

COMMENT



I WOULD like to warmly welcome all of our students to the 2009 university year. In particular, I extend a special welcome to those of you who are commencing your studies this year.

We recognise that the first days and weeks at university can be a little bewildering to newcomers as you learn to find your way around our campuses, navigate our systems, locate your lecture theatres, secure your tutorial allocations, and familiarise yourself with the community and recreational facilities which are available.

So, take a little time and please do not hesitate to ask for assistance.

All of us at QUT are keen to provide you, our students, with a great university experience - so I do encourage you to take advantage of the feedback opportunities which will be available to you, to let us know what you think of the quality of teaching and courses and the adequacy and efficiency of the various support services which are available.

We are also in the midst of major upgrade of our buildings and

facilities. In recent years, a wonderful transformation of our facilities has been underway at Kelvin Grove and the work will continue this year with a major upgrading of our library on that campus.

New teaching and support facilities have been completed at our campus at Caboolture (which we share with the Brisbane North Institute of TAFE).

Meanwhile, at Gardens Point a major building program is proposed over the next few years.

It will commence this year with the upgrading of many of our teaching and research laboratories as well as completing the restoration of Old Government House, and continue over the next three years with the development of a major new Science and Technology Precinct and Community Hub.

Once again, on behalf of all our colleagues, I welcome you to QUT and hope that you have a great set of experiences here.

Professor Peter Coaldrake
Vice-Chancellor

VC Scholar hits right note

Scholarships

WITH his OP 1, Callum Weeks, pictured, could have chosen almost any degree he wanted, but it was a love of music and teaching that drove him to a Creative Industries double degree at QUT in 2009.

Callum, who has also earned a Vice-Chancellor's Scholarship, said it was easy to decide on a Bachelor of Music/ Graduate Diploma in Education degree.

"People ask why I'm doing music education when I have an OPI and tell me I should be studying medicine or law," Callum said.

"But if you are studying something

for four years and are going to give it your all as a profession, it should be something you love."

Growing up in a musical household, Callum has held a guitar ever since he can remember, and began formal music lessons on the bass guitar in Year 9 at Redlands College.

He plays in a rock band with former classmates, which has entered "battle of the bands" competition over the past three years and is currently preparing to record a demo - and decide on a band name!

Callum plans to work part-time teaching guitar in the Redlands area to supplement his studies.

"I really enjoy teaching and helping people to learn," he said.

"I love finding different ways to appeal to individual learning styles. Some people learn visually while others pick things up aurally, it's a rewarding challenge."

Callum said receiving a Vice-Chancellor's scholarship was a great honour and would help to cover his study fees.

"It is such a stress off to receive the scholarship and know I won't have a debt," he said.

"It's also a great opportunity to accelerate my degree."

Callum received one of 200 scholarships available annually to OP 1 and 2 students in the \$2.3 million Vice-Chancellor's Scholarship Program.



Taking academia to the people

QUT lecturers and researchers are being urged to join the university's online Expert Guide to help share their knowledge with the general public via the media.

The QUT Expert Guide (www.expertguide.qut.edu.au) is a searchable online resource that provides information on leading QUT academics and their fields of expertise.

The portal is managed by QUT's Marketing and Communication Department and aims to link journalists across the country with the best QUT brains.

The resulting news stories can help build the university's profile and the academic's profile, and are also part of QUT's engagement with the wider community and its sharing of knowledge.

The QUT Expert Guide is also connected to a wider national expert database that features more than 20 Australian universities.

Lecturers and researchers interested in joining or updating their details can contact QUT's media manager - astradadzis@qut.edu.au.

Senior appointments



New ombudsman to hear student matters

QUT's new student ombudsman is Ray Morley.

Mr Morley brings more than 40 years of tertiary education experience to the role, and since 1995 he has been QUT's

director of Student Administration, Student Services and Student Support Services Departments.

Mr Morley was instrumental in establishing QUT's First Year Experience program and has researched the student experience in many studies.

As student ombudsman, Mr Morley will independently and confidentially address issues and grievances raised by coursework students, usually about academic or administrative decisions.



Learning research expert is new assistant dean

DR Nan Bahr has been appointed as the QUT Faculty of Education's new assistant dean (teaching and learning).

Associate Professor Bahr took up her role at the end of January and was formerly the University of Queensland's director of teacher education.

She has expertise in learning research, particularly in music, and research related to adolescence, middle

years of schooling and teacher education.

She also consults across the education sector.



Kaplan takes reins of science & technology

PROFESSOR Simon Kaplan has been appointed the first executive dean of QUT's new Faculty of Science and Technology.

He took up the post on January 1 this year when the new faculty became operational.

Professor Kaplan joined QUT in 2004 as the Faculty of Information Technology executive dean.

He began his academic career at the University of Cape Town, South Africa, where he undertook his computer science PhD and was a lecturer. He has taught at the French National Institute for Research in Computer Science and Control (INRIA) and the University of Illinois, United States.

Before he joined QUT, Professor Kaplan was head of the School of Information Technology and Electrical Engineering at the University of Queensland.

The new Faculty of Science and Technology is an amalgamation of the existing Faculties of Science and Information Technology, which is a key initiative in the strategic strengthening and renewal of QUT's endeavours in the science and technology disciplines.

Driving change

Biofuel research

AUSTRALIA'S only biofuel performance research facility is stepping up a gear in the race to cut Australia's dependence on fossil fuels.

Dr Richard Brown, from QUT's new Biofuel Engine Research Facility, said the facility would test the emissions, efficiency and engine performance of renewable fuel made from plant material.

"We will test ethanol made from waste sugar cane and grain and biodiesel made from food-based material such as canola oil, waste cooking oil and tallow as well as

biodiesel made from algae, waste timber, green waste and sugarcane waste," Dr Brown said.

There'll be another landmark moment this month when the Syngenta Centre for Sugarcane Biofuel Development is officially opened at Gardens Point.

The centre is the result of a collaborative agreement between QUT's Centre for Tropical Crops and Biocommodities, QUT's commercialisation arm bluebox, the local biotech start-up Farmacule BioIndustries, and Syngenta - the world's largest integrated agribusiness company.

- Niki Widdowson



QUT's Dr Zoran Ristovski with Dr John Cole from the Office of Clean Energy.