

longer singing uni's praises

Lost opportunities sadden maths whiz



By LACEY BURLEY
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UNIVERSITY of Southern Queensland mathematics student Adam Walsh may be the youngest student at just 10 years of age, but he has a big voice.

"I am extremely disappointed that opportunities will be taken away from young people in our region," Adam said in response to USQ's Realising our Potential plan.

The second of the four-part plan was handed down on Tuesday which includes axing 21 staff members (through both forced and "voluntary" redundancies), slashing 260 degrees and 751 courses to save between \$3 million and \$4 million.

The Chronicle featured Adam last month after he wrote a letter to Professor Terence Tao, Australia's first Fields Medallist (the equivalent of a Nobel Prize in the maths world), to enlist his help in saving maths resources at USQ.

Professor Tao then rallied forces with colleagues both here and overseas to fight the cuts at USQ. Adam yesterday expressed his disgust that these recommendations weren't taken onboard. Five mathematic and statistics staff were cut along with the Master of Sciences (professional mathematics and statistics) degree.

"I feel very annoyed at the primary school teacher who, so many years ago, instilled such a hatred of mathematics in the current dean.

"I am ashamed that some of the smartest maths and science minds in the world came together behind Dr Tao's petition for our little uni in Toowoomba and yet these third-rate bureaucrats kept their ears closed. If that many first-class minds told me I was doing the wrong thing, I would certainly be thinking very hard about changing direction!

"I would like to thank Dr Tao for everything he did and apologise for how pathetic and short-sighted we can be in this country."

USQ Mathematics and Computing head of department Dr Richard Watson said although they have lost five staff positions in Mathematics and Statistics, two new non-teaching positions were created.

"From a teaching point of view, there will be five less staff, but if we're talking bodies on the ground we will be down three."

Dr Watson said that "redundant" staff will have some tough decisions to make.

"From a staff point of view, especially the maths and stats staff, they are very seriously considering their future. These are big decisions to make and there is some uncertainty as to how the voluntary redundancies will pan out."

USQ will now be in a position to invest money in the development of new, high demand degrees.

— Bill Lovegrove

USQ now poised to deliver

UNIVERSITY of Southern Queensland vice-chancellor Bill Lovegrove described the "Realising our Potential" plan as a way of rolling out a new generation of degree programs designed to renew, revitalise and re-profile the university.

Professor Lovegrove said the plans would guarantee USQ's thriving future by revitalising students' experience and respond to the demands of the Australian workforce by repositioning their five faculties for the next 10 years.

"By reviewing the degrees we offered, we will now be able to equip graduates with a range of skills that will make them more employable.

"By decreasing the amount of money we spend on unpopular programs, USQ will now be in a position to invest money in the development of new, high demand degrees."



USQ Mathematics and Computing head of department Dr Richard Watson said "redundant" staff have some very serious decisions to make.



USQ's maths prodigy Adam Walsh.

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