



Annual Report 1997

Report of the Council
of the Royal Melbourne Institute of Technology
for the period 1 January to 31 December 1997

To the Honourable Phil Honeywood MLA, Minister for Tertiary Education and Training:

In pursuance of the provisions of the *Financial Management Act* 1984, the Council of the Royal Melbourne Institute of Technology has the honour to transmit to you RMIT's annual report for the year ended 31 December 1997.

Sam Smorgon AO
Chancellor

9 April 1998

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Introduction

RMIT University emphasises education for employment, and does research that uses technology to solve real-world problems. RMIT offers a fully integrated range of courses from VET apprenticeships, certificates and diplomas to bachelor degrees, graduate certificate and diplomas, masters by research or course work, and professional or research doctorates. With around forty-five thousand students, RMIT is Australia's largest multi-level university.

RMIT University is a leader in the export of education and training services. Its campus in Penang, Malaysia, is the first of its kind in Asia. Links with universities and colleges around the world allow RMIT staff and students to participate in exchanges, study-abroad programs, and co-operative teaching and learning programs. By 2002 at least one-quarter of all students will complete part of their RMIT course overseas.

The city campus is located at the northern end of Swanston Walk, next to Melbourne Central Station and the State Library of Victoria. The main body of the campus occupies two whole city blocks, though several faculties are located in buildings elsewhere in the city centre.

The Bundoora campus is about twenty-five kilometres north-east of the city centre, on the fringe of suburban Melbourne. In contrast to the city campus, RMIT Bundoora is set in extensive parkland. The university has invested more than eighteen million dollars in developing the Bundoora campus (acquired in 1992) to fulfil RMIT's commitment to education in the northern metropolitan region.

RMIT University has Co-operative Research Centres for advanced composite structures, intelligent decision systems, intelligent manufacturing systems, polymer blends, and water quality and treatment. It hosts national Key Centres for applied and nutritional toxicology and knowledge-based systems, the Australian Housing and Urban Research Institute (AHURI), and the eMERGE Co-operative Multimedia Centre.

Established as the Working Men's College in 1887, RMIT became a university on 1 July 1992 under the *Royal Melbourne Institute of Technology Act 1992*.

1997 at RMIT University

January

The exhibition 'Images of Korea' is opened by Professor Bill Gregory, Dean of the Faculty of Art, Design and Communication, at RMIT's Building 94. This is a collection of illustrations from the Seoul Illustrators' Council. This month RMIT University is also curator of 'Aurora', an exhibition of wood, metal, glass, fibre and ceramic work by sixteen artists.

The Strategic and Financial Planning Group implements a new chart of accounts and other financial reforms. A new travel policy and related accounting system through American Express allows better management analysis of staff travel activities.

The Human Resources Management Group's 'alignment project' commences. The project will identify how key human resource management practices and policies align with

RMIT University's strategic objectives and directions.

February

A twinning agreement with the Civil Aviation Flying College of China and a memorandum of understanding (MOU) with the Civil Aviation Authority of China (CAAC) are signed at the international air show held at Laverton airport near Geelong. Under the twinning agreement thirty Chinese pilots will attend RMIT University's Point Cook flight training centre, starting in August 1997. Under the MOU groups of twenty CAAC employees will enrol in the RMIT University Master of Aviation Management program, starting in March 1998.

Over one hundred senior students and staff, including the Vice-Chancellor, gather in RMIT Storey Hall to welcome four hundred and fifty new international students to RMIT University. The event, part of a three week program co-ordinated by the Centre for International Students and Scholars, is the first formal welcome of its kind held at RMIT and is well received by students and staff.

Sue Earl, a 1996 graduate of the Graduate Diploma in Animation and Interactive Multimedia, wins the 'best student film' award at the Australian Effects and Animation Festival in Sydney.

An improved management reporting system in the Strategic and Financial Planning Group starts delivering monthly finance reports to cost centres and the University Council.

March

RMIT Business launches 'Services Marketing', the first Open Learning Australia subject to be taught entirely on the Internet.

The Faculty of Art, Design and Communication, in conjunction with Arts Project Australia,

curates a group exhibition resulting from their joint project to improve opportunities for artists with intellectual disabilities. Under the joint program, artists from Arts Project Australia regularly attend drawing classes at RMIT. The 'Nexus' exhibition in RMIT Building 94's 'Project Space' is opened by Sir James Gobbo AC, Victorian Governor-designate.

Twenty students from the Faculty of Art, Design and Communication attend the National Screenwriters' Conference in Melbourne. RMIT's Advanced Diploma in Screenwriting is launched and receives strong industry support as the first program of its kind dedicated solely to the written word for use in electronic media.

The Faculty of the Constructed Environment joins in celebrating the opening of the Queen Victoria Women's Centre with a seminar on women in architecture. Women architects present their work to an enthusiastic audience of architects, students and interested members of the public, and Associate Professor Sand Hesel launches guest of honour Francesca Hughes' book, *The Architect: Reconstructing Her Practice* (MIT Press).

The West Melbourne Primary School's closure means the Eades Place Children's Centre, in which RMIT University is a partner, must move out of its West Melbourne premises this month. The centre relocates temporarily to Kids on Collins, 600 Collins Street, Melbourne, while a permanent site is prepared. Eades Place offers full time and part time care for children of RMIT staff and students.

Thirty-eight third-year undergraduate civil engineering students and two staff members from Trisakti University in Jakarta, Indonesia, visit RMIT to compare Australian universities with their own.

Two thousand staff and students are relocated from the closed Coburg campus to Bundoora. Operating hours of the computer access laboratory at Bundoora are expanded, and the number of student work-stations is doubled to forty-four.

April

The International Co-operation House, a joint venture between RMIT University and the Vietnam National University, opens in Hanoi.

The Chinese Vice-Minister of Construction visits RMIT University in Melbourne and is the keynote speaker at a building and construction seminar. Renowned Cuban-born New York-based interior designer Vicente Wolf presents his recent work to VET built environment students.

RMIT University's submission is forwarded to the Commonwealth government's 'West Committee' reviewing higher education financing and policy.

For the first time RMIT University participates in the National Trust's annual Victorian Heritage Festival. Five buildings on the city campus are opened to the public on a Saturday afternoon, with archival displays and student guides from the Department of Tourism and Hospitality. Dr Tony Dare, co-author of *The Tech*, presents an audio-visual history of RMIT.

The Vice-Chancellor joins a party of chief executive officers of Victorian universities and TAFEs accompanying the Minister for Tertiary Education and Training, Hon. Phil Honeywood, to Singapore, Malaysia, Hong Kong and Vietnam.

May

The Treasurer of Victoria, Hon. Alan Stockdale, opens the renovated RMIT Building 108 at 239 Bourke Street, Melbourne. The building

houses the RMIT Business faculty, RMIT Training and RMIT Resources companies, the international services and projects offices, a business library, bookshop, cafeteria, copy centre, student computer centre, and a recreation and services centre operated by RMIT Union and the Student Union.

A central 'help desk' service is introduced by the Information Technology Services Group to provide customer service for all ITS activities.

RMIT University staff join over 4,500 delegates attending the NAFSA international educators conference in Vancouver, Canada. RMIT shares a booth with the University of Melbourne, promoting study opportunities in Melbourne. RMIT University organises an Australian reception at the conference, show-casing the country's commitment to internationalisation.

The first issue of 'RMIT Publishing News' appears, having grown out of the Informit newsletter. The university has brought together its electronic and print publishing houses with Informit, RMIT Press and TAFE Publishing combining to form RMIT Publishing. Sandra Oxley is director.

A revised, integrated planning and budget cycle is implemented by the Strategic and Financial Planning Group, bringing greater cohesion to the components of RMIT University's strategic and business plans. The SFP Group forwards statutory statistics on first semester student enrolments and HECS enrolments to the federal Department of Employment, Education, Training and Youth Affairs (DEETYA).

A new probation policy for general and VET teaching staff is released by the Human Resources Management Group.

Japanese architect Kazuyo Sejima, a guest of the Department of Architecture, gives a lecture in RMIT Storey Hall on her work.

The first RMIT soccer cup tournament is held at the Bundoora campus and enthusiastically contested by nine teams from local secondary schools. In a round-robin competition emphasising participation and fun, Lalor Secondary College defeats Thomastown Secondary College 2-1 to take out the girls' cup. In the boys' division Thomastown defeat Fawkner Secondary College 2-0. Gary Moran, careers co-ordinator at Lalor Secondary College, says the soccer program is "a big hit with the students".

RMIT awards an honorary doctorate to Dr Ma Kam Ming in recognition of his achievements in business, education and community service. Dr Ma has been a director, chairman and board member of some of Hong Kong's most influential banking, property and investment companies.

A scientist by training and a librarian by design, Ainslie Dewe is appointed as university librarian. She comes to RMIT from her position as director of academic associated services at Lincoln University New Zealand, where she played a key role in transforming the Lincoln library into a modern, information-age resource centre oriented to student self-learning. The people who thrive in the information age are those who know how to find the information they need. "What really matters," says Ms Dewe, "are the libraries' skills in managing that information."

June

Students Andrew Jones, Adam Rose and Murray White from the RMIT Bachelor of Arts (Advertising) course win first prize in the television and cinema category of the British Design and Art Direction Student Awards. The Department of Visual Communication flies them to London to collect the prize. Acting course co-ordinator Peter Sorenson says "to win

this award is the pinnacle. It shows that their creative communication ability is world-class and it reflects the quality of the course."

Two students from the Professional Writing and Editing course are interviewed on ABC-TV's literature program 'Between the Lines'. The program produces three segments following the students through the first year of their course.

At the National Wool Week awards, students from the Bachelor of Arts (Textile Design) course win first and second prizes in five categories. RMIT University is the overall institution winner. Gavin Davis, an RMIT public relations student, is selected as the only Victorian to represent Australia in the under-21 Australian hockey team.

RMIT's educational profile for the 1998-2000 triennium is submitted to DEETYA.

July

The second RMIT International Conference is held 14-16 July, providing a stage for discussion on key issues that affect university teaching and learning in a global community as we approach the twenty-first century. Following this conference, RMIT hosts the eighth 'Youth Building the Future' conference, celebrating a decade of YBF student gatherings around the world.

Professor David Beanland and Professor Yang Fujia, president of Fudan University in Shanghai, China, sign an agreement formalising the establishment of the collaborative Ma Kam Ming International Management Centre for education, training and research initiatives.

The Faculty of the Constructed Environment has a busy month for conferences, hosting gatherings on 'Re-Working the Australian City', 'Managing Projects', 'The City in History' and

'Viewing the Landscape, Making the Landscape'.

On 1 July the Human Resources Management Group launches the RMIT Employee Assistance Program. EAP will provide staff at all levels of RMIT, and their families, with free, confidential counselling off-campus. The service offers help with problems that affect clients' psychological and/or emotional well-being. In the first six months 121 people use the service. Additional sessions are provided on campus to help staff undergoing change in work areas or following a major incident.

The Australian Quality Council ranks RMIT twelfth out of 114 participants in its financial best practices bench-marking report. This survey focuses on the financial operations of varied Australian organisations.

RMIT launches Australia's first university project directed at investigating waste minimisation principles in all areas of its courses. The four discipline areas are nursing, accountancy, building and construction economics.

Fuji Xerox Australia Pty Ltd, the Sydney Institute of Technology and RMIT University announce a new joint course to update the printing and publishing industry with new technological developments. A further expansion of training is expected with the introduction of colour digital printing in 1998.

August

A graduation ceremony is held for students completing RMIT-Singapore Institute of Management courses. This year marks the tenth anniversary of the RMIT Bachelor of Business (Business Administration) program with SIM. The La Salle-SIA convocation is held in Singapore.

The RMIT Foundation Studies program opens at LP3I in Jakarta, Indonesia, with a reception for students, parents and staff. Thirteen students have enrolled in the program which is coordinated by Liz Nixon of RMIT's Department of Law and Economics. Back in Melbourne, the annual Foundation Studies graduation ceremony is held in RMIT Storey Hall. Over four hundred students attend with their family, friends and university staff.

A forum on 'Men as Workers, Men as Fathers' is held as the first stage of an integrated work and family strategy which will help ensure RMIT is a family friendly workplace. Training programs for senior managers will be conducted throughout 1998.

A nine-month 'Women In Leadership' program concludes. Set up in 1996, and aimed at women at the lower end of the academic and general staff structures, this was a joint venture with Swinburne University financed by the Commonwealth Staff Development Fund. On completion of the initial program, RMIT University establishes a two-year Women in Leadership project open to all women employed at RMIT.

The Ma Kam Ming Charitable Foundation donates one million dollars in support of the establishment of the Ma Kam Ming International Management Centre.

Karen Verbeek, a third year Bachelor of Arts (Textile Design) student, wins the student category of the Victorian Design Awards. The young designer award goes to Alison Landy, a 1996 graduate of RMIT in textile design. Andrea McNamara, a lecturer in textile design at RMIT University, wins the major textile design section and the international specialist skills award.

The Strategic and Financial Planning Group participates in NACUBO bench-marking to help

with quality improvement in administrative operations. Preparations begin for formulating the 1998 budget, and RMIT's 1998 VET profile documentation is submitted to the Victorian government Office for Technical and Further Education (OTFE).

Students occupy the Strategic and Financial Planning Group's offices at 449 Swanston Street, city campus, protesting against the University Council's decision to make fee-based places available to Australian undergraduate students commencing in 1998. The illegal occupation lasts nineteen days and is resolved peacefully.

A leading Singaporean architect, and adjunct professor in the Faculty of the Constructed Environment, William Lim gives a public lecture in the faculty's Design Talk series, 'From Corb to Pluralism: reflections of a Singaporean architect'. Adjunct Professor Lim also leads a student seminar on development in the Asian region.

Melburnians have a rare chance to see the world's fastest solar car, Aurora, as it glides along Swanston Walk from RMIT's city campus to the Melbourne Town Hall, delivering an invitation to the Lord Mayor, Ivan Deveson AO, to attend RMIT's Open Day. RMIT provides technical and scientific support for the Aurora solar car consortium.

Bob Bangay retires as Director of TAFE and Pro Vice-Chancellor (Vocational Education and Training) after four decades at RMIT. "Teaching has very significant rewards in seeing students do well," he says. "One of the strongest rewards is to see some of your students return as teachers... One would hope that the way you taught and the way you felt about teaching were influences in their aspiration to become teachers."

The fourth annual World Week celebrates cultural diversity among students and staff. Activities include lunch-time entertainment, an international ball, movies and games. World Week is organised by volunteers from the RMIT Association of International Students with support from various university departments.

Incentive grants are awarded to research teams under RMIT's national competitive grant support program.

September

RMIT TAFE graduate Leroy Eggmolesse receives the Victorian Training Award for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander student of the year. A former labourer, 31-year-old Mr Eggmolesse completed an RMIT course in home community care and is now a support worker with the Coomealla Aboriginal Housing Company.

The Internal Audit Group is represented at the forty-first annual conference of the Association of College and University Auditors in Norfolk, Virginia, USA. Heads of internal audit from four hundred and sixty universities around the world attend. RMIT University's Internal Audit Group is nominated for an excellence award at the conference.

A new suite of student load-based resource allocation models is adopted for use by the Strategic and Financial Planning Group in formulating the 1998 budget. Senior executives of the university attend a Department of Employment, Education, Training and Youth Affairs (DEETYA) meeting in Canberra to discuss RMIT University's educational profile and future funding.

Professor Tony Adams, Dean of International Programs, receives an IDP Education Australia award for his outstanding contribution to international education in Australia. IDP was established by Australian universities to

promote Australian education overseas. IDP's chief executive, Dr Denis Blight, says Professor Adams has "led or fostered initiatives at RMIT which have set bench-marks for other Australian institutions".

Current students, alumni, editors and agents of some of Melbourne's largest publishing houses gather for a triple book launch by the RMIT Department of Creative Media. In the past year thirty-six students from the department's professional writing and editing courses have had novels or stories published nationally and, in some cases, overseas. Books launched at this month's function are *Orlando's Sleep* by Jen Spry, *Second Storey Sally* by Meg Caraher and *Watching Seagulls* by Sue Saliba. The Victorian Premier and Minister for the Arts, Hon. Jeff Kennett, writes a letter of commendation saying that "the department is clearly an incubator for some of this country's most brilliant literary minds... and demonstrates the extraordinary impact that gifted young Victorians are making on the national arts and cultural scene."

The Faculty of the Constructed Environment and the Royal Australian Institute of Architects present a lecture in Storey Hall by Peter Davidson, Don Bates and Tim Hurburgh, winners of the international architectural competition for redevelopment of Melbourne's Federation Square on the corner of Flinders and Swanston streets.

October

Two counsellors from the Student Affairs Group visit the Penang campus to give advice on matters raised by students, and to gain some experience of conditions in off-shore locations.

Family, friends and RMIT staff attend the presentation to ten students of John Storey Memorial Scholarships. The scholarships will

help students undertake overseas exchange programs.

James Cole, a student of the RMIT corporate video course, wins first place in the Australian Cinematographers Society awards for 1997.

A three-day conference, jointly sponsored by RMIT University and Deakin University, discusses 'Truth: writing courses and the imagination'. More than one hundred writers, students and teachers of creative writing attend to hear papers by Thomas Keneally, Morris Gleitzman and Jan Sardi, among others.

Statutory statistics are submitted to DEETYA, reporting on student enrolments and HECS liabilities for second semester 1997.

The Centre for Design hosts a public lecture in RMIT Storey Hall by American curator and critic Patricia Phillips, titled 'Provocative Partners: art, architecture and public life'.

RMIT's Textile Resource Centre receives a \$100,000 donation in memory of Dr Frances Mary Burke MBE, a distinguished textile designer and former teacher at RMIT. Dr Burke received RMIT's first honorary doctorate of arts in 1987. Her lifetime companion, Miss Fabie Chamberlin, attends an official ceremony on 22 October to rename the Frances Burke Textile Resource Centre. Speaking at the ceremony, RMIT Chancellor Sam Smorgon AO says Miss Chamberlin's support "will enable Frances Burke's contributions to the textiles industries to be recognised in an important and enduring way... At a time of great change in the textile industries we need more people like Frances Burke. People with inspiration and ideas and a capacity to translate those ideas into products that capture the imagination of the Australian market-place."

Victorian Treasurer and Minister for Multimedia, Hon. Alan Stockdale, opens RMIT's Interactive Information Institute on

23 October. 'I-Cubed' represents a collaboration between academia, government and global multimedia and information technology industries.

Bachelor of Engineering student Karl Berthelsen wins a ten thousand dollar travel prize provided by the Advanced Engineering Centre for Manufacturing, recognising his outstanding academic performance, leadership and communication skills demonstrated during the first three years of his studies. The prize will fund a European study tour.

The RMIT Centre for Workplace Culture Change hosts its first conference, 'Workplace 97'. This practical workshop encourages participants to find new methods that suit their business instead of following the latest managerial fads. The conference is the venue for the launch of *When Too Much Change is Never Enough* by Anna Bodi, Glenn Maggs and Don Edgar (ISBN 1 875680 45 5).

November

Leroy Eggmolesse is named Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander student of the year in the Australian Training Awards presented in Canberra by the Prime Minister, Mr John Howard. Mr Eggmolesse's return to study, and desire to help the Aboriginal community, was inspired by the suicide of his young brother-in-law. "You can make a difference. I hope I can be a role model for the younger ones and get them thinking 'if he can do this, I can do it too'," Mr Eggmolesse said (*Herald Sun*, 20 November, page 22).

Graduation ceremonies for RMIT students are held in Singapore, Malaysia and Hong Kong.

Around sixty RMIT students attend the Education Abroad Centre's pre-departure program for outgoing exchange students. They are encouraged to act as ambassadors for the

university and Australia, and given advice about studying and travelling.

Three hundred and eighty Foundation Studies students celebrate the end of the year with a banquet in a Little Bourke Street restaurant. A basketball trophy and lucky door prizes are presented, and the Foundation Studies yearbook is launched.

The Tower, created by four RMIT University students, is named 'best virtual reality product' at the Australian Teachers of Media (ATOM) international awards ceremony. The award is in the professional international category, an added coup. Mark Guglielmetti, Chris Henschke, Sergio Montalban and Glen Taylor are students of the RMIT Advanced Diploma of Arts (Electronic Design and Interactive Media). Alyssa Rothwell's interactive CD-ROM *Three Mile Creek* also receives an ATOM award for best use of sound. Ms Rothwell completed her Graduate Diploma in Animation and Interactive Media at RMIT University.

The prestigious Cicely and Colin Rigg Craft Award exhibition this year concentrates on metalwork, and is dominated by RMIT-trained craft practitioners. The \$35,000 prize goes to RMIT University lecturer Robert Baines for his series 'A Vesseled History', in which he used techniques he researched during his recent Senior Fulbright Scholarship in the United States.

During November and December the Faculty of Art, Design and Communication holds over twenty end-of-year graduate exhibitions on campus and throughout the city of Melbourne.

The RMIT Council approves the university's 1998-2002 strategic plan. 'Second reference date' student data files on RMIT's VET sector enrolments are submitted to the Victorian Office for Technical and Further Education (OTFE).

The affirmative action consultative committee is re-formed and adopts new terms of reference aimed at facilitating the university's affirmative action strategies. Voluntary departure packages are offered to eligible staff.

The architectural practice Ashton Raggatt McDougall wins the competition for the design of Australia's new National Museum in Canberra. The partners in Ashton Raggatt McDougall are adjunct professors in RMIT University's Faculty of the Constructed Environment, and were architects of the RMIT Storey Hall renovation and extension.

Professor David Beanland opens the Hewlett Packard Enterprise Innovation Unit established by the Department of Information Management in RMIT's business faculty to advance development in electronic documents and work-flows.

December

A preliminary version of the university's 1998 budget and operational plan is approved, pending finalisation in February 1998. (The delay was caused by time lost during and after the student occupation of building 48 in August.)

The RMIT enterprise agreement is certified by the Australian Industrial Relations Commission. The agreement applies until July 1999 and provides an 11.5 percent salary increase phased in over this period (cumulative 12 percent from May 1997 to July 1999).

The University Council approves a code of ethics for university staff and activities. This, and

policies on equal opportunity, child care and sexual harassment, will be implemented in 1998.

A celebration of innovation and research at RMIT is held on 2 December and includes an invited lecture by Fulbright Senior Scholar Robert Baines on gold technology in classical antiquity. Other guests discuss why good ideas fail to come to fruition in their native land, and recent developments in the application of electrical signals generated by the brain. The annual RMIT Innovation and Research Awards are presented, and the RMIT Raiders robot soccer team plays an exhibition match fresh from its success in the international RoboCup competition in Nagoya, Japan.

In the same month as RMIT acquires the Old Melbourne Magistrates' Court, city watch-house and police garage, plans are also announced for construction of a new sports complex on Swanston Street. Designed by Lyon Architects and Perrott Lyon Mathieson, the centre will have a multipurpose stadium with seating for 2,750 people plus a gym and health centre, sports medicine clinics, a cafe and teaching spaces. The twenty-six million dollar centre should be completed by the end of 1999. Writing in *The Age* on 17 December (page C7), Joe Rollo says the plans "signal the entrenchment of the university as Australia's pre-eminent patron of bold and dramatic architecture. In a masterstroke, the university has commissioned the kind of building that will put its campus and Melbourne on the architectural map."

RMIT University in the north

The 1992 Act establishing RMIT as a university calls for "the development and provision of educational, professional, technical and vocational services to the community and in particular, the fostering of

participation as a university of technology of persons living or working in the northern metropolitan region of Melbourne."

RMIT University has interpreted this as a call to develop a particular mission of community service in Melbourne's north. RMIT University is a major organisation in the region and the community looks to RMIT University to make a particular contribution to the development of the region. For RMIT, response is an imperative: in its strategic planning, RMIT University has defined "contribution to the economic and social development of the northern metropolitan region of Melbourne" as one of the "main areas where the needs of the community are particularly relevant to the mission of RMIT and to RMIT's capacity to respond".

Northern Partnerships program

In 1994 RMIT University established its Northern Partnerships program to further develop its service to, and partnership with, the community of the north of Melbourne. The director of this program, Professor Graham Mulroney, manages RMIT's regional role in Melbourne's north and leads the co-operative establishment of projects and programs by RMIT and community groups.

The goal of the Northern Partnerships program is to contribute to economic, cultural and social development of the northern metropolitan region of Melbourne by adding value to industry, enhancing school education, contributing to the provision of health and community services; providing services to municipal government; and assisting community groups. The program aims to develop a co-operative approach to the provision of education and training in the region; develop the Bundoora campus as a major node of provision of service to the regional community; improve equity and access for participation in RMIT University of people living or working in the region; and ensure quality management of RMIT's community service in the region.

Examples of Northern Partnerships in action include:

- support for economic development of the region through 'North Link', the region's economic development organisation;
- formation of the RMIT 'Research Network for the North' to focus research in northern region settings;
- support for employment programs through the Northern Area Consultative Committee and the regional Office of Labour Market Adjustment committee;
- support for enterprise development in the region through Northern Industry Education and Training Link (NIETL);
- response to the needs of manufacturing industry in the north through a major effort in offering training and research programs;
- close links between the Faculty of Education, Language and Community Services and local schools for education of trainee teachers, professional development programs for teachers and principals, links to industry, and research and postgraduate programs for teachers in the region;
- contributions to school education of Northern Interactive Education Co-ordinated Area Program (NIECAP), a partnership of RMIT with local schools, industry and others—during 1994-97, four thousand secondary students from fifty northern region schools used RMIT

laboratories, a quarterly science and technology magazine was produced and distributed to 550 secondary and primary school campuses, school-to-work programs were supported, and local industry-school links were assisted;

- a new partnership with the Australian Multicultural Foundation to establish a Multicultural Aged Care Training Institute at the Assisi Centre in Rosanna;
- and programs where RMIT University students work and learn in northern region community settings.

Northern Partnerships has provided an extensive range of health services to the community including: nursing programs education and training, research and consultancy in collaboration with regional health providers; chiropractic, osteopathic and complementary health services to the community through the clinic on the Bundoora campus where three hundred patients are treated each week and the service is widely used by pensioners and students; and the psychology clinic on the Bundoora campus which treats children and adolescents with services provided to more than a hundred local families each year.

Development of the Bundoora campus

As part of its commitment to the region, RMIT University is actively developing its Bundoora campus to world-class standard. This development includes:

- a student population of at least six thousand equivalent full-time by the year 2000;
- an increasing proportion of international students;
- other international activities including visiting experts, conferences and intensive training programs;
- disciplines, courses, research and other programs which respond to needs and aspirations of the communities of the northern metropolitan region of Melbourne;
- location for the university's Research and Development Division and Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Research and Development);
- emphasis on equity and access for people living and working in the region;
- a genuinely open campus with easy and normal access to the local community, to commuters using the new transport interchange and to the northern region community generally;
- partnerships with the community to develop activities and services for the benefit of the RMIT community and of the diverse communities of the region;
- active contribution by RMIT to the economic, cultural and social development of the northern metropolitan region;
- and a particular contribution to the enhancement of manufacturing and other industries and employment opportunities in the region.

The Bundoora East site

Programs are being developed at RMIT University's Bundoora East site which relate to the primary needs of industry in the northern metropolitan region of Melbourne and which have an Australia-wide impact in areas of national priority.

In addition to world-class education of new professional industry personnel both at undergraduate and postgraduate levels the site will also play major roles in upgrading the skills of existing professional and technical employees in industry; transfer and development of new technologies to existing industries; assistance with the development and support of existing and new manufacturing industries; and major research of international significance.

Organisational structure

Mission, goals and values

RMIT's mission and purpose is to provide technical and professional education that develops people for leadership and employment, and undertake research programs that address real world issues.

Our goal is to create and sustain a world class university at the forefront of technical and professional education and real world research, through continuous quality improvement and with all staff committed to total quality management. We define a world-class university as one that is recognised by the university community, stakeholders, and other knowledgeable organisations, as a leader in its teaching and learning processes, research activities, and other community services by:

- the performance and reputation of its graduates and staff;
- the innovative developments in teaching and learning;
- the significance and rigour of its research and development undertakings, and both the quality and quantity of its research publications;
- the importance of the types of community services provided and the quality and quantity of outcomes;
- its cultural activities, international dimensions, self-discipline and high ethical standards in the pursuit of excellence; and
- developing new products and procedures.

RMIT University will be characterised as an organisation, and in the conduct of its individual members, by practicality, relevance, environmental care, technological innovation, enterprise, fairness to all, creative orientation and client focus.

RMIT organisation summary 1997

■ Council

Vice-Chancellor

Director Quality Development

Deputy Vice-Chancellor
Education and Training

Deputy Vice-Chancellor
Research and Development

Deputy Vice-Chancellor
International

Deputy Vice-Chancellor
Resources

Pro Vice-Chancellor (VET)
and Director TAFE

Director
Strategic Research Planning

Dean International
Programs

Pro Vice-Chancellor
(Resources Projects)

Pro Vice-Chancellor
(Higher Education)

Director Community Services
and Northern Partnerships

Academic Director
Adorna Institute of
Technology

Pro Vice-Chancellor
(Development)

Dean Applied Science

Director
Industry and Innovation

Director International
Projects

Director Fundraising
University Secretary

Dean Art, Design and
Communication

Director
Institute-Industry Initiatives

Director International
Services

Director Asset Management

Dean Biomedical
and Health Sciences

Director
Interactive Information
Institute

Director European Office

Director Commercial and
Legal Service

Dean Business

General Manager
RMIT Innovation Ltd

Managing Director
RMIT International Pty Ltd
RMIT Malaysia Sdn Bhd

Director RMIT Print

Dean Constructed
Environment

Dean Education, Language
and Community Services

Dean Engineering

Dean Nursing

Director Educational
Program Improvement
Group

Pro Vice-Chancellor
(Academic Services and
Equity)

Director Student Affairs
and Academic Registrar
University Librarian

General Manager
RMIT Training Pty Ltd

Director Corporate Affairs

Director Human Resources
Management

Director Information
Technology Services

Director Internal Audit

Director Strategic and
Financial Planning

Director Strategic
Information Technology

General Manager
RMIT Resources Ltd

A review of the university's senior management structure was undertaken toward the end of the year. This resulted in the creation of a new Deputy Vice-Chancellor position and consequent changes to the responsibilities of some other senior managers. The new structure takes effect on 1 January 1998.

Chancellor

In the area of governance, this year the Victorian government amended the RMIT Act to give effect to the recommendations of the Ministerial Committee of Advice on University Governance in Victoria. The composition of the RMIT University Council will change by the discontinuation of the appointment of three members of parliament and by the addition of four other members including the chair of the Academic Board and the chair of the Board of Technical Studies.

Members of Council in 1997 continued to make an important and invaluable contribution to the university. A major issue for most of the year was that of full-fee places for local undergraduates in award courses. Faced with severe financial constraints Council agreed, subject to many conditions, to authorise the enrolment of such students.

One of the consequences of the decision to allow enrolment of local full-fee paying undergraduate students in award courses was the illegal occupation of a university building in August. A protracted, expensive and destructive occupation of the Strategic and Financial Planning Group's facilities was undertaken by a group that included RMIT students. The Vice-Chancellor is to be commended for negotiating a peaceful end to the occupation. There is now a challenge to ensure that dialogue within the university is such that there will never again be the occupation of an RMIT facility.

In April 1997 the university recognised one of its most distinguished alumni, Mr Jac Nasser, with the award of an honorary Doctor of Technology. This conferring took place at a ceremony in RMIT Storey Hall.

RMIT Storey Hall continues to provide an important interface between the university

and the City of Melbourne. The RMIT Gallery, located in the original part of the building, continued to build its reputation as a gallery of international standing during 1997 by hosting many important exhibitions from Europe and Asia. These, together with exhibitions involving the work of students, attracted thousands of visitors to the university.

RMIT University's research and development and community services activities also continue to expand.

The start of the year saw the smooth closure of the Coburg campus and the transfer of the remaining activities to Bundoora, primarily, and the city campus. At Bundoora new purpose-built buildings and upgraded facilities were provided to house the ex-Coburg activities.

In July RMIT University hosted its second international conference, which had the theme 'The Global University: a twenty-first century view'. This successful event saw three hundred delegates gather to discuss a range of issues relevant to the future of universities. This was followed by the eighth 'Youth Building the Future' conference at which RMIT University hosted student delegates from more than twenty countries.

Later in the year, the members of the 1987 RMIT Centenary Commission reconvened to receive a report from the university on the progress that has been made over the past decade with implementing their recommendations.

After some years of negotiation, RMIT University bought from the Victorian government the former Magistrates' Court complex. Except for the Old Melbourne Gaol operated by the National Trust, this purchase

gives RMIT control over the entire city block that accommodates the core of the city campus.

The university also acquired a one hundred hectare site in Bundoora abutting the Bundoora East site. Council established a management committee to oversee the development of the property as the RMIT Technology Estate. This project will combine some of RMIT's education and research and development activities with high-technology industries to create a world-class technology-based research and development precinct

Following lengthy negotiations an enterprise agreement was reached, giving staff a significant salary increase. For the first time the Commonwealth government will not fund the increase and the university has been planning how to cope with this added financial burden without diminishing the quality of its programs.

Despite the many challenges of the year, RMIT University continues to make excellent progress toward its goal of becoming a world-class university. This progress would not have been possible without the fine leadership of the Vice-Chancellor, the dedication of the staff and the enthusiasm and commitment of the students."

Chancellor Sam Smorgon AO acts as a high-profile link between the university and external community, business and government organisations. The Chancellor is the titular head of the university and chairs the University Council.

University Council and committees

People whose major sphere of activity lies outside the RMIT University community participate in both the formulation of policy and monitoring of the university's performance.

This participation takes place through specific categories of membership of the University Council and its committees, and through specialist membership of course advisory committees. RMIT students participate through student membership of university committees.

All Council members have completed disclosure of director-related transaction declarations for 1997.

University Council membership in 1997

.....
GERALD B. ASHMAN MLC
 Member of the Legislative Council
 Appointed by the Governor-in-Council

.....
DAVID G. BEANLAND
 Vice-Chancellor

BE Melb, MSc, PhD Salf, ASwTC, TITC, FTSE, FIEAust, FIREE Aust
 Vice-Chancellor
 Ex officio

.....
PETER BARKER
 President, Student Union Council
 Ex officio

.....
RON BEST MLC

Member of the Legislative Council
 Appointed by the Governor-in-Council

.....
JOHN BURGESS

Appointed 11 August 1997
 BE, ME Ncle, PhD Edin, DEng Ncle, FTSE, FIEAust,
 FICLE
 Corporate General Manager, Safety Environment
 and Research, BHP
 Appointed by RMIT Council

.....
PETER CHEW

MA Oxon
 Cattle breeder (retired), Shell director
 Appointed by RMIT Council

.....
RITA COMPTON

Resigned 30 June 1997
 BSc(Hons) Brunel
 Company director
 Appointed by the Governor-in-Council

.....
COLLEEN COUTTS

GradDip (Industrial Relations) RMIT
 Faculty Executive Officer, Faculty of Biomedical
 and Health Sciences
 Elected by the general staff

.....
PATRICIA CROSS

BS Georgetown
 Company director
 Appointed by the Governor-in-Council

.....
EVELYN DANOS

BSc, LLB Monash
 Director, James Richardson Corp Pty Ltd
 Appointed by RMIT Council

.....
GRANT HANNAN

BA(Hons) Tas, MA Qld, DipHistArt Edin
 Head, Department of Fine Art, Faculty of Art,
 Design and Communication
 Elected by the academic staff (higher education
 sector)

.....
ROSS G. HEPBURN

Deputy Chancellor
 BE Melb, MAdmin Monash
 Managing director, Aberdeen Hire Service
 Appointed by RMIT Council

.....
ELI GIANNINI

Appointed 2 September 1997
 BArch, MArch RMIT
 Director, McGauran Soon Pty Ltd Architects
 Appointed by the Governor-in-Council

.....
SUE JOHNSTON

BA Melb, DipEd Monash, BEd LaT, Dip Lond Int Film
 School
 Video-multimedia manager, Educational Program
 Improvement Group
 Elected by the academic staff (VET sector)

.....
CECILIA LEUNG

Elected by the students

.....
JAMES E. LEWIS

Resigned 30 January 1997
 BA UNE, BE(Hons), PhD
 Executive general manager, Corporate Planning
 and Administration, BHP Ltd
 Appointed by RMIT Council

.....
JOHN MITCHAM

Deputy Chancellor
 DipAppChem, Cert M'ment RMIT
 Director and general manager, Manufacturing
 Division, Kodak (Australasia) Pty Ltd
 Appointed by RMIT Council

Secretary: M. David Knight, BA(Hons) Melb

IN ATTENDANCE

.....
ROBERT J. BANGAY

Retired 26 June 1997
 ARMIT, TTrIC, MIREE(Aust)
 Director (VET)
 Pro Vice-Chancellor (Vocational Education and
 Training)

.....
BARRY PULLEN MLC

DipCE RMIT
 Member of the Legislative Council
 Appointed by the Governor-in-Council

.....
GARRY RINGWOOD

BCom NSW, FSCPA
 Executive director operations, Amcor Ltd
 Appointed by the Governor-in-Council

.....
SAM SMORGON AO

Chancellor
 Elected by RMIT Council

.....
GEOFF SPRING

TCC, BA, MEd, FACE, FAIM
 Secretary, Department of Education
 Appointed by the Minister

.....
AIJA THOMAS

Resigned 11 June 1997
 AAPT(Arch), ARIA
 Director, Silver Thomas Hanley Architects
 Appointed by the Governor-in-Council

.....
JANE TONGS

Honorary Treasurer
 Appointed 25 February 1997
 BBus RMIT, MBA Melb, ICA, ICD
 Partner, Price Waterhouse
 Appointed by the Governor-in-Council

.....
MARGARET BENNETT

BSc(Hons), PhD Monash, DipEd, RN, RM
 Dean, Faculty of Nursing
 Chair, Academic Board

.....
RUTH DUNKIN

BA(Hons) Melb, GradDipMgmt CIAE, MPubAd Harv
 Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Education and Training)

.....
PETER FROST

BA LaT, BLitt UNE, MEd, PhD Harv
 Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Resources)

.....
ANN HENDERSON-SELLERS

BSc(Hons) Brist, PhD Leic, DipInfoTech C&G,
 GradManQual UNSW
 Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Research and
 Development)

.....
BRUCE WATSON

BAppSc Vic, DipAppSc BCAE, GradDipEd SCV, MEdSt
 Monash, MACE, AIMM
 Deputy Dean, Faculty of Biomedical and Health
 Sciences
 Chair, Board of Technical Studies

.....
DAVID WILMOTH

BEc(Hons) Qld, MTCP Syd, PhD UC Berkeley, MRAPI
 Deputy Vice-Chancellor (International)

Major committees

RMIT University has a significant number of major committees which contribute to the effective governance of the university and to the effective review of its activities.

In 1997 the University Council operated the following committees:

- Honorary Awards Committee;
- Audit Committee;
- Education and Training Division Committee;
- Human Research Ethics Committee;
- International Division Committee;
- Legislation Committee;
- Membership Committee;
- Remuneration Committee;
- Research and Development Division Committee;
- and the Resources Division Committee.

Academic supervision of the university's academic programs is provided by the Academic Board and the Board of Technical Studies, and these are assisted by faculty boards.

Another important group is the course advisory committees. These committees, of which there are scores, bring together experts from relevant industries, professions and employer groups to review and monitor the relevance of all courses offered by the university.

Terms of reference and membership lists for all Council committees are available from the university secretary, e-mail <d.knight@rmit.edu.au>.

Vice-Chancellor

There has been a great deal of attention to the RMIT Council's decision to allow fee paying domestic students in undergraduate award courses from 1998. The results of the staff and student referendum confirmed that the university community, like the Australian public at large, is strongly supportive of a properly funded tertiary education system and, if given the choice, would prefer that universities were not forced to accept fee-paying students to compensate for shrinking government funds. The results have proved helpful in informing the debate, at national and local levels, on the funding of higher education.

We are all aware that the competition among universities for students (both local and overseas) is increasing. It is critical to our on-going development as a successful institution that we are pro-active in attracting high quality students to study at RMIT, at all levels, and that we attract and retain high calibre staff. As part of our strategy in these areas, in July this year we embarked upon a marketing campaign designed to position RMIT as a different type of university, emphasising our real-world approach to education, training, research and development. Early indications are that the campaign has been well received by the target markets.

Another strategy introduced this year was the 'Virtual Open Day' run on the RMIT World Wide Web site, which enabled people from far and wide to access information on RMIT University without needing actually to come to any of our campuses. This was offered as an adjunct to the traditional Open Day which attracted over thirty-five thousand visitors to our Melbourne campuses and sites.

Several state and federal government reviews were undertaken this year. Among other issues, the reviews are examining the roles of institutes of technical and further education and the extent to which those roles should overlap with universities; higher education funding and policy; several different models for the organisation of TAFE; research and development; and science, engineering and technology education. The outcomes of these reviews will affect RMIT and we must be ready to deal with the opportunities and challenges with which they will present us.

At RMIT we have reviewed the 1 January 1996 restructure that integrated higher education and TAFE sectors into single faculties.

Substantial progress has been made with the reorganisation, but a number of issues were identified that have impeded progress in some areas. We will now take steps to address the various issues that were raised.

To increase internal awareness of our research and development potential, an 'R&D roadshow' visited RMIT departments during the year. This involved a series of presentations by senior staff of the Research and Development Division and the acting general manager of RMIT Innovation Ltd, focusing on how the Research and Development Division can help RMIT staff with their research and development projects. There has been a significant increase in the number of departments actively working with the Research and Development Division to enhance income and beneficial outcomes in our research and development activities.

The Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Education and Training) and I visited faculties throughout the year to discuss their goals, strategies and financial plans for the next three years. In addition I have visited a number of

departments to meet staff and discuss issues of particular interest to them.

I firmly believe the path that RMIT University has set for itself, of providing practical education that produces employable graduates, and of having research programs that respond to the needs of industry, is the appropriate one for a university going into the

next century. We have a leadership position in international education and we are developing programs that will be delivered through a variety of modes, to cater to the needs of the community. With the co-operation of all those associated with RMIT University, we can achieve our goals."

RMIT's chief executive officer is Professor David Beanland. In 1997 he was assisted by four Deputy Vice-Chancellors.

Quality development

RMIT University has a strong commitment to improving the quality of its outcomes and processes as reflected in the university's strategic goal "...to create and sustain a distinctive world-class university at the forefront of technical and professional education and real-world research, through continuous improvement and with all staff committed to quality management processes".

This commitment is backed by commitment from senior levels of the university to provide significant corporate resourcing including a Quality Development Unit as part of the Vice-Chancellor's office, which provides leadership and facilitation of quality improvement across all parts of the university.

Mechanisms are also in place to draw on the expertise of other organisations that have achieved business success through quality management.

Quality improvement is strongly integrated into RMIT University's core business and support areas. All courses are subject to an internal quality assurance process which has received international acclaim. The quality of RMIT's initiatives in community service was recognised as a national exemplar in reviews of the Australian university system by the Commonwealth. RMIT University has developed a quality management system that is being applied systematically across the entire organisation to include areas not traditionally incorporated in quality systems, including academic research and development.

International Standards Organisation (ISO) certification has been obtained for parts of the organisation and this is being progressively extended to other business areas. International operations and all of RMIT University's associated commercial entities have ISO-certified quality management systems.

Education and Training Division

"Our graduates know that RMIT is a university that works—a university that gives students the skills and the insight employers look for.

The vocationally-relevant education and training we provide at RMIT University remains as critically important as ever. In a time of high unemployment, it is almost essential. Before they graduate, most of our students have gained work experience or participated in an industry-linked research project during their RMIT course. Armed with that experience, many find their first post-graduation job, in Australia or overseas, before graduation. As RMIT University graduates, our students start the next phase of their lives with the advantage of a practical, hands-on education with an international dimension.

RMIT University has chosen to internationalise its educational programs for the benefit of both Australian and overseas students. With over five thousand international students in Melbourne, and thousands more in Asia, this global outlook enables us to contribute positively to our own and other communities.

We work constantly on improving the quality of our teaching and learning processes, and the impressive number and diversity of awards won by RMIT students and staff during 1997 is a tribute to the efforts of individuals and groups. Dr Nick Vardaxis of the Department of Medical Laboratory Science won the inaugural Australian university teaching award for health science, judged partly on feedback from his students, and Bob Lord's experience as an ABC Science Media Fellow will benefit not only his communication and electronic engineering department but other staff and students who want to tell a non-scientific audience about their work. Students also have recorded some remarkable achievements in multimedia,

design, technological innovation, community service and politics this year. Visit our 'accolades' web site <<http://www.ip.rmit.edu.au/>> to learn more about these outstanding people.

The career of Bob Bangay, who retired in 1997 after forty years of service, is a fine example of the commitment to practical education and training for which RMIT is renowned. Bob began his career at RMIT as a cadet technician and progressed through many roles to his final appointment as Pro Vice-Chancellor (VET) and Director TAFE. Bob's understanding and knowledge of both RMIT and the TAFE sector will be missed, and I am sure all at RMIT wish him well in the next phase of his life.

It is almost impossible to predict what the twenty-first century will bring. In 1997 we saw pictures from Mars and successful cloning of a living animal—achievements that ten years ago could only be dreamed of. As we near the end of the second millennium, we are witnesses to a period of remarkable creativity, innovation and uncertainty. Today's graduands will have to be open to change—where possible, they need to be the agent of change rather than responding to changes imposed by others, to be pro-active rather than reactive. RMIT University courses are designed to prepare students to meet these challenges head-on, and triumph.

Learning does not end at graduation. RMIT University has a long history of providing life-long educational opportunities. From its beginnings over a century ago, RMIT University has been committed to providing continuing education for people in the work-force, for mature-age students, for people wanting a change of direction or needing to upgrade their skills.

When our students graduate they become RMIT alumni, with all the benefits that entails.

They are always able to keep in touch with former class-mates and the university through our alumni association's magazine and web site. They will always carry with them the professional advantages of an RMIT qualification, and the associated reputation of this university's close and productive links with industry.

And they will always be welcome to return to their university community. There are many ways to do this: as a member of a course advisory committee, as a mentor or guest speaker; as a visitor to our annual Open Day or Heritage Festival; as a business-person with a research problem that needs to be solved; or even as a student in a short course or a higher degree program."

Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Education and Training) Ruth Dunkin is responsible for Vocational Education and Training (TAFE), undergraduate and postgraduate programs. In 1997 she was assisted by Pro Vice-Chancellor (Higher Education) Professor Helen Praetz, Pro Vice-Chancellor (Vocational Education and Training) and Director (TAFE) Bob Bangay and Pro Vice-Chancellor (Academic Services and Equity) Associate Professor Robert Gray. RMIT Training Pty Ltd is the commercial arm of the Education and Training Division.

Faculty of Applied Science

Department of Applied and Environmental Sciences
 Department of Applied Chemistry
 Department of Applied Physics
 Department of Computer Science
 Department of Food Science
 Department of Land Information
 Department of Mathematics
 Department of Psychology and Intellectual Disability Studies
 Department of Statistics and Operations Research

Key Centre for Knowledge Based Systems
 RMIT Centre for Remote Sensing and Geographic Information Systems
 Software Engineering Research Centre
 Multimedia Database Systems Group
 Sir Lawrence Wackett Centre for Aerospace Design Technology (with the Faculty of Engineering)

During 1997 the Faculty of Applied Science noted a number of achievements and events, among which was the successful implementation of a new multi-major applied science degree. This was one of a range of new and revised courses, including double degrees and dual TAFE/degree awards, developed and approved during the year.

Promotion of the faculty's courses and activities through the faculty marketing and publicity committee was a major activity in 1997. The faculty continued its involvement in the CRA National Youth Forum, the Siemens Summer Science School, the Chemistry Enrichment Programs and the National Science and Mathematics Talent Search, and made a concerted effort in liaising with selected schools and attending careers fairs.

The faculty met its student target numbers in the higher education undergraduate and

postgraduate course work areas, and was marginally under-enrolled in the research load on the 31 August census date. In the VET sector, the faculty was over-enrolled in all areas and continued its program of encouraging its Foundation Studies students to proceed to formal award courses at RMIT University.

Professor Bill Appelbe was appointed as head of the Department of Computer Science; Professor Mike Adams as head of the Department of Applied Chemistry and Associate Professor Norm Edwards as head of the Department of

Land Information. Many staff continued to upgrade their qualifications, and twenty of the faculty's academic staff obtained promotion to a higher level.

During the year the faculty developed a 'strategy plan' as part of its business plan, and signed three significant agreements:

- with the Faculty of Business and Informatics Holdings (Singapore) for the delivery of off-shore courses in information technology;
- with the Department of Natural Resources and Environment to support the establishment of a Chair in Spatial Information Science;
- and a three year partnership with the RMIT Department of Psychology and Intellectual Disability Studies, the Royal Children's Hospital and the Tweedle Parenting Centre to study and research parenting issues and difficulties.

A revised agreement with the Software Engineering Research Group (SERC) and Ericsson Australia was also negotiated.

Some important items of teaching and research equipment were acquired during the year, and arrangements were completed for part of the faculty to relocate from Bundoora West to the Bundoora East site.

The faculty received four of RMIT's five large Australian Research Council grants in 1997 and obtained a number of large ARC collaborative grants, including one with Alcoa Australia and the RMIT Department of Applied Chemistry.

The faculty ended 1997 with small operating surpluses in both its higher education and VET sectors.

Faculty of Art, Design and Communication

Department of Communication Studies

Department of Creative Media

Department of Fashion and Textile Design

Department of Fine Art

Department of Printing

Department of Visual Arts and Display

Department of Visual Communication

From 1 January 1997 the faculty took a new name, adding 'communication' to its title to give a better indication of its core business after its restructure the previous year. Two VET departments were merged to become the Department of Printing. The faculty's policy and advisory group continued to meet to further integrate the VET and higher education sectors along discipline lines. This group now primarily meets in sub-committees to consider specific discipline areas (for example multimedia) or particular areas such as Foundation Studies.

The research profile of the faculty continues to grow in new technologies, and continues its tradition of excellence in the traditional disciplines. Robert Baines, from the gold- and silver-smithing area of the Department of Fine Art, won Australia's richest craft prize, the Cicely and Colin Rigg Craft Award worth \$30,000. RMIT University has been invited to represent Australia at an international exhibition of metalwork at the Victoria and Albert Museum in London. In the VET area, the Department of Creative Media hosted a successful writing conference featuring Tom Keneally, Morris Gleitzman and Jan Sardi. The 'RMIT On-line' multimedia project was set up by the Vice-Chancellor in the second half of 1997, and is run by the faculty with input from both higher education and VET areas.

Students from many areas won awards in 1997. Three students from the Bachelor of Arts (Advertising) course were the first Australians to win one of the most prestigious international advertising prizes, the British Design and Art Direction Student Award. An honours student from the Bachelor of Arts (Fashion) course was presented with the Challenges of Plastic-Crespi Award during the *Milano collezioni* at the *Fiera Milano*, winning a week's visit to Milan for herself and her head of department. RMIT University fashion and

textile design students dominated in their categories at the Victorian Design awards. Three gold- and silver-smithing students were selected to exhibit at the *Talente* contemporary craft award in Munich in 1998. Four students from the VET department of Creative Media won the ATOM award for best virtual reality product in the international category. The Department of Communication Studies saw its public relations students successfully organise and host their annual PR forum.

The Medici Society, the faculty's fundraising body, continues to increase its membership. In December the society hosted the launch of the faculty's program for its end of year exhibitions across RMIT University and the city.

The faculty continued to run courses at La Salle-SIA in Singapore and Limkokwing Institute of Creative Technology (LICT) in Malaysia. Following its success in 1997, the Advanced Diploma in Electronic Design and Multimedia, jointly delivered by RMIT University and LICT, will be delivered to about sixty students in 1998. Co-operative memorandums of understanding have been signed with Seoul National University and Kang Won University school of design in Korea, and the faculty hosted an exhibition of the Korean Women Artists Association in Melbourne. The Department of Fine Art now has an association

with Hong Kong Arts Centre to deliver degrees in ceramics and painting. The Department of Visual Arts and Display has developed an alliance with the Trident School of Design in Japan, and ran short courses for Japanese students in Melbourne. This will continue into 1998.

In 1997 the total EFTSU for the faculty was 4,650, comprising 2,303 in higher education

and 2,347 in VET. International EFTSU were 996 in total, 503 for higher education and 493 VET. In budgetary terms, the actual total income to the greater faculty was \$20.839 million, comprising \$14.130 million in the higher education sector and \$6.708 million in the VET sector.

Faculty of Biomedical and Health Sciences

Department of Anatomy and Physiology
 Department of Applied Biology and Biotechnology
 Department of Chiropractic, Osteopathy and
 Complementary Medicine
 Department of Health and Clinical Sciences
 Department of Human Movement Science

Department of Medical Laboratory Science
 Department of Medical Radiations Science
 Key Centre for Applied and Nutritional Toxicology
 Industry Training and Consultancy Unit

In 1997 the faculty addressed the decline in operating grant funding by focusing on cost-effective means of delivering its programs, and by targeting commercial and research opportunities. Thirty percent of the faculty's income was from sources other than government operating grant. Although the faculty experienced a net reduction in funds in 1997, it continues to seek ways to support its activities whilst maintaining quality in an environment of tighter financial constraints.

The faculty built on its research activity, with income from industry and government research funding bodies of approximately \$1.5 million in the 1997 financial year. The faculty's research was concentrated in the areas of drug research, toxicology, ecotoxicology, vaccine development, antibiotic production, cardiovascular research and diabetes. Grants attracted included national competitive grants from the National Health and Medical Research Council and the Australian Research Council for more strategic research. Considerable funding was also received from major research and development boards and industry partners for projects of commercial significance.

The Industry Training and Consultancy Unit achieved income of over \$750,000 from successful government tenders, and from the provision of short courses. It entered its second year of operation by broadening its scope to include the Faculty of Nursing, in preparation for the merger of the two faculties from 1 January 1998. The ITC Unit continued to have a high success rate with tenders for major curriculum projects.

The linkages with international exchange fellows and postgraduate exchange students from such countries as Holland, Austria, Denmark and Italy have continued. The

faculty's successful off-shore activity brought in income of over \$300,000 from initiatives such as the provision of chiropractic courses in Japan and Korea and postgraduate osteopathy courses in New Zealand, both by the Department of Chiropractic, Osteopathy and Complementary Medicine. Off-shore activity is expected to grow in 1998 and beyond.

The faculty, in conjunction with the Australian Multicultural Foundation (AMF), provided training in multicultural aged-care at the Assisi Centre, Rosanna. This was funded by the Victorian Office of Training and Education (OTFE). The alliance with the AMF continues to strengthen and further joint projects are being developed.

A pilot project for the delivery of VET programs was undertaken at Bundoora West. One group of twenty-four students commenced the Certificate 4 in Health (Nursing) in March 1997 under a co-operative arrangement with the Faculty of Nursing. Tenders for New Apprenticeships were successful and the faculty continues to maintain delivery of VET courses that are unique in the State of Victoria. This has helped address long-standing funding anomalies.

There has been a significant new development in the delivery of on-line education in the faculty. During 1998 the faculty will commence operation of its 'city campus learning centre'. This facility establishes a new paradigm for the delivery of tertiary education, and deliberately moves away from the common 'computer-laboratory' model. By constructing a space predicated on learning, with the information technology explicitly in a supporting role, collaborative and flexible student learning can be more readily facilitated.

Associate Professor Nick Vardaxis was the recipient of a national award for excellence in teaching in health. Associate Professor Marian Dobos was one of four RMIT University staff to be successful in gaining a Commonwealth University Teaching Staff Development (CUTSD) grant. This grant will extend work already being undertaken on peer group tutoring in biochemistry and which has previously been supported by RMIT funding.

Faculty of Business

Department of Accountancy
 Department of Business Computing
 Department of Business Information Technology
 Department of Business Law
 Department of Business Management
 Department of Economics and Finance
 Department of Financial Studies
 Department of Information Management
 Department of Law and Economics

Department of Management
 Department of Marketing and International Trade
 Department of Marketing, Logistics and Property
 Graduate School of Business

Centre in Finance
 Centre for Workplace Culture Change
 Transport Research Centre

RMIT Business is now the largest business education, research and consulting entity in Australia, comprising VET and higher education sectors and the Graduate School of Business. RMIT Business serves a wide range of clients including over fourteen thousand students throughout Australia and the Asia-Pacific region.

Operating from its central city location in Bourke Street, Melbourne, RMIT Business is well placed to cater for diverse technical, education and training needs in business, from short courses to fully accredited master and doctoral degree programs. The on-going integration of VET and higher education sectors is enhancing co-operation, articulation, cross-teaching and the development of off-shore courses.

The higher education sector of the faculty continued to maintain a sound financial base from which it has pursued various academic and commercial ventures both within Australia and overseas. Significant expertise has been developed in the area of managing cross-cultural diversity; a new Graduate Certificate in Business (Managing for Diversity) has been developed in conjunction with partners in the Australian Technology Network. The new Centre for Workplace Culture Change joined RMIT Business 1997 and will provide research and consulting services to industry groups, corporations, organisations and government.

The co-operative education program continued its successful track record of placing a great many business students in over two hundred companies including Hewlett Packard, Ford

Australia, ANZ Bank, BHP Transport and BMW Australia.

New programs commenced during the year included the Master of Business (Corporate Governance); the Master of Business and Graduate Diploma in Document Management, which is the first course of its kind in Australia to be available exclusively on-line; and the Bachelor of Business (Financial Planning), the only degree of its type in this country, which is offered at RMIT Business and through Open Learning Australia.

The number of postgraduate research students in the faculty increased to 127, consistent with a growth in the number of theses completed and an improved publication rate amongst staff. In the VET sector, RMIT Business met or exceeded most targets for 1997 and continues to maintain a sound financial position. It continued to be the only TAFE business entity in Victoria to register tertiary entrance ranks (TERs) for all of its major courses.

During 1997 several major initiatives were brought to fruition in VET. These included accreditation of five new advanced diplomas—in international trade, marketing, information technology, management and administrative management—to which RMIT

University holds the copyright. Articulation agreements were established for these courses. All VET business computer laboratories were upgraded to the same standard as those used by students in the higher education sector, and the 'language pathway' program was established by the faculty's International Student Unit. Open Learning business courses were introduced to enable flexible delivery of VET programs; the operation of the faculty's business training and consultancy services unit was integrated with the 'call centre' operated by RMIT Training; and winter and summer schools were established for VET students in the metropolitan area. RMIT Business (VET)

continued to be the major destination for international TAFE students in Australia. The faculty conducted teaching in Penang (Malaysia), Vietnam, Singapore, Indonesia and Wuhan (central China) as well as Shanghai (China).

Industry-based training was delivered to public and private organisations such as the state Department of Human Services, Bunnings Building Supplies Pty Ltd, Ericsson, the Saigon Cosmetics Company and the Beijing Taxation Bureau as well as many overseas delegations from Vietnam, Indonesia and China. Multimedia and satellite delivery capability was enhanced as a result of successful tenders.

Faculty of the Constructed Environment

Department of Architecture
Department of Building and Construction
Economics
Department of Built Environment
Department of Interior Design
Department of Landscape, Environment and Planning
Department of Social Sciences and Social Work
Department of Industrial Design

Australian Housing and Urban Research Institute
Centre for Applied Social Research
Construction Industry Research and Development Centre
Key Centre for Design

Nineteen ninety-seven was an exceptionally busy inaugural year for the Faculty of the Constructed Environment. Management structures were put in place; issues relating to course structure, common course architecture and course delivery were tackled; the mission of the new faculty was articulated; and a set of strategic, business and research management plans was developed, based on a newly articulated strategic vision of the faculty as a leading provider of senior professionals in international urban and environmental design, policy and management.

The above activities were undertaken within the context of, and ensuring significant progress towards, the faculty's stated benchmarks which relate to provision of a rich educational environment; research-led teaching; simple structures; course patterning; and 'pursuing the difference' or developing the faculty's unique capabilities and advantages.

The VET Department of the Built Environment, which joined the new faculty in 1997, has

brought a valuable industry training and commercial focus to the faculty and some exciting joint VET/higher education initiatives, such as the Diploma of Vehicle Design Development, have already emerged.

Significant restructuring and development costs, combined with declining government funding and increased salary costs, resulted in a negative budget outcome for the faculty in 1997. With further funding cuts and salary

increases in 1998 and 1999, the faculty had to take decisive action to ensure its continuing financial viability.

With three research centres attached to it, the Faculty of the Constructed Environment has a strong research base on which to build. The Centre for Applied Social Research, in conjunction with the Australian Housing and Urban Research Institute (AHURI), provides the new faculty with a powerful presence in the field of policy studies. The Centre for Applied Social Research enjoyed particular success in 1997 with the receipt of three collaborative grants from the Australian Research Council.

Despite budgetary stringencies the faculty was able to support a rich educational environment with a strong interface to the wider professional and general community. This was achieved through a full program of exhibitions, public lectures and forums, publications, community and festival projects, conferences and seminars involving local, national and international guests. The value of this activity both to students and the community cannot be over-estimated and will continue to be an important bench-mark in measuring the success of the new faculty in coming years.

Faculty of Education, Language and Community Services

Department of Access and Preparatory Studies
Department of Hospitality, Tourism and Leisure
Department of Industry, Professional and Adult
Education
Department of Justice and Youth Studies
Department of Language and Cultural Studies
Department of Language and Interpreting

Department of School and Early Childhood
Education
Department of Social and Community Services

Centre for Youth Affairs Research and
Development

The Faculty of Education, Language and Community Services came into existence on 1 January 1997 following the 1996 University Council decision to merge the then Faculty of Education and Training with parts of the then Faculty of Social Sciences and Communications. In addition to entering a new faculty, four departments were relocated from Coburg to the Bundoora campus. With the departments forming the faculty coming from a diverse range of backgrounds and discipline areas, the major task during 1997 was creation of a sense of faculty.

During the year two key leadership appointments were made. In May, Helen Smith became the faculty's first deputy dean. The faculty's foundation dean, Professor Mary Kalantzis, took up her appointment in September.

In October the University Council approved the creation of the first cross-sectoral department in RMIT University. This approval will see the creation of a strong Department of Language and International Studies. The department will be able to offer programs from certificate through to PhD level in the areas of applied languages, interpreting, cross-cultural studies, international studies and teaching English to speakers of other languages (TESOL).

The faculty achieved a satisfactory budget outcome in 1997, with a budget surplus reported for the faculty as a whole. The faculty is in a sound financial position with continued growth expected in income generated from non-operating grant sources.

Both the VET and the higher education sectors achieved their student load targets. In the VET sector the strength of demand for places resulted in a small increase in the student contact hours allocated to the faculty. In the

higher education sector demand was strongest for undergraduate and research degree programs.

Several new courses were introduced in 1997. The Professional Doctorate (EdD) program enrolled its first students at the beginning of second semester. The program, which caters for professionals working in a range of discipline areas covered by the faculty, has received strong acceptance from the field. Other new programs introduced during 1997 include the Bachelor of Applied Science (Hospitality Management), the Bachelor of Applied Science (Tourism Management), a Graduate Certificate/Diploma in TESOL and pre-service Graduate Diplomas in Education (Early Childhood Education, Primary and Secondary). The quality of course design in the hospitality and tourism degrees was recognised by the university through the presentation to staff in the Department of Hospitality, Tourism and Leisure of an RMIT University quality award for teaching and learning.

A student from the Department of Social and Community Services, Leroy Eggmolesse, received Victorian and National Training Awards for Student of the Year (Aboriginal and

Torres Strait Islander) and was named Wentworth Shire Citizen of the Year. Mr Eggmolesse was a student in the customised Home and Community Care Program under a flexible delivery arrangement to the Dareton Aboriginal community in rural Victoria. The success of this program has led to a continuing involvement with the Dareton community and the allocation of six thousand student contact hours from the Victorian Office for Technical and Further Education (OTFE) specifically for programs in this community.

From February to March, Professor Mou Dai was a visiting fellow with the Department of Justice and Youth Studies. He worked with the department's staff on preparing for publishing a range of articles in the criminal justice field.

The development of a framework for establishing and supporting the faculty's research and consultancy profile was achieved during 1997. Over \$60,000 was allocated in research seeding grants to eight projects in areas of strategic importance to the faculty.

Faculty of Engineering

Department of Aerospace Engineering
 Department of Aerospace Technology
 Department of Building Services and Refrigeration
 Department of Chemical and Metallurgical Engineering
 Department of Civil and Geological Engineering
 Department of Communication and Electronic Engineering
 Department of Computer Systems Engineering
 Department of Construction and Surveying
 Department of Electrical and Control Technology
 Department of Electrical Engineering
 Department of Electronics Technology
 Department of Manufacturing Mechanical and Marine Technology
 Department of Manufacturing Systems Engineering
 Department of Mechanical Engineering
 Department of Metal Technologies
 Department of Technician Electronics

Advanced Engineering Centre for Manufacturing
 Centre for Advanced Technology in Telecommunications
 Centre for High Performance Computer Systems
 Co-operative Research centre for Advanced Composite Structures
 Co-operative Research Centre for Intelligent Manufacturing Systems and Technologies
 Co-operative Research Centre for Polymer Blends
 Co-operative Research Centre for Water Quality and Treatment
 Graduate School of Engineering
 Microelectronics and Materials Technology Centre
 Polymer Technology Centre
 Rheology and Materials Processing Centre
 Seismology Research Centre
 Sir Lawrence Wackett Centre for Aerospace Design Technology (joint centre with Faculty of Applied Science)

During 1997 the Faculty of Engineering made strong progress towards its goal of being the leading provider of engineering education in Australia. Following an intensive review of the VET sector, the faculty embraced a new structure for its TAFE operations. Three 'technology centres' will replace the previous system of nine departments. The resulting improvements in flexibility, responsiveness to industry and quality of service will see the faculty well-placed to take advantage of new opportunities in 1998, particularly in expanding the range of industry services on offer. Achievements in research and development and awards to engineering students reflected the depth of talent in the faculty and the continuing commitment of staff to excellence in their profession.

The new configuration for TAFE engineering consists of the Centre for Infrastructure Technology, the Centre for Telecommunications, Computing and Electrotechnology and the Centre for Manufacturing, Mechanical and Materials. Combined with flexible delivery methods and close industry partnerships, TAFE engineering offers exceptional flexibility and experience with cutting-edge technology. RMIT engineering courses are designed in partnership with industry to meet the needs of a sector undergoing rapid technological change. Employers and graduates can be

assured of flexible, leading-edge training. During 1997 the faculty expanded its range of industry services and short courses.

The move from the city campus to Bundoora of the Department of Mechanical Engineering complements the move last year by the Department of Manufacturing Systems Engineering. With new facilities and a spacious new campus, these departments are well-situated to expand their range of industry services.

This engagement of the Faculty of Engineering with the latest technology and ground-

breaking research was highlighted at the RMIT Innovation presentation at RMIT Storey Hall in November. The soccer-playing robots developed by a team led by Andrew Price attracted great interest for their novel design and international success. Likewise, the development of the Astor-Boeing 737 aileron by the aerospace co-operative research centre, with significant input from the RMIT engineering team led by Professor Murray White, exemplified the practical and industry focused nature of the research and development work carried out by the faculty.

Bevan Damm won the J.N. McNichol Prize for outstanding undergraduate student. A member of the Royal Australian Navy, Mr Damm completed his double degree in communication engineering (honours) and mathematics (distinction); was chief organiser of the 1996 Open Day activities for two departments in the faculty; and is active in various community and sporting organisations.

International student Rini Akmeliawati won the Patricia Guthrie Award for outstanding female student. Ms Akmeliawati completed her Bachelor of Engineering (Electrical) at RMIT with an outstanding academic record and is now undertaking master degree studies in the same field. During her time at RMIT University she regularly contributed to orientation and Open Day programs, the annual RMIT World Week festival, the APEC youth summit and the Indonesian Aerospace Students in Europe (IASE) conference. She continues to be active in the RMIT Muslim student community.

The Faculty of Engineering operates at the city, Bundoora, Fishermens Bend and Penang campuses of RMIT University. Actual income for 1997 comprised \$28.43 million of government operating grants and \$16.72 million from other sources.

The installation of a new Reifenstall plastic extrusion machine in the Polymer Technology Centre opens up important new possibilities for partnerships with the chemical engineering industry. The Reifenstall extruder is the only one of its kind in an Australian university.

Students of the Faculty of Engineering continued to demonstrate excellent achievements. In particular, Bevan Damm and Rini Akmeliawati were awarded two of RMIT University's four top prizes for outstanding students.

Faculty of Nursing

Department of Nursing Inquiry, Practice and Management

Department of Public Health, Family and Mental Health

Nineteen ninety-seven saw the Faculty of Nursing further develop and strengthen relationships with the health care, and rural and international sectors and with other faculties within RMIT University.

The multidisciplinary Master of Creative Arts Therapy course continued to generate enthusiasm among students and significant interest from other Australian and overseas universities. A collaborative link was formed between Lesley College in Boston, USA, and RMIT University, culminating in a visit to Melbourne by expressive arts therapist Professor Julia Byers who conducted a weekend workshop.

Collaboration with other faculties is evidenced by the successful completion, with the VET sector, of an Educational Program Improvement Group-funded internationalisation project to develop a culturally sensitive curriculum for overseas-trained enrolled nurses to enable them to register in Victoria.

The faculty's commitment to education in rural areas continues. When the Bachelor of Nursing program at East Gippsland Institute of TAFE commenced, it was intended that only the first year would be conducted at Bairnsdale; however following the successful completion of first year, second year was also delivered away from the RMIT University campus. Access and equity funds enabled the rural students to travel to Bundoora to meet their peers.

Funded by a tender from CURHEV, the Department of Nursing Inquiry, Practice and Management is developing a preceptorship training program for registered rural health practitioners.

Off-shore activities included the running of the Master of Health Science (Psychiatric Nursing) program in Hong Kong and an agreement with

the Shell-Panaga Hospital in Brunei. Both contributed to an increase in enrolments of full-fee students.

International linkage arrangements between the faculty and Chiang-Mai University enabled final-year students to learn about and experience nursing, health and health systems in a developing country through a successful study abroad program. Professor Carol Morse's appointment to the editorial board of the Britain-based 'International Menopause Society Journal' is another example of the growth of the faculty's international profile.

The faculty moved closer to the establishment of a clinical school of nursing with the appointment of a chair in clinical nursing. The chair will be located primarily at the Austin and Repatriation Medical Centre and is to be funded jointly by RMIT University and the Austin.

The faculty continues to pursue industry-based training and consultancy opportunities. The midwifery team developed and delivered for St George's Hospital a series of innovative, customer-focused childbirth sessions.

Considerable emphasis was placed on developing distance education and flexible learning approaches. Maternal and child health nurses presented their distance education project at a ministerial launch. The self-directed learning package involves around fifty teams across Victoria and allows child health nurses to incorporate continuous quality improvement into their daily practice.

The faculty was awarded \$200,000 from the RMIT strategic investment fund to develop multimedia packages for the Bachelor of Nursing for offering in 1998. This will allow greater flexibility in the program offerings and delivery mode, particularly in relation to the conversion program and Bachelor of Nursing

program in East Gippsland. Innovative multimedia approaches to learning by staff include the release of a CD-ROM which teaches the use of the otoscope and stethoscope. Another CAUT-funded project nearing completion is the development of a simulated pregnancy model.

Resources Division

"A decade after RMIT's centenary celebrations, this year we undertook and published a review of how we have implemented the 133 recommendations made by the RMIT Centenary Commissioners in 1987. While some of the recommendations are less relevant today than they were ten years ago—when RMIT was a single-campus institute of technology—the large majority remain highly applicable. The report on the progress made over the last ten years was presented to the RMIT Centenary Commissioners in September, and provides a valuable addition to our records which chart the progress of this institution over its 110-year history.

Over many months this year, negotiations with the various staff unions resulted in endorsement of new enterprise agreements covering academic and general (PACCT) employees, and general (trades and services) staff. The 1997 round of voluntary departure applications was finalised in December.

Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Resources) Dr Peter Frost is responsible for providing university infrastructure services such as human resource management, information technology, and strategic planning and reporting. In 1997 he was assisted by Pro Vice-Chancellor (Resources Projects) Professor David Knowles and Pro Vice-Chancellor (Development) Ian Permezel. RMIT Resources Ltd is the commercial arm of the Resources Division.

An agreement has been reached with the state government whereby RMIT acquires the former Magistrates' Court, city watch-house and police garage complex in Russell Street, Melbourne. Part of the complex will be reserved for up to two years for possible use as a museum by the National Trust. The space will provide us with some more accommodation, particularly in the former Magistrates' Court building, and enable the extension of the Urban Spaces program that is creating a more welcoming and pleasant outdoor environment on the city campus. This is something that students and staff, and members of the external community, have been telling us for many years that they wanted. The program will make the campus a far more attractive one in which to work or study, and further integrate the university into the heart of Melbourne.

At Bundoora West, new buildings are enabling the transfer of additional programs from the city campus and providing enhanced services to students and staff."

Corporate publications

During 1997 the following publications were available from the university:

- the *RMIT Annual Report 1996*;
- an organisational summary;
- a strategic plan (summary version);
- *RMIT Openline*, the university's newspaper;
- the *RMIT Research and Publications Report 1996*;
- a general information brochure;
- undergraduate course brochures;
- postgraduate course brochures;
- a postgraduate course guide;
- a bachelor degree course guide;
- a VET course guide;
- a student diary;
- various Open Day publications;
- two short course directories;
- a staff and student handbook;

- various faculty short course directories;
- and a World Wide Web site <<http://www.rmit.edu.au>>.

Copies of these publications were available from the Corporate Affairs Group.

Asset Management Group

The Asset Management Group is responsible for enhancing, maintaining and operating all buildings and grounds owned and leased by RMIT University. The group is responsible for planning, designing, constructing and maintaining the physical infrastructure and environment of all the university's campuses.

Specific functions of the Asset Management Group include capital works and minor works delivery; property management including leasing; project management from feasibility and planning stages to commissioning and hand-over; maintenance and engineering management including energy management; accommodation planning, including the university's space planning model; environmental co-ordination for university activities; security; cleaning, furniture and contract services.

Some of the Asset Management Group's key achievements in 1997 include consolidation of the restructured group with a property management focus, and development of a space charge-back system for implementation in 1998. New cleaning contracts were established, and phase one of a security/access system was installed. An energy management policy was completed, under which a tender was issued for supply of energy under contract. A standard brief for project works was developed and implemented. Further developing the group's emphasis on customer service, the operation of the customer service desk (help-desk) was implemented; a maintenance and works request management system was started for all of the group's activities; and customer service agreements were introduced. A significant upgrade of open spaces on the city campus was started in 1997, under the 'Urban Spaces' project.

All new projects and maintenance work are carried out in compliance with the *Building Act 1993*. Work on existing facilities that require regulatory upgrading is funded from the capital management program approved by the University Council in April 1997. The allocation for 1997 was \$8.2 million. Work has commenced on the city campus and documentation is proceeding for TAFE facilities and at the Bundoora campus.

Building works

Type of work	1996	1997
Buildings certified for approval	6	23
Works in construction and the subject of mandatory inspections	2	3
Occupancy permits issued	5	23
Notices issued for rectification of substandard buildings requiring urgent attention	0	0

Commercial and Legal Services

Commercial and Legal Services (CALS) provides consulting services to internal RMIT University clients on a range of commercial and legal matters. Clients for such work fall into two basic groups:

- deans, deputy deans and heads of department seeking commercial, evaluation or business planning advice in relation to a specific contract or proposal;
- and members of the Vice Chancellor's executive seeking the development or review of financial or management policies or advice on major project proposals.

CALS staff are committed to providing quality, timely and professional service to assist in achieving clients' objectives. The commercial and legal professionals work closely together to provide a seamless and integrated service.

The demand for objective commercial and legal advice within RMIT University continued to grow during the year, particularly relating to diversification of RMIT's funding base; international activities; property acquisition and development; student housing; and increasing numbers of unincorporated associations and companies in which the university and/or its subsidiary companies participate. Property acquisition and development projects under way included the former Janefield site at Bundoora East, purchase of RMIT Building 91 and the associated car park in Victoria Street (city), and the proposal to build a sports complex in Swanston Street (city).

In 1998 CALS will focus on collaboration with industry to develop quality and affordable housing for RMIT students; risk management advice regarding the Janefield development; and continued work on taxation and national competition policy. The group will also work on gaining a better understanding of RMIT University cost structures at course level and for Co-operative Research Centres.

Human Resources Management Group

The Human Resources Management Group's branches continued improving their services through incremental change strategies, addressing issues and recommendations arising from the 1996 review of HRMG. In its first year the new Management Improvement Unit, replacing the Human Resource Development and Policy Branch, undertook a range of organisational effectiveness projects.

The VET annual work plan policy was reviewed, and a probation policy for general and VET teaching staff was introduced. Guidelines and procedures were developed for the university's international activities, specifically addressing issues concerning the employment and repatriation of expatriate staff. The RMIT code of ethics was finalised and will be implemented throughout the university in 1998.

A major initiative addressing the development needs of women at RMIT started in mid-1997. The 'RMIT Women in Leadership' program will be in place for two years. The Australian Technology Network's women's executive development program—involving five universities and initiated in 1996—continued in 1997 within the Women in Leadership project, offering senior women a range of options to develop their skills and professional knowledge.

The Equal Employment Opportunity Branch continued its mentoring programs and for the first time included men as mentors. Career planning workshops and the academic promotions program proved popular once again and a quarterly EEO Branch newsletter was received well.

An executive health program was piloted with directors from the Resources Division. This program involved a health assessment, fitness

test, supervised exercise and information sessions on diet, relaxation and the benefits of regular exercise. The program has achieved improved levels of fitness for those involved and will continue in 1998.

The Safety Health and Risk Management Branch continued to provide training to managers, supervisors and others. The branch was active in committees dealing with health and safety across the university and provided financial assistance to major projects.

Other HRMG staff development activities during 1997 included two LEAD programs for academic staff and senior executives.

The Human Resources Management Group continued to expand its work-force planning function and provided a range of staffing profile reports to help cost centres in developing their work-force planning strategies. Employment opportunities at RMIT University, including position descriptions, are now advertised on the HRMG web site. New web sites were established for the human resources policies and procedures manual and for staff superannuation. Each university staff member received a copy of the new booklet 'Clear', which summarises HRMG policies and procedures.

In conjunction with the Quality Development Unit, HRMG commenced a quality alignment project to ensure all human resources management practices incorporate quality principles, emulate best practice and support the achievement of RMIT University's major strategic objectives. This involved development of performance management practices, development of a succession planning model, a review of recruitment practices, and a project on dysfunctionality. Further projects were

undertaken and most of these will be completed and implemented in 1998.

Internal Audit Group

The Internal Audit Group provides assurance to RMIT Council and the Vice-Chancellery regarding the efficiency, effectiveness and economy of resource management practices and controls to mitigate organisational risks. Work undertaken by the group is designed to provide a systematic and independent review of all activities as a means of adding value and contributing to effectiveness of university operations.

The group's activities are performed in accordance with an internal audit charter approved by RMIT Council which encompasses financial, compliance, operational, computer and special audits. The approved strategic plan for the group is aligned to the university's overall strategic plan.

A range of initiatives that satisfy RMIT Council's internal audit requirements were delivered during 1997. A risk-based five year strategic internal audit plan for 1997-2001 was approved by the University Council's audit committee.

Internal audit certifications were provided to grant-issuing bodies during the year and audits encompassing financial, operational, information technology and other matters were completed, with quarterly reports to the audit committee. The group continued its program of follow-up audits to assess implementation of remedial actions by management. The Internal Audit Group provided timely responses to requests from the Vice-Chancellor's executive and other senior management for advice, assistance or special investigations.

The evolving environment within RMIT continues to be characterised by substantial change including internationalisation, devolution and organisational restructuring. Along with opportunities, change brings with it additional risks to the university. The challenge for the Internal Audit Group will be to keep abreast of the changes occurring, assess the consequential risks to the university, and ensure that the major risks are adequately addressed in the strategic internal audit plan.

Opportunities for internal audit in the future revolve around the further development of the group's computer-assisted auditing tools, involvement in the university's risk management process, and adoption of a collaborative approach with management in the execution of internal audit projects. These initiatives are designed to provide a cost-effective internal audit function and further enhance the group's focus on satisfying customers' needs and complying with professional auditing standards.

Libraries

RMIT University libraries exist to link staff and students with recorded knowledge in an appropriate time, place and way, enabling them to achieve excellence in teaching, learning and research. In 1997, the libraries improved service delivery by:

- increasing by ten percent the funds available for the acquisition of information resources which support the teaching, learning and research programs of the university;
- in partnership with selected academic staff, identifying, selecting and making available information resources which support innovative curriculum and delivery modes for course work;

- extending the hours of library access at the city campus Business Information Centre to ensure that its academic year opening hours cover the VET teaching year; at the Bundoora East library service point to forty hours per week; and at the Aerospace Resource Centre (Fishermens Bend) to thirty-five hours per week;
- improving cross-campus loan delivery times;
- and expanding the libraries' access to the full text version of electronic journals to approximately one thousand titles.

In their drive toward the continuous improvement of services and processes, the libraries used a trained quality team to review a further major library process (items recovery). The recommendations of the two 1996 quality teams were implemented during 1997, leading to significant improvement in time taken to provide new materials and reshelving time. The libraries participated in the development of national performance measures for reference and enquiry services, and implemented a materials availability study as the second national academic library performance indicator.

To improve their response to the changes taking place within the university and in information services, the libraries continued the development of their strategic plan by producing specific supporting statements in the areas of information technology, information resources, human resources and marketing and public relations. Commercial operations were reviewed, with the aim of rebuilding the libraries' non-government revenue base.

Office of Strategic Information Technology

In 1997 the Office of Strategic Information Technology operated as a small, high-level, advisory and information technology planning unit.

A strategic information technology plan was drawn up within the university's overall planning framework, providing the technological background upon which to develop plans that support RMIT's emerging business needs and to define future information technology developments that support teaching, learning and research.

The information technology plan took account of the demands for more flexible delivery of teaching, consonant with the university's aim to deliver programs which are essentially student-centred. Priorities were set out for short term and long term goals including, for example, projects for 2000 compliance, common staff desktop platforms and a common messaging system. Research was also undertaken to evaluate information technology developments of potential value to the university in future.

Strategic and Financial Planning Group

The group had several significant achievements during 1997, continuing the program of financial reform (commenced in late 1996) with a review of the chart of accounts and the abolition of fund accounting. Council, divisional and cost centre management reporting were improved, as was the budgeting process which now includes a user-friendly software package to help staff in cost centres with framing their budgets. The software compiles the budget from a project base.

Reviews of processes and policies brought changes in several areas. The university's performance on objectives and targets was assessed, and the strategic plan was consequently revised. The strategic planning and budget processes now have greater coherence, and the university has a redesigned planning and budget cycle. Following a review of resource allocation models used in the budget, all student load-based income in the university will be calculated using a new, simpler and more transparent range of models.

Revised enrolment forecasting models are now being used to develop profiles, and the process is now user-driven. These changes are the first step in creating a software package for use by faculties and departments to forecast enrolments. The Strategic and Financial Planning Group produced three-year enrolment profiles by funding source and used them in the budget process by applying them in the new resource allocation models.

Progress was made in developing a new financial model for the university and using it in 'what if' analyses for the enterprise bargaining process. The group also developed and enhanced a user-friendly data warehouse of financial information to enable more timely and professional reporting. A complex costing model, which demonstrates competitive neutrality, was developed for faculties to use in competitive tendering for VET apprenticeships and traineeships.

The Strategic and Financial Planning Group participated in the Education and Training Division's academic profile workshops and

writing of the educational profile documentation for the Commonwealth and state governments, for the higher education and VET sectors respectively. Strategic and Financial Planning prepared the university's responses to the Higher Education Council's quality assurance requirements and the West Committee's review of financing and policy in higher education.

A restructuring of the group was finalised, with the last senior appointments in place by

Student Affairs Group

The Student Affairs Group was formed at the end of 1996 by amalgamating the responsibilities of the academic registrar with those of the Student Services group.

The Student Affairs Group's services are now organised through seven branches: Academic Administration; Awards and Examinations; Careers and Employment Services; Counselling; Health Services; Student Administration; and Support and Advisory Services.

A number of accommodation changes occurred on the city campus during the year. Some of these were aimed at improving efficiencies by consolidating activities on that campus.

October. Staff were trained to use the new financial data warehouse.

Staff, work and services to clients were severely disrupted by the student occupation of the Strategic and Financial Planning Group's city offices in August. Considerable effort went into disaster recovery of the offices and files, resuming normal services and maintaining staff morale.

Research and Development Division

"Nineteen ninety-seven was a year in which governments at Commonwealth and state levels strategically reviewed different aspects of effectiveness of research and development to Australia's national science and technology priorities, resulting in the Mortimer report on business programs for investment innovation and export and the Goldsworthy report on national priorities in information technology.

These reviews clearly articulated a need for research and development in Australia to be needs driven, responsive to the end user, and efficient with the client base paying an increasing share of costs. Such directions are entirely consistent with RMIT University's strategic plan to be a different university with a focus on real-world outcome-driven research linked to professional education.

The Research and Development Division, with its focus on client-linked research and community service, emphasises not only technology transfer but knowledge transfer and its beneficial application—a process we call innovation. Valued research and development is funded. RMIT University has consistently had the highest proportion of its research funds coming directly from industry compared to academic grants. This figure has approached two-thirds over the last few years indicating the strength of RMIT University's industry collaboration.

RMIT University's strategy for community service in the northern sector of Melbourne was

Based at the Bundoora campus, Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Research and Development) Professor Ann Henderson-Sellers is responsible for managing RMIT's current research programs, and developing the university's community and industry links. This work is supported by the commercial arm of the division, RMIT Innovation Ltd.

extended in 1997 by the endorsement of 'RMIT in the City', the strategic framework for the university's community service in inner Melbourne through partnership with the Melbourne City Council.

The Victorian Treasurer, Hon. Alan Stockdale, officially opened RMIT's Interactive Information Institute and welcomed its first industry partners including Optus, Telstra, Sun, Silicon Graphics and Multimedia Victoria. During 1997 the second of RMIT University's initiatives under its new research institutes program was formulated in the area of environmental and economic sustainability. The 'environmental enterprise' is under development by the Faculty of Applied Science, Faculty of Engineering, Faculty of Biomedical and Health Sciences and Nursing, and Faculty of the Constructed Environment.

To reinforce the research experience of RMIT University students, an Undergraduate Research Opportunities Program (UROP) was developed as a trial across three faculties. This involved 216 undergraduates and 159 projects. The Academic Board supported making the scheme available to all faculties. The Research and Development Division also initiated a trial UROP Summer Research Scholarship program supported financially by RMIT Innovation Ltd. This drew undergraduates from within and outside RMIT University to work on research projects in our centres and groups."

Key research activities

RMIT research has resulted in two new patent applications in the important areas of plant production and food quality. Associate Professor Ann Lawrie developed a unique diagnostic assay for the detection of club root in agricultural plants. Professor Jorma Ahokas and colleagues in the RMIT Toxicology Centre have devised processes for the decontamination of food materials by the removal of aflatoxins and their binding using natural probiotic products. Interest in internationalising this development within a suite of commercial food additives has already been shown by a European company.

The RMIT-Australian Institute of Sport 'superbike' continues to achieve success on the track. To date the superbike has won twenty-four gold medals and three world records.

The Software Engineering Research Centre have had their core research funding increased to \$70,000 per annum by Ericsson and now form part of their world wide network of associated university research groups.

Sue Ann Ware, of the RMIT Department of Environmental Planning, formulated a concept for the Australian Institute of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Studies to hold a national design competition for a memorial to the stolen generation. This was supported by a number of Commonwealth reconciliation bodies.

Centres and institutes

Institutes

Interactive Information Institute

Environment Enterprise

Centres

Advanced Engineering Centre for Manufacturing

Australian Housing and Urban Research Institute

Centre for Advanced Technology in Telecommunications (CATT)

Centre for Applied Social Research

Centre for Design

Centre for High Performance Computer Systems

Centre for Remote Sensing and Geographic Information Systems

Centre for Youth Affairs Research and Development

Centre in Finance

Co-operative Research Centre (CRC) for Advanced Composite Structures

CRC for Intelligent Manufacturing Systems and Technologies

CRC for Polymers

CRC for Water Quality and Treatment

eMERGE Cooperative Multimedia Centre

Key Centre for Applied and Nutritional Toxicology

Key Centre for Knowledge Based Systems

Microelectronics and Materials Technology Centre

Polymer Technology Centre

Rheology and Materials Processing Centre

Seismology Research Centre

Sir Lawrence Wackett Centre for Aerospace Design Technology

Transport Research Centre

International Division

In a most successful year for RMIT internationally, the university extended its position of market leadership during 1997 and took steps to assure future growth and protect its position in a difficult environment.

The university's major international partners continue to be in Asia. RMIT University is well represented in Malaysia, Singapore, Indonesia and China (including Hong Kong). During the year strong growth occurred in Japan, Korea, Vietnam, the Philippines, India and Thailand. Around 85 percent of RMIT's international on-shore students are from the Asian region. Similarly, most RMIT programs delivered off-shore are in these major markets. The university is actively exploring Europe and the Americas for new partnerships into the next century, as well as dedicated sites for students throughout eastern Asia.

In 1997 RMIT's on-shore program attracted over 5,200 students, making RMIT University Australia's largest provider of direct education to international students on-shore, and off-shore one of the world's largest such providers.

The International Division gained ISO 9002 accreditation in September 1997. As well as the clear benefits of establishing and maintaining ISO standards, certification will further enhance the marketing activities of RMIT University's two hundred agents abroad.

Off-shore, a doubling of the number of RMIT award courses to forty-five degrees and diplomas enabled 4,500 students to be enrolled in ten countries. Agreements were signed for new courses such as the Master of Aviation Management and Diploma of Aviation Management (Pilot Training) with General Administration of Civil Aviation of China (CAAC); the Bachelor of Chiropractics with

Hanseu University, Korea; and the Bachelor of Arts (Fine Art) with the Hong Kong Arts Centre. Further development of the joint venture campus in Penang, with over 350 students enrolled, included new courses in tourism and hospitality. Economic conditions in Malaysia caused some difficulties. An arrangement with the University of British Columbia in Canada will license their Certificate in Intercultural Studies to RMIT University for operation throughout Australia.

Growth in the activities of RMIT University's joint centre with the Vietnam National University in Hanoi augurs well for further programs in Vietnam. However, a joint venture English language college in Ho Chi Minh City was deferred.

Student exchange and study-abroad programs continue to grow, with two hundred corresponding institutions and five hundred students in 1997.

The university received a commendation in the Governor of Victoria Export Award, and Professor Tony Adams received a personal award as International Educator of the Year from IDP Education Australia.

RMIT University's international activities were greatly enhanced during the year by the establishment of an International Projects Unit within RMIT International Pty Ltd. This unit will market RMIT's education, training and consultancy functions to a growing international market for these services.

In 1997 RMIT University expanded its support services for students studying in Melbourne and developed policies to implement its stand against racism. The Intercultural Projects and Resources Centre, the Centre for International Students and Scholars and the International

Services unit all helped international students through a challenging year.

Consistent with the theme of the second RMIT international conference on 'The global university', held in July, RMIT University is moving towards becoming one of the first truly

global higher education institutions. With plans for the fundamental transformation of RMIT University's education, training and research and development programs internationally, the prospect ahead is an exciting one."

Deputy Vice-Chancellor (International) Professor David Wilmoth is responsible for managing and developing RMIT University's international operations, both within Australia and overseas. The commercial arm of this division is RMIT International Pty Ltd.

International activities

RMIT University's international program grew by 5.5 percent for on-shore programs and by 78 percent for programs offered outside Australia (off-shore). In the on-shore programs, higher education growth was strong but VET enrolments fell by 2.8 percent. International students represented 18 percent of on-shore load in 1997, rising from 16.6 percent in 1996. Expansion in VET off-shore programs reflects growth at the RMIT campus in Penang, Malaysia.

Operational objectives

Each year, in negotiations with the Commonwealth government through the Department of Employment Education Training and Youth Affairs (DEETYA) and the Victorian government through the Office of Training and Further Education (OTFE), the university sets student load and other targets for its higher education and vocational education and training programs respectively. The university also sets targets for its international programs, contract research and industry training.

Student load

Total student load outcomes, higher education and VET, 1997

Higher education data at 31 August 1997. VET data are full-year for 1997.

Course level	Government	Australian fee paying postgraduate	International on-shore	International off-shore	Other	Total
Higher education (equivalent full time student units)						
Research	838	0	127	5	5	975
Course work postgraduate	1,158	787	515	298	24	2,781
Undergraduate	13,358	0	2,939	1,494	158	17,949
Higher education subtotal	15,354	787	3,581	1,796	187	21,705
Vocational education and training (equivalent full time students)						
Diploma	4,963	62	914	357	2	6,299
Advanced certificate	1,393	71	70	0	64	1,598
Apprentice	1,097	27	0	0	0	1,124
Certificate/other	928	57	976	225	280	2,465
VET subtotal	8,382	216	1,960	582	346	11,486
Total RMIT	23,736	1,003	5,540	2,378	533	33,191

Performance against targets

RMIT University's government funded higher education student load exceeded target at 31 March 1997. Higher education targets for students articulating from VET courses were also exceeded, for the third successive year. In the VET sector, targets were not met due to late cancellation of non-continuing enrolments arising from closer auditing of attendance records. This issue will be the subject of a major project in 1998.

Performance against government targets, higher education and VET, at 31 August 1997

Target description	Target	Actual number
Higher education government target (equivalent full time student units)	14,965	15,196
VET on-campus target (student contact hours)	4,847,569	4,453,325
VET off-campus target (student contact hours)	150,000	72,756
VET total target (student contact hours)	4,997,569	4,526,080
VET-higher education articulation	447	525

Equity and access

Faculties have now been provided with data covering the past four years, on access (commencing students) and participation (all students) for four equity groups:

- women;
- non-English speaking background;
- students from a low socio-economic background;
- and students from a rural background.

In addition, success (passed subjects enrolled in) data has also been made available for two years.

This information is provided at departmental and course levels to help department heads and course co-ordinators identify problem areas and develop finely-tuned intervention strategies to improve access, participation and/or success. There were two notable successes in 1997:

- The Faculty of Nursing's first-year mentoring scheme has improved both success and retention (completing courses).
- The combined Faculty of Engineering and Faculty of Applied Science outreach program to rural schools promises to increase access rates, particularly for women in non-traditional courses.

University-wide data shows that RMIT University's equity performance, measured in terms of the Martin indicators, has improved continuously over the last three years in the participation of women in non-traditional areas; by students from non-English speaking backgrounds; students with disabilities; and people from socio-economically disadvantaged backgrounds. Participation by rural and isolated students at the university declined in 1997 following constant participation patterns for the last few years.

Equity and access targets and performance in 1997

	1997 target	1997 actual
Persons of non-English speaking background		
Access	8%	8%
Participation	8%	7%
Retention	1.000	1.010
Low socio-economic status (17-24 years)		
Access	21%	20%
Participation	1.000	0.600
Retention	1.000	1.021
Women		
Access		
Total	50%	54%
Postgraduate research	38%	38%
Higher degree course work	40%	58%
Architecture	42%	44%
Engineering	18%	17%

Business	47%	49%
Science	45%	44%
Participation		
Total	50%	54%
Postgraduate research	38%	36%
Higher degree course work	40%	48%
Architecture	42%	44%
Engineering	18%	18%
Business	47%	48%
Science	45%	43%

Distribution of students' permanent home residence in 1997

Higher education data is at 31 March 1997. VET data are full-year figures

Location	Higher education	VET	Total	Percent
Asia	5,486	1,966	7,452	16.9%
Victoria	21,286	13,207	34,493	78.1%
Rest of Australia	693	646	1,339	3.0%
Rest of the world	675	181	856	1.9%
Total	28,140	16,000	44,140	100.0%

Higher education and VET student enrolments by sex 1997

1997 higher education data are at 31 March; VET data are full-year figures

Sex	Higher education		VET		Total	
	1996	1997	1996	1997	1996	1997
Female	13,380	13,947	5,597	9,488	18,977	20,435
Male	13,778	14,193	9,832	9,512	23,610	23,705
Total	27,158	28,140	15,429	16,000	42,587	44,140
% female	49.3%	49.6%	36.3%	40.6%	44.6%	46.3%

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander education strategy

RMIT University's commitment to national equity goals for indigenous education is demonstrated in its Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander (ATSI) education strategy plan,

and progress toward the objectives outlined in that plan.

The Koori Education Unit plays an important role in assisting RMIT University to set and

achieve targets closer to the state comparison values.

During 1997 the Koori Education Unit received an RMIT University quality award for community services for its involvement with the National Aboriginal and Islander Day of Commemoration. NAIDOC is part of an annual week of national celebration for ATSI communities. In Victoria since 1996 there has been a series of ATSI art exhibitions to celebrate our living cultures, and RMIT University has held an exhibition on campus each year: in 1996 'Eh Look Out Now!' and in 1997 'Lookin Back, Movin Forwards'.

Another significant achievement in 1997 was a Koori art and design project. The RMIT Koori liaison officer and Department of Visual Art and Design, in partnership, have been working with the ATSI Artists Community since July 1996. This project has produced a VET course in Koori art and design that is relevant to the needs of Victorian ATSI artists, promoting new technologies in visual arts. The course is offered by the Faculty of Art, Design and Communication and provides pathways and articulation into other VET and higher education art and design courses.

Disability Liaison Unit

The Disability Liaison Unit established a disability resource room in 1997 which was officially opened by the Vice-Chancellor. This room has adaptive technology for students with disabilities. The process of developing this resource room earned the Disability Liaison Unit an RMIT University quality award.

The unit has been involved in two research projects on the improvement of student support services. Funding for these projects was secured by the unit from external sources. The unit has also been involved in the organisation of a disability audit. All three projects are due for completion in mid-1998.

The profile of the Disability Liaison Unit within RMIT University has been lifted significantly with invitations for co-ordinator Martin Fathers to lecture in a variety of classes ranging from VET to postgraduate level. Collaborations between Disability Liaison Unit and other university staff have resulted in a disability awareness package for secondary schools and a curriculum for a postgraduate course in disability studies.

The Disability Liaison Unit has strengthened its ties with external organisations, resulting in a service agreement for disability support with Melbourne College of Textiles, a strategic link with an employment agency that specialises in helping people with disabilities to obtain work, and the provision of support workers to William Angliss Institute.

New courses in 1997

Certificate in Engineering (Basic)
Certificate in Engineering Production (Level 1)
Certificate in Engineering Production (Level 2)
Certificate in Engineering Production (Level 3)

Advanced Certificate in Engineering Studies

Certificate 1 in General Education for Adults

Certificate 1 in Polymer Processing
Certificate 1 in Pre-vocational Printing
Certificate 1 in Printing (Fibre-board Operations)

Certificate 2 in Computer Systems

Certificate 2 in Electrical

Certificate 2 in Electronics

Certificate 2 in General Education for Adults

Certificate 2 in General Education for Adults (Further Study)	Certificate 4 in Printing Technology
Certificate 2 in Polymer Processing	Certificate 4 in Public Administration (Administration Service Officer)
Certificate 2 in Telecommunications Cabling	Certificate 4 in Public Administration (Technical Officer)
Certificate 3 in Accounting	Certificate 4 in Transport (Master Class 4)
Certificate 3 in Arts (Applied Photography)	Course in Engineering (Post-Trade)
Certificate 3 in Education (Integration Aide)	Diploma of Applied Science (Conservation and Ecology)
Certificate 3 in Education (Language and Literary Aide)	Diploma of Applied Science (Environmental Technology)
Certificate 3 in Education (Office Support)	Diploma of Applied Science (Medical Laboratory Technology)
Certificate 3 in Occupational Health and Safety	Diploma of Arts (Applied Photography)
Certificate 3 in Polymer Processing	Diploma of Arts (Furniture Design)
Certificate 3 in Print Finishing	Diploma of Audiovisual Technology
Certificate 3 in Public Administration (Administration Service Officer)	Diploma of Building
Certificate 3 in Public Administration (Graduate Administrative Assistant)	Diploma of Building Design and Drafting
Certificate 3 in Public Administration (Technical Officer)	Diploma of Building Surveying
Certificate 3 in Telecommunications Cabling	Diploma of Business (Conveyancing Practice)
Certificate 3 in Transport (Master Class 5)	Diploma of Business (International Trade)
Certificate 4 in Audiovisual Technology	Diploma of Business (Legal Practice)
Certificate 4 in Building	Diploma of Computer Systems
Certificate 4 in Building Drafting	Diploma of Electrical
Certificate 4 in Business (Conveyancing Practice)	Diploma of Electronics
Certificate 4 in Business (International Logistics)	Diploma of Engineering
Certificate 4 in Business (International Trading)	Diploma of Occupational Health and Safety
Certificate 4 in Business (Legal Practice)	Diploma of Printing Management
Certificate 4 in Community Services (Disability, Adult Day Support Services)	Diploma of Public Administration (Administration Service Officer)
Certificate 4 in Community Services (Disability, Employment)	Diploma of Public Administration (Technical Officer)
Certificate 4 in Community Services (Disability, Residential)	Associate Diploma of Business (Public Administration)
Certificate 4 in Community Services (Youth, Child and Family)	Advanced Diploma in Building Construction (Penang campus)
Certificate 4 in Computer Systems	Advanced Diploma in Tourism and Hospitality (Penang campus)
Certificate 4 in Electrical	Advanced Diploma of Building Design
Certificate 4 in Electronics	Advanced Diploma of Business (Advertising)
Certificate 4 in Engineering (Technician Traineeship)	Advanced Diploma of Business (Conveyancing Practice)
Certificate 4 in Laboratory Technology (Biological Sciences)	
Certificate 4 in Occupational Health and Safety	

Advanced Diploma of Business (Information Management) (Penang campus)
 Advanced Diploma of Business (International Trade)
 Advanced Diploma of Business (Legal Practice)
 Advanced Diploma of Business (Operations Management) (Penang campus)
 Advanced Diploma of Business (Public Relations)
 Advanced Diploma of Engineering (Civil Engineering) (Penang campus)
 Advanced Diploma of Engineering (Electronics and Computing) (Penang campus)
 Advanced Diploma of Engineering (Manufacturing) (Penang campus)
 Advanced Diploma of Marine Transport

Bachelor of Applied Science
 Bachelor of Applied Science (Hospitality Management)
 Bachelor of Applied Science (Software Engineering)
 Bachelor of Applied Science (Textile Technology)
 Bachelor of Applied Science (Tourism Management)
 Bachelor of Social Science

Bachelor of Applied Science (Computer Science) with Advanced Certificate in Management Skills

Bachelor of Applied Science (Computer Science) with Bachelor of Applied Science (Geomatics)
 Bachelor of Applied Science (Manufacturing Systems) with Bachelor of Applied Science (Computer Science)
 Bachelor of Engineering (Communication) with Bachelor of Applied Science (Computer Science)
 Bachelor of Engineering (Computer Systems) with Bachelor of Business (Business Administration)
 Bachelor of Engineering (Electrical) with Bachelor of Business (Business Administration)

Bachelor of Engineering (Electronic) with Bachelor of Applied Science (Computer Science)
 Bachelor of Engineering (Mechanical) with Bachelor of Business (Business Administration)
 Bachelor of Engineering (Metallurgical) with Bachelor of Business (Business Administration)
 Bachelor of Engineering (Polymer) with Bachelor of Business (Business Administration)

Bachelor of Applied Science (Environmental Science) (Honours)
 Bachelor of Nursing (Honours)

Graduate Certificate in Document Management
 Graduate Certificate in Early Childhood Teaching
 Graduate Certificate in Electronic Engineering
 Graduate Certificate in Teaching English for Speakers of Other Languages
 Graduate Certificate in Tertiary Teaching and Learning
 Graduate Certificate in Vocational Education and Training

Graduate Diploma in Document Management
 Graduate Diploma in Early Childhood Education
 Graduate Diploma in Early Childhood Teaching
 Graduate Diploma in Early Childhood (Primary)
 Graduate Diploma in Early Childhood (Secondary)
 Graduate Diploma in Electronic Engineering
 Graduate Diploma in Teaching English for Speakers of Other Languages
 Graduate Diploma in Tertiary Teaching and Learning
 Graduate Diploma in Vocational Education and Training

Master of Engineering (Electronic)
 Master of Midwifery
 Master of Technology (Computing)

Credit transfer and articulation

By the end of 1996, there were eighty-one separate formal agreements in place for articulation between cognate higher education and VET courses at RMIT, compared with sixty-nine in 1995. The number of formal agreements in place is not measurable for 1997, though it is expected to be measurable in 1998.

Industry-funded training

RMIT University provides public and customised short courses and skills up-grades for industry in Australia and overseas totalling \$1.2 million in 1997. The university was highly successful in bids for tendered training, research and curriculum development projects. Key clients included government agencies such as the Australian National Training Authority (ANTA), the Office of Technical and Further Education (OTFE) and the Department of Justice; educational organisations such as the Australian Catholic Education Office and the Victorian Principals Association; and over a hundred companies including BHP, Ford, Ericsson and Kemcor.

Freedom of information

During 1997 five requests were received for information under the *Freedom of Information Act 1992*.

Access granted in full	3
Access granted in part	2
Access denied	Nil
Total	5

Categories of document

The university preserves subject files, personnel files, computer records and archival material.

Subject files

The university's Central Registry filing system contains policy and procedural files arranged by subject. A decentralised system in the TAFE sector, under a centralised classification system with local control, also contains policy and procedural files arranged by subject. Local filing systems in some faculties and departments and administrative units contain local working subject files.

Personnel files

A file for each member of staff, documenting her or his relationship with the university, is held by the Human Resources Management Group. A file for each student, documenting the student's relationship with the university, is held by Student Administration (Higher Education) or Student Administration (TAFE). Local staff and student files, while not duplicating documents held centrally, are held in relevant academic and administrative sections.

Computer records

Information concerning university administrative functions is held by the Resources Division on the database, and supplements the information held in hard copy series.

Archival material

Large numbers of documents dating from the founding of the organisation are preserved in the university archives.

Material prepared by the university under Part 2 of the *FOI Act*

Published material (guides, procedures etc.) together with a copy of the university's Part 2 statement may be inspected at Academic Administration Services on the city campus. Copies of Part 2 statements may be bought from that address for \$0.20.

Application procedure

An application under the *Freedom of Information Act* should be made in writing to:

Freedom of Information Officer
RMIT University
GPO Box 2476V
MELBOURNE VIC 3001

Documents to which access is granted may be inspected between 8-30 a.m. and 5-30 p.m. Monday to Friday. The freedom of information officer is John Lambrick, e-mail <john.lambrick@rmit.edu.au>.

Employee relations

The university successfully completed negotiations for two enterprise agreements during 1997. The agreement covering academic and general (PACCT) staff provides a cumulative 12 percent salary increase from May 1997 to January 1999. The agreement contains numerous initiatives that will increase flexibility and efficiency such as introduction of annual work plans, streamlined redundancy provisions and rationalised leave arrangements. A new agreement covering trade and related staff is expected to be certified in early 1998 and is essentially identical to the academic and general (PACCT) staff agreement.

Occupational health and safety

In 1997 there were 1,734.50 days lost due to industrial disputes and workers' compensation accidents.

During the year 265 work-place injuries/incidents were reported, with sixty-six new WorkCover claims lodged as a result. Of the new claims, thirty-six involved no time lost from work. For the second consecutive year, an increase in stress claims accounted for the highest proportion of time lost.

A routine inspection by the Victorian WorkCover Authority in October 1997 highlighted the need for continual improvement in the quality of the work environment and compliance with health and safety legislation. The university will continue to co-operate with the WorkCover Authority in an effort to make RMIT University a safer place for staff, students and visitors.

Equal employment opportunity

In 1997 the RMIT Council adopted an equal opportunity policy and a revised sexual harassment policy which will come into operation on 1 January 1998. These policies reflect RMIT's commitment to equal opportunity and freedom from all forms of discrimination in employment and education. The equal opportunity policy sets out thirteen grounds of discrimination which reflect state and federal anti-discrimination laws. Both policies are designed around quality principles and will be reviewed after twelve months of operation.

RMIT University's 1997 report to the federal government's Affirmative Action Agency received a rating of three out of five.

During 1997 the Equal Opportunity Branch of the Human Resources Management Group expanded its role to include providing advice, training and research in matters involving sex discrimination, sexual harassment and

affirmative action. The branch held seminars on work and family, aiming to make the RMIT University work-place more 'family-friendly'. The affirmative action advisory committee was restructured and a new committee was established to redraft the affirmative action

plan for 1998, focusing on cultural change throughout the university and career advancement for women. A brochure outlining RMIT University staffing profiles by gender was distributed widely throughout the university.

Total staff: full time equivalent in March 1997

	Total	Female	% female	Change from 1996
Academic	990	324	33	-1%
Teaching	435	117	27	+2%
General	1,401	87	58	+1%
Executive	117	24	20	+2%
Total	2,943	1,281	43	+1%

While numbers of women have increased in the executive service, their representation among academic staff has dropped 1.3 percent. The total number of staff has dropped by 58 academic and 81 general staff.

Women in management 1996-97

Category	1996 total	1997 total	Number of women 1997	% women	Increase since 1996
Executive service	115	118	24	20%	+2%
Organisational chart February 1997	42	45	10	22%	+8%
Professoriate	69	78	13	17%	+8%
Associate professor	115	101	28	28%	+2%
Head of department (higher education sector)	50	47	8	17%	*
Head of department (VET sector)	24	22	5	23%	+11%
Six largest groups, 38+ staff	6	6	2	33%	

Executive service = Vice-Chancellor, Deputy Vice-Chancellor, Pro Vice-Chancellor, Dean, Deputy Dean, Head of Department, Director

** One female head of department was on leave*

Total number of associate professors is down by 14 from 1996 due largely to promotion and voluntary departure packages. There was an increase in female managers in the VET sector.

Academic staff by gender and level, 1997

	Level A	Level B	Level C	Level D	Level E
Female	43%	37%	28%	27%	16%
Male	57%	63%	72%	73%	84%

Academic promotions

Of the 144 academics who applied for promotion this year, thirty-nine (27 percent) were female. While this is an increase on previous academic promotion rounds, it is still short of the total proportion of female academics (33 percent).

In 1993, women were 18 percent of those promoted. In 1995 women were 26 percent of applicants and 51 percent of those promoted.

General staff by HEW level and gender, 1997

Level	HEW 2	HEW 3	HEW4	HEW5	HEW6	HEW7	HEW8	HEW9	HEW10
Female	17%	75%	73%	67%	52%	44%	36%	51%	23%
Male	83%	25%	27%	33%	48%	56%	64%	49%	77%

Earnings of general staff 1997

	Technical <\$30,000	Administration <\$30,000	Technical >\$40,000	Administration >\$40,000
Female	51%	87%	0	41%
Male	49%	13%	100%	59%

Classification and number of staff

	Number of people			Full time equivalent		
	June 1995	June 1996	June 1997	June 1995	June 1996	June 1997
Academic	1,047	1,128	1,052	991.70	1,064.79	989.66
Teaching	467	475	486	433.34	433.40	439.42
General	1,619	1,707	1,636	1,520.47	1,613.47	1,544.44
Total	3,133	3,310	3,174	2,945.51	3,111.66	2,973.52

Additional information available on request

Consistent with the requirements of the *Financial Management Act 1994*, RMIT has prepared material on the following items, details of which are available on request:

- declarations of pecuniary interest;
- shares held beneficially by senior officers as nominees of a statutory authority or subsidiary;
- changes in prices, fees, charges, rates and levies;
- major external reviews;
- major research and development activities;
- overseas visits undertaken;
- corporate publications;
- consultancies;
- and the RMIT University annual report.

Enquiries about these materials should be addressed to:

Registrar
 Royal Melbourne Institute of Technology
 GPO Box 2476V
 Melbourne Vic 3001

Telephone +(61 3) 9925 2900
Facsimile 9925 4621
E-mail < g.pope@rmit.edu.au >

Compliance index to disclosure requirements

The annual report of the Royal Melbourne Institute of Technology is prepared in accordance with the *Financial Management Act 1994* and the Directions of the Minister for Finance. This index has been prepared to facilitate identification of compliance with statutory disclosure requirements.

In the list below:

TEA = *Tertiary Education Act 1993*

PE(EEO)A = *Public Authorities (Equal Employment Opportunity) Act 1990*

MFD = Directions of the Minister for Finance issued under section 8 of the *Financial Management Act*

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