

# Personnel Relations & Equal Opportunity Directorate

2007  
The Year in Review

August 2008



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## ***From the Director's Desk***



Again in 2007, the Personnel Relations and Equal Opportunity Directorate was heavily involved in supporting and responding on behalf of the University to the Commonwealth Government's Higher Education Workplace Reform Requirements (the HEWRRs), which was announced in 2005. At a personal level I regard the HEWRRs as the 'Great Deflection'. The programs and processes required for compliance with the HEWRRs as well as the Workchoices legislation, impacted heavily on the Directorate until the fall of the coalition government in November 2007. This concentration of focus impacted on the Directorate by delaying programs in some areas of strategy and action, but not wholly so, and by curtailing our capacity to maintain normal service levels. This was sometimes frustrating for us as we had to be sure in the event of a coalition win in 2007, that we could meet our compliance obligations, so as to assure Commonwealth HEWRRs funding.

The key activity in relation to HEWRRs was the ongoing offering of Australian Workplace Agreements (AWAs) that complied with the Workchoices Legislation to casual and sessional staff. In addition, the Workchoices Legislation precipitated a further review of policies and procedures along with the development of new policies to ensure adherence to the new industrial requirements. The outcome of these processes has been beneficial to the University in that much needed Commonwealth funding was won and a raft of policies and procedures have been reviewed and modernised. The associated consultation process committed to by the University was launched and continued throughout the year.

Notwithstanding the above, the PREOD has persisted in advancing improvements and innovation in a range of areas outlined throughout this report. Key areas range across workforce planning including "Pathways to Retirement"; training to support improved recruitment and selection practices and work on automated systems to support recruitment; an ongoing strengthening of the learning and development delivery of the Directorate. In addition, standard services underpinning the University and its operations – "bread and butter" like payroll, superannuation benefits and superannuation services were delivered extremely well. Indeed, demand on these areas continued to measurably increase in most cases.

Although a range of other initiatives featured during the year two in particular warrant special noting. The first is compliance. The HEWRRs required explicit evidence of progress in performance management and considerable progress was made in this area especially with regard to general staff. Compliance training in relation to other Core Planning Group mandated areas progressed exceptionally

well with most programs exceeding the 90% mark, an outcome unmatched in the higher education sector. Well done ACU. The second was incorporation of the Religious Members of the University into our Staff Connect system following the implementation of a standardized deed with all of the congregations who provide members to support the work of the University. This has greatly simplified matters for this important cohort of University staff.

Added to this, initiatives in the areas of OHS and wellbeing, staff equity and associated compliance training have further strengthened. With the HEWRRs settled, and the Universities financial position assured, the PREOD was able to get back on track with its own restructuring process. By the end of 2007, most positions were placed or filled and the program of “bedding down” the new structure had begun. This process is expected to continue into the first half of 2008 and better place us to offer our normal and thereafter to systematically develop our services.

In introducing the PREOD 2007 Year in Review I am sensitive to the support afforded this Directorate by our colleagues and friends throughout 2007. On behalf of the Directorate, I thank all of those who have assisted us achieve, despite the difficulties of the times, across the many areas of our responsibility needed by the University.

Although not an event relevant for 2007, at the time of finalising this ‘Year in Review’, I am approaching my own retirement from the University. I am happy to be able to advise that my term at the University has been highly fulfilling for me both personally and professionally. I wish the University and all of its staff well.

Dr John Barclay

Director Personnel Relations and Equal Opportunity

12 August 2008

## *Significant Projects undertaken in 2007*

In 2007, a number of significant projects were undertaken by the Personnel Relations and Equal Opportunity Directorate (PREOD). These initiatives enabled the Directorate to further enhance its capability to support the University to achieve its long term strategic human resource goals.

### **Regulatory and Compliance Projects**

The Personnel Relations and Equal Opportunity Directorate ended 2006 having further put in place arrangements that the University hoped would assure compliance with the Commonwealth Government's Higher Education Workplace Reform Requirements in relation to its Enterprise Agreement, Australian Workplace Agreements and associated policies. Subsequently, in early 2007 the University was advised that it had met the compliance requirements and, therefore, would receive significant and much needed funding from the Commonwealth.

### **Compliance training and development**

PREOD continued to implement the University-wide compliance program throughout 2007 that aimed at ensuring all staff members are aware of their legal obligations and the University's policies and guidelines in relation to the Trade Practices Act, Workplace Behaviour & Bullying, and Workplace Discrimination & Harassment. The online training provided a flexible training option for staff and enabled the University with the support of nominated supervisors, to ensure that it was achieving its ongoing compliance obligations in these key areas.

### **Pathways to Retirement**

In 2006, the Core Planning Group endorsed the introduction of the Pathways to Retirement Program. This innovative program is designed to provide staff members with a range of retirement planning options which provide flexibility and financial security for ACU National staff as they transition towards retirement.

The program was recognized nationally when the University was nominated as a grand finalist in the Australian Human Resource Institute national awards for 2007. Take off has been slow as new superannuation arrangements at the national level were introduced by the Commonwealth government at about the same time rendering lump sum payments and pension payments for staff over sixty free from income taxation.

### **Implementing an E-Recruitment Solution**

The Core Planning Group approved the development of an E-Recruitment Solution and the Committee set about establishing a strategic progression of the project with a view to its release in the latter half of 2008.

### **Indigenous Employment Strategy**

The Indigenous Employment Strategy commits ACU National to supporting, facilitating and increasing the number of indigenous employees across the University, consistent with representation within the wider community. In addition, the strategy recognises that the University, in line with its Mission, acknowledges the importance of implementing affirmative action strategies to help redress the disadvantage experienced by some Indigenous Australians.

During 2007, the Indigenous Employment Coordinator developed a program for Cross Cultural Awareness Training. This training was delivered on each ACU Campus and was very

well received by staff and supervisors. PREOD will continue to work to implement the Strategy by building on the awareness developed throughout the University of Indigenous employment issues through the delivery of the cross cultural training. This awareness will underpin future recruitment action targeted towards indigenous staff.

## **Workforce Planning**

### **Workforce Planning Policy and Procedure**

The University approved a policy statement and procedure, prepared by PREOD, defining how workforce planning will be conducted at ACU National. The policy identifies workforce planning as an integral part of the University's strategic management process and requires organisational units to review, once established, their workforce profiles, and forecasts and plans annually. PREOD will develop and maintain a workforce planning framework that enables organisational units to conduct localised workforce planning; and will support organisational units as they analyse their workforce profile, develop workforce planning scenarios, prepare forecasts, and identify gaps and associated risks.

The policy commits ACU National to using workforce planning to assist and support the decision-making needed to achieve alignment between the overall management of its workforce and the University's strategic planning, and to support the maintenance and development of the distinctiveness of ACU National.

The Workforce Planning Procedure presents the approved framework for workforce planning, which is based on a cycle of analysis, forecasting, planning, implementation, monitoring and review. This framework will enable the University to proactively manage its

workforce profile to support the achievement of University goals and objectives.

### **Workforce Profile**

PREOD prepared the first annual Workforce Profile Report for submission to core planning group in early 2007, which identifies ACU National's performance across a range of workforce dimensions, and identifies a number of areas of workforce management that require further investigation and analysis. The report was well received and an annual Workforce Profile Report is to be prepared in subsequent years.

### **Benchmarking Programs**

PREOD submitted workforce data to external organisations, such as the former Department of Education, Science and Training (DEST), the Universities' HR Benchmarking Program and the InfoHRM Benchmarking Program.

Participation in these programs provided PREOD with the opportunity to analyse and compare ACU National's performance across the higher education sector, other industries and organizations. This analysis enabled PREOD to identify trends and emerging issues that require consideration and examination by the University together with supporting the development of appropriate workforce management strategies and data integrity.

PREOD enhanced a range of its Staff Services and Systems standard operating procedures, in order to improve the data integrity of the University's human resource management information system (HRMIS), in response to data issues identified in the production of workforce data for internal clients and external organisations.

## Analysis and Reporting

PREOD enhanced existing and/or created new internal data codification, manipulation and analysis processes in order to improve its capacity to generate, with greater data integrity, human resource statistics to support trend analysis, internal comparisons, external benchmarking, and to underpin workforce planning.

The InfoHRM Benchmarking Program released new data querying and reporting functionality to member organisations, including ACU National. PREOD created a range of prototype queries and reports for testing and validation of ACU National's data. This work will continue into 2008.

## HR Systems

### Upgrade to Staff Connect

Staff Connect is designed to provide staff and supervisors with a facility for easily accessing and managing a range of personal, payroll, leave and administrative information online using a standard web browser. In 2007, preparation commenced for a rollout of the new and improved facility in the first half of 2008.

The new release includes a number of product resolutions and functionality enhancements over the current version, including:

- An Integrated look and feel to the University's website
- Network login authentication to Staff Connect
- Ability to edit approved leave
- Ability for supervisors to modify their leave approval delegation during periods of absence

- Ability to apply for more leave types, further reducing the need for paper based leave requests

In addition, specific interface enhancements were commissioned to increase aspects of alignment with staff and supervisors' current and emerging needs.

### Religious Staff integrated into PayGlobal

During 2007 all Religious staff records were integrated into PayGlobal. As Religious Staff have a different working relationship with ACU compared to employees some customisation of the system was necessary to achieve the required outcomes.

Since November 2007 Religious staff have had the same access as employees to the following information on Staff Connect:

- Ability to apply for leave and view balances on line
- Automatically receive an electronic payment advice (each quarter)
- Access to forms and Personnel Relations Matters
- Ability to view and amend personal information

### Electronic Payment Summaries (Group Certificates)

For the first time at ACU, PAYG Payment Summaries were produced electronically for all employees with access to Staff Connect. This initiative meant that staff didn't have to worry about losing their Payment Summary and they could simply log on to Staff Connect and print as many copies as they wished at a time suitable to them. Casual staff and terminated staff received a paper copy in the normal way.

## ***Employee Relations***

### **WorkChoices and the Higher Education Workplace Reform Requirements (HEWRRs)**

Throughout 2007 the Directorate continued to focus on implementing the Federal Government's Workchoices legislation and meeting the HEWRRs requirements. This involved further development and/or revision of many of the University's human resource management policies, procedures and guidelines, to ensure compliance with the HEWRRs and to implement the changes to the Workplace Relations (WorkChoices) Act and associated Regulations. This meant that some relevant policies needed to be updated twice when Regulation 19 of *the Workplace Relations Act, 1996*, was amended twice in 2007, for example, by changing the requirements of employers regarding the recording of hours worked by staff.

The University developed and implemented a consultative process through which some 54 human resources and related policies were distributed to the University community for consultation and feedback. In addition, the composition of the Australian Catholic University Staff Consultative Committee was finalized, and the first meeting was held on 3 May 2007. Four meetings were held during 2007 and the Committee considered a range of policy and change management matters, and received regular reports regarding OH&S and Equity initiatives, and staff development programs and opportunities.

On 6 February 2008 the University was advised that the Minister for Education and Workplace Relations had approved that the University's application had demonstrated its compliance with the HEWRRs as of 31 August 2007. The

additional 7.5% funding has now been incorporated into the University's budget.

### **Australian Workplace Agreements**

In accordance with the requirements of the Higher Education Workplace Reform Requirements (HEWRRs), the University continued to offer all staff members the opportunity to have their employment conditions regulated by an Australian Workplace Agreement (AWA). During 2007 several staff requested that the University enter into an AWA which provided the staff member with a particular benefit (eg. the encashment of leave). In 2007 some 1,116 AWA offers were made, 246 personalised AWAs were sent to staff for their consideration, and 98 AWAs were lodged with the Federal Workplace Authority. On the election of the new government in late 2007, the new Minister announced that AWAs were to be dispensed with as soon as possible in 2008.

## ***PREOD Restructure***

Personnel Relations and Equal Opportunity Directorate (PREOD) is divided into five functional units that have the following broad responsibilities:

### **Office of the Director**

Provides overall leadership and direction to the Directorate. Plans, manages, co-ordinates and oversees all Directorate activities.

### **Personnel Relations and Equal Opportunity Consultancy Services**

Personnel Relations and Equal Opportunity Directorate Consultancy Services assist staff and managers to work through a range of

employment issues relating to recruitment, staff performance, change management, workers compensation and rehabilitation. This is done through the provision of advice, training and coaching on employment policy and procedures relating to the various industrial instruments, policies and procedures.

Consultants are located on the McAuley at Banyo Campus, Mount Saint Mary Campus, MacKillop Campus and St Patrick's Campus. Consultancy Services to Aquinas Campus are provided through the consultant based at St Patrick's Campus, and, to Signadou Campus through the consultant based at MacKillop Campus.

### **Workforce Remuneration, Planning and Systems**

Develops policy and procedures relating to workforce planning, remuneration and benefits and HR systems.

The Workforce Planning Unit analyses data collected through various HR Systems managed within the Directorate to meet internal and external reporting requirements and to support organisational units across the University undertake workforce planning.

The Remuneration and Benefits Unit provides services across a range of employment and payment related matters including payroll, superannuation and salary packaging.

The HR Systems Unit develops and maintains HR systems to support the work of the staff, supervisors and PREOD. These systems include the University's HRMIS, PayGlobal, Staff Connect and PageUp. The HR Systems Unit works with other University systems areas to support, where applicable, integration of data stored across the University.

The PREOD Support Unit undertakes the administrative processes to support the creation

of all payment outcomes. Processes include recruitment administration; leave administration, casual employment administration, timesheet and other related salary payments, salary deductions, recognition of prior service, significant date follow up, and, separations.

### **Organisational Learning and Development**

Develops policy and procedures relating to learning and development and provides targeted learning opportunities for general staff and managers including formal internal and external courses, lunch box sessions and study support. Develops induction programs for staff and supervisors including a web-based induction program, of courses for all new staff. Develops and offers an annual training and development program for staff and managers. Monitors and reports on compliance training programs on behalf of the Core Planning Group.

### **Employment Relations and Compliance**

Develops policy and procedures relating to employment relations and compliance including Occupational Health Safety and Wellbeing, and, Equity and Diversity. Supports the University's industrial negotiation processes. Liaises, as necessary, with employer and employee associations and/or lawyers to prepare and provides advice across a broad range of employee relations issues.

### **Senior Recruitment**

PREOD was involved in the recruitment of five highly significant senior appointments during 2007:

- Allan Myers Chair of Law
- Fethullah Gulen Chair in the Study of Islam and Muslim-Catholic
- Professor of Educational Leadership
- Director of the Institute for Advancement of Teaching and Learning
- Vice-Chancellor

## ***Organisational Learning and Development***

### **EO & OHS (Equal Opportunity and Occupational Health & Safety) Induction**

The EO&OHS sessions were introduced and run for the first time in 2007. This three hour session is part of the orientation program for all staff and is mandatory for new staff to attend. These sessions were held on four campuses - MacKillop, Mount St. Mary, St. Patrick's and McAuley at Banyo during the beginning of June. A total of 80 employees participated. The sessions are designed to provide staff with information about the legislation and policies relating to EO and OH&S at ACU National including, what is expected of them as an employee and who they can go to for assistance. It also provides staff with the opportunity to ask about any aspect of EO or OH&S that may be of concern to them. The EO section of this session complements the on-line Workplace Harassment and Discrimination module that new staff are also required to complete.

### **Information Sessions – Changes to HR Policies**

A one-hour session for all supervisors was planned across 4 campuses of MacKillop, Mount St. Mary, St. Patrick's and McAuley in the beginning of June, focusing on the recent changes to HR policies relating to developing and rewarding performance and Induction. The information sessions were designed for all new and existing nominated and assistant supervisors (including Academic staff) who supervise general and/or academic staff. The sessions covered Performance Development Program (PDP) for General Staff, Rewarding Excellence in Performance for General Staff and Induction for all new staff. A total of 54 supervisors attended this session.

### **Job Evaluation and DWM for Classification Committee**

Two three-day workshops on Job Evaluation and DWM Descriptors were conducted in North Sydney in May for all members of the General Staff Classification Committee. The workshops were facilitated by the Hay Group and with internal facilitators. The sessions were designed to train the Committee in the use of the Hay Group Job Evaluation Methodology as well as the DWM Descriptors. A total of 27 supervisors and staff were trained during the three day workshops.

### **Planning for Retirement**

An external company, Sageco, was selected to conduct a series of 'Planning for Retirement' sessions for ACU National. Five full day workshops were conducted at the MacKillop, Mount St. Mary, St. Patrick's, McAuley at Banyo and Aquinas campuses. These workshops were offered to all staff and supervisors who were 55 years of age and older and could be expected to be contemplating retirement in the next few years. This follows the introduction of the Pathways to Retirement suite of policies and the information sessions that were held across ACU National in late 2006. The workshops were very well received and a total of 68 employees attended these workshops, of which 12 staff were accompanied by their spouses/partners. The University also purchased a one year license to access the retirement website of Sageco titled 'sagecentre'. This website is a one stop resource for any member of the University who wants to access more information relating to retirement or if they are contemplating a change in their work life.

### **Selecting the Best**

The Selecting the Best workshop was introduced for the first time in 2007. This half-day workshop is aimed at general and academic staff who are likely to be a participant on

selection panels. It is designed to provide the participants with a clear understanding of their responsibilities and the skills to effectively undertake their role as a panel member. This training meets the requirements of the Recruitment and Selection Policy, which stipulates that all staff, general and academic, who will be part of a selection panel, are trained. From April 2009, there is a requirement for a selection panel to have 50% of the panel trained in "Selecting the Best" (and/or Role of Chair)

### **Grievance Management for Staff Information Sessions**

Further information about the University's Grievance Management Policy and procedures was placed on the PREOD website, and lunchbox sessions about grievance management for staff and supervisors were held. In 2007, four formal grievances were notified to the University and it is understood that several other grievances were resolved at the local level.

In addition, support for staff has been increased via the online training modules. During 2007 staff continued to complete the University's compulsory on-line training programs on Workplace Behaviour:

The "Workplace Discrimination and Harassment – Legal Compliance" unit, and

The "Workplace Behaviour – Bullying" unit.

The aim of the on-line learning program is to improve the knowledge and understanding of University staff on these issues in order to prevent discriminatory or bullying behaviour from occurring in the ACU workplace and learning community. By the end of 2007, over 90% of staff had completed the Workplace Discrimination and Harassment unit, and approximately 85% of staff had completed the Workplace Behaviour – Bullying unit.

### **Lunch Box Sessions for General Staff**

In 2007, the Lunch Box sessions were well attended. The convenience of attending a one hour session with the added advantage of communicating with staff on a national basis has proven to be a successful form of education.

The Lunch Box sessions have proved to be popular, once again, with approximately 98 staff attending. These will continue to be offered in 2008. The topics covered Supervisors in 2007 included:

- Performance Development processes,
- New Staff Induction Process,
- Change Management and IR Issues,
- Staff Probation,
- Staff Connect.

The topics covered for staff in 2007 included:

- AWA Process,
- Performance Development Program,
- VC Development Award,
- Study Assistance,
- Pathways to Retirement,
- Grievance Management,
- Staff Connect.

The topics covered for both Supervisors and Staff together included:

- Record-Keeping,
- Classification Information.

### **Compliance Training**

In 2007, staff of ACU National made a significant increase in terms of compliance. The online programs – Workplace Behaviour – Bullying, Workplace Discrimination & Harassment and Trade Practices all reached 90% compliance levels with some even higher. Trade Practices has now been released to all staff and all new staff will be required to complete this training also.

Feedback from staff who have undertaken the programs has been positive. Many have said they prefer this style of learning as it is self-

paced and easy to pick up and complete throughout the day.

2008 will see the introduction of the OH&S online courses for supervisors and for all staff.

## ***Occupational Health and Safety***

The University actively supports the health, safety and wellbeing of its staff, students and others involved with ACU National. Local OH&S Committees are responsible for guiding ACU in respect of health, welfare and wellbeing awareness and these committees met regularly throughout 2007. The committees also addressed a variety of OH&S issues that arose throughout the year. Their individual and collective contributions towards making ACU National a safer and healthier workplace is very much appreciated. Minutes of the Committee meetings are communicated to all staff via email.

The functions of the National OHS Committee have now been transferred to the ACU Staff Consultative Committee (ACUSCC) which considers regular reports and provides strategic direction in relation to OHS and Wellbeing matters. Reports from the National OHS and Wellbeing Coordinator are tabled at each ACUSCC meeting.

PREOD has prepared a strategic OHS concept paper for consideration by the University's Senior Executive. The paper outlined the major features of a seamless ACU OH&S Management System and Model and set out key strategic OHS directions, which have now been endorsed by the ACU Core Planning Group. The endorsed OH&S Management Systems/Model and strategic directions now provide the basis for the development of national OH&S policies, guidelines and initiatives

OH&S Induction is given high priority within the university, with local Managers and Supervisors continuing to play an important role in inducting new employees. Further consolidation of the induction process has taken place, with a number of OH&S induction sessions being conducted throughout the year by the National OH&S and Wellbeing Coordinator and Personnel Relations Consultants. Based upon feedback obtained from staff, the OH&S Induction information sessions have now been reviewed and revised for 2008.

ACU's OH&S policy documents are available to all staff via the Personnel Relations and Equal Opportunity Directorate (PREOD) website, thus allowing a more seamless approach to OH&S management within the university. As new policies, procedures and pro-formas are developed or revised and approved, they will also be made available on the PREOD website.

ACCESS Programs continue to provide the Employee Assistance Program (EAP). The EAP Program provides access to confidential professional counselling services for staff and their families and assists staff with any personal or work-related problems. Utilisation of the service is in line with industry average (approximately 4% for 2006/2007) and will continue to be closely monitored to assist the university in better managing its health and safety. A representative from ACCESS Programs addressed a forum for the Heads of School in August 2007 as part of their management assistance program to help Heads of School better understand and manage staff who may be experiencing work-related or personal difficulties. There were a total of 50 users of this system throughout 2007.

During 2007, through the active management of Workers' Compensation claims, a number of the claims were closed. Additionally, the active management of Workers' Compensation claims has meant that the total cost of claims in 2007 fell in comparison, to the cost of claims in 2006.

There has been particular focus on the development and implementation of a National Emergency and Critical Incident Management Response Policy, which is designed to establish processes that may be called upon should an emergency occur, to enable staff and students to react appropriately. Implementation will be completed in 2008.

## ***Staff Equity and Diversity***

During 2007 ACU continued to introduce progressive workplace reforms, consistent with its Mission statement which expresses the University's fundamental concern for justice and equity, and for the dignity of all human beings.

ACU continued to participate in the Australian Research Council funded research project called "Redesigning Work for an Ageing Society" (RW4AS). This project is concerned with the effective management of ageing workforces and it is linked into similar research being conducted in Europe. The project is being managed from the "Business, Work & Ageing Centre for Research" at the Swinburne University of Technology. During June and July staff members were invited to complete the "Workability" staff survey, and were given the option of completing it either on-line or by paper-based copy. The final number of staff who completed the survey was 656, which represents slightly over 50% of total staff numbers and which is considered to be an excellent result. Following an analysis of the findings, the University will be developing pilot intervention strategies for trial throughout 2008.

### **Indigenous Cultural Awareness Training**

The development and delivery of Indigenous Cultural Awareness Training is a major component of the University's Indigenous Employment Strategy. Cultural Awareness training lays foundations for respect and

understanding for individuals working with Indigenous Australians, and is an important step in creating a cultural climate which is conducive for the successful recruitment and retention of Indigenous employees.

The content of the ACU program covered topics including the historical impact of policies and legislation, Indigenous terminology, culture and communication, and a number of interactive activities that focused participants on the contribution they could make to improving employment outcomes for Indigenous Australians.

A total of 103 participants attended training, which was offered at all campuses. The overall evaluation of the workshop was high on the standard evaluation scale, with 90% of participants rating it above the 80% mark. The participants reported that they enjoyed the interactive format, which encouraged challenging discussion amongst the group.

The feedback from staff who attended the training to their colleagues has created a great deal of interest. It is apparent that in line with the University's mission, many ACU staff have a strong personal commitment to supporting a fair and just workplace that respects all individuals and provides opportunities for Indigenous Australians in particular to make a contribution. Further workshops are planned in 2008.

### **Representation of Women in ACU National**

Queensland University of Technology recently released a report entitled "Selected 'inter-institutional gender equity statistics'". This analysis compares the gender representation in Australian Universities, based on DEST data as at 31 March 2006 for various classifications, focusing on the representation of women in senior roles in Australian Higher Education Institutions, both general and academic, in relation to overall representation of women in these areas. The analysis showed that ACU was

consistently in the top three for both overall female representation, and this result was also reflected at a senior level.

It is also very reassuring to note that the ratio of female representation in senior positions was approximately 1.1 (Sector average is .66) for general staff and for academic staff was .85 (Sector average is .58). In the case of academics, the ratio was approximately 1: .85.

This indicates that at ACU women in senior general staff position are represented at a higher level than their male counterparts in senior roles,

and are approaching parity in the academic area.

The report also provides information regarding the overall representation of women academics since 2004, which indicates there has been a steady increase at ACU in all the categories reported. The results speak for themselves, and are clear evidence that the University has taken a leading role in regard to gender equity in Higher Education, this being a highly significant achievement for the University.

## ***Strategic Direction for 2008***

In 2008 the PREOD will continue to focus on core delivery across a range of areas, including:

- Development and/or modification of University employment related policies and procedures. Updating the range of University policies that the ongoing ferment of government industrial reforms have precipitated. The change of Government in November 2007 will not stop this process as the new Labor Government's industrial reforms will set in place yet another round of changes that will need to be integrated and implemented;
- Management and maintenance of HR systems to support the work of PREOD and the broader University community;
- Salary and other staff payments and deductions;
- Leave management;
- Delivery of a learning and development program for general staff and supervisors of staff;
- Consultancy advice, guidance and support to staff and supervisors;
- Ongoing training and support to harassment advisers
- Delivery of national occupational, health and safety policy and procedures and targeted programs; and
- Compliance and other identified reporting both internal and external.
- Monitoring and considering the final Workplace Relations legislation when it is released by the Labor Government in order to provide advice about the implications of these changes for ACU staff and for the higher education sector generally
- Monitoring the Award Modernisation process as the higher education sector

awards are considered priority awards by the Australian Industrial Relations Commission, including consideration of the implications for ACU

- Researching and developing a National Child Protection Policy which takes into account the different legislative requirements in Queensland, NSW, Victoria and the ACT.

The delivery of core activities must remain the bedrock of focus for PREOD in the context of a changing industrial climate that will continue to impact upon the University in 2008.

In addition to core activities a number of key projects have been identified for development and/or implementation commencing in 2008.

The key projects focus around improvements to policy, procedure and systems and also seek to address areas of identified risk to the University.

Key projects include the following:

### **1. Finalising the PREOD restructure**

In 2007, the Personnel Relations and Equal Opportunity Directorate (PREOD) is in the penultimate phase of implementing its restructure, in line with the "PREOD Restructuring Document Set – May 2007," approved by Core Planning Group.

The first step in the placement process was for all continuing staff who were currently appointed to a position within PREOD to be considered for placement in the new structure prior to consideration of fixed-term staff. This step was finalised by the end of 2007 and all continuing staff were placed, with no re-deployment process required for any continuing staff member within the PREOD.

The second steps included the placement of a number of fixed-term staff members who had

undergone a previous merit based recruitment and selection process at ACU National, and these staff were directly placed into vacant positions at grade within the structure.

Subsequent steps have included the advertising of all vacant positions for staff to either apply for a promotional opportunity or for placement; if they were a fixed-term staff member not yet placed in the structure; and, the advertisement of all vacant positions internally and externally in line with normal recruitment and selection processes. The process continued into 2008.

### **2. Updating PayGlobal and Staff Connect**

A significant upgrade to the PayGlobal system in the first half of 2008 will provide the Directorate with certain time-saving efficiencies relating to the cyclical payroll process. The newer version (1.94) is a non-exclusive access release, meaning that certain cyclical processing tasks no longer require all users (except one) out of the system so that these tasks can run. Therefore the system can continue to be utilised during these traditional downtimes.

### **3. Provision of ATO data on line to support E-Tax**

The University has approved the participation of a trial with the Australian Taxation Office where PREOD will upload end of tax year Payment Summary data directly to the ATO which will result in the pre-filling of the staff member's electronic tax return. This trial will result in much tighter deadlines for production of information and taxation reconciliation for PREOD but will be very convenient for staff, who submit their tax return electronically, either themselves or through a tax agent.

In addition to the Pre-filling of tax returns, the University will also commence the electronic upload of Tax File Number Declarations. This will take place before the taxation pre-fill trial to enable any system issues to be resolved before the end of the financial year.

The University is currently awaiting the necessary system approvals to be issued by the ATO before commencing implementation.

### **4. Implementing workforce Planning Procedures - as a pilot**

The University approved a plan, prepared by PREOD, for the implementation of workforce planning at ACU National. The plan will ensure that workforce planning will initially be focused on those organisational units, services and positions that have the greatest impact on the University's mission. Workforce planning will be conducted in the three Faculties, the International Education and ACUcom organisational units, and in those organisational units that directly support teaching and research. Workforce planning at ACU National will be implemented in three stages from 2008.

### **5. Developing a People and Culture Plan as a response to the ACU National Strategic Plan for operation within the University**

The senior management team of the Personnel Relations and Equal Opportunities Directorate began work on drafting a People and Culture plan for ACU National in 2007. This initiative will extend into 2008 and be completed in time to support the AUQA review in 2008. The plan is to be one of a number of institution-wide University's strategic plans relevant to the institution as a whole. As a consequence, once the first draft of the plan is accepted by the Vice Chancellor and the Core Planning Group, it will need to be put out for wide consultation within the University community.

### **6. Preparation for the next round enterprise bargaining**

Throughout 2007, preparations continued for the next round of enterprise bargaining which is due to commence in late 2008. This included preliminary research on a range of employment related issues and consideration of the effectiveness of a range of individual clauses within the Australian Catholic University Staff Enterprise Agreement, 2005 – 2008.

## **7. Implementing an E-Recruitment solution**

Electronic Recruitment (E-Recruitment) is an integrated information system used to acquire, store, manipulate, analyse, retrieve and distribute pertinent information regarding the management of recruitment and selection processes and enables many of the processes to be managed electronically. Such a system is designed to achieve a range of quality improvements and cost efficiencies across ACU National.

The Core Planning Group, in May 2007, approved the Personnel Relations and Equal Opportunity Directorate (PREOD) recommendation to implement an E-Recruitment solution for ACU National and the University has engaged the services of system vendor, PageUp, to assist with this implementation. This represents an exciting new initiative for the University. An E-Recruitment Steering Committee, which includes members from a cross-section of University areas, has been established to oversee the strategic progression of the project.

### **The following four broad areas form part of the initial phase of the E-Recruitment project:**

**7.1.** On-line recruitment requisition process with associated electronic workflow – Nominated Supervisors will be able to initiate a recruitment request that will follow a tailored electronic approval workflow via the appropriate delegated officers of the University. The information stored can be utilized for many purposes including, direct forwarding of documentation to relevant advertising agencies.

**7.2.** Applicant management system – Applicants interested in applying for an identified position or for registering to receive notification about future employment opportunities at the University will be able, via an intuitive yet powerful web interface, submit their application, access information on its progress, and use the search

functionality, anywhere and at anytime, assuming the user has computer access.

**7.3.** Management of the recruitment and selection process will be standardised and supported by automated communication to applicants about the progress of an application; applications will be distributed to selection committees electronically; and associated recruitment and selection forms and processes will be completed in real time.

**7.4.** Management reporting – The system will capture data to assist with internal and external reporting requirements, including benchmarking measures and workforce profiling exercises which will assist the University in making decisions about the effective placement of advertisements for employment opportunities.

The contract between the University and PageUp was entered into in July 2007. Work has commenced on the configuration of the system for ACU National. The functional specifications have been finalised and are currently with PageUp for development. After a period of testing and training, system roll out will occur in a phased approach commencing with the launch of the ACU Careers website in the latter half of 2008.

## **8. Developing a range of OH&S / Wellbeing policies and programs**

In 2008 there will be a focus on developing a range of OH&S/Wellbeing policies and programs for staff. These will include programs such as offering all staff the opportunity to receive influenza vaccination at the University's expense in order to promote the wellbeing of staff by minimizing their the risk of exposure to the virus.

Other wellbeing initiatives will be researched and it is anticipated that several initiatives will be developed from the Workability Study. Such initiatives will be offered and trialed as appropriate.

### **9. Implementing Web-Based Induction**

In 2008 – OL&D will be implementing the web-based induction program to assist staff members in becoming familiar with the information contained on the web. It also encourages staff members to be proactive in finding information about ACU National and becoming self-reliant. This style of Induction also includes helpful checklists that enable the supervisor to prepare for the arrival of a new staff member and systematically take them through a range of important steps on starting employment with the University. These steps are integral and significant with regard to the Mission and the culture of ACU National in general. Supervisors are encouraged to interact with new staff members, early and to continue to assist the transition into the new role. This interaction also provides a good base for setting up the Performance Development Program towards the end of the new staff member's first three months of service.

### **10. Develop/finalise National Child Protection Policy Project**

The project objective is to ensure that ACU National has policies and procedures in place that ensure the safety and wellbeing of children and young people in the care of its staff members. Major actions of the project include:

- **Investigation of current compliance with Child Protection Legislation at all campuses** – Managers of University staff members who are involved in working with children and young people have been contacted on each campus and processes are underway to ensure checks are completed where required. A monitoring system is being developed to ensure there is ongoing compliance.
- **Develop ACU National Child Protection Policy** – The Draft policy is being updated to incorporate legislative changes following receipt of legal advice. Child Protection processes for Victoria, New South Wales, Queensland and the Australian Capital

Territory will be included with the policy document. These processes also require amendment due to legislative changes.

- **Investigate the viability of adopting a National Risk Management Strategy** – It is important to conduct Working with Children checks where appropriate, but there is also a need to support the checks with strategies that minimise risk to children and young people who are on University campuses. A national Risk Management Strategy is being developed which will include a simple, user friendly checklist and record keeping processes to ensure that potential risks are considered and appropriate strategies are put in place.

### **11. Roll out VC's Determinations for Senior Staff and Teachers in Centres**

Several staff members of the University, including senior staff and teachers in Centres such as ACUCom, are not covered by the provisions of *the ACU Staff Enterprise Agreement, 2005 – 2008*. The objective of this Project is to advise Senior Staff and Teachers in Centres of the details of their conditions of employment which are specified in the Determination for Senior Staff and in the Determination for Teachers in Centres.

### **12. High Risk Work Activities**

A national guideline is being researched and it will identify high risk work activities at ACU and provide advice about the associated safety issues. The types of activities to be covered will include working from heights, working in confined spaces, working alone and/or in remote locations, and/or in hot/cold environments and also working with non-ionising radiation.

### **13. Develop OH&S/Wellbeing Proposal**

An OH&S Wellbeing Proposal will be researched with consideration to be given to the development of a National ACU Wellbeing Statement. Recommendations for interventions which are obtained from the Redesigning Work

for Ageing Society Survey Report will be considered as a part of the statement's development.

#### **14. Development of Delivery of Terms and Conditions of Employment Induction Module**

As part of the Organisation Learning and Development Program, the Organisational Learning and Development Unit (OL&D) in conjunction with consultancy services & Employment Relations and Compliance Unit developed a series of inductions sessions entitled *Terms and Conditions of Employment* to be delivered in 2008. This is part of a series of orientation sessions designed to introduce new staff to the University including information about aspects of their responsibilities as employees to the University. The *Terms and Conditions of Employment* session provides information about the general conditions of employment, including information about payroll, types of leave, policies, industrial agreements, study support, financial assistance and accessing employment information through Staff Connect. It also gives new staff the opportunity to ask questions about any aspect of their employment.

The early sessions that were conducted were received positively, overall. However, on the basis of participant feedback, some minor adjustments have been made to the content of the sessions. In addition, it is planned to run sessions more frequently throughout 2008 to ensure that new staff are able to attend within a short time of their commencement with ACU National.

#### **15. Research Delegations of Authority Models**

The Register of Staffing Delegations was last updated in 2003 and certain gaps and overlaps have been identified which require consideration and updating. PREOD will research various models of Staffing Delegations in the higher education sector, including on-line examples, in order to provide options for an updated Delegations of Authority document. This

process will by necessity need to link into the Vice-Chancellor's change program.

#### **16. Critical Incidents and Emergency Response Rollout**

Throughout 2007 research was undertaken towards developing a national approach to dealing with any Critical Incidents or Emergencies which may happen on an ACU Campus. The proposal will pilot having a general security number (which will be the same number for all campuses) and each campus will also need to develop and implement its own Campus Crisis Response Plan within national guidelines parameters.

#### **17. Laboratory Safety**

As ACU National has several different types of laboratories which are used for both teaching and research purposes, the University will develop a consistent framework for laboratory safety. A National Guideline will be drafted and feedback will be sought from Heads of Schools and also from the OH&S Committees prior to finalising this Policy document.

#### **18. Staff opinion Survey**

The development and implementation of a 'staff opinion' survey, VOICE, will assist and provide insights into the culture and climate of the University and identify areas for effective workforce management initiatives

#### **19. Health and Wellbeing Survey**

It is proposed that the University undertake a Health and Wellbeing Survey of its staff in 2008. This is likely to occur after VOICE survey has been implemented and the Voice Survey's report and advice from the Redesigning Work from an Ageing Society Survey will both assist in the development of staff health and wellbeing initiatives as well as personal health maintenance.

## **20. Automated Performance Management System**

The identification of a strategic electronic performance management solution to assist in cascading individual plans to organisational objectives and to streamline the paper-based process would enable the University to implement and manage this important area more effectively. The intention being to reduce manual processing and to enhance overall management and monitoring of the programs, in particular, by providing the University with evidence based information.

## **21. Qualifications Audit**

Undertaking an audit to verify qualification records held by the University which will be used to update the University's HRIS and used for University publications ensures that the University is meeting all of the necessary

requirements, especially as these relate to Trade Practices legislations.

## **22. Support development of an Integrated Data Warehouse**

Participation in a Commonwealth funded collaborative project with the University of Southern Queensland and Swinburne University of Technology to develop with ACU stakeholders the relevant data and data definitions to support an ACU integrated data warehouse and management information dashboard. Through this initiative, the University hopes to be better able to manage data from a broad range of existing systems to inform planning and decision-making, assure quality provision of programs and services and better utilise resources.

## 2007 in Summary

The following selected figures provide an indication of the expanding volume and range of work with which PREOD has been involved, to some degree, in delivering service to the University during 2007 as compared to 2006 and 2005. The simple statistics show a steady and continuing increase in activity within PREOD over the last three years and attest the diversity and wide-ranging level of service provision by the Directorate.

Details	2005	2006	2007
Total number of staff employed on a permanent (non casual) and on-going basis (including fractional)	954	985	1031
Total number of continuing employees	722	675	683
Number of General Staff	526	553	576
Number of Academic Staff	428	432	455
Number of Casual General Staff	357 (16.5 fte)	372 (16.8 fte)	385 (26.4 fte)
Number of Casual Academic Staff	1736 (203.3 fte)	1601 (202.6 fte)	1665 (259.1 fte)
Number of Women	617	642	674
Number of Men	337	343	357
Number of staff of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Island descent	11	10	11
Number of advertised positions	117	170	179
Number of separations	158	135	152
Number of internal staff appointed to an advertised position	38	52	48
Number of staff attendances at internal training courses (including lunchbox sessions and on-line training)	848	1767	3563
Number of General Staff utilising Study Support / Financial Assistance	34 \$10,668	33 \$9,229	26 \$11,062
Number of participants in the Scholarship Program: Frontline Management Course – Cert IV (introduced in 2006)	N/A	7	7
Number of new policies prepared or significant changes made to existing policies (A large number of revised policies were to remove ambiguity, provide clarification, ensure consistency within and between policies or to accommodate further changes necessitated by the WorkChoices legislation in 2007)	104	36	5(new) 63 (revised)
Total number of standard payments made to staff	33,696	35,146	36,774
Total number of manual payments including Annual Leave Loading Payments made to staff	1189	1223	1,339
Total number of stipends payments made to Religious Members of the University (moved from monthly to quarterly)	378	351	230

## Who to Contact in PREOD

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