01 Message from DVC I&D

It is a busy and exciting time as we approach the end of another calendar year. Recent graduation ceremonies in Hong Kong, Malaysia and Singapore saw the awarding of RMIT University testamurs to over 2,500 students, which is evidence of the strength of our ongoing relationships in the region.

We are now looking forward to the upcoming graduations at RMIT Vietnam in November, and Melbourne in December. There is always a lot of work to be done in preparation for these major events, but the satisfaction gained from seeing another cohort of students achieving their educational goals and moving to the next phase of their careers makes all the hard work worthwhile.

RMIT’s educational partners have had some considerable achievements during 2010: the Shanghai Institute of Foreign Trade celebrated its 50 year anniversary; Edutrust certification was granted to the Singapore Institute of Management and SMa Institute of Higher Learning; and Taylor’s University (previously Taylor’s University College) in Malaysia was granted full university status, just to name a few.

We extend our congratulations on the achievement of these milestones and I would like to thank all our offshore partners, both staff and students, for their hard work and commitment during 2010.

Stephen Connelly
Deputy Vice-Chancellor and Vice-President International and Development

02 Hong Kong Art School exhibition

The Graduation Exhibition by Bachelor of Arts (Fine Art) students —This Way Up— was successfully launched at the Pao Galleries, Hong Kong Arts Centre on 6 July 2010. The exhibition kicked off with an opening ceremony on 5 July attended by students and staff, including guest of honour Professor Elizabeth Grierson, Head of the School of Art, RMIT University and Mr. Felix Leung, Director of Hong Kong Art School. The exhibition which ran until 31 July featured the work of 34 graduates from the BFA program and gave an insight into themes and issues of concern to emerging artists in the Asian region.

03 Blackboard is changing!

RMIT is upgrading its Learning Management System (Blackboard) to the latest version 9.1, which will provide a significant improvement for all users and a far more contemporary ‘fit for purpose’ system. Blackboard 9.1 has a wide range of new features for teaching, assessment, student work and course management that many staff and students have been wanting.

The new look Blackboard 9.1 introduces flexible and customisable options to improve the teacher/student experience and uses a contemporary web interface of a standard that students expect and are familiar with. The way that instructors interact with the site will be simplified and improved.

All existing Blackboard shells will be automatically moved to the new system, so you will still have access to the valuable content that has already been created. All staff teaching into RMIT courses will be provided with detailed instructions on the changes to basic functionality and student guides will also be updated. Staff and students will access the new version from 1 January 2011.

Please visit www.rmit.edu.au/blackboardupgrade for further information.

A reminder that during the Australian holiday period the University will be closed from 25 December 2010 to 3 January 2011. The University will reopen on Tuesday 4 January 2011.
04  AIEC Conference Sydney

The Transnational Education team recently attended the 24th annual Australian International Education Conference (AIEC) in Sydney. Many of you will be familiar with the conference which is held annually and attracts pre-eminent speakers and presenters from around the world. This year’s conference provided an excellent opportunity for the exchange of valuable information and ideas that is so important in the ever changing international education landscape. The theme, Engaging for the Future, focused on the future of international education over the next 25 years and attracted over 1,300 Australian and international delegates working in higher, secondary, English language and vocational education, government and non-government agencies, the corporate sector and multilateral funding agencies.

There was a strong showing by RMIT staff, with two members of the TNE team—Scott Crighton and Caryn Nery—presenting a paper looking at management strategies around transnational education activity. Other presentations covered topics as diverse as international student engagement through new media, and enhancing connections with international alumni.

Whilst there are some challenges ahead, and international education is undergoing a transformation in light of changes to the business, economic, social and regulatory environments in which we operate, there are also opportunities to work more closely with our partners to forge new directions for the future.

The conference is open to all our offshore partners and we look forward seeing some of you at the 25th anniversary AIEC in South Australia in 2011.

05  Offshore graduations 2010

Graduation ceremonies have recently been held for RMIT University students studying with our partners in Hong Kong and Singapore.

At the Singapore Institute of Management (SIM) ceremonies testamurs were presented to more than 2,200 graduates from SIM—RMIT programs. This was the largest cohort of graduates to date, with five ceremonies over two days. Over the past 23 years nearly 20,000 students have graduated from SIM with RMIT diploma, undergraduate and postgraduate degrees, making it RMIT’s largest and most established overseas partner. As John Ngan Fung Cheung, Bachelor of Business (Marketing) graduate, noted:

“The SIM—RMIT program has enriched my personal development by providing technical knowledge and practical know-how … the project work undertaken in the program has further enhanced my teamwork and leadership skills. I am now confident in seeking my future career”

The Hong Kong ceremony was sponsored by RMIT and included graduates from a number of partner institutions including the Hong Kong Management Association (HKMA), Superguide Consultants, Vocational Training Council (SHAPE), the Mandarin Oriental Hotel Group and the Hong Kong Arts Centre. There were more than 480 RMIT graduates, almost 400 of them from the three programs offered in partnership with HKMA.

HKMA is RMIT’s second largest partner and has been delivering undergraduate business programs since 1994. Professor Joyce Krk, Acting Vice-Chancellor and President, congratulated students and thanked RMIT’s Hong Kong partner institutions.

‘As graduating RMIT students, you can be confident that your qualification has international recognition, assuring future employers that you are ready to work across markets and across cultures.’

06  Congratulations to Taylor’s University!

Taylor’s University recently announced its upgrade by the Ministry of Higher Education, Malaysia to full university status. Taylor’s University (formerly Taylor’s University College) is a long-established RMIT University partner, offering RMIT computer science degrees. Established in 1969, the University is one of Malaysia’s oldest and most reputable private higher education institutions. The certificate was awarded to Professor Dato’ Dr Hassan Said, President and Vice-Chancellor of Taylor’s University, who noted:

“We are happy to receive University status which will further enhance our standing and enable us to better compete globally. It is indeed a mark of recognition and trust from the Ministry of Higher Education and further reiterates our acceptance as a respected institution of higher learning.

“As one of Malaysia’s oldest and most reputable private education institutions, Taylor’s plays a strong role in developing our nation’s human resource capital. Currently, we have a 65,000-strong alumnus which continues to grow annually, and many of these Taylorians are now leaders in their respective fields. We will continue to work closely with the Ministry of Higher Education towards placing Malaysia as the Regional Hub and Centre of Excellence in Education.’

Our congratulations to Taylor’s University, and we look forward to many more years in partnership delivering quality higher education programs.

07  Management of Results Policy

On 1 January 2010 the University introduced a new Management of Results Policy. The new policy ensures a university-wide approach for managing student results and recording student performance in a course. Under the new policy there have been some changes to the interim and final student grades that are now valid for use.

Full details on the new policy and grading structure can be found on the RMIT website www.rmit.edu.au/students/grading and we would encourage staff to make themselves familiar with the changes.