreign aid program and those holding Commonwealth government scholarships. Most international students enrolled in the dedicated graduate coursework programs are sponsored by their governments or employers or by foreign aid funding.

2.3 Rationale for graduate coursework

It is evident from the history and current range of graduate coursework at the ANU that it serves a wide variety of purposes.

Preparation for a research degree. First-class Honours or a research Master degree has become an almost essential qualification for the award of a PhD scholarship. There is, however, increasing evidence within the University that further coursework preparation is considered desirable both as background for the doctoral thesis and as complement to the thesis in ensuring breadth of knowledge in a discipline.

Discussion of coursework within the PhD has been stymied in recent years by the reduction of scholarship support from four to three years (with possible extension to 3.5 years); three years is seen in many disciplines as inadequate for thesis preparation alone. Nonetheless Economics and Clinical Psychology require a year of coursework within the PhD. Clinical Psychology doctoral students usually enrol in the first year of the Master course and transfer for their second year of coursework to the PhD, thus undertaking a four-year program. In Economics, those PhD students who have not already completed the one-year coursework MEc at the ANU must fulfil its requirements during their first doctoral year. Other disciplines have considered requiring coursework within their PhD programs -- particularly Demography and Astronomy, which have no undergraduate degrees on which to build -- but have left it as a recommended option or require attendance at a series of lectures and seminars.

Several disciplines currently offer a Master-by-coursework of one year suitable for incorporation into a PhD course. Most Master programs involving coursework are conceived as appropriate preparation for a research degree and a substantial number of recent and current PhD students have been recruited on the basis of Master coursework or a Graduate Diploma at the University. Seven students who completed ANU Graduate Diplomas in 1996 and nine who completed coursework Master degrees were admitted to PhD candidacy in 1997 in 10 Graduate Programs; this does not include students who completed similar coursework elsewhere or in previous years.

For international students with no coursework background in Western universities, coursework can provide an essential basis for orientation to the academic culture of an Australian university. PhD scholarships funded by Australian international aid frequently provide for bridging courses prior to PhD enrolment.

Professional advancement. The initial orientation of the ANU towards research and a liberal education in science, the humanities and social science has been increasingly complemented by professional training. The Faculty of Law and Department of Forestry were the only early professionally focused units, but the addition of Clinical Psychology, Commerce and Engineering within the Faculties and of dedicated graduate coursework in the NCDS, Public Policy Program, MBA and NCEPH shifted the balance. This reflects a response by the University and its components to increasing specialisation and labour market competition in Australian society.

Only Clinical Psychology and the Legal Workshop offer specific professional qualification through graduate coursework, but other programs reflect changing and informal pressures within professions to upgrade qualifications and update knowledge. Graduate coursework for these purposes is likely to provide the greatest scope for growth in fee-paying enrolments.

Intellectual needs. The argument is advanced from within the Faculties that graduate coursework is an essential component of the intellectual enterprise of a university, enhancing the intellectual life of a teaching and research department. This argument assumes that graduate coursework is of a nature different from that of undergraduate teaching and research supervision, involving a higher level of critical debate and the exploration of new concerns. The new graduate coursework programs in Australian Studies and Scientific Communication are representative of these, and may continue the tradition in...
which Sociology, International Relations and Environmental Studies were explored through graduate coursework before being incorporated into the undergraduate curriculum.

**Financial pressures.** The combination of decreased government funding and authorisation to raise funds through fees has made graduate coursework an increasingly attractive option for the ANU, with its restricted undergraduate catchment and uncertain prospects for growth in research scholarships.

### 2.4 Capacities of the ANU for graduate coursework

Among the obvious strengths of the ANU in mounting graduate coursework programs are its reputation for scholarship across a broad range of disciplines, its concentration of resources on the Asia-Pacific region, and its national role. Perhaps less obvious externally are its relatively small size and decentralised structure which make possible local initiatives, small classes and greater attention to the needs and interests of individual students. The latter is reinforced by exceptionally strong student support services and the activities of the Graduate School and its Programs as sources of support and innovation complementary to those of the teaching departments and centres.

Some of these strengths, all of which are under strain with limited resources, are matched by parallel limitations. The University's size and location preclude its mounting a number of professional programs relating to industry and commerce, and it lacks the professional faculties of agriculture, architecture, education, veterinary science and medicine which provide substantial graduate enrolments in other GO8 universities. Less obviously, the ANU's complex and devolved structure, weighted towards traditional disciplines, has proven inherently conservative and inhibits support for precisely the interdisciplinary programs (information technology, environmental studies, cultural studies, applied and policy-oriented disciplines) likely to prove most attractive for graduate coursework students. Decentralisation of initiative is accompanied by a hierarchy of accountability, with proposals for new or reoriented programs having to clear several levels of approval; this is widely cited as a major disincentive to innovation. As well, during a period of financial restrictions new programs are more likely to be cut back than better staffed traditional disciplinary centres. In the same manner, younger non-tenured scholars recruited to develop new areas of interest are more vulnerable than tenured staff working in areas of lower interest for graduate coursework students.

The research orientation of the Institute, reinforced by current promotion structures favouring research, provides a cultural bias within the University against commitment to graduate coursework and a reluctance on the part of non-tenured research staff to become involved in teaching. In some teaching departments in the Faculties there is a well entrenched culture favouring the teaching of subjects of staff research interest in second- and third-year units, while treating first-year lectures and tutorials and even Honours IV seminars as a necessary encumbrance, leaving graduate coursework out of sight. The system of incentives in the University thus means that staff motivation for contributing to graduate coursework has been lacking in many areas. Collegiality in the past ensured broad participation in academic programs at various levels; until the recent crisis in enrolments in some faculties, the clear signals for maximising the research quantum have tended to drown out any indications of advantage to be gained from mobilising resources in teaching enterprise.

A further set of limitations relates to the potential for incompatibility between the ANU’s academic structures and culture and the operation of educational programs on a commercial cost-recovery basis. Numerous issues have been raised by the NCDS, Demography and MBA programs in relation to rules and administrative arrangements concerning admission standards, intensive and non-award courses, non-standard teaching periods, contributions to central services, etc. These have not proved insurmountable, but are a continuing source of low-level friction between institutions with contrasting values and interests.

### 3 Coursework Degrees, Diplomas and Other Awards

Concerning each of the degrees and awards discussed below there are a number of decisions and recommendations by the Graduate Degrees Committee and the former Intermediate Awards Committee which set policy on the application of the Rules for each degree. These have considerable import for the operation of graduate courses and yet many are not codified outside the minutes of the GDC and not readily available to those who are planning and directing courses. The Graduate Students Section has been the effective monitor of the Rules, providing a source of consistent advice on the body of precedent within the University. The restructuring of student administration, combined with a significant reduction in senior and experienced staff, has put great strain on capacity to monitor and advise.
Recommendation 2: That significant determinations by the Graduate Degrees Committee be published in the Graduate School Handbook as supplements to the Rules for each degree.

For each degree and award there are Working Rules which supplement the Rules and which, in principle, incorporate relevant determinations of the Graduate Degrees Committee and appropriate Boards of Studies. Although Working Rules are assumed to be kept up to date and issued to students, this does not happen in some courses, and the resolution of the Graduate Degrees Committee in 1987 that changes be reported to the GDC has not been implemented in recent years.

Recommendation 3: That Working Rules for each graduate coursework degree and award be annually brought up to date, notified to the Graduate Degrees Committee and issued at enrolment to students.

3.1 Master Degrees

Historically the rules concerning Master degrees are focused on the concept of the Master by research, following on a good Honours degree. Although separate Master (Coursework and Research Course) Rules were drawn up in 1983, they remain a variant of the Master (Research Course) Rules and have not been rethought in terms of their present primary application to professional upgrading. As a result, there are a number of inappropriate rigidities, some of which are discussed here.

3.1.1 Nomenclature

Despite the existence of separate rules there is no clear differentiation between the nomenclature of Master-by-research degrees and Master-by-coursework and Master-by-coursework-and-research degrees. Almost all of the named Master-by-research degrees -- Arts, Arts (Asian Studies), Arts (Visual Arts), Commerce, Economics, Laws, Legal Studies and Science -- are offered in coursework and/or coursework-and-research variations. The Master of Engineering is currently available only as a research degree, but a coursework degree of the same name is planned, and the research Master of Resource and Environmental Studies has a coursework analog in the Master of Environmental Science. In addition 12 other named Master degrees are offered by coursework and/or coursework and research, and more have been approved for offer in 1998.

While there are in 1997 a total of 22 named Master degrees awarded on the basis of coursework or coursework-and-research, several of these comprehend a number of course formats and specialisations. There appear to be 61 different courses involving coursework which lead to the award of a Master degree, and the Student Information System registers Master-by-coursework students enrolled in 1997 under 63 different course codes.

The Master by research and Master by coursework (or by coursework and research) have quite different traditions in that the former degree is seen as essentially a degree of academic orientation, and the latter as primarily professionally focused, though it also can serve as qualification for admission to the PhD. The Master by research is counted towards the University's research quantum, whereas all degrees with more than one-third coursework content -- all those currently operating under the Master (Coursework and Research Course) Rules -- are not so counted.

The Higher Education Council in 1990 considered that "research and coursework masters programs can and should be differentiated by their titles." There would appear to be value in providing a clear marker in the nomenclature of the Master-by-research degree so as to avoid its confusion with the wide variety of conditions which now apply to Master-by-coursework degrees. This would also serve to free the Master by coursework from some of the limiting effects of close linkage with the traditions of the Master by research, e.g., qualifications for admission, course length, attendance at university and external examination of sub-theses, most of which are already compromised in some measure.

Other Australian universities have taken varying approaches to this problem. The Sydney universities, having adopted the Master (Pass) coursework degree at the time that the ANU brought in Graduate Diplomas, introduced an even greater degree of variation in the Master (Honours) research degree and the Master (Pass), but newer vocational degrees have been more flexible in entry qualifications and course length than those at the ANU. They have avoided the traditional research degree names of MA, MSc, etc., and are instead labelled Master in Environmental Studies, Master in Applied History, etc.

At Oxford and Cambridge Universities, because the MA, MSc, etc have served other purposes, the Master-by-research degree is a Master of Philosophy, analogous to the Doctor of Philosophy. Griffith and Murdoch Universities adopted the title Master of Philosophy for all Master-by-research degrees from their foundation, and the Faculty of Arts at the University of Sydney has recently renamed its Master of Arts (Honours) research degree a Master of Philosophy to avoid confusion with the Master of Arts (Pass) coursework degree. It would be possible to designate all ANU Master-by-research degrees as Master of Philosophy, but this would succeed only if agreed to by all Faculties.
An alternative scheme which would remove much of the confusion of the meaning of present nomenclature would involve the reservation of Master of Arts, Master of Science and Master of Laws as generic research degrees. This would suggest that Asian Studies and Visual Arts follow the example of Music and offer a research Master of Arts without bracketed specialisation, and that Commerce, Economics and Engineering research degrees revert to the older style of Master of Science. The Master of Laws could retain its differentiation from Legal Studies by designating the Master of Legal Studies by research as a Master of Arts.

One significant effect of this reform would be to allow all coursework Master degrees to be altered to labels specific to the area of study, e.g., MA (International Relations) to Master of International Relations, MSc (Geosciences) to Master of Geosciences, LLM with specialisation in Public Law to Master of Public Law. There would be some element of proliferation, particularly in Law, but probably not in the overall number of degrees, and the gain in clarity would merit this.

**Recommendation 4** -- That all Master-by-research degrees be designated Master of Arts, Master of Science or Master of Laws, and that these titles be reserved to degrees offered under the Degree of Master (Research Course) Rules.

A further aspect of nomenclature is currently under consideration. Late in 1996 the Graduate Degrees Committee resolved to classify higher degree courses as being "by research" or "by coursework", thus adopting DEETYA definitions and principles of classification and eliminating the distinction between the Master by coursework and the Master by coursework and research. The latter distinction appears to have no clear basis in the rules which apply to both, and the University's student administration is already operating on the basis of the DEETYA definitions. The classification of courses as Master by coursework and Master by coursework and research is presented only in the annual Graduate School Prospectus. The GDC has referred the implications of its proposed change to Schools, Faculties and Centres for comments and not all of these have been received. Whether or not this is adopted there are a number of provisions of the Rules, e.g., external examination of sub-theses, which need review.

**Recommendation 5**: That the Master (Coursework and Research Course) Rules be reviewed by a sub-committee of the Graduate Degrees Committee.

### 3.1.2 Admission and Course Length

Under Rule 3(1) the Prescribed Authority may admit as a Master degree candidate a person holding "a degree with first or upper second class honours of an Australian university" or "a qualification that is equivalent or superior". Under Rule 3(2) the Graduate Degrees Committee itself may admit "a person who does not hold a degree or other qualification referred to" and this authority is delegated to the chair of the GDC. Most G08 universities have a provision similar to that in Rule 3(2), but its application is administered by the equivalent of Prescribed Authorities rather than a central body.

For the case of a candidate who has been awarded a Graduate Diploma at less than Merit level, the GDC in 1995 clarified the grounds for consideration under Rule 3(2).

> The decisive factor should clearly be whether the candidate is judged to have the capacity to complete successfully a Master degree. Such a judgement ought to be based on the totality of the candidate's qualifications, including, but not necessarily dependent on, performance in a graduate diploma course which could take into account for example performance in certain components in the course or on the improvement in performance over time.

Since the case for "capacity to complete successfully a Master degree" must be presented by a course director through the Prescribed Authority it may be that judgment could be exercised at the level of the Prescribed Authority rather than, as at present, requiring a guarantee of uniformity through referral of cases to the Chair of the GDC for approval.

Several programs (e.g., those in Public Policy, International Relations and the Faculties of Arts, Asian Studies and Law) offer common coursework for Graduate Diploma and Master students, initial enrolment depending on previous qualifications. In these programs Graduate Diploma students who achieve Merit or Distinction results are allowed to transfer their enrolment to the Master course and proceed, where relevant, with a long essay, sub-thesis or other requirements to complete the Master degree. This "roll-over" arrangement raises issues of appropriate Master course length.

In 1990 the Higher Education Council recommended that admission to a coursework Master program from a pass degree be considered appropriate where a program is of two years duration, while students
entering with an honours degree or with a pass degree and a graduate diploma should complete the program in one year full-time. Given the proliferation of varying coursework Master degrees it seems unlikely that the Council would repeat this recommendation in 1997.

There has been no official enforcement of the Council's advice but, in the light of the recommendation, the Graduate Degrees Committee resolved that the course length for a Master-by-coursework degree should be no less than four semesters or two calendar years after completion of a pass degree; this referred only to course length, not to qualification for admission. However, in applying this to the issue of "roll-over" from the Graduate Diploma, the GDC agreed that students transferring to a related Master course in which requirements had already been partially met could be awarded the degree of Master in less than two years after a first degree in certain circumstances. This exemption relates to students holding a pass degree together with substantial work experience (normally at least three years) relevant to the particular course, and applies only to the Master of Public Policy, the Master of Arts in International Relations and the various Master of Laws and Legal Studies degrees.

The exemption appears to be granted on the grounds that three years of relevant work experience is equivalent to a fourth-year Honours 2A degree as appropriate qualification for admission to a coursework Master degree. It would not normally be suitable for a research Master degree, for which the Honours 2A qualification was originally set; for professionally oriented Master-by-coursework degrees, relevant work experience might prove even more suitable than an Honours degree. Currently admission to the 14-month Master of Business Administration is available to students with "high quality university degrees" and at least three years of business or other professional experience. Given the fact that similar entrance qualifications are required in most other MBA programs of similar length in Australia and abroad, it is unlikely that higher qualifications or greater length would prove viable.

The case for replacing the Graduate Diploma with a one-year Master degree following on a Pass degree has been put by the former Deputy Vice-Chancellor, Millicent Poole, in her memorandum of 25 November 1996 to the Graduate Degrees Committee. Her memorandum cites the difficulty of competing with the Sydney universities where a one-year coursework Master degree is common in a number of faculties. This is an argument advanced within the University in the fields of Business Administration, Commerce, Engineering, Forestry and Law, all of them professionally oriented. There is also support from less professional areas, such as Anthropology. On the other hand, there are areas within the University that have a well structured two-year coursework program, notably those at NCDS, where the progression from Graduate Diploma to Master course is valued and seen as attractive to the international students for whom it is designed.

Practice among GO8 universities varies considerably on this issue. Leaving aside the Sydney universities, which offer a one-year Master degree in many fields after a Pass degree, there are several coursework Master degrees of one year or three semesters to which students can gain admission with a Pass degree and two years of appropriate professional experience. Almost all GO8 universities offer a Master of Business Administration degree on this basis and some Commerce, Engineering and Law coursework Master degrees as well. In reputable overseas universities in the US, Canada, UK and Japan, with which the ANU is in competition for international students one-year coursework Master degrees are commonplace.

Recommendation 6: That a pass degree and three years of relevant experience be considered appropriate qualification for admission to one-year coursework Master degree courses in professional fields.

### 3.2 Master of Letters

The Master of Letters was adopted in tandem with a Graduate Diploma by the Faculties of Arts and Asian Studies, but was abandoned by the Faculty of Asian Studies in 1994 in favour of coursework Master degrees. The MLitt is intended for graduates who wish to return to studies after a considerable break and/or undertake studies in a new discipline.

**Table 4: Faculty of Arts Graduate Coursework Enrolments, 31 March 1997**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Discipline</th>
<th>MA cwork</th>
<th>MLitt</th>
<th>Grad Dip</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Aboriginal Studies</td>
<td>not offered</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Anthropology</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Applied Linguistics</td>
<td>not offered</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Archaeology</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Art History</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Art History and Curatorship</td>
<td>not offered</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Australian Studies*</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>not offered</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Biological Anthropology</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Classics</td>
<td>not offered</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>English</td>
<td>not offered</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
While the MLitt provides an alternative to Honours as a qualification for admission to research degrees, its requirements are more onerous than Honours and both more onerous and more inflexible than the coursework-and-research MA courses offered in Anthropology, Art History and Linguistics within the Faculty of Arts. The MLitt has a rigid structure, requiring a year of coursework in Part A, most often including Honours units, and a thesis of 20-25,000 words in Part B, each of which must be completed at H2A level; completion at a lower level yields no award. Students completing the Graduate Diploma at Merit (H2A) level may proceed to Part B of the Master of Letters. Duration of the MLitt course is three or four semesters for full-time students unless status for previous work is granted.

In some respects the MLitt has proved to be superfluous to the Graduate Diploma, which serves the same purposes since completion of the Graduate Diploma at appropriate level can qualify a student for admission directly to the Master of Arts or PhD. The Faculty of Arts also maintains the older MA(Qualifying) arrangements under which a flexible program can be tailored to qualify able students for a research degree, particularly those with a very good undergraduate record who wish to qualify for a research degree in a new discipline.

In a few departments there is a large enough cohort of graduate coursework students to develop a sense of identity, and in Archaeology and Anthropology a part-time graduate administrator has provided support until the recent Faculty budget cuts. Elsewhere in the Faculty of Arts the small numbers of Part B MLitt students are not normally given the recognition (office accommodation, etc) that is accorded to Master-by-research students; instead, like Graduate Diploma students, they are treated as an anomalous supplement to undergraduate students or, at best, part of a fourth-year Honours cohort.

A further shortcoming of the Master of Letters is its lack of recognition elsewhere, since the degree is offered only at the University of New England and as a one-year alternative to the Master of Arts (Pass) at the University of Sydney.

**Recommendation 7** That the Faculty of Arts consider the desirability of replacing the Master of Letters with coursework Master degrees, including dedicated graduate units.

In order to ensure viable numbers of students this may require some collaboration among departments, e.g., in offering a Master in Humanities and a Master in Social Science, each with several specialisations.

### 3.3 Graduate Diplomas

Currently there are 28 named Graduate Diplomas offered within the University, but those in Arts, Asian Studies, Law and Science each comprehend several specialisations, each with its own working rules; these add up to 74 different Graduate Diplomas on offer and the Student Information System in 1997 has students enrolled under 77 Graduate Diploma course codes. They serve a number of different purposes -- to impart a specific set of skills, to provide qualification in an area of specialisation other than that of the first degree, to extend and/or update existing academic or professional qualifications, and to prepare graduates not holding an Honours degree for admission to a higher degree. The Rules on Graduate Diplomas leave admission requirements to be set by Faculties, Research Schools and Centres under guidelines from the Boards of The Faculties and the Institute and specify a duration of from two to three semesters.
Many of the Graduate Diplomas are offered in conjunction with coursework Master degree programs, with varying measures of overlap or integration between Graduate Diploma and Master coursework. Progression from Graduate Diploma to Master enrolment has since 1993 normally required completion of the Diploma at least at Merit level, equivalent to H2A, but conditions vary under locally determined rules on the calculation of Merit (not necessarily equivalent to an average grade of 70) and on the granting of status for completed Diploma work within Master coursework requirements (see above re Master admission.)

The Graduate Diploma of Science, which has rules separate from the general rules for the Graduate Diploma, has no related coursework Master of Science degree. Like the Master (Qualifying) which it replaced and the Honours degree for which it substitutes, it is exceptionally flexible, with courses of study usually designed on an individual basis to fit the aims and academic background of students and normally comprising both coursework and research completed over a course from 10 to 24 months for full-time students. Admission is based on a Bachelor degree or on practical experience approved by the Dean of the Faculty, and may be made conditional on successful completion of specified preparatory work. Administration of the Graduate Diploma in Science is undertaken by Graduate Programs rather than departments and schools within the Faculty of Science.

3.3.1 Nomenclature

As discussed at 3.1.2 above, there are pressures from several areas to replace the Graduate Diploma with a one-year Master degree on the Sydney model, but evidence from others of strong support for its retention. In many instances the Graduate Diploma serves as a bridging course to a higher degree and carries no significant cachet or benefit outside the universities. In rare cases the Graduate Diploma constitutes a professional qualification, such as the Graduate Diploma in Legal Practice. Elsewhere it provides a specific set of skills, e.g., the Graduate Diplomas in Scientific Communication, Electronic Arts with specialisation in Computer Animation, Accounting and Finance. The Graduate Diploma also serves as a flexible means of adapting an individual student's preceding skills and qualifications to those required for admission to a higher degree. This was the original purpose of the Master (Qualifying) alternative to the Honours degree, which the Graduate Diploma was initially designed to replace. In many respects the Graduate Diploma in Science adheres most closely to this model.

For those coursework programs which, like the NCDS courses and Demography, use the Graduate Diploma as the first year of a two-year course, there may be grounds for considering the nomenclature of the Monash University Faculty of Science. There the first year of graduate coursework following an appropriate Pass degree is offered as a Master (Part 1), with a Master (Part 2) available on completion of a Master (Part 1) or an Honours degree. Given, however, the diverse purposes of the many Graduate Diplomas currently offered, it is unlikely that any uniform alteration of nomenclature will be appropriate or acceptable.

Recommendation 8 That the Graduate Diploma remain as a flexible award.

3.3.2 Undergraduate Content

Following government guidelines, the Graduate Degrees Committee recommended that the proportion of undergraduate units in graduate coursework degrees and diplomas be limited to a maximum of one third. Provision for exemption for a particular course “in very special circumstances” was specified, but this has not in practice been requested.

The issue of undergraduate content arises only in relation to Graduate Diploma and coursework Master courses offered by the Faculties, where the function of the Diploma was primarily that of surrogate for Honours. Prior to the change in government guidelines, undergraduate and Honours units were used as significant, if not the only, components. The standard solution to the new requirement has been simply to give undergraduate units within a Diploma/Master course a graduate unit number and require additional work and/or a different examination. The Graduate School Handbook lists all units available as graduate coursework and the great majority of those units offered in the Faculties are also offered as undergraduate units. The same arrangement is followed in other GO8 universities.

A major constraint on Faculties departments in offering dedicated graduate coursework is the low level of enrolments. At the same time the substantial proportion of Graduate Diploma students who would not qualify for admission to fourth-year Honours makes departments unwilling to enrol them initially in dedicated Honours units. Many students are in fact transferring to a new discipline and need the content of undergraduate Pass degree units in their program.

To ensure that the substance of the guidelines on undergraduate content is observed, there needs to be some quality control on the observance of requirements for additional work and/or higher standards for
graduate students. Common lectures have occasionally raised objections from fee-paying graduate students, but both undergraduates and graduates are disadvantaged if they participate in the same tutorial groups or seminars. Different essay topics and examination questions and/or longer essays and additional questions are among the mechanisms deployed to ensure a differentiated set of graduate requirements.

**Recommendation 9**: That Departments offering undergraduate Pass degree units in which graduate students are enrolled be required to specify to Prescribed Authorities each year the additional work and special arrangements in place for graduate students.

### 3.4 Graduate Certificates

The Graduate Certificate, offered only in the three programs in the National Centre for Development Studies and in Demography and Public Policy, is a one-semester (or part-time equivalent) course usually comprising three units drawn from the relevant Graduate Diploma course. Its purpose is usually to provide and assess skills among students not considered eligible initially for admission to a Graduate Diploma course. The Graduate Certificate in Public Policy is offered in two streams of four compulsory units to develop specific competencies.

In the first semester of 1997 there were no international students enrolled in Graduate Certificate courses, and seven of the eight enrolments were in Public Policy. While it may prove useful to maintain a flexible form of entry to the Graduate Diploma through a one-semester Certificate bridging course, the name Graduate Certificate might be deployed more usefully as an award for all graduate short courses.

### 3.5 Graduate Non-Award Enrolments

Students who hold a Bachelor degree or equivalent may be permitted to enrol in units on a non-award graduate basis, usually for the purpose of completing qualifications for admission to a Graduate Diploma or higher degree course. The old Master (Qualifying) course is still available in the Faculties of Arts and Law, though seldom used, as a more flexible route than the Graduate Diploma and Master of Letters towards qualification for admission to a research degree. In addition, non-award enrolments include students enrolled in dedicated preparatory courses offered by ANUtech for those holding scholarships for NCDS degree and diploma courses.

### 3.6 Short Courses

A wide range of intensive short courses is offered in various parts of the University and there is evidence of their recent proliferation. NCDS offers a substantial number of short courses, some as intensive units within its degree offerings, others free-standing. Graduate courses in Law are often presented in the form of intensive units, compressed into periods of from three to five days, and the proposed Master of Engineering by coursework would operate entirely through intensive units; in each case these are open to external students on a non-enrolment basis. In addition, there is a growing number of special non-enrolment courses, including the longstanding ACSPRI Summer Program in Social Research Methods and Research Technology and the Federated Scheme in Housing and Urban Studies, listed in the Graduate School Handbook.

A proposal for an ANU Graduate Course Award, to provide a form of recognition for external students in short and intensive courses and to ensure a measure of quality control, has recently been approved by Council. The Awards are intended to serve as a focus for new modes of course delivery, possibly including off-shore courses. They would constitute at least the equivalent of a half-semester course for a Graduate Diploma in terms of intellectual rigour, would need to be approved by the Graduate Degrees Committee and may be given status towards a Graduate Certificate or Diploma. Fees would be determined by the area proposing the course and Awards would be issued by the Graduate School.

It is not entirely clear whether the Award is intended to apply to short courses mounted in response to external sponsorship and, indeed, to longer contract training courses. The Master in Business Administration program, Public Policy Program and NCDS are all engaged in graduate courses of this kind, as are ANUtech and the Centre for Continuing Education. To the extent that the University's name is linked with these courses, the same logic concerning quality control would seem to apply.

Students in short courses are not formally enrolled on the ANU Student Information System and therefore do not receive student cards and have no access to the usual student services and privileges, e.g., the library and Internet. This may raise difficulties for students who take short courses which have no recognised assessment outcome and who wish later to receive status for these towards a graduate diploma or degree. The proposed Graduate School Award may serve as a basis for conceding status, and for this and other purposes a database on Awards will be maintained by the Centre for Continuing Education.
4 Good Practice in Graduate Courses

Given the wide variety of purposes and structures of graduate coursework it is difficult to specify general attributes of good practice among the courses currently offered. Nonetheless there are a few salient delineations, most notably that between dedicated graduate courses and courses primarily based on undergraduate and Honours units, in particular the Graduate Diploma and Master of Letters programs in The Faculties. The dedicated courses typically have a clearly defined structure, are organised and taught by staff whose primary concern is with the course, and they recruit annual cohorts of students with the capacity to develop esprit de corps. Often they have as well their own boards of studies and administrative and language-and-learning support. Each of these attributes provides an advantage over non-dedicated courses and there are derivative characteristics which make the best examples of dedicated course models for others. Among these are the incentive and opportunity for comprehensive course design and close monitoring of the relevance of courses for the skills and qualifications which they ostensibly provide.

Whereas each of the dedicated graduate coursework degrees has been vetted in the past decade by the Graduate Degrees Committee and by one or more Faculty or Research School committees prior to submission to the GDC, the Graduate Diplomas in Arts, Asian Studies, Science, Economics and Commerce have not been seriously evaluated at any level since they were established. All courses currently offered on a HECS-liable basis will require reconsideration in terms of their eligibility for HECS exemption, and this provides an opportunity for evaluating their performance and continuing suitability as graduate coursework degrees and awards.

A few of the dedicated courses with primarily international enrolments, all based in the Research Schools, have for the past two years been treated as financial centres for purposes of determining their self-sufficiency. This arrangement was initiated to meet the requirement by government that international students not be subsidised by the university's operating grant. It applies to the National Centre for Development Studies, the Managing Business in Asia program, the MA in International Relations and the MA in Demography, as well as to the Legal Workshop, which caters primarily to domestic students. Under the arrangement, staff salaries and contributions to University overheads are assessed, and course or program directors must defend their accounts before the Council’s Finance Committee. The arrangement allows an accounting of the surplus and deficit for each program, with appropriate incentives for earning surpluses which can be used for the benefit of the program or sponsoring centre or department. For all other programs there is a general accounting through The Faculties and the Institute.

Recommendation 10: That each graduate course be provided with information sufficient to calculate full costs, similar to the information provided for the MA (International Relations).

It is unlikely that new centres comparable to the NCDS, the MBA program and the Legal Workshop will be established unless they are externally sponsored, as in the cases of the Scientific Communication program and courses offered by the National Centre for Epidemiology and Population Health. Thus, despite the specific virtues of these programs (some of which are discussed in the section on international students), they do not provide relevant general models of good practice.

There are, however, two quite different programs which provide both models of good practice and a range of specific lessons relevant to other graduate coursework programs, actual and proposed, within the University. They are also the programs consistently rated most highly by staff in student administration and student services as the best planned, taught and administered of graduate coursework programs, with evidence of high levels of student satisfaction. These are the MA in International Relations and the recently restructured graduate coursework diplomas and degrees of the Faculty of Law. Brief case studies here outline the experience of these programs, with emphasis on lessons for other graduate coursework.

4.1 Faculty of Law

Until recently there has been no strong tradition of undertaking higher research degrees in Law and thus no commitment to a tradition of graduate research. In contrast to the increasing tendency to require a PhD for academic appointment in other faculties, only a limited proportion of academic staff in the Faculty hold research degrees. The Faculty's professional orientation has always set it apart from other faculties and the Institute and has made it more ready to respond to the demand for professional upgrading through graduate coursework. The Faculty also has the structural advantages of comprising a single department and having a Graduate Program largely to itself; these have made it easier for the Faculty to plan and act in a unified fashion and to adapt to a readily identifiable market.

In 1979 the Master and Graduate Diploma of International Law were launched in response to a request from the Department of Foreign Affairs, setting precedents within the University for rolling over Diploma
coursework into Master candidacy. A year of coursework was initially followed by a sub-thesis of 15-20,000 words, equivalent to the Honours sub-thesis, but this was replaced in 1991 by a research paper of 9-10,000 words. A similar program in Public Law was introduced in 1983 and one in Environmental Law in 1993. From their inception these programs were also available to non-Law graduates as diplomas and degrees in Legal Studies, with appropriate bridging units. Although there were some dedicated graduate units, most components were also offered to undergraduates, with separate graduate tutorials or seminars.

In the early 1990s the Faculty increased substantially its undergraduate intake without a corresponding increase in staff, and this led to a decline in the proportion of dedicated graduate units. Those staff of the Faculty who took teaching and co-ordinating roles within the graduate courses in addition to their undergraduate teaching responsibilities developed grievances. While the three graduate courses had no equivalents at other universities, and in each of the three fields the ANU Faculty was seen as nationally pre-eminent, increasing demand for professional upgrading and the introduction of tuition fees for part-time students led other law schools to expand their offerings. The University of Melbourne introduced a wide range of new graduate courses and began recruiting students in Canberra, while the University of Canberra upgraded its offerings in law and began to compete with the ANU for students.

A working party of Philip Alston and Robin Creyke, involved respectively in the International and Public Law courses, proposed to Faculty in March 1994 a scheme for revitalising graduate offerings. They surveyed the constraints of the existing program and the advantages of increasing resources through fees, and they recommended an external consultancy to survey demand and report on appropriate arrangements. In particular they favoured the Melbourne practice of offering some units as intensive short courses.

Their proposal provoked debate in Faculty, with considerable scepticism about the potential market and reluctance to disrupt existing arrangements. Strong backing from the Dean, Tom Campbell, and his offer to fund a consultancy won support for the proposal, and several management consultant firms were invited to bid, with KPMG Peat Marwick the successful bidder. The main issue for the consultants was identifying the market in Canberra for graduate courses, and they also interviewed staff and students and conducted research on other leading law faculties. Their final report of October 1994 reached clear conclusions: that the Faculty's reputation was high, but that its graduate coursework was seen as conservative, out of touch with local employers and not user-friendly for part-time students, the bulk of its prospective clientele. It recommended that Commercial Law be added to existing graduate specialisations, that a professional doctorate (SJD) be offered to follow on from Master coursework degrees and that, in view of the small international market, courses be aimed initially at local and national students.

The Faculty accepted the consultants' report and set about developing a flexible program available to both law and non-law graduates, the latter taking a compulsory intensive introduction to legal studies and enrolled in separate Legal Studies diplomas and degrees in each specialisation. Almost all units are designed to fit the needs of part-time students, with many classes conducted from 8.00 to 10.30 am or 5.30 to 8.00 pm, others interspersed with occasional Saturday morning sessions or “intensives” whereby a semester's contact hours are compressed into a week of classes but assessment is spread over the period of a full semester. An elaborate brochure, modelled on that of the University of Melbourne and costing $20,000 for its first edition, was issued and drew considerable attention. Although almost all teaching is undertaken by Faculty staff, a few "big names" have been imported from private practice to offer high-profile intensive units. The Graduate Program has its own administrative staff in the Faculty office, who work with the course co-ordinators under an Academic Director with full-time responsibility for graduate courses.

Fees have been set at the standard rate of the Graduate Tuition Fee, but are charged by the unit rather than by EFTSU so as to provide additional flexibility for part-time students and attract non-award students. In 1996, the first year the new program was offered, enrolments rose from 61 in 1995 to 249, earning the Faculty about $500,000 and thus saving at least four staff positions. This provided incentive for all members of staff to participate. The intake has been 80% Canberra-based, 55% non-Law graduates, 75% part-time.

Some problems have emerged. Limited advertising at the end of 1996 contributed to lower intake in the second year and the expected student numbers from private law firms have not materialised; however under-enrolment at the beginning of 1997 was compensated for by holding a mid-year entry which attracted a respectable enrolment. Small enrolments in some units make these difficult to justify in competition with very large undergraduate classes; this has been particularly true in Commercial Law. The use of outside lecturers has not proved entirely satisfactory since they are not available for students beyond the intensive teaching period and have not fitted easily into teaching schedules. Charging fees by
the unit has raised problems for making these available to students enrolled in other graduate courses with different numbers of units.

There are positive lessons to be drawn from the experience of the Faculty of Law.

- The use of consultants to assist in evaluating the demand for courses and facilitating a change in direction could prove appropriate in such fields as Commerce and Resource and Environmental Management: their value in Law was greatly enhanced by close liaison with a Faculty steering committee which was committed to revitalisation.

- The willingness to adapt conventional modes of delivery to fit the needs of potential students was a major feature of the reforms, and the Faculty’s experience in mounting intensive units merits evaluation for use elsewhere, e.g., in the intensive courses proposed for a coursework Master of Engineering.

- The tendency towards a proliferation of nomenclature was reversed by the Faculty in the reduction of all its specialised coursework degrees and awards to a Master of Laws, Master of Legal Studies and Graduate Diplomas in Law and Legal Studies, with specialisation indicated on the testamur issued to students.

  Initial focus on local intake has allowed the program to settle its arrangements with a few international students, whose satisfaction has prepared the way for an international recruitment campaign.

4.2 Master of Arts (International Relations)

From the late 1960s there were discussions between the Department of International Relations in the Research School of Pacific Studies and the Department of Political Science in the Faculty of Arts about the need for graduate coursework in international relations in the absence of undergraduate education in this field. Collaboration of the kind which developed among the Economics departments proved difficult, and in 1975 the Department of International Relations proceeded to establish a MA by coursework and thesis as preparation for potential PhD candidates. Shortly after the course began, the Ford Foundation offered scholarships for regional candidates and for a decade, although the program remained relatively small, with fewer than 10 students each year, it produced a substantial number of influential staff in foreign affairs departments, international agencies and academic institutions. During this period the course was largely taught by its co-ordinator, with assistance from the other research staff of the department.

The cessation of Ford funding and a turnover in staff in 1988 led to the creation of a Graduate Diploma, a rise in admission standards and an orientation towards regional affairs in the second semester of the course. The sub-thesis of 12-15,000 words, written after a year of coursework, had proved difficult to supervise and complete once students left the University: it was replaced with a 10,000-word research essay written during the summer break by Master students and designed as an academic journal article, ensuring completion of the course in 12 months. Course offerings have been reshaped frequently, partially in response to annual surveys of student opinion, conducted by CEDAM. All lectures and seminars are presented by research staff while four part-time tutors, appointed from among the Department's PhD students, provide additional support for international students. As a result of these arrangements a high level of esprit de corps has been maintained.

From 1992, spurred by increased demand for the course despite the introduction of fees, intake was doubled to 20 students per year and peaked at 37 in 1996, prompting the imposition of a quota of 20 full-time places so as to preserve a seminar format for teaching. By 1996 the program had produced 258 Master graduates, 22 of whom since 1988 had been admitted to PhD studies in Australia, England, the US and Canada. In recent years about one third of the Department's PhD students have been recruited through the MA program, and a number of other students from within and outside the Department have participated in the program in the first year of their PhD course.

There are difficulties in conducting a graduate coursework program from a departmental base within a Research School. The Department has written a teaching requirement into all recent staff contracts, but the Research School gives no recognition to teaching in its allocation of funding or its promotion procedures. Whereas in the past the program could rely on collegiality for teaching the MA(IR), the incentives for research staff to participate in teaching arise from the subsidy which the program provides to the Department.

Although the co-ordinator holds an appointment within the Department (subject to promotion criteria in The Faculties), the program covers the salary of a half-time administrator and part-time tutors and it provides a substantial supplement to the Department's research and administrative budget; this is
 Demand for places in the MA(IR) program has until 1997 been substantial and growing. Within the Asia-Pacific region the program is seen as offering a regional focus on international relations which is not available in North America and Europe; like NCDS, the program uses a well developed recruitment network among its own graduates. In North America and Europe, Australia is seen as an English-speaking gateway for understanding regional international relations, and the program is matched only by the University of California at San Diego and the International University in Japan. During 1997 the Department has undertaken a major recruitment effort in North America and Europe. It is estimated that the program could without reducing admission standards serve as the nucleus for a regionally focused institute comparable to the Fletcher School of Law and Diplomacy at Tufts University, but the Department is reluctant to lose control of its carefully nurtured arrangements.

Among the lessons of the MA(IR) experience are the importance of

• appropriate incentives for staff, whether research or teaching, to participate in graduate coursework and supervision.

• retention of a size appropriate for a research department to teach and manage and for a sense of community to be maintained.

• adaptation of course content and arrangements in the light of regular evaluation (those programs which have made consistent use of CEDAM evaluation are those which are widely recognised as well run).

• provision of tutorial support without limiting student access to lecturers.

• staff participation in recruitment and close control of admissions by the course co-ordinator; all applications for admission are dealt with within one week by a program admissions committee of three and informal responses are despatched to counteract delays in the issuing by student administration of formal letters of admission.

4.3 International Students

Although the present study has not focused explicitly on recruitment issues nor on international students, there are a number of elements of good practice in relation to the latter that stand out. The most significant of these concerns the provision of language and learning services for international students. The University's Study Skills Centre has set a model within Australia for effective learning support services for students at all levels, from first-year undergraduate to PhD, both Australian and overseas. Given the Centre's limited staff, it has fostered among graduate coursework programs the development of equivalent services. Among courses catering primarily for international students those in the National Centre for Development Studies have the largest and longest established service of this kind, and Demography and Business Administration also maintain their own language and learning support staff.

The University requires all students from non-English-language educational backgrounds to provide evidence of competence in English through achievement of a certain level of performance in one or more of several tests; details are provided in the Graduate School Prospectus. Some areas of the University, most notably Business Administration and the Institute of the Arts, present arguments that their practice-based disciplines do not require prior competence in English at the general University level and that students acquire sufficient competence during their course. Some flexibility in this regard might be appropriate, but would need to be balanced with evidence of strong language and learning support within the programs seeking exemption from the general standard.

In relation to recruitment, the NCDS also has set a number of precedents which are worthy of emulation. NCDS staff have played a substantial role in the recruitment of international students for the Centre, and argue that their intimate knowledge of the course programs and of student experience equips them to recruit much more effectively than generalist and non-academic University staff. In addition the NCDS, with the advantage of two decades of operation, has helped establish networks among its graduates in several countries. Contact is maintained through circulation of an alumni bulletin and, in conjunction with visits by NCDS staff, the networks have provided substantial support for publicity and recruitment. Among other dedicated graduate coursework programs, Demography, International Relations and
Business Administration have established similar links with their graduates, as has Scientific Communication among its Australian graduates.

5 New Initiatives

Phasing out most HECS-liable graduate courses and replacing them with new fee-based courses will provide occasion for thinking afresh about the appropriate design of graduate coursework in many areas of the University. Those courses which are primarily intended to serve as qualification for research degrees are most suitable for maintaining on a HECS-liable basis with HECS exemption where possible, but they need to be clearly identified and justified in these terms. Most other courses will be conceived instrumentally towards professional advancement, suitable for fees.

Several areas within the University appear to be ripe for "revitalisation" of graduate coursework, to draw on the term used in the Faculty of Law. The Law model of reform might prove particularly useful in the School of Resource and Environmental Management, where there is common agreement that there is a substantial untapped market for graduate coursework and that the present proliferation of Master degrees and Graduate Diplomas, each with small enrolments, needs coherent rethinking. Another promising area for rethinking in the context of untapped markets is the Faculty of Economics and Commerce, where a consultancy similar to that employed by the Faculty of Law would help in identifying the specialisations and modes of delivery suitable for graduate coursework in both Economics and Commerce. Engineering is already planning a coursework Master degree and Computing Science, a field of very substantial international demand, may be able to discern a niche among already well established local courses.

There is a tendency to categorise graduate courses as catering primarily for international or domestic students, the former including the NCDS programs, Demography and Business Administration. A few with less professional orientation, such as International Relations, Economics, Asian Studies and the Institute of the Arts, have been equally attractive to domestic and international students. Yet others, such as Law, Scientific Communication and the NCEPH courses, have been designed specifically within Australian culture and institutions and have very limited international intake.

Adapting the domestic focus of the latter group so as to attract international students requires consideration of appropriate cultural content and standards. To take an extreme example, if the Graduate Diploma in Scientific Communication, which prepares a team of students to organise an annual science circus for schools, were to be offered to international students it would need to be reconceived within the cultural and educational framework of the societies in which its graduates would be practising. What would be needed is a course adapted for and sponsored by the country or countries whose schools would be the beneficiaries. The resources required for this or, say, for the adaptation of NCEPH courses for overseas students, would need to be found externally.

There is rapidly increasing demand for courses offered on contract with government departments or overseas governments which are designed for specific purposes of professional upgrading. AusAID is transferring much of its scholarship support into support for contract courses for overseas government mounted either in Australia or off-shore. Several areas within or linked with the University have been successful in organising these courses, most notably Business Administration, NCDS, the Centre for Continuing Education and ANUtech. The potential for collaboration, rather than competition, among these for external courses is currently being explored.

A comparable arrangement is that of "industry-based" courses linking graduate coursework with placements in industry. Plans for an industry-based Master of Engineering have been drawn up but have not been submitted for approval. One existing course which operates successfully in this fashion is the Master of Applied Epidemiology, which is predominantly field based, involving 21 months of field placement and three months of intensive coursework in Canberra.

Many of these potential new initiatives need seeding funds -- not necessarily on the scale provided for Business Administration -- particularly for planning exercises involving consultant surveys and for initial publicity. Whereas the Faculty of Law, with a large single-line budget, could find the funds for these from within its own resources, smaller units cannot do so. Such seeding funds are currently available only in the form of loans with interest, but some of the budget earmarked for recruitment might usefully be deployed in assisting new initiatives.

A final consideration is that of incentives. Several areas which report an interest in developing new graduate courses are reluctant to do so on the grounds that the funds from fees would flow not directly to the departments undertaking teaching, but to Faculties for wider distribution. The arrangements established by the Department of International Relations appear to provide a suitable model whereby the University and Research School receive some payment for on-costs, but the bulk of fees are made available to the organising and teaching department to support its research program.
6 Central Administration and Co-ordination

6.1 Administration

The dismantling of the Graduate Students Section has, as noted above in relation to the monitoring of degree and award rules, resulted in a considerable reduction in central capacity to advise on graduate matters. While research students and general Graduate School and Graduate Degrees Committee matters are administered by former Section staff in the Research and Scholarships Office, graduate coursework students have been placed with undergraduates in the Admissions and Enrolments Offices. Much of the detailed administration of graduate coursework had already been devolved to Faculty and Research School offices, and most dedicated coursework programs have their own administrative staff. Some of these have proved essential for the coherent operation of programs, and particularly for meeting students' need for efficient management.

The extension of the ANU Student Information System (AnuSIS) to cover graduate students in 1997 meant an inevitable centralisation of some aspects of administration. Whereas in previous years it was possible for offers of admission, enrolment and course variation to be dealt with in local areas, the demand for conformity with government guidelines on HECS, fees and reporting of enrolments has led to the centralisation of these functions in central student administration offices. Unfortunately the introduction of graduate AnuSIS, which involved the manual re-entry of all data on continuing enrolments, coincided with the restructuring of student administration and substantial reduction of staff, with an inevitable loss of efficiency and morale. This has led to some delay in the processing of applications and offers of admission.

Another aspect of administration which raises difficulty is the processing of enrolment at the start of each semester. Current graduate coursework students, when asked about administrative problems, consistently raise enrolment as their most vexatious encounter with the University, citing confusing and misleading instructions about times for enrolment and about queuing at enrolment. For part-time students who must take time away from employment this proves a particularly offputting introduction to the University.

Recommendation 11: That the University's current review of AnuSIS undertake a study of the processing of graduate coursework applications, offers of admission and enrolment procedures and consider the need for short-term and long-term remedial action.

The fees-driven nature of AnuSIS design is apparent in the problems raised for students who convert their enrolment to a Master degree after completion of a Graduate Diploma at an appropriate level. The fees for the two courses may be the same, but for the transferring student who needs to complete the research paper component of the Master degree (assessed at 2 points out of 8 points in the Master, as in the MAs in International Relations or Middle Eastern and Central Asian Studies), an extra 2/8 of the fee is charged automatically by AnuSIS even if this is not the intention of the academic staff. This suggests that all academic areas planning to offer graduate coursework need to anticipate the financial impact of course variations and engage in early negotiation with the Fees Office.

6.2 Co-ordination

The complexities of the variety of arrangements for coursework graduate work in the University are a good part of the reason that there has been no co-ordinated approach to planning for future development. The present review may serve as a useful basis for consideration of the range of issues it addresses, though it does not in itself map a coherent strategy for revitalisation and builds on current practice rather than setting out a bold vision. If the University is serious about taking up professional advancement as a mission additional to its traditional roles of undergraduate education and research, then it requires a focal point for planning the development of graduate coursework.

The Dean of the Graduate School is fully occupied in the organisation and operation of the Graduate School, which has been acclaimed in all University reviews as signal effective. There is no scope within present resources for focusing attention on graduate coursework, and the Review of the Graduate School in 1994 recognised this in recommending the appointment of a Deputy Dean with responsibility for graduate coursework. The work of this position would encompass planning new initiatives, assisting local areas in the design of new courses and restructuring of old ones, liaison with recruitment, planning and monitoring new modes of delivery, redrafting of the Rules, and monitoring through the Graduate Programs the progress and problems of graduate coursework students.

Recommendation 12: That the University appoint a Deputy Dean of the Graduate School with responsibility for development of graduate coursework.
7 Recommendations

**Recommendation 1**: That a transparent procedure for determining the internal allocation of HECS exemptions (APA scholarships without stipend) be established and referred for comment to the Graduate Degrees Committee.

**Recommendation 2**: That significant determinations by the Graduate Degrees Committee be published in the Graduate School Handbook as supplements to the Rules for each degree.

**Recommendation 3**: That Working Rules for each graduate coursework degree and award be annually brought up to date, notified to the Graduate Degrees Committee and issued at enrolment to students.

**Recommendation 4**: That all Master-by-research degrees be designated Master of Arts, Master of Science or Master of Laws, and that these titles be reserved to degrees offered under the Degree of Master (Research Course) Rules.

**Recommendation 5**: That the Master (Coursework and Research Course) Rules be revised by a sub-committee of the Graduate Degrees Committee.

**Recommendation 6**: That a high-quality pass degree and three years of relevant experience be considered appropriate qualification for admission to coursework Master courses of at least 12 months’ duration.

**Recommendation 7**: That the Faculty of Arts consider the desirability of replacing the Master of Letters with coursework Master degrees, including dedicated graduate units.

**Recommendation 8**: That the Graduate Diploma remain as a flexible award.

**Recommendation 9**: That Departments offering undergraduate Pass degree units in which graduate students are enrolled be required to specify to Prescribed Authorities each year the additional work and special arrangements in place for graduate students.

**Recommendation 10**: That each graduate course be provided with information sufficient to calculate full costs, similar to the information provided for the MA in International Relations.

**Recommendation 11**: That the University’s current review of AnuSIS undertake a study of the processing of graduate coursework applications, offers of admission and enrolment procedures and consider the need for short-term and long-term remedial action.

**Recommendation 12**: That the University appoint a Deputy Dean of the Graduate School with responsibility for development of graduate coursework.