

Review of the College of Engineering & Computer Science

The Review Panels of the Centre for Sustainable Energy Systems (CSES) and the Department of Engineering, and the Overall Review, made comments about CSES. CSES agrees with all of these comments.

CSES Review

Governance

1. *That CSES be retained as a research centre within the College of Engineering and Computer Science and that it have the same status as a Department, with its own director and budget.*

Funding

2. *To ensure the stability of CSES the College should provide the Director's salary.*
3. *All CSES staff, apart from the Director, and all operational expenses should be funded from an appropriate share of the research quantum earned by CSES, plus external grants and contracts and royalties derived from intellectual property developed by CSES,*

Links to the Department of Engineering

4. *CSES must work closely and cooperatively with the Department of Engineering and therefore CECS should facilitate the development of an agreement between CSES and DoE in regard to research funding, the joint use of research facilities, teaching assistance by CSES staff, a shared web site (solar@anu), sharing of royalties, payments for services and other relevant matters.*

College Issues

5. *That CECS consider the possibility of allocating additional laboratory space to CSES when space is reallocated following the move of NICTA to its new building.*
6. *That CECS consider how to provide improved support to CSES for business development, contracts and the commercialization of intellectual property.*

CSES Planning

7. *That CSES develop a strategic plan and a business plan for its operations over the next five years as a research centre within CECS. This plan should be regularly reviewed and updated in consultation with CECS administration.*
8. *That CSES attempt to strike an appropriate balance between scholarly research and commercialization in order to optimize its viability and to assist the professional development of its staff. In particular, more attention should be given to publications in international journals and applications for competitive research grants.*

Department of Engineering Review

1c) The CSES is an asset to the College and should be given every encouragement in its efforts to continue with high-grade research. Its finances should be put on a firm basis that is transparent to the rest of the College and be constituted as Centre within the College.

1d) CSES should continue to contribute to the teaching within the College with the appropriate financial arrangements for staff time and facilities.

1f) It is essential that in any arrangement the treatment of laboratory usage charges, research quantum funding distribution etc apply equitably.

Overall report

It is recognised that the situation of CSES is rather different to that of DoE because we have here an area of research strength where there are great opportunities for growth as the Government and industry focus on the fight against global warming. If the ANU wishes to focus on sustainable energy as one of its research strengths then it is recommended that it nurture CSES as a identifiable research enterprise alongside DoE to avail such opportunities.

The college should examine maintaining CSES as a separate, identifiable research unit, subject to the pending ARC review and its business planning process. CSES should contribute to the teaching activities of DE, as identified for IE above. This issue should be examined by the impending College Review.